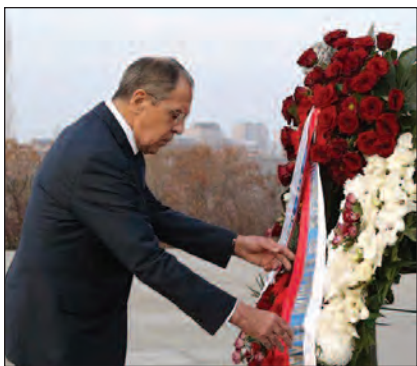


Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov Visits Armenia, Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – During a visit to Armenia, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said there is no cause for “too much optimism” over a resolution of the long-standing conflict over Azerbaijan’s breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

“Together with our American and French colleagues we will now analyze where we are right now; we will try to take some sort



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visits the Tsitsernakabert Armenian Genocide Memorial in Yerevan.

of active steps to create conditions to achieve a settlement,” Lavrov said in Yerevan on November 21.

“I wouldn’t be too optimistic, it’s a challenging task, and our experience of negotiations makes us think they will not end quickly,” he told a joint press conference with Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian.

Internationally mediated negotiations with the involvement of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s see LAVROV, page 3

Bernard Kouchner Joins Aurora Humanitarian Initiative Board

PARIS – The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative has announced that Bernard Kouchner, the co-founder of Médecins Sans



Bernard Kouchner

Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), is joining the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity Selection Committee. The committee, which selects the annual Aurora Prize finalists and laureate, comprises humanitarians, human

right activists and former heads of state, and is chaired by Academy-award winning actor and philanthropist George Clooney.

Kouchner, an internationally renowned politician and physician, co-founded the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Médecins Sans Frontières in 1971 and co-founded Médecins du Monde in 1980. From 2007 to 2010, he served as France’s minister of foreign and European affairs, and earlier, as minister of health. He has organized humanitarian operations around the world, including in Somalia, El Salvador, Lebanon, Syria, Vietnam, Cambodia, Chad, Libya, Nigeria, Thailand, Uruguay, Peru, see KOUCHNER, page 4



From left, Jerry Misk, Hilda Hartounian, Artemis Nazarian, Nazar Nazarian, Hagop Vartivarian, Claudia Nazarian and Seta Nazarian

Tekeyan NY Celebrates 70th Anniversary

PARAMUS, N.J. – The Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) of Greater New York hosted a gala celebration of the 70th anniversary of TCA at the Terrace at Biagio’s with more than 250 guests. The evening was held under the auspices of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) and the presidency of Nazar and Artemis Nazarian. Notable guests included Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Armenia’s representative to the United Nations and his wife, and leaders of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party, Armenian General Benevolent Union, Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, Armenian Relief Society and Fund for Armenian Relief.

The master of ceremonies was Jerry Misk. The invocation was offered by Very Rev. Oshagan Gulgolian of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church of Wynnewood, Penn.

Hilda Hartounian, chair of the TCA of Greater New York, welcomed the guests.

Hagop Kassardjian, chairman of the TCA Founders Committee of Lebanon, who had come specially for this occasion, spoke not only about the history of TCA but the imperatives of the present. Aram Arkun, executive director of the TCA of the see GALA, page 20

Tekeyan Cultural Association World Council Formed

NEW YORK – The Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) is a pan-Armenian organization whose structures have operated in many diaspora communities since 1947 and in the Republic of Armenia since its independence in 1991.

The TCA and its sister organizations held a consultative conclave on Saturday, November 18, at the TCA Center of Greater New York, and after long deliberations decided to form the Tekeyan Cultural Association World Council, which will coordinate the activities of different chapters and serve as their spokesman in pan-Armenian forums. To further this coordination, a convocation will be held in March 2018 in Yerevan.

This initiative was taken by the TCA Founders Committee in Lebanon and the Central Board of the TCA of the United States and Canada, and supported by the representatives of the majority of the Tekeyan chapters.

The formation of the World Council will offer new prospects to the entire organization to carry out its mission more effectively and to contribute meaningfully to the Armenian people in the homeland and in the diaspora.

Tekeyan Cultural Association
Founders Committee
Hagop Kassardjian
President

Central Board of the Tekeyan Cultural
Association of the United States and Canada
Edmond Y. Azadian
President

November 18, 2017



Participants in the meeting forming the Tekeyan Cultural Association World Council

NEWS IN BRIEF

Paris Suburb, Artsakh Town Sign Friendship Declaration

PARIS (Public Radio of Armenia) – On November 20, Artsakh Republic President Bako Sahakyan arrived in the French city of Alfortville to participate in a solemn event of signing a friendship declaration between Alfortville and the Artsakh city of Berdzor.

In his speech, Sahakyan described the signing of the friendship declaration as a significant event for Artsakh from political, legal and moral viewpoints, classifying it among important bases for cementing and developing friendly ties with France.

“The cooperation with France and its administrative regions is among the main directions of our foreign policy and expansion of sister cities’ list and geography, deepening ties with them are among pivotal components of this policy,” the president stated.

According to President Sahakyan, memorable episodes have already been registered in the course of cooperation with the city of Alfortville. In this context, he recalled the visit of the city’s delegation led by Mayor Luc Carvounas to Artsakh in September 2016 and the mass demonstration held in Alfortville during the Four Day April War in support of Artsakh and against the Azerbaijani violence.

Sahakyan noted that this demonstrated to the world the inadmissibility of aggression for the civilized community.

“We are grateful to all, who stand beside Artsakh, who fight for freedom and equality, protection of human rights and dignity. This is a courageous and exemplary behavior,” stressed President Sahakyan.

Bako Sahakyan underlined that in case of proper organization of the planned activities, cooperation between Berdzor and Alfortville has promising prospects, expressing confidence that numerous programs will be brought to life with joint efforts.

Wife of Chess Champ Aronian Appointed Advisor to Armenian Prime Minister

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Arianne Bo Caoili has been appointed an adviser to Armenian Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan this week.

Caoili is a Philippines-born Australian chess player. She was awarded the title of Woman International Master (WIM) by FIDE. She won the Oceania Women’s Chess Championship in 2009 and competed in seven Women’s Chess Olympiads.

Caoili has been living in Armenia since 2015. She married Armenia’s leading chess player Levon Aronian in September 2017.

INSIDE

A New Path For Women

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

National Archives of Armenia Working to Digitize Materials

YEREVAN (Panorama) — The National Archives of Armenia dates back to 1924. During its 93 years of activity, the archive has accumulated a rich collection. Now the institution is taking efforts to digitize its archival materials and to create electronic databases to make the archives available to everyone.

According to Amatuni Virabyan, director of the National Archives of Armenia noted that although the Armenian archive was created in 1924, it features documents from 1830, when Eastern Armenia became part of the Russian Empire. The main materials kept at the center date back to 1921. “We find documents about Armenia in our neighboring countries – Georgia, Turkey, Russia, as well as Europe. Now we are expecting documents from Russia that refer to the developments in Artsakh before becoming part of the Soviet Union,” the director highlighted.

More than 400 million documents, thousands of movies, including footage from the First World War, thousands of photos and records are kept at the National Archives of Armenia, with the edicts of Shah Abbas in 1607 being the center’s oldest document.

Virabyan noted only 0.1 percent of the archival materials have been digitized up to now, adding they are more focused on those documents that are more valuable and enjoy greater demand.

More than two dozen foreign researchers from Russia, England, France and Germany study the Armenian archives annually. Interestingly enough they are more interested in documents referring to Soviet Armenia.

In regards to the Armenian Genocide documents, the director said they enjoyed great interest especially during the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, with the interest in documents diminished in recent period.

Karapetyan Tours Gyumri’s Kumayri Historic Center

GYUMRI (Armenpress) — During a visit to Gyumri on November 17, Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan toured the Kumayri Historic Center, followed by a consultation in the City Hall, where the process of development of the historic center was discussed.

Karapetyan was briefed on the planned works for restoring the infrastructures of the Shiraz and the adjacent streets of the historic center. He asked that a specific schedule be drafted within a week.

“It is necessary to launch construction as soon as possible, moreover when the weather allows it,” he said. Local officials said the restoration of the other streets of Gyumri, financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development will begin in the upcoming spring.

Transport Minister Martirosyan Meets with New Swiss Ambassador

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Vahan Martirosyan, minister of transport, communication and information technologies, received Ambassador of Switzerland to Armenia Lukas Gasser this week. Welcoming the ambassador, Martirosyan touched upon the opportunities to deepen the bilateral cooperation in transportation, communication and IT. During the meeting the officials exchanged views on cooperating in the transportation and road construction spheres. There was also a reference to the program of installing a single transportation system in Armenia and the possibility to engage Swiss companies in it. The ambassador presented Switzerland’s public transport management experience and expressed readiness to present the details of the project on installing a single transportation system in Armenia to the Swiss respective companies. At the end of the meeting Gasser conveyed the official letter of the Swiss President to the Armenian minister to take part in the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in December.

iPod Creator Receives Presidential Award

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) — The 2017 Presidential Award for Global Contribution in the Field of Information Technology was presented on November 17 to iPod developer Tony Fadel, who also founded Nest Labs Company.

Hovik Musayelyan, chairman of the Executive Board of the World IT Awards Committee, first presented the

joint State-private sector initiatives aimed at promoting the development of the IT sector, many of which have become traditional already. The floor was next given to Award Committee member Tony Moroyan who presented the life story of this year’s award winner.

President Serzh Sargsyan presented the prize to Fadel, and delivered a

mentality, ideology and aspirations.”

He continued, “For over a decade now, our country has been looking for a niche in the global market of information technology in quest of new achievements. There are about 600 IT companies operating in Armenia, including many world-renowned organizations. This has helped solve the problem of employment for about 20,000 people.”

And then he added, “We should have thousands of IT companies and hundreds of thousands of specialists working in the field of information technology. That is why we need a dynamic system of special education, and we have a lot to do in this regard. The decades-old traditions and the youth with a strong will shall serve as a solid foundation for achieving those goals. That is my vision. We shall have many new professionals who will bring our country to the point of changing their work and the overall climate in the country. They will break the psychological template of being a ‘small country’ which sometimes comes to the forefront in our society.”

He then praised Fadel’s innovations. “I think Mr. Fadel’s solutions relating to iPod players or other innovations should be instructive for our specialists. He has gone through deeper roads overcoming difficulties, learning new lessons on his way to success. ... With this award, we wish to highlight the achievements of your team and yourself in the field of iPod players, iPhones, thermos-regulators, safe and smart toys for children, and much more. I hope you will be able to present your success story to our students and professionals and encourage them to reach new heights.”

Sargsyan praised Fadel’s efforts despite failures along the way, noting that “failures are another step forward on the way to achieving the desired goal.”



President Serzh Sargsyan presents the award to iPod Developer Fred Fadel.

background history of the Presidential Award for Global Contribution in the Field of Information Technology, the principles steering the Award Committee and the International Selection Commission, established by the decree of the president of the Republic of Armenia, and the world-renowned award-winners.

He highlighted Armenia’s competitive edge in the priority sector of information technology, the great potential that dates a far back as to the Soviet Armenia, which later became a solid basis for further development.

Musayelyan also spoke about the

speech at the reception held on that occasion. Fadel reciprocated with words of thanks.

The president said, “I am happy to hand the Presidential Award for Global Contribution in the Field of Information Technology to Tony Fadel, the founder of Nest Labs. He is really one of those people who are shaping our everyday life and lifestyle in this digital era.

“During its millennial history, the Armenian people has always sought to master and adapt to the local medium everything progressive in the world. This award is the manifestation of our

Dutch Senate President Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) — On November 16, the President of the Senate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Ankie Broekers-Knol, accompanied by the Vice President of the Armenian National Assembly Arpine Hovhannisyan and Armenia’s Ambassador to the Netherlands Dziunik Aghajanian, visited the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex.

Broekers-Knol laid a wreath at the memorial to the Armenian Genocide victims and at the eternal fire.

Broekers-Knol visited the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, got acquainted with the documents proving the Armenian Genocide, observed the exhibits and left a note in the Memory Book of Honorable Guests.

She noted: “This is the first time I am in the Museum, and I am deeply impressed by the sufferings that the Armenians had. It is appalling and terrible.”



Ankie Broekers-Knol at the Armenian Genocide Memorial

Prime Minister Meets with New France Ambassador

YEREVAN — Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan of Armenia met this week with new ambassador of France to Armenia Jonathan Lacôte. Congratulating the ambassador on his new post, the prime minister expressed confidence that his activities would help develop and strengthen Armenian-French relations.

Karapetyan said he attached importance to the deepening of trade and economic ties between the two countries, emphasizing that Armenia could become a solid platform for French companies to enter the Iranian and the Eurasian Economic Union markets.

Karapetyan said he could see good prospects in developing cooperation in the fields of energy, agriculture, tourism, transport, water resources management, information technology and other spheres. The Premier highlighted the role of France in building EU-Armenia linkages and promoting bilateral cooperation on international platforms.

Thankful for the warm welcome, the French ambassador said he shared the premier’s opinion concerning the development of bilateral relations, including the need for activating economic interaction.

Lacôte noted that he had already called at different French companies successfully operating in Armenia. There are many other companies interested in the launch of business activities in waste management, energy, transport, agriculture, and other spheres. Lacôte said he was impressed with Armenia’s IT potential, adding that there are good opportunities for cooperation in this field as well.

The interlocutors emphasized the importance of holding business forums in order to present Armenia’s investment attractiveness to business circles abroad.

Karapetyan and Lacôte also touched upon the upcoming La Francophonie Summit to be held next year in Armenia. They expressed confidence that it would promote political and economic contacts between the member states and Armenia.



Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan receives the newly-appointed French Ambassador to Armenia Jonathan Lacôte.



ARMENIA

Lavrov and Armenian Leadership Attend Opening of Russia-Armenia Exhibit

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – President Serzh Sargsyan attended the “Armenia-Russia: Friendship Forged over Centuries” exhibition at the National Gallery of Armenia, dedicated to the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation.

The exhibition was opened by Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. Accompanied by the two countries’ foreign ministers, other officials and guests, the President of Armenia viewed the archival documents and photos representing the Armenian-Russian cooperation in different spheres of activity.

Armenian Parliament Extends Amnesty-For-Cash For Draft Dodgers

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenian lawmakers on November 17 approved legislation to provide young men who have illegally evaded compulsory military service an opportunity for amnesty if they pay a hefty sum.

The 105-seat National Assembly voted unanimously for the amendment to an existing amnesty law, in a move that is expected to enable hundreds of young men, who must have turned 27 by December 1, to avoid criminal prosecution and legally return to Armenia.

To qualify for the amnesty, they will have to pay 200,000 drams, or \$410, for each conscription period they illegally missed, to a maximum of 3.6 million drams, or some \$7,400, for all draft periods.

Ruling Republican Party lawmaker Karine Achemian who presented the bill in parliament, said the amnesty provision will be in force until December 31, 2019.

The original amnesty law adopted in 2004 has so far been extended eight times, enabling thousands of citizens to return to Armenia. The previous term of the legislation expired in May 2015.

Earlier, the Defense Ministry suggested that the parliament provide such an opportunity for the last time and also raise the cost for taking advantage of the amnesty to at least 9 million drams (approximately \$19,000).

But that initiative was rebuffed by the parliamentary committee on defense and security, where it was criticized by committee Chairman Koryun Nahapetian and several other lawmakers affiliated with the Republican Party.

Achemian said the Defense Ministry proposal would have restricted lawmakers’ constitutional right to come up with bills.

Nahapetian said last week that 700 to 800 draft dodgers have been granted amnesty each year since 2004. He also revealed that almost 9,500 men remain on the run on draft evasion charges.

President Attends Opening Of Monte Melkonian Military Training College

DILIJAN (Armenpress) – President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan attended the official opening of Monte Melkonian military training college in Dilijan on November 21.

The opening ceremony of the college was dedicated to the 60th birth anniversary (November 25) of Monte Melkonian.

The president, together with Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan, the members of the National Security Commission and the other guests watched the solemn march of the students of the college.

The unveiling of Monte Melkonian’s statue also took place in the territory of the college. Sargsyan toured in the military training college and got acquainted with the conditions of the college.



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his Armenian counterpart, Edward Nalbandian, with President Serzh Sargsyan in the background

Then, in the presence of Sargsyan, a stamp canceling ceremony was held with two stamps released on the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation. The stamps were can-

celled by the Armenian and Russian foreign ministers and the Armenian minister of transport, communication and information technologies.

President Sargsyan said in a statement: “The title of the exhibition dedicated to the 25th

anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation reflects the true nature of our strategic partnership. For the past quarter of a century, Armenian-Russian relations have been brought to the highest level, covering all spheres of interstate cooperation.

A comprehensive legal framework has been set up, based on the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, the 20th anniversary of which was marked in August, as well as on the Allied Partnership Declaration aiming the 21st Century.

“The Armenian-Russian strategic interaction is marked with high mutual trust-fostered political dialogue. We are keen to develop foreign policy coordination in the international arena within multilateral frameworks. We are making joint efforts to build up partnerships in defense and military-technical fields, develop effective cooperation in trade-economic, energy and transport sectors. Interregional ties are being strengthened and deepened; cooperation is being expanded in the fields of culture, science and education.

“It is crucial that the Armenian-Russian exchanges involve millions of people, the business and scientific communities, youth and public structures. The ongoing interaction opens up new opportunities and prospects, which imply consistent work on the strengthening of allied partnership for the benefit of our two peoples, in the best interest of security and stability in the South Caucasus.”

Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov Visits Armenia, Azerbaijan

LAVROV, from page 1

(OSCE) Minsk Group have failed to result in a resolution. The Minsk Group is co-chaired by France, Russia and the United States.

Speaking alongside Lavrov, Nalbandian said that Armenia was “willing to continue” negotiations to try resolve the conflict.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Russia and the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of

the ministers of industry education, health, and these days the visit of the foreign minister.

Noting that the Armenian-Russian relations are developing consistently, the president stressed that further work should continue in the direction of developing interstate relations, strengthening the friendship of the Armenian and Russian peoples.

Lavrov expressed gratitude for the reception and conveyed to Sargsyan the warm

on November 20 as part of a regional tour timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and the two ex-Soviet republics, which have been locked in a conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh for even longer.

In Baku, where he met with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov and President Ilham Aliyev, Lavrov said that friendly diplomatic relations between the two countries played “a great role in providing security” in the South Caucasus and Caspian regions.

During his meeting with Lavrov on November 19, Aliyev hailed the “high level” of bilateral ties between Azerbaijan and Russia and voiced confidence that cooperation will strengthen in the future.

He also said that his country was “very interested” in resolving the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

“Being one of the three OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmen, we will continue looking for mutually acceptable ways of peaceful settlement with regard to the developments that emerged during the recent meeting of the three co-chairmen – Russian, American and French – with the Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers in Moscow,” Lavrov added.

Lavrov also said that the OSCE Minsk Group on Nagorno-Karabakh includes all the countries that can contribute to the settlement of the conflict, so, there is no need to extend its format.

“We have an agreed format. There are three co-chairs. They do not exist in a vacuum; they are co-chairing the OSCE Minsk Group where all the countries concerned that can have any influence on that process are present.”

The top Russian diplomat confessed he had heard the idea of extending this format from journalists only as this topic had never been raised.

“I think that in this situation, like in many other conflict situations, any new initiatives may be used, intentionally or not, as tools to spoil what is already being done in the format that has already proved its worth for both parties,” Lavrov stressed.

(Stories from RFE/RL, Arka and news.am were used to compile this report.)



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov with President Serzh Sargsyan in Yerevan

Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance and was productive in terms of strengthening bilateral relations, Armenian leader said.

“Relations are characterized as genuinely allied. I fully share this opinion, because these relations are distinguished by a high level of political dialogue at all levels, broad coordination of foreign policy activities, fruitful cooperation on international platforms, very good interaction in the economic, military and technical and humanitarian spheres,” Sargsyan said.

He stressed the importance of active reciprocal visits during which during the past few months Armenia was visited by the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation,

greetings of Russian President Vladimir Putin. During the meeting, the Minister presented the results of the talks with his colleague and the discussions that took place during his official visit.

In a message read out at the opening ceremony of an historic exhibition in Yerevan on “friendship” between Russia and Armenia, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia and Armenia “are not just good neighbors,” according to Russian news agencies.

“We are bonded with shared history, pride in the feats of our ancestors, and traditions of friendship and mutual understanding that we cherish,” he said.

Lavrov flew in to Armenia from Azerbaijan



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Ateshian Visits Destroyed St. Giragos Church in Diyarbekir

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) — Archbishop Aram Ateshian who recently stepped down as the General Vicar of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, visited the Sourp Giragos Armenian Church in Diyarbekir, which has been looted and destroyed as a result of the military operations by Turkish armed forces since its total renovation two years ago.

There are currently holes in the walls of the church as well as broken windows. After touring the church, Ateshian made an announcement, reading as follows, “The places for raising prayers to God in this region, churches and mosques, are in ruins. He who stands behind this cannot be regarded as a human being. Everything is in ruins. He who did it cannot be a creature of God.”

Ateshian called upon relevant state bodies to immediately take measures to start the reconstruction of the church.

The St. Giragos Church of Diyarbekir, the largest Christian church in the Middle East, celebrated the first church ceremony after a 32-year-break on November 4, 2012. On the same day the church hosted a wedding. The renovation of the 14th-century church was carried out with the assistance of Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Diyarbakir Municipality also financed the initiative.

Armenian Institutions of Argentina Express Support for Law Against Domestic Violence

BUENOS AIRES (Agencia Prensa Armenia) — The Armenian institutions of the Argentine Republic (IARA), an entity that brings together all the institutions of the Armenian community in Argentina, published an open letter in support of the draft law against domestic violence in Armenia approved on November 16.

“We, representatives of the Armenian institutions of the Argentine Republic, follow with great interest the recent debate that arose in various areas of the Republic of Armenia regarding the bill that criminalizes domestic violence,” said IARA. “A debate that undoubtedly reflects the evolution of Armenia as a democratic republic, by translating into the country’s regulations a common reality to many countries. Deciding to penalize it demonstrates the maturity of our nation,” added the text.

According to IARA, the bill will allow the Armenian woman, “vital protagonist of the local society, to have a life without fear of violence and unjust treatment,” hoping that “violence against women could be eradicated from Armenian society and gender equality becomes a reality and a step forward towards the rights of women.”

Oldest Wine Found in Georgia

TBILISI (BBC) — Scientists say 8,000-year-old pottery fragments have revealed the earliest evidence of grape wine-making.

The earthenware jars containing residual wine compounds were found in two sites south of the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, researchers said.

Some of the jars bore images of grape clusters and a man dancing.

Previously, the earliest evidence of wine-making was from pottery dating from about 7,000 years ago found in north-western Iran.

The latest finds were published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS).

“We believe this is the oldest example of the domestication of a wild-growing Eurasian grapevine solely for the production of wine,” said co-author Stephen Batiuk, a senior researcher at the University of Toronto.

In 2011, a wine press and fermentation jars from about 6,000 years ago were found in a cave in Armenia.



Edward Nalbandian (right hand, center), Armenian Foreign Minister, meets with the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, Moscow on November 14

Armenian FM Meets Mediators, Discusses Meeting with Azeri Counterpart

MOSCOW (RFE/RL) — Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian discussed a possible meeting with his Azerbaijani counterpart, Elmar Mammadyarov, as he met on November 14 with international mediators advancing peace efforts in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement.

The meeting between Nalbandian and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chairs Igor Popov, of Russia, Stephane Visconti, of France, and Andrew Schofer, of the United States, took place during the top Armenian diplomat’s working visit to Moscow, Russia, the press office of Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported.

According to the report, the meeting was also attended by Andrzej Kasprzyk, a personal representative of the OSCE chairperson-in-office.

“During the meeting the sides exchanged views on the necessary steps towards creating conducive conditions for the advancement of the process of exclusively peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The interlocutors discussed the steps aimed at the implementation of the agreements reached during the summits in Vienna, St. Petersburg and Geneva,” the Ministry said in a statement.

“The possibility of organizing a meeting between the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan was discussed,”

it added.

Armenia’s Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharian said earlier this month that Armenia’s and Azerbaijan’s foreign ministers were planning to hold fresh talks on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to try to build on understandings reportedly reached by the two countries’ presidents in October.

Presidents Serzh Sargsyan and Ilham Aliyev pledged to intensify the peace process and bolster the ceasefire regime in the conflict zone when they met in Geneva on October 16. The American, Russian and French mediators announced in the Swiss city that they will soon hold follow-up “working sessions” with Foreign Minister Nalbandian and his Azerbaijani counterpart Mammadyarov.

Mammadyarov said late last month that he may meet with Nalbandian in Moscow on November 16. The Azerbaijani minister is scheduled to meet with the mediators there on that day. Nalbandian will accompany President Sarkisian on a trip to the Russian capital, which is due to start on November 15.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will travel to Armenia and then to Azerbaijan in the near future, Russia’s TASS news agency reported.

“At the beginning of next week my visits to Yerevan and Baku are planned. They are related to the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Russian-Armenian and Russian-Azerbaijani diplo-

matic ties. Issues of bilateral relations are on the agenda, we have rich relations with these two countries,” Lavrov said.

According to him, international issues will be discussed during the meetings. “We will try to understand at what stage our efforts on the Karabakh settlement are after the meeting of the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Geneva,” the top Russian diplomat said.

Meanwhile, ahead of Lavrov’s regional tour Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev reiterated his country’s position on the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. Speaking at a meeting dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the ruling New Azerbaijan Party, Aliyev again stated that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be settled “within the framework of the principle of Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity.”

“There is no other way. We will never allow the establishment of a second Armenian state in our historical territory,” the Azerbaijani leader claimed. He further claimed that Azerbaijan will restore its territorial integrity at any cost. According to Aliyev, Azerbaijan will consistently strengthen its armed forces.

“According to international ratings, our army is one of the most powerful armies in the world. The army will be given as much means and equipment as it will be required, without restrictions,” Aliyev said.

The Armenian leadership did not immediately react to Aliyev’s statements.

Bernard Kouchner Joins Aurora Humanitarian Initiative Board

KOUCHNER, from page 1

Guatemala and Honduras. He oversaw Medecins Sans Frontieres’ medical relief response to the Spitak Earthquake in Armenia, which occurred 29 years ago.

“We are pleased to have Bernard Kouchner as part of the Aurora Prize Selection Committee. He has spent most of his life contributing his time and expertise to assist in emergency situations in the developing world,” said Ruben Vardanyan, co-founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative. “Thanks to Mr. Kouchner and his organization, the population impacted by the 1988 earthquake in Armenia received immediate medical care. We are grateful for his invaluable efforts and pleased to tap into his expertise as we review the Aurora Prize nominations.”

“I am deeply honored to join the Aurora Prize Selection Committee and become part of an initiative that has already made an incredible impact on thousands of lives in such a short period of time,” said Kouchner.

“Throughout my career, I’ve had the opportunity to come into contact with many heroes while in emergency zones, and I am thrilled with the opportunity to select such admirable individuals as future Aurora Prize laureates.”

Kouchner joins current Aurora Prize Selection Committee member Nobel Laureates Oscar Arias, Shirin Ebadi and Leymah Gbowee; former president of Ireland Mary Robinson; former president of Mexico Ernesto Zedillo; human rights activist Hina Jilani; director of the Institute of Global Health Innovation at Imperial College London Lord Ara Darzi; President Emeritus of the International Crisis Group and former foreign minister of Australia Gareth Evans; President of Carnegie Corporation of New York Vartan Gregorian and Academy Award-winning actor and humanitarian George Clooney.

Founded on behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide and in gratitude to their saviors, the Aurora Prize is in its third year. For the 2018 Aurora

Prize for Awakening Humanity, there were 750 submissions from 115 countries. The Selection Committee will gather in Berlin, Germany on December 4 to review the nominations.

Also in Berlin, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative will host its first Aurora Dialogues outside of Armenia. Entitled “Millions on The Move: Need for Development and Integration,” the Aurora Dialogues Berlin is a joint effort of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, Global Perspectives Initiative, Robert Bosch Stiftung and Stiftung Mercator, to be held on December 4-5, 2017. Speakers will address the state of the global migration crisis and look at the role of different actors in advancing positive change.

The 2018 Aurora Prize Finalists will be announced in Armenia on April 24, 2018. The third annual prize — \$100,000 to the laureate and \$1 million awarded to organizations of the laureate’s choice, will be announced on June 10, 2018 at a ceremony in Armenia.



INTERNATIONAL

Azerbaijan Moves to Drastically Cut Number of Lawyers

By Mike Runey

BAKU (Eurasianet.org) – The Azerbaijani parliament has approved amendments to the country's civil code that would effectively bar roughly 90 percent of the country's legal professionals from practicing law.

The amendments, adopted on October 31, require presidential approval before they go into effect. They would give the state-controlled bar association complete control over the legal profession. Observers, as well as members of the legal community, characterize the move as the latest and most decisive step in an escalating crackdown on the country's few remaining human rights lawyers.

Less than 24 hours after Azerbaijan's parliament ratified the changes, several lawyers reported being summoned to their local police stations, where they were told they were no longer licensed to practice law and would be subject to arrest or fines if they continued.

The amendments herald the end of a two-tiered legal system that Azerbaijan adopted under pressure from its fellow members in the Council of Europe. Azerbaijani lawyers are either licensed bar members who pass a series of written tests and a highly politicized oral examination, or registered lawyers who have not passed the bar but, until now, have been entitled to represent clients in all non-criminal courts.

Under the amendments, an estimated 8,000 registered lawyers stand to be barred from representing clients in any Azerbaijani court, leaving a nation of nearly 10 million people with only 934 registered legal professionals. At roughly nine lawyers per 100,000 people, that would be a ratio that is 18 times lower than the European average, and by far the lowest figure of any Council of Europe member.

In an interview with Azerbaijani news site QafqazInfo, Chingiz Ganizade, an unaffiliated Azerbaijani MP who voted against the amendments, pointed out that 934 lawyers could not possibly handle the 370,000 cases currently pending in civil and administrative courts, and that legal fees would necessarily increase beyond the reach of most Azerbaijanis, driven up by the short supply of lawyers.

He also worried about the 2,000 lawyers he said were involved in Azerbaijan's seemingly never-ending process of resettling internally displaced people (IDPs) from the Nagorno-Karabakh War. In the past year, there have been several protests by IDPs over poor living conditions, and a lack of even nominal access to justice, along with the ongoing effects of a persistent economic downturn, could easily exacerbate discontent.

Ganizade acknowledged the amendments' purpose was to curtail the activities of lawyers whose "activities were against national interests" – apparently referring to lawyers who irritate the government by repeatedly appealing to the European Court of Human Rights

(ECHR). But he added that the adopted amendments were excessive. "If the arm hurts, cutting it off will not help; it must be cured," he said.

"After the implementation of the amendments, most current litigants will lose their lawyers and representation, and possible [future] litigants will have hardships finding lawyers," said Samed Rahimli, an Azerbaijani lawyer and member of the ad hoc lawyers' advocacy group, Praktik Hüquqsünaslar Qrupu (Group of Practicing Lawyers), which coalesced in October to lobby against the amendments.

Rahimli added that many Azerbaijani districts lack even one lawyer, a consequence of the bar only admitting 500-600 in the past decade.

Neither the bar association nor the government has expressed interest in changing this situation.

What the government is interested in is its international image. It has spent tens, if not hundreds of millions of dollars over the past decade on hosting international sporting events and other high-profile activities, in large part to cast Azerbaijan as a cosmopolitan and modern state in the eyes of the international community. Lawyers who call attention to Azerbaijan's poor rights record by filing cases with the ECHR undermine the image that authorities are seeking to project.

Lawyers who defend high-profile political prisoners or file numerous cases to the ECHR are often threatened with disbarment, or dis-

ciplinary measures on vague charges of ethical violations.

A typical example is Khalid Bagirov, a prominent lawyer who was disbarred on questionable ethics charges in 2015 in what is widely believed to be retribution for his defense of imprisoned opposition politician Ilgar Mammadov, in addition to a number of other high-profile political prisoners. Several high-profile lawyers are currently facing disciplinary proceedings, the threat of disbarment, or routine harassment by security officials.

The amendments' adoption has occurred against the backdrop of two overlapping Azerbaijani political-legal dramas – a showdown between Azerbaijan and the Council of Europe over Azerbaijan's continued failure to comply with a 2014 ruling ordering the release of Ilgar Mammadov, and the continued international political fallout of the revelations of large-scale bribery and money laundering known as the "Azerbaijani Laundromat."

Spurred by the latter scandal, Council of Europe has taken unprecedented legal steps to force Azerbaijan to comply with the ECHR's decision and release Mammadov. For its part, Baku has threatened to withdraw from the Council entirely, although analysts are skeptical the government will follow through.

President Ilham Aliyev still holds the power to veto the amendments, and, taking into account the havoc the amendments would wreak on the Azerbaijani judicial system, there is a slight chance he may choose to do so.

Armenian Ceramics Artist Keeps Ancient Craft Alive in Jerusalem

By Ali Dolah

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (Al Monitor) – In his shop in the middle of the Old City market in Jerusalem, Hagop Antreassian sits among an array of colorful ceramic pottery and tiles, a craft that has been practiced by Armenians for 100 years in Jerusalem.

Antreassian, 73, is Armenian-Palestinian and lives in the Armenian Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. For 40 years, he has taken great pride in the craft he taught himself, although he fears that the ceramics and tile-making, the mark of the Armenian presence in Jerusalem, may now be disappearing.

Antreassian explains that his family, came from Zeitoun in Turkey's Marash province to escape the Ottoman Empire's Armenian Genocide during World War I. Now, in southwest Jerusalem's Armenian Quarter, their descendants coexist with Palestinians in the holy city. During the British mandate in 1920, three renowned Armenian families – the Balians, Karakashians and Ohannesians – were recruited to repair the tiles on the Dome of the Rock, a shrine that dates back to the seventh century. Ever since, the Armenian families that settled in Jerusalem have continued the crafts that first made them famous back in the Ottoman Empire, not only as a source of livelihood but as preservation of heritage.

Antreassian told Al-Monitor in a phone call from his Jerusalem residence that he is determined to revive the art form, though the residents of Jerusalem and larger Palestinian cities such as Al-Bireh and Bethlehem do not seem very interested in ceramics. Fortunately, the tourists who come to the Old Market and the Armenian Quarter flock to the tile shops that are part of the historical her-

itage in this part of town, which includes a closed Armenian monastery and several ancient churches.

Armenian ceramics are some of Palestine's many famous ancient handicrafts such as mosaics, pottery, embroidery, soap and glass, all the mixed heritage of the civilizations that came to Palestine throughout the ages such as the Romans, Canaanites, Byzantines and Phoenicians.

"Foreign tourists from various countries such as France, America, Germany and others come to my small shop to buy Armenian ceramics, which they see as part of the heritage of ancient civilizations in Palestine. But the Arabs and residents of Jerusalem have no interest in buying ceramics," he said.

He explained that the work is laborious, saying, "Several stages are involved in the making of Armenian ceramics. I start by drawing patterns on the piece, then I use coal for engraving or marking the ceramics. I move to the coloring stage. The completed ceramic piece is then displayed for everyone to see its beauty and glittering brilliance."

Antreassian said making Armenian ceramics gives him a sense of comfort and peace. His motifs are inspired by old Armenian manuscripts and Armenian decorative arts.

Antreassian is fluent in Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew and English, which he uses to speak with foreign customers. His shop is often filled with tourists. "I make various forms of ceramic pieces at different prices. The smallest pieces are sold for \$20, while large prices start at \$200 up to \$1,000," he said.

"In foreign countries, they use Armenian ceramics in various sculptures and decorative pieces, but mostly these are not very appealing. They are machine-made ceramics, not handcrafted. When visiting Jerusalem, foreigners rush to buy handmade Armenian ceramics reminiscent of old times."

Henrik Mkhitarian Helps Raise Funds for UNICEF

MANCHESTER, U.K. (Public Radio of Armenia) – Jose Mourinho and his Manchester United squad were out in force on Wednesday, November 15, as they attended the prestigious United for UNICEF Gala Dinner at Old Trafford. The 18th annual event raised \$212,000 (£160,000) for UNICEF.

All funds raised from this year's dinner will go towards UNICEF's work in Thailand, to support education programs for children with limited or no access to schooling. These children are among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children in Thailand. Many children in Thailand are denied access to education because of poverty, disability, gender discrimination and migrant status. UNICEF supports education for every child to provide them with the skills and knowledge to lead a better life and break the cycle of poverty for families, communities and countries.

Mourinho said: "I have always been very supportive of UNICEF, and my team and I are proud to once again be a part of this amazing event to support vulnerable children in Thailand. We have raised a fantastic amount of money tonight, which will help to support children with limited or no access to schooling, something that every child should, without question, have a right to."

Attending his first UNICEF dinner since joining United in July this year, Victor Lindelöf said: "It's going to be a fun night and it's always nice to



Henrik Mkhitarian at the UNICEF banquet

dress up a little bit, plus it's great to be a part of this, because UNICEF do great work with kids all over the world so yes, it feels good to be here."

Manchester United star and Armenia native Henrik Mkhitarian added: "It's very important for the kids; every child should have a good childhood, to learn how to read and to write, so I hope we can make a difference."

Mkhitarian then said in a Facebook post he's proud to be a UNICEF Ambassador.

Armenia national team captain Henrik Mkhitarian was appointed UN National Goodwill Ambassador on November 9, 2016. Together with UNICEF, Mkhitarian encourages Armenian families to get active and enable a fair chance for every child in the country with a focus on children's and young people's rights to get quality learning from early years and quality education in an inclusive environment.

Iraqi oil Minister Promises Fuel for Kurdistan Region

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region (Rudaw) – As temperatures drop in the mountainous Kurdistan Region, Iraq's oil ministry has guaranteed fuel deliveries to the four provinces.

"We will start providing 30 million liters of oil next week to the cities of Sulaimani, Erbil, Duhok and other cities in north Iraq," said Iraqi Oil Minister Jabbar al-Luaibi in a statement last week.

The decision by the Iraqi oil minister came after the Kurdistan Regional Government said that the central government was not sending as much medicine and fuel supplies as before. Iraq's health minister told his Kurdish counterpart on Wednesday that medical deliveries would resume and the reduction was not due to political relations between the two capitals.

Officials in the Kurdistan Region have said that its health infrastructure has been strained because of hundreds of thousands of displaced Iraqis who came for shelter during the ISIS war, and recently up to 150,000 displaced, mostly Kurdish, people from Kirkuk. "The ministry continues to provide heating oil to refugee camps and liberated areas in northern provinces," added Luaibi.

Erbil's economy has been heavily reliant upon oil revenues. Several oil fields previously under KRG control are now under Baghdad's.

Kurdish leaders have objected to Baghdad's recent use of "northern provinces," and see it as an affront against their people. The Kurdistan Region was guaranteed in the Iraqi constitution of 2005.

Community News

Columbia University to Host Conversation with IAGS President Theriault

NEW YORK — Dr. Henry Theriault, recently elected as president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS), will be part of a program on Thursday, November 30, at 7 p.m., on human rights violations around the world, the state of genocide studies today, genocide prevention, reparations, denial and more.

The event is titled “‘Impossible Harms’: A Conversation with Prof. Henry Theriault,” and will take place on., at 301 Pupin Hall, 538 West 120th Street (at Broadway), Columbia University.

The program is co-sponsored by the Armenian Center at Columbia University, the Institute for the Study of Human Rights, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, and the Research Institute on Turkey.

Theriault has served as founding co-editor of the peer-reviewed journal Genocide Studies International, chaired the Armenian Genocide Reparations Study Group and was lead author of its 2015 final report, and his autobiographical narrative, “Out of the Shadow of War and Genocide,” was included in Advancing Genocide Studies: Personal Accounts and Insights from Scholars in the Field (2015), edited by Samuel Totten. After 19 years on the faculty in the Philosophy Department at Worcester State, in 2017 he became associate vice president for academic affairs.

As a scholar who has been a leading voice among of genocide studies over the past decade and more, and now as President of the IAGS, a position to which he was elected in June 2017, Theriault is among those setting the agenda for genocide studies. In his inaugural address, he stated that “genocide studies has been at the forefront of recent human rights advances. ... Demagogues attack the sensibilities genocide studies engenders. Our work is a crucial challenge to their propaganda.”

For more information about this program, contact Prof. Khatchig Mouradian at km3253@columbia.edu or hq@naasr.org.

NAASR Christmas Open House to Feature Lecture By Dr. Marian Mesrobian MacCurdy

BELMONT, Mass. — A talk by Dr. Marian Mesrobian MacCurdy will highlight the 2017 NAASR Christmas Open House on Thursday, December 14, at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Center, 395 Concord Ave. The Open House will take place from 6 p.m. till 11 p.m. with a break at 7:30 for the lecture. Everything in the NAASR Bookstore will be 35-75 percent off.

The Armenians have suffered a personal and collective trauma born not only of genocide but also of its denial. Despite the military tribunals held after World War I, justice eluded the Armenians. The Turkish government has never acknowledged the truth of the Genocide and, on the contrary, adds exponentially to the trauma and continues to engage in active denial. This presentation focuses on how Operation Nemesis, resistance, and building community helped to counteract the inter-generational trauma of the unacknowledged Genocide.

Silence perpetuates trauma; exposing the truth lessens it, as can building community. This lecture will examine these issues in relation to the Armenian community in the US It will also look at resilience — what makes some people able to cope effectively even after multiple traumas, while others struggle. Action, even extra-legal action, can attenuate a trauma

see CHRISTMAS, page 9



At the Armenian Museum of America, from left, Michele Kolligian, Rosalyn Minassian, Armine Hovhannissian and Rachel Kaprielian

New Paths Bridging Armenian Women at First Year

BOSTON — New Paths-Bridging Armenian Women started over a cup of coffee while chatting with my friend and co-founder, Armine Hovhannissian. With technology and advancements in social media, we thought Armenian women have no “online” presence offered with absolutely no membership fees, an inclusive space for fragmented Armenian communities, a place where women may connect to share their stories, professional and personal experiences, setbacks and achievements. That was October 2016. It has been an

By Rosalyn Minassian

organically growing and ongoing learning experience for the Believing Committee of Volunteers since the initial cup of coffee. Should you wish to continue reading our story, you will quickly find majority of New Paths (NP) members to be from the New England area, yet thanks to Facebook (Closed Group Feature) we engage and connect with our sisters all over the world. Our success stories validate our vision and believing in the power of unity, we are bridging Armenian women.

On January 29, NP launched a kick-off event held and generously sponsored by Phinix Grill, Belmont, with Guest Speaker, Yn. Natasha Aljalian, an attorney and an active member of St. James Armenian Church, who also happens to be

see WOMEN, page 7



Inaugural meeting of New Paths, which featured Yn. Natasha Aljalian as speaker

Knights of Vartan Joins Effort to Teach Armenian Genocide in Public Schools

DETROIT — A Knights of Vartan delegation joined Gala dinner at the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum located in the St. John Armenian Church campus to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Museum as well as the 2016 landmark decision by the State of Michigan to teach the Holocaust and Armenian Genocide in public schools. Guests of honor were James and Ana Melikian of Scottsdale, Ariz., noted patrons of the arts, who were present to share their special exhibit “Celebrating and Preserving our Cultures” featuring selected Armenian and Jewish artifacts at the museum. The exhibit will remain open until January 15, 2018. This grand celebration and phenomenal dinner was hosted by The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum and Richard Manoogian, chairman of the Board of the Armenian Apostolic Society.

Guests included members from the American Armenian and Jewish communities as well as local dignitaries. The Knights of Vartan was well represented with Grand Commander Dr. Gary Zamanigian, Grand Secretary Richard Norsigian and Grand Treasurer Edward Bedikian in attendance. Nareg-Shavarshan Lodge members present were Past Commanders Paul Kulhanjian and David Terzibashian. Michigan State Rep. Klint Kesto was an honored guest as well as



Klint Kesto, left, with Dr. Gary Zamanigian

Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence. Representative Kesto was the sponsor of Michigan HB4493, passed and signed by Governor Rick Snyder in 2016, mandating that the Michigan high schools include in their curriculum (6-8) teach of the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust.

This bill, a victory for all Armenians, came to fruition through the perseverance of local activists that joined forces to present a united effort toward this goal. Members from the local chapter ANC (Armenian National Committee) along with members from local Armenian organizations including the Knights of Vartan, Armenian Assembly of America, the Armenian Research Center at U of M Dearborn, Tekeyan Cultural Association, the ADL and local Armenian Churches, joined together in 2015 to form the AGECE (Armenian Genocide Education Committee) to pursue this legislation. The project began when Knight and Past Commander David Terzibashian noticed an article in a local newspaper revealing that Kesto was working with a group to mandate the teaching of the Holocaust into Michigan high school curriculums. Requesting a meeting with Kesto, Knights and Past Commanders Bedikian, Kulhanjian and Terzibashian discovered that the Jewish metro Detroit community had a bill ready for submission. In conversation with Kesto, they also

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COMMUNITY NEWS

St. James Armenian Church Men's Club Dinner Meeting

WATERTOWN, Mass. — On Monday, December 4, St. James Armenian Church will host a Men's Club dinner meeting at the St. James Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center. The speaker will be Shushil K. Tuli.

Tuli has been one of the leading figures in lending and banking in Massachusetts for nearly 30 years. He founded Leader Bank in May of 2002, opening a single branch in East Arlington with seven employees and \$6.5 million in assets. He has guided Leader Bank to become one of the top community banks in the country, with well over 225 employees across seven full service branches and three loan production centers, and over \$1 billion in assets. During his time as president, chairman and CEO, Tuli has grown all facets of Leader Bank's business, with a particular focus on

retail banking, residential mortgages and both commercial and small business lending.

Tuli and Leader Bank have been repeatedly honored for their success over the last decade. Under Tuli's leadership, Leader Bank has received both a 5-Star Superior Rating from Bauer Financial in every quarter since 2010 and an "A" or "Excellent" rating from Weiss Ratings. In 2013, Banker & Tradesman named Tuli as a Community Bank Hero, and in 2015, the Boston Business Journal named him Leader in Diversity. Tuli also recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Tie-Boston for his work mentoring and supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses, and the 2015 President's Award from HomeStart, Inc., for his dedication to combating homelessness in Massachusetts.

Tuli's leadership extends beyond his work with Leader Bank, having served in 1999 as the Chairman of the Massachusetts Mortgage Bankers Association, the largest mortgage banking industry association in New England. Tuli is currently serving as a member of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's Community Depository Institution Advisory Council and the Massachusetts Home Ownership Advisory Committee. Governor Charles Baker also recently appointed Tuli to the Massachusetts Economic Development Council, and until recently, he also served on Fannie Mae's Affordable Housing Advisory Council.

Tuli is regularly interviewed and quoted regarding his experience in and knowledge of lending and banking in Massachusetts and nationwide, and has been the subject of per-



Shushil K. Tuli

sonal profiles in publications such as the Boston Globe and Banker & Tradesman.

The program will begin with a social hour and mezza at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15/person.

New Paths Bridging Armenian Women at First Year

WOMEN, from page 6

married to Rev. Arakel Aljalian. Natasha Aljalian spoke about the significance of uplifting one another as women, and the importance of educating, inspiring and empowering women in our community. She shared examples from her childhood to present day life, reconfirming the importance of women having helpful dis-

cussions with a circle of support.

Embracing the perks of social media, the group members have created a series of informative career oriented topics via Facebook Live Feed. From the comfort of their homes, members had opportunity to view a committee member, Araxi Postaljian discuss resume writing, best sources for job search and tips for inter-

viewing. The group was fortunate also to have guest speaker Rita Balian Allen, president of Rita B. Allen Associates, a national career management firm specializing in executive coaching and career development and author of the book titled *Personal Branding and Marketing Yourself*. Allen shared valuable insight from her book on the topic.

An on-line survey led by Lusine Hagopian Baghsarian, marketing professional and committee member, resulted in the number-one topic of interest: confidence. On May, a forum titled "Women Walking with Confidence" was sponsored and held at the Armenian Museum of America in Watertown. President of the Armenian Museum Board Michele Kolligian eloquently defined the group's mission: "New Paths-Bridging Armenian Women is a community for women of Armenian heritage to share personal and professional experiences in an unthreatening and supportive environment. Knowledge is power; I applaud Rosalyn Minassian and Armine Hovhannissian for developing this much-needed platform and initiative for Armenian women to share their stories, exchange ideas, offer advice and ultimately raise awareness in areas that otherwise may have been overlooked. Sharing the same cultural background is an added bonus."

Guest Speaker Kristin Asadourian, a professional life coach, went right to the core of the subject, it was an emotionally moving session packed with women from all walks of life and everyone left the evening more inspired and empowered. As one of NP's members shouted: "We have all been hungry for these types of events in our community!"

Keynote speaker Rachel Kaprielian, a former Massachusetts state representative, shared her experiences on the campaign trail and election. Leaving a lasting impression on attendees, the crowd was in awe of her courage and confidence. She said about the group: "New Paths has an almost magical quality to it. It's a group of smart, accomplished familiar 'khnemies' and the support we give and derive from one another is incredible. These are the women I want to know; in work, in my neighborhood, and in my circle of trust. I believe it will help us to accomplish great things as individuals, as a sisterhood and as a part of the larger community."

In September, to wrap up a year of live events, the group organized a program called "Hello Gorgeous," bringing together beauty experts. The significant theme to the event was three competing professionals in the same field can collaborate and be successful together. Close to a hundred women enjoyed learning about the importance in skin care from Arlene Maserejian, award-winning, LME CLT Licensed aesthetician owner of Blush Spa. Garineh Ashjian, makeup artist, owner of Glamour Cosmetics gave a tutorial about how to conceal dark circles and Ani Davtyan, a fellow makeup artist and owner of Makeup by Ani, taught those attending about formal evening makeup.

Siranush Hakobyan and Hasmik Tatian, owners of KaterArt in Rhode Island, generously catered the event. Artist Larisa Martino of Larisa Designs of Cranston, RI shared her beautiful works of art and Michele Kolligian hosted the event at the Armenian Museum.

Without support from strong and passionate women none of this would have been possible.

The Believing Committee Members also want to thank business donors, Accessory Designer, Anet Abnous of California, decorative dandle designer Susana Seropyan-Der Kosroffian, designer Karine Abgaryan and Ksenia Verdiyan, photographer of Verdi Studio.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian American Medical Association Boston Dinner Honors Dr. John Bilezikian

BOSTON — The Armenian American Medical Association of Greater Boston gathered on November 11 at the Hotel Commonwealth to celebrate the achievements of John P. Bilezikian, MD. Dr. Bilezikian, the Dorothy L. and Daniel H. Silberberg Professor of Medicine and Professor of Pharmacology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, is also the chief emeritus of the Division of Endocrinology and Director of the Metabolic Bone Diseases Program at the Columbia University Medical Center in New York.

Bilezikian served as the president of multiple societies including the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research and the International Society of Clinical Densitometry. He served as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, and senior associate editor of the *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research*.

He is the recipient of the Distinguished Physician Award of the Endocrine Society, the Frederic C. Bartter Award of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research

(ASBMR) for Excellence in Clinical Research, and the First Annual Global Leadership Award of the International Society of Clinical Densitometry. He has authored or co-authored over 800 manuscripts in prestigious medical journal, and published more than five books in the field of bone health.

Over the past 10 years, Bilezikian has been actively involved in promoting health care in Armenia, particularly in the field of endocrinology, osteoporosis, and bone health. He has been instrumental in bringing 10 bone densitometers to all the regions of Armenia and Artsakh over the past decade and making osteoporosis diagnosis and treatment a standard of care. In 2017, he was designated as visiting professor at Yerevan State Medical University. Bilezikian founded the Osteoporosis Center of Armenia, which had its grand opening in October 2017. While there in Yerevan, he led the 11th Annual International Osteoporosis Symposium.

During the gala dinner, the initial warm reception with scientist colleagues, admirers, and family members was followed by a program



Dr. John Bilezikian receives an Armenian tricolor tie from Dr. Armen Arslanian, with, from left, Dr. Armineh Mirzabegian, Dr. Rosalynn Nazarian (partially obscured), and Dr. Vatche Minassian.



From left: Drs. Ara and Rosalynn Nazarian, Dr. Armineh Mirzabegian, Drs. Shant and Reem Parseghian, Dr. John Bilezikian, Dr. and Mrs. Armen and Araz Arslanian, Dr. and Mrs. Vatche and Nathalie Minassian, and Dr. and Mrs. Raffi and Nanor Karagozian



Dr. John Bilezikian receives an award from Dr. Shant Parseghian, with, from left, Dr. Armineh Mirzabegian, Dr. Rosalynn Nazarian, Dr. Vatche Minassian and Dr. Armen Arslanian.

Knights of Vartan Joins Effort to Teach Armenian Genocide in Public Schools

EDUCATION, from page 6

discovered that he had been speaking with Lara Nercessian, an ANC representative, regarding the possibility of adding specifically the Armenian Genocide to the legislation. The Knights then contacted Nercessian to make this a united American-Armenian effort, thus the Armenian Genocide Education Committee (AGEC) was born and the task was begun. After much discussion the Jewish contingent agreed to add to their Bill "the Armenian Genocide," encouraged by the fact that in 2002, then Governor John Engler signed into law, Michigan Public Act 558 designating that April 24 of each year shall be the Michigan Day of Remembrance of the Armenian genocide of 1915-1923, and that the period beginning on

the Sunday before that day through the following Sunday shall be the Days of Remembrance, in memory of the victims of the genocide, and in honor of the survivors.

Seizing the opportunity at having both the Armenian and Jewish communities together at this event, Grand Commander Zamanigian asked the organizers if Kesto could be recognized for his efforts on behalf of both communities and they responded positively. Kesto was asked to say a few words on the importance of the legislation and a grateful audience responded with appreciative applause.

HB4493 is proof that a project may start with one person which can evolve to a committee of five persons which then becomes a movement in the community.

rich with inspiring speeches, including remarks from Dr. Aram Chobanian, President Emeritus of Boston University and Dean Emeritus of the Boston University School of Medicine. In addition to a song, *Ode to Johnny Bilezikian*, prepared by the latter and sang by Dr. Caroline Apovian, a cousin to Dr. Bilezikian, the evening included an inspiring musical performance by a string quartet composed of Naseem Alatrash (cello), Layth Sidiq (violin), Elinor Speirs (violin) and Dan Lay (viola).

Dr. Armen Arslanian provided welcoming remarks, Dr. Shant Parseghian served as the master of ceremonies and Dr. John Saryan, longtime chairman of the Scholarship Committee, announced three new scholarship recipients.

The proceeds from the event, including a silent auction and fundraising, went toward the Armenian medical student scholarship fund.



Dr. Aram Chobanian with Dr. Caroline Apovian, who is singing a song in honor of Dr. Bilezikian

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Cartoonist and Journalist Kasbarian Discusses Political Cartoons and the Armenian Cause



Lusine Kasbarian

NEW YORK – On Sunday, November 12, journalist and cartoonist Lucine Kasbarian delivered a talk titled “Armenians and Political Cartoons” at St. Illuminator’s Armenian Apostolic Cathedral. She presented a comprehensive survey of sharp-witted, insightful and thought-provoking work by diverse cartoonists spanning many eras in Armenian life – vivid proof of the old adages “the pen is mightier than the sword” and “a picture speaks 1000 words.”

At the conclusion of the presentation, Rev. Mesrob Lakissian, pastor of St. Illuminator’s, which co-sponsored the event with the Hamazkayin Armenian Educational & Cultural Society’s Eastern Regional Executive, obviously struck a chord with the audience when it responded with sustained applause to his comment, “I really learned something new today.”

The event began with introductions by Lakissian and Arevig Caprielian, chair of the Hamazkayin Eastern Regional Executive. Then Kasbarian took to the lectern, quickly demonstrating her mastery of the material, both in English and Western Armenian, as well as her passion for this art form in the proverbial toolbox of public persuasion.

In tandem with the images projected on the screen, she first described the origins of political cartooning with early examples from Europe and the United States. She outlined the history of cartooning among the Armenians, and showed examples of cartoons that Armenians and non-Armenians have been producing about the Armenian Cause and related subjects. Kasbarian also explained how she herself began creating political cartoons following the murder of Hrant Dink in 2007 and offered examples of her own work, some of which are in her newest book, *Perspectives from Exile*.

Drawing from hundreds of political cartoons in her collection, which she researched from an array of sources, Kasbarian spotlighted Armenian artists such as Alexander Saroukhan, Massis Araradian, Krikor Keusseyan, Vrej Kassouny, MediaLab artists and others, including herself. These examples dealt with such topics as Armenia-Diaspora relations, the presidential and parliamentary elections in

Armenia, the war in Artsakh, and corruption and domestic violence in Armenia.

She also featured the works of non-Armenians such as Khalil Bendib, Arend Van Dam, Carlos Latuff, Kaniwar Zidan and several others again, including Kasbarian herself, whose cartoons dealt with the Armenian Genocide, the megalomania of Turkish President Erdogan, Turkey’s support of ISIS and Turkey’s aspirations to join the EU.

Kasbarian went on to furnish examples from history of how satirical cartoons mobilized the people to act as agents for positive change. She pointed out that political leaders who abused their power have often persecuted cartoonists precisely because the latter’s satirical work was so successful in targeting and exposing these politicians.

When asked about public reactions to her political cartoons, Kasbarian said that the responses have been overwhelmingly positive. She noted that “sometimes, Diasporan Armenians – including writers and cartoonists producing works that are unflinchingly critical of the Armenian government – are called ‘too critical’ of a still-fledgling nation 26 years after asserting its independence from Soviet rule.” Even so, Kasbarian said that the sentiments coming out of Armenia by its citizens, writers, and particularly the cartoonists shown during this presentation, “are often far more unapologetically critical of their government than we in the Diaspora are.”

In addition to her new book, *Perspectives from Exile*, Kasbarian has produced the award-winning books *Armenia: A Rugged Land, an Enduring People* and *The Greedy Sparrow: an Armenian Tale*. She was also a consulting editor and contributor for a special publication called *The Armenian-Americans*. Kasbarian is a graduate of the NYU Journalism program and studied cartooning at the NY School of Visual Arts.

Kasbarian has already presented a modified version of “Armenians and Political Cartoons” to students in the metropolitan New York and Boston areas and is currently planning subsequent presentations in other venues.

The Pastor and Parish Council of
St. James Armenian Apostolic Church
cordially invite parishioners and friends to the

ST. JAMES 86TH ANNIVERSARY NAME DAY BANQUET AND CELEBRATION

Sunday, December 17, 2017

His Eminence Abp. Khajag Barsamian, Primate
Presiding

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Parishioner of the Year

NISHAN & MARGRIT ATINIZIAN
Diocesan St. Vartan Award Recipients

10 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Name Day Banquet to follow. Keljik Hall.
St. James’ Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center

\$45 per person. \$10 for children 12 and under.

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Advance Reservations Required. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

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NAASR Christmas Open House to Feature Lecture By Dr. Marian Mesrobian MacCurdy

CHRISTMAS, from page 6

response, especially if it results in self-protection or perceived justice. This is one of the key contributions that the Operation Nemesis narrative has made to Armenian culture – resistance can counter not only the effects of oppression but also the sense of victimhood. The act of resistance itself can be therapeutic to survivors.

MacCurdy is retired professor and chair of the Department of Writing at Ithaca College, and currently visiting professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She has published scholarly articles, personal essays and poetry in such journals as *Raft*, the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, and the *Journal of Teaching Writing*. She is the author of *Sacred Justice: The Voices and Legacy of the Armenian Operation Nemesis*, as well as *The Mind’s Eye: Image and Memory in Writing About Trauma* (2007) and *Writing and Healing: Toward An Informed Practice*, with co-editor Charles Anderson (2000).

Read News in Armenian at:





COMMUNITY NEWS

Muratsan Oncology Clinic Doctors Visit Boston Area

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — This September, two doctors from the Muratsan Chemotherapy Clinic in Yerevan, specializing in pediatric cancers, came to Boston, where they met with local members of the community at a gathering at Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

American Veterans of the Corporal Paul Marsoubian Post presented the hospital with a check for \$10,000.

Speaking at the program were doctors Liana Safaryan and Gevorg Tamamyan.

One of the volunteers raising funds for the hospital who was present at the program was Vaughan Krikorian, 12, the grandchild of Cynthia Kazanjian. Last year he raised \$2,000 for the clinic, while this year, so far, he has raised \$1,000.

It was his question, "What are we going to do about this?" that began the journey to raise the money for the clinic while the family was visiting Armenia as part of a tour organized by the Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

He told the audience about seeing children his age or younger who had hair loss, needles in their arms, bedridden and too sick to pick up their heads, and the impression they made on him. The guests that evening were so touched by his presentation. They were amazed at his comfort level, holding a microphone

and speaking with such a genuine nature, to the group. Many of the attendees donated that evening.

It was after that presentation that George Haroutunian came to the front of the room and talked about the Armenian American

physician and also holds a doctorate.

There was a representation of clergy at the event as well: Rev. Mampre Kouzouian, pastor emeritus of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Rev. Vasken Kouzouian, Pastor at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Deacon Levon Asdourian, Intern at Holy Trinity (in a separate picture with Arpie Kouzouian) newly ordained minister, Joseph Garabedian, First Armenian Church.

Kazanjian will be meeting with Dana Farber officials in December to tie up loose ends and determine how the funds will be forwarded to Muratsan Chemotherapy Clinic.



Patients from the Muratsan Oncology Clinic including Anahit (Leukemia) who celebrated her 5th birthday, and Anahit Davit, age 12

The doctors were invited by Cynthia Kazanjian and came to visit area hospitals as well as raise funds for their clinic.

So far, the hospital has raised a total of \$30,000 in Massachusetts this year.

During the September program, Armenian



Cynthia Kazanjian, with her grandson, Vaughan Krikorian



Doctors from the Muratsan Center, Liana Safaryan and Gevorg Tamamyan, with Cynthia Kazanjian



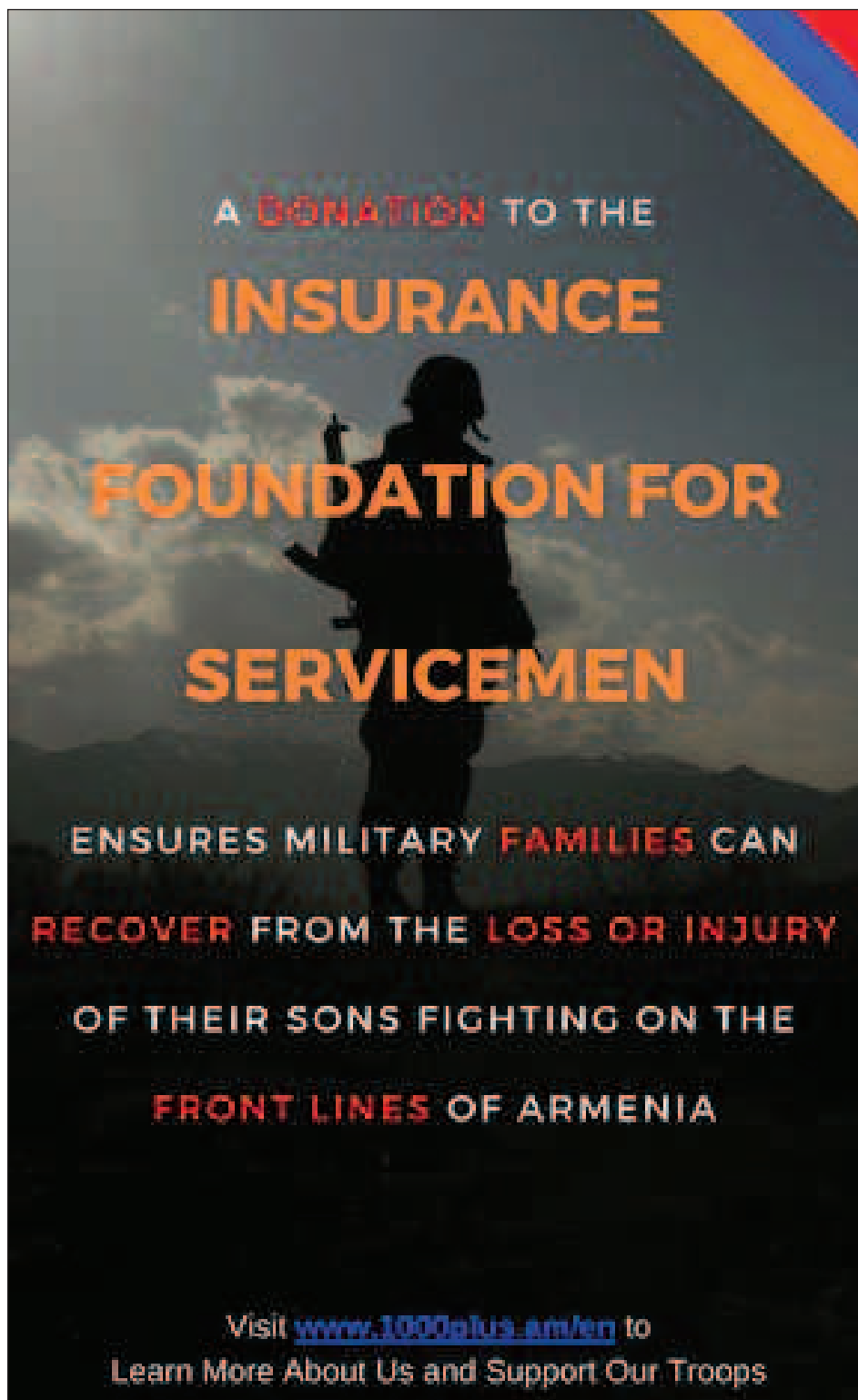
Vaughan Krikorian, and his father, Neil, take donations for the center.



Armenian-American veterans from the Corp. Paul Marsoubian Post presented a check for \$10,000. From left, Edward Sahagian, Rev. Mampre Kouzouian, Jerry Boghosian, George Haroutunian, Cynthia Kazanjian, Gerald Boghosian and Rev. Vasken Kouzouian

Veterans (AMVETS). He told the audience that he had come with a blank check, that his fellow veterans agreed, unanimously, to donate and that he had their approval of \$10,000 for a worthy cause. He wrote the check after listening to the Doctors from Armenia and Dr. Leslie Lehmann the Clinical Director of the Pediatric Stem Cell Transplant Center at Dana-Farber/Boston Children's Cancer and Blood Disorder Center.

Safaryan is an Oncologist at Muratsan and assistant professor of oncology at Yerevan State Medical University. Tamamyan is a





Rhode Island Armenian Historical Association Dedicates Main Gallery

By Joyce Yeremian and Martha Jamgochian

PROVIDENCE — On Saturday, October 21, the Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island (AHARI) formally dedicated its main gallery in memory of Mantoohe and Tateos

Heditsian, as bequeathed by their daughter, Corrine Heditsian. This was a follow-up to the grand opening of the museum which took place on May 13.



58th Annual Trinity Christmas Bazaar

Friday, December 1 12 noon-9 pm
Saturday, December 2 10 am-7 pm

Delicious Armenian Dinners

Lamb Shish, Losh, Chicken Kebab
 (combo dinners available)

served

Friday, December 1, 12 noon-7:30 pm
Saturday, December 2, 11:30 am-6:00 pm

Take-out meals and A La Carte Menu Available
 Optional Seating for Families with Children Available

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Armenian Gourmet Foods, Delicacies and Pastries

Choreg, Braids, Paklava, Bourma, Nut and Cream Khadayif, Apricot Squares, Simit, Spinach Boreg, Tourshi, Manti, Puff Pastry Cheese Boreg, Yalanchi, Vospov Kheyma, Homemade String Cheese, Rojik, Bastegh, Soujouk, Sini and Porov Kufta, Boyajian Oils, and much more!

Booths and Vendors

Abundant Farmer's Market, Country Store, Candy Emporium, Poinsettias and Wreaths, Jewelry and Accessories, Sweet Tooth Booth, The Punch is Right Game, Exciting Silent/Sports Silent Auction, KEZI Jewelry, Armenianvendor.com, Purl Leez Jewels, Raffles, and more!

Activities for Children

Peter Adamian Hall, Admission is Free

Friday, December 1, 7:00 pm-9:00 pm
The Polar Express Pajama Party

Saturday, December 2, 11:00 am
Curious Creatures

An interactive live animal show for children of all ages

Visit with Santa

and have your photo taken too!

Saturday, December 2
1:00 pm-2:00 pm

Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall



Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston

145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA • 617.354.0632 • www.htaac.org



The dedication program began with a blessing by Rev. Kapriel Nazarian of Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church. Ramon Zorabedian, AHARI chairperson and program MC, spoke about the genesis of the AHARI organization in 1997 and the role that Corrine Heditsian played in its development. Heditsian was the second chair of the organization. She was fully committed to its mission and that of Heritage Harbor of which AHARI was a member. She and AHARI's first chairperson, Varoujan Karentz, became members of the Heritage Harbor governing board.

A little-known fact regarding Tateos Heditsian is that he was friends with Colonel Everitte St. John Chaffee of the Rhode Island State Troopers. Chaffee approached Tateos in 1925 to design the current uniform for the RI State Police. Heditsian then measured each trooper and hand sewed each uniform as needed. A fully uniformed RI State Trooper was on hand so that the program attendees could see the commanding and famous uniform of the troopers which has not changed over the years.

Corrine's brother, Manoog Heditsian, noted that Corrine Heditsian was a very idealistic person, something she got from her parents. Ted Avedisian, Corrine's nephew, reiterated this, remembering her steadfast commitment to AHARI and Heritage Harbor.

Aram Garabedian made remarks complimenting AHARI and its work and donated \$1,000 so that the organization may continue the work of the museum.

AHARI took this occasion to also thank another museum benefactor, Marilyn Woloohojian, regarding new additions to the gallery, including art works by Providence-born Armenian artist, Karnig Nalbandian. Woloohojian made special mention of receiving



Marilyn Woloohojian

about his upcoming book that documents the early Armenian immigrants to America.

AHARI Board Member Martha Jamgochian discussed the on-going activities at the museum including a genealogy sub-committee which is chaired by Margaret Chevian and co-chaired by Janet Evans Houser. A multi-faceted approach to genealogy is used that includes helping individuals

find information about their ancestors and special projects ranging from building a database specific to Rhode Island to collecting family histories and researching family memoirs.

A variety of committees continue to be formed at the museum. Areas of interest are web maintenance, marketing assistance, artifact categorization and documentation and other related areas for

which there are volunteer opportunities.

The public is invited to tour the museum on Saturdays from noon to 3 p.m. as well as by appointment. The current exhibit includes sculptures and a sculpted relief of Palou by Donabed Cheteyan. Graphite drawings and ceramics by Providence native Karnig Nalbandian, priest's vestments, lace and other handwork, Near East Relief posters, mementos and photographs are also on display.

The museum is located in the Bliss Building, 245 Waterman Street in Providence, RI Suite 204. For more information visit armenianhistorical-ri.org



Guests and attendees at the program

a copy of the second novel by William Saroyan from Nalbandian that she later had signed by Saroyan himself in Boston.

A surprise guest was Hayk Demoyan, the former director of Tsitsernakaberd - the Genocide Museum and Institute in Yerevan. He is studying and teaching at Harvard this year under a Fulbright Scholarship. His remarks covered getting young people involved in their heritage and culture. Demoyan noted that next year is a landmark year marking the 400th Anniversary of Martin the Armenian visiting the state of Virginia; he was the first known Armenian to have landed in America. Attendees were told



DETROIT — Recently, students from A.G.B.U. Alex and Marie Manoogian School's automotive engineering class met with Bill Ford, executive chairman of Ford Motor Company. The meeting at Ford Field was facilitated by the Detroit Economic Club and gave the students the ability to ask Ford questions regarding the automotive industry. Mary Rose Azar, a student who participated in the meeting, said, "Mr. Ford discussed how rapidly accelerating advances in technology are disrupting industries and how his company is addressing the change."

Arts & Living

A Century Of Spring

Bayara Aroutunova-Manusevitch at 101

By Sonia Ketchian

BELMONT, Mass. — On November 1, 2017, Dr. Bayara Aroutunova-Manusevitch turned 101 in her beautifully appointed home. Born in 1916 to a Russified Armenian family in Novyi Nakhichevan (New Nakhichevan, now in Rostov, where in 1778 Catherine II forcibly relocated over 200,000 Armenians from Crimea), she was named after her maternal grandmother Bayar.

“Bahar,” the little girl was told, in Armenian means “spring” that she must always youthfully emulate.

Bayara’s father, Haroutun Haroutunian, born in Karabakh, from age 6 was educated in the family of a wealthy Anglicized relative, Ekizler, who financed the bright lad’s entire education: gymnasium, the exclusive Lazarev Institute in Moscow, and study of engineering in Paris. In Paris Haroutun met Kristina



Bayara Aroutunova-Manusevitch at her retirement

Iablokova (Khndzarian) of a cultured Russified Armenian family, whose wealthy great-grandfather had attained Russian nobility. Educated at the Rostov Gymnasium, Kristina moved to Moscow for the Higher Women’s Courses of Guerrier (3 years). Kristina was traveling in France with her fellow student friend Aleksandra (Asia) Ekster, later a world famous Russian artist, whose gifted paintings and decorated boxes little Bayara liked to “improve upon,” to Kristina’s chagrin. Married in 1913, Kristina and Haroutun’s happy family life was immersed in music, books, and art, and vacations in Crimea.

At Rostov University, Bayara graduated with high honors (1935-39) and in 1940 was admitted for a master’s degree in linguistics at the Rostov Pedagogical Institute, where she completed her examinations in two years, and wrote her dissertation, but World War II disrupted its defense. Well before the war, however, tragedy and suffering shook their idyllic family. In 1937 Haroutun Haroutunian, now a prominent engineer, was arrested as an “enemy of the people” by the NKVD, and sentenced to 10 years “without the right to correspond,” which meant immediate execution. His parting words to Bayara were, “Complete your education.” Six months later Kristina was arrested, see BAYARA, page 15



Ryan Tedder of OneRepublic performs as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)

Inaugural ‘Promise’ Award Celebrated with Emotional Tribute to Chris Cornell

LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Committee of Human Rights Watch had their most successful fundraising dinner to date, raising more than every year prior.

The event, which took place on November 14 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, had an immense amount of celebrities and influential people in attendance including Eric Esrailian, Serj Tankian, Angela Sarafyan, Kimberly Marteau Emerson, Mike Medavoy, David Foster, Katherine McPhee, and Linda Ramone. The program also introduced the inaugural Promise Award, followed by a special performance by Ryan Tedder and Drew Brown of OneRepublic.

Inspired by the film and song that powerfully depicted the atrocities committed against the Armenian people; the award recognizes an outstanding song, television show, or film that advances the values of equity and justice in an original and

Ryan Tedder of OneRepublic Performs *The Promise* to Standing Ovation

see TRIBUTE, page 13



Matt Cameron, Vicky Cornell and Kim Thayil (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)

ALMA Presents Two Lectures on November 30 On Armenian Art and Culture

WATERTOWN — The Armenian Museum of America (ALMA), 65 Main St., offers two talks at its third floor gallery on Thursday, November 30 at 7.30 p.m.

One of the lectures will be by Dr. Helen C. Evans, a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The Metropolitan Museum of Art will host Armenia, a major exhibition on medieval Armenian art, from September 21, 2018 until January 13, 2019 and will borrow illuminated manuscripts from the ALMA collection for the show. Armenians are well aware of being the people originating at the base of Mt. Ararat who would become the first Christian nation. Armenians, and non-Armenians, are often less aware of the diversity of Armenian art and culture developed during their medieval centuries as Armenians spread from their homeland to become powerful on trade routes that would extend across the globe. Dr. Evans will discuss how the exhibition



Dr. Helen Evans

Armenia will demonstrate the Christianization of Armenia, the development of Armenian art in the Middle Ages and its importance to the art of the world.

Evans is the Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator for Byzantine Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her dissertation on Cilician Armenian manuscript illumination has led to the museum’s upcoming exhibition Armenia that will focus on the medieval centuries of Armenian art and culture. It will be held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art from September 21, 2018 – January 13, 2019. Previously Dr. Evans co-curated the Morgan Library and Museum’s 1994 exhibition, Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts. At the Metropolitan Museum she curated “The Glory of Byzantium” (843-1261) in 1997 and “Byzantium: Faith and Power” (1261-1557) in 2004 that included major works of Armenian art. Both were recognized by the *New York Times*, *Apollo Magazine* and others as among the most important cultural events of their years. Armenian art is now installed in the Met’s permanent medieval galleries as an important East Christian culture. As the Nikit and Elenora Ordjanian Visiting Professor of Armenian Studies, Evans has taught courses on Armenian art at Columbia University and published widely on Armenian topics. She is president of the International Center for Medieval Art (ICMA) and immediate past-president of the

see ALMA, page 16



ARTS & LIVING

Inaugural 'Promise' Award Celebrated with Emotional Tribute

TRIBUTE, from page 12

powerful way. Fittingly, the inaugural honor was awarded to the late legendary singer and songwriter Chris Cornell in recognition of his song, *The Promise*. The award was presented by the producers of "The Promise" Eric Esrailian, Mike Medavoy, writer/director Terry George, and singer/songwriter, human rights activist and composer Serj Tankian. Chris Cornell's wife, Vicky Cornell, accepted the award on his behalf and was accompanied by Cornell's bandmates, Kim Thayil and Matt Cameron of Soundgarden.

Pioneering recording artist Chris Cornell, who died in May, wrote the title song for the film, "The Promise," the first major film about the Armenian Genocide. The song and its video



Eric Esrailian and Angela Sarafyan (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)



Ryan Tedder and Drew Brown of OneRepublic perform as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)

compellingly weave the Genocide with humanitarian crises of today. The song focuses on courage, perseverance, and hope. Cornell donated all proceeds from the song to benefit refugees and children, and his song continues to inspire millions as an anthem for the human rights movement.

"We are proud to name this award after *The Promise*, and present the inaugural award to Chris Cornell's inspiring song," stated Justin

Connolly, Director of Human Rights Watch's Los Angeles Committee.

Following the award, songwriter, Grammy Award-winning record producer, and OneRepublic front man Ryan Tedder honored the late Soundgarden lead by performing an acoustic version of *The Promise* with bandmate Drew Brown to a standing ovation.

Tedder is an in-demand hit songwriter, a Grammy-winning record producer and the

charismatic lead singer, multi-instrumentalist and main writer of the Grammy-nominated band OneRepublic. Beyond the success of OneRepublic, Tedder simultaneously established himself as a musical force, writing and/or producing tracks for an impressive roster of artists including: Beyoncé, Adele, Leona Lewis, Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran, U2, Ariana Grande, Maroon 5 and many more of music's biggest names.



Kim Thayil, Serj Tankian and Linda Ramone pose together as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA. (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)



Angela Sarafyan and Karbis Sarafyan arrive as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA. (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)



From left, Terry George, Rina George, Melina Esrailian and Eric Esrailian pose together as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA. (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)



Terry George and Eric Esrailian pose together as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA. (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)



Justin Connolly and Mike Medavoy pose together as Human Rights Watch presents the Voices For Justice Annual Gala on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA. (Photo: Benjamin Shmikler/ABImages)



ARTS & LIVING

Valentina Amirayan (Arnaud) ... ‘Nightingale of the Nile’

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Research always yields many surprises. While researching Diaspora Armenian film professionals and the history of Armenian presence in China, and contacting the American-born director-actor Edwin Gerard, I found out he is the grandson of the Armenian-Egyptian singer/actress Valentina Amirayan, familiar to me, who turned out to be the wife of another Armenian national media figure who lived in China, Haig Assadourian.

We asked Edwin Gerard to send information about his grandmother – articles, newspaper clippings (some of them with illegible dates of publication, however, whose accuracy is indisputable), and the result was a portrait of Valentina Amirayan, (née Maria Hortensia Ophelia Nedda Arnaud, 1901, Constantinople – 1971, Los Angeles).

Valentina is unique in the history of Armenian Diasporan culture in that only one of her parents was Armenian (from her mother's side); yet Valentina contributed greatly to promoting Armenian art throughout the world. Her father was Italian, Nicolai Michele Arnaud, of Sardo-Piemontese origin, reportedly born of a noble family. Her mother was a Constantinople Armenian, Akabi Hamamdjian. Valentina and her parents moved to Cairo. The first documentary evidence of her presence in the Egyptian capital is from ca. 1920.

Here Valentina married Stepan Zarmayr Amirayan, a native of Smyrna. They had a daughter, Alida, born in Cairo in 1921.

Valentina was a student of Professor Cantoni, composer and founder of the Musical Lyceum of Cairo. Throughout the 1920s, she participated in numerous concerts performed by his students, featuring works by her teacher along with favorite Armenian works. Still young and musically gifted, she appeared in many theatrical events in the Armenian community of Cairo. She was especially acclaimed in Tigranyan's opera "Anoush." As the journalist O. M. (code-named) wrote: "Mrs. Amirayan was the main figure of performance, who shone in her part from beginning to end and was the grace of the opera with her charming singing and beautiful acting. Particularly impressive was Mrs. Amirayan's song where she was telling on Dervish's curse" (The staging of "Anoush," *Arev* Armenian daily, Cairo, May 29, 1925). The same newspaper also spoke about a performance she gave in Alexandria: "As about the actors, it must be said Mrs. Amirayan's role brought her much acclaim. Her sweet voice and gentle movements communicated the pain and suffering of poor Anoush" ("The production of 'Anoush' in Alexandria, *Arev*, May 18, 1925).



On one of her trips from Egypt to Shanghai on the Japanese steamer "Harun Maru," she happened to meet and became acquainted with the famous American film producer Cecil B. de Mille.

ful acting. Particularly impressive was Mrs. Amirayan's song where she was telling on Dervish's curse" (The staging of "Anoush," *Arev* Armenian daily, Cairo, May 29, 1925). The same newspaper also spoke about a performance she gave in Alexandria: "As about the actors, it must be said Mrs. Amirayan's role brought her much acclaim. Her sweet voice and gentle movements communicated the pain and suffering of poor Anoush" ("The production of 'Anoush' in Alexandria, *Arev*, May 18, 1925).

On August 9, 1925 a great concert was held at the at the San Stefano casino. The concert was directed by Edgardo Bonomi, featuring soloist Valentina Amirayan. Schubert's *Tragic Symphony* and Rimsky-Korsakov's great Russian *Easter Overture*, were also on the program, along with Amirayan performing solo arias from Puccini's "Manon Lescaut" and Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana," and selected works by the Armenian composer Komitas.

In 1927, she gave a recital of Armenian, French and Italian songs, including an aria from Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro." "It should be noted that starting with the first Mozart aria from 'Figaro,' followed by eight or nine other pieces and culminating with P. Ganachian's *Olor*, Mrs. Amirayan maintained the same



Valentina Amirayan (Amy Rayan) in her prime

level of freshness and immediacy throughout," according to "S" in the Cairo Armenian newspaper *Lusardzak*, December 26, 1927.

In 1930, she performed the role of Gylchora in Hajibekov's popular operetta "Arshin Mal Alan." Here in Cairo, *Arax* weekly wrote in its June 14 publication: "The performance was a success thanks to Amirayan's naturally poignant voice, holding the audience at rapt attention till the end. Her rendition of Sirouhis ('My Sweetheart') drove the public's heart into a world of dreams. After the highly talented artist sang A. Aharonian's *The Father's House*, she found herself surrounded by an outburst of endless, thunderous applause..."

The piece continues, "Amirayan, known as the 'Nightingale of the Nile,' is an Armenian-Egyptian soprano. The king of Egypt has invited this truly unique personality to be present on stage in his palace theatre. She has also performed in Sudan and won high praise in the English-language press of Khartoum." These articles have been published in translation by the French media in Cairo.

"The multi-talented singer-actress, who uses the stage name Amy Rayan, was approached by an Egyptian film company to star in 'Wonderland Park' and 'His Holiness C.' After a three-month run of these films, contract in hand, our talented compatriot plans to leave for America. We are confident that Mrs. Amirayan's captivating personality and charming voice will, before long, become known to millions of film fans. Her name will once again bring the glory of our artists to the world, as the names of [American filmmaker] Rouben Mamoulian and [French film actor] Max Maxudian," according to the *Arax* newspaper article, entitled "Mrs. Valentina Amirayan's brilliant future." The actress first went to Paris to attend the French Film artists' festival and received press attention there. "It was a pleasure to hear the Egyptian singer Amy Rayan's vast and impressive repertoire. She conveyed the melodious arias with her own sense of authority" (*Ciné Comédie* newspaper and *Eus écouté* magazine wrote. "Amy Rayan, a name still unknown in Paris... a young Egyptian, with a wonderful, lyric soprano voice. The 'Mon Club Association' of Women revealed her last week. Among other talents, Amy Rayan sings in nine languages. She performs equally well, in Greek, works from the Greek operetta "Haji Apastoloni," Richard Strauss's *Serenade* in German, *Musetta's Waltz* from "La Bohème" in Italian, Joaquin Valverde's *Clavelitos* in Spanish, and Margaret Monnot's *Viens dans mes bras*, in French. 'La Claque,' the official Paris Cinema Club, predicted that the artistic "young and beautiful Egyptian Artist Miss Amy Rayan will be the star of the film company in the near future."

Indeed, Amy Rayan went off to Paris in 1933 and then to the US where she acted in several films (she played a supporting role of Gypsy in the 1933 film "I Loved a Woman" by Alfred E. Green starring Edward G. Robinson), but did not reach stardom. An Armenian-American writer described her as a middle-aged woman, a gifted lady with "natural grace." If Armenians attached the same importance to "social life" that Americans do, they would have described in further detail the

honorable lady's wardrobe and manners. Nevertheless, they admitted that she was of a lovely origin, with a delicate disposition, a sweet and soft-spoken, gifted young lady. Even if she were not willing to reveal her identity, no one would have doubted that she is of Armenian origin." (The author of the article was certainly unaware that the actress was half Italian).

When Valentina Amirayan returned to Egypt, she was introduced to a businessman, former boxing champion of Egypt, Haig Assadourian (1901, Heliopolis – 1987, Los Angeles). After her divorce, she married the handsome, energetic Assadourian. In 1934, they moved permanently to Shanghai, China. Valentina not only brought along her daughter Alida, but her sister Augusta, along with Augusta's husband Yervant Hamamdjian, leaving behind her first husband Stepan Amirayan. On one of her trips from Egypt to Shanghai on the Japanese steamer "Harun Maru," she happened to meet and became acquainted with the famous American film director Cecil B. de Mille, who invited her to try out for the role of Cleopatra in his upcoming production. But Valentina never played Cleopatra. She was waiting for a different life ...

Established in Shanghai, her husband Haig Assadourian became one of China's film and sports magnates. He belonged to the Shanghai "Metropolitan Films" company and co-produced the "Sand Locusts." He founded and directed Jai Alai stadiums in Shanghai, Tientsin and Manila (Philippines). Assadourian was an important player in the Chinese-Armenian community, making generous donations to national institutions. The press, however, is silent on how Valentina occupied herself while in China.

Just prior to the breakout of World War II, and for years to come, China was occupied by the Japanese government. Valentina's husband was arrested by the Japanese in Manila, Philippines, "for secretly helping US and allied powers in Europe." Declared an enemy of Japan, he, Valentina and their daughter Alida were interned in the Santo Tomas Interment Camp from 1942 to 1945. There, Valentina was almost at the point of starving to death in the final year of her imprisonment and was on her deathbed when the camp was liberated by the Americans. After one year, the Americans offered them US citizenship, and the family moved to Los Angeles where she lived



A story about her in *Savarnak* newspaper



Valentina Amirayan (Amy Rayan) was featured in French publications during her visit to that country.



Another feature on the young Valentina Amirayan (Amy Rayan)

until her death at age 70.

Her artistic talents have been inherited by her grandson, actor, director, and playwright Edwin Gerard (née Vartan Hamamdjian, born 1948), who has performed dozens of roles in Los Angeles, Paris, and throughout Europe.



ARTS & LIVING

A Century Of Spring: Bayara Aroutunova-Manusevitch at 101

BAYARA, from page 12

and fortunately released in nine months; Bayara could not recognize the old emaciated woman who came to the door as Kristina. In the meantime, in this despondent situation, Bayara appreciated the moral strength and love of her brilliant sympathetic professor Georgii Gaevsky, but their marriage was short-lived when in February 1941 he was arrested and executed.

During World War II, Bayara and Kristina ended up in Germany as “house servants” to one of Kristina’s long-established brothers. Their living nightmares would gradually come to an end. In December 1952, with US help, Bayara arrived in New York, where she received a stipend to continue her education in the graduate program of her choice. In 1953, her choice fell on Harvard’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures with world-renowned luminaries Roman Jakobson and Mikhail Karpovich. Kristina and Bayara were re-united in 1954, and permanently in 1956 thanks to the efforts of then Sen. John F. Kennedy. Mother and daughter rejoiced as Bayara defended her PhD dissertation titled “Linguistic and Stylistic Problems of Word Order in Modern Russian” in 1958 with Jakobson as her main advisor. The department invited her to remain, and therefore Bayara Aroutunova became a tenured senior lecturer for 30 productive years teaching impeccable Russian Stylistics, Advanced Russian and Literature in Russian until her retirement in 1987. A great asset to the department with her superb vibrant intelligence, stupendous Russian, articulated in her beautiful voice and intonation, fine training, dedicated teaching, vivacious genial personality and superior elegance, Bayara prepared many of the lucky best American specialists in Russian language and literature.

Finding Love Again

Bayara and Victor Manusevitch fell in love at the Slavic Department where he was studying



Bayara Aroutunova-Manusevitch surrounded by family

Russian literature and was continuing toward his PhD.

However, the multitasking Manusevitch already was an accomplished violinist in the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitzky. He and Bayara had much in common; they loved hospitality, enjoyed many illustrious friends, music, literature, art. Together they purchased their Belmont home, enjoyed their life of concerts, art, socializing with many friends, built their own summer place in Stockbridge, (Bayara made corrections to their architect’s vision, so the amazed architect asked if he could use her ideas; she agreed but rejected payment), near the BSO summer home in Lenox, Tanglewood.

In his youth in Leningrad Victor had met the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova at a friend’s gathering. They had sat chatting on a sofa, but Victor told me he now wished he had asked cer-

tain questions. As a scholar, Bayara researched in the Vatican archives and in cities of Europe, but never returned to visit the Soviet Union that had shattered her life, depriving her of a happy youth and her adored father and much-lamented first husband Georgii Gaevsky.

Meeting a Mentor

In 1965, I met Bayara Artemevna at the Slavic Department as a neophyte graduate student who came to greatly admire this elegant, beautiful, sophisticated talented scholar and instructor for her knowledge, love of culture and life (“Liubliu krasivo zhit”)—I love to live beautifully—I heard her say). Being a native speaker of Russian, I was never her student (my loss), but did substitute for her when she was hospitalized years ago. Bayara values friendships, the longer the better, and goes out of her way for friends.

Never to be forgotten was the time I was teaching at Dartmouth College and at my initiative we invited Bayara to come to lecture in Russian on a topic of her choice. She spoke on Solzhenitsyn to a mesmerized audience of students of Russian and faculty and entertained questions in Russian to an energized audience. The next year my students wanted me to invite Bayara again. “What will my chairman think? He will not believe it was not my idea to invite Bayara again. I won’t.”

My students assured me, “You’ll do it because you like us!”

My chairman, Richard Sheldon, was happy to accommodate the initiative of the students by inviting Bayara for a repeat magnificent presentation, this time on the poetry of Boris Pasternak.

Bayara participated in national and international conferences and published articles on Gogol, Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Pasternak and others. Her first book, *Lives in Letters: Princess Zinaida Volkonskaya and Her Correspondence* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1994), recently appeared in Russian translation. Her memoir, *Nedavno proshedshee* (Recently past) was published in Russia in 2014, co-edited with Alla Mymbaeva.

Much appreciated by her former students and colleagues, Bayara was acknowledged with a *Festschrift: Studies Presented to Bayara Aroutunova* (Eds. A.L. Crone and Catherine Chvany. Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1987). It features my article among the contributions.

Happy Birthday to Bayara Aroutunova Manusevitch whose youthful spirit and love of humanity have turned adversity and tragedy into successful intellectual service to students, scholarship, colleagues, friends, family, and her adopted United States.

(Sonia I. Ketchian teaches at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies,



by Christine Vartanian Datian

Lentil Stew with Vegetables

INGREDIENTS

1 1/3 cups dried green or brown lentils, washed and rinsed
5-6 cups water or low-salt beef, chicken or vegetable broth
2 medium zucchini, sliced or diced
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
2 stalks celery (plus tops), diced
1 medium baking potato, leave peeling on, diced
1 (16 oz.) can stewed tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, minced
Sea or Kosher salt, black pepper, dried cumin, marjoram, oregano, thyme
2 tablespoons white or brown rice
Juice of 1/2 lemon or 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
1 bay leaf
Fresh chopped parsley, crushed red pepper flakes
Olive oil, lemon wedges

PREPARATION:

In large pot, bring the water or broth to a full boil and add the lentils. Stir and cook for 10 minutes on medium heat.

Add the zucchini, carrots, celery, potato, tomatoes, garlic, spices, rice, lemon juice, and bay leaf. Stir, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 45-55 minutes or until lentils and vegetables are tender.

Add more water or broth if the stew becomes too thick. Check seasonings and stir occasionally to prevent from sticking.

Remove bay leaf a few minutes before serving. Serve with red pepper flakes, chopped parsley, and lemon wedges. Drizzle with olive oil if desired.

Serves 4-6.

*Garbanzo beans, or chickpeas, black, navy, pinto, lima and fava beans are all excellent choices to substitute for the lentils in this recipe. Diced or shredded cooked lamb, chicken or beef may be added to this recipe.

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

Science and Faith Unite in ‘Tomb of Christ’ Exhibit

By Nora Hamerman

WASHINGTON — There is no more sacred place in Christianity than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. And now you can visit it — virtually, anyway — here in the nation’s capital at the interactive “Tomb of Christ” exhibit of the National Geographic Museum that unifies cutting-edge science and technology with faith.

The science has been deployed to conserve and shed new light on the ancient building. The faith stirs the feelings of every Christian who approaches those places where our Savior suffered, died, and rose again, according to a tradition that goes back until at least the 4th century. (The latest scientific tests confirmed the presence of rock-cut Jewish tombs dating back to the first century, when Jesus lived.)

The exhibit celebrates the recent preservation of the Aedicule of the Holy Sepulchre built by Franciscan friars in 1555. Led by an interdisciplinary group of engineers, researchers, stonemasons, and professors from the National Technical University of Athens, the work began in 2016 and was completed by Easter 2017.

This precious complex has undergone many cycles of destruction and rebuilding since the first Christian Emperor Constantine first visited in 325. Constantine tore down a Roman temple that had been erected to counteract growing Christian fervor, and built the first church on the site. It was wrecked under Arab rule in the 7th century. Earthquakes and fires wreaked further havoc. Each time it was rebuilt.

The constant traffic of visitors and the destructive impact of water, humidity, and soot from gas lamps and candles have undermined the stability of the building. The stone walls of

the Aedicule were beginning to buckle outward. Intervention was urgent.

Virtual Tour

When visitors walk through the vestibule at the museum, a door opens and we suddenly find ourselves virtually at the portal of the Holy Sepulchre while a virtual guide describes the premises. Six religious orders of different Christian denominations (primarily the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Armenian Apostolic churches) share the custody of this ancient building, where they hold mass in their respective rituals and host thousands of pilgrims every day.

The guide describes architectural details from many eras, from an early Christian narrative relief in Western style, to a foliate frieze made under the Ottoman Turks. She points upward to an “immovable ladder” that has been there for 150 years and symbolizes the Status Quo accord, under which none of the religious orders may make any change without the unanimous consent of the others.

In the next room, visitors don 3-D glasses to witness the transformation of the building over its long history, culminating in a “you are there” emersion into the famous Holy Fire ceremony on the Orthodox Easter vigil.

The Technology

Next, you walk out into a room that features a timeline wall and some of the non-invasive machines used to gain information about the site, such as ground-penetrating radar, radiometry, and robotics.

The images gained from heat-sensing cameras allowed the team to see under centuries of soot to reveal dome and wall frescoes hidden for perhaps a thousand years. They located voids in the masonry with the radar and filled

see TOMB, page 17



ARTS & LIVING

New Book on Genocide of Greeks, Armenians Released

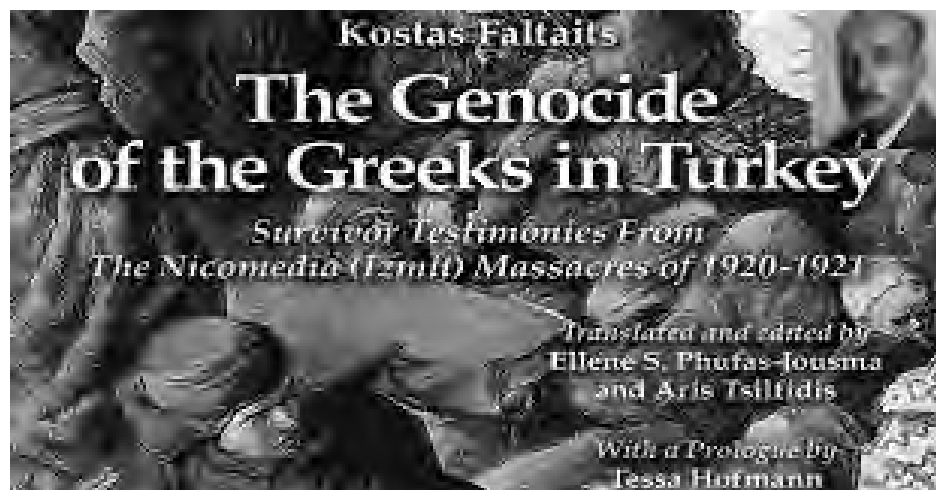
By Theodore G. Karakostas

Kostas Faltaits was a Greek journalist for the newspaper *Embros* and covered the Greek struggle in Nicomedia (Izmit) in 1921. What Faltaits reported on was the systematic extermination of the Greek population by the Kemalist armies under General Mustafa

Kemal. Indeed, surviving witnesses to the slaughter of civilians in Greek villages stated that Kemal himself presided over some of the massacres.

As with any text that deals with the horror of genocide, it is not easy to read and I found myself stunned by the various eyewitness accounts documented by Mr. Faltaits. Mothers killing their own children to spare them from the Kemalist horrors. The raping of Greek women. In one particular case, a Greek priest named Father Phillippos Kalokidis was humiliated and degraded before being murdered in cold blood.

This is a historically important work that was originally translated into French. This book was widely distributed in Greece at the



The Genocide of the Greeks in Turkey

Survivor Testimonies from the Nicomedia (Izmit) Massacres of 1920-21. By Kostas Faltaits.
Translated and Edited by Ellene S. Phufas-Jousma and Aris Tsilfidis.
With a Prologue by Tessa Hoffman

time and was cited as documentary evidence by the Greek Foreign Ministry in making the case for Greece's rights in Asia Minor at the time. The book included horrifying details of massacres in Greek villages throughout Nicomedia. The original title of the book at the time of publication according to the editors was *These are the Turks*.

This is an important document about the Greek genocide and deserves to be placed alongside other works of the 1920s such as the *Black Book* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, George Horton's *The Blight of Asia* and Edward Hale Bierstadt's *The Great Betrayal*. The book has introduced me to a Greek hero that I knew nothing about.

Faltaits was a superb journalist who bravely went about reporting on the horrors undertaken by the Kemalist forces and during a period when Greece was being actively betrayed by alleged western "allies."

There is a heartbreaking chapter on the Armenian Genocide where Faltaits spoke with the local bishop of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The bishop said that out of the 80,000 Armenians in his flock, 70,000 were slaughtered. The bishop provides graphic details of the torture, rape and murders of the Armenian people. A common theme in all the chapters of this book is the sadistic pleasure of the Turks in raping, torturing, and slaughtering defenseless Armenian and Greek civilians.

A century later, Turkey has still not been punished for its crimes against humanity. A few years ago, when resolution for the Armenian Genocide was introduced in

Congress, the Bush administration lobbied against it.

In addition, eight living past and present Secretaries of State actively lobbied to block recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The pro-Turkish policies that enabled the rise of Mustafa Kemal to complete the work begun by the Young Turks remain in effect up to the present day.

Mention is made in the prologue by Tessa Hoffman of Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee was a paradoxical figure. During the First World

War, Toynbee worked for British intelligence and unequivocally condemned the Armenian Genocide and published a book, *Armenian Atrocities The Murder of a Nation*. Toynbee subsequently turned into a supporter of the Turks and proceeded to accuse Greece of atrocities while ignoring or diminishing the horrors of the Kemalists.

This is an excellent historical work on the



The late journalist Kostas Faltaits

genocide of the Kemalists. It is also an excellent example of principled journalism.

Faltaits has done a great service to history and helped to ensure that the victims of Turkish genocide would not be forgotten.

ALMA Presents Two Lectures on November 30 On Armenian Art and Culture

ALMA, from page 12

Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC) and AAMC Foundation.

The next speaker will be photographer Hrair Hawk Khatcherian. Since surviving cancer in 1993, Khatcherian has devoted himself to photographing the richness of the Armenian heritage. The official photographer for the upcoming exhibition Armenia at the Met, Hawk will present his new book, *Khatchkar*, which



Cover of *Khatchkar* by Hrair Hawk Khatcherian

features photographs of Armenian *khatchkars* (carved memorial stele bearing a cross and traditional motifs).

Born in Lebanon in 1961, Khatcherian moved to Canada in 1984. His photographs have appeared in numerous magazines, newspapers, books, and publications around the globe. To date, his works include: *Artsakh: A Photographic Journey* (1997), *Karabakh: 100 Pictures* (2002), *Yergir* (2005), *Flying Hye* (2005), *Armenian Ornamental Art* (2010, in collaboration with Armen Kyurkchyan), *Armenian Ornamental Script* (2012), *2 YERGIR* (2011), *One Church One Nation* (2013), *100* (1915-2015) (2015), *Armenian Block Printed Fabric* (2016) and *Khatchkar* (2017).

A question-and-answer period and book signing and reception will take place immediately following the presentation.

For more information, visit www.armenian-museum.org.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Students of Armenian Descent

Having Completed One Year of College by June 2018
Applications and other information may be obtained from:

**Armenian Students' Association
Scholarship Committee
333 Atlantic Avenue • Warwick, RI 02888
Tel. 401-461-6144 • Fax 401-461-6112**

email: headasa@aol.com

Deadline for returning completed applications: March 15, 2018



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ARTS & LIVING

C A L E N D A R

MASSACHUSETTS

NOVEMBER 28 — “Stopping Violence Against Women: From the Local to the Global,” a panel on violence against women in New England, nationwide, and in the Republic of Armenia. Sponsored by the Armenian International Women’s Association and the Watertown Free Public Library. Featuring Wendy Murphy, Attorney and Adjunct professor at New England Law Boston, Tsovinar Harutyunyan, United National Population Fund (UNFPA) Armenia Program Analyst, Craig Norberg-Bohm, consultant and formerly of the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. Moderated by Judy Norsigian, past executive director and co-founder of Our Bodies Ourselves and AIWA Board member. 7 p.m., Watertown Free Public Library, 123 Main St., Watertown, Free and open to the public.

NOVEMBER 30 — Two lectures on the same evening at the Armenian Museum of America, 65 Main Street, Watertown, 7:30 PM – (3rd Floor Gallery). First, Armenia | about the exhibit at Metropolitan Museum of Art 9/21/18 – 1/13/19. Dr. Helen Evans of Metropolitan Museum will discuss how this exhibit will demonstrate the Christianization of Armenia, the development of Armenian art in the Middle Ages and its importance to the art of the world. Then, Book Presentation | 25 Years of Khatchkar Photography | HC | 516 pp By Author / Photographer Hrair Hawk Khatcherian Photographs from Artsakh, Armenia, Western Armenia and Cilicia, Jerusalem and surviving Old Julfa (Nakhijevan). Q&A and book signing/reception immediately following the presentation. Berj Chekijian, berjc@armenianmuseum.org or 617-926-2562 X7

DECEMBER 1 and 2 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Featuring delicious Armenian dinners, a la carte menu and take-out meals; booths and vendors – perfect for doing your Christmas shopping; Armenian gourmet foods, delicacies and pastries; raffles, and more. Activities for Children, Peter Adamian Hall: Friday, 7-9 p.m., All Aboard “The Polar Express” Pajama Party, recommended for children ages 5 and older; Saturday, 11 a.m., Children’s Entertainment. Visit with Santa, Saturday, 1-2 pm, and have your photo taken too. Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall. For further information, contact the church office at 617.354.0632, or log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/449/>

DECEMBER 7 — Panel: “Environmental Security and Statecraft in Armenia,” at Northeastern University, Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Co-sponsored by the NAASR/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues and Northeastern University Armenian Club. At 220 Shillman Hall, Northeastern University, 115 Forsyth Street, Boston. Contact NAASR at hq@naasr.org for more information.



The Armenian Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown, will feature two lectures on November 30 at 7:30 p.m. One will be by Dr. Helen Evans of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, on a new major exhibit there on Armenian Christian art. The next talk will be by Hrair Hawk Khatcherian on his new book, Khatchkar, on Armenian stone crosses. For more information on the two lectures, contact Berj Chekijian at the museum at berjc@armenianmuseum.org or call 617-926-2562, ext. 7. Above is Khatcherian.

DECEMBER 10 — Christmas Holiday Concert, Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, 7 p.m., Sunday, Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. This year’s concert, under the direction of Composer Konstantin Petrossian, music director and conductor, will open with the Arlington High School Madrigal Singers and feature the vocal quartet the Bostonians. The program will consist of traditional Armenian and Western sacred and holiday music. The public is invited to attend this complimentary concert which is a gift to the community. For further information, call the Church office, 617.354.0632.

DECEMBER 14 — NAASR Christmas Open House, with 7:30 lecture by Marian Mesrobian MacCurdy, “Operation Nemesis, Justice, and Inter-Generational Trauma: How Resistance Promotes Resilience,” Thursday, 6-10 p.m. at the NAASR Center, 395 Concord Ave.,

Belmont. All items in the bookstore will be 35 percent or more off. Contact NAASR at hq@naasr.org for more information.

DECEMBER 17 — Candlelit Labyrinth Peace Walk, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, 4:30 – 6 pm. Quiet holiday reflection and celebration. Tie a ribbon with your wish on the Wishing Tree. Hot Chocolate & Cookies, hosted by The Bostonian Hotel Boston All are invited. RSVP appreciated, please email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

DECEMBER 17 — St. James 86th Anniversary Name Day Celebration. Sunday. Abp. Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Presiding. Honoring Michael G. Yapchaian, Parishioner of the Year, and Nishan & Margrit Atinizian, Diocesan St. Vartan Award Recipients. 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy. Name Day Banquet to follow. Keljik Hall. St. James’ Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center. \$45 per person. \$10 for children 12 and under. Advanced Reservations Required – purchase tickets online at www.stjameswatertown.org. 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown 617.923.8860/info@stthagop.com

MICHIGAN

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 Keghizees of historic Western Armenia. Funds raised will help in development of the school’s multi-purpose auditorium.

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.

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.

Science and Faith Unite in ‘Tomb of Christ’ Exhibit

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them to stabilize the stone structure. Once the mortar had set, they removed an ugly iron “cage” that had surrounded the Aedicule since the 1940s.

So as not to disturb the millions of pilgrims who visit each year, much of the work was carried on at night. Corey Jaskolski, a National Geographic Explorer and engineer, described to me how he and his wife waited until the site was closed for the day, and then was locked in all night with 50 monks to carry out the laser scanning (literally, billions of images) of the entire structure.

Only once during the yearlong process, the tomb of Christ closed for six hours to lift the stone cover from the limestone rock upon which Jesus’ body was buried. A crystal window now allows visitors to see part of the holy rock, which had been invisible for centuries.

A visit to the “Tomb of Christ” exhibit should ideally be combined with a trip to the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America in northwest DC, where the Franciscans are celebrating the 800th anniversary of their arrival in Acre (now in Israel) in 1217. The church, dedicated in 1899, and grounds include replicas of the sacred shrine constructed between then and the 1930s. Although they are old, they are tangible. You may even get a tour from a friar who served in the Holy Sepulchre or other shrines in the Holy Land. The adjoining church has a splendid dome, one of three in Washington that are reminiscent of the Holy Sepulchre.



The Church of the Holy Sepulchre



COMMENTARY

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COMMENTARY

Yet Another Diplomatic Flurry Around Karabakh

By Edmond Y. Azadian

It is not the first time that a diplomatic flurry has been triggered around Karabakh. The summit meetings between President Serzh Sargsyan and Ilham Aliyev are too many to keep track of. Every time meetings are held on the presidential or foreign ministerial levels, documents are drafted and then shelved for indefinite periods. These meetings have almost become a routine and no one expects a breakthrough in the deadlocked situation any time soon.

Like many other “frozen” conflicts, Karabakh has become a hostage to the major powers’ interests. Meetings and discussions intensify whenever one or two powers that have a stake in the conflict perceive an opportunity in its resolution. Then, more important issues take over and Karabakh is once again relegated to the back burner.

It seems that this time around, two factors are igniting the interest of the parties to revisit the issue. One is Turkey’s desire to join the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which only Moscow can deliver, and the other is Moscow’s desire to lure Azerbaijan to join the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which only Ankara can deliver.

All these expectations and anticipations form the background of the revival of the diplomatic activities.

Presidents Vladimir Putin and Recep Tayyip Erdogan recently met in Sochi and wrapped up many economic and political deals. Not too long ago, they were at each other’s throats. On the eve of that meeting, Putin announced that relations between Russia and

when Ahmet Davutolgu, then foreign minister of Turkey, was asking the Armenian side to cede at least one region as a good will gesture without any counteroffer.

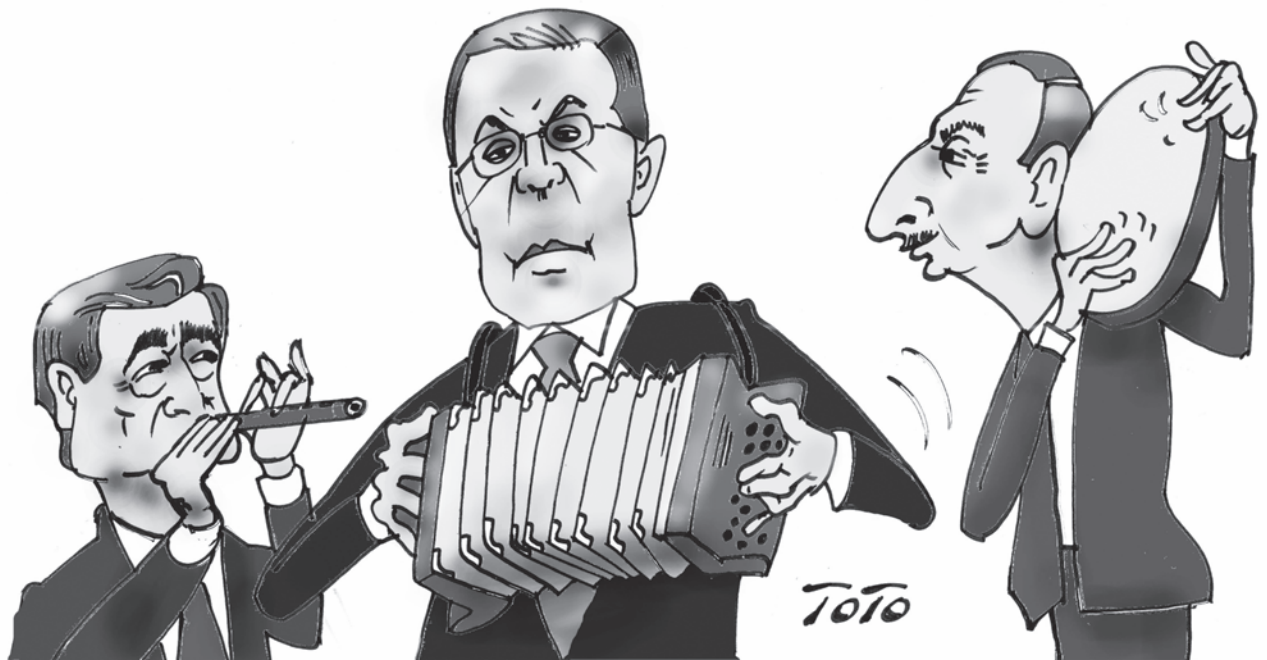
Those strategic regions serve as a security guarantee in the war zone and as well as a diplomatic chip at the negotiation table.

Following the meeting of the Russian and Turkish presidents, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visited Baku and Yerevan, where he did not make any earth-shaking announcements.

He certainly dashed Erdogan’s expectations when he stated that the Minsk group format is just fine and that any expansion may turn out to be a “spoiler.” On the other hand, he indicated that Moscow would be pleased to see Azerbaijan in the EEU and CIS. “The EEU is an open integration alliance, said Lavrov, adding, “We do not force anyone to join us. ... We always welcome accession of new members.”

Russia’s top diplomat made almost identical statements in both capitals of Yerevan and Baku: “No one is satisfied with the conflict, and a solution should be sought for, all the more so because many areas that are expected to bring results have already been outlined,” he stressed.

This even-handed diplomacy gave no one any cause to cheer. The only relief came from a different quarter warning against Azerbaijan’s bellicose posture. The Russian Senate’s Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Konstantin Kosachev reminded Aliyev of Georgia’s 2008 adventure, implying that any resumption of hostilities may only help formalize Karabakh’s split from Azerbaijan. Indeed, in 2008, Georgia’s former president, Mikhail Saakashvili, backed his hostile rhetoric with bullets, providing a much-needed opportunity to Moscow to move its tanks into Georgian territory to “save” South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which today have become unrecognized republics in



Turkey have been fully restored.

Turkey was on the verge of economic collapse when Russia blocked almost all commercial activities between the two countries after the Turkish air force shot down a Russian military plane in 2015. Turkey backed down, desperately searching for an honorable way out.

On the other hand, Washington and Brussels were tightening the noose around Russia through economic sanctions and military build-up around Russia’s periphery. Thus, Erdogan’s policy tilt toward Moscow gave a much-needed respite in its isolation, while giving a black eye to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), by Ankara’s virtual divorce from the alliance.

The Syrian battleground became the theater to bring both countries’ interests to converge, as the Russia-Turkey-Iran tandem brought the Syrian war to its conclusion, relegating the US to a marginal role.

Erdogan’s appetite was whetted for other possible deals through the same channel.

Therefore, Karabakh was one of the frozen issues which both countries had an interest in and its resolution could yield dividends for both parties.

After the Sochi meeting, Erdogan disclosed that talks were carried out about the Armenian side ceding five of the seven regions under the control of Karabakh forces. This is a recurring theme for the Turkish side, since the days of the protocols in Switzerland,

the Caucasus.

The Karabakh conflict is an intractable problem for two major reasons. One is the unwillingness of the major parties to resolve it, to use the issue in their favor at the opportune time, and the second is that the premises of the issue are misstated when they try to reconcile the principle of self-determination with the principle of territorial integrity. Once the diplomatic community accepts that Karabakh was never a part of Azerbaijan’s territory then reconciliation of the two principles will be resolved.

The fact that no resolution has yet been achieved sometimes reflects on the diplomats themselves. Some people who think Armenia must have the silver bullet for the problem blame Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, who is a consummate diplomat, on par with his peers from the major powers.

Recently speaking at a joint press conference in Yerevan with his Brazilian counterpart, Nalbandian commented on the upcoming declaration of the 28 European Union ambassadors planning to meet on November 24 in Brussels. The declaration has hit a snag which Armenia’s foreign minister has delineated in a deft definition that Baku’s issue is not with Armenia; it is with the EU, whose stand Azerbaijan has been fighting.

Despite intense diplomatic movement, no one in the Caucasus is holding his or her breath for a breakthrough any time soon.

Turkey and Azerbaijan have become pariah states. If the concerned parties can recognize them as such, maybe, we hope peace will be in the offing.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Turkish PR Agent Ronn Torossian's Father and Grandparents are Armenians

Last week I wrote a column about Ronn Torossian, President of 5W Public Relations firm in New York City, who had signed a contract for \$60,000 to do PR work for the Republic of Turkey in the United States.

I wrote that I did not know if Torossian was an ethnic Armenian or simply had an Armenian last name, since some Jews and Iranians also have Armenian-sounding last names. Before writing the previous column, I had attempted to contact him and had left two voice mail messages at his office. But, he did not return my phone calls.

After writing that column, I received several emails and phone calls from Mr. Torossian. However, he requested that our phone conversations be off the record. I also received many emails and phone calls from Armenians around the world who knew the Torossian family.

I also noticed that several readers had posted comments under my column on various websites, insisting that Mr. Torossian was not an Armenian, but simply Jewish or Iranian who carried an Armenian last name. These commentators

were basing their presumptions on the fact that all of the articles about Mr. Torossian on the internet referred to him as being Jewish and mentioned his extensive record of activism and involvement in Jewish causes and organizations.

However, I was informed by a Canadian Armenian, a former resident of Jerusalem, that he grew up in that city with Ronn's father, Harout Torossian, who now lives in New York City. Ronn's grandfather was Voskan Torossian and the grandmother was Mariam.

Voskan and his family lived in the Convent of Jerusalem's Armenian Patriarchate. Voskan worked as a handyman at the Patriarchate. Ronn's father attended Saints Tarkmanchats Armenian School in the Convent. Both Ronn's father and grandfather were members of Homenetmen (Armenian General Athletic Union and Scouts). Voskan was also a devoted member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation.

Since Ronn's father was married to a Jewish woman, Ronn is considered by the Jewish community to be Jewish. He was raised as a Jew and considers himself to be Jewish and not Armenian. From Ronn's family friends and his father's former classmates I have learned a lot more about his relatives and their personal lives, but to protect Ronn's privacy I decided not to divulge any more details. I only mentioned his father and grandparents to prove that he is partly of Armenian heritage, and not Iranian or fully Jewish.

Interestingly, in one of the emails Ronn Torossian sent me after my first article, he stated: "I am Jewish. I am American-born and raised in a Jewish home, and proudly educate my children in Jewish day schools. I do not and never have considered myself to be Armenian. You are conducting a comical, ridiculous and destructive ugly litmus test." He asked that the rest of his email be considered off the record.

I answered Torossian in an email: "Thank you for finally

contacting me. I wish you had responded to the two phone messages I left for you in the past month. I respect that you feel Jewish. That is your choice and decision. However, being Jewish does not exonerate you from the unacceptability of doing PR for a country that denies Genocide whether you are Jewish, Armenian or any other nationality. Being of both Jewish and Armenian ethnic ancestry makes you a descendant of survivors of both the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide which places the double burden on you to be especially sensitive to Genocide deniers. Just because you are making money spinning for Genocide deniers does not justify your professional activities. As I pointed out in my column, you yourself have criticized those who do PR for dictators. Yet you are paid to do PR for the dictator Erdogan. If you don't consider Erdogan to be a dictator, then you are one of the few individuals in the world who thinks so!"

Ronn Torossian replied to my email: "Criticize me all you wish. Please don't raise my family or your perceptions of my ethnicity. I have never considered myself Armenian all my life."

I must inform Ronn Torossian that over the years I have written dozens of columns criticizing all those who have been hired by the Turkish government for the purposes of lobbying or public relations, regardless of their nationality. It is unacceptable to represent Turkey for money, a country that is run by a dictator, violates the human rights of its citizens, and denies the Armenian Genocide.

Ironically, back in June 2010, before Torossian signed a PR contract with Turkey, he had organized an anti-Turkish protest in Manhattan after the Israeli military attacked a Turkish humanitarian flotilla. Torossian was quoted as stating: "what these so-called peace activists on the Turkish vessel pulled off was nothing short of a cleverly devised anti-Semitic lynching."

Once Upon a Time in America

By Nane Vardanyan

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone" was an expression I had never considered to be true in my case.

This year, at the age of 22, I dared to step outside of my most comfortable (and comfort) zone – the capital of my heart, Yerevan. Unlike many of my friends, I had never had the dream to live or study abroad, but my passion to know the world better brought me to Boston, and specifically Boston University, in pursuit of my academic studies.

Visiting America, the country I had seen in my favorite movies, was truly spectacular for me. I had always associated the United States with the most beautiful things, such as all the nice clothes, bags and shoes my relatives had sent me. It was an allure that grew over many years, with each news headline, gift or visitor from the States.

First impressions: everything is big: portions, buildings, expectations, problems, dreams.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do. Integrating into American culture started with the addition of smiles and polite gestures – not entirely foreign to my social experience in Armenia, but certainly uncommon in my interactions with strangers. Appearing to be in an international community in America, I met diverse people from all around the world. A few years ago, my interest towards exploring new cultures and civilizations made me learn my third foreign language: Chinese. Now, that the majority of my class consists of Americans and Chinese, I fully enjoy the pleasure of talking to everyone in their native languages.

Coming from a country which does not have McDonalds, Starbucks or Dunkin Donuts, where everything is organic and the expiration date of dairy products is a week at most, I sought out food like the homemade variety I used to eat. Here, too, I encountered the diversity America had to offer: French croissants and Americano coffee for breakfast, Japanese sushi for lunch and delicious Italian pasta for dinner.

The first week of classes I was invited to a classmate's birthday. As we always do in Armenia, I purchased a gift for my new friend and lovingly attached a handwritten card. Upon receiving my present, she looked at me in shock, realizing not only that it was a gift for her, but also that it was the only one she had received all day. Later I was told, "You don't have to buy a gift in America, splitting the bill or buying a drink for them is enough."

I have always enjoyed studying, but my goodness, the assignments are so interesting here. Having completed my bachelor's degree at Yerevan State University, I am finding the educational system at BU not only challenging, but strikingly different as well: the practicality of assignments is cloaked in a creative design. University faculties are responsible for shaping you as a scholar and professional, and one is constantly reminded that the relationship is mutual. We

work for them; they work for us. In addition, students are not just filling seats in the classroom – our opinions and feedback matter deeply and have an influence.

Upon realizing I am not from America, I am thrown into a position where I must teach my professors and classmates, new friends and acquaintances, where exactly I am from. "Armenia – that's where the Kardashians are from," I hear very often. "You are the first student that I have had from Armenia," said my professor. My classmates proudly told me, "You are the first Armenian that I am meeting." Being the first, or perhaps the only Armenian in someone's life puts a huge burden on your shoulders, not only to be a good representative of yourself, but also of your country.

At the same time, there were people who knew a lot about Armenians. "My best friend at school was an Armenian. I loved their family and yes, I know about 1915," said my professor. Sam Kauffmann, another professor at the College of Communication at BU, said that whenever he sees an Armenian last name on a student list, he knows they are smart and are going to work hard.

More than 5,500 miles away from home, I found myself looking for "ian" surnames. The more I looked for it, the more I found it. Before arriving to Boston I was told that Armenians in Boston are the "old Armenians," the well-educated, hardworking and successful members of the community. I cannot identify a stronger example of this description than Stephen Kurkjian, a 40-year veteran at The Boston Globe, and founding member of its Spotlight team and the author of Master Thieves. I saw how humble, friendly, and gregarious he was despite his numerous awards and prizes. Conducting my first professional interview with Mr. Kurkjian in Watertown was a turning point that continues to color my journey in the U.S.

And Watertown, of course, feels like home. You feel safe as you see names such as Sevan, Arax, Massis, Artsakh and more Armenian names on the buildings. Surprised to feel the presence and strength of Armenian spirit in the community, I realized there are so many "Little Armenias" with thousands of stories outside Armenia.

America is a country of freedom and possibility. Among diverse definitions of freedom that I have read, here I can see all of them. From people to experiences, from politics to economics, from cultural to religious, the possibilities are seemingly endless.

We take a piece from everywhere we go and we leave one there as well. I look forward to shaping this chapter of my life as memorable as I can, gain the best of America and return to my small lovely Yerevan. Every day I wake up and realize that doing that step out of my comfort zone was so worth it. I have never had the American Dream, but now I admit—America changes the way you dream.

(Nane Vardanyan is a student from Yerevan working toward her master's degree in public relations at Boston University.)

The Sultan's Nightmare

By Miran P. Sarkissian

IN which of the thousand rooms of his white palace will Recep Tayyip Erdogan be hiding these days? The man who bases his power on a continuing show of strength finds himself depending on powers he cannot control. Although he invests in divisions, he finds everybody joining forces against him instead. The harder he tries to lock doors, the more obvious it becomes that the enemy is within the walls. Maybe it is his own self.

Against Ankara's traditional foreign policy, whereas Turkey's continuing participation in NATO has never been in doubt during the past years, Mr. Erdogan plans and acts alone without a strategy except for serving his own personal needs and demands. His authoritarianism helped him stay in power but it is also leading him to a dead end.

Mr. Erdogan has pursued good relations with Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin. Authoritarian characters all three, it was natural for them to get along. The Turkish president would very much like to 'play' one against the other but he is constantly realizing that he depends on the others' moods. This is, probably the reason for his unsteady behavior. Just two short years ago, when a Turkish plane downed a Russian one over the Syrian border and rebels, assisted by Turkey, killed one of the two pilots, Mr. Erdogan was desperately searching for support from NATO and the USA as he was exchanging insults with his Russian counterpart. Today, he meets Mr. Putin rather often and moves on to agreements for the building of nuclear power plants and the purchase of S-400 missiles, an act which if brought to fruition will bring Turkey to a very strong clash with NATO as that air defense system is not compatible with the aircraft of the Western Alliance.

The Turkish president is even more vulnerable in his rivalry to the policies of both Russians and Americans in Syria. Although Mr. Erdogan was playing a primary role in kicking Bashar al-Assad out of Syria and trying to isolate the Kurds from political developments, the Trump-Putin meeting in Vietnam on November 11th concluded into an agreement that there cannot be a military solution in Syria and that all fighting parties should participate in the peace negotiations. Meaning including the Syrian president and the Kurds. Mr. Erdogan is also very much aware that the United States has access to 13 bases in Northern Syria while the Russians have access to another 5 bases. The presence of these two powers neutralizes Turkey's plans to control Northern Syria and strengthens the Kurds. The Erdogan-Putin meeting in Sochi on November 14th confirmed their basic difference on this very point.

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Poland Celebrates 650th Anniversary of Local Armenian Community

WARSAW – On September 19, the Polish Senate held a conference to celebrate the 650th anniversary of the Armenian community in Poland. The event was held in collaboration with the Polish Academy of Arts and Science and the Armenian Cultural Association.

The Armenian community is one of Poland's officially recognized minority group. Armenians first arrived in central Europe and Poland in the 11th century, following the fall of the Armenian Kingdom of Ani. In 1367, the Polish king Casimir III the Great, granted a special status to the Armenians.

The Speaker of the Polish Senate Stanislaw Karczewski; the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia Edgar Ghazaryan;

AGBU Europe President Nadia Gortzounian and President of the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy Kaspar Karampetian delivered welcome speeches. Karczewski said that the centuries-long Armenian presence in Poland shows the country's openness and tolerance towards other nations. In his speech, Karczewski acknowledged the contribution of some of the well-known Polish artists of Armenian descent to Poland's culture, including painter Teodor Axentowicz, composer Krzysztof Penderecki, poet Zbigniew Herbert, film director Jerzy Kawalerowicz and actress Anna Dymna.

Gortzounian emphasized the significance of Poland's Armenian community as one of



The Polish Senate held a conference to celebrate the 650th anniversary of the Armenian community in Poland.



AGBU Europe and the Foundation of Culture and Heritage of Polish Armenians sign a partnership agreement.

the oldest communities in Europe. “In the age of migration, diversity and conflict, I am convinced that the Armenian experience is worth learning from,” she said.

The conference brought together Polish and Armenian scholars, including professor Claude Mutaflan from University of Paris 13; Dr. Tatevik E. Sargsyan from Simferopol's Crimea Research Centre, professor Krzysztof Stopka, Dr. Pawel Skibinski from Warsaw University and others. The academic discussion focused on the Armenian cultural and religious heritage in Poland.

Also, AGBU Europe and the Foundation of Culture and Heritage of Polish Armenians

signed a partnership agreement. “I very much look forward to our center – the Nubar Library in Paris – working closely with the Foundation of Culture and Heritage of Polish Armenians in the future for the benefit of research and understanding of the Armenian experience,” said Gortzounian.

AGBU Europe coordinates and develops the pan-European activities of the Armenian General Benevolent Union. AGBU Europe runs numerous programs in fields relating to academic research, the preservation and promotion of heritage, education and culture as well as awareness raising, advocacy and leadership training.

ARPA International Film Festival Gives Platform to LGBT Voices in Armenian Filmmaking

By Lousine Shamamian

LOS ANGELES – This past weekend's ARPA International Film Festival was a momentous occasion for the arts and Armenia. It is probably not news to many how difficult it can be to be openly LGBT within the Armenian community. Film is an opportunity to give voice to the voiceless, bringing to the center those who are

marginalized and allowing those voices to be heard. The 2017 Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival in Armenia was originally slated to include two Armenian films with LGBT themes, “Listen To Me” and “Apricot Groves,” but they were dropped due to pressure from the Cinematographers Union. Both films were screened at the ARPA International Film Festival.

When the Golden Apricot Festival censored these films, it squandered the opportunity to participate in one of the most meaningful traditions of filmmaking: being a catalyzing force for social and cultural change.

In Avo Kambourian's film “Echoes of Survival,” renowned oud player Ara Dinkjian says “the Armenians in Turkey are heroes to me, because I don't know of any place where it is as difficult to remain Armenian. They have held that torch and I think they should

be recognized and praised.”

This struggle is at the heart of Gagik Ghazareh's intimate documentary “Listen To Me” about LGBT Armenians in Armenia. One of the participants of “Listen To Me” eloquently asks “Are we asking for any special treatments? No, we want the same rights as everyone else: to be given the freedom and respect to live our lives as everyone else. At the end of the day, we are all human.” Which is why “Listen To Me” should be essential viewing for all Armenians both in and outside of Armenia. This beautiful documentary presents the spectrum of the LGBT experience in Armenia through candid interviews with brave souls who have risked making themselves targets in order to speak their truth. They share their humanity and as a result, make it easier for all those who live in fear, silence, and lies because frankly, sometimes their lives depend on it.

I commend ARPA for screening the two films that were censored at the Golden Apricot Festival. The Golden Apricot Festival should redeem itself by screening “Listen To Me” and “Apricot Groves” at next year's festival and celebrate the essential duty of all Armenians to respect one another's humanity. We as a people need more films like these, not fewer.

To learn more about the ARPA International Film Festival go here and to learn more about GALAS please go here.

(Lousine Shamamian is a comedian, performer and originator of the web series “Lousine: Lesbian Matchmaker To The Straights”. A television editor and board member of GALAS - The Gay and Lesbian Armenian Society, she was born in Armenia, raised in Brooklyn and now resides in Los Angeles.)

Tekeyan NY Celebrates 70th Anniversary

GALA, from page 1

US and Canada, spoke about the legacy of the late Dr. Nubar Berberian, long-time secretary of the TCA of the US and Canada. Nora Azadian, the sole person in the hall who personally had known Vahan Tekeyan, recited to great applause his poem “The Soul of the Armenian.”

The Nazarians were honored and presented with the Lifetime Benefactor Award.

The keynote speaker was Edmond Y. Azadian, who praised the work of the Greater New York chapter and spoke of the mission of TCA, which follows the vision of Vahan Tekeyan.

In his closing remarks Barsamian praised the work of TCA, and gave his benediction.

Further coverage will be forthcoming in the coming weeks.

The Sultan's Nightmare

SULTAN, from page 19

Mr. Erdogan's nervousness, however, must spring to a great extent from a development in the USA which he could not avoid and which may have very heavy repercussions for him. This very week in New York begins the process of electing jurors in the trial of the Turkish-Iranian gold trader Reza Zarrab and the assistant to the managing director of the Turkiye Halkbank, owned by the Turkish state. Although both of these individuals were accused of having acted to break sanctions against Iran and for money laundering, it seems Mr. Zarrab is cooperating with the American authorities and it will only be the Turkish banker who will be put on trial. In 2013 Turkey was shaken by allegations of a scandal involving Mr. Zarrab and highly placed

official of the Turkish government. Research into those allegations was halted rather suddenly and policemen and justice officials working the case are now being condemned as collaborators of Fethullah Gulen, Erdogan's archenemy and self-exiled imam residing in Pennsylvania. Mr. Zarrab was arrested in the US last year and it is believed that he has a lot to uncover concerning Mr. Erdogan's relationships with Iran, Russia and, maybe even, close advisors to Mr. Trump.

Mr. Erdogan has repeatedly requested of President Obama and now President Trump to let Mr. Zarrab free. Unfortunately for him, such requests have been left unheeded by the US government to-date. Could this become the Sultan's undoing and nightmare? We shall see.



Poster from “Listen to Me”