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New Armenian President Sworn In

Ex-President Expected to Retain Power

YEREVAN (RFE/RL, Armenpress) – Armen Sarkisian was sworn in as president of Armenia amid speculation that outgoing President Serzh Sargsyan will become prime minister, a post that is now more powerful than the presidency due to consti-



President Armen Sarkisian

tutional reforms.

Armen Sarkisian, who is not related to the outgoing president, was inaugurated in a ceremony at the Karen Demirchian Sports and Concert Hall on April 9.

The 64-year-old Sarkisian, a former ambassador to Britain, was elected to a seven-year term by lawmakers on March 2.

Opposition leaders have accused Serzh Sarkisian, who was first elected in 2008 and held office for two terms, of seeking the prime minister's job to allow him to retain power.

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From left, head of the Armenian Catholic Church Krikor Bedros XX Gabroyan, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, Pope Francis and Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I

New Statue of St. Gregory of Narek Unveiled in Vatican Gardens

VATICAN CITY (Combined Sources) – Pope Francis on Thursday, April 5, consecrated the bronze statue of Saint Gregory of Narek (Grigor Narekatsi), a 10th-century poet and monk.

The historic event was attended by President Serzh Sargsyan, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I as well as the head of the Armenian Catholic Church Krikor Bedros XX Gabroyan.

For the first time in history, all three Armenian Church leaders were gathered together with the Roman Pontiff. It is something that Pope Francis prayed for in 2015.

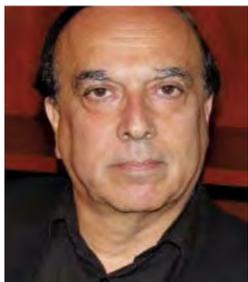
The bronze statue, designed by David Yerevantsi, was forged in the Czech Republic under the joint sponsorship of Mikael Minasyan, Armenia's ambassador to the Holy See, and Artur Janibekyan, the director of Gazprom Media Holding (Moscow).

see STATUE, page 4



Mass. State House Commemoration of Armenian Genocide Takes Place on April 20

BOSTON – Many prominent Massachusetts politicians will join the Armenian community of Boston in commemorating the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on Friday, April 20 in the historic State House. The Massachusetts Armenian community is fortunate to have this unique setting for one of the most prominent commemorations of the Genocide in the United States. This year guest speaker Raffi Bedrosyan will give unique insights into the Islamized “hidden” Armenians of Turkey,



Raffi Bedrosyan

Youth Program April 21 at Armenian Heritage Park

the living victims of the Genocide, and popular soprano Knarik Nerkararyan will perform several musical pieces. On Saturday, April 21, a special program oriented to the youth will be presented at Armenian Heritage Park.

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Bedrosyan to Lecture on Islamized Armenians in Watertown

WATERTOWN – For more than a hundred years, Armenians talk about the murdered victims of the Genocide. It is time to talk about the living victims of the Genocide, the descendants of assimilated survivors remaining in Turkey today. On Friday, April 20, at 7 p.m., Raffi Bedrosyan will be in Watertown to address these largely overlooked people who managed to preserve aspects of their identity under extremely challenging circumstances. The Tekeyan Cultural Association and St. James Armenian Church present this illustrated talk, entitled “Islamized Hidden Armenians of Turkey: Hidden Victims of a Genocide,” followed by a question-and-answer session open to the public.

see LECTURE, page 10



“Hidden” Armenians from Turkey visit the Armenian Genocide monument in Armenia.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Soldier Killed by Azeri Army in Artsakh

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Defense Army conscript Narek Harutyunyan, 20, was killed by Azerbaijani forces on April 9 at about 2 p.m. in the southern section of the contact line. The spokesperson of the Defense Ministry of Armenia Artsrun Hovhannisyanyan said an investigation is underway.

“The Defense Ministries of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh share the grief of the loss and express solidarity with the family, relatives and co-servicemen of the killed soldier,” Hovhannisyanyan posted on his Facebook page.

Armenia Negotiates With Tesla Storage Battery Project

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – With increased electricity production through solar power stations, Armenia is eyeing the establishment of accumulative stations (batteries).

Hayk Harutyunyan, deputy minister of energy infrastructures and natural resources, said this week they want to build the first 14 MW / h energy storage accumulator battery by 2020 in Ddmashen, Gegharkunik province.

“The battery stations are necessary not only for renewable energy, but also for our base capacities. We aim at the maximally efficient use of our base capacities,” he said.

The ministry is currently discussing approaches of the construction of the stations.

Harutyunyan said they are also discussing the possibility of hydro-accumulation stations – taking into account the hydro-energy resource of Armenia.

Sarkisian Meets with Eurnekian to Discuss Armenia’s Development

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia’s new president, Dr. Armen Sarkisian, visited on April 5 Tierras de Armenia CJSC, owned and operated by Argentine-Armenian businessman and philanthropist Eduardo Eurnekian.

Sarkisian and Eurnekian toured in the orchards and visited the wine bottling plant. The latter spoke about the work done there, future plans and projects of his company.

Sarkisian and Eurnekian talked about the prospects of Armenia’s development, and the opportunities for investments.

Sarkisian expressed his gratitude to Eurnekian for his contribution to the economic development of Armenia, noting that he has brought a new business culture, mentality, work style and approaches to Armenia.

Tierras de Armenia was founded in 2003.

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Times Square Gathering

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

HALO Manager Gives Update on Victims

STEPANAKERT (Armenpress) – Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh Republic) Masis Mayilian received the Artsakh Program Manager of the HALO Trust, Michael Newton, on April 10.

During the meeting, the sides discussed issues related to the social security of the family members of the HALO Trust deceased staffers, and those injured as a result of the March 29 mine explosion in the Martakert region.

Newton briefed him on the course of the organization's investigation into the incident. Newton once more expressed his gratitude to the government of Artsakh for the prompt assistance rendered to the organization, as well as personally to Mayilian, for visiting the HALO Trust Office with the director of the State Emergency Service, Karen Sargsyan, and for the moral support provided on behalf of the authorities of Artsakh.

Mayilian reiterated the readiness of the Artsakh authorities to continue supporting the activities of the HALO Trust in the Republic.

EU Is OK with Armenia's Power Plant

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – A landmark agreement signed by Armenia and the European Union in November does not call for the closure of the Metsamor nuclear power plant anytime soon, a senior Armenian official insisted on Tuesday, April 10.

The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) covers a wide range of areas, including Armenia-EU cooperation on "energy matters." It specifically refers to "the closure and safe decommissioning of Metsamor nuclear power plant and the early adoption of a road map or action plan to that effect."

The 350-page agreement makes clear at the same time that such a plan must take into account "the need for [the plant's] replacement with new capacity to ensure the energy security of the Republic of Armenia."

Deputy Foreign Minister Karen Nazarian emphasized this provision when he assured Armenian lawmakers that as a result of the CEPA Yerevan will not be forced to shut down Metsamor before replacing it with a new nuclear or other energy facility. "There is no such language in the agreement," Nazarian said during a parliament debate.

The EU and the United States have long pressed for the decommissioning of the plant generating roughly one-third of Armenia's electricity.

Serzh Sargsyan pledged to build a new plant shortly after becoming president in 2008. However, his government failed to attract billions of dollars in funding needed for replacing the Metsamor facility. The government decided instead to extend the life of Metsamor's 420-megawatt reactor by 10 years, until 2027.

Russia plays a key role in this endeavor, having provided Armenia with a \$270-million loan and a \$30-million grant in 2015.

Sargsyan Meets with President of Lower House Of Italian Parliament

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President Serzh Sargsyan had a meeting on April 5 with Roberto Fico, President of the Chamber of Deputies (lower house of parliament) of Italy in Rome.

In the beginning of the meeting Fico asked the Armenian president about the process of his visit to Italy and Vatican, the president's office said.

The president presented the busy agenda and results of the visit, the meeting and agreements which were reached.

Sargsyan congratulated Fico on his election as president of the Chamber of Deputies.

Sargsyan attached great importance to parliamentary ties in expanding the agenda of interstate relations, and told Fico that the Armenian parliament has formed a good tradition of friendly ties with parliaments of numerous European countries.

Sargsyan stressed it is time to also elevate the Armenian-Italian inter-parliamentary partnership. In this context he emphasized that simply the fact that the previous Italian parliamentary friendship group with Armenia was one of the two largest groups in the world's parliaments speaks volumes.

AUA, AGBU to Co-Host Lecture Series Commemorating First Republic Centennial

YEREVAN – American University of Armenia (AUA) and the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Armenia will co-host a lecture series by renowned historian Dr. Richard Hovannisian dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the First Armenian

Republic. The lectures will be delivered in AUA's Manoogian Hall on April 16, 18, and 20.

Hovannisian is an Armenian-American historian and professor emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles. His works include an inimitable four-volume history of the First Republic of Armenia, a series of books on the regions of Western Armenia, and an oral history project to record the eyewitness accounts of Armenian Genocide survivors.

The first lecture, taking place on April 16 and titled "May 28: The Uncharted Course Toward Independence," will focus on the conditions during World War I which made the road to independence extremely treacherous and the challenges facing the desperate Armenian leadership seemingly insurmountable. But somehow the Republic managed to survive until the end of the war when strong rays of hope spread over the slopes of Mount Ararat. Since then, May 28 has become the symbol of resurrected Armenian statehood after centuries of foreign dominion.

On April 18, Hovannisian will talk on

"Creating the Republic's Infrastructure." In the spotlight will be the measures taken to lay the foundations of a republican form of government, while also dealing with internal tensions, not only among the several Armenian political parties, but also within the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnak Party).

The lecture series will conclude on April 20 with the topic "Armenia in the International Arena and an Assessment" the Republic. The response of the Great Powers was critical in that endeavor, and it was a question of whether they would commit the resources necessary to honor their wartime pledges regarding the future of the Armenian people. The collapse of the First Armenian Republic in December 1920 gave the answer to that question. As the Republic passed into history, strongly divergent views became manifest regarding its actual significance. Dr. Hovannisian will seek answers to the question "In this centennial year, what might be a realistic appraisal?"

The lectures and the following-up discussions will be in English with simultaneous translation into Armenian.

Karapetyan 'Very Likely' to Become Deputy PM

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Outgoing Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan is "very likely" to serve as first deputy prime minister in Armenia's new government that will be formed later this month, the ruling Republican Party (HHK) said on April 10.

"Karen Karapetyan will continue to play a serious role in the government system," the HHK spokesman, Eduard Sharmazanov, said. "It's just that as has been the case until now, the leader and locomotive of that system will be [former President] Serzh Sargsyan, the head of the ruling party."

Karapetyan has been tipped to take up what will be the second most powerful position under Armenia's new, parliamentary system of government since Sargsyan signaled last month his plans to hold on to power. The two met on Saturday to discuss their political future two days before Sargsyan completed his second and final presidential term.

Karapetyan said on Monday that they decided to "propose" to the HHK to nominate Sargsyan for prime minister.

The Armenian parliament controlled by the HHK and its allies is due to vote on the new prime minister on April 17. Sharmazanov said the party's governing body will discuss and field its candidate for the top government post by the end of this week.

Sargsyan appointed Karapetyan as prime minister in September 2016 in the hope of speeding up sluggish economic growth through major reforms promised by the former business executive.

Opposition leaders scoffed at the outgoing premier's readiness to downgrade his nominal status. "I consider this a humiliation and deception of the Armenian people, including by [Karapetyan,]" one of them, Raffi Hovannisian, told reporters. He argued that it was Karapetyan, not Sargsyan, who led the HHK's parliamentary election campaign in April 2017.

Armenian Team Technology on Domestic Violence Wins World Bank Grant

YEREVAN – The World Bank Group and Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) have awarded \$99,500 to an Armenian technology business foundation to help reduce incidents of gender-based violence (GBV).

The award, part of the 2018 Development Marketplace for Innovation to Address Gender-Based Violence, will support the Armenian Enterprise Incubator Foundation (EIF) to deploy mobile applications and digital technologies that empower women with real-time expert support and information, and that collect critical data needed to inform policy on a larger scale.

The Award will also enable EIF to promote dialogue among stakeholders in the field of GBV and ICT professionals.

"I am very pleased to congratulate the Enterprise Incubator Foundation, our long-standing partner, with this outstanding award," said Sylvie Bossoutrot, World Bank Country Manager for Armenia.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 35 percent of women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.

"Studies show that gender-based violence can cost economies up to 3.7 percent of GDP due to lost productivity, in addition to the direct harm caused to women and men," said Caren Grown, Senior Director, Gender, World Bank Group. "The World Bank Group is proud to support the Development Marketplace winners, whose projects seek to find sustainable and scalable approaches to preventing GBV for us today and for future generations."

Launched in 2015 in memory of Hannah Graham, daughter of a long-time World Bank Group employee, the Development Marketplace is an annual competition for researchers to find innovative solutions that can help individuals, communities, and nations stamp out GBV.

This year's winners, chosen from more than 250 submissions from research institutions, NGOs, and aid and other organizations around the world, come from Armenia, Cambodia, Colombia, Honduras, Jordan, Kenya, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda and South Africa.

New Armenian President Sworn in

PRESIDENT, from page 1

Parliament is scheduled to elect a prime minister on April 17.

Under a shift that was approved in a December 2015 referendum, Armenia changed its form of government from semi-presidential to a parliamentary republic.

As a result, presidential veto powers have been stripped from the post and the presidency has been downgraded to more of a figurehead position.

Unlike previous post-Soviet presidents in Armenia, Armen Sarkisian was elected by parliament instead of by popular vote.

The constitutional reforms coming into effect also limit the president to a single term.

Sarkisian said in an interview that in order to attract foreign investments it is necessary to provide a transparent legal field and successful business examples for investors.

"In order to attract Western investments to Armenia everything must be done so that each potential investor knows what is waiting for him, in what conditions he is going to work, what is the country's legislation and practice where he is going to invest. And in order to create a favorable investment environment, a constant hard work is needed," he told TASS.

According to him, from the perspective of the country's economic and investment attractiveness, the further strengthening of the rule of law and

establishment of equality of everyone before the law is very important, which, he says, depends not only on the state, but also the citizens, society and business community.

As for the Armenian Diaspora, Sarkisian said the Armenian traders still from the ancient times established business ties in remote coasts, from India to Iran, America to Australia. "But the majority of the Western Diaspora was formed when Armenians were subjected to genocide in the Ottoman Empire in late 19th century and early 20th century. Today our compatriots practically live in all continents, they are actively engaged in the economic, public and cultural lives of 100 countries of the world," he said.



INTERNATIONAL

Armenia Seeks Foreign Policy Balance

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN – In the current Cold War climate in East-West relations, exasperated by the British-Russian crisis around the Skripal affair, it has become increasingly difficult for smaller nations to maintain an independent stance in the interest of protecting friendly relations with both the West and Russia. No one knows this better than the Armenians. Thus, when Ambassador Ashot Smbatyan was invited to speak at the Lepsiushaus in Potsdam on March 22, he faced an audience of intellectuals, political figures, diplomats and members of the Armenian community, eager to hear his views on “Armenia and Europe: Taking Stock, with a View to



Ambassador Smbatyan at Lepsiushaus

the Future.”

To explain his country's relations with Europe, Smbatyan posed the question, “Where does Europe begin and where does it end?” An ostensibly simple question, it actually can be addressed from different perspectives: geographically, he said, Germany belongs to Europe whereas India does not. But then perhaps “Europe” designates more a “shared value system” than a land mass; or, yet again, one may be referring to the economic dimension. The aim of his remarks was to explain “what this concretely means for a country like Armenia.”

Situating Armenia in the “geographical interface between Europe and Asia,” as a country sharing borders with Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Iran, Smbatyan said it had managed, despite centuries of conflicts, to preserve its independence, “national identity and unique culture” – also thanks to its early development of a written language culture. A brief historical overview of the last century, from its short-lived independence from 1918 to 1920, to its membership in the Soviet Union until 1991, set the parameters for his remarks on Armenian foreign policy.

“Since our independence, the aim of Armenian foreign policy has not been to act against any country, but to work together with all our immediate and proximate neighbors towards enduring peaceful coexistence for the region. On the basis of this premise,” he said, “one has to consider Armenian foreign policy as a whole, which means not only single bilateral agreements but also Armenia's inclusion in various structures and organizations of the international community.” With this in mind, one should understand that Armenia “for historically developed reasons fosters a close strategic partnership with Russia, on the one hand, and very good relations with the West, that is the European Union and the USA, on the other.”

Europe: Neighborly Cooperation

Since the start of the new millennium, bilateral relations with the EU have

progressed steadily in line with Armenia's foreign policy guidelines. Smbatyan ticked off a number of cornerstones of this partnership, from 2004 when it was admitted into the European Neighborhood Policy to 2006 when the EU action plan entered into force; from 2009 when it joined the Eastern Partnership, together with five other former members of the USSR, to 2010 when it started association negotiations with the EU.

Last year in November a framework agreement with the EU was concluded which is to begin implementation this Spring. If the earlier steps in the process already laid the basis for

strengthening national sovereignty and contributing to social and economic stability on the regional level, this new framework “opens up not only a new chapter in Armenian-European relations, but also the possibility of finding new paths towards Eurasian and

European-Iranian cooperation.” Smbatyan highlighted the fact that Armenia has built good relations with Iran and could play “an important mediating role” between the Islamic Republic and the EU. “You see,” he stated, “that relations to Europe are in not at all one-sided!”

Economic Partnerships: Exclusive or Inclusive?

To contribute to overcoming the conflicts plaguing the region, economic stability is a key factor. Smbatyan stated that Armenia has decided to pursue a western economic model, a step which “is still not undisputed” inside the country. “Our economy,” he added, “is linked to Russia's through many ties,” as is the case for others from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

This led the ambassador to the crux of the issue. Anyone familiar with the debate in German political and press circles knows that there has been criticism leveled at Yerevan for its close ties to Russia. And, in the context of currently escalating East-West tensions, it was important to address this issue. Smbatyan said that, considering these ties, “the key to success of a Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) lies in dialogue including all sides and in the readiness of our European partners to tolerate the agreements that Armenia has made. The EEU,” he explained, “is for us one part of the international integration processes that we have planned. From our standpoint, integration processes can unfold successfully, also in parallel.” In other words, there need be no exclusiveness.

Smbatyan pointed to the example of China, to show that a liberal market economy system can coexist with a different social system – “which may not be the best” – and can still be very successful. “For this reason,” he said, “I think that when we entered the European Neighborhood Policy and Armenia, as a member of the Eastern Partnership, began negotiations on association and a free trade agreement, it would have been right

to start from the onset with ‘as well as’ instead of ‘either/or.’ For in retrospect, there are many who argue that one should not have raised an ‘either/or’ but should have spoken of an ‘as well as.’ Maybe we could have avoided a lot that way.”

Those who remember the two-day visit paid by President Serge Sargsyan to Germany in early April 2016 may remember that Armenia's decision to join the EEU had sparked controversy. He was asked about this during an interview with Deutsche Welle: “Armenia has been part of the ‘Eastern Partnership’ program, which implied association prospects with the EU. But you decided in favor of the Eurasian Economic Union. What triggered this decision? Russia's pressure? Economic calculations? Ukrainian developments?” Sargsyan was precise: “I would like to make a correction: We still are a member of the ‘Eastern Partnership.’ The new phase of negotiations began in December of last year. We will sign an agreement with the EU. There was no pressure from the Russian side. We were guided by economic reasons. Russia is our biggest market and our largest trade partner. Russia has offered very favorable conditions for us within the Eurasian Economic Union, by providing a 30-percent discount on its products. My principle is taking decisions which can be realized.”

At the time, and to her credit, Chancellor Angela Merkel declared that Germany was not raising any objections. “We do not want an either/or situation,” she stated. (She also noted that Sargsyan had stressed the importance of the Iran nuclear accord and its positive repercussions.)

Armenia, Smbatyan said, has always been opposed to establishing any dividing line between cooperation with the one or the other partnership. He added that Armenia had “never concealed the fact that it has strategic relations with Russia” and noted that it is the only country in the Eastern Partnership that has made such progress with the EU notwithstanding.

Strategic Considerations

Returning to his rhetorical question, “what is Europe?” Smbatyan emphasized respect for the norms of shared European values, and he reiterated Armenia's readiness to pursue collaboration on the reform process, democratization, human rights, good governance and fighting corruption. But he strongly underlined the need as well to consider the geopolitical and geostrategic aspects when discussing Armenian foreign policy. In this context, obviously the Karabakh (Artsakh) conflict looms large, and with it, the fact that the borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan remain closed. The EU has an important role to play in pursuing a peaceful solution to the conflict, especially in the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Smbatyan lamented the fact that despite the Minsk Group's mediation efforts since 1994, a solution “is still not in sight, because the Azerbaijan side is not constructive and does not want to face reality.”

A durable peace, he said, would come “only with help from Europe, the US and Russia.” He endorsed the deployment of Armenian troops in the context of NATO peacekeeping cooperation, in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Lebanon. “And still,” he added in the same breath, “Armenia's ties to the Russian Federation, in view of the historical and political background, will remain close even in the future.” In sum: ultimatums and false dilemmas are not on the agenda.

International News

North Korea Foreign Minister Visits Azerbaijan

BAKU (PanARMENIAN.Net) – North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho left Pyongyang for Beijing on Tuesday, April 3 for a visit to Azerbaijan and Russia, Sputnik reports.

After his visit to China, the minister was to take part in a ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) scheduled for Thursday and Friday in Baku, and then was going to visit Russia, the Yonhap news agency reported, citing diplomatic sources.

Pyongyang has not yet revealed any announcement of the foreign minister's tour.

The Russian Foreign Ministry earlier said that Moscow was working on the visit of the North Korean foreign minister to Russia in the near future.

FIDE President Urged to Resign

MINSK (Public Radio of Armenia) – The International Chess Federation (FIDE) Presidential Board voted 14 to 1 with no abstentions to urge President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov to resign.

The issue was discussed during a meeting in Minsk, Belarus over the weekend.

FIDE said earlier that its Swiss bank accounts would be closed after Ilyumzhinov was accused of facilitating transactions on behalf of the Syrian government.

Ilyumzhinov was added to a US Treasury Department sanctions list in 2015 for his alleged dealings with the Assad government.

The senior management of the bank extended the deadline from the original 28th February, 2018 to 30th April, 2018, but was unwilling to extend until the FIDE elections on 3rd October, 2018.

Sargsyan Praises Commitment of Armenian Community of Argentina

ROME (Agencia Prensa Armenia) – Armenian President Serge Sargsyan praised the commitment of the Armenian community of Argentina during his meeting with Pope Francis in his official visit to the Vatican on Thursday, April 5, according to Telam, the Argentine national news agency.

“We are very grateful to the Armenian community in Argentina, we have a true community of ambassadors,” proclaimed Sargsyan in a conversation with journalists after inaugurating a statue of Saint Gregory of Narek with the pontiff in the Vatican gardens.

The president also highlighted the figure of Argentine businessman and philanthropist Eduardo Eurnekian, whom he considered “an example of how you can be 100 percent Argentine and with the same pride be 100 percent Armenian.” “He is a person with a great love for the Armenian homeland and an example for young people, which represents the values of the entire diaspora,” added Sargsyan.

When Bergoglio was Archbishop of Buenos Aires, before becoming Pope Francis, he was very close to Archbishop Kissag Mouradian, Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church for Argentina and Chile.

Lithuania's Government Approves Armenia-EU Agreement

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Lithuanian government approved the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between Armenia and the European Union, Armenia's Ambassador to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia Tigran Mkrtchyan said on Twitter.

The ambassador informed that the government has submitted the agreement to the legislative body aimed at ratifying it according to the procedure.

As of now among the EU member states Estonia ratified the CEPA, and the parliament of Latvia adopted it at the first reading.

Armenia and the EU signed the CEPA in Brussels on November 24, 2017.



INTERNATIONAL

New Statue of St. Gregory of Narek Unveiled in Vatican Gardens

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In an interview with the Vatican News on Wednesday, Minasyan said, “The idea to erect the statue of Saint Gregory of Narek in the gardens of Vatican stands as a symbol of fraternity between the two churches and all the Christians, particularly those in the Middle East.”

Gregory of Narek was a 10th-century monk, poet and mystical writer and composer. His best-known literary work is a book of prayers, known as the *Book of Lamentations*. It is considered a masterpiece of Armenian literature. St. Gregory himself defined the work as an “encyclopedia of prayer for all nations.” He voiced hope that his book would provide guidance in prayer for people of all walks of life in order to reach God.

The groundwork for the ceremony was laid by Pope Francis on April 12, 2015 when he cel-



Pope Francis and President Serzh Sargsyan speak.

brated Mass in St. Peter's Basilica marking the centenary of the genocide of a million and a half Armenians whom the Pope referred to as martyrs. “A century has passed since that horrific massacre which was a true martyrdom of your people, in which many innocent people

died as confessors and martyrs for the name of Christ,” Pope Francis said on that occasion.

During that same liturgy, Pope Francis elevated St. Gregory of Narek to the rank of a Doctor of the Universal Church. The Pope characterized St. Gregory as a monk who “knew how to express the sentiments of your people more than anyone,” and who, as “an extraordinary interpreter of the human soul, offers words which are prophetic for us.”

Later in June 2016, he visited Armenia. Calling the genocide “the first of the deplorable series of catastrophes of the past century,” Pope Francis praised the faith of the Armenian people, “who, illuminated by the light of the Gospel, even at the most tragic moments of their history, have always found in the cross and resurrection of Christ the strength to rise again and take up their journey anew with dignity.”

A copy of the same statue is currently in production and will be placed in the gardens of the Cathedral of Echmiadzin where an inauguration ceremony will be held at the end of 2018.

In the relations of the two churches an important event was the visit of Catholics of All Armenians Karekin II to Vatican on December 10, 1996 during which the catholicos met with Pope John Paul II. A joint statement was signed based on the visit results which called on the clergymen of the two churches “to more actively and effectively develop the cooperation, become agents for solidarity, peace and justice” and etc.

On November 9, 2000 John Paul II and Karekin II signed a joint statement according to which Vatican recognized the Armenian Genocide. The document in particular says: “The 20th century was marked by an extreme cruelty. The Armenian Genocide in the beginning of the century was the prelude for future horrors: two world wars, countless regional conflicts and deliberately organized massacres that claimed lives of millions of believers.”

The Armenia-Vatican relations entered qualitatively new stage by the visit of Pope John Paul

II's delegation to Armenia on September 25-27, 2001. The visit took place at the invitation of former Armenian President Robert Kocharyan

audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican on April 6. Sargsyan expressed gratitude for the Pope's decision to erect the statue of 10th cen-



From left, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, President Serzh Sargsyan, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I and the head of the Armenian Catholic Church Krikor Bedros

and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II.

The Vatican issued series of postage stamps on November 23, 2017 dedicated to Pope Francis' 2016 visits. Among the stamps there was one dedicated to the Pope's visit to Armenia in 2016. Pope Francis is depicted on the stamp, and behind him is the Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial.

Armenia's President Serzh Sargsyan had an

audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican on April 6. Sargsyan expressed gratitude for the Pope's decision to erect the statue of 10th cen-

ury Armenian monk Gregory of Narek in the heart of Vatican. The President and the Pontiff then exchanged gifts. Sargsyan donated a silver model of the Armenian St. Gayane Church to the Pope.

Pope Francis, in turn, presented a marble copy of the sculpture of the Holy Family kept in the Vatican Museum, as well as the copies of his most recent three books.

New Report Details Germany's Role in Armenian Genocide

BERLIN (Deutsche Welle) – The German Reich provided the Ottoman Empire with the weapons to carry out the Armenian genocide, a new report claims. Prussian officers also laid the “ideological foundations” for the massacre, according to the author.

Turkish forces mainly used German rifles and other weapons to carry out the 1915-16 geno-



Wolfgang Landgraeber says Prussian officers provided both material and ideological support

Mauser pistols.” Many German officers witnessed and wrote about the massacres in letters to their families.

The report represents the first “case” being researched and developed by GN-STAT, a new multilingual worldwide network of more than 100 organizations, and a database for activists, whistleblowers, journalists, artists, and others interested in arms exports. It is already preparing new case studies about the illegal G36 deal that Heckler & Koch made in Mexico, and which is about to go to trial in Stuttgart, and the \$110 billion (€90 billion) arms deal that the United States struck with Saudi Arabia last year.

Accessory to Murder

The Turkish army was also equipped with hundreds of cannons produced by the Essen-based company Krupp, which were used in Turkey's assault on Armenian resistance fighters holding out on the Musa Dagh mountain in 1915.

In 2015, German President Joachim Gauck acknowledged Germany's “co-responsibility” for the Armenian genocide, while a book published in the same year by the journalist Jürgen Gottschlich detailed the political collusion of Turkey's most important European ally in the First World War, which provided military advice and training for the Ottoman Empire throughout the Wilhelmine period. But the new GN-STAT report is the first to detail the sheer extent of the material support provided by Mauser and Krupp.

“Mauser really had a rifle monopoly for the Ottoman Empire,” said the report's author, Wolfgang Landgraeber, a filmmaker who has made several films about German weapons

exports. Mauser is now defunct as a company, but Krupp's successor, the German steel giant ThyssenKrupp, has never publicly acknowledged the part that it played in the genocide.

“The question of who actually supplied the weapons, not only for the genocide but also for the First World War in Turkey, no one has really addressed that question before,” said Landgraeber. “And to what extent German officers took part in murders by actually picking up the rifles and firing them themselves – that wasn't known before.”

Many of the firsthand German accounts in the report come from letters by Major Graf Eberhard Wolffskehr, who was stationed in the southeastern Turkish city of Urfa in October 1915. Urfa was home to a substantial population of Armenians, who barricaded themselves inside houses against Turkish infantry. Wolffskehr was serving as chief of staff to Fahri Pasha, deputy commander of the Ottoman 4th Army, which had been called in as reinforcement.

“They (the Armenians) had occupied the houses south of the church in numbers,” the German officer wrote to his wife. “When our artillery fire struck the houses and killed many people inside, the others tried to retreat into the church itself. But ... they had to go around the church across the open church courtyard. Our infantry had already reached the houses to the left of the courtyard and shot down the people fleeing across the church courtyard in piles. All in all the infantry, which I used in the main attack ... acquitted itself very well and advanced very dashingly.”

Ideological Support

While German companies provided the guns, and German soldiers the expert advice on how to use them, German officers also laid what Landgraeber calls the “ideological foundations” for the genocide.

That the German Reich shared the Ottomans' mistrust of the Armenians was no secret – both

feared they were colluding with mutual enemy Russia, while Gottschlich's book quotes navy attaché Hans Humann, a member of the German-Turkish officer corps and close friend of the Ottoman Empire's war minister, Enver Pasha, as saying: “The Armenians – because of their conspiracy with the Russians – will be more or less exterminated. That is hard, but useful.”

Another figure the report focuses on is the Prussian major general Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz, a key figure who became a vital military adviser to the Ottoman court in 1883 and saw himself as a lobbyist for the German arms industry and supported both Mauser and Krupp in their efforts to secure Turkish commissions. (He once boasted in his diary, “I can claim that without me the rearmament of the army with German models would not have happened.”)

“Not publicly, but among his friends and relatives, von der Goltz would show himself an Armenia-phobe,” said Landgraeber. “Several witnesses heard him describing them as ‘a greasy trader people.’ He helped persuade the Sultan to try and end the Armenian question once and for all.”

Landgraeber also considers von der Goltz a source for later Nazi ideology. The Prussian officer published a military book in 1883 titled *Das Volk in Waffen* (“The People Armed”), in which, as Landgraeber puts it: “He adopts positions that Hitler would take up later – for example, the aim of a military campaign should be to destroy the enemy totally, not just to fight and force a capitulation. He believed in total war. That was also the ideological foundation that he gave the Ottomans, and which they used in the Armenian issue.”

Landgraeber is keen to underline that the new research does not absolve the Ottoman Empire of its guilt – but simply fills in the gaps in the historical record. “It happened as we have researched it, and nothing should be sugarcanted – but the entire picture should be more complete.”

cide of the Armenian people, a new report has found.

Mauser, Germany's main manufacturer of small arms in both world wars, supplied the Ottoman Empire with millions of rifles and handguns, which were used in the genocide with the active support of German officers. Historians have estimated that between 1 million and 1.5 million Armenians were killed in the two-year genocide.

“German officers who served in Turkish-Ottoman military staff actively helped carry out individual murders,” according to the report by Global Net – Stop the Arms Trade (GN-STAT). “The majority of the aggressors were armed with Mauser rifles or carbines, the officers with

Community News

Toros Mangassarian Named Eastern Diocese's 2018 'Church Member Of the Year'

By Taleen Babayan

NEW YORK – When Toros Mangassarian traveled to Armenia with his family two summers ago, he read his children a passage from William Saroyan's short story, "The Armenian and the Armenian." The Pulitzer Prize-winner's words struck a chord with his youngest daughter, Gabriela, who said the message taught her about the "strength and resilience" of Armenians.

It's a message Mangassarian has been cultivating all his life.

The grandchild of Genocide survivors, the church was a second home for him from a young age. Some of the fondest memories of his childhood took place on Sunday mornings when he would walk hand-in-hand with his grandfather to the Forty Martyrs Cathedral in Aleppo, Syria, to attend badarak.

When his family moved to Lebanon's Achrafieh neighborhood a few years later, his parents quickly found a home at St. Hagop Armenian Church, where Mangassarian said it was "natural" to spend Sundays attending Divine Liturgy and playing with friends in the church community as an 8-year-old. As he grew older, he began to serve on the altar. He was actively involved, not only in the church community, but in the cultural arena as well, teaching French at AGBU's Hovagimian-Manoogian and Tarouhi-Hagopian schools early on in his life.

In his late 20s, when Mangassarian decided to move to the US to strike out on his own, he once again sought out an Armenian cultural and religious sphere he could immerse himself in. He found his spiritual home within the St. Gregory community, led by the Rev. Karekin Kasparian, while living in Westchester County. In the mid-1970s, the church was still a mission parish (and still known under the name "St. James") – years away from the consecration of its own magnificent edifice, to which Mangassarian would later become an influential donor.

"The church is the foundation and the center of the Armenian culture," said Mangassarian. "The religion complements the culture and one needs the other to remain strong and influential."

Build it for the Future

As his involvement in Armenian Church life progressed, so did his professional and family lives. He and his wife, Gacia, welcomed three children: Taleen, Mark and Gabriela. He established the Nitron Group Corporation in 1982, a global trading firm specializing in chemical and agricultural fertilizers, where he currently serves as chairman and chief executive officer.

His success continued to grow, but his humility remained intact – particularly when his parish called on him to help lead efforts towards the creation of a physical church structure. Mangassarian became involved in the building committee, searching for a property and spearheading fundraisers.

While raising money for the church, he noticed the difficulties of securing funds and voiced his concerns to Kasparian. He questioned whether they should continue to build the church structure.

"Fr. Karekin responded to me by saying, 'You don't build a church for today's generation. You build it for the future,'" Mangassarian recalled.

Those words remained etched in his mind and soon enough, the community supporters see MANGASSARIAN, page 7



Carla Garapedian

St. James Armenian Church Men's Club Dinner to Feature Carla Garapedian

WATERTOWN – On Monday, May 7, St. James Armenian Church Men's Club dinner meeting will be held at the church's Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center. The speaker will be Carla Garapedian, international film producer, director, actress, writer, broadcaster, and supporter of genocide education.

Based in Los Angeles and London, Garapedian is the director of "Screamers," a film that has been dubbed into 14 languages and continues to be used around the world to raise Genocide awareness in schools and colleges. She is also associate producer of "The Promise" and consulting producer for "Intent to Destroy."



Garapedian, left, shows a manuscript to USC Shoah Foundation writer Robin Migdol, center, and Diana Hekimian

in Africa. The *Los Angeles Times* described her work with the headline "Documenting Truth in Dangerous Places." She has been featured in the *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe* and publications around the world.

In 2009, Garapedian founded the Pomegranate Foundation, which promotes genocide education through the arts. It houses the Rwanda Library, a rare collection of Rwandan genocide survivor interviews and will soon include an archive of testimonies from Syrian Armenian refugees.

Since 2011 she has led the Armenian Film Foundation's project to digitize a rare collection of 400 Armenian genocide survivor interviews filmed in 16mm over four decades by the late filmmaker Dr. J. Michael Hagopian. This archive is now part of Steven Spielberg's Visual History Archive at the USC Shoah Foundation.

Carla is currently working on an international film production of her new crime drama, "Nemesis," about the murder of Talaat Pasha in Berlin and the trial of Soghomon Tehlirian.

This St. James Men's Club dinner meeting will begin with a social hour and mezza at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. Ladies are invited.

Supervisor Janice Hahn Recognizes 'Armenian History Month'

LOS ANGELES – At the direction of Los Angeles County Supervisors Janice Hahn and Kathryn Barger, the Board of Supervisors has declared the month of April to be "Armenian History Month."

"During Armenian History Month, LA County will celebrate the rich culture and heritage of the Armenian people here in our communities and worldwide as well as recognize the dark days of the Armenian Genocide," said Hahn. "Throughout the month of April we will highlight the accomplishments of local Armenian Americans and what an incredible part of the Los Angeles County fabric the Armenian people have become."

This is the second time the county has recognized "Armenian History Month," after Supervisors Hahn and Barger directed the County to do so in 2017. Previously, the board had only honored Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.

Throughout the month Supervisor Hahn is honoring the accomplishments of Armenian American individuals in LA County. During the first board meeting of the month, Supervisor Hahn honored the Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church in Downey. At the board meeting on April 10, Hahn was scheduled to honor racing legends the Agajanian brothers: J.C., Jr., Chris, and Cary.

New Paths and KA Coaching Bring Self-Awareness Conversation To Teens

WATERTOWN – New Paths-Bridging Armenian Women (NP) is collaborating with New Paths member Kristin Asadourian on "It's Okay to Be You: A Talk about Self-Awareness." The talk is designed to benefit parents and youth ages 13-18. The event will take place at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mount Auburn St., on Sunday, April 15, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

You can learn more about Kristin and her practice at kacoach.com, about Pete and his work at futurefitnesspro.com and New Paths by visiting their Facebook page, News Paths- Bridging Armenian Women.

NP is a Boston-based women's networking group on-line. In addition the group provides quarterly forums and collaborates with speakers to bring helpful and informative discussions to the community.

Asadourian, a social worker, life coach, motivational speaker and founder of KA Coaching, and Pete Asadourian, a strength and conditioning coach and founder of Future Fitness Pro, are bringing their talents to Watertown on April 15. Both Asadourians have worked with young people their entire careers and possess an understanding of and ability to connect with them. Pete Asadourian believes in the power of sports and exercise to get his clients focused on themselves and their self-worth. Kristin Asadourian's approach is to get her clients to slow down and focus inward.

She states, "It is extremely important that we realize our gifts and use them to their fullest potential. I work alongside my clients as they journey into discovering and utilizing their gifts." Both spend a great deal of time getting their clients to reach a heightened level of all around awareness in themselves and their abilities.

"Whether on the playing field or in life, success comes when a person lives and plays based on her/ his values. Connecting to your gifts is a spiritual journey that leads to a fulfilled life," states Kristin Asadourian.



Music, Justice and Remembrance at Times Square

NEW YORK – Classically trained opera singer Elie Berberian will serve as the special headliner of the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at the Times Square Commemoration on Sunday, April 22.

Hosted annually by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, the commemoration serves as an opportunity to share in remembrance of the 1.5 million Armenians massacred by the Young Turk government between 1915-1923 and to spread awareness of the first genocide of the 20th century.

The diverse program features top elected officials who underscore their efforts in Congress in their push towards genocide recognition, as well as renowned scholars and artists.

memoration for the past decade, attorney Armen McOmber, Esq., who will be joined by Prof. Nvair Beylerian, remarked on the program's theme of "Truth, Justice and Recognition."

"For over a century we remember and honor the one and a half million victims of the Armenian Genocide and we continue our efforts towards worldwide recognition," said McOmber. "The annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Times Square brings together thousands of human rights supporters and is invaluable to our community and the world at large."

As a member of the diaspora who maintains deep ties to his heritage, Berberian looks forward to a strong and resilient future for Armenians, both in the homeland and in the Diaspora.

"As we continue to commemorate the Armenian Genocide, we do so not as victims, but as advocates of hope and peace."

The 103rd Armenian Genocide Commemoration is organized by the Mid-Atlantic chapters of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan (www.kofv.org), an international

Armenian fraternal organization headquartered in the United States, and co-sponsored by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (www.agbu.org), the Armenian Assembly of America (www.aaainc.org), the Armenian National Committee of America



Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Times Square, New York (Photo credit: Anahid Kaprielian)



Longtime Armenian Genocide recognition supporter New York Senator Chuck Schumer (Photo credit: Anahid Kaprielian)

"Times Square is the business and entertainment capital of the world," said Berberian. "It's an extraordinary step for my nation to have an event of this scale that amplifies the Armenian cause."

Berberian will debut a special song during his performance, titled *Hayer Jan*, which spreads the message of united Armenians. He will sing



singer Elie Berberian

two additional songs, including the emotional folk melody *Horovel* by Komitas.

Emphasizing the importance of Armenian Genocide remembrance on both "moral and historical levels," Berberian says it's paramount to teach the new generation "the strength of our ancestors who fought to keep their religion."

"As descendants of genocide survivors, we are advocating our history to the world in the face of denial."

Bryan Ardouny, the executive director of the Washington-based Armenian Assembly of America, who serves as the commemoration's official media liaison, elaborated on the event's historical significance over the past 30 years "standing together in Times Square united against genocide denial and its consequences."

Ardouny noted the attempts of the United States to prevent the Armenian Genocide and aiding those who survived.

"Given this proud chapter in America's history, we strongly encourage all people of goodwill to join us in marking this important occasion as we commemorate the Armenian Genocide and continue our collective efforts to prevent future genocides."

Serving as Master of Ceremonies of the com-

(www.anca.org), the Armenian Council of America and the Armenian Democratic League - Ramgavars.

Participating organizations include the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Catholic Eparchy for U.S. and Canada, the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA), the

Armenian Youth Federation (AYF-YOARF), Armenian youth organizations and university Armenian clubs.

For more information, visit, <http://www.kofv.org/main/april222018>, www.april24nyc.org, www.armenianradionj.net, www.theforgotten.org, www.armenian-genocide.org, www.twentyvoices.com.

-Taleen Babayan

103 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIVE WEEKEND



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FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2018

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Toros Mangassarian Named Eastern Diocese's 2018 'Church Member of the Year'

MANGASSARIAN, from page 5
galvanized and the parish unveiled its church in White Plains, NY, in 1998 – more than two decades in the making. Mangassarian was named as one of the church's godfathers.

"Toros is generous, kind-hearted, friendly, hospitable, deep-thinking and good-hearted," said Kasparian, a close family friend who baptized the Mangassarian children. "He has been a parishioner of mine for a long time and has been helpful from the very beginning."

While Mangassarian has been active in his parish church, on a Diocesan level he has contributed to the Annual Appeal, Legacy Endowment Fund and the new St. Nersess Armenian Seminary campus in Armonk, NY.

A Certain Mystic Aura

Mangassarian backs many initiatives, including the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), admiring its global reach. He also contributes to Armenia Fund, tying back to his love for his homeland, which he visited with his family for the first time in 2016.

"You feel proud to be Armenian when you are in the homeland," he said, noting that while visiting Echmiadzin, he felt "a certain mystic aura that continues to attract people for centuries."

Mangassarian said he felt equally moved when he visited the Armenian Genocide Memorial in Armenia, where he read his children that same Saroyan passage with its famous words: "I should like to see any power of the world destroy this race, this small tribe of unimportant people whose wars have all been fought and lost, whose structures have crumbled, literature is unread, music is unheard, and prayers are no more answered. Go ahead, destroy Armenia. See if you can do it. Send them into the desert without bread or

water. Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh, sing and pray again. For when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a New Armenia."

Reflecting on those words, Mangassarian

more ways than one.

"I met His Holiness Karekin I [Sarkissian], of blessed memory, on a few occasions when he was a young priest in Lebanon," said Toros, who remained in touch with him throughout

talked little but accomplished a lot. And like many of his contemporaries, he does so with a humble demeanor.

"It's a privilege, not an obligation, for my father to give back to the Armenian Church and community," said his daughter Gabriela. "Christianity is at the core of the Armenian people, and he believes that preserving the Christian faith goes hand-in-hand with preserving the Armenian identity."

As for being awarded the Diocese's 2018 "Armenian Church Member of the Year" distinction, to be bestowed on him during the annual Diocesan Assembly banquet, held this year on Friday, May 4, and hosted by his home parish of St. Gregory the Enlightener, Mangassarian says: "It is an honor. But more importantly it is a lesson to my children, for them to follow in my footsteps, and for me to pass the torch onto the next generation."

That lesson has been heeded by his own children, who are all "incredibly proud."

"My father has proven the importance of preserving the Armenian identity through past, present, and future," said Gabriela. "We must make sure to carry on the messages of our ancestors, focus on embracing our current values, and ensure that the Armenian Church and community are preserved and embraced for generations to come."

The 116th Diocesan Assembly will take place May 3-5, with the awards banquet on Friday, May 4, all at the

Renaissance Westchester Hotel, in West Harrison. In addition to Mangassarian's tribute, Dr. Stephen Smith (of the USC Shoah Foundation) will be honored as this year's "Friend of the Armenians." A special award will be bestowed on Nazar and Artemis Nazarian, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of St. Vartan Cathedral.



Toros Mangassarian

said: "I'm supporting the Armenian Church for the future. I want my children to be proud of their heritage and to continue to be involved throughout their lives."

In addition to his family, a certain clergyman who would eventually become Catholicos of All Armenians was a moving force behind Mangassarian's desire to serve his church in

the ensuing years. "He always supported me and was a big inspiration for me."

Of all the lessons the late catholicos taught him, the one he remembers the most is: "Don't lie to anyone; but most importantly, don't lie to yourself."

A Privilege, Not an Obligation

Mangassarian comes from a generation that

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10 AM / THE DIVINE LITURGY

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Celebrant and Homilist

The Gomidas Choir and combined Diocesan parish choirs
Under the direction of Kris Kalfayan
Louise Yardumian, guest organist

Following services, the public is welcome to a Fellowship Reception in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium
(Suggested donation: \$10 at door)



COMMUNITY NEWS

Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) Expo at St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School

WATERTOWN – This year, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) expanded its one-week long Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) Expo to a month-long event, focusing on various activities including coding, robotics, engineering design and math challenges. The month ended with a science fair when parents were invited to view their children's projects that involved: Life Cycle Investigations and Chicken Hatching (K), Study of Bird Beaks and How Their Shape Affects their Diet (Gr. 1), Study of Matter (Solid-Liquid-Gas) (Gr. 2), Study of Weather and Meteorological Predictions (Gr. 3), Building of Simple Machines (Gr. 4), Environmental Science, in collaboration with the Avedisian School in Armenia (Gr. 5).

"The STEM Expo allows for collaborative learning which is key to developing highly-desirable 21st-century skills such as creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration," said Houry Boyamian, the principal at SSAES.

Founded in 1984, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) has distinguished itself with its bilingual curriculum, academic strength, devoted staff and low student-to-teacher ratio. St. Stephen's is fully accredited by the Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE), the accrediting body for independent elementary schools. AISNE has commended the school for "creating an environment where all the students love to read and appear committed to academic excellence" and for recruiting a remarkably talented and dedicated staff." To learn more about SSAES, visit www.ssaes.org



Grade 4 students presenting their Simple Machines



Grade 3 students Presenting their Meteorological Predictions



Grade 2 students with their research on Matter with Teacher Erica Lauria

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Peter and Irene Vosbikian to Receive Global Humanitarian Award at Armenian Assembly Celebration

PHILADELPHIA – The Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) will be honoring Life Trustees Peter and Irene Vosbikian with the Global Humanitarian Award at the Philadelphia Celebration on Saturday, April 28 at the National Constitution Center.

The Vosbikians are longtime members of the Assembly, and continue to be leading figures in advocacy and philanthropy. Peter Vosbikian was on the Board of Directors from 2000-2006, and served as chairman in 2002 and 2003. He also served on the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee from 2007 through 2009. During his Chairmanship, he encouraged more delegations of public policy makers, and trustees and member mission trips to visit Armenia and Artsakh, especially for young Armenian Americans.

They have contributed to many different program areas, especially the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program. The Vosbikians have previously hosted interns in their summer home in New Jersey and encouraged students

to participate in the internship programs the Assembly offers in Washington, D.C. and Yerevan, Armenia.

“Peter and Irene represent the very best of our values and ideals. Their passion for Armenian issues knows no bounds, and their steadfast commitment to the Assembly over the decades is truly remarkable,” Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny said. “The Philadelphia Celebration will not only honor the Vosbikians, but is also an opportunity for Young Professionals, Assembly intern alumni, and our friends in the community to connect with one another and enjoy a fun-filled evening.”

Additionally, the couple has been major donors to the Armenian Sisters Academy in Radnor, Penn. and the Armenian Prelacy. They support many other causes, most importantly the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, and St. Jude Children’s Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

Both were born in Philadelphia and grew up in nearby neighborhoods in Pennsylvania. It



Irene Vosbikian, Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), and Peter Vosbikian

wasn’t until college, at Temple University in Philadelphia, where they first met. On November 8, 1964 the couple was married and eventually had four children, Paul, David, Terry, and Mary.

band’s parents.

She was fascinated by the hardships endured by Peter Vosbikian’s parents. She spent countless hours with Peter’s father listening to the nightmare he experienced in Turkey prior to escaping the Armenian Genocide. This resulted in her first novel, titled *Bedros*, which was originally published in 1983 then re-published in 2013. In 2015, she read passages from her book during one of the Assembly’s annual Members Meeting in Boca Raton. She signed copies for guests who purchased the book, with all proceeds benefitting the Armenian Assembly.

Not long after, Irene authored the book *The Carnation Tablet*, based on the life of her father Rudolph and his tragic death in 1944. *The Carnation Tablet* was actually the diary that her father kept during World War II. He made entries into this diary several times a week up until the time of his death.

Peter Vosbikian joined the family business after graduating college in 1963. Quickie Manufacturing Corporation was in the business of manufacturing and marketing household cleaning tools. He became chairman and president of the company in 1971. When he retired in 2004, company market share had grown to the number one position in the US.

Today, the couple resides in Moorestown, NJ surrounded by their four children, their respective spouses, and 11 grandchildren.

If interested in becoming a sponsor for the evening, contact Assembly Development Director Nazanee Topian at info@aaainc.org. RSVP by Friday, April 16.

To learn more about the Philadelphia Celebration, visit www.aimhye.com or the Armenian Assembly of America Facebook Page.



Irene Vosbikian signing her book *Bedros* at the Assembly’s annual Members Meeting in Boca Raton, Florida in 2015

At the very same time, the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception arrived in Philadelphia to open a new Armenian school. Prior to the opening of the school, Irene Vosbikian visited the Sisters every week in order to learn the Armenian language. Having mastered Latin in High School, Irene Vosbikian learned very quickly and within two years she was able to read, write, and speak Armenian. She did this primarily to converse with her hus-

Re/Max Agent Nounne Karapetian Earns Annual Sales Production Award

BELMONT, Mass. – Nounne Karapetian, with Re/Max Leading Edge, has qualified for the Re/Max 2017 100% Club Award, which honors successful agents who have earned at least \$100,000 in commissions in the past year.

Karapetian has been working in the real estate industry for more than eight years and has extensive experience in residential sales where she helps buyers and sellers realize their real estate dreams. Among Karapetian’s achievements are Seniors Real Estate Specialist Certificate, Re/Max Executive Club Award in 2016 and Quality Service and Ruby Awards from Century 21 Adams KC before she joined Re/Max Leading Edge.

“Nounne Karapetian has been an integral member of our team and is more than deserving of this very prestigious award,” said Paul Mydelski, founder and chairman of Re/Max Leading Edge. “Winning this award is a tremendous accomplishment. Karapetian continues to raise the bar in real estate, making us, and this community proud.”

In addition, Karapetian actively supports Armenian Relief Society and Foundation for Belmont Education. Karapetian is also a classically trained soprano who has sung with Opera Companies and in concerts throughout New England, including leading roles with Granite State Opera in NH and Opera Boston.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Bedrosyan to Lecture on Islamized Armenians in Watertown

LECTURE, from page 1

Bedrosyan will also be the keynote speaker at the Massachusetts State House commemoration the same morning, where he will speak briefly on related issues.

Hundreds of thousands of Armenian orphans were left behind in Turkey after the 1915 Genocide, who were forcefully assimilated, Islamized, Turkified and Kurdified in state orphanages, military schools or Turkish and Kurdish homes. But these orphans did not forget their Armenian identity and secretly passed it on to the next generations.

Now, a hundred years after the Genocide, hidden Armenians started emerging in different regions of Turkey, openly revealing their original roots and identity. The most significant trigger for this new phenomenon was the reconstruction of the Surp Giragos Church in Diyarbakir/Dikranagerd, which acted like a magnet helping the hidden Armenians come together, support one another and return to Armenian culture, language and Christianity. Several trips to Armenia, organized by Project Rebirth, in cooperation with the Armenian Ministry of Diaspora, further encouraged the hidden Armenians to come out.

There is now a vast network and support mechanism connecting the hidden Armenians together through Project Rebirth. They need all the support they can get, as there have been many difficulties, dangers and threats against them from a hostile government, neighbors, employers, sometimes their own families, but surprisingly, even the Armenian Church. The clashes between the repressive Turkish government and Kurdish militants for the past two years have made the situation even worse, with the expropriation and closure of the Surp Giragos Church, but the hidden Armenians keep on sur-

viving.

Bedrosyan's speech will lead to discussion of many issues raised by the new reality of the hidden Armenians, such as 'Who is an Armenian?'

Bedrosyan is a civil engineer, writer and con-

the construction of school, highway, and water infrastructure projects in Armenia and Karabakh, projects in which he also participated as civil engineer in the 1990's. Two notable engineering projects were the water distribu-

This was the first Armenian church reconstruction project allowed in Turkey since 1915, followed by the successful return of several properties belonging to the church.

He is also a writer with dozens of articles posted in English, Armenian and Turkish media. In the US, he regularly contributes to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and the *Armenian Weekly*. His articles deal with Turkish-Armenian issues, the newly emerging phenomenon of Islamized hidden Armenians and the history of thousands of Armenian churches left behind in Turkey after 1915.

With the emergence of hidden Armenians following the reconstruction of the Surp Giragos Church, he helped organize Armenian language classes for them. In cooperation with the Armenian Ministry of Diaspora, he arranged several trips to Armenia from different regions of Turkey for hundreds of Islamized hidden Armenians who found the courage to return to their original Armenian roots and identity.

In April 2015, as part of the worldwide Armenian Genocide Commemoration events, he again chose to give a concert at the Surp Giragos Church in Diyarbakir, Turkey, attended by 1000 people, mostly hidden Armenians. The event became not only a commemoration of the genocide but the rebirth of a people which survived the genocide.

He is the founder of Project Rebirth, which continues to help Islamized hidden Armenians return to their original Armenian roots, language, and culture under difficult circumstances in Turkey. He works as the Manager of Engineering at the City of Toronto, Canada.

Bedrosyan's talk will begin at 7 p.m. at Charles Mesosian Cultural and Youth Center-Keljik Hall at St. James, 465 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown. For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com.



Raffi Bedrosyan plays the piano at the renovated Surp Giragos Armenian Church in Dikranagerd (Diyarbakir)

cert pianist, living in Toronto, Canada. Born in Istanbul, Turkey, he has been actively involved in Armenian issues ever since he settled in Canada to pursue engineering and music studies. He has given numerous benefit concerts in Toronto as well as in New York, Detroit, Montreal, Vienna and Cairo. He has donated proceeds from his concerts and two CDs toward

tion network in Stepanakert, capital of Karabakh, and the Goris-Stepanakert highway joining Armenia to Karabakh.

In 2013, he helped organize the reconstruction of Surp Giragos Armenian Church in Diyarbakir/Dikranagerd in Turkey, the largest Armenian church in the Middle East, which was lying in ruins after being destroyed in 1915.

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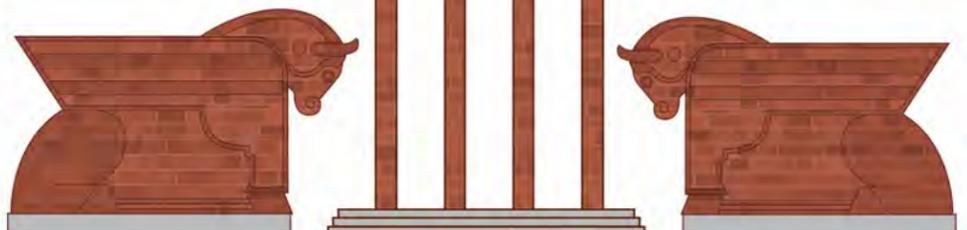
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COMMUNITY NEWS

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Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association to Sponsor Panel Discussion on 3D Printing

ARLINGTON, Mass. – The Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA) has organized a panel discussion on 3D printing: the wave of the future. The event is co-sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

This event is being held as part of the annual Cambridge Science Festival on Thursday, April 19, 7-9 p.m. at the

engineering/researcher at Matter Wave Physics Lab, Institute for Physical Research, National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan, Armenia. Azizbekyan has been invited to Cambridge by CYSCA specifically for this event.

The five other panelists will include local 3D experts: Jennifer Milne, Formlabs, Somerville, a manufacturer of 3D printers in Somerville, Germany, Japan and China; Adam Green, Einstein's Workshop, Burlington, a hands-on STEAM learning center; AJ Perez, NV Bots, Boston, a manufacturer of 3D printers founded by a team of MIT engineers; Chris Templeman, Garage Makerspace (NERD), Microsoft, Cambridge, their official outlet for experimental projects. Jack Keverian of Peabody will offer an overview of 3D printing.

The discussion will cover the education, application, manufacture of 3D printers and is intended for the general public. Since its inception, 3D printing has been innovative in various industries such as biomedical, manufacturing, industry and socioculture. Those attending can learn about efforts being made both in the United States

and Armenia, in terms of manufacturing and education.

Admission is free and the public is invited. Refreshments will be provided after the program. For questions or more details, contact Alisa Stepanian at asteonian@aol.com.



Dr. Hrayr Azizbekyan

Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St. The moderator will be Berge Ayvazian, senior industry analyst and consultant, Wireless 20/20.

The panel of scientists will feature an expert from Armenia on 3D printing, Dr. Hrayr Azizbekyan, head of

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Mass. State House Commemoration of Armenian Genocide Takes Place, April 20

BOSTON, from page 1

The twin commemorations are jointly organized for the first time this year, coordinated by two young and dedicated chairmen, Michael Demirchian and Saro Sakaian of the Massachusetts Armenian Genocide Commemoration Committee. This is an opportunity for area Armenians to come together in memory of one of the most important historical tragedies of the 20th century, the repercussions of which continue to haunt us today.

At the State House, Raffi Bedrosyan will tell the story of the Armenian orphans left behind in Turkish state orphanages, state military schools and Turkish and Kurdish homes, who were forcefully Islamized, Turkified and Kurdified. It will be the story of these orphans, who secretly kept their Armenian roots and passed them on to the next generations despite all pressures for assimilation. It will be the story of the grandchildren of these orphans, who now show the courage after 100 years to openly reveal their original Armenian roots and return to their Armenian identity, language and culture. It will be the story of the triggering events which helped the hidden Armenians come out again, as well as the difficulties and challenges facing them in a harsh environment, surrounded by a hostile state, neighbors, employers and even their own families.

Bedrosyan, a civil engineer, writer and concert pianist living in Toronto, Canada, helped organize the reconstruction of Surp Giragos Church in Diyarbakir/Dikranagerd, the first such reconstruction and return of property project in Turkey, and gave the first Armenian piano concert there since 1915. He is the founder of Project Rebirth, which helps Islamized Armenians return to their original Armenian roots, language and culture.

Nerkararyan is a graduate of the Komitas

Prior to the main event at the State House, guests are invited at 9 a.m. to the fourth floor gallery to see an exhibit of Scott Sutherland's photographs of the metal art of Armenian-American machinist and craftsman Abraham Megerdichian (on display April 17 to 20). They also will be offered a light breakfast. The formal commemoration starts at 10:30 a.m. After its conclusion, a light reception will be given, at which there may be prominent surprise guests meeting the audience.

On Saturday, April 21, the youth commemoration at Armenian Heritage Park on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway will begin at 3 p.m. It includes speakers Muradian and editor of the *Armenian Weekly* Rupen Janbazian, and



R Mean

musical performances by rapper R-Mean and the Zankagner Performing Arts Ensemble led by founder Hasmik Konjoyan.

Rap artist R-Mean, of Armenian descent, was born in Los Angeles and raised in Amsterdam. He later moved to California to pursue his passion for music while also obtaining his Doctorate of Pharmacy from Loma Linda University. His song *Open Wounds* is dedicated to those affected by the Armenian Genocide and sparked the Open Wounds 1915 movement to spread awareness about humanitarian causes through the power of hip-hop music, urban fashion, and social media. Some well-known supporters of Open Wounds include System of a Down, Capital Cities, The Game,



Zankagner Performing Arts

State Conservatory in Yerevan with a 2008 master's degree in vocal performance from Azusa Pacific University. She has performed in many operatic roles and also often sings Armenian repertoire.

State Rep. David Muradian, who serves on several committees and also is a member of the Knights of Vartan, will serve as the master of ceremonies at the State House. During the ceremony, the nationally important Boston-area English-language Armenian newspapers, the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and the *Armenian Weekly*, will be honored with certificates for their editors, respectively Alin K. Gregorian and Rupen Janbazian. Armenian clergy, Homenetmen scouts and the children of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School have roles in the ceremony, as do various Massachusetts politicians. Two recipients of the George Keverian Memorial Scholarship will be announced.

and Post Malone.

Complimentary transportation will be provided for both events by the Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge. Buses will be provided to and from the State House on Friday, April 20. They will depart in Watertown from the ACEC and St. James Armenian Church, and in Cambridge from Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, at 8:30 a.m. The buses will depart Boston shortly after the reception, around 1:30 p.m.

For the Armenian Heritage Park, buses will be provided from the same locations, departing at 2 p.m., and leaving shortly after 5 p.m.

To reserve a spot for either bus e-mail BostonAGCC@gmail.com with all names in the party, preferred location, and the event attending by Monday, April 16. For more information, visit the group's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/MAGenocideCommemorationCommittee/>



Armenian Students Association
And Knights Of Vartan
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RECONCILIATION AFTER OPPRESSION: The Future of The Armenian Struggle

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Georgetown University
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Panelists:

Professor Gregory Stanton, Ph.D.

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Kate Nahapetian, Armenian Legal Center for Justice and Human Rights



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Raffi Bedrosyan of Toronto

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Arts & Living

Prelacy's Musical Armenia Thrills Audiences at 35

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – It was a unique musical event to celebrate a special anniversary. Musical Armenia 35, held at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, on Sunday, March 18, had all the ingredients of a thrilling celebration – inspiring music by professional artists, recognition of a special anniversary and a tribute to a dedicated, beloved individual.

Presented by the Armenian Prelacy (Eastern), Prelate Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, and the Prelacy Ladies Guild, it was in celebration of the 35th anniversary of Musical Armenia, and featured pianist Hrant Bagrazyan and composer Mary Kouyoumdjian whose dramatic, innovative works were performed by Jeffrey Gavett (baritone), Timo Andres (piano), and members of the Hotel Elephant ensemble.

The concert was dedicated to one of the Prelacy's Rita (Lulu) Tatevossian who served the Prelacy Ladies Guild for many years, and was a passionate promoter of Musical Armenia.

Prelacy Vicar General Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, representing Choloyan who was out of the country, welcomed the crowd with Levon Tatevossian, son of Rita Tatevossian, calling her "one of the dedicated pillars of the Prelacy."

Before starting his performance, pianist Hrant Bagrazyan quietly bowed his head for a minute in contemplation. His program included three composers very different from one another. Arno Babadjanian's *Six Pictures for Piano*, though highly improvisational, is replete with Armenian folk-nuanced melodies, changing rhythms, and colorful picturesque images.

Requiring a pianist of fearsome specialized skills, Bagrazyan showed his prowess as a technical wizard, his fingers dancing over the keys, and his body and facial expressions reflecting his emotions. The music ranged from the shattering and stormy *Improvisation* to the lyrically beautiful *Folk Song*, and *Sassoun Dance*.

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze* from the Hunting Cantata which was originally written for a birthday celebration, has been arranged for different instruments. This piano transcription by Egon Petri, reflected Bagrazyan's virtuosity, as did his interpretation of Maurice Ravel's *Mirrors*, a richly dark, moody work replete with melancholy.

Following a lengthy ovation, the pianist to the delight of the audience, shared Komitas' Armenian Dance as an encore, inflecting it with its joyous Armenian feeling.

Following intermission, four compositions by Mary Kouyoumdjian embodied her interest and involvement with significant somber pages in Armenian history. With each tragic saga, Kouyoumdjian painted vivid and creative musical images reflecting the emotional power of each story.

Providing the musical interpretations were guest artists, pianist Timo Andres, baritone Jeffrey Gavett, violist Gillian Gallagher, flutist Katie Cox, cellist Maria Bella Jeffers, clarinetist Isabel Kim and violinist Andie Springer.

Aghavni (Doves, 2009) resonates with the happiness of life for a group of women before the genocide, and the subsequent horror and loss. *Everlastingness* from *Gorky* (2015), is an aria written on the life and death of renowned painter Arshile Gorky – his childhood memories of Armenia, his mother's death from starvation during the Genocide, and his life in America with its series of tragic events. Lyricist Royce Vavrek described the song as a "fever dream as Gorky's memories consume him."

A Boy and a Makeshift Toy from *Children of Conflict* (2015), is based on a young refugee playing in a train station filled with Albanian refugees waiting to be transported to another

see PRELACY, page 14



Sahan Arzruni

Spectacular Concert in Celebration of St. Vartan Cathedral 50th Anniversary

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – The 50th anniversary of the Diocese of the Armenian Church (Eastern) will be celebrated in grand style on the weekend of Saturday, May 5, and Sunday May 6, with the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II presiding.

One of the memorable events of this occasion will be a spectacular concert on the evening of May 5, in St. Vartan Cathedral, organized by pianist Sahan Arzruni, who was asked by the Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian to plan the event.

Arzruni recently reminisced, with memories flooding in of the building's erection in the 1960s. "I remember the double-intersecting arches during the construction, as well as the pyramidal dome, consisting of the drum and the cone – two unique features distinct to Armenian church architecture," he said.

St. Vartan Cathedral "is a replica of the seventh-century Saint Hripsime Church in Echmiadzin, named for St. Hripsime, one of the first martyrs of the Armenian Church, along with abbess Gayane and 35 other nuns," he explained. "Hripsime was a Roman noble woman who fled to Armenia to escape the amorous advances of the Roman emperor, Diocletian."

Especially beautiful, Hripsime was also pursued by Armenian King Drtad. When she refused her advances also, she was punished by being roasted alive, he said.

Arzruni's memories also include that of Catholicos Vasken I coming to New York, and elevating to the rank of archbishop in 1968 the then Primate of the eastern Diocese, Bishop Torkom Manoogian, who had played a pivotal role in the construction of St Vartan Cathedral, the first in North America.

According to Arzruni, during the inaugural service on April 28, 1968, the local Komitas choir had sung. An off-shoot of the original choir, established in 1910 by Komitas, the New York branch was formed by Isahak Aprahamyan, Onnig Hepsen and Dr. Arthur Misyen in 1958. Often Arzruni played the organ, for he had been the regular organist of the original Komitas choir in Istanbul from 1961 to 1964 before coming to New York.

Plans for Special Concert

This special concert that has been planned for Saturday evening, May 5 will entail a program of sacred Armenian music. The acclaimed soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian who is noted for her interpretive authenticity of sharagans (a.k.a. Armenian canonical hymns) will sing without accompaniment a number of them, Arzruni detailed.

"The first composers from the eighth century were women – Sahakdukht, Khosrovidukht. In fact, they were the first women composers ever in the common era," Arzruni revealed, adding that therefore "it is appropriate to have a woman chanter."

see ANNIVERSARY, page 17

Armenian National Institute Holds Exhibit on Critical Role of YMCA in Armenian Relief

WASHINGTON – The Armenian National Institute (ANI) launched a new 24-panel digital exhibit displaying the role of the YMCA and American relief work during the first republic of Armenia (1918-1920). The exhibit focuses on John Elder and James O. Arroll who arrived in Yerevan, Armenia in January 1918 to open a YMCA center. As with digital exhibits previously released by ANI, American Relief in the First Republic of Armenia 1918-1920, subtitled "John Elder and James Arroll in Yerevan, Gyumri, Sevan & Etchmiadzin," is freely downloadable from the ANI website (www.armenian-genocide.org).

Neither Elder nor Arroll had anticipated being stranded as the only Americans left in the country's capital city with all communication to the outside world cut off when the frontline faltered. World War I was still raging at the time and Allied forces were in retreat on the Caucasian front. The November 11, 1918 Armistice that ended the global conflict was many months away, crucial months during which the very existence of the Armenian people hung in the balance.

By the time they left Yerevan in August 1919, John Elder and James O. Arroll had become responsible for the entire operation set up by US-based charities that had earlier sent emergency aid and volunteer workers to Armenia. As John Elder wrote on January 16, 1919: "One year in Yerevan and what a year it has been. Had anyone told me a year ago that in addition to running a YMCA, I would be in charge of factories employing 7,500 people, orphanages with 350 children and a 120 bed hospital, I would have thought them crazy."

ANI Chairman Van Z. Krikorian said: "The stellar example of American humanitarianism by Elder and Arroll continues to be emulated to this day. They were pathfinding pioneers who traveled all the way to Armenia during a very difficult time. All the relief workers who went to Armenia after the 1988 earthquake, and the Peace Corps volunteers who continue every year to extend their helping hand are following John Elder's and James O. Arroll's superb example. Armenians and Americans alike are proud to share this chapter of remarkable service to those in need."

The exhibit reconstructs the story of the near superhuman efforts undertaken by John Elder and James O. Arroll to rescue Armenians from the many perils they faced during the 1918-1920 independent Republic of Armenia. The exhibit relies upon John Elder's own words from his published journal, along with original records that he personally saved from the time of his service, and the photographs that he made and captioned.

Elder and Arroll arrived as two enthusiastic young men dedicated to the purpose of sustaining morale among soldiers enduring long campaigns and treacherous conditions as the Great War kept grinding on, year after year, without end. They departed as two celebrated heroes who stood by the Armenian people at the fateful hour. John Elder wrote on May 26, 1918, as Ottoman Turkish forces advanced to the outskirts of Yerevan: "You never can tell what may happen. Just as the end seems at hand the pendulum swings the other way...After a two-day battle at Sardarabad, the Turks have been completely routed." With the decisive battle won, two days later, on May 28, 1918, Armenia declared independence.

The only Americans in Yerevan at the time, Elder and Arroll witnessed momentous events and the unfolding of a heart-wrenching humanitarian disaster as the ravages of war were revealed once the fighting stopped. A

see YMCA, page 15



ARTS & LIVING

USC Thornton Friends of Armenian Music Celebrate 39 Years on May 6

LOS ANGELES – In recognition of 39 years of commitment in promoting and supporting Armenian musical heritage at the University of Southern California (USC) Thornton School of Music, a celebration luncheon will be held on Sunday, May 6, 2018 at 1 p.m. at the Louvre Banquet Hall, 1767 N. Vermont Avenue. This event will be hosted by the Board of Directors of the USC Thornton Friends of Armenian Music and under the auspices of Dean Dr. Robert Cutietta and Assistant Dean of Advancement, Dr. Phoenix Delgado.

Irene Sassounian, president of the USC Thornton Friends of Armenian Music, states, “We look back with pride on our years of association with the USC Thornton School of Music which was established in 1979 for the purpose of advancing the knowledge, preservation and presentation of our rich Armenian musical heritage. Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedicated leadership of our Past Presidents and their

steadfast support of all our programs and endeavors. At the luncheon, we will be honoring our Past Presidents in acknowledgement of their years of devoted service.”

Guests will also enjoy a musical program performed by Armenian professional artists who are graduates of the USC Thornton School of Music and were recipients of the USC Thornton Friends scholarship awards. This luncheon affords guests the opportunity to recognize their musical talent, ability and professionalism.

In 1984, with donations from friends and supporters, the USC Friends of Armenian Music Scholarship Fund was established and each year the Scholarship Endowment Funds continue to present awards to an average of eight recipients each year. Another accomplishment was the launching of the USC Armenian Music collection in the Doheny Music Library in 1985. Through the years the library has been enriched with musical notes,

scores and books by the generous donations of the Armenian community. The entire collection has been catalogued and available for research

and study for many years.

Donations for the luncheon are \$60.00 for adults and \$30.00 for students.



Board of Directors of USC Thornton Friends of Music at the USC University Club.

Prelacy's Musical Armenia Thrills Audiences at 35

PRELACY, from page 13

camp. And, *Sea of Two Colors* (2012), reveals a portrait of Komitas before and after the Genocide when he writes, “I have seen a black sea, and all around was white. The waves crashed but the two did not mix. Who has ever seen a sea of two colors?” from *Andouni* (Homeless).

members.

Welcoming the guests, Tanielian thanked the artists for “their interpretation and spirit” and called the concert “very unique” because of the inclusion of a composer among the performers. He also paid tribute to the Musical Armenia committee members who “continuously choose the best among the best.”

awarded an artist diploma. In the US, he received a master's degree in music from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and currently is pursuing his doctoral degree in piano performance from Michigan State University. He was awarded a Bronze Medal at the Aram Khachaturian International Piano Competition in 2007, First Prize at the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra International Young Artist Competition in 2014, and First Prize at the San Jose International Piano Competition in 2015. He has given concerts in Armenia, Belgium, Poland and the U.S.

For Kouyoumdjian, the concert was “special, but rare, to have performed for an Armenian audience. My music is inspired by my background. My parents came here as a result of the

Lebanese civil war. I wanted to be on stage writing my own music about things that I care deeply about, to give voice to those who are no longer here. Arts are a powerful medium to do so.”

Kouyoumdjian has a master's degree in film scoring and multimedia from New York University, and a master's degree in composition from Columbia University where she is pursuing her doctorate. She has received commissions from the Kronos Quartet, Carnegie Hall, International Contemporary Ensemble, Brooklyn Youth Chorus, WQXR, the Nouveau Classical Project, Music of Remembrance, the Los Angeles New Music Ensemble, among others. Her work has been performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Museum of Modern Art, and several music festivals.



Pianist Hrant Bagrazyan

At the conclusion of the concert, all performers acknowledged the standing ovation, as Levon Tatevossian came onstage and greeted each one with flower bouquets. The celebration continued at the Prelacy headquarters where the performers joined community leaders and members of the Musical Armenia committee and Prelacy Ladies Guild

For pianist Hrant Bagrazyan, the experience of performing at Carnegie Hall was the “ultimate honor. You are in that holy place where there is history in every corner of the building. To know that I performed where idols have played. . .”, he said, his voice trailing off.

Armenia-born Bagrazyan studied at Yerevan State Conservatory where he was



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ARTS & LIVING

Armenian National Institute Holds Exhibit on Role of YMCA in Armenian Relief

YMCA, from page 13

year elapsed before a new crew of relief workers reached Armenia to lighten the burden they shouldered. In the meantime, their efforts and accomplishments had become legend among admiring Armenians and fellow Americans at home.

The YMCA digital exhibit is the fifth such exhibit developed by ANI based on American documentation of the Armenian Genocide. It follows upon other educational material developed for the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, including the four large exhibits displaying hundreds of historic photographs. These exhibits include: Witness to the Armenian Genocide: Photographs by the Perpetrators' German and Austro-Hungarian Allies ;The First Refuge and the Last Defense: The Armenian Church, Etchmiadzin, and the Armenian Genocide ; The First Deportation: The German Railroad, The American Hospital, and the Armenian Genocide; Iconic Images of the Armenian Genocide (also available as a slideshow) and Survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

The exhibit displays 95 images, 64 from John Elder's photo collection, 8 contemporaneous records and documents, and 4 maps. With 32 quotations from Elder's journal authenticating the photographs, along with introductory and explanatory text, the exhibit opens a window into life during the first year of the newly independent Armenian republic in 1918. The exhibit includes the entire set of photographs Elder attributed to his time in Armenia.

Several American relief workers are also mentioned in the exhibit, including Reverend Ernest Yarrow, Gertrude Pearson, F. Tredwell Smith,



Gertrude Pearson

and Mabel Farrington. Mary Kifer, whose life was cut short after leaving the Caucasus, improbably found romance while conducting relief work in Armenia. Her story parallels "A Farewell to Arms" before Ernest Hemingway wrote his WWI era tragedy.

Other American personalities in the region appearing in the exhibit include F. Willoughby Smith, US Consul in Tiflis, who supported the efforts of the relief workers; Robert McDowell, who was at the front when the Turkish forces broke through and invaded Alexandropol/Gyumri; Dr. John H.T. Main, presi-

dent of Grinnell College in Iowa, who witnessed the horrific conditions in Armenia firsthand on behalf of the American Committee for Relief in

Walter George Smith, who traveled to Armenia on behalf of the American Relief Administration. Both were members of prominent families. Smith was married to Elizabeth Drexel, whose uncle, banker and philanthropist Anthony Drexel, founded Drexel University in Philadelphia. Smith became the most vocal American Catholic advocate of the Armenian people at the time.

"The Armenian National Institute thanks the Elder family for supporting the research undertaken to develop the exhibit, and for permitting our organization to continue to honor the memory of such a committed humanitarian," stated ANI Director Dr. Rouben Adalian. "At the height of the conflict in the Caucasus when other relief workers chose to evacuate, John Elder refused to leave fearing that tens of thousands more Armenians would die of starvation if the relief programs were discontinued. He is credited in providing relief for 15,000 Armenian orphans. Such selfless heroism must be recognized."

Adalian added: "I also want to thank Dr. Christina Maranci, professor of Armenian Art and Architecture at Tufts University for lending her expertise. Dr. Andrew Anderson of the University of Calgary graciously extended permission to reproduce the very high quality map



Children in the government orphanage



John Elder, left, with Tredwell Smith in Yerevan

the Near East; missionary Grace Knapp; and John Mott, longtime president of the American YMCA, who, with the encouragement of his friend President Woodrow Wilson, dispatched young Americans wherever they could lend civilian support behind the front to men in combat.

John Elder was particularly happy to welcome two Pennsylvania natives like himself, Pittsburgh businessman Howard Heinz, and president of the American Bar Association

depicting the situation in the Caucasus in 1918. I thank as well the staff at the YMCA Archives for retrieving critical information about the protagonists of this exhibit."

Adalian continued: "The YMCA exhibit should be viewed as a continuation of the historical reconstruction provided in a previously issued ANI exhibit and titled, The First Refuge and the Last Defense: The Armenian Church, Echmiadzin, and the Armenian Genocide. That exhibit documented the extent of the spillover consequences in Eastern Armenia, then part of the Russian Empire, and of the atrocities committed in Western Armenia in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. The YMCA exhibit is a compelling reminder that the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide continued to unfold over the course of many years and spread across Eastern Armenia as well with every advancing step of the Turkish armies. The evidence gathered by John Elder demonstrates that Russian Armenia was not spared the genocide perpetrated by the Young Turk regime. He wrote on January 16, 1919: 'Among the refugees it has been a holocaust.'"

The exhibit concludes with US President Herbert Hoover's tribute to the remarkable role of the YMCA pair who risked going to Armenia in the thick of World War I. The exhibit marking the centennial of the founding of the Armenian republic also extends appreciation to the Peace Corps volunteers today who are following in Elder's and Arroll's footsteps under the leadership of US Ambassador to Armenia Richard M. Mills, Jr. who happened to be the State Department's first Armenia desk officer when Armenia regained independence in 1991.

Tekeyan Cultural Association - Los Angeles and Glendale/Pasadena Chapters
 present
 Two concert performances by *Alan Hovhaness*
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Komitas
 MOVSES POGOSSIAN, Artistic Director
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 MORGAN O'SHAUGHNESSEY, Viola - NIAL FERGUSON, Cello
Aram Khachaturian
SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2018 at 5:00PM
 UCLA VEM String Quartet
 with
 Danielle Segen, Mezzo-Soprano
 TCA BESHGETURIAN CENTER
 1901 N. Allen Ave., Altadena, CA 91001
 Refreshments
 Free Admission
 All are welcome

Edward Mirzoyan
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 UCLA VEM String Quartet
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 For more information, contact: (626) 398-1142

Romanos Melikian
Franz Schubert
Dikran Tchouhadjian



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CONNECTICUT

APRIL 21 — Connecticut Commemoration of the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Saturday April 21, 2018. House Chamber at the State Capitol. 210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT at 11:00 a.m. Speaker: Taner Akcam, PH. D. Professor of History, Clark University. Topic: Armenian Genocide: Killing Orders and Denialism. Reception to follow the commemoration. Please arrive at 10:30 a.m. to allow time to clear security and be seated by 11:00 a.m.

FLORIDA

JANUARY 20-17, 2019 — Armenian Heritage Cruise XXII 2019, Western Caribbean Cruise aboard of Royal Caribbean's Allure Of The Seas. Traveling to Nassau / Cozumel / Roatan / Costa Maya. Cabin Rates starting from US \$949 / person based on Double Occupancy, including Port Charges and ACAA registration fee. Government taxes of \$137.45 are additional. Armenian Entertainment, Armenian Cultural Presentations, Armenian Festival Day, Tavlou and Belote Tournaments and much more. Call Travel Group International @ 1-561-447-0750 or 1-866-447-0750 Ext.108, contact person Janie

ILLINOIS

APRIL 15 — Book presentation by Adrienne Alexanian (editor) on her father's memoir Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army, Sunday, 3 p.m. sharp. The Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center 9603 Woods Drive Skokie, Il. 60077—RSVP (847) 967-4800. There are no other books in literature on this aspect of the Genocide. The book also contains rare documents and pictures which will be shown during a power point presentation. Book signing during reception.

MASSACHUSETTS

APRIL 14 — Saturday, St. James Great Gatsby Gala! A Roarin' 20s Celebration! Live Jazz & Armenian Music, Passed Hors D'oeuvres, Mezza and Dessert Stations and more. St. James Armenian Church — 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, 8 p.m., Tickets \$100. Purchase online at www.stjameswatertown.org or contact info@sthagop.com.

APRIL 15 — Vase Painting, Wine & Unwind, 5 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge MA. Vase painting led by artist Arevik Tserunyan, entertainment, food and wine. All proceeds to benefit medical outreach for the Karahunge and Shirak regions in Armenia. Donation: \$35; limited seats. To reserve a seat, call/text: Amalia, 617.669.7444; Marianna, 617.966.1339; or Nanah, 857.389.8362. Sponsored by Watertown Armenian Club and Holy Trinity Armenian School.

APRIL 19 — "3D printing: the wave of the future. Come and learn about efforts being made in Armenia and the U.S. Sponsored by the Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA) with co-sponsorship by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR). 7 p.m. At the Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St., Arlington.

APRIL 20 — Raffi Bedrosyan of Toronto lecture: "Islamized Hidden Armenians of Turkey - Living Victims of a Genocide," organized by the Tekeyan Cultural Association and St. James Armenian Church of Watertown, Friday, 7 p.m., at St. James Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown. For more information, emailcadirector@aol.com

APRIL 20-21 — Commemorating the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, first at the State House, on Friday, April 20, 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., Boston. A free reception will follow. Then on Saturday, April 21, a Commemoration at the Park, 3 to 5 p.m. Further details will follow. For more information, visit bostonagcc@gmail.com.

APRIL 21 — Boston Armenian Genocide Commemoration, "United Against Genocide" organized by the Boston Armenian Genocide Committee, Saturday April 21st from 3-5 pm at the Armenian Heritage Park. Buses will be provided from St. James, Watertown and Holy Trinity, Cambridge. For more information, email bostonagcc@gmail.com.

mation, email bostonagcc@gmail.com.

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

April 22 — Sunday, free Buses from Watertown, 9:30 a.m. from the Armenian Cultural and Education Center, 47 Nichols Ave, and Worcester 10 a.m., Rt-146 & Mass pike Park & Ride to Times Square, New York City for the 103rd Armenian Genocide Commemoration. Organized by Knights of Vartan @ Times Square, New York City 2-4 p.m. Bus rides complements of Knights and Daughters of Vartan Lodge #1.

APRIL 28 — Trinity Talent Showcase, 7 p.m., doors open; 7:30 p.m., 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 Combo. Cabaret Table Seating: \$20 per person/\$100 for table of 6 max. (RSVP deadline April 15); Auditorium seating: \$10 in advance; \$15 at the door. For further information or to reserve online, log onto <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/trinity-talent-showcase-tickets-43801836472>, or call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632.

MAY 5 — Saturday, Kentucky Derby Watch Party, Fun and festivities to support Armenia Tree Project, At the elegant/historic Gore Place in Waltham. 5:00 pm. Tickets available via www.ArmeniaTree.org/KentuckyDerby

MAY 5 — ANNUAL MEETING & LUNCHEON, Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA). Meeting, 9:30 a.m.; Luncheon, 12 noon. Speaker: Patti Fletcher, author of *Disrupters: Success Strategies from Women Who Break the Mold*. Alumnae Hall, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA. Info & Reservations: info@aiwainternational.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 and towns worldwide including the labyrinth in Gyumri. At 12:45 p.m., introduction to Walking a Labyrinth, 1:30 pm - Reception to View the 2018 Configuration of the Abstract Sculpture. Remarks: 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 & Eastern Lamejun Bakers. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

MAY 6 — "Celebrating 400 Hundred Years of Armenian American Heritage: 1618-2018" Exhibition and the launching of Armenian Legacy in America: A 400-Year Heritage by Dr. Hayk Demoyan in an illustrated talk. Other speakers include Robert Mirak, Barbara J. Merguerian and Nubar Afeyan. Sunday, 3 p.m. Admission free and open to the public. Book sale and reception to follow. Organized by Armenian Cultural Foundation, co-sponsored by the Amaras Art Alliance, and National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, 441 Mystic Street (Route 3), Arlington. Tel. (781)-646-3090 armeniancultural.fdn@gmail.com

MAY 11 — Welcome His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, to a Celebration of a Life of Service: Rev. Mampre A. Kouzouian on the 60th Anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. Under the auspices of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate. Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Hrashapar Service in Sanctuary, 6 p.m. All are invited to attend. Celebration Banquet, 7:p.m., in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, by advance paid reservation, RSVP deadline April 30. For an invitation or further information, <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/525/> or call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632.

MAY 18-19 —Armenian Memorial Church Annual Fair, Armenian Memorial Church, 32 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, Friday, May 18, 5-8 p.m., Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Armenian kebab meals served, Armenian delicacies, silent auction

MAY 19 — Hai Guin Scholarship Association Annual Luncheon & Fashion Show, Saturday, 11:30 a.m., at Montvale Plaza, Stoneham. Fashions by Soft Surroundings of Chestnut Hill, MA. Tickets: \$60 per person. Please call Lisa at 781-729-6333; Becky at 508-651-8893; or Marilyn at 978-818-9098 for tickets.

JUNE 1-2 — Armenian Food Festival Sponsored by the Hye Pointe Church Women's Guild, 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, 1280 Boston Post Road, Haverhill. Chicken Kabob, Losh Kabob, and Kheyma Dinners, Armenian Delicacies including Lahmejoun, Cheese Beoreg, Spinach Pie, Tourshi, Cheoreg, Kataif, Paklava, and many more delicious items. For more information call the church at (978) 372-9227.

JUNE 6 — Tea & Tranquility, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Wednesday, 5-6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Enjoy Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

JUNE 9 — The Friends of Armenian Culture Society will host the 67th annual Armenian Night at the Pops on Saturday, at 8 p.m. at Symphony Hall in Boston. talented violinist Haig Hovsepian. A winner of the 2017 Boston Symphony Orchestra's Concerto Competition and a rising sophomore at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Hovsepian will appear as soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra under the direction of Keith Lockhart. He will perform the Sibelius *Violin Concerto in D-minor*. The Pops will present Dance to the Movies with Dancing Celebrity Pros, So You Think You Can Dance top finalists, and singing stars from American Idol and The Voice. Tickets \$95, \$70 and \$35, available at: www.FACSBoston.org

JUNE 28 — Under a Strawberry Moon, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Thursday, 8:30- 9:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Moonlit Labyrinth Walk. Enjoy chocolate-dipped strawberries, hosted by Vicki Lee's and Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

JULY 7 — Save the date! Armenian Church of Cape Cod second annual Kef Time dinner and dancing at the Cape Club, 125 Falmouth Woods Road, North Falmouth. Leon Janikian Band with DJ and special appearance by Harry Minassian. Details to follow.

JULY 18 — Tea & Tranquility, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Wednesday, 5- 6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Enjoy Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

AUGUST 15 — Tea & Tranquility, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Wednesday, 5-6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Enjoy Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 16 — Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families & Friends. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway. 2-4 p.m. Enjoy Boston Hye Guys Ensemble with Ron Sahatjian, clarinet; Joe Kouyoumjian, oud; Art Chingris, percussion. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NEW JERSEY

SEPTEMBER 30 — Save the date! Armenia Fund USA and Ardzagang Armenian TV are proud to present Artash Asatryan and Band, guest singer Grisha Asatryan, from Armenia! The concert is dedicated to the Armenia's and Artsakh's Independence Celebration. Don't miss the performance by the son and grandson of the legendary Armenian singer Aram Asatryan. Proceeds will benefit Fruitful Artsakh Project. 4 p.m. Location: Bergen PAC, 30 N Van Brunt St, Englewood.

NEW YORK

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

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ARTS & LIVING



Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Avocado, Tomato and Basil Salad

INGREDIENTS:

2-3 large ripe avocado, pitted, peeled and diced
 2 medium ripe tomatoes, cut into wedges or 1 1/2 cups halved grape or cherry tomatoes
 1 cup firmly packed chopped fresh basil
 1 cup celery, including tops, diced
 1 cup red or yellow bell pepper, diced or sliced
 1 medium red onion, sliced thin
 4 or 5 green onions, diced
 8 oz. fresh mozzarella or Jack cheese, diced
 1/4 cup radishes, sliced
 8 cups assorted lettuce, romaine, endive, bibb, or green leaf
 Fresh basil leaves, minced parsley, and Armenian or Greek olives as garnish
 Toasted slivered almonds as garnish

DRESSING:

2/3 cup olive oil (to taste)
 1/3 cup fresh lemon or lime juice or balsamic vinegar
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon or crushed dried mint
 Sea or kosher salt, crushed red pepper flakes, black pepper, paprika to taste

PREPARATION:

Combine dressing ingredients in a medium bowl or glass container, check seasonings, cover and chill before serving.
 Sprinkle avocado with lemon juice.
 Place choice of salad greens in large bowl. Put avocado, tomato, chopped basil, celery, bell pepper, and red and green onions on top. Add cheese and radishes and toss with some salad dressing.
 Garnish with basil leaves, parsley, olives, and toasted almonds. Serve with extra dressing on the side and garlic bread or fresh rolls.
 (Note: 1 pound cooked medium to large peeled, deveined shrimp or 2 cups diced cooked chicken may be added to this salad.)

Serves 4.

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

Spectacular Concert in Celebration of St. Vartan Cathedral 50th Anniversary

ANNIVERSARY, from page 13

Following the sharagans, there will be an instrumental work, *Prayer of St. Gregory* by Alan Hovhannes, an excerpt from his "Etchmiadzin" opera. This special arrangement will be performed by Haig Mardirosian, organist and dean emeritus of Temple University, along with young clarinetist Narek Arutyunian.

Hayren, by well-known composer Tigran Mansourian, will follow performed by Sato Moughalian on the alto flute, with Arzruni accompanying on the piano. *Hayren* is a medieval poetic form – couplets with a single coherent theme – perfected by Nahapet Kouchak, one of the first Armenian *ashoughs*.

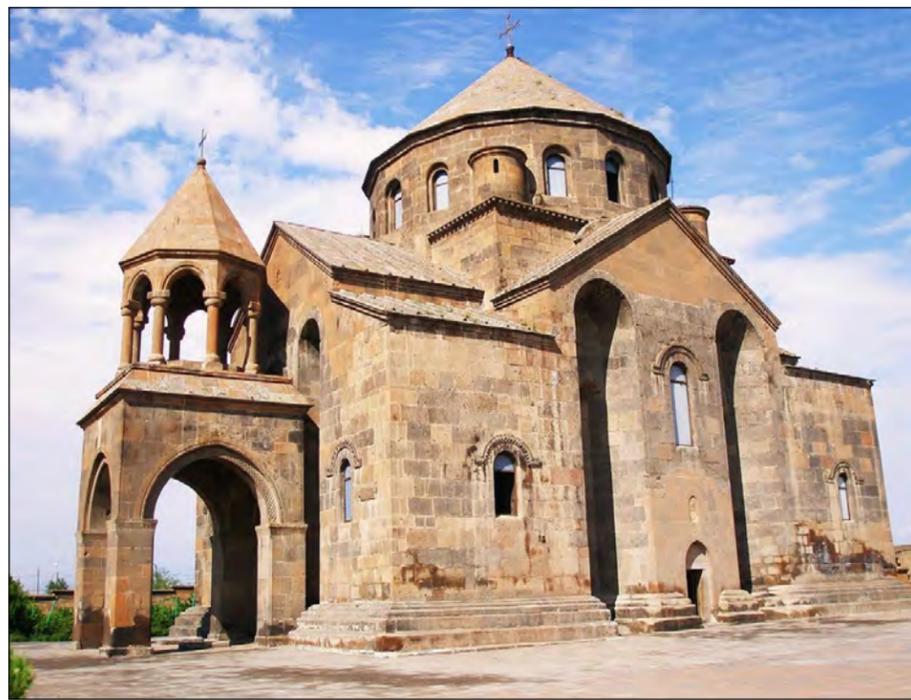
Organist Haig Mardirosian will then perform

a suite by Alan Hovhannes titled *Sanahin*, who was deeply influenced by his memories of a visit to the 10th-century monastery of the same name.

The concert will conclude with excerpts from the Komitas *Divine Liturgy* conducted by Prof. Hovhannes Mirzoyan who will be arriving from Armenia to conduct a 16-member professional male choir.

Starting this concert will be an ensemble of 120 children singing the Yegmalian *Hayr Mer*, and the Hayrabadagan Maghtank dedicated to the Vehapar. The children will come from three local Armenian schools – Holy Martyrs, Brooklyn, and the Hovnanian Schools.

Following the concert, a reception will take place to which all are invited.



Saint Hripsime Church in Armenia, the original model for St. Vartan Cathedral

ADAA and Anteaus Present 'We Have Heroes'

GLENDALE – The Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance, in partnership with Antaeus Theatre Company, will present a special evening to commemorate the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide: "We Have Heroes," Sunday, April 22, 6-8 p.m., at the Kiki and David Gindler Performing Arts Center in Glendale.

The event will shine a light on the works of living Armenian composers: Robert Amirkhanian, Loris Tjecknavorian and Charles Aznavour. Their compositions will be performed by Salpy and Sossi Kerkonian, a flute and harp duo, and The Greg Hosharian Trio and performers Jade Hykush and Mariam Vardani. There will also be a screening the short film, *Song of a Warrior*, written by Shauna Vartanian



Charles Aznavour



Loris Tjecknavorian

and directed by Von Kochar, who will also be directing the evening's program. This film illustrates the legacy of survivors like George Mardikian and his involvement with the Displaced Persons of WWII who have also rebuilt their lives in a new world. The program will be produced by Bianca Bagaturian.

"On April 24, 1915, the first wave of artists and intellectuals were rounded up in the Ottoman capital of Constantinople and slain," Bagaturian noted. "On April 22, 2019, we reclaim these people and the spirit of their artistry with *We Have Heroes*."

Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Armenian Church Western Diocese, will begin the evening with an invocation. A reception will follow the performance.

Limited tickets will be free to the public. For questions or sponsorship opportunities, contact Natalie Rose at natalie@antaeus.org. Sponsorship deadline to receive tickets and benefits is April 16.

FROM PAGE 16

St., New York, Tuesdays through Sundays; weekend matinees. Discount tickets for seniors, students and groups. For tickets and information: www.telecharge.com or call (212) 239-6200. For discount tickets: www.telechargeoffers.com or call (212) 947-8844. Or contact the theatre: info@panasianrep.org, (212) 868-4030.

APRIL 22 – The 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide will be commemorated in Times Square, New York on Sunday, from 2-4 p.m. in an event sponsored by the Knights & Daughters of Vartan. The program will feature elected officials, academics and artists, including a special appearance by Elie Berberian. For more information visit <http://kofv.org/>.

PENNSYLVANIA

APRIL 28 – Join the Armenian Assembly of America for its Philadelphia Celebration at the National Constitution Center on Saturday, starting at 6 p.m. The Armenian Assembly will be honoring longtime members and Life Trustees Peter and Irene Vosbikian. The evening's entertainment will feature Kevork Artinian Entertainment and his Band. To learn more about the Philadelphia Celebration, please visit www.aimhye.com. Please RSVP by Monday, April 16.

RHODE ISLAND

APRIL 28 – The Armenian Martyrs' Memorial Committee of Rhode Island Presents Cocktails & Conversation with Chris Bohjalian on Saturday, 3-5 p.m. at the Marriott Providence, 10 Orms Street, Providence, RI. Join Chris Bohjalian, NY Times best-selling author of *The Flight Attendant*, in Conversation with RI's own Robin Kall of "Reading with Robin." Tickets: \$40 per person Includes hors d'oeuvres, a cocktail, and a goody bag. Order tickets online at www.ammri.org or call Joyce Yeremian 401-354-8770. R.S.V.P. deadline Friday, April 20 or Esther Kalajian 401-885-9116.

APRIL 29 – The Armenian Martyrs' Memorial Committee will commemorate the 103rd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at 12:45pm at North Burial Grounds, Branch Avenue, Providence. Religious services will be held with three local Armenian churches and clergy. Federal, state and local politicians. Keynote speaker will be Chris Bohjalian. His work has been translated into more than thirty languages, and three of his novels have become movies. We invite the entire Armenian community to join us and remember our Holy Martyrs and survivors of the 1915 Genocide. For info- joycey41@cox.net or visit our website www.ammri.org

MAY 18 – Book presentation by Adrienne Alexanian (editor) of her father's memoir Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army. 7 p.m. Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, 70 Jefferson St., Providence. (401) 272-7712. Book signing during reception to follow. All proceeds to be donated to the church.

COMMENTARY

Armenia Beckons Tourists with Christianity and Night Clubs

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Every time I return from a trip to Armenia, I find the flight full of Asian and European travelers. I often have wondered what attracts those visitors to Armenia. A few random questions reveal that many people visit Armenia to learn about its Christian history. That, of course, would have been a dignified cause had it been the only reason. There is no doubt that Pope Francis' visit and his courageous statement about the Armenian Genocide put Armenia on the tourist map.

But going from the sublime to the ridiculous, Kim Kardashian's visit in 2015 also has created tremendous interest in that tiny country tucked away in the Caucasus Mountains in a different audience.

We may also be loath to admit that Kardashian's statements about the Armenian Genocide have, perhaps, been as equally effective in generating awareness about this historic wrong as the volumes of serious academic publications on the subject.

As ironic as it may sound, that predicts what triggers the interest of other people.

Another flow of tourists into Armenia comes from Iran. The Muslim tourists from that country have the least interest in Armenia's Christian heritage; instead, the source of their interest in Armenia is their own closed society which enforces rigorous moral codes, restricting people from enjoying the social freedoms of an open society.

Armenia's Christian heritage is a recent discovery even for its own people. In today's world, many countries filter their politics through religion. Even in America, the Bible Belt has been a staunch supporter of President Trump, regardless of his frivolous romps (allegedly) with adult actresses, several divorces and out-of-wedlock dalliances. The Bible does preach understanding and compassion, and Mary Magdalene is more virtuous than many others who were socially superior to her.

One of the few benefits of the Soviet system was that people were not discriminated against based on their faith. The combustible mixture of religion and politics did not exist. That is why formerly the Muslim populations of the Soviet republics were not attracted politically to Muslim countries, despite some attempts by Turkey and Saudi Arabia to entice them.

By the same token, Armenia's religion was not visible during the Soviet period and only now in the post-independence stage is staging a comeback. In the process, Western popular culture has inundated Armenia, making it attractive for Muslim tourists from Iran.

When Armenia became independent, its amateur rulers of the day shortsightedly privatized most of the factories, dismantling its industrial infrastructure, and selling it as scrap metal to Iran and Turkey. As Armenia was not endowed with natural resources, it had to depend on information technologies (IT) and tourism. The latter has yet to be developed fully in order to serve as a lifeline for the economy.

Those two avenues for economic development can overcome the blockade of the country, unlike other products which need export routes.

As a tourist destination, Armenia is not competitive. Since its independence, Armenia's citizens have been gravitating to Turkey and Georgia, because resorts in their own country have proved to be beyond their means. It is less expensive for an Armenian family to spend a week in Antalya, Turkey, or Batumi, Georgia, flight included, than head to Sevan Lake, 35 miles from the capital.

We had to wait for a Russian-Israeli blogger, Alexander Lapshin, who gained fame after being kidnapped and incarcerated in Azerbaijan for visiting Artsakh, to reveal to us this anomaly in Armenia's tourism industry.

He says one-way fare from Israel to Yerevan costs 180 euros, whereas from Israel to Tbilisi, Georgia, it costs 86 euros.

"In days I was searching for a ticket from Yerevan to Paris for

the end of April and all one-way tickets cost 250 euros and it is still cheap and not every day. And the average price for a one-way ticket is 350 euros. Then I looked for options from Tbilisi and the ticket cost 130 euros."

The same disparity exists in hotel accommodations. And every tourist will make that calculation and Armenia will lose its competitive edge. The statistic demonstrates how that competitiveness is lost. Thus, last year, 220,000 Iranians visited Armenia, which was a 16-percent rise from 2016, yet 322,000 Iranians visited Georgia and 362,000 visited Azerbaijan during the New Year (Now Ruz) at the start of spring.

One would think that Armenia suffering from high unemployment should have made itself more affordable to world tourism but that is not the case. The only captive audience that Armenia has is the diaspora, because for any price, they will not fly to Tbilisi or Baku, but head to Yerevan directly.

The modern airport in Yerevan, which offers one of the most enchanting arrivals for passengers, is run by Eduardo Eurenkian, and it charges high landing fees for foreign carriers. That fee is passed on to the traveling public.

As far as service industries are concerned, all employable people cannot find jobs. The conditions set by employers in the tourism industry could be considered criminal in other civilized



countries. For example, many businesses advertise openings for attractive female applicants younger than 35. Here we find gender discrimination along with age discrimination, and on top of that, the insinuation of physical experience which borders on sexual inuendo.

Today, there are 22,000 Syrian Armenian refugees in Armenia. By the government's admission, they have introduced a new culture in restaurant industry and new work ethic standards in other industries.

I happened to dine at one of the tiny restaurants operated by Armenians from Aleppo. The food was above average and the prices were moderate. It was owned by two partners, one working with his wife, the other with his mother. When I asked how they fared, they complained bitterly about the tax collectors. They said, "They don't let us breathe. They are watching us daily. There is very little after we give them their share."

This is where the economic strangulation of the country begins; that system will never allow the creation of a large, stable middle class, which is the economic backbone of any society.

Some cosmetic dispensations are publicized for the refugees but the taxman is everywhere to fatten himself and his supervisors, no matter what the repercussion for Armenia's economy.

When a small restaurant owner has to suffer from bribery and corruption, one can imagine on what level bribery is practiced at large.

Business does not recognize patriotism and capital will flow where there is a healthy atmosphere for economic development. However, many Armenian venture capitalists, who could invest in safer countries, try to invest in Armenia, driven by a stubborn patriotism. But their counterparts in the country do not feel anywhere near the same level of patriotism and concern for the country's economic development.

Armenia's economic ills begin from that small restaurant in downtown Yerevan and climb up to the peak of the pyramid.

The day that restaurant thrives, the way for Armenia's middle class will be paved. Thus, when tourists arrive, they will have more choices and the locals, more money.

Mirror Spectator



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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Why Turkey Accepted Jordan's Demand To Revise Their Free Trade Agreement?

Before the recent turmoil in relations between Turkey and several countries in the Middle East, Europe and the United States, Syria and Jordan had signed a Free Trade Agreement and visa-free travel with Turkey hoping to benefit from its growing economy.

Relations between Syria and Turkey quickly deteriorated starting in 2011 when Turkey supported Islamic Jihadists undermining the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Earlier this year, going a step further, Turkey brazenly invaded Northern Syria, occupying the town of Afrin and announcing the intention to expand its invasion.

Consequently, the mutual trade agreement and visa-free travel between Turkey and Syria were cancelled. Recently, Jordan suspended its own trade agreement with Turkey, after warning repeatedly that it was one-sided and benefited Turkey much more than Jordan. Turkish exports to Jordan in 2016 amounted to \$710 million, whereas Jordan's exports to Turkey totaled only \$102 million.

Jordan pledged to reactivate the agreement if Turkey agreed to certain revisions, including "the Turkish side's consent to protection measures Jordan will design to protect local industries, increasing Turkish technical assistance to Jordan as stipulated by the FTA [Free Trade Agreement], and reconsidering the 'strict' rules of origin specifications applied

by Turkey," according to the Jordan Times.

Surprisingly, Turkey consented to renegotiate the Free Trade Agreement which was signed in 2011. This was a departure from Turkey's usual aggressive tactic to threaten and bully both friends and opponents to submit to its wishes.

The government of Jordan should be commended for its tough stand in defense of its interests, despite the fact that, in recent months, several developments had strengthened Turkey-Jordan relations. Both countries vehemently criticized President Trump's recent decision to relocate the US Embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv. On February 21, the two countries also signed a military cooperation agreement. Furthermore, Turkey had agreed to "exempt 500 Jordanian goods from customs duties," according to the Al-Monitor news website.

Prof. Pinar Tremblay, in an Al-Monitor article analyzed the four factors that would impact the renegotiation of the Turkish-Jordanian trade agreement.

The first obstacle is the displeasure of Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt with Turkey for supporting their antagonist Qatar. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman went as far as calling Turkey a member of the "Triangle of Evil" along with Islamic militants and Iran! The anti-Turkish posture of Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt puts pressure on Jordan to be more cautious in its relations with Turkey. The reason Turkey is trying to accommodate Jordan is to break out of its isolation from major Sunni Arab countries.

The second obstacle is most Sunni leaders' hostility towards Iran. This antagonism spills over the resentment of Turkey by Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt due to persistent Turkish relations with Iran. Turkey is trying to boost its relations with Jordan, because of its need for allies in the Arab world. In recent years, Turkish President Erdogan has aspired to become the leader of Sunni Muslims rivaling Saudi Arabia, the home of Islam's two holy sanctuaries: Mecca and Medina.

The third obstacle is Saudi Arabia's desire to spread its influence over the Arab world opposing Turkish expansionist policies. That is why Saudi Arabia and Turkey are competing for the friendship of the Kingdom of Jordan, among others.

Tremblay reported that "at the end of December, Turkey acquired a 99-year lease from Sudan for Suakin Island, increasing Turkey's presence in the Red Sea. This move has unnerved the countries that identify themselves as 'the Arab Anti-Terror Quartet' (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain). Turkey's relations with African nations are flourishing. Not everyone is happy about such developments, and this could cause problems for Turkish-Jordanian relations."

Prof. Tremblay described the fourth challenge as financial: "Turkey wants Jordanian markets but faces roadblocks posed by Gulf countries. Since March 2016, Turkey and Jordan have been trying to plan, without success, a maritime route between Turkish ports (Iskenderun) and Jordan's port of Aqaba to reach out to Gulf markets. Yet without political compromises, economic cooperation does not seem sustainable in the region. Turkish Airlines restarted direct flights March 19 between Istanbul and Aqaba. Intriguingly, also in March, the Saudi crown prince was in Cairo discussing the proposed multibillion-dollar King Salman Bridge to link Egypt and Saudi Arabia through the entrance of the Gulf of Aqaba; some see this as a reaction to the Aqaba flights and the maritime route project. During his March 12 visit to the Jordanian capital of Amman, the UAE foreign minister reportedly promised to help Jordan with its various economic challenges and establish stronger regional ties. Turkey believes these developments are behind Jordan's suspension of the free trade agreement. Jordanian business people and analysts concur that the UAE and Saudi Arabia had a hand in the suspension decision."

Tremblay concluded that "Turkey desperately needs to diversify its opportunities in foreign policy. Repeated mistakes and costly failures have significantly limited Turkish foreign policy options in the past. In the past decade, Turkey's ambitions and rhetoric have not matched its capabilities and achievements. Yet in regard to the free trade agreement with Jordan, Ankara is not only determined but also well-organized. If Turkey can overcome the obstacles outlined, a free trade agreement revision would indeed be a win for Ankara."

In Memoriam: Karekin I Hovsepian, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia (1867-1952)

By Father Zaven
Arzoumanian, PhD

On behalf of the Armenian Church and Nation the year 2017 will mark with deep gratitude the 150th birthday (1867-2017), and the 65th anniversary of the passing (1952-2017) of His Holiness Karekin I Hovsepian, the Eminent Catholicos of Cilicia (1943-1952). I am humbled to dedicate this tribute as a grateful student at the Seminary of the Catholicosate (1949-1954), under the blessings of this great churchman. The Catholicos passed away while I was about to embark on the second year of the Theological Faculty.

Bishop Karekin Hovsepian

On September 22, 1920 the Turkish army invaded Sarighamish, Gaghzevan, and Surmalou, as the Armenian inhabitants fled to Kars and found refuge in the fortress for safety.

The Turks soon entered Kars in October heading to the fortress, while the population fled to the valley called Dzor in the direction to Alexandropol.

During those trying days Bishop Hovsepian, one of the first graduates of the Kevorkian Seminary of Holy Etchmiadzin and a great patriot, was in Kars to help his persecuted flock, like he did heroically two years earlier in 1918 on the front lines of the Battle of Sardarabad. His Eminence, who late in his life elevated to the throne of the Cilician Catholicosate as Catholicos Karekin I, began his heroic mission from Alexandropol, after receiving the blessings of Catholicos Kevork V of All Armenians (1911-1930).

The brave and brilliant Bishop Karekin soon headed an impressive procession of the priests and dignitaries of the four local churches, himself vested in full episcopal attire, staff and cross in his hands, marched from St. Asdvadzadzin church of the city heading to the City Hall, wearing on his chest the Medal of Honor received

from the Sardarabad Battle. The "Antasdan" service was held first in front of the City Hall, and soon they entered Kars and were welcomed by his compatriot General Taniel Piroumian, both sons of Karabagh. Piroumian was also involved in the Sardarabad Battle, earning the Medal of Senior General, and now assigned as the guard of the garrison of the castle in Kars. Other Generals were defending Armenia, namely, Nazarbekian in Yerevan, Silikian in Alexandropol, and Dro (Drastamad Ganayan) in Sourmalu with their respective officers.

Bishop Karekin Hovsepian in Kars

Arriving in Kars, the Bishop performed the Holy Mass on the first Sunday in the presence of the Armenian military and civic officers, followed by a special service for the military forces. General Piroumian gave orders to his compatriot to ride the horse and visit the orphanages and the hospitals of the city to comfort those in need. He witnessed masses leaving Kars for Dzor, and above all, the desperate moves General Piroumian was about to take, asking the Bishop, and I quote from his later published Memoirs, saying, "Your Grace, one thing you should try, to personally announce from the top of the fortress that we are ready to surrender". The order, as much as shameful and demeaning, had to be followed. The Bishop, with two military officers, Col. Vahan Der Arakelian and a military pilot, went up the fortress to fly the white flag at the risk of their lives. All three were arrested and taken to the Turk colonel. Bishop Karekin transferred General Piroumian's orders: "We are defeated and came to announce that we are surrendering," asking for mercy for the infants and the orphans who were trapped in Dzor and save their lives. His wishes were met, and both Piroumian and the Bishop were allowed to take the endangered Armenians to Kars.

Kars Surrendered

The most demeaning and embarrassing surrender of the city took place on October 30, 1920. Bishop Karekin had carried the orders most reluctantly, saying, "It is hard to find in the history of nations such an embarrassing defeat. It would have been better to give our lives in front of the castle by thousands in defense of our homeland, than to escape ignobly to save our skins." Bishop Hovsepian

wrote in his Memoirs that both General Piroumian and Governor Stepan Ghorghanian were severely blamed for not coordinating their efforts which resulted in the surrender of Kars without resistance.

Following their defeat, the Turks began rounding up Armenians for harsh labor. Many could not take the hardship, and died. Bishop Karekin resisted privately and visited the orphanages and the hospitals; he was able even to conduct worship services in the Armenian churches of Kars to comfort his desperate flock.

An Armenian Ancient Manuscript

It is hard to believe how in those critical and trying days for Bishop Karekin to follow up and review a 13th century Armenian parchment manuscript, a large volume of a Lectionary, kept with the Erznkatsian family of Kars. The parchment manuscript was written and kept in the Monastery of Akoulis. The large volume represented a Church Lectionary for daily Scriptural readings devoted to the feast days according to the Armenian Church Calendar. The ancient manuscript was the possession of physician Erznkatsian, inherited from his wife's grandfather as a legacy to his granddaughter. The manuscript could have been captured by the Turks on the way from Kars to Dzor, had it not been hidden by Doctor Erznkatsian.

The Bishop's Captivity

Bishop Hovsepian had hard time as a captive in Kars, despite his many appeals to return to Armenia. His appeals fell on deaf ears, and even he was subject to investigation that led him to prison with many others. Soon he was exiled to Sarighamish and was able to go as fugitive and return to Kars.

At age 53, finally Bishop Karekin's odyssey ended when he escaped on January 19, 1921 by the permission of the deputy governor of Sarighamish, telling him he was a photographer and that his cameras were left in Kars, asking if he could return and bring them. Arriving in Kars, the Bishop found refuge in the American Armenian orphanage where he stayed until the orphanages moved from Kars to Soviet Armenia, among them the true hero Bishop Karekin Hovsepian, disguised, arrived in Alexandropol. Finally, in July 1921 the Bishop arrived safely in Holy Etchmiadzin.

LETTERS

Kudos to Overview of ADL Role in First Republic

To the Editor:

Dr. Arshavir Gundjian provided a very good overview ("ADL Proudly marks the May 2018 Centennial of Armenian Statehood" Mirror-Spectator, March 31).

In my mind, which is not as informed and yearning for solid elucidation, the Ramgavars did not really embrace the Armenian state in 1918, and I hope did not collaborate with the Bolshevik Armenians who acted in the interest of everything but Armenia.

I hope the Ramgavars then, did not cooperate in any way with the Bolsheviks who were in euphoria with the Russians and Ataturk ripping Armenian lands in the name of international socialism.

This review is good, the Ramgavar role during the Cold War is well taken.

The final, definitive comprehensive, and no stones unturned history of the first republic needs to be written ASAP.

-Vagheenag Tarpinian, MD
New Jersey

Editor's Note: As the reference article indicates, the ADL fully embraced the First Republic and served on its first cabinet. As far as collaborating with Bolshevik, it is a controversial fact that the ADL press has often criticized the February uprising of 1920 against the Bolshevik rule while the Joghovertagan (Popular) Party, which was the eastern wing of the ADL, actually supporting the uprising by the ARF. Armenian history is too complicated to judge in hindsight with simple conclusions.



President Sargsyan Meets with Acting Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta

ROME (Armenpress) – After the signing of the cooperation agreement between Armenia and Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta on April 5, President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan met with Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta Giacomo dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto.

Sargsyan thanked for the reception of the Armenian delegation in Military Hospitaller Order of Malta and recalled with warmth the first visit of the Grand Master to Armenia. According to Serzh Sargsyan, that visit opened a new page in the relations of Armenia and the Order of Malta.

The Armenian President and the Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta mutually emphasized that there is great potential for development in the relations of Armenia and the Order of Malta.

At the end of the meeting Sargsyan wrote in

the Book of Honorary Guests of the Military Order of Malta:

“It’s a great honor for me to be hosted in the Palace of the ancient spiritual Order of Rome. I am grateful for the warm and friendly reception. Our relations coming from historical times are full of demonstrations of mutual respect and support. I am convinced we will continue to deepen the relations between Armenia and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in the same spirit for the benefit of all of us.”

A cooperation agreement was signed between Armenia and the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta. The agreement was signed by Armenia’s foreign minister Edward Nalbandian and Grand Chancellor of the Order of Malta Albrecht von Boeselager.

The agreement aims at promoting the joint activity in healthcare and humanitarian spheres.

Armenian EyeCare Project Plans Second Annual Armenian Adventure

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. – Last summer the Armenian EyeCare Project hosted a special 25th anniversary trip to Armenia for friends, donors and physicians, many of whom were visiting their motherland for the first time. The Armenian Adventure was such a great success that the Project is planning a second trip this year from September 19 through October 3.

Friends and donors are invited to join the EyeCare Project for a once-in-a-lifetime trip. Highlights of the trip include historical day tours of ancient monasteries and breathtaking landscapes; evening entertainment including a special Welcome Party at the iconic Megerian Carpet Factory in Yerevan, a Gala with dinner and dancing at the rooftop Radisson Blu restaurant overlooking the capital city, a weekend trip to Karabakh, a special Armenian Independence Day celebration and much more.

Guests joining the trip will also get the opportunity to learn more about the EyeCare Project and observe how the organization provides eye care throughout the country. The group will visit many of the Project’s programs including the Mobile Eye Hospital, Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Childhood Blindness and the Grand

Opening of the Gyumri Regional Eye Clinic as well as meet-and-greets with the physicians, staff and others behind the Project.

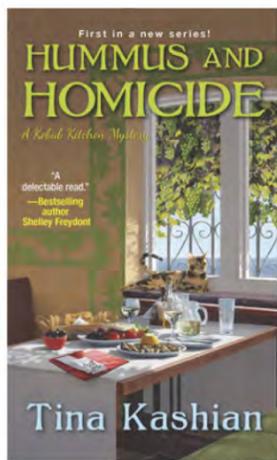
In addition to all day tours and evening entertainment, the project’s all-inclusive



Guests on the Eyecare Project tour enjoy an al fresco lunch.

package includes hotel accommodations at the five-star Grand Hotel in Yerevan and at the Vallex Garden Hotel in Stepanakert in Karabakh; all meals; in-country transportation; airport transfers; tour guide and translator; and much more. The cost of the trip is \$4,600 per couple and \$3,000 per person, plus the cost of airfare.

For reservations and more information on this trip, including photos and video of last year’s tour, guest testimonials and a full itinerary of this year’s program, visit www.eyecareproject.com/armeniatrip. Deadline to reserve is August 15, 2018.



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We have an exciting trip planned for friends of the EyeCare Project who have helped Bring Sight to Armenian Eyes for over 25 years! Join us as we see spectacular landscapes and historical architecture, tour the world’s oldest churches and monasteries, visit our eye care programs, meet the people behind the Project and experience the rich culture Armenia has to offer — a once-in-a-lifetime trip!

Armenian EyeCare Project
Bringing Sight to Armenian Eyes

Visit our website to learn more about this amazing trip and see footage from last year:
eyecareproject.com/armeniatrip

Trip Includes:

- Five-Star Hotel Accommodations at the Beautiful Grand Hotel in Yerevan
- Historical Day Tours to Armenia’s Breathtaking Landmarks and Monasteries
- Visit AECP Programs, Including Mobile Eye Hospital & Regional Eye Clinics
- All Meals Included — Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner — at Finest Armenian Restaurants
- Gala Party & Lots of Fun Evening Entertainment
- Journey to Karabakh
- Lots More!

For Reservations, visit our website or call our office at 949-933-4069.
Reservations limited. Deadline August 15, 2018.