Support of Artsakh

WASHINGTON Armenian America (Eastern), gave the opening prayer. 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Armenian Opposition Activist Sentenced to 10 Years in Prison

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Zhirayr Sefilian, a radical opposition figure, was sentenced to 10.5 years in prison on Monday, March 20, nearly two years after being arrested on charges of plotting an armed attack against the Armenian government.

A court in Yerevan also handed down prison sentences ranging from 2.5 to 30 years to six other defendants who went on trial with Sefilian last May.

The short term in prison has been given to Hovannes Petrosyan, the sole defendant who has testified against Sefilian. Petrosyan has said that the latter had told him to prepare for the seizure for a television tower in Yerevan.

The prosecutors claim that Sefilian formed an armed group to attack this and several other “strategic” facilities, including a military base just outside the capital, with the aim of forcing the Armenian authorities to take “certain actions.” They also say that he planned to organize “mass disturbances” in Yerevan during the April 2015 commemorations of the centenary of the Armenian genocide in Ottoman Turkey.

Sefilian and all other defendants except Petrosyan have strongly denied these accusations as politically motivated.

Speaking at the end of his trial, Sefilian called the criminal case against him and the other men a “farce.” The jailed leader of Founding Parliament, a radical opposition movement, also accused the presiding judge, Tatevik Grigorian, of resorting to “illegal actions” throughout the trial.

Sefilian has frequently and bitterly argued with Grigorian during court hearings in the high-profile case. The Lebanese-born oppositionist has been repeatedly banned from the courtroom as a result. The 37-year-old judge has also sanctioned his and other defendants’ lawyers for contempt of court.

The lawyers, backed by some human rights activists, have declared what they call serious violations of due process. They have insisted that the prosecution has failed to substantiate its grave accusations. Grigorian claimed the opposite in his closing address.

Sefilian, 51, was arrested in June 2016 less than a month before three other members and supporters of Founding Parliament seized a police compound in Yerevan’s Erebuni district to demand his release and President Serzh Sargsyan’s resignation. The gunmen laid down their weapons after a two-week standoff with security forces which left three police officers dead. They are now standing through three separate trials.

A well-known veteran of the 1991-1994 war in Nagorno-Karabakh, Sefilian has been a vocal critic of both the current and previous Armenian governments. In 2006, he was arrested shortly after setting up an antigovernmental union of fellow war veterans. The authorities claimed that they planned an armed revolt. He was acquitted by a court in 2011, at which time President Robert Kocharyan freed him.

Sefilian was again detained along with four of his associates in 2015, ahead of a series of antigovernmental protests by groups planned by them in Yerevan. They were charged with plotting street violence but were set free a month later.

Opposition leader Zhirayr Sefilian waves to supporters at the end of his trial.

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenia is trying to transform several regions into winemaking centers and attracting new tourism as the country is being positioned on the world tourism map as the birthplace of wine.

A development program for local producers is underway in the Vayots Dzor province, which is widely known for the Areni grape variety. As a result, locals will present their own wine to tourists in a more attractive way.

Zarali Muradyan, director of the Viticulture and Winemaking Foundation of Armenia, said they have designed the project with assistance from GIZ, and is being implemented by the Union of Young Winemakers.

“Beneficiaries are provided with consultation ranging from cultivation up to bottling,” she said.

Organizers want to show local home producers that cultivation of grapes is profitable and it is possible to continue to reform this sector and take further steps towards its optimization.

The head of the Armenian government suggested continuing discussions on various projects with the government of the Russian Federation. In 2006, he was arrested shortly after setting up an antigovernmental union of fellow war veterans. The authorities claimed that they planned an armed revolt. He was acquitted by a court in 2011, at which time President Robert Kocharyan freed him.

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YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan received a delegation led by World Bank Yerevan Office Head Sylvie Bossoutrot on March 20.

During the meeting Bossoutrot presented the partnership framework between WB and Armenia for 2018-2022 and the proposed reform agenda, based on the government’s five-year plan. She underscored that the World Bank is ready to build on the ties of effective cooperation with the Government of Armenia in a number of areas, including public administration, infrastructure, export promotion, human capital development, sustainable environment and natural resource management.

The WB Yerevan Office Head appreciated the ongoing transformations in Armenia and complimented the Prime Minister for achieving high rates of growth. Highlighting the successful course of constitutional reforms, the completion of our country’s transition to the parliamentary system, the signing of the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, the high rates of economic growth and the rising tide of Diaspora’s involvement in various spheres of the economy, Bossoutrot noted their positive impact on the ongoing reform process in Armenia.

Karapetyan attached importance to the deepening and expansion of bilateral cooperation, welcomed the draft partnership program and the proposed reforms. The Head of the Armenian gov- ernment suggested continuing discus- sions on various projects with the gov- ernment agencies and thanked the World Bank for supporting the reform of the water resource management system. He noted that his government will continue to reform this sector and take further steps towards its optimization.

ARMENIA Eyeing Wine Tourism

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KYIV, Ukraine (RFE/RL) — Fikret Huseynli, a journalist who fled his homeland of Azerbaijan over a decade ago, has been arrested early on March 19 that suspicious-looking men were trying to track him down in Kyiv.

Local media outlets reported that Huseynli said in a recent interview, four men whom he suspected were linked to the Azerbaijani security services turned up at the door of his rented apartment in the Ukrainian capital.

Commenting on the police and speaking both Ukrainian and Azeri, they told him they had been sent to detain him and that he'd be extradited “within 48 hours” back to Azerbaijan, where Huseynli faces what he and his supporters call trumped-up charges linked to his past reporting, much of it focusing on corruption at the highest echelons of power in theenergy-rich Caspian country.

“They tried to break down the door. They punched me, and I lost three teeth. With the help of others, I managed to close the door, and I escaped through the balcony,” Huseynli said on March 14.

Huseynli, a correspondent for the independent Azeri news agency Turan, has been in self-exile in Kyiv since October, when authorities in Baku stopped him boarding a flight to Germany, seizing his documents under an Interpol red notice issued by Baku. He has lived in legal limbo as Ukraine decides what to do with him. A</p>

International media watchdogs have urged Kyiv not to aid Baku in its efforts to track down critics beyond its borders. “We call on Ukrainian police to investigate the March 5 physical attack on Huseynli, and bring the perpetrators to justice,” Ukraine’s prosecutor-general did not respond to questions about the case.

Huseynli, the current head of the Amsterdam bureau of Turan, a Baku-based news agency that offers reporting in Azeri, Russian and English on its website portal, arrived in Kyiv on October 7, 2017, to check out possibly opening a bureau in the Ukrainian capital.

Huseynli was about to board a flight to Dusseldorf at Boryspil International Airport on October 14 when he was arrested under a red notice issued by Interpol at the Azerbaijani government’s request. It accused him of “crossing a border illegally” and “fraud.”

Following his arrest, a Kyiv court ordered him held for 18 days pending examination of his appeal. A Kyiv court on October 27 ordered the journalist’s release on bail but ruled that Huseynli should remain in Ukraine for two months while the Prosecutor-General’s Office investigated his extradition request, according to reports.

Ukrainian courts have twice extend- ed the investigation term, the new deadline is March 20, 2018, according to the journalist.

“If I am killed or kidnapped or extradited to Azerbaijan in the near future, all responsibility lies with the Ukrainian authorities. What awaits me in Azerbaijan is a long prison term or death,” Huseynli wrote on his Facebook page on March 13.

Huseynli, who formerly worked for Azerbaijan’s opposition Aftandil newspaper, fled to the Netherlands after he was stabbed, beaten, and left for dead by unknown assailants in Baku in 2006.

His fears of being abducted appear well grounded.

In March 2017, his colleague, the independent Azeri investigative journalist Aligün Multab, disappeared in Thika, Ethiopia, where he lived in exile, and reemerged two days later at a detention center in Azerbaijan.

On September 20, Ukraine detained Uzbek journalist Narzullo Akhunzhovov when he arrived in Kyiv from Turkey on September 20, also on the basis of an Interpol red notice.

The number of Interpol red notices has skyrocketed in the past decade—from 2,894 in 2006 to 12,878 in 2016, according to Reporters Without Borders. The watchdog and other NGOs charge that the alert has been abused by repressive governments to hunt down dissidents abroad.

Huseynli says he feels betrayed by Ukraine, whose “territorial integrity” he’s always backed amid the country’s conflict with Russia, which seized Crimea in 2014 and has backed separatist fighters in eastern Ukraine.

“But now the Ukrainian government is doing this to me,” he says. “They just want to sell me out.”

Close Economic Ties with Vietnam Explored

HASO01 (Armenpress) — Armenian Ambassador to Vietnam Rusay Vardanyan on March 16 met with members of the Armenia-Vietnam Friendship Association and business representatives in Vietnam, the Armenian Foreign Ministry reported.

During the meeting, a range of issues including the humanitarian, investment and tourism projects and the steps aimed at promoting the bilateral cooperation at these directions were exchanged views on a number of regional developments. In this context Ambassador Vardanyan presented the process of transition to a parliamentary system in Armenia, the efforts of Armenia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group Co-Chair countries aimed at peacefully settling the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, as well as Armenia’s positions on regional issues and their solutions.

International News

Turkish Embassy in Denmark Attacked

COPENHAGEN (Armenpress) — At least two people were attacked outside Turkey’s Embassy in Copenhagen with petrol bombs early on Monday, March 19, causing some minor damage to the exterior of the building but no injuries, police in the Danish capital said.

No injuries were reported.

Police were at the scene investigating and no one had been arrested, a police official told Reuters.

Artsakh Forces Down Azeri Drone

STEPANAKERT (Armenpress) — The Armed Forces of Artsakh downed an Azeri unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or drone around 18:30, March 19, in the northeastern (Talish) section of the line of contact.

The Azerbaijani drone violated the airspace of Artsakh and was deployed to carry out a reconnaissance operation, the Artsakh defense ministry said.

Yeva’ Banned in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) — The International Film FIlmMuer Women’s Film Festival announced on March 20 that the Government of Turkey is banning its films. On Saturday, March 17, the planned screening of an Armenian-Iranian movie titled “Yeva” over security concerns.

The movie creates the perception that Karabakh is an Armenian territory.

Filmed by Armenian-Iranian director Anahit Abad, “Yeva” is about a woman, who escapes her influential in-laws with her daughter Nareh, after her husband’s death and takes refuge in one of the villages of Karabakh, Armenia, where she has to live in disguise.

Arthur Abraham Fight

BERLIN (Public Radio of Armenia) — Former two-time World Champion Arthur Abraham (46-6, 30 KOs) will meet Dominican Patrick Galina (22-4, 14 KOs) in a make or break Super Middleweight showdown on April 29 at the Baden Arena in Offenburg, Germany, Boxing News reported.

Abraham returns to the ring having dropped a points decision to Chris Eubank Jr. in an IBF World title contest on July 15 at The SSE Arena, Wembley, while Nielsen is back in action after a knockout loss to John Ryder at the same London venue on October 14.

Following these defeats, both men are now eager to re-establish their World title credentials in this crunch Super Middleweight clash.

Having consulted his long-term coach and mentor, Abraham, the former IBF Middleweight and WBO Super Middleweight World Champion, says he is ready to get back on the World title trail in an attempt to reclaim his 168lbs crown.

"After my last fight, I spoke to my coach Ulli Wegner and he helped me reach a decision," said Arthur. "I am not ready to retire! There is still more to prove and want to win the Super Middle championship and become World Champion again. I am looking forward to fighting Patrick Nielsen, and putting on a good performance for my fans, I feel strong and Patrick is a good boxer. This will be a very good test for me and a chance to prove I’m ready to challenge for World titles again.”

Nielsen, the former WBC Silver Middleweight and WBA International Super Middleweight Champion, says he is looking forward to face Abraham in Offenburg, and having learnt a lesson from the Ryder loss, believes he has what it takes to defeat the German boxing icon and get his career back on track.
The Plight of Afrin Reverberates Across Europe

APRIN, from page 1
Workers Party (PKK) and nationalist Turks. Whenever flags and posters featuring leader Ocalan have been displayed, German police have intervened.

The closer Turkish tanks approached Afrin, the more exasperated the political confrontations in Germany became. Among the targets are not only Turkish institutions but also offices of German parties, seen as supporting the Erdogan campaign. According to the Tribune de Genève, the Erdogan supporters in some German cities are calling themselves "Turks for Peace" and are staging leaflets contending there are no Kurds and blaming some Turks for financing the Kurds. On Monday, Turkish nationalists demonstrated in Cologne, a city with a large Turkish community. According to the Süddeutsche Zeitung, they have organized not only here but throughout Europe. It has been mooted, at the same time, that Turkish nationalist elements have been staging attacks, in an attempt to discredit the opposition. It also cannot be excluded that rightwing extremists are exploiting the situation to target Turks.

In Germany incidents have been reported in various cities and federal states, among them, Berlin, Lower Saxony, Hannover, Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and North Rhine Westfalia. According to the German Interior Ministry, staged attacks, in an attempt to discredit the opposition. It also cannot be excluded that rightwing extremists are exploiting the situation to target Turks.

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How Near East Rice Pilaf Became a New England Staple

By Keith Pandolfi

WORCESTER (Boston Globe) — Today, Near East is a New England staple. Growing up in Shrewsbury in the 1970s, my weeknight dinners were pretty straightforward affairs: chicken Kiev or London broil; Prince spaghetti or tuna casserole. And while we often switched up the side dishes from Birds Eye frozen corn to Birds Eye frozen peas, one thing remained consistent — we always had Near East rice pilaf, and it was always prepared in the same Revere Ware saucepan that my parents received as a wedding gift in 1966. I lived Near East as a kid. In fact, I still do. That salty, nutty mix of rice and toasted orzo along with the accompanying paper flavor pack of onion, garlic, and bouillon. So in love was my family with Near East that when we left Shrewsbury for Cincinnati in 1979, my mother packed a case of the rectangular white boxes, with their famous wheat stalk illustrations and simple earth tones, into our station wagon. Last time I learned the company itself was started in 1932 in Shrewsbury, and it was best to find it in the Midwest. Luckily we did, and Near East remained a dime-store staple well into my 20s, when I started eschewing frozen vegetables and premade rice mixes for fresh roasted green beans and arugula salads. I still pick up a box of Near East every once in a while, mostly for nostalgia’s sake, a reminder of simpler times, and simpler dinners. But it wasn’t until recently I learned the company itself was started out of an Armenian grocery store in Worcester — just a few miles from our old house in Shrewsbury — in 1962. It was the brainchild of one of America’s most unsung female entrepreneurs, an Armenian immigrant named Hannah Kulaian. And while her story once appeared on every box of Near East, these days it’s largely been forgotten. That’s a shame, especially at a time when some question whether or not the American Dream still exists — her story is an encouraging reminder of just how potent, and how possible, that dream can be.

In her out-of-print autobiography, Hannah’s Story: Escape from Genocide in Turkey to Success in America (Armenian Heritage Press, 1990), Kulaian writes that she was born Henanouh (Armenian for “sweet fire”) Cartagianogian, one of five children, in Diunce, Turkey, in 1910. That in 1915, her father, Nazak, a beloved local butcher, was taken away to a labor camp by Turkish soldiers, where he would die. By 1920, Kulaian and her family were forced to flee their home town as word spread that the Turks were coming and the realities of what’s now

see HANNAH, page 6

BELMONT, Mass. — By the end of April, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) expects to begin demolition of its aging and cramped headquarters on Concord Avenue, to make way for a new construction at the site, which will create a new three-story building with a soaring glass wall extending the full three floors in front and illuminating the interior with natural light. “This will be one of the most beautiful buildings in the country,” said NAASR Chairman Vervant Chekijian, “and a true global center for the Armenian community.” The plans call for a variety of Armenian features incorporated into the design. The lead building donors are Edward and Pamela Arvedian. The two other lead donating families are Margaret C. and Leon J. Aghamian and Family, and Marta and James Batmasian. Many NAASR members and the community have also made significant gifts. “We are honored and grateful to many generous families who have put their trust in NAASR as one of the world’s leading institutions to preserve Armenian heritage for generations to come,” said Chekijian.

The Belmont Planning Board approved the new construction plan after a presentation from Ara Krafian, CEO of the architectural and engineering design firm of Synmies, Mann & McKee (SMMA) of Cambridge, on December 19, 2017. Recently, NAASR selected a general contractor, Altair Construction, and anticipates a start date for site work and demolition in April. Meanwhile, NAASR has continued to raise funds for the $6.5 million campaign and, to date, has financial commitments for more than $4.8 million. “We invite the community to become part of NAASR’s inspiring plans for our headquarters and create a lasting way to recognize your family,” said Chekijian.

NAASR’s rare book Muradian Library is one of the top five Armenian libraries open to the public in the diaspora, soon to total 40,000 books, with books dating back to the 1600s, and rare periodicals dating to the 1800s, as well as unique personal archives of prominent scholars, early Armenian-Americans, and religious leaders. The new building will have ample space to accommodate existing holdings and allow for substantial growth, with a secure and up-to-date environment.

NAASR’s new headquarters will be a central gathering space and world-class Armenian Center.

see NAASR, page 7

Holy Trinity Pays Tribute to Fr. Mampre Kouzouian for a Life Of Service, Ministering To Those in Need

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — On Friday, May 11, under the auspices of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), a Celebration of a Life of Service on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Ordination to the Priesthood of Rev. Father Mampre A. Kouzouian will take place at Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Battle St.

Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholics of All Armenians, will be present to celebrate this significant milestone marking Father Mampre’s 60 years of dedicated service and commitment to the Armenian Church and its people.

The traditional Hrashapar Service will be held at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary to welcome the catholicos. Clergy from New England will be called on to participate. Doors to the Sanctuary will open at 5:30 p.m. All are invited to attend.

The 60th Anniversary Celebration Banquet follows in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall at 7:15 p.m. Advance reservations are required for the Banquet. To receive an invitation to attend the banquet, please contact the Holy Trinity Church Office by emailing ofice@htacc.org.

At Father Mampre’s request, funds will be raised to support two causes, “close to my heart,” the children at the Muratsan Children’s Cancer Clinic, in Yerevan State Medical University, a pediatric oncology clinic that treats children from all over Armenia, as well as homeles individuals and families in the Vagharshapat region surrounding Holy Etchmiadzin. “In May 2017, I was in Armenia,” Father Mampre shares. “This was my 16th visit to our Motherland and I chose to journey to the hospitals and the abandoned buildings where the

homeless dwell in Yerevan. During my visit to the Muratsan Children’s Cancer Clinic, innocent young children living with cancer, without their hair as a result of their treatment, were with their parents on their routine visits. The children were in pain, suffering from this cancerous disease. I couldn’t stand it. After I said my prayers on each child, I came out of their rooms and cried like a child I couldn’t accept what I saw. These children are God’s gifts to their parents, to our Nation, to our Motherland, and to our Churches. During that stay, I also went to visit the homeless individuals and families of the Vagharshapat region surrounding see TRIBUTE, page 7
How Near East Rice Pilaf Became a New England Staple

HANNAH, from page 5

known as the Armenian genocide became all the more palpable. Her mother, Cobar, knew that if they didn’t leave Dunce right away, they would face the same fate her husband did. Or even worse.

After securing refuge in Constantinople, Cobar, unable to care for all their children, placed Kalajian in an orphanage. They would reunite a year later only to see the Turks again, this time to Lebanon. In 1924, Kalajian secured passage on an ocean liner bound for New York, where she lived with a married older sister. She applied for a job at Bloomingdale’s, and when the hiring manager couldn’t pronounce “Haranosh,” she changed her name to Hannah. Soon after, she met George Kalajian, a family friend and fellow Genocide survivor.

After a 5-day courtship, they married and, by the early 1940s, ended up in Worcester, where George opened an Armenian grocery store and luncheonette called George’s Spa and Market. While the luncheonette started out selling mostly coffee and doughnuts (its most avid customers being the employees of a nearby lumber mill), it expanded to daily specials of chop suey, noodles, and Lipton chicken stock. “It was a real Mickey Mouse operation,” Kasparian remembers. “All these Armenian ladies working in that tiny room.”

Kalajian first came up with the idea of selling a pilaf mix commercially on a visit to California. As she told a newspaper reporter in 1974, “In the markets, the big thing was package mixes. I . . . decided to start one? If they can do it, so can I!” Her idea came just in the nick of time, too. In the mid-’70s, the roads around the Lincoln Street market were being remodeled, leaving it on a dead-end street with little foot traffic and cutting it off from the lumber mill entirely. Fearing their market could soon go out of business, Kalajian got to work developing a perfect package-friendly recipe that would become the Near East pilaf we know today.

“How Near East Rice Pilaf Became a New England Staple

By Jason Sohijian

GLENDALE — Armenians around the world are celebrating the centennial of Armenia’s declaration of independence on May 28, 1918, the birth of the First Republic of Armenia.

On May 21, 1918, an Ottoman Turkish division attacked Armenian forces at Bash Aparan, with the intent of pushing towards Vereenik. After three days of fierce combat, the Armenians, led by General Dro (Drastamat “Dro”) Kanayan, were instrumental in the formation of the First Republic of Armenia.

The Kanayan Family is partnering with Armenia Tree Project (ATP) to create a living memorial to General Dro and his victory in Bash Aparan. The overall goal is to plant 2,500 trees to improve the site. Already 1,700 of ATP’s trees have been planted by local residents in partnership with volunteers from Birthright Armenia and the tech company Mottis Armenia. An additional 800 trees will be planted this spring as part of a visit by the Kanayan Family.

ATP organized a series of educational and fundraising events to support these programs. The first was a lecture about the Battle of Bash Aparan by Dikran Kalajian at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research in Boston, followed by a fundraising reception at the Narek Suni Agoump which included remarks by Dro’s daughter Olga Prudian and Tadat Sonenta-Paparian.

General Dro’s grandson and namesake, Dro Kanayan of Massachusetts, says that planting trees in his grandfather’s honor is appropriate because he had a strong connection to the land: “Dro understood the importance of what the land can provide for the people. My family believes that planting trees for the future of Armenia is a fitting tribute to the bravery and sacrifices of General Dro and his troops. We are proud to continue our grandfather’s tradition of service to the Armenian Nation in this way.”

The next series of events are in Los Angeles. The first is a memorial at Garabed Mountain co-hosted by the Woodbury University Armenian Students Association, which will be held on March 7.

The next event is a fundraising reception at the Oak and Vine in Glendale on Thursday, April 12. Philip Kanayan is planning to attend, along with leaders from the local Armenian community.

Ticket and sponsorship information is available via www.ArmeniaTree.org/1918

103RD ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIVE WEEKEND

STATE HOUSE COMMEMORATION
FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2018 9AM-12:30 PM
*Reception to follow

COMMEMORATION AT THE PARK
SATURDAY APRIL 21, 2018 3-5PM
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT FACEBOOK OR EMAIL: BOSTONAGCC@GMAIL.COM
Holy Week at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral Observed March 25-April 1

NEW YORK — St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral will observe Holy Week, March 25 through 31, with a series of special services, culminating in the Easter Sunday celebration on April 1.

Holy Week is the sacred commemoration of the dramatic events leading to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, His victory over death and the redemption of humanity and the fallen world. The Armenian Church re-enacts these episodes in the days leading up to Easter.

Palm Sunday, the commemoration of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, falls on March 25. Fr. Mamikon Khudjagian (dean of St. Vartan Cathedral) will be the celebrant for the services, which will begin with a Morning Service at 9:30 a.m., and will continue with the Divine Liturgy at 10:30 a.m. The Terasnut-pak data “Door-Opening” Service will be held after the Divine Liturgy.

The St. Vartan Cathedral Council will host a special “Children’s Day” program on Palm Sunday, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Children ages 5 and older are invited to take part in the Palm Sunday procession, and create arts and crafts.

March 29 is Great and Holy Thursday and the day’s services memorialize the Last Supper. Jesus’ vigil in the Garden of Gethsemane, his arrest and trial. Two separate services will be celebrated on this day. In the morning, the Divine Liturgy will begin at 11 a.m. This will be followed by a luncheon.

In the evening, the “Washing of the Feet” ceremony will start at 7 p.m., with the Khacharoom or Vigil Service following at 8:30 p.m. During the Washing of Feet ceremony, twelve individuals will serve as surrogates for the apostles.

The crucifixion and death of Christ will be observed on March 30 — Great and Holy Friday — and again two services will occur. The Order of the Crucifixion of Christ will begin at noon. This will be a short service enabling working people in Manhattan to attend, and it will be followed by a luncheon in the Diocesan Complets.

That same evening, at 7:30 p.m., the Order of the Entombment of the Lord, or Taghoom Service, will take place.

On Great and Holy Saturday, March 31, the Divine Liturgy will be preceded by a scripture-reading ceremony at 6:30 p.m. Easter Eve Liturgy will begin at 7 p.m., celebrated by Fr. Mamikon Khudjagian. Students from the Diocesan Khrimian Lyceum and the St. Vartan Armenian Saturday School will provide the Scripture readings. A reception will follow the services.

The drama of Holy Week will culminate on Easter Sunday, April 1. Easter is the central holy day of the Christian calendar, and commemorates the discovery of Christ’s empty tomb and the news of His glorious Resurrection. Matins will begin at 9:30 a.m. The Divine Liturgy will begin at 10:30 a.m. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, will celebrate the liturgy and deliver the homily. The St. Vartan Cathedral Choir will sing the Divine Liturgy under the direction of Khoren Mekanian. Florence Avakian will accompany on the organ.

Immediately following the service, the Release of Doves ceremony will go forth on the cathedral plaza. This year, Adrianne Alexanian will serve as godmother of the daces ceremony.

An Easter Sunday reception and program will follow the services, in Haik and Alice Karoookjian Auditorium. The reception will include a home blessing service, and the recognition of the various names associated with the holiday. The reception is free and open to the public.

For information on these observances—and on the cathedral’s 50th anniversary weekend of May 5, call the Diocese of the Armenian Church or visit its website, www.armenianchurch.us.

St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral is located at 630 Second Ave. (corner of 34th Street).
WASHINGTON — Soor Khatch Church of Bethesda, Md., recently celebrated its 53rd anniversary gala dinner, which was attended by nearly 200 parishioners. Archbishop Goshgarian Cholayan presided over this truly special event, and was recognized for his 50 years of service to the Armenian Church.

Jerair and Anahid Nishanian served as the honorary co-chairs for the evening.

Also speaking at the event were Deputy Chief of Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United States Hrachia Taschjian as well as the Representative of the Republic of Artsakh to the US Robert Atvayan.

Cholayan presented letters of Recognition to Arsen Saryan, Ara Sahagian, Rose Balian and Haroutian Arabian.

One of the highlights for the evening was a medley of traditional Armenian Songs performed by Emma Soghomonian and Pamela Tossouantan. They were accompanied by Armin Khachatourian on drums and Mikhan Kochyan on oud. The national anthems, Star Spangled Banner and Mer Harenk, were performed by Saren Balian and Aya Balian.

Anto Tossouantan was master of ceremonies. The anniversary dinner was co-sponsored by Elia Hacopian and Janna Simonian.

Jerair Nishanian is the founder and president of the Jerair Nishanian Foundation (JNF). The JNF came to be through Jerair Nishanian’s profound sense of duty inherited from his parents, who were the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, and a deep desire to assist the underprivileged young Armenians, in particular, the ones talented and a deep desire to assist the underprivileged, talented young Armenian students in Armenia to receive higher education and achieve their inherent potentials, and in turn, contribute to the welfare of their motherland and the future generations.

JNF is also committed to religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, translations, publications, and educational endeavors, and grants scholarships and financial aid to the talented underprivileged young Armenians to attain higher education in various disciplines in liberal arts, law, sciences, engineering and architecture; therefore, exclusively preserve their Armenian heritage, and build a strong generation of Armenians armed with higher education.

The foundation awards scholarships to attend Gavar State University and the State Engineering University in Yerevan.

Since its formation in 1993, JNF has been granting scholarships to undergraduate students in Gavar State University in Gavar, Armenia, but since 2011, JNF expanded its scholarship program to include students majoring in engineering and architecture to National University of Architecture and Construction of Armenia, located in Yerevan. To secure the continuity of the JNF scholarship program, Nishanian on May 2013, donated $1,000,000 to establish an endowment fund.

Since 2007, the JNF scholarship program in Armenia has been managed by the Doone of the Armenian Church of America’s Fund for Armenian Relief (FAK) in New York and its branch office in Yerevan. The JNF currently provides scholarships to more than 70 college students in Armenia, and is anticipated to increase the number of the students to 80 within the next two years.

The Jerair Nishanian Foundation was one of the six major donors in the US for the Centennial Memorial of the Armenian Genocide which took place in Washington D.C. in May 2015. The foundation has also funded several special projects, including the remodeling and construction of the Main Altar of St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church, Washington D.C., the translation of the book from Turkish into English by Dr. Taner Akçam, titled ‘The Young Turks’ Crime Against Humanity,’ as well as ‘The Young Turks’ Crime Against Humanity.

Nishanian is the recipient of several medals, certificates of appreciation and commendations from universities in Armenia and different orga-
SACRAMENTO, Calif. — On Wednesday, February 28, a delegation from the Armenian Assembly of America attended a hearing initiated by the CA State Senate’s Select Committee on California, Armenia and Artsakh Mutual Trade, Art and Cultural Exchange, under the leadership of Committee Chair, California State Sen. Anthony J. Portantino (D-25).

The committee convened its inaugural hearing at the State Capitol in Sacramento, and covered a wide range of subjects, including the re-invigoration of trade between California and Armenia, the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Sумгат pogrom by way of testimony from human rights activist, author, and refugee from Baku, Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte, and an enlightening discussion on the University of California (UC) system’s and UC students’ respective positions vis-à-vis divesting approximately $75 million from the Republic of Turkey. The latter discussion was precipitated by a successful grassroots divestment campaign on every UC campus by UC student activists of Armenian descent. The Armenian Assembly of America extends its profound gratitude to State Senator Portantino for chairing the hearing, and commends State Senators Scott Wilk, Ben Allen, and John Moorlach for their participation.

Armenian Assembly delegates provided statements during the public comment period of the hearing. Assembly delegation members included Southern California Regional Council member Helen Haig, Assembly Central Valley activists Daniel Aydenian and Helvina Grikoryan, and Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan.

Assembly delegation members are also grateful to have privately met and discussed a wide range of issues with Members of the California State Assembly and State Senate, including California State Assemblymembers Dante Acosta (R-38), Laura Friedman (D-43), Heath Flora (R-12) and Jim Patterson (R-23), and California State Senators Scott Wilk (R-21), John Moorlach (R-37) and Tom Berryhill (R-8). Among the issues discussed with members of the state Senate is the status of AB-1597, authored by California State Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian (D-46), which, if approved and signed into law, would prohibit California’s public employee retirement systems (CalPERS and CalSTRS) from investing new or renewing existing public funds in Turkish government-issued, owned, controlled, or managed bonds and assets. AB-1597 overwhelmingly passed (67 - 0) during a floor vote in the California State Assembly on June 1, 2017 and is currently pending in the California State Senate’s Committee on Public Employment and Retirement. The Armenian Assembly of America has submitted a written statement for the record in support of AB-1597.
WASHINGTON, from page 1

Sahakyan invited again to the US, this time officially by the White House.

Totah invited Hamparian to speak.

Hamparian thanked Sahakyan for making his work in Washington easy. He said, “Artsakh is on the right side of the defining issues that matter here in Washington DC, on questions of peace, on questions of dialogue and on questions of democracy.” Artsakh wants accountability on questions of peace and truce violations, open communication and dialogue. Hamparian said that Artsakh is an American story: it is the victory of a free people over foreign rule.

Hamparian declared that in honoring President Sahakyan, they were honoring a generation, starting in the late 1980s, that turned the tide of one thousand years. Armenians went from losing land and hope to a rebirth thanks to the people of Artsakh. He encouraged the guests to honor the president and his coevals by showing their support through money, time and effort to those on the front lines of Armenian independence.

Totah then invited Sahakyan to speak. Deputy Head of the President’s Administration David Babayan, translated his remarks into English. Sahakyan said that the American-Armenian community was one of the most powerful and accomplished segments of the Armenian diaspora, and was carrying out important work in developing Artsakh-US and Armenian-American relations and supporting Artsakh.

In particular, Artsakh, he said, is interested in developing a partnership with the United States. The peoples of the two countries share much in common in their system of values, Sahakyan continued, including dedication to the principles of democracy, freedom, and initiative, and the unacceptability of stereotypes.

Sahakyan then bestowed Artsakh state medals of gratitude to the ANCA and its representatives for their consistent support and services rendered to the Artsakh Republic. The same awards were previously awarded to the Assembly. ANC American-Armenian activist Dr. Sarkis Agaftonian of Georgia was called to the front to receive the medal of gratitude, while Kaper Kasparian, president of the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy, visiting from Belgium, was given the Mesrop Mashtots Medal by the Artsakh president.

At this point, Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny declared that it was truly an honor to come together as one community united in support of Artsakh on this auspicious occasion. He called up Annie Totah, and together with Aram Hamparian, the three organizational leaders toasted the president.

Totah repeated that they would be working for the president’s next visit to be on the invitation of the White House. Hamparian concluded the evening by emphasizing that our community is deeply united when it comes to issues like Artsakh.

During the banquet, a 20-year-old pianist from Artsakh, Anahit Arushanyan, performed three musical selections for the gathering during a break in between speeches.

The Artsakh delegation, in addition to the president and Babayan, included Foreign Minister Masis Mayilian, parliamentarians David Ishkhanyan and David Melkumyan, and was accompanied by Artsakh’s Permanent Representative in the United States, Robert Avetisyan.

In the audience were several clergymen, including, in addition to Archbishop Aykazian, Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Vicar General of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America. Aram Bakshian, a speechwriter for US Presidents Nixon, Ford and Reagan, and former US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans were present. The leaders of Armenian political parties like the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, cultural organizations like the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada and the Hamazkayin Armenian Cultural Association of the Eastern United States, as well as service organizations like the Knights of Vartan were in attendance.

Next week’s Mirror will have a special interview of President Bako Sahakyan conducted by Aram Arkun of the Mirror staff.

WASHINGTON, from page 1

WASHINGTON, from page 1

WASHINGTON, from page 1

WASHINGTON, from page 1

WASHINGTON, from page 1

WASHINGTON, from page 1

WASHINGTON, from page 1
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COMMUNITY NEWS

in Support of Artsakh

From left, Aram Hamparian, Bryan Ardouny and Annie Simonian Totah prepare to make a joint toast

ADL Supreme Council Meets with Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan

ADL, from page 1

On March 16, the ADL representatives had a private meeting with President Sahakyan’s group in the office of the Artsakh Republic representative to the United States. ADL Supreme Council President Nazerian welcomed the guests from Artsakh to the United States and then reported on the activities of ADL members in Artsakh. The meeting turned into a substantive discussion of the political situation of Artsakh. A number of plans which will be implemented in Artsakh in the near future by the ADL and associated organizations were discussed.

After the conclusion of the meeting, the ADL Supreme Council invited the Artsakh delegation to a special dinner at an elegant Washington restaurant.

The members of the visiting Artsakh delegation included, in addition to President Sahakyan, Artsakh Minister of Foreign Affairs Masis Mayilian, members of Parliament David Ishkhanyan and David Melkumyan, and Deputy Head of the President’s Administration David Babayan.

The meeting with the Artsakh delegations

Enjoy a night filled with friends, fun, raffles, and food.
Join us at Gore Place in Waltham.
For more information call 617-926-TREE

www.armeniatreeproject.org/KentuckyDerby

Berge Setrakian Honored on the 30th Anniversary of the Artsakh Movement

SETRAKIAN, from page 1

A number of representatives from the Armenian-American community were invited to the March 15 reception along with the Armenophile former US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans. Ambassador of Armenia to the United States Grigor Hovhannisian served as the master of ceremonies, first welcoming the official representatives of the Republic of Artsakh and then inviting a number of representatives of the Armenian-American community to themselves deliver their words of greetings to the guests.

At the end, President Sahakyan spoke and declared that he had visited America on a variety of prior occasions. However, this visit is the first to bear both political and historical significance. He then thanked the Armenian General Benevolent Union and its president, Berge Setrakian, who was sitting next to him at the table of honor. He then ceremoniously pinned the Mesrob Mashtots Medal of the Republic of Artsakh on Setrakian’s lapel and gave him an official governmental decree in recognition of his years of assistance to Artsakh.

Moved by this unexpected act of appreciation, Setrakian spoke emotionally, stressing that whatever the diaspora provided to the heroic people of Artsakh was insufficient. The diaspora was obligated to do much more because the Artsakh independence movement gave pride to the diaspora, and inspired its youth to continue to live their lives as Armenians.
How an Armenian Soldier Saved the Life of a Future US Senator

WASHINGTON (Armenpress) – Former US Sen. Mark Kirk says he owes his life to an Armenian soldier. The American politician made the remark in his speech March 9 when the Armenian parliamentary delegation awarded Kirk with the Medal of Honor of the Armenian National Assembly in Washington D.C.

Many years ago when Mark Kirk visited Armenia as an ordinary staff member of the Congress, he went to the frontline to get acquainted with the situation, and if it weren’t for an Armenian soldier standing next to him, this could’ve been the last visit of the US politician, Voice of America reports.

“We were in a trench near Terter, we were looking at Azerbaijani positions. I mistakenly raised my head up and right at that moment I felt the hand of the Armenian soldier on my collar, who pulled me back. An Azerbaijani bullet passed through the very place where my head was seconds ago. The Armenian soldier saved my life, and it was a lesson for me that you can’t raise your head from a trench,” Mark Kirk said.

The Senator learned another lesson from this visit also. He emphasized that history has been unfair towards the Armenian people and that historic justice should be restored, foremost by recognizing the Armenian Genocide. “Who remembers the Armenians” – the Senator repeated the infamous statement of Adolf Hitler. “Who remembers the Armenians, and none of us should forget the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian people, the wonderful, creative people,” Kirk said.

Bryan Arounian, Executive Director of the Armenian American Museum, United States, unified against genocide.

This year will mark the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in 1915. The focus of the genocide was on the Armenian Republic of Armenia and the modern-day Turkey, with millions of Armenian lives lost during the Armenian Genocide.

“Who remembers the Armenians” – the Senator repeated the infamous statement of Adolf Hitler. “Who remembers the Armenians, and none of us should forget the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian people, the wonderful, creative people,” Kirk said.

Bryan Arounian, Executive Director of the Armenian American Museum, United States, unified against genocide.

Genocide Commemoration at Heritage Park on April 21

BOSTON — The Massachusetts Armenian Genocide Commemoration Committee will host a commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on Saturday, April 21, at the Armenian Heritage Park on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway at 3 p.m. and is expected to conclude at 5 p.m.

This year will mark the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, killed approximately 1.5 million Armenians massacred by the Ottoman Empire in 1915. The focus of this year’s program will be on coming togeth-
Mouradian’s Book Shines Light on Armenian Genocide

By Cameron Vernali

LOS ANGELES (Daily Bruin) – Kay Mouradian’s mother survived the Armenian Genocide at the age of 14. Mouradian researched for 10 years in libraries, book shops and other countries. Mouradian won the Armenian Genocide Awareness Legacy Award at the Armenian National Committee of America Western Region’s annual awards banquet on February 24.

Kay Mouradian wrote a novel and released a documentary describing her mother’s experiences during the Armenian genocide, both titled My Mother’s Voice. The novel and accompanying documentary focus on her mother’s life during the Armenian genocide, which Mouradian grew up hearing stories about as a child. She said she wanted to help the Armenian Genocide will help people, especially teachers, remember a part of history that is often forgotten.

University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) alumna Kay Mouradian wrote a novel and released a documentary describing her mother’s experiences during the Armenian genocide, both titled My Mother’s Voice.

Committee of America Western Region’s annual awards banquet on February 24 for spreading awareness of the topic and said she hopes a personal focus on the Armenian Genocide will help people, especially teachers, remember a part of history that is often forgotten.

Mouradian said the idea for the book first came from her mother, who was suffering from severe dementia. As her condition got worse, she told Mouradian to write a book about her life and the Armenian Genocide. However, Mouradian was teaching throughout Los Angeles and had plans to go to Beijing to teach overseas at the time.

But her plans changed – Mouradian never went to Beijing and ended up writing the novel instead. Mouradian said she wanted to help the Armenian Genocide retain its place in history, and as a former teacher, she wanted to give her other educators a more accessible way of understanding the genocide.

The Armenian genocide began in 1915, during which the Ottoman Empire – which includes modern-day Turkey – committed genocide of more than 1.5 million Armenians residing in the empire. However, Mouradian said people see BOOKS, page 14.

Evening of Art and Food Raises Funds For YerazArt

By Alin K. Gregorian

BOSTON – On March 11, a capacity crowd gathered at anoush’ella’s kitchen restaurant in the South End for a fundraiser to benefit YerazArt, an organization helping young musicians in Armenia.

The event netted $20,000. Sharoun the event this year were YerazArt board members Nina Festekjian and Anna Aleyan. Festekjian and her husband, Raffi, are the proprietors of anoush’ella, which opened several months ago.

Aleyan spoke about the track record of the artists supported by the organization, who have achieved a high level of success internationally. Among those are Narek Arutyunyan, a young clarinetist who graduated from the Juilliard School, and Diana Adamyan, a young violinist who has won several competitions and has been selected to participate in the International Menuhin Competition in April.

Aleyan said that the organization has given grants and scholarships to many young musicians and that since 2006, it has supported more than 100 artists so that “young musicians grow up and become very accomplished. There are several who hold PhDs now both abroad and in Armenia.”

She noted that the group now wants to focus on musicians playing wind and brass instruments and even the National Philharmonic has European players for those instruments, she said.

“We also pay stipends to teachers so that they teach year-round,” Aleyan said. “And we donate the instruments. They are no less expensive in Armenia than here,” with instruments costing between $2,000 and $5,000. “We donate the see YERAZART, page 16.

Glendale Exhibits Explore Concept of Inherited Trauma of Armenian Genocide

By Jeff Landa

GLendale (Los Angeles Times) — The Downtown Central Library will host two simultaneous art exhibits that explore the concept of generational trauma associated with the Armenian Genocide.

The main exhibit, “Nonlinear Histories,” is curated by Ara and Anahid Oshagan as well as Isin Önlü and features the works of seven artists who examine their generational ties to the Armenian Genocide by reimagining inherited artifacts. It will run through May 6.

The collections are inspired by the theory of “post-memory” by literature scholar and author Marianne Hirsch, which refers primarily to how the children of Holocaust survivors cope with trauma.

Artists featured include Jean Marie Flaxman, Ekizen Claren, Odili Khe, Hayri Edmisekian, Sibnna Der Meguerditchian, Hrair Sarkissian and Glendale resident Harry Vesperian.

Ara Oshagian said there has been no “post-memory” exhibit on the Armenian Genocide, adding that it's one of the most important concepts that tries to address ways in which second- and third-generation survivors deal with trauma.

see LIBRARY, page 14.
Glendale Exhibits Explore Concept of Inherited Trauma of Armenian Genocide

BOOKS, from page 13

sometimes are unaware of the mass killings since Turkey refuses to acknowledge the genocide, and the word “genocide” did not exist until 30 years after the Armenian genocide.

“I thought to myself, ‘How do I make it easy for teachers to get a grasp of what happened in 1915 to make their job easier and to get their interest involved?’” Mouradian said.

Mouradian researched the genocide using a variety of sources including the history and memoir sections in used bookstores and international trips. At the bookstores, Mouradian would open books to the table of contents and buy them if she saw the word “Constantinople” in it. She also went to UCLA libraries for books on World War I and got in touch with the Library of Congress manuscript division for 10 microfilms.

During three trips to Turkey and two to Syria, she searched for her mother’s rescuers whose descendants remembered her mother decades after the end of the genocide, she said. She also traveled the routes her mother took from her village to Aleppo and through the Syrian desert.

However, Mouradian added to the complexity of My Mother’s Voice when she decided to create a documentary with the same name and focus as the novel. Mouradian said she wanted to create the documentary to help students understand the Armenian genocide via a more accessible medium.

Mark Friedman, a sound designer for Mouradian’s film, said his goal in making the documentary after meeting her through mutual friends.

The documentary features Mouradian’s voice over archive footage and photographs, as well as live footage of Mouradian herself. Friedman said the focus on Mouradian’s mother’s life created an opportunity for viewers to personally connect with the story.

“When you tell (people) that a million and a half people were murdered (in the Armenian genocide) … that number is so large that they can’t identify with it,” Friedman said. “But when you follow somebody’s life specifically, I think it has a lot of meaning and really affects people in the way we wanted them to be affected.”

Mary Mason, the director of teaching and learning in Glendale, met Mouradian while working with her on the Genocide Education Project training committee for district teachers. Mason said she thinks the documentary is a useful educational tool because it is personal and appropriate for kids to watch and talk about but does not oversimplify the topic.

“It puts a very real face on something that happened 100 years ago, and I think that’s important in the bigger context,” Mason said.

“My Mother’s Voice” is currently pending approval of the curriculum review committee of the Glendale Unified School District and the school board.

The Armenian Genocide does deserve its rightful place in history,” Mouradian said.

Zareh Tjeknavorian’s Film Wins at First Hermetic International Film Festival (FHIFF)

YEREVAN – American University of Armenia Adjunct Lecturer Zareh Tjeknavorian’s film “Elegy in Light” has won the Rosenkreuz Award for Best Foreign Documentary at the First Hermetic International Film Festival in Venice, Italy.

Tjeknavorian teaches Filmmaking and Cinema Studies at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS).

“From the beginning we had the feeling that this film was going to win awards because of its accessibility,” FHIFF director Sara Ferro said. “Rarely does a documentary film possess such mesmerizingcemtric, spiritual and arcane spiritual themes. Described by one participant as “two evenings of unusual, esoteric, lyric films,” the festival took place on March 1 and 2 at La Casa del Cinema in the historic heart of a snow-clad Venice. The program consisted of 28 works from Armenia, Australia, Canada, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Rosenkreuz Award for Best Foreign Documentary is named after Christian Rosenkreuz, legendary founder of the Rosicrucian Order (Order of the Rose Cross) in the early 15th century.

Zareh Tjeknavorian was born in Fargo, ND into a family of musicians and grew up in Telran, London, Frankfurt, Paris and New York, where he attended the Professional Children’s School and New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, majoring in film and television. Over the years he’s pursued his interests in ancient and esoteric cultures, lost histories, and the lives of the forgotten and disappearing through short and long-form films.

His most recent work is a folktale history of the Armenian Genocide and its aftermath in Soviet Armenia, told through the memories of orphans, refugees and their descendants.
An Evening of Reflection ‘In the [Spring] Time of Your Life’

By Michael Rettig

FRESNO — In an increasingly fast-paced world in which success is often measured by one’s monetary gains it is important to remember to live with intention and awareness. On Tuesday, March 6, 2018, Megan A. Jendian delivered an apt reminder of this “intentional living” in her multimedia presentation, “In the [Spring] Time of Your Life,” an exploration of the concept of “time” as expressed in both William Saroyan’s literary writings and in unique features of the Armenian liturgical tradition.

On behalf of the Armenian Cultural Conservancy (ACC), Dr. Matthew Ari Jendian, professor and department chair of sociology and director of Humanics at Fresno State, welcomed supporters to become members of ACC, and introduced his sister Megan as the evening’s presenter.

According to neuroscientific research, the brain perceives time differently based on one’s awareness and engagement with the present. Through highlighting the significance of the name, characters, and content of Saroyan’s 1939 play, “The Time of Your Life,” Jendian shared several examples of his sophisticated understanding of time and art which is often overlooked by his reviewers. Saroyan believed that successful art alters one’s awareness of time by intensifying one’s experience in the present moment that is both historical, yet not fully past.

“Connecting us to the presence of the eternal, both Saroyan’s writings and the Armenian faith tradition remind us to awaken, open our eyes, and pay attention so we may revel in life’s moments of grace, truth, and life,” Jendian encouraged during the dandelion tea reception. “Let this reflection be an invitation in the springtime of your life - to look more deeply, see more clearly, and perhaps live your life as magnificent art.”

A native of Fresno, Megan A. Jendian is a Saroyan literary enthusiast, graduate of the University of California, Irvine, and holds Master of Arts degrees from St. Nersess and St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Seminaries. She currently contributes as an editor and consultant for several publications. Over the last decade, Jendian has cocreated and implemented Diocesan curricula for retreat programs in New York, New England, the South, and the Midwest, provided 2017 Lenten presentations within Armenian communities of Racine, WI and Charlotte, NC, and continues to facilitate adult education seminars for parishes and organizations upon invitation.

Fresno’s Armenian Cultural Conservancy—a 501 nonprofit, community benefit organization, welcomes your membership. For further information, visit http://armenianculturalconservancy.org.

Recipe Corner

Grilled Eggplant, Tomatoes and Cheese Meze

With Yogurt Mint Salad

by Christine Vartanian Datin

INGREDIENTS:
6-8 Japanese eggplants, sliced thinly
6 medium tomatoes, sliced thinly or 2 boxes of cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup black or green olives, finely chopped
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (to taste)
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (to taste)
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (to taste)
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (to taste)
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (to taste)

GRILLED EGGPLANT AND TOMATO SALAD

Preparation:
Preheat a grill or grill pan to medium heat.
In a small bowl, combine the olive oil, salt, pepper, and garlic, and set aside.
In a medium bowl, combine tomatoes, olives, lemon juice, basil, and a few tablespoons of olive oil, feta, and set aside.
Brush bread or pita slices with olive oil and garlic mixture, and grill until toasty, turning one time, about 5 minutes (do not burn), remove bread from grill and keep warm. (You can bake bread slices in the oven arranged on a baking sheet, oiled side up).
Brush eggplant slices with olive oil and garlic mixture, and grill for 5-8 minutes or until browned. Turn eggplant slices over and top with thin sliced cheese. Grill for another 2-3 minutes or until cheese melts.
Arrange grilled eggplant on top of sliced bread, and top with the tomato and olive mixture and the roasted peppers. Sprinkle with koumiss salt and Parmesan or feta cheese, and garnish with parsley, mint, and green onions.
Serve warm, hot or cold with a warm tomato sauce on the side, if desired.
and the Cucumber Mint Salad.
Serves 6-8.

*Christine’s recipes have been published in the Fresno Bee newspaper, Sunset magazine, Cooking Light magazine, and at http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/
Evening of Art and Food Raises Funds for YerazArt

YERAZART, from page 13

instruments to the schools and they are dedicated to a promising young artist,” Afeyan said. Once the student leaves, they cannot take the instrument with them.

Many of the instruments were more than 50 years old and in rough shape, she said.

Festekjian thanked the local artists who had donated artwork for the silent auction: Levon Gyulkhasyan, Tamara Wolfson, Hagop Keledjian, Karine Makartichian and Sirarpi Heghiman Walter.

Noubar Afeyan added that another item up for auction was a signed early copy of Hayk Demoyan’s Armenian Legacy in America: A 400-Year Heritage.

Festekjian then invited Nicole Babikian Hajjar, who for more than a decade has chaired the fundraisers for YerazArt, and presented to her a Michael Aram decorative piece as a token of thanks.

Hajjar said, “I am very happy to YerazArt is in the best hands possible” and congratulated the founders of the organization, Raffi Festekjian and Noubar Afeyan, and their spouses.

Nina Festekjian said she was happy with the program. “I am thankful to have this today. It has been great to raise as much as this. This year we are doing it in a public place where are usually it is in a house.”

Sylvie Zakarian, a YerazArt board member and a faculty member in the percussion department at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Afeyan said, is helping the group focus its scope in Armenia.

Zakarian said that for several summers YerazArt has set up a two-week summer music school for gifted students high school age and younger for wind and brass.

Guests mingled and munched on Lebanese and Armenian food passed around on trays.

Music was provided by Oriental Trio.

For more information or to donate, visit https://www.facebook.com/events/364699393999850/
APRIL 8 — St. David Armenian Church of Boca Raton will celebrate the 30th Anniversary of its Consistory on Saturday, April 8. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with Mass at 7 p.m. at Marjardian Hall at 1 p.m., presided by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian. All are invited to this special occasion. Donations for adults $45, children under 14, $10. Contact the church office 561 994-2333, or Song Kradjan 607 727-6876 and Erma Plikian 561 414-1711.

APRIL 20-21 — Commemorating the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, first at the State House, on Friday, April 20, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Boston, MA. Luncheon and reception will follow. Then on Saturday, April 21, a Commemoration at the Park, 3 to 5 p.m. Further details will follow. For information, call (617) 850-0632 or bostonogc@gmail.com.

APRIL 21 — Annual Presentation and Raising of the Armenian Flag at City Hall in commemoration of the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Presentation to be led by the Lowell Armenian Veterans Honor Guard. Participants should meet at the corner of Memikmov and John Sts. in Lowell at 9-30 a.m. Sponsored by the Armenian National Committee, Memikmov Park (ANCW) with the participation of all area Armenian Churches and Organizations.

APRIL 28 — Trinity Talent Showcase, 7 p.m., doors open: 7:30 p.m. Free. For that showcase begins, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA. All invited to an evening of entertainment featuring talent from the Holy Trinity Church community, Robert Clarke, magician and juggler; and music by the Black Sea Compos. Cabinet Table Seating: $20 per person/$100 for table of max. 6 (RSVP deadline April 15); Auditorium seating: $10 in advance; $15 at the door. For further information or to reserve online, log onto: https://eventbrite.com/e/2018-trinity-talent-showcase-tickets-43813863472, or call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.937.7900. For more information, contact chingris@htrc.org.

MAY 5 — Saturday, Kentucky Derby Watch Party, Fun and festivities to support Armenia Tree Project. At the eleventh hour, 240 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA. Details to follow.

MAY 5 — Save the date! Annual Meeting, Armenian International Women’s Association (AIWIA). Details to follow. Contact: info@aiwianational.org or 617-926-0171.

MAY 5 — Celebrate Public Art during Artweek on Saturday at the Park, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, 1 p.m., World Labyrinth Day: Walk As One in peace & harmony with people in cities worldwide who will be walking a labyrinth in their area. At 12:45 p.m., introduction to Walking a Labyrinth, 1:30 p.m. - Reception to View the 2018 Configuration of the Abstract Sculpture. Remarks by HAIC Curator, Sarah Baker, editor-in-chief, Art New England magazine. Introduced by Lucas Cowan, Public Art Curator, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy. Tea & Desserts, hosted by MEM Tea Imports & The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 2:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 30 — Save the date! Armenia Fund USA and Ardzivag Armenian TV are proud to present Artsakh's Independence Celebration. Don’t miss the performances by a choir of 100 Armenian singer Aray Asatryan. Proceeds will benefit Fruitful Artsakh Project. 4 p.m. Location: Bergen PAC, 30 N Van Brunt St., Englewood.

NEW YORK

MARCH 28 — Taner Akçam, “Killing Orders: Talat Pasha’s Telegrams and the Armenian Genocide,” at Columbia University. 6:00 p.m. Co-sponsored by the Columbia Armenian Center and NAASR. (Venue TBA) Further details to follow. APRIL 21 - MAY 13 — Off-Broadway production by Pan Asian Repertory Theatre of Joyce Van Dyke’s play, DAYBREAK: the lyrical story of two Armenian women friends, survivors from 1915, who are transported with their families into the 21st century future. Performances at the Beckett Theatre (on Theatre Row), 410 W. 42nd St., New York. Discount tickets for seniors, students and groups. For information: www.telegarage.com or call (212) 239-6200. For tickets: www.telecharge.com or call (212) 947-8844. Or contact the theatre: info@panasianrep.org, (212) 868-4030.
It looks like the Cold War is back with a vengeance. Western capitals and Moscow are trading accusations or counter-accusations, and the recent poisoning of a former Russian intelligence officer in London has amplified the Cold War rhetoric to the extent that the US and the West may lead. Armenia and Artsakh have been taking initiatives which would not have been possible in the past under the same circumstances.

Federica Mogherini, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs, has announced that never before have Armenia and the EU been as close. That relationship has already been reflected in the exchange of high-level political delegations between Armenia and European countries.

It looks like developing relations with the EU is also extending to cover the US-Armenian relations. Indeed, in these tense international relations, a parliamentary delegation from Armenia is visiting the US, while simultaneously a ministerial delegation headed by Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan is in the US, despite having triggered an angry diplomatic note from Baku to the US government. The US ambassador was called to the Foreign Ministry in Baku to protest the visit.

In the same vein, Azerbaijan’s delegation to the US is also headed by the US official by the US ambassador was called to the Foreign Ministry in Baku to protest the visit.

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How Azerbaijan Distorts UN Security Council Resolutions

The Armenian National Committee of America, San Francisco Chapter, in a joint statement with Members of the Armenian National Committee Member Levon Korkis, Esq., and ARF Western US Central Committee Member Vache Thomassen, Esq. have issued a joint statement outlining how Azerbaijan has distorted UN Security Council Resolutions.

The statement reads: “When this official genealogy website was opened, I immediately noticed a number of errors and omissions. I couldn’t find a single article or statement about the Armenian genocide. The Armenian population was not represented at all. I was shocked to see how little attention was paid to the suffering of the Armenian people. I immediately contacted the website administrators and demanded that they make changes to the website. They promised to do so, but I didn’t want to wait any longer. I immediately contacted the Armenian National Committee of America, San Francisco Chapter, and asked them to help me. They provided me with a list of contacts and I contacted them immediately. I was told that I could take legal action if necessary. I immediately contacted a lawyer and filed a lawsuit. The website administrators were forced to make changes to the website. I was able to correct the errors and omissions and the website was updated.”

The statement concludes: “This incident shows the importance of having a strong and independent media in a country. It also shows the importance of having a strong and independent government. We must continue to fight for our rights and for the rights of our people. We must never give up.”

Armenian Turks And Other Roots Stories

By Rafii Bedrosyan

Recently the Turkish government opened a website where Turkish citizens can look up their ancestral roots until mid-1950s. There are hundreds of stories in printed and social media that this caused widespread shock and among several Turks who discovered that instead of coming from purely Turkish origins, they had Albanian, Arabic, Pontic Greek, and worst of all, Armenian roots. Stories have been reported that some members of an ultra-nationalistic and racist Turkish party were excluded from the website, out of the way, went into depression and even committed suicide upon finding Armenian roots.

Whether these stories are true or not, the subject of one’s roots is deadly and critical in Turkey. The late Hrant Dink was prosecuted, prosecuted for “insulting Turkishness” and eventually assassinated after revealing that Atatürk’s adoptive daughter and first female military pilot in Turkey, Saba Goken, was in fact an Armenian girl orphaned during the 1915 genocide. Many Armenian families who knew the tragic 1915 fate of their grandmother’s or grandfather’s, born all the way back in 1890s, are now finding out that these people are still miraculously alive, according to the documented records of the website.

I wish to relate two interesting — and little known — stories of roots.

An Armenian wealthy family lives in a village of Malatya in the 1980s. The region is terrorized and harassed by Kurdish inhabitants who regularly raid the villages. Armenians have started organizing defense forces by banding together fedaies, to protect the Armenian villages. An Armenian fedaey leader invites his Spanish-Armenian-Armenian family in France and asks for money to buy weapons and horses. The wealthy Armenian states he will decide in two weeks whether to com- plete with this request or not. At the end of two days, the fedaey returns, the wealthy Armenian refuses to give any money, and the fedaey promptly shoots the man. The widow of the killed Armenian-flys with her son to Paris to join Latie, the converts to Islam and raises the boy with complete hatred of Armenians. The boy grows up to be Ismet Inonu, the second president of Turkey after Kemal Ataturk. He is the worst enemy of the Armenians and other minorities in Turkey, after the Ittihadist leaders.

By the way, it is interesting to note that Kemal’s great-grandson, as a master diplomat, Boris Johnson, who regularly attacks the Armenians, has also sent his British wife and children to England for safety reasons. Unfortunately, the tide turns against Artin Kemal when the resistance in Armenia grows, and he begins to lose power and sweeps the Sultan and the Istanbul govern- ment away. Artin Kemal gets caught in the barber shop of Tokatliyan Hotel in Istanbul while he is being taken to Ankara for trial, one of Atatürk’s commanders, “Red” Narekliyan Flaha (dubbed red for his beard as well as his blood-red coat) orders his soldiers to Lynch Artin Kemal, who is torn apart limb by limb still alive, and Artin Kemal dies tragically in 1922. It seems this Narekliyan specializes in lynchings because when his forces enter Imam Surmeyi, in 1922, he does the same to the leading Greek bishop in the city, now named Saint Chrysostomos of Smyrna, only this time he orders the Bishop’s eyes gouged before tearing him limb by limb.

Back to Artin Kemal’s British wife and children in England, and the family of Russian deportees, the latest? Former mayor of London, and the current Foreign Minister of Britain, Boris Johnson, who happens to be Artin Kemal’s great-grandson, together with Johnson’s father, Johnson tells Turkish President Erdogan that UK will do everything possible to get Turkey into the European Union, but at the same time, he advices his countrymen to stay in the EU when Britain is part of EU. Britain would be flood- ed by Turkish immigrants.

In conclusion, the tragic roots stories, politics, and fun.
COLUMBIA, Ill. — David Bequette, founder of The Green Bean Café chain in Yerevan, Armenia, is running for United States House of Representatives in Illinois’ 12th Congressional District. On Thursday, the Illinois Board of Elections confirmed Bequette’s place on the ballot, along with one other candidate, going into the March 20th Democratic primary.

David and his wife, Irina Ghaplanyan, and their three children, spent several years in Armenia building the café chain, which is responsible for providing jobs for dozens of Syrian Armenian refugees. Irina, was born and raised in Yerevan, and recently published a book on Armenian politics.

Professionally, Bequette holds a bachelor’s degree from Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville, and is a marketing consultant and entrepreneur. He worked on several projects in Armenia to include the Smithsonian Institution’s My Armenia program as well as the non-profit organization One Armenia. Bequette also taught Marketing and Management at the Agribusiness Teaching Center, a Texas A&M degree program in Yerevan.

Bequette, a Democrat will face one primary opponent, and then challenge incumbent Republican Mike Bost.

For more information, visit www.bequettefor-congress.com

Prime Minister Visits Armaniv, Gets Familiarized with Ostrich-Breeding, Pistachio Orchards and Winemaking

YEREVAN — During his March 17 trip to Armaniv, Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan got acquainted with a number of investment programs underway in the region.

He first visited an ostrich-breeding farm in Pokhtavan community. He was told that owing to investments made since 2008, the number of ostrich has reached 500 at the farm. The production of basturma, sujukh and ghaurma started late last year. At this point, the products are only sold on the Armenian market, but steps are being taken to arrange their export abroad.

Welcoming the development of ostrich-breeding in Armenia, Karapetyan suggested cooperating with the Business Armenia Foundation (Armenian Development Fund) to promote the exports.

The premier next visited Artamed, where Iranian-Armenian investors are implementing a large-scale pistachio gardening project. Karapetyan was informed that a 590-hectare pistachio garden with a drip irrigation system will be established in Armaniv through a $10-million investment program. Seedling processing activities have already started. The whole range of the output will be exported to different markets.

Karapetyan stressed that the government is prepared to make use of its toolkits in order to assist the company with their investment program and the projected exports.

The premier’s next port of call was Voskeni Wines Company in Sardarapat community, where he was introduced to the winery’s ongoing activities and future plans. The production is based on modern equipment imported from Germany. Grape purchase contracts have been signed not only with the local entities, but also with farmers from Vayots Dzor. Voskeni Wines is going to expand the use of the drip irrigation system. Exports shall be enhanced as the range of wines expands. The output is currently marketed in Armenia, Russia and the Netherlands. Steps are being taken to master new European markets.