

## Sargisian Praises Close Relations with Russia

MOSCOW (Armenia Now) — President Serge Sargisian's first three-day state visit to Russia last week once more confirmed that relations with Russia "have gone beyond positive-friendly and are developing in the realm of friendly partnership and strategic relations," the president said. Many in Armenia, however, have concerns whether those words match reality.

The president said that from the first day of his visit the Armenian delegation could feel the pointedly warm attitude, which is the first evidence of Armenian-Russian relations as allies.

"It is an answer to all those who are trying to drive a wedge between the two countries. We reaffirmed today that such attempts are futile. The Armenian-Russian strategic partnership has a strong historic ground and is actively developing in accordance with both countries' interests that are aimed at the future and are important to both peoples."

Sargisian's visit has a full agenda: on the second day, Monday, the leaders of Armenia and Russia had a meeting at the Kremlin, followed by the signing of a number of documents.

"We are holding large-scale negotiations

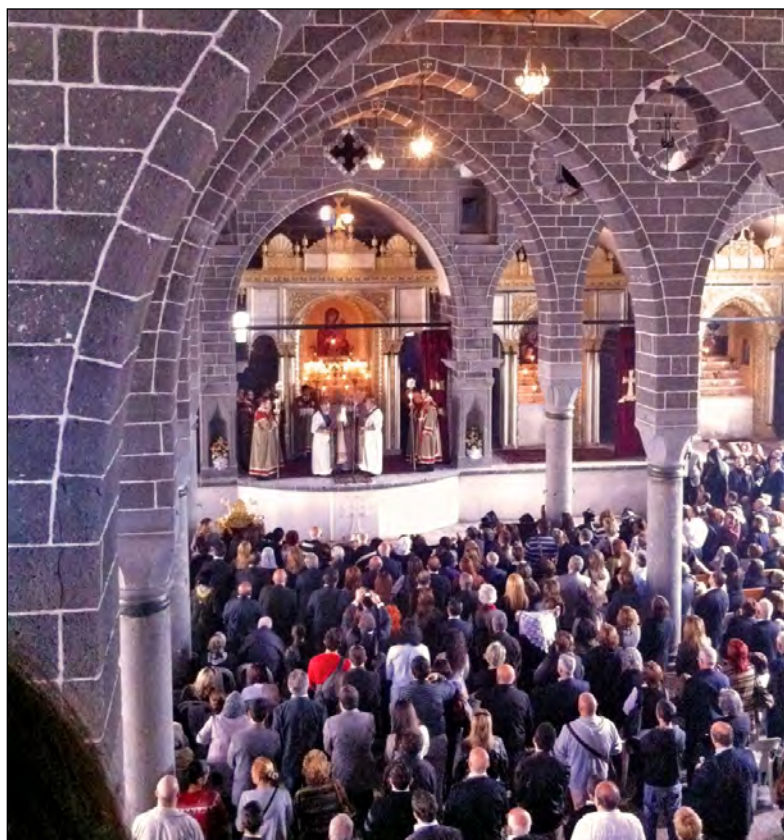


President Dmitry Medvedev (right) meets with his Armenian counterpart Serge Sargisian in Moscow.

both privately and publicly. We have covered all the topics on both bilateral and regional as well as economic and military-technical cooperation," said Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

During their joint press conference the two presidents also talked about economic cooperation.

"Russia has been and will remain our number one trade and economic partner," said Sargisian, stressing that Russian investments in Armenia currently reach \$3 billion, he said. (see RUSSIA, page 2)



The number of participants in the St. Giragos Church re-consecration service exceeded 2,000, with groups of Armenian pilgrims from Istanbul, the US, Armenia, Holland, Germany, Syria and Lebanon present.

## Pilgrims from the Eastern Diocese Take Part In Consecration in Dikranakert

DIARBEEKIR, Turkey — Last week Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), led a group of Diocesan leaders on a pilgrimage to the city of Diarbekir (Dikranakert), where they took part in the October 22 re-consecration of the historic St. Giragos Armenian Church.

The group, which included the Diocese's ecumenical director, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, was scheduled to travel to the historic Armenian region of Van as well, but the earthquake in that region on Sunday afternoon caused a cancellation of those plans.

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## More than 500 Die in Turkey Quake

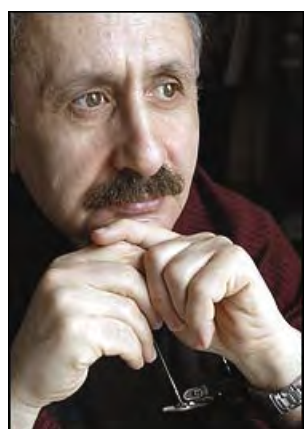
### Van Rocked, No News from Surb Khatch Church

VAN (Combined sources) — As casualty figures are rising, following Sunday's 7.1-magnitude earthquake in Van, Armenians worldwide await information on whether damage done to the city — some 130 miles from Yerevan — included historic sites from the time when Van was home to about 185,000 Armenians (as estimated by the Armenian Patriarchate). No news has yet emerged on whether Surb Khatch (Holy Cross) Church on the island of Akhtamar — a hallowed shrine to the Armenian faith that sits on the north shore of Lake Van —

was damaged.

As of early Monday, more than 500 deaths were reported, however officials expect to learn of more as the debris from at least 25 apartment buildings is searched. It is also reported that 55 buildings had collapsed in Ercis, on Lake Van's northern shore. A large portion of the known dead were from Ercis. The fate of many villages in the area is yet unknown, as rescue has been hampered by debris blocking roads. (The city of Van has an official population of about 370,000, however the figure is disputed and the unofficial estimate is as high as 600,000.)

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Taner Akcam

## European Court of Human Rights Rules In Favor of Genocide Scholar Akcam

STRASBOURG, France — On Tuesday, October 25, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the Turkish government's prosecution, under Article 301 of its penal code, with respect to Dr. Taner Akcam's public views on the Armenian Genocide, violated Akcam's right to freedom of expression under Article 10 of

the European Convention on Human Rights.

Akcam, the holder of the Kaloosdian/Mugar Chair for the Study of Modern Armenian History and Armenian Genocide at Clark University in Worcester, Mass., became the target of threats and harassment for expressing his views and publishing his findings on the

Armenian Genocide. A close friend to the late Hrant Dink, the Turkish-Armenian journalist assassinated in January 2007, Akcam knows all too well the dangers of speaking about this taboo subject in Turkey. Before he was gunned down in broad daylight, Hrant Dink was also prosecuted under Article 301.

see AKCAM, page 4



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Philanthropists Sued by Man Convicted of Swindling Them

LINCOLN, Mass. — K. George Najarian and Carolann Najarian, MD, philanthropists, are being sued in a civil court by Grigor Igityan, the man convicted of swindling them of both property and money. Igityan was convicted on all counts in the criminal courts after more than eight years of hearings, trials and appeals up to the highest court in Armenia. He is now serving out his prison sentence in jail.

From jail, Igityan has launched a civil suit through the Kentron Court of First Intention, Yerevan, against the Najarians. He is claiming damages for financial losses he reportedly sustained due to being tried and convicted for crimes he had committed. In addition to the court case, the Najarians' properties have been attached by the court. This is unprecedented in legal practice not only in Armenia, but elsewhere.

According to the Najarians' attorneys in Armenia, all demands made in Igityan's claim have been resolved through multiple court decisions in the criminal case brought against him. The evidence to substantiate these decisions against Igityan was confirmed by the highest court there.

### Azerbaijan Gets UN Security Council Seat

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Azerbaijan received the two-thirds support of UN member states needed for a Security Council seat Monday after its lead competitor, Slovenia, dropped out.

Azerbaijan and Slovenia went into a second day of balloting on October 24 after each failed to get the two-thirds majority needed from the General Assembly for the sole eastern European seat on the UN's most powerful body.

The Slovenian representative announced his country was withdrawing after losing the 17th round to Azerbaijan by a 77-116 vote. In the final round, Azerbaijan got 155 votes, Slovenia 13 and Hungary one, with 24 countries abstaining.

Four of the 15-member council's five new members were chosen more easily on Friday: Pakistan, Morocco, Guatemala and Togo.

Security Council seats are coveted because they give countries a strong voice in matters dealing with international peace and security.

The new makeup puts Pakistan on the council alongside its regional rival, India, which like Colombia, Germany, Portugal and South Africa, is serving a two-year term that wraps up at the end of 2012. They will also serve with the five permanent, veto-wielding members: China, France, Russia, Britain and the United States.

The five new members replace Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria.

Because ballots are secret, multiple rounds of votes are common in Security Council elections.



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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Youth from Armenia, Karabagh, Azerbaijan to Compose Music

YEREVAN (news.am) — The European Integration NGO, in cooperation with US Embassy in Armenia, launched the Together Project.

Poets, composers, designers, photographers and artists from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabagh will work on creating a song, a motto and a video during the next nine months with the aim of achieving an understanding amongst each other.

Young people who have been active in music and other creative fields during the past three years can participate in the contest. The outcome will be a song created by young people from the three republics.

## Yerevan and Paris Mayors Sign Agreement

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Wrapping up the meeting at Yerevan Mayor's Office, Yerevan Mayor Karen Karapetyan and Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoe signed an agreement on friendship and cooperation between the two cities.

Delanoe noted that the Yerevan meetings were held in a familial atmosphere and that the family has enlarged with the presence of the participants of the 31st assembly of Francophone. Referring to the signed agreement, Delanoe said that the document includes interesting verges of cooperation between the two cities. "Besides our high-class cultural cooperation, we intend implementation of serious economic programs," he said.

Karapetyan stressed in his speech that both Armenian-French relations and the relations between the two cities are at the highest level today. "The signed document elevated our cooperation to a new qualitative level, and I am sure that after this meeting our friendly relations will be more strengthened," said Karapetyan.

## Montreal Mayor Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay visited Armenia where Yerevan Mayor Karen Karapetyan received him October 27. The press service of the Yerevan mayor's office said that on the same day Tremblay visited the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex and the Armenian Genocide Institute-Museum.

## Gumri and Osasko Become Sister Cities

GUMRI (Armenpress) — A delegation from Osasko, Brazil, paid a two-day visit to its sister city, Gumri, this past week. The delegation members, led by Mayor Emidio Pereira de Souza, met with the Gumri mayor. A cooperation memorandum was signed as a result of the meeting.

"The cooperation between the two cities was initiated last year, when Gumri Mayor Vardan Ghukasyan gave a stone cross to Osasko, which is placed at the center of the city. The first cooperation between the cities will be in the sphere of sports: a football match is intended, which will be followed by new events. In general, there are huge programs," the Gumri mayor's spokesperson said.

## Artsakh Capital Celebrates City Day

STEPANAKERT (PanARMENIAN.Net) — On October 8, President Bako Sahakyan of Artsakh took part in events dedicated to the Day of Stepanakert.

He, accompanied by the country's high-ranking officials, visited the traditional fair organized in the capital, followed by the exhibition of photographs depicting old and modern Stepanakert held at the Youth and Culture Palace.

On the same day, Sahakyan attended a concert as part of the celebrations.

# Soccer Coach Sees More Glory

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Vartan Minasian, the head coach of Armenia's national soccer team, expressed delight at a nationwide jubilation sparked by its surprisingly strong performance in the qualifying campaign for the 2012 European Football Championship earlier this month. In a recent interview, he also sounded optimistic about its future, saying that the squad will be bolstered by more young and promising players in the coming years.

"I don't know what will happen in the future," said Minasian. "But I can promise one thing. Each of us — footballers, coaches and managers — will do our best and work in a professional manner."

"I can't tell for sure how it all will end. But I'm optimistic. Doing a particular job without optimism is meaningless."

Armenia, which was not even in the top 100 in the world team rankings in the not-so-distant past, finished third in Group B of the Euro 2012 qualifying campaign that comprised six teams, including the more highly-rated Russia, Ireland and Slovakia. In what was its best performance to date, it won five of the 10 qualifiers, drew two others and scored more goals than any of its group opponents.

Three of those wins, including a 4-0 away drabbing of Slovakia, came in quick succession in September and early October, sparking overnight wild celebrations on the streets of Yerevan. They prompted parallels with 1973 when the football club Ararat Yerevan won the Soviet football championship and the Soviet Cup.

The Euro 2012 campaign, which began in September 2010, has also resulted in a sharp increase in popular interest in the game, which had visibly declined since the Soviet collapse. President Serge Sargsian spoke of "national rebirth" and held up the team's players as role models in a speech before young people last week. Minasian, 37, likewise asserted that the run of good results has engendered a spirit of national unity and pride that has overshadowed many problems facing the country.

"Football has a great social impact," said the coach. "It's a social phenomenon and we can see that now. It can make people forget their day-to-day problems and rally around one idea."

"The same happens during wars when nations rally around a common

cause. Football now has the same power, judging from what is happening in our republic and the diaspora."

In terms of style, Armenia is probably the most potentially exciting side to emerge since Denmark in the early 1980s," a football commentator for Britain's The Guardian daily wrote ahead of the team's last qualifier against the Republic of Ireland that was played in Dublin on October 11.

Armenia needed a victory to finish second and make the playoffs, but they controversially lost 2-1. The Irish scored twice after Armenian goalkeeper Roman Berezovsky was wrongly sent off by Spanish referee Eduardo Gonzalez. The latter compounded his error by allowing the play to continue when it appeared Irish striker Simon Cox handled the ball moments before the goalkeeper was wrongly adjudged to have done so outside his area.

The Football Federation of Armenia (FFA) has filed an official protest to UEFA, European soccer's governing body. It wants UEFA to cancel Berezovsky's red card, rather than replay the game or even punish the referee. Minasian agreed with the FFA's stance. "We can't even talk about having the game replayed," he said. "The only thing we can achieve is to have that red card cancelled. If they do that, they will admit that the referee made a mistake."

Unlike furious football fans in Armenia, the normally reserved and serene coach refrained from blaming Gonzalez for the defeat.

"I have worked as coach for five or six years and have never commented on refereeing decisions and I hope I will never have to do that," he said. Minasian also dismissed a conspiracy theory that UEFA decided to ensure Ireland's victory at any cost to balance out France striker Thierry Henry's infamous handball that cost the Irish the chance of reaching the 2010 World Cup finals. "This is just speculation and I don't think we should pick it up," he said.

"If Ireland had lost in such a manner, they would be calling for a replay," he said.

The Irish Independent daily wrote after the match. "Instead, the emotional Armenian coach, Vartan Minasian, delivered a brief address wishing Ireland good luck in the play-offs and stressing how proud he was of his team."

The current Armenian team was built by Minasian around several young players plying their trade in foreign clubs. The most prominent of them are the 22-year-old attacking midfielder Henrik Mkhitaryan of the Ukrainian champions Shakhtar Donetsk and Yura Movsisian, the 24-year-old US-Armenian striker playing for Russia's FC Krasnodar.

Minasian said they will be joined by a new and younger generation of players in the near future. "When I look at our Under-21, Under-19 and Under-17 teams, I can see that a new generation [of footballers] is coming up and ... in around five years from now we will have fewer problems because three or four players will be competing for each position," he explained.

"When you have more choice, you also get a better quality." Armenia's next soccer adventure will begin in the fall of 2012 with the start of the qualification campaign for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. Minasian's side was drawn into an arguably stronger group comprising European football powerhouses such as Italy, Denmark and the Czech Republic. Minasian acknowledged the enormity of the next task facing his young charges and the burden of heightened expectations weighing upon them now. "We have very serious work to do," he said.

## Mining Company's Former Director, Wife Sue Company

YEREVAN (news.am) — Deno Gold Mining Company's (DGM) former general director, Robert Falletta, and his wife and company's former employee, Farida Falletta, filed a petition, with Syunik Region's court, demanding the company pay their salaries, according to Aravot daily.

"Farida Falletta demands from the company \$18,000 Canadian (\$17,326 US) (tax-exempt and without other obligatory payments) for January-June 2011, and Robert Falletta demands 52 million drams (\$139,996).

On February 27, Chief Operating Officer Rick Howes of the Canadian Dundee Precious Metals company, which owns DGM, had visited Kapan and, on the following day, dismissed Robert Falletta from his duties as general director, according to Aravot daily.

## Sargsian Praises Armenia's Close Ties with Russia

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billion, and 60 percent of foreign companies operating in Armenia are Russian.

It is this extent of Russian presence in Armenia that many economists are concerned about. They periodically remind that Russia owns 80 percent of Armenia's energy networks by "pennies and pressures," having ousted Iran by means of the same pressures; two of Armenia's three phone operators are Russian, 30 percent of the railway has been given to Russia under concession-

al management agreement. The concerns grew even bigger when the Russian military base deployment agreement was extended to 49 years.

"Every once in a while we should remember that one shouldn't keep all eggs in one basket, it doesn't matter whether it's Russia or any other country. It's a threat to our sovereignty, but we can see how that political-economic expansion continues, and not in our favor," political scientist Stepan Grigoryan, head of Globalization and Regional Cooperation Center, said.

During the visit Medvedev indicated Russia's intention to organize further high-level Armenian-Azerbaijani peace talks and facilitate Armenia's transport links with the outside world after meeting with his visiting Armenian counterpart Serge Sargsian on Monday.

The two men discussed the unresolved Nagorno-Karabagh conflict and bilateral ties on the second day of Sargsian's state visit to Russia.

"I am convinced that one can achieve a just resolution of the conflict only by

political means," Medvedev told a joint news conference in the Kremlin. "In recent years quite a lot has been done in that direction, including with Russia's participation."

"I believe that we should continue to contribute to the negotiating process as a co-chair of the [OSCE] Minsk Group by organizing direct contacts with the leaderships of Armenia and Azerbaijan," he said.

Medvedev has hosted as many as 10 face-to-face meetings between Sargsian and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev since 2008 in a bid to get the conflicting parties to agree on the basic principles of a Karabagh settlement drafted by Russia, the United States and France.

Sargsian and Aliyev came very close to overcoming their differences at their most recent trilateral meeting with Medvedev held in the Russian city of Kazan in June. The meeting did not yield a breakthrough, however.

(Radio Free Europe contributed to this report.)

## Omission

A photo of the late Sarkis Soghanalian which ran on the front page of the October 22 edition of the *Mirror-Spectator* ran without its photo credit. The photo was by Harry Koundakjian.



## ARMENIA

## Workers Return to Nuclear Plant after Getting Raises

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Dozens of employees of Armenia's nuclear power station at Metsamor who quit their jobs last week agreed to return to work on Monday after accepting a 10 percent increase in their wages offered by the government.

Armenia's Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources announced the pay rise several hours after negotiations held between employee representatives and Energy Minister Armen Movsisian.

More than 150 of them formally ceased to work for Metsamor on Friday one month after demanding that the plant's administration raise their wages by 50 percent or relieve them of their duties. They cited the dangerous character of their work and the increased cost of living.

The administration and the staff agreed on a 20-30 percent pay rise during last-minute talks held on the same day. However, the compromise deal was vetoed by Movsisian's ministry. The latter offered a more modest wage increase that was apparently discussed during Monday's talks.

In a short statement, the ministry said the average wage of Metsamor's 450-strong core staff catering to the plant's sole functioning reactor and other key facilities will rise by 10 percent. All of the protesting employees, among them senior engineers, work there. According to the plant administration, they currently earn an average of 277,500 drams (\$740) a month.

The employee representatives discussed the proposal with their colleagues before responding to it. "It wasn't a particularly lavish proposal. But we have accepted it in order to reduce tension," one of them, Karen Karapetian, said.

"Nobody is satisfied," said another worker. "But what can we do? We must take some steps for our state and our families."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources insisted through its spokeswoman, Lusine Harutiunian, that the mass walk-out did not compromise the safety of the Soviet-era plant. "There are no problems with safety, and it's business as usual at the nuclear plant," she said.

Metsamor's sole functioning reactor, which generates nearly 40 percent of Armenia's electricity, was brought to a halt on September 5 for regular prophylactic repairs and partial refueling. It was due to be relaunched by October 21. The ministry statement said the Metsamor reactor is now undergoing final tests and will resume power generation very soon. But it gave no concrete dates.

Vahram Petrosian, head of the Hayatom state-run research institute on nuclear energy, attributed the delay to the mass resignations. "It's an unprecedented phenomenon, a totally wrong method [of struggle]," Petrosian said, referring to the walkout. "It could lead to very bad things."

## A Woman Called Mayrig At Echmiadzin

ECHMIADZIN – Her name was Mayrig; that is all I knew about the woman. She leaned up against the back of the Mother Cathedral at Echmiadzin one bright, September day in Armenia's Holy Land.

People were coming and going. Seminarians were meandering

**By Tom Vartabedian**

couldn't have been more than 7 or 8, oblivious to the laggard woman.

Judging by the way she was dressed, she appeared no mercenary. The woman wore a long blue coat, slippers instead of shoes and a kerchief. She appeared forlorn with her head pointed to the ground when I stumbled upon her presence.

Perhaps I was overstepping my bounds a little when I pointed a camera at her. She twitched a little when she noticed the intrusion but remained poised for a photograph. I was working on a piece about poverty in Armenia and figured it would fit.

She had a look about her that was hard to resist. A couple of frames later, I approached her with some coins, thinking she could use some assistance. On the contrary, she refused the money.

"I don't want your money," she said, without lifting her head. "If you wish to help me, take the money and light a candle for me. Perhaps God will hear your prayer and make me well. I am ill and come to Echmiadzin so I may be healed. I remain in God's care."

I asked her name and she replied with homage, "I am Mayrig. You can call me Mayrig."

I took her calloused hand and patted it. I couldn't be sure of her age. Women in Armenia tend to look older than their actual years. It was clear these hands had worked. They had changed diapers, washed clothes, prepared food and even driven a nail into a baseboard when necessary. They were the hands of love, not money.

I honored her request. A prayer inside the sanctuary with a plethora of lighted candles would be my pleasure. One other time, I was answered a similar request at Alaverdi. A street comber had asked for money and I posed a question.

"What do you plan to do with this money?" I asked, thinking it would catch him off guard.

Instead, his answer threw me for a loop.

"I want to buy a candle and pray for my wife," he uttered. "She died last month."

He had that look of veracity on his face. I handed him a dollar and off he went. Ten minutes later, our paths crossed inside a nearby church as he hovered over a sandbox filled with burning candles, his hands folded in prayer.

It turned out to be the best dollar I ever spent in Armenia. Panhandling can become a ritual in the Motherland, especially if you're a soft touch. Others more experienced had other impressions.

"Don't pay any attention to beggars, especially children," they

about with a priest or two in their midst. A trio of costumed children was off to one side by a bench, practicing a dance. They



Echmiadzin's Mayrig

would tell me. "Let them learn to suffice on their own and become responsible for their actions. By feeding them money, you're taking away their integrity."

I understood the inference. This woman at Echmiadzin had integrity, if nothing else. The sanctuary at Echmiadzin was laden with tourists and insiders this particular day. The Mother Cathedral was resplendent with history as 1,700 years of Christianity might attest.

To honor it with a candle and a prayer would take a matter of minutes.

I lit one candle for the well-being of my 95-year-old mother, a Genocide survivor; another for my wife and children; a third for the welfare of Armenia and the last one for the woman outside this very cathedral who went by the name "Mayrig."

The candles were burning brightly that day. It was as close to heaven on earth as you could get. Just being there gave you the feeling of piety.

I went back outside to look for the woman and she had disappeared. My eyes followed a path in every direction with no Mayrig. No woman in a blue coat slouched over. No woman who had her shoulders to Echmiadzin as if she were carrying the weight of an entire cathedral on her back.

Was she an apparition? Did God place her there to test my own sanctity? My photograph was all the testament I would need at this sacred moment.

In the days and weeks that followed, my visit to Armenia took on special meaning. Besides the buildings and the sites, the glamour, come the people – especially those you never expect to meet.

## 500 Million Drams Invested in Tatev Aerial Tramway This Year

YEREVAN (Arka) – A total of 500 million drams have been invested in the world's longest aerial tramway this year built to transport visitors to the Medieval Monastery of Tatev in southern Armenia, the facility's director, Tigran Kazarian, said Sunday. He said a part of the funds was used to build a lounge and two souvenir shops.

"The residents of nearby villages may provide tourists with bed and breakfast made of locally-produced, ecologically-clean natural products," he said.

According to him, about 80 percent of tourists coming to Tatev want to stay in a rural house or outdoors in tents. He said the number of tourists visiting the Monastery this year has increased 12 times from last year. Kazarian said the opening of the cable car allowed to create 55 new jobs, and four more jobs are set to open soon. The personnel are residents of Goris and surrounding communities.

The 5.7-kilometer-long aerial tramway transports visitors from the village of Halidzor across the Vorotan gorge to the village of

Tatev, within walking distance of the monastery, allowing tourists and visitors to bypass a 90-minute drive on a dilapidated road in and out of the Vorotan River Gorge.

The reversible cable car line cost \$18 million, with much of the funding coming from private donations, according to the National Competitiveness Foundation of Armenia, which oversaw the project through its Tatev Revival Project.

The cable car travels at a speed of 37 kilometers per hour (23 miles per hour) and a one-way journey takes 11 minutes. At its highest point over the gorge, the car travels 320 meters (1,056 feet) above ground level. It has two cabins, each capable of carrying up to 25 passengers. Local residents can ride the cable car once a day for free while others will have to pay 3,000 drams (\$8). The cable car is part of a \$45-million effort to develop tourism at Tatev. The tramway was officially registered by a representative of the Guinness World Records on October 23, 2010.

## Hayastan All-Armenian Fund Continues to Help Improve Education in Armenia's Shirak Region

ASHOTSK, Armenia – Hayastan All-Armenian Fund has begun constructing a brand new school in a village in Armenia's Shirak Region. The project is sponsored by the Fund's French affiliate.

Shirak province, located in the northwest region of Armenia, suffered notable and devastating effects from the 1988 earthquake, leaving Gumri's structures in shambles. The Fund has built and renovated numerous schools and residential housing across the Shirak Region, with the school in Ashotsk being its current project.

The future campus in Ashotsk will consist of four wings: two buildings for classrooms and administrative offices, a gym and a structure, which will house an events hall. Designed to accommodate up to 360 students, the school will also feature a sizeable playground, which if up to the children would be deemed the most vital component of the school.

With earthwork completed and the foundations laid, crews are currently building the school's reinforced-concrete columns. The project is expected to be completed by May of 2013.

The community's existing school was built in

the 1970s when Ashotsk was an industrial center. Accordingly the town boasted a 5,000-square-meter campus, large enough for over 1,000 students. In time, however, Ashotsk saw a steady decline in population numbers while the old campus, which lacks central heating, fell into disrepair. Today the student population of Ashotsk stands at approximately 300.

"Education has always been a top priority for Ashotsk," said Hamik Khachatryan, the school's principal. "As a rule, some 90 percent of our graduates continue their studies at colleges and universities in Gumri or Yerevan. I am confident that this trend will only grow following the construction of our new school, as the modern and well-appointed facility will certainly inspire our students to value knowledge and learning."

"With our continued support of school-building and renovation projects throughout the regions of Armenia and Artsakh, we hope to help prepare a highly educated generation, one which will be entrusted with the further development of our homeland," said Ara Vardanyan, executive director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund.



## INTERNATIONAL

## International News

## Sarkozy Determined to Continue Genocide Recognition Campaign

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – French President Nicolas Sarkozy thanked his Armenian counterpart Serge Sargisian for a welcome expended during his October 6-7 visit.

As Sarkozy noted in his letter, he was “deeply impressed after the visit to Tsitsernakaberd Genocide Memorial, I’d like to reiterate determination to continue Genocide recognition campaign until the descendants of Genocide perpetrators recognize the 1915 massacres.”

Sarkozy expressed gratitude to Genocide survivors’ contribution to France, noting that the warm welcome shown to him by Armenian people at Yerevan’s Square of France is a life proof of age-long friendship between the two countries.

## 2 Weightlifters Banned After Positive Drug Tests

BUDAPEST, Hungary (ArmeniaNow) – Two leading Armenian weightlifters have been banned from the sport until 2015 for allegedly using performance-enhancing drugs during competitions in 2011.

The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), based here, published the list of 10 weightlifters that have been banned over the results of anti-doping tests and European silver medalist Elen Grigoryan and European bronze medalist Gevorik Poghosyan are among them.

Armenian Weightlifting Federation head Samvel Khachatryan described the case as “possible misunderstanding.” He told Tert.am on Saturday that the Federation had protested the IWF decision.

In an interview with PanArmenian.Net, Poghosyan (w/c94kg) denied the information about his being banned from the sport, saying that his being not with the team at current training assemblies in Russia was connected with his injury. Armenian women squad coach Artashes Nersisyan also denied getting any official report about Grigoryan’s ban. He said the athlete performing in the 53kg weight division would miss the world championships because of an injury.

## EU Officials Reaffirm Support for Karabagh Peace Initiatives

BRUSSELS (Arminfo) – Senior European Union Officials and members of the European Parliament have affirmed their support for the Nagorno-Karabagh peace process and expressed their readiness to engage more strongly to support it through confidence building measures and efforts to promote reconciliation, commonspace.eu reports.

They were speaking at an event in the European Parliament in Brussels where the work of European civil society organizations working for the peaceful resolution of the Karabagh conflict was presented. Amongst the many guests were the ambassadors of Armenia and Azerbaijan to the European Union, who welcomed the efforts of the European Union and European civil society.

In his opening remarks, EU special representative for the South Caucasus, Phillipe Lefort said that the European Union was a desired partner in the South Caucasus and perceived as the main partner for modernization in all three South Caucasus countries. The EU was ready to engage and to respond positively to demands to be more active. Lefort reiterated the support of the European Union for the Minsk process format.

He said that the quest for peace over Nagorno Karabagh did not only require a political process but was also one of reconciliation between people and the EU was ready to contribute its expertise in this field. Speaking on the same theme, John Kjaer, head of the Eastern Partnership Division at the European External Action Service, said the European Union sought to add value to the work of the Minsk Group and to contribute to its work through confidence building measures and outreach activities.

## Turkish Rock Musician Reveals Armenian Origins

ANKARA (Tert.am) – Prominent Turkish rock and alternative musician, Yashar Kurt, recently gave an interview to *Hurriyet Daily News* and spoke about the release of his new album, as well as his Armenian origins.

According to the Turkish publication, Kurt became baptized at the age of 40 after learning that he was actually of Armenian origin.

“I am trying to discover myself. Every individual ought to be free in this decision and live the way they feel. One ought not to carry their identity around as if it were his or her fate. I am a proselyte for both sides, neither side accepts me. The sense of not belonging sticks to you like your destiny. Is being human not the most important thing?” Kurt told the paper.

Kurt was interested in his true origins since age 13 but never received a reply, says the paper. The musician reportedly felt extremely angry when he learned the truth about his origins after 40 years.

“I lived unaware of my true identity in this land, which was visited by indescribable pain, but I want peace and dialogue. The peace that I am describing is a peace where one does not prevail over the other,” he said, adding that his relatives were unnerved and reacted negatively when he revealed his true identity.

Kurt’s greatest wish is to stage a screenplay about the life of great

Armenian composer Komitas.

“Besides our physical resemblance, Komidas is also a significant figure for humanity, and for Turkish-Armenian relations,” Kurt said, adding that everyone who saw him was struck by their likeness.

Kurt also stands as a highly symbolic figure for conscientious objectors; his dissident song *Korku* (Fear), which was released in the late 1990s on the album “Gondermeler” (Allusions), amounts to a political march against military service. Kurt was sued and tried for treason because of the album.

“I was going to be sentenced to 12 years in prison, had I not been acquitted,” he said, adding that the ban on the album was still in effect.

“My album is banned. I cannot reintroduce it to the market, but I can add the songs to my new albums one by one and sing them in my concerts – it’s truly a contradiction. Because the album was banned by the Culture Ministry I must file a lawsuit against the state to lift the ban [and] I was tried at a military court,” Kurt said.

He lived as a fugitive for years to avoid military service, Kurt said, adding that he finally served 28 days in the military in the early 2000s through draft regulations that allowed him to conduct partially exempted and paid service.

“Militarism is the fundamental cause

behind all the world’s problems. I cannot lay my hands on a weapon. Bearing arms is not the only way to serve the country. I can look after the elderly in a nursing home, or do cleaning work, but I did not want my hands to touch a weapon and I still do not want to do so,” he said.

## Azerbaijan, Turkey Sign Gas Deal

ANKARA (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Turkey and Azerbaijan on Tuesday, October 25 signed a long-awaited agreement to allow the transit of some 10 billion cubic meters of Azeri natural gas to Europe, resolving one of the final obstacles preventing the opening of a southern corridor to allow gas to flow from the Caspian to the EU.

A Turkish Energy Ministry spokesman said Tuesday the agreement has now been signed, although no details on the exact terms were available.

Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev arrived in Turkey early Tuesday to attend the ceremony for a new feedstock refinery being built in Ariaga and had been expected to sign the gas deal at a meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Turkey and Azerbaijan have been in talks for nearly two years over a far-reaching new gas deal to allow for up to 10 billion cubic meter (Bcm)/year of gas produced from the second phase of Azerbaijan’s Shah Deniz field to be exported to Turkey and onto Europe.

In addition, Turkey had been hoping to take a further 6 Bcm/year of Azeri gas for its own needs and to finalize a new pricing agreement for existing contracts signed in 2001.

Under those contracts, Turkey takes up to 6.6 Bcm/year of gas from the first phase of the Shah Deniz field, which Turkey has been receiving since 2007.

A transit deal for Azeri gas to cross Turkey en route to Europe was a prerequisite for any of the planned southern corridor gas pipelines.

On October 1, the BP-led consortium developing the second phase of Shah Deniz gas field received formal proposals from three planned export pipelines.

The contenders are: the 31 Bcm/year Nabucco pipeline; the 10 Bcm/year Interconnector Turkey-Greece-Italy (ITGI) link and the 10-20 Bcm/year Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP).

The Azeri government wants a dedicated pipeline through Turkey that will enable them to export gas not only from Shah Deniz 2 but from a cluster of other gas fields, some of which they believe can be brought online in much the same time frame as the giant phase two of Shah Deniz in 2017.

The three projects have upped the public relations offensive in recent weeks as the deadline nears.

But while Nabucco, ITGI and TAP have spent years trying to convince BP and Azerbaijan of their credentials, BP has also proposed a fourth plan should none of the three meet its needs.

The proposal, which emerged last month in Baku, is simply to supply Shah Deniz gas through Turkey to exit points on Turkey’s borders with Greece and Bulgaria and then rely on limited upgrades to existing pipelines – and to current or planned EU local interconnectors – to create a market in south-east Europe that will absorb all the 10 Bcm/year of Shah Deniz 2 European exports, Platts reported.

## European Court of Human Rights Rules In Favor of Genocide Scholar Akçam

AKÇAM, from page 1

The court acknowledges this connection and in its decision notes “it was widely believed that Hrant Dink had been targeted by extremists because of the stigma attached to his criminal conviction for ‘insulting Turkishness.’”

Responding to public horror and international condemnation upon Dink’s demise, the Armenian Assembly of America worked with then-Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Joe Biden (D-DE) who spearheaded legislation calling upon Turkey to repeal Article 301. At that time, Biden stated, “Hrant Dink was a leading voice in Turkey’s Armenian community and an eloquent advocate for human rights, press freedom, and democracy.” Chairman Biden also told the Assembly that “his assassination was an outrage and a tragedy. Hrant’s legacy deserves the Senate’s respect. His murder demands our action.”

In its verdict, the court honors Dink’s legacy in its conclusion that “the criminal investigation commenced against the applicant [Taner Akçam] and the standpoint of the Turkish criminal courts on the Armenian issue in their application of Article 301 of the Criminal Code, as well as the public campaign against the applicant in

respect of the investigation, confirm that there exists a considerable risk of prosecution faced by persons who express ‘unfavourable’ opinions on this matter and indicates that the threat hanging over the applicant is real.”

The Court further concluded that changes to Article 301 and the replacement of the term “Turkishness” by the words “the Turkish Nation” made “no change or major difference in the interpretation of these concepts because they have been understood in the same manner by the Court of Cassation...[in other words it] does not introduce a substantial change or contribute to the widening of protection of the right to freedom of expression.”

Welcoming the court’s decision, Akçam commented that “Turkey should learn that facing history and coming to terms with past human rights abuses is not a crime but a prerequisite for peace and reconciliation in the region. I consider myself as a part of Turkish civil society, which fights for a truly free and democratic Turkey. This cannot happen if Turkey continues to criminalize discussion of the Armenian Genocide.” He added: “You cannot achieve reconciliation and peace with Armenia with the existence of this kind of poisonous law or continue to deny diplomatic relations.”

## Armenia’s National Archives Participates in Conference, Launches Bids to Cooperate

TOLEDO, Spain (Armenpress) – The world archives annual conference being conducted here October 22-29 gave an opportunity to the Armenia’s National Archives to cooperate with partners from other countries.

Director of Armenia’s National Archives Amatuni Virabyan said that meetings with representatives of archives of different countries took place. According to him, a memorandum of cooperation was signed with Finland. “As far as Finland was part of Russia till 1917 and the political prisoners, including Armenians, were taken to their prisons,

there is a possibility of existence of some information about them,” Virabyan said, adding that the agreement is being signed stemming from this circumstance.

Virabyan was planning to negotiate with the head of the archive service of Georgia. According to him, the initiative was launched last year but the Georgian side did not take any steps and the agreement was frozen.

Virabyan commended the negotiations with the secret archives of Venice.

Representatives of archives of about 170 countries are participating in the annual conference.



# Community News

## VA Approves Govt. Headstones with Armenian Crosses

WASHINGTON — For many years, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) has honored deceased American veterans and has made available Government Headstones or Markers for their graves. These Markers generally include the “Emblem of Belief” (EOB) of the deceased veteran.

When Shavasp Hanesian, an eminent lawyer in Niagara Falls, NY, who worked on a committee that prevented a regional developer from taking the property of St. Sarkis Armenian Church, died in 2005, his family felt that one of the government markers should be on his grave. His wife, Laurice, and, brother, Deran, began to investigate the requirements for a government marker to honor him for his service in the 24th Infantry Division in the Army of Occupation of Japan after World War II.

Upon receiving the information and application for obtaining a marker, they learned that 38 denominations had their “Emblem of Belief” accepted by the Veterans Administration. Armenian-American Veterans did not have available their “Emblem of Belief,” the Armenian Cross. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian was contacted to request permission to proceed in getting the Armenian Cross accepted by the Veterans Administration as an acceptable “Emblem of Belief.” Barsamian gave permission for the endeavor and involved Fr. Mardiros Chevian and Deacon Sebouh Oscherichian.

The Veterans Administration was contacted and a document was prepared. Officially, the application had to be filed by the next of kin, his wife, Laurice Hanesian. An extensive letter was required by the “recognized central head or primary contact person” of the sponsoring organization. Barsamian provided the necessary information of the Armenian Apostolic Church. He provided the history from the founding by the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew after the resurrection of Christ and the conversion of the Armenian people from Zoroastrianism. The letter elaborated on how the Armenian people became the first nation to accept Christianity as its state religion in 301 AD and how they have survived and defended their Christian faith against hostile enemies for more than 1,700 years. It was pointed out that Armenians have served in the Armenian armed forces since the American Revolution. After the Genocide of 1915, which was perpetrated by the Government of Ottoman Turkey, large numbers of Armenians immigrated to America. They and their children continuously served in large numbers in the United States Armed Forces beginning with World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and more recently Iraq and Afghanistan. They served honorably; many gave their lives and many others served honorably and survived.

The letter also had to submit “information about the size and organizational structure of the organization, including the total number of members and the location of the congregations.” It was pointed out that since the Genocide of 1915, the Armenian nation has been dispersed all over the world and its churches serve large congregations in the Armenian homeland and in the diaspora.

One challenge emerged and that was to fulfill the request of a “three-inch circular digitized black-and-white representation of the requested emblem that can be reproduced in a production line environment in stone or bronze without loss of graphic quality, and is free of copyright restrictions.” The Veterans Administration was called for advice. Deran Hanesian also sought advice from his colleague and friend, Bill Reynolds, director of Instructional Technology and Media Services (ITMS) at New Jersey Institute of Technology. Reynolds contacted the VA and obtained the requirements for the “three-inch circular digitized black-and-white

see HEADSTONES, page 6



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian blesses Holy Trinity Church's wedding crowns, which recently received a fresh layer of gold plating.

## A Celebration of Marriages At Holy Trinity Church

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), visited Holy Trinity Church, on Sunday, October 16, as the community came together for a special celebration in its yearlong observance of the church's 50th anniversary.

Titled “A Day of Celebrating Marriages,” the gathering recognized couples who were married at Holy Trinity Church over the past five decades. Barsamian celebrated the Divine Liturgy and, at the conclusion of the service, offered a blessing to the couples and their families.

In his sermon, Barsamian reflected on this year's Diocesan theme of “Ministry of the Faithful” and noted that marriage is itself a ministry, which encapsulates the spirit of the call to serve the Lord.

“Whenever two souls come together to form a single unit, it demands courage, humility, sacrifice and faith from both parties,” Barsamian said. “Each member in a marriage cares for, comforts and supports the other — and this activity is almost a perfect illustration of what true ministry in Christ represents.”

The Primate also blessed the church's wedding crowns, which recently received a fresh layer of gold plating. During a champagne reception held later in the afternoon, the crowns were at the center of an arrangement of wedding photographs highlighting the many families that began their journey at Holy Trinity Church.

David Maher, the mayor of Cambridge, extended congratulatory remarks to the parish on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. Parish delegate James Kalustian also offered a toast to Barsamian on the occasion of his 40th anniversary of ordination into the priesthood and his 60th birthday.

“What better way to honor our parish's 50th anniversary than celebrating with our Primate,” said the Rev. Vasken Kouzouian, parish pastor. “What was particularly joyful to witness was the fellowship that took place during our reception — it resembled a family reunion.”

Holy Trinity Church was originally located on Shawmut Avenue in Boston. But as families began moving to the suburbs in the boom of the post-war years, the parishioners decided to relocate their church to Cambridge, where the present building was consecrated in September 1961.

The parish is planning additional events as part of the 50th anniversary year, with a series of programs scheduled for the spring and fall of 2012.



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Fr. Vasken Kouzouian and altar servers

## Fenway Park Is Setting For Heritage Park Bash

By Tom Vartabedian

BOSTON — For decades, Fenway Park has been more than just a ball park; it has been a site for ever-springing hopes of die-hard Red Sox fans.

Soon it will host a benefit party for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment.

Veteran sports announcer Bob Lobel, at the invitation of Precision Fitness Equipment's David Aykanian, will headline a program on Thursday, November 17, when organizers lay out the red carpet for a fund-raiser for the Armenian Heritage Park, currently under construction on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway.

Lobel will be available for informal sports talk, most likely commenting on his intake on the Red Sox demise during September and the New England Patriots' quest



Bob Lobel

toward a Super Bowl.

A tour of Fenway Park will also take place for higher-end party supporters. A brief program will extend gratitude to former Transportation Secretary Jeff Mullan for his leadership. An open bar, hors d'oeuvres and music by the John Baboian Quintet will enhance the evening.

For reservations and other details, visit [www.ArmenianHeritagePark.org](http://www.ArmenianHeritagePark.org) or call Charles Guleserian at (617) 484-6100.

The park is currently in the final phases of construction and commemorates the 1.5 million lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides and celebrates the immigrant experience and contributions made to American life and culture.

It is scheduled for completion next spring, culminating a \$6.2-million endeavor which began in 2006 to design and construct the park and to endow public programs, including the October 20 lecture on human rights at Faneuil Hall, annual reconfiguration of the sculpture and the park's ongoing care and maintenance. Groundbreaking took place last September with the participation of Gov. Deval Patrick and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II.

“We are all focused upon raising the final \$500,000 by the end of the year to meet the endowment goal. The generous support of 15 church communities has greatly enhanced our efforts in the true spirit of unity and collaboration,” said benefit Chairman George Elanjian. “Over 30 organizations initially stepped forward to see this park reach its fruition. It's a testament to their generosity and adherence. The entire Armenian-American community is stepping forward.”





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# AGBU Vice President Sinanian Honored by Armenian President During Independence Anniversary Celebrations in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES — On Sunday, September 25, the president of the Republic of Armenia, Serge Sargisian, attended a banquet at the Beverly Hilton Hotel to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the independence of Armenia. During the official gala, Sargisian awarded AGBU Central Board of Directors Vice

President Sinan Sinanian the Anania Shirakatsi Medal for his decades of service to the community and support of cultural and educational endeavors.

Most recently, Sinanian chaired the committee to realize the establishment of House of Armenia, a planned cultural center in Glendale and the headquarters of the consulate of Armenia in Los Angeles.

In his opening remarks, Sinanian thanked Sargisian for visiting the Armenian community in Los Angeles, which Sinanian considered an indication of the great potential the community presents and the significant role that it should play. He said, "It is an honored tradition when commemorating historic events to erect a landmark stone that stays for posterity. Earlier today the president inaugurated the House of Armenia, which was realized through the joint efforts of our community. We believe that the House of Armenia, while being the official residence of the diplomatic representation of the Republic of Armenia, is destined to be the showcase for what is beautiful in our homeland and a permanent exhibition hall for its ongoing achievements. That edifice will be the symbolic landmark stone erected on behalf of our community on this proud occasion of the 20th anniversary of the independent Republic of Armenia."

Sinianian continued, "It is our wish that every time we pass by the House of Armenia, or set foot in it, we be reminded of our collective responsibility to continuously help and support our homeland."



AGBU Vice President Sinan Sinanian was awarded the Anania Shirakatsi Medal for his decades of service to the Armenian community on September 25.



From left, Mayor of Los Angeles Antonio Villaraigosa, Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, President Serge Sargisian, AGBU Vice President Sinan Sinanian and his wife, Angele Sinanian

Eight hundred Los Angeles-area Armenians and numerous government officials — including Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Los Angeles County Supervisors Michael Antonovich and Zev Yaroslavy — attended the gala event.

Sargisian spoke during the evening's celebration about the strong feelings people have for Armenia and the idealism it embodies for all Armenians. "We have made enormous progress, but we have shortcomings that we all know very well. Who better than our fellow Armenians can help us in overcoming them," he said during his keynote address. He went on to explain that Armenia, like all other nations in the world, is striving to become freer. "Our times are symbolized by freedom, freedom which is achieved through competing and cooperating. There is a competition between individuals and competition between businesses. There is a competition between economies and competition between states. The more competitive we are, the

greater freedom we will enjoy," said Sargisian. "Armenia exists. Armenia is not a dream. It is a small but proud country in far-away mountains, which is gradually rising to her feet. It is a country that is now competing in the arena of the world's large and powerful players. A country that is encountering harsh problems, building new vital institutions, achieving successes and pursuing new and greater goals. We all share these goals."

Sargisian bestowed a number of other awards during the event, including the Order of Honor to Gerard Turpanjian for his significant services and contribution to the Republic of Armenia, the Order of Merit of the Second Degree to Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, for his dedication to and support of Armenia, and the Mkhitar Gosh medal to Tevan Arustamian, for his contribution to the development of diplomacy, law and political science in Armenia.

## Marsoobian to Give Lectures In Chicago on Marsovan

CHICAGO — Prof. Armen T. Marsoobian, professor of philosophy, Southern Connecticut State University and currently Ordjanian Visiting Professor of Armenian Studies at Columbia University, will give a pair of lectures here.

On Friday, November 4, at 4 p.m., Marsoobian will give a lecture titled "Resistance and Rescue During the Armenian Genocide: The Story Behind a Photograph, Marsovan 1915-1918," at the University of Chicago, 102 Stuart Hall, 5835 S. Greenwood Ave. This event is presented as part of the University of Chicago Center for Middle Eastern Studies Friday Lecture Series, in association with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

On Sunday, November 6, at 3 p.m., Marsoobian will give a lecture titled "Memories of a Lost Armenian Home: Photography, Anatolia College and the Story of an Armenian Family in Anatolia, 1888 to 1922," at the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Chicago Norehad Center, 7248 North Harlem Ave. This program is sponsored by the AGBU Chicago, Anatolia College, Project SAVE and NAASR.

Marsoobian is editor of the Wiley-Blackwell philosophy journal *Metaphilosophy*. He has co-edited five books, including *Genocide's Aftermath: Responsibility and Repair*, *The Philosophical Challenge of September 11* and *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy*. He has published articles and book chapters in aesthetics, moral philosophy, genocide studies and American philosophy. His article, "Acknowledging Intergenerational Moral Responsibility in the Aftermath of Genocide," appeared in *Genocide Studies and Prevention*. He is a frequent presenter at conferences on topics related to his work on genocide, including reparations, reconciliation and memorialization. At Columbia he is teaching "Memories of the Armenian Genocide: An Exploration through Memoir, Literature, and the Arts," a

graduate seminar. He is organizing a photography exhibition and writing an illustrated book that chronicles the story of his family and Armenians in the Ottoman province of Sivas between 1888 and 1922. The exhibition, based on the Dildilian Brothers photography collection, opens in Istanbul on April 25, 2012, and will travel to Thessaloniki, Paris and other cities.

More information about the lecture is available by e-mailing [hq@naasr.org](mailto:hq@naasr.org) or writing to NAASR, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA 02478.

## VA Approves Govt. Headstones with Armenian Crosses

HEADSTONES, from page 5 representation of the requested emblem." He accessed a picture of an Armenian Cross on the Internet and prepared a completely black and white, three-inch digitized cross on the computer. A copy of the cross was sent electronically to the Veterans Administration and was accepted.

Today, the loved ones of deceased Armenian-American veterans of the US Armed Forces, who have never received a government grave marker or tombstone, can submit a request for one with the Armenian Cross on it for their graves. The grave markers and tombstones are free of charge. The marker will be sent directly to the cemetery where the veteran is buried; the cemetery staff will install the marker on the grave site.

For more information, e-mail [mps.headstones@va.gov](mailto:mps.headstones@va.gov) or contact National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 5109 Russell Road, Quantico, VA 22134-3903.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Richard Hovannisian Lectures Around the World

LOS ANGELES — During September and October, UCLA Prof. Richard Hovannisian has lectured and participated in national and international conferences in Eastern and Western Europe and the United States. During the first week of September, he and Dr. Vartiter K. Hovannisian were in Riga, Latvia, and Tartu (Dorpat) and Tallinn, Estonia. In Riga, where there are now approximately 5,000 “old” and “new” Armenian inhabitants, they met with members of the Havatk Cultural Association and visited the renovated church of St. Gregory the Illuminator.

They then traveled to historic Dorbat, where they met Prof. Rafik Grigoryan, long-time professor at the university and former head of the local Armenian community. Together, they visited the historic institution where Khachatur Abovyan studied from 1830 to 1836 and where an auditorium is named in his honor. In the Estonian capital, Tallinn, the Hovannisians met with leaders of the Armenian community, who accompanied them to the Armenian church, which here, too, is named St. Gregory the Illuminator.

In the second half of September, the Hovannisians traveled to the Crimean cities of Simferopol, Sudak, Feodosiya (Kaffa), Yalta and Sevastopol, all with historic Armenian communities dating back to the Middle Ages. In Simferopol, Richard Hovannisian participated in the fourth international conference on Armenians in the Ukraine, sponsored by the Ukraine-Armenia Society and the Ethnographic Museum and organized by a committee headed by Prof. Oleg Gabrielyan, rector of the Crimean University of Culture, Arts and Tourism, assisted by Olga Gherardini. The conference, held in the central state library of the Crimean Autonomous Republic, focused on Armenians in the Ukraine down through the centuries.

Hovannisian surveyed Armenian-Ukrainian relations during the period of the first Armenian republic, the assistance extended by both the Ukrainian government and the Armenian communities in caring for survivors of the Armenian Genocide in the region and in the outfitting and transport of volunteers to serve in the Armenian army. He discussed the various diplomatic posts and consular officials in Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Yalta, Sevastopol and Simferopol, and the challenges that the Armenian communities and representatives faced as the military front shifted back and forth during the Russian Civil War.



Emma Melikian and Richard Hovannisian, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Hovannisian was interviewed by Crimean and Armenian television channel during the conference.

Aside from the imposing Church of St. Hripsime high above in Yalta and the seven remaining Armenian churches in Feodosiya, the medieval monastery of Surb Khach (Holy Cross) located in a large wooded area near Staryi Krim leaves a deep impression on the visitor. Under the direction of Very Rev. Hayrik, it has been renovated and conducts nine daily services.

In early October, Richard and Vartiter Hovannisian returned to Europe, this time to Budapest to participate in the triennial conference of the International Association of Armenian Studies (AIEA), held at the Central European University. Nearly 100 participants attended the meeting, which included a number of younger non-Armenian scholars studying various aspects of Armenian history and culture, particularly relating to the Armenian communities of Eastern Europe and other historic diasporan centers. Other US participants were Kevork Bardakjian, Peter Cowe, Seta Dadoyan, Sergio de Porta, Robert Dulgerian, Christina Maranci, Marc Nicheanian, Rubina Peroomian and Abraham Terian.

During the session on modern history, Richard Hovannisian addressed “Neo-Denialism of the Armenian Genocide,” in which he analyzed the strategies and arguments of the neo-denialists, who distort and manipulate to assert the lack of premeditation and intent in the Genocide, point the figure of blame at the victims themselves and on disorderly tribal elements, and virtually exonerate the central authorities from any direct culpability. The cooption of a number of non-Armenian and

non-Turkish writers in this campaign is intended to give an impression of balance and therefore to be acceptable to mainstream publishing houses and an unsuspecting readership. The neo-denialism has been accompanied by an increase of legal actions brought against institutions and universities that refuse to give the Turkish state narrative a place in their programs, as seen in recent suits brought against the Massachusetts State Board of Education and the University of Minnesota.

After organizing the lecture of Cilician Catholicos Aram I at UCLA on October 14, Richard Hovannisian departed for Phoenix, Ariz. at the invitation of St. Abkar’s Armenian Church and Arizona State University. On October 15, Richard and Vartiter Hovannisian were the guests of honor at a dinner reception in the church hall hosted by Greg and Emma Melikian, longtime residents and benefactors.

During their comments, both Emma Melikian and Richard Hovannisian reflected on the qualities of Emma’s brother, Dr. Nikit Ordjanian, and his contributions to the Armenian community. Following church services conducted by Fr. Zakaria Sarikbekyan on October 16, Hovannisian was the featured speaker in the Melikian hall. He noted that October is observed as Cultural Month throughout the Armenian world and dedicated his presentation to that celebration. In his comments and Power Point presentation, Hovannisian shared experiences, sentiments and views of historic Armenia in a collage of three trips that began five years ago with a journey from the Black Sea to Erzerum, followed by the second exploration of Armenian sites from Kesaria (Caesarea) to Everek and then the third this year from Samsun to Marsovan. At the conclusion of the program, Hagop Baghtchedjian presented Hovannisian with a map of historic Armenia and Asia Minor, printed more than two centuries ago.

On October 17, he spoke at Arizona State University in Tempe on the state of Armenian historical studies and advances and pitfalls in the field. The talk was sponsored by at the Melikian research and training center, which includes the Critical Language Institute and is directed by Prof. Stephen Batalden, who introduced the speaker and moderated the lively discussion session.

Richard Hovannisian is traveling to Amsterdam, October 25-29, to participate in the Eighth Workshop on Armenian Turkish Studies. The theme of this workshop is “Ethnic

Tensions and Violence at the End of the Ottoman Empire.” Sponsored by the International Institute of Social History and the Institute for the War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies in the Netherlands, the workshop brings together scholars from various backgrounds and disciplines to discuss issues surrounding the final decades of the Ottoman Empire and the accompanying violence, including the Armenian Genocide.

Hovannisian’s role in Amsterdam is that of discussant of papers relating to the violence against the Rum (Greek Orthodox) population in the 1820s, the Constantinople Armenian massacre of 1896, the Adana Armenian massacres of 1909, and the Turkish social and boycott movements against the Greek Orthodox population, 1909-1914.

Hovannisian returns to San Diego for two consecutive programs. The first of these on Sunday, October 30, from 1 to 5 p.m. is the First Annual Symposium on the Initiative for Moral Courage, featuring speakers on the Holocaust, Armenian Genocide, and African Genocides. The event, a part of weeklong activities, is sponsored by the Jewish Studies Program and the Religious Studies Department at San Diego State University and organized by Jackie S. Gmach. It will be held in Room GMCS 333 at SDSU. There, Hovannisian will discuss various aspects of moral courage during the Armenian Genocide, both by the victims and by those who attempted to assist them, as well as the various choices and options that had to be faced. Dr. Stephen Smith, director of the Shoah Foundation at USC, will offer reflections at the conclusion of the symposium.

On Monday, October 31, Hovannisian will be at the Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. to speak on international law and the Armenian Genocide, during which he will explore the development of human rights laws and customs and the concept of crimes against humanity and how these apply to the Armenian Genocide, as well as the applicability in the Armenian case of the 1948 United National Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

On his return to Los Angeles, Hovannisian will be at the Glendale Public Library on November 4, at 7 p.m. for the book launch of the 10th volume in the UCLA series on Historic



At Dorpat University, from left, Rafik Grigoryan, with Vartiter and Richard Hovannisian

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Armenian Cities and Provinces. The volume, *Armenian Kars and Ani*, will be presented by Prof. Hagop Gulludjian of UCLA, with reflections by Richard Hovannisian, and a Power Point presentation prepared by Roupen Berberian, who along with Hovannisian and others traveled through the region in June this as part of a NAASR heritage trip.

The book launch is sponsored by the Armenian Educational Foundation, NAASR and the Ararat-Eskijian Museum.

In mid-November, Richard Hovannisian will travel to Yerevan to participate in a conference on the 1,050th anniversary of the establishment of Ani as the capital city of Armenia.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Dr. Albert Kapikian Receives Maurice Hilleman/Merck Award

BETHESDA, Md. (ASM News) – Albert Z. Kapikian, MD, chief of the Epidemiology Section, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), NIH, has been awarded the 2011 Maurice Hilleman/Merck Award. This is ASM's premier award for major contributions to pathogenesis, vaccine discovery, vaccine development and control of vaccine-preventable diseases. The award is presented in memory of Maurice R. Hilleman, whose work in the development of vaccines has saved the lives of many throughout the world. Kapikian was nominated by Anthony Fauci of NIAID, who says "his many accomplishments exemplify the spirit of Dr. Hilleman's life work and reflect exceptional and sustained scientific achievement in the service of improving human health."

Kapikian received his bachelor's of science degree cum laude from Queens College, Flushing, NY, and his MD from Cornell University Medical College. He gave 31 years of uniformed service as a commissioned officer of the United States Public Health Service at NIAID, and today continues there as a member of the Civil Service.

Mary Estes, fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology from Baylor College of Medicine, supported the nomination. "Dr. Kapikian is recognized worldwide as a pioneer and leader in understanding the epidemiology, clinical features and pathogenesis of gastroenteritis in general, as well as initiating and developing live attenuated vaccines to prevent serious rotavirus disease," she explains.

Kapikian developed the first US-licensed rotavirus vaccine. He pioneered the study of rotavirus epidemiology and serology, which linked severe infantile diarrhea to rotavirus. In addition, he is credited with discovering the Norwalk virus, a strain of RNA virus that causes many cases of gastroenteritis around the world. This discovery dubbed him "the father

of human gastroenteritis virus research." Another major contribution Kapikian has made to the field of pathogenesis is co-discovering the virus that causes hepatitis A, eventually leading to a successful hepatitis A vaccine.

Kapikian is also known for his mentorship and dedication to the field. Harry Greenberg, a former trainee of Kapikian and supporter of his nomination describes him as "kind, considerate, caring and thoughtful in his guidance and advice for young people. At the same time, he teaches the true nature of scientific investigation, the critical need in all experiments for the inclusion of carefully considered controls, the importance of confirming exciting preliminary findings using multiple approaches and the necessity of always examining all of your data before making a conclusion. He is a scientist's scientist in this regard." Greenberg is a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology and professor at Stanford University Medical Center.

An author of more than 400 publications, Kapikian has had an extremely productive career. He and his colleagues hold over a dozen patents in the United States and other countries. In 2005, he was a recipient of a Butantan Institute Medal for contributions to the field of biomedical science, and later that year he was the recipient of the 2005 Albert B. Sabin Gold medal from the Sabin Vaccine Institute "for exemplary contributions in the vaccine field and commitment to lifesaving medical discoveries." In 2006, Kapikian was a member of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Rotavirus Research Team that was awarded the HHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service. He was then awarded the NIAID Special Act or Service Award in 2007, "in recognition of and appreciation of special achievement in support of the mission of the National Institute of Allergy



Dr. Albert Kapikian

and Infectious Diseases."

"Despite his extraordinary accomplishments, Dr. Kapikian has remained a humanist with a passionate concern for those less fortunate. His inherent decency, his generosity of spirit and his commitment to help others has inspired many others here at NIH and in the scientific community at large," says Fauci, also an Academy Fellow. "Dr. Kapikian remains committed, focused, optimistic and dedicated to finding scientific clues that will lead to the alleviation of human misery and the saving of lives through vaccines and other means of prevention and control."

Kapikian will receive the 2011 Maurice Hilleman/Merck Award on May 22 at the 111th general meeting of the American

Society for Microbiology. Kapikian is chief of the epidemiology section of the Laboratory of Infectious Diseases, NIAID, a position he has held since 1967.

Known as "the father of human gastroenteritis virus research," Kapikian and his colleagues discovered the Norwalk virus in 1972. This was one of the first viruses to be associated with acute epidemic gastroenteritis in humans. A year later, Kapikian and fellow NIAID scientists Dr. Stephen Feinstone and Dr. Robert Purcell first identified the virus that causes hepatitis A. In 1974, while conducting studies in infant and young children hospitalized with diarrhea, Kapikian and his colleagues detected and visualized human rotavirus. This was the first reported detection in the United States of the virus, which had been discovered in Australia a year earlier.

Rotaviruses have emerged as the leading cause of severe diarrhea in infants and young children worldwide. Each year, they account for approximately 500,000 deaths, mostly among children under the age of 5 in developing countries.

Kapikian led a nearly 25-year effort to develop a rotavirus vaccine. He and his research group defined the mode of transmission of rotavirus, identified the viral proteins critical for triggering an immune response and formulated a vaccine aimed at protecting several important rotavirus strains. Their efforts, in partnership with Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, led to the development, testing and FDA approval in 1998 of the first rotavirus vaccine. Kapikian's work has led to second-generation rotavirus vaccines and ongoing efforts to improve rotavirus vaccines and expand their use in the developing world.

ASM's Maurice Hilleman/Merck Award recognizes major contributions to vaccine discovery, vaccine development and/or control of vaccine-preventable diseases.

The Armenian Library and Museum of America, Inc. ("ALMA") has had in its collection paintings of the late Dr. Jack Kevorkian for almost twelve years. The paintings are not on display currently, although they are in the possession of ALMA. It was reported last week in this and other papers and media that these paintings were going to be sold at auction by the Estate of Dr. Jack Kevorkian. ALMA, pursuant to a longstanding policy, does not sell paintings or other artwork in its collection. ALMA has not authorized any part of this collection to be sold. ALMA contends that the paintings were donated to ALMA by Dr. Kevorkian, are owned by ALMA, are part of its permanent collection and should remain as part of its permanent collection. The Estate of Dr. Jack Kevorkian contends that it is the owner of the paintings and is entitled to sell them at auction. A complaint was filed in the Middlesex Superior Court on October 13, 2011 requesting that the Court determine that ALMA is the rightful owner. Pending resolution of that lawsuit, the paintings will remain in the possession of ALMA as part of its permanent collection.



ON  
DECEMBER 13  
**Vote For  
Jon Hecht**

## Representative Hecht Launches Campaign for Senate Seat

Representative Jonathan Hecht, a friend of the Armenian community of Massachusetts and sponsor of the Armenian Genocide Commemorations in the State House, announced his candidacy for the Senate seat left vacant when Senator Steven Tolman resigned



The 2nd Suffolk and Middlesex Senate district in Massachusetts includes **Watertown, Belmont and parts of Cambridge, Allston-Brighton, the Fenway and the Back Bay.**

For more information contact State Representative Jon Hecht at

**electhecht@gmail.com**  
**617.320.8905**





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Pilgrims from the Eastern Diocese Take Part in Consecration in Dikranakert

PILGRIMAGE, from page 1

As reported shortly after news of the disaster broke, the pilgrims from the Eastern Diocese are safe and were unaffected by the earthquake. But in a telephone interview Sunday, Barsamian said, "After such a splendid [re-consecration] ceremony, our hearts were heavy when we learned of the earthquake, and our prayers go out to the victims and their families."

The restoration and re-consecration of the St. Giragos Armenian Church was a major event in the region, with dignitaries and pilgrims from around the world participating. Constructed in the 16th century, St. Giragos is arguably one of the great sanctuaries of the worldwide Armenian Church. After years of abuse, the recent renovation project – to which a number of diaspora Armenians contributed – has restored it to its former glory.

The group of pilgrims from the Eastern Diocese arrived in Istanbul on Friday, October 21, and had dinner that evening with Archbishop Aram Ateshian, patriarchal vicar of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, who warmly welcomed the group. Barsamian extended his thanks to Ateshian.

On Saturday morning, the pilgrims traveled to Diarbekir (Dikranakert), and on their arrival at the local airport they were welcomed by members of the St. Giragos Armenian Church Parish Council. They proceeded to tour the Old City of Dikranakert – including the ancient St. Sarkis Armenian Church, located in the historic district.

Streets throughout Diarbekir were festooned with flags in Armenian, Turkish and Kurdish reading "Welcome home." The sentiment throughout the city was festive, warm and welcoming.

The consecration of St. Giragos Armenian Church began at 5 p.m. Ateshian, Barsamian, Aykazian, Bishop Shahan Sarkisian (Primate of Aleppo) and Bishop Sahag Mashalian (from Istanbul) consecrated the five altars. Also present was the Very Rev. Haigazoun Najarian, formerly of the Eastern Diocese and currently the Pontifical Legate for Central Europe.

The number of participants in the service exceeded 2,000, with groups of Armenian pilgrims from Istanbul, the US, Armenia, Holland, Germany, Syria and Lebanon present.

Among the dignitaries attending were the United States Consul General of Istanbul, Scott Kilner; the US Consul of Adana, Daria Darnell; the mayor of greater Diarbekir, Osman Baydemir; Abdullah Demirbas, mayor of the city's Sur Ici section (the area "inside the walls" of the old fortified city) and Mayor Scott Avedisian of Warwick, RI – all of whom were interested in the service and supportive of the historic event.

At the conclusion of the service, the mayor of greater Diarbekir, Osman Baydemir, offered his warm welcome to the visitors – speaking first in Armenian, then in Kurdish, Turkish, English and Arabic. To the Armenian pilgrims he said, "Welcome to your home. You are not guests here; this is your home. Anytime you come here, you are coming to your home."

"This is a happy and special day not only for you but also for us," Baydemir continued. "We all know about past events, and our wish is that our children will celebrate together the coming achievements." Baydemir's remarks were frequently interrupted by applause, as those gathered were gratified to hear acknowledgement that the city is indeed an historic Armenian center.



Archbishop Aram Ateshian, patriarchal vicar of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, during services at St. Giragos Church last weekend.

## A Day of Hope

Baydemir hosted a dinner for the clergy and guests, where the US Consul General and the US Consul of Adana were also present.

Vartkes Ergun Ayik, chairman of the St. Giragos Church Parish Council, welcomed the visitors, thanked all those who had participated in the restoration project and invited Barsamian to offer some remarks.

The day's achievement, said Barsamian, "represents many things to all of us. But most of all, perhaps, it is the result of the mutual recognition and respect of everyone involved, which has animated this project from the very beginning. That is a great reason to be hopeful, and it makes today, above all, a day of hope – a day to look to the future with optimism."

"As pilgrims from America who have been blessed to be a part of this day, we share in that sense of optimism and hope," he added. He closed by making presentations of the "St. Vartan Award" to Baydemir and Demirbas.

Ateshian likewise expressed thanks to everyone and presented silver awards to both mayors and to the architect of the restoration project.

Baydemir concluded the evening by characterizing the occasion as one not only for celebration, "but a day of expressing our apologies for the tragic events of the past. We want to see you come back here not only as tourists, but also as people coming back home."

Sunday morning witnessed the celebration of the Armenian Divine Liturgy in the newly re-consecrated St. Giragos Church. Ateshian was the celebrant and homilist, and members of the Sts. Vartanantz Church choir from Ferikoy, Istanbul, sang the Komitas arrangement of the *badarak*.

The service took place before another remarkably large gathering of the faithful, which included guest Armenian clergy, as well as the Syrian Orthodox bishop of Adiaben; the representative of Bartholomew I, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople; mayors Baydemir and Demirbas, and the two American consuls.

To conclude the liturgy, the Armenian *hokehankisd* (requiem) service was performed for the deceased primates, pastors, altar servers and faithful of Dikranakert.

With the next day's planned trip to Van (where the group of pilgrims was scheduled to visit the Holy Cross Church on Akhtamar Island) cancelled due to the earthquake, the Eastern Diocese group drove instead to visit the 17th-century St. Kevork Church in Derek, near Mardin. There they met the caretakers who faithfully care for the 300-year-old *Bible* and hymnal housed within the church. The pilgrims were welcomed by Eyyup Guven, author of a biography titled *Kohar* – the memoir of an Armenian Genocide survivor from the area.

During their visit the pilgrims were trailed by a sizeable group of local residents, eager to say that they were of Armenian origin.

The group was scheduled to fly to Istanbul on October 25 and to return to the United States later this week.

## Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority Appoints Jamian Executive Director

DETROIT – The Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority (DWCPA) Board of Directors announced this week they have appointed John Jamian to be executive director of the Port Authority.

Jamian will be responsible for business management and political affairs for the DWCPA and work with federal, state and local officials for development projects in the Port of Detroit. This is a second term as executive director for Jamian, who also served in the position from 1997 to 2001.

The appointment comes as the authority is preparing to open its most high-profile project in years with the grand opening next month of the



John Jamian

DWCPA's new \$22 million public dock and terminal facility located at 130 E. Atwater St. between the GM Renaissance Center and Hart Plaza.

"John brings extensive maritime experience to the job and we are fortunate that he was

available at this moment in the authority's history," said Chairman Arthur Blackwell. "The port authority is preparing to play a more prominent role in developing the Detroit riverfront and the City of Detroit and John's skills provide a perfect match for the job."

Jamian was appointed by President George W. Bush in 2003 to serve as deputy administrator for the US Maritime Administration under the US Department of Transportation where he oversaw the administration's \$205-million budget and managed more than 900 employees. Jamian successfully led procurement and grant projects funding ports, highways and rails, helped negotiate international bilateral maritime treaties with Vietnam, China and Mexico and worked to strengthen transportation systems to meet the economic and maritime related security needs of the United States. Jamian was the first appointee from the Great Lakes region to serve in this role, a position he held for three years.

During his previous tenure as executive director for the DWCPA, Jamian helped reestablish the presence of the Great lakes cruise ship industry, bringing the first cruise ship back to Detroit since 1967. He also led the Detroit River Seawall improvement study project and other environmental mitigation programs with the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Jamian worked with the Foreign Trade Zone Board, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), the Detroit Regional Chamber and the City of Windsor to promote the history, benefits and economic future of the port of Detroit. During that time, he served on Detroit's Tercentennial Commission and managed the Great Lakes' Tall Ship Challenge Race and other events with the city of Windsor and the port of Windsor.

Prior to returning to the DWCPA, Jamian was the president of the Seaway Great Lakes Trade Association in Birmingham, where he was an advocate for maritime environmental affairs representing shippers, carriers, manufacturers, grain companies, terminals and employees in all eight Great Lakes states.

Jamian also served in the Michigan House of Representatives from 1991 to 1996 as a state representative for the 40th district. While in the legislature, he was chair of the House Maritime Committee on the Great Lakes and was named "Most Outstanding New Legislator" by the *Detroit News*.

Jamian graduated in 1977 from Oakland University with a bachelor's degree in social sciences. He was an adjunct faculty member of the Intergovernmental Health Policy Project at George Washington University and is a contributing writer to various healthcare and maritime publications.

The Jamian family has a long and honorable record of community service in Detroit. John and Greg Jamian have been continuing that tradition in assuming leadership roles in the Armenian community.



(from left) The Very Rev. Haigazoun Najarian, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Kevork Atinizian, Archbishop Aram Ateshian, and Archbishop Khajag Barsamian at St. Giragos Church.



Pilgrims from the Eastern Diocese pose for a group photo at the 17th-century St. Kevork Church in Derek, near Mardin.





## New York METRO

# HMADS Welcomes Lucine Kasbarian

BAYSIDE, N.Y. — The month of October is dedicated to Armenian culture and the founding of the Armenian alphabet. The accomplishments of Mesrob Mashdotz are “revived” over and over because of the impact it has and will have for years to come.

Traditionally, most Armenian schools in the US celebrate this cornerstone of their rich and varied past by commemorating literary figures and enjoying dance and music. Thus, on Wednesday, October 12, Lucine Kasbarian

answers were: by attending Armenian schools, enjoying the instructions of their Armenian teachers, learning and singing Armenian music and going to various dance classes.

All of the elements are in place; the future generation has to incorporate them and use them as a vital part of their daily life. “Yes! You can be both Armenian and American in this world,” Kasbarian explained. When Armenians are deeply involved in the Armenian immersion, they are also honoring



Lucine Kasbarian reads to the young students.

was the guest this year at Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School. This young woman, who is also the author of *Armenia: A Rugged Land, An Enduring People*, with her new book *The Greedy Sparrow*, introduced the genre of fables to the students.

The fable of the sparrow was first written down on paper by Hovhannes Toumanian.

What was so refreshing to see was the way Kasbarian related to the children. She was dressed in a traditional Armenian costume and her interaction with the students was captivating.

Kasbarian also spoke about “immersion” and preservation of the Armenian identity and how unique and authentic all ethnic rituals are. How can Armenians reclaim and preserve some of their customs? Can they feel closer to their ancestors because of it? In what way can they truly honor them? The students’ interest was elevated and some of their

their ancestors and ethnic background; and that is exactly what the author’s objective was. She thanked her great-grandmother and father for enriching her life by introducing her to Armenian traditions, Armenian fables and folktales. It was inspiring when the voice of the author’s father resonated strongly when they heard him on tape telling the story of *The Greedy Sparrow* in his Dikranakert dialect. Most Armenian fables begin with “once there was and was not,” but they also carry a profound message or a lesson learned which we can still apply in modern times.

The event concluded with the author signing copy after copy of her book while her numerous admirers were waiting impatiently.

For more information about HMADS first Armenian elementary day school on the East Coast visit the school’s website: [www.hmads.org](http://www.hmads.org).

## AGBU New York Summer Intern Program Applications Now Available

NEW YORK — The AGBU New York Summer Internship Program’s (NYSIP) applications for the 2012 program are now available online. The deadline for the program is Thursday, December 1.

The program brings together 30-35 students of Armenian descent from around the world. This year, 32 students from 11 countries participated in the program. Participants gather with the common goals of gaining an edge in pursuit of their future careers, establishing a deeper connection to their cultural heritage and developing ties to other like-minded college students. The two-month experience continues to be a unique adventure, allowing students to form lasting memories and lifelong friendships.

NYSIP participants are housed in a New York University residence hall and placed in full-time internships based on each individual’s interests and career goals. Recent NYSIP alumni have been placed at institutions such as Columbia University Medical Center, Rothschild, First Solar and

Prudential, Douglas, Elliman, as well as scores of other prestigious companies and institutions. During evenings and weekends, students are involved in various educational, cultural, social and professional networking events. Events include a visit to Saint Vartan Armenian Cathedral for a private tour and dinner with the Primate, a community service project at the Armenian Home for the Aged, various social outings and numerous talks by industry experts. Interns also benefit from an interactive Mentoring Program organized by the AGBU Young Professionals of Greater New York, which works to develop one-on-one interactions between local Armenian mentors and summer interns over an extended period of time.

For more information, and to download an application, visit the website <http://agbu.org/downloadableforms/NYSIPai.pdf>. For further assistance, contact Associate Program Director Michael Hovsepian at [nysip@agbu.org](mailto:nysip@agbu.org).



## Party at the Other Park!

Benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment



Thursday, November 17, 2011  
7:30 - 9:30pm

### Fenway Park

State Street Pavilion  
Boston, Massachusetts

Armenian Heritage Park in Lights

John Baboian Quartet

Informal Sports Talk with Bob Lobel

Open Bar & Hors d'oeuvres

Tour of Fenway Park at 7pm for Party Supporters of \$1,000 and above  
Brief Program: Extending Thanks to former Transportation Secretary Jeff Mullan

Casual Business Attire

Lots of Fun!

RSVP by November 12, 2011

Advance Reservations required.

For a Reply Form, please e-mail

[fenway@armenianheritagepark.org](mailto:fenway@armenianheritagepark.org)

or call Charles Guleserian 617.484.6100

Funds raised support the Endowment for Armenian Heritage Park under construction on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, Boston.

The Park commemorates lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides, and celebrates the immigrant experience and contributions made to American life and culture.  
[www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net](http://www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net)

# SHUSHI

Armenian Dance Ensemble of St. Vartan Cathedral, NYC

Presents

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**New York**  
**METRO**

# St. Nersess Seminary Celebrates 50th Anniversary

**By Florence Avakian**

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — The fourth annual Evening Under the Stars at the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, on Saturday, September

24, was a two-pronged celebration. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary by the late Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan. And there are plans to purchase a new complex soon in Armonk that will educate and house Armenian seminarians for the next several



Dr. Raffi Hovanesian conversing with Seminarian Arman Uzunyan alongside Fr. Daniel Findikyan and Fr. Arakel Vardazarian



Recent graduate Deacon Benjamin Rith-Najarian with Danielle Der Asadourian and Megan Jendian



Supporters of St. Nersess enjoying the benefit evening at the Seminary

decades.

This surprise announcement was made by Suzanne Akian of the institution's Board of Directors, to more than 100 clerical and lay supporters present who greeted the revelation with great enthusiasm. The support of the community is crucial for this vital effort, said Board Treasurer Steve Mekenian.

Welcoming the attendees, the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, the dean of St. Nersess and professor of Liturgical Studies, invited the co-chairman of the St. Nersess 50th-anniversary campaign, Jonathan Najarian, to greet the guests. He then introduced the four seminarians present: Deacon Christopher Sheklian, a doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of Chicago; Eric Vozzy from Albany; Armand Uzunyan, a medical doctor from Armenia, and Saro Kalayjian, son of Rev. Vertanes Kalayjian.

Outlining the many programs at the Seminary, Findikyan detailed a new master's degree in diaconal studies, intended for men who do not aspire to the priesthood, but wish to assist the priests in various aspects of their ministry. He also spoke about the summer programs for the youth, a continuing

educational program for clergy in October and a November reunion and workshop for past participants of the Deacon's Training Program. He revealed that 40 clergy who are graduates of St. Nersess are now serving in parishes throughout the United States.

In addition to a silent auction, a live auction was conducted by Akian, featuring a handcrafted silver pendant created by Ani Khachian, which Dr. and Mrs. Raffi Hovanesian won.

Under a huge tent with colorfully-decorated tables, planned and organized by Yeretzgin Paulette Doudoukjian, the attendees enjoyed several courses of Armenian delicacies, prepared by chef Ovidar Padilla, and an open bar donated by Raffi Korozian.

Especially enthusiastic for the prospect of a new and larger seminary complex was Dr. Raffi Hovanesian who noted that, "We have four new deacons of a more mature age, and the likelihood is that they will serve our church in the near future."

For Raffi Balian, a US State Department advisor, the evening was "a great opportunity to build rapport in the community. It's not only about seminarians, but it's also about us and the future of the church in America. It's great to see a dynamic, energized crowd, enthusiastic about serving the Seminary," he commented. And Sona Lise Haratunian, an UBS Senior Learning Designer, expressed great optimism and inspiration about the work of the Seminary and the future of the church.

St. Nersess Board of Directors member Kevork Toroyan delighted in the fact that so many young volunteers had dedicated their time in making the evening a success. And Eastern Diocesan Council Treasurer Papken Megerian was also impressed with the preparation of the event and the elegant auction. "I deeply believe in the Seminary's goals to prepare priests for our churches that don't have pastors," he said.

"This was our largest Evening Under the Stars event," said Akian. Concerning plans for the new St. Nersess complex, she related, "We need a place where we can grow for the next 50 years, a place for classes, a library, land as well as bachelors' and married housing quarters."

She revealed that Haig Didizian of London, England, has already donated more than \$2 million for one of the four buildings of the complex that will be named the Catholicos Karekin I Theological Center. "We need great support also from the community. This event gave me great faith that people have St. Nersess in their hearts."

Other members of the St. Nersess Board of Directors present were Rev. Karekin Kasparian, Michael Haratunian, Karen Dilimetin and Nicole Vartanian.

## Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2011



Since its inception in 2001, TCA's 'Sponsor a Teacher' program has raised over \$477,750 and reached out to 3,700 teachers and school workers in Armenia and Karabagh.



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

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## Annual Orthodox Prayer Service Held at St. Vartan Cathedral

NEW YORK — Members of the United Nations (UN) community and Orthodox Christians in the New York-metro area gathered for the annual Orthodox Prayer Service and reception at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral on Tuesday, October 18.

The evening began with a procession of clergy from the cathedral plaza to the beat of a *kebero* — a traditional drum used in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church — which organized this year's service. In the narthex of the cathedral, families and children welcomed the procession with dance and song.

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), welcomed guests and reflected on the history of the UN Prayer Service, which was initiated in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

"We inaugurated this pan-Orthodox service 10 years ago, during a time of darkness and uncertainty for this city," Barsamian said. "But I can vividly recall how the mere act of coming together on that occasion — of sharing our hopes and sorrows with each other — had a powerful effect on everyone present. We emerged strengthened, encouraged, re-committed to helping our respective people through the difficulties of that time."

Turning to recent violence against Christians in the Middle East, he added: "Tonight, we pray for our brothers and sisters all over the world, in their hour of need. And above all, we pray to our Lord Jesus Christ, for his strength and guidance, and for his peace

— which our world so desperately needs."

The service was led by Archbishop Abuna Zakarias, the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in the eastern and central United States. Other participating church leaders included Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America; Bishop Savas, head of the Greek Orthodox Office of Society and Culture, and Bishop Antoun Khouri of the Antiochian Orthodox Church.

The evening's guest speaker was Ambassador Tekeda Alemu, the permanent representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the UN. Alemu emphasized the importance of the "collective efforts of the United Nations community to fully realize" global peace and stability and noted the role of churches and other community organizations in supporting such efforts.

Following the ambassador's remarks, Zakarias offered a special prayer for the Coptic community. At the conclusion of the service, a reception was held in the Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium of the Eastern Diocese.

Organized under the auspices of the Joint Commission of the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in North and Central Americas, the annual Prayer Service gives Orthodox Christians an opportunity to come together for worship and to learn more about each other's culture and heritage by engaging with representatives from the United Nations.



Clergy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church led a procession from the plaza of St. Vartan Cathedral prior to the start of Tuesday's service.

## AIWA New Jersey Chapter Hosts Programs to Help Women, Children

By Shoghig Chalian

ENGLEWOOD, N.J. — On Saturday, October 15, the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) New Jersey affiliate held a Women's Wellness Luncheon at Nisi Trattoria honoring longtime AIWA non-government organization (NGO) United Nations (UN) representative Mary Toumayan.

Toumayan was born in Lebanon and attended the American University of Beirut. She spoke eloquently when she accepted the honor on behalf of various UN NGO representatives who undertake to support the work of the United Nations, as they promote knowledge of its principles and activities in order to achieve the collective goals. One example of those goals was the "Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health," which was passed three years ago to save millions of women, newborns and children. She spoke of the significant work that the NGO's undertake and lobby their governments accordingly to remind them of their obligations, responsibilities and signed agreements. As a result of this ongoing work and new initiatives, more children are living past their 5th birthday, fewer women are dying at childbirth and babies are being born HIV/AIDS-free from infected women. Toumayan stressed that there is always more work to be done.

The AIWA New Jersey affiliate was founded by Lisa Stepanian after her attendance of the AIWA conference in London. She was impressed with the work of AIWA and organized a committee 10 years ago, whose members undertook the task of the fundraising for the immunization project of the children of Armenia and raised \$10,000 for that cause. Ultimately a Wellness Day event was also organized at the time, and after a long break, the committee reunited (with some new members) and organized two events this year. The first was an afternoon tea and the second event was a dental health month program and

Dr. Joyce Kurdian spoke of the importance of dental visits and how dental health can affect the rest of the body

The attendees were also presented with a report of AIWA's 20th anniversary conference that was just held in San Francisco. Three local chapter members attended: Stepanian, Hasmig Kazanjian and Ani Chatmajian. In total, more than 200 women attended from US and other countries such as Armenia, Lebanon, Argentina, and Canada.

The guests in New Jersey were entertained further with a few dance performances by one the younger members of the committee, Araksya Hovsepyan, who performed a Flamenco fusion dance and an Armenian dance in traditional costume, they joined in the group dances as well, while socializing with friends

The program included an artist as well, Maral Massoyan Kachichian, who demonstrated her talent by painting a striking still life with flowers as the attendees watched and then raffled off the painting to benefit the Nork Nursing Home of Armenia. The renovation of this nursing home will require about \$30,000, to be raised and controlled by the AIWA NJ and will be overseen by the designated liaison member who will make sure that the funds are spent in the correct manner. All donations are welcome and those interested can contact [aiwanjaffiliate@gmail.com](mailto:aiwanjaffiliate@gmail.com).

Amongst the notable attendees of this event was Nane Nazarian, the wife of Armenia's representative to the United Nations, Garen Nazarian. The latter presided over the 54th and 55th sessions of the UN Commission on the status of women. This is the only intergovernmental body that examines and reformulates policies concerning the advancement and welfare of women. He has stated that "Without solving women's issues in Armenia, like anywhere else, society cannot be stable."

The committee of the AIWA NJ affiliate members plans to have more such events in the future for women's wellness that benefit the local women and simultaneously raise funds for women's causes in the United States and Armenia.

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**Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 2011**

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<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b> WBIN-TV	Comcast Cable Ch. 18, 25, 79 Charter Communications Ch. 26 Verizon FiOS Ch. 6 RCN Ch. 18	DirectTV Ch. 50 DISH Ch. 50	12PM–4PM
<b>NEW YORK</b> WMBC 63	Verizon FiOS Ch. 18 RCN Ch. 19 Cablevision Ch. 20 Time Warner Cable Ch. 10, 18, 21 or 63	DirectTV Ch. 63/895 EchoStar Ch. 63/8115	12PM–6PM
<b>NEW JERSEY</b> WMBC 63	Verizon FiOS Ch. 18 Cablevision Ch. 20 Comcast Cable Ch. 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 32, 63 Time Warner Cable Ch. 21 or 63 US Cable of Paramus Ch. 10 Service Electric Ch. 18	DirectTV Ch. 63/895 EchoStar Ch. 63/8115	12PM–6PM
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# Arts & Living

## NAASR Talk Pays Tribute To Lemkin

By Alin K. Gregorian  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BELMONT, Mass. — Khatchig Mouradian, a doctoral student at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Clark University, presented a talk on October 6 at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) on the links between human rights activist and lawyer Raphael Lemkin and the discourse both within and outside the Armenian community on the Armenian Genocide.

Mouradian, the editor of the *Armenian Weekly*, drew from various sources, including the archives of Armenian newspapers as well as Lemkin's correspondence with the editors of those newspapers on how the Armenian experience helped the Polish-born, Jewish Yale professor to craft the word genocide to define the events that befell the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the new Turkish Republic. In addition, he delved into the Armenians' perception of the word genocide and how and when they started using it. In addition, he also spoke about the collaboration between Armenian-Americans and Lemkin in his tireless efforts to have the US ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, more commonly known as the Genocide Convention.



Khatchig Mouradian

Mouradian said Lemkin and his efforts, which cost him so much during his life, inspired him to turn from journalism to academia.

"Lemkin knew about the Genocide, was influenced by the Genocide and dedicated his life" to "make Genocide a crime punishable by law," Mouradian said. The issue was especially resonant with Lemkin because he had lost so many family members during the Holocaust.

On December 11, 1946, thanks to his efforts, the United Nations General Assembly passed the Genocide Convention. After that, Lemkin was more and more in touch with the Armenian press, trying to galvanize them into action to push the US to ratify the Genocide Convention. He corresponded regularly with the editors of the Armenian papers and started interviewing survivors, including a woman in Watertown who was the only person to be spared in her family. In addition, he also wanted Turkey to ratify the Genocide Convention. Ironically, he succeeded with Turkey, but not with the US. It was not until 1988 that the US ratified it.

The issue of defining and avenging the see LEMKIN, page 17



A gypsy dance

## Sayat Nova Dance Company Celebrates 25th Anniversary with Special Performance

BOSTON — From the darkness comes a soft ethereal sound; a sound that speaks an ancient language, a language without words that curves and curls filling every hollow in time, in space, in soul. It is the duduk, the traditional woodwind instrument of Armenia. Softly a dull light begins to rise; shadows take shape on stage and there is movement. The women dance, their costumes of color waving in unison, the music flowing through their stretched fingertips extending out to the audience, grasping their hearts and gently whispering "remember."

By Vana Melkonian

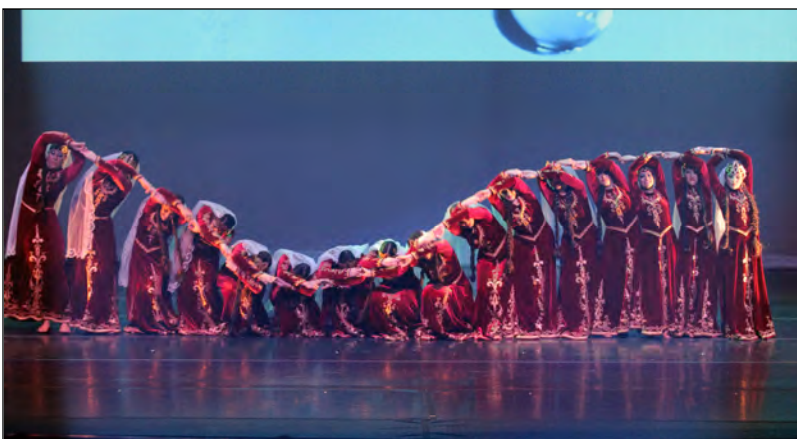
From one dance to the next, the men and women of Sayat Nova Dance Company (SNDC) of Boston bring to life the Armenian history of fear, faith, death and perseverance, and those who watch remember.

I was 5 when I saw Sayat Nova perform for the first time. I remember marveling at the fluidity of movement, the power of the men, the grace of the women and the music that brought them all together. And now, 25 years later, I cannot remember the last time I watched a performance from the audience. Instead I have been on stage dancing with the company for the last 14 years. It is a family, Sayat Nova — a family of people from all walks of life who join together in music and in dance to celebrate and share the love of their culture. An independent non-profit organization, Sayat Nova has traveled the world, performing all over the United States coast-to-coast, in Canada and Armenia, and now, in the year of 2011 we celebrate Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston's 25th anniversary.

To commemorate and honor this milestone, Sayat Nova has prepared a brand new show, the process of which takes years of planning and dedication from its members, and it is titled "Journey Through Time." The show bursts to life with fire and drama portraying the pagan days of our people. It then seamlessly pays homage to St. Krikor Lusavorich in Khor Virap depicting the conversion to Christianity, making Armenia the first Christian nation in the world.

"The Battle of Vartanantz" is remembered with deep heart-pounding drums, power and might vibrating through the auditorium. The dance of "Caravan" respects those who suffered the brutalities of the Genocide and pays homage to their memory. The show has all new numbers, new music and stunts; "Journey Through Time" will fill your soul and have your heart beating in rhythm.

"Journey Through Time" will premiere on November 19, at 7 p.m. at Waltham High School. To purchase tickets, visit <http://www.itsmyseat.com/sayatnova>. To learn more about SNDC, visit [www.sayatnova.com](http://www.sayatnova.com).



The precision of the movements creates a wave.

## Free Preview Of 'Deported' At ALMA

WATERTOWN — In a free preview at the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) on November 6, actors will read scenes from the upcoming world premiere production of "Deported/ A Dream Play," a new play about the Armenian Genocide by award-winning playwright Joyce Van Dyke.

The actors will be the same ones performing the play in the Boston premiere that opens March 8, 2012 at the Modern Theatre, a beautiful, newly-restored, historic theatre next door to the Opera House, in the heart of Boston's revitalized Theatre District. "Deported" will be produced at the Modern by Boston Playwrights' Theatre in association with Suffolk University and will feature Armenian dance choreographed by Apo Ashjian of Sayat Nova Dance Company.

According to Joyce Van Dyke, "Deported" was inspired by the true stories of her grandmother and Dr. H.

Martin Deranian's mother — close friends who were deported together from Mezireh in 1915. Memories and dreams interlace in this "dream play" which stretches from 1915 into the future beyond 2015, and tackles large questions about the legacy of the Genocide.



Joyce Van Dyke

In the words of Prof. Taner Akcam, Kaloosdian/Mugar Professor at the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University: "How can we overcome a past trauma? How can we find the words and acts to represent the 'inconceivable' for today's audience? Is it possible to overcome this historic burden? In her extraordinary 'Deported / A Dream Play,' Joyce brings these essential questions to the stage."

The performance at ALMA will be followed by a conversation about how the play was developed, with the participation of the playwright, director Judy Braha and Deranian, moderated by Ilana Brownstein of Boston University. The November 6 program will take place from 3 to 5 p.m. in the third floor gallery at ALMA.

For more information visit the website <http://www.almainc.org/calendar.html> or [www.bostonplaywrights.org](http://www.bostonplaywrights.org).



The Modern Theatre





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Karsh Photo Still Enthralls Vartan Gregorian

By Tom Vartabedian

WATERTOWN — By virtue of his nature and fame, Dr. Vartan Gregorian is a man accustomed to sitting on the hot seat.

Of all the positions he has held, all the accolades he has received, all the speeches he has given and notables he has encountered throughout his academic lifetime, nothing has rattled him more than the time he posed for Yousuf Karsh.

The year was 1991 and Gregorian was president emeritus of New York Public Library. This would be his second encounter with the great Armenian photographer from Ottawa, whose lens immortalized some of the greatest individuals on this planet.

"It proved to be a nerve-racking experience," he recalled. "It took hours before he actually took the picture, making sure every last detail was in place. He was impatient because I was growing impatient. Although I've been photographed by several other prominent photographers, having Karsh take my picture was very special because we were both Armenian."

The setting shows Gregorian with one hand



Dr. Vartan Gregorian poses before a photograph of himself taken by Yousuf Karsh in 1991, during a recent visit to the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) in Watertown. (Tom Vartabedian photo)

on books and another in his pocket, smiling against a backdrop of library shelves. By his name reads the inscription: "Academic, Educator, recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom."

Of the 25 subjects currently on display at the newly-refurbished Bedoukian Gallery inside the

Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), only one individual remains alive.

Gregorian got to see his own portrait hung on the wall — two decades later — next to Ernest Hemingway and Eleanor Roosevelt.

"It was a humbling experience that day when he showed up at the library with his gear," recalled Gregorian. "He ran the picture in his *Legends* book. Being the only Armenian included in those pages was humbling."

Few if any of the subjects, including Winston Churchill, were able to get two photo commissions out of Karsh. The first time they met was in 1981 when Gregorian was provost at the University of Pennsylvania.

Even then, Karsh proved a taskmaster with the sitting.

"It took four, maybe five hours before he was done," Gregorian remembered. "Looking at my photo now being displayed at ALMA, it's living proof that we all age — and unfortunately decline."

At the time of the grand opening on September 16, Gregorian had a previous engagement and could not attend. He went to see the exhibit on a Sunday afternoon in early October when the museum was launching an art exhibit by impressionist Martin Barooshian. The two notables were floors apart, each greeting their own constituents and never did get to meet that day.

Gregorian had a flight to catch and was in Geneva days later, attending a conference as president of the Carnegie Corporation. At an age when most retire, he also remains a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art, the American Academic in Berlin, the Institute for Advanced Study and Brandeis University, among other institutions. Nearly 70 honorary degrees have come his way.

The Iranian-born academic served as president of Brown University for nine years before going to Carnegie. His New York Public Library tenure extended eight years and proved one of his most lasting legacies.

When he arrived there in 1981, the library faced a major deficit and a deteriorating architecture. Eight years later, the operation budget had doubled, 400 new employees had been hired, the buildings were cleaned and restored and \$327 million had been raised.

Over the years, Gregorian grew to admire Karsh's work and held him in the highest esteem. They had met on other occasions and the respect turned mutual.

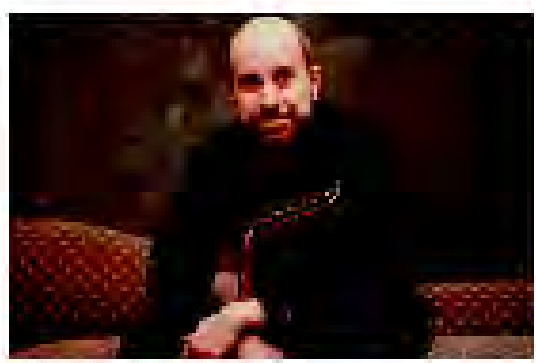
"Although he was proud to be Canadian, Karsh was equally proud to be Armenian," said Gregorian. "I admired his erudition as well as his modesty. He treated everyone as if they were the only person who counted in the world. Even Churchill couldn't defy him when he took the cigar out of his mouth."

Gregorian further described Karsh as "profound and humorous."

"He had no identity crisis," Gregorian added. "He knew who he was and his mission in life. He had a rich inner life as well as a wonderful profession and he loved and admired his wife, Estrellita. They were a great couple who complemented each other. It was a joy to be with them."

The gratitude of seeing his photograph displayed with other venerable figures brings overwhelming pride to Gregorian. In a letter to Board Chairman Haig Der Manuelian, he thanked ALMA for its leadership and its initiative toward keeping Armenia's legacy alive in America.

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## Zohrab Center Seeks Young Scholars for Conference

NEW YORK — The Zohrab Center is currently organizing an Armenian young scholars' conference and invites all undergraduates and/or recent graduates to present a paper related to Armenian Studies, including but not limited to the fields of history, literature, economics, art and religion. The daylong conference, which is tentatively planned for Saturday, January 14, 2012 and will take place in the Diocesan Complex, will also feature the participation and attendance of established scholars and academics. To be considered as a presenter, email a proposal and abstract to Taleen Babayan at [zohrabcenter@gmail.com](mailto:zohrabcenter@gmail.com) no later than December 15. Participants and the program will be finalized by the end of December.

For more information about the center visit [www.zohrabcenter.com](http://www.zohrabcenter.com).





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Meet Terri Melkonian, a Power to Reckon with in Hollywood

By Jenny Werth

LOS ANGELES — Terri Melkonian is a powerhouse of a woman who embodies what it takes to “make-it” in the ever-shifting and challenging show business industry. In an interview, she mapped out her plans for the future, as well as the steps that have brought her to this point in her career.

**Jenny Werth:** Terri, you are one of the most liked and respected studio executives in the industry. We can’t imagine Sunset Gower without your strong presence. What initially inspired you to take on the task of revamping a small indie studio as Sunset Gower after working for the super-sized Universal?

**Terri Melkonian:** Thank you for your kind words, Jenny. The best part of my job is being able to meet and work with some of the most talented and amazing people I’ve come across during my 15 years in the studio business. This is a small industry where many of us know each other or know of each other. You are only as good as your word — integrity and respect is a big deal with me. What I value most is the trust my clients have in me and I would never, ever, jeopardize that.

My job at Sunset Gower came to me very unexpectedly when I called my friend Bob Papazian in mid 2006 — looking for stages and offices to rent. About a year before that, GI Partners had purchased both the Sunset Gower and the Nickelodeon Studio properties in Hollywood for \$110 million. Bob Papazian joined them as the CEO and part investor. When I called Bob, I had just left Universal after 10 years and was working as a producer. I’d heard Sunset Gower was struggling to keep their stages full and was asked by my Universal boss to send overflow business to them. I’d met Bob the year before and instantly liked him. Now that I was a producer, I wanted to bring my business to him. I called to let him know I was stopping by to tour his studio and after seeing stages and offices, Bob called me to say he had something else in mind for me. He offered me a job which he created for me — said he wanted me to come work with him and rebuild the image of Sunset Gower and build up the business. But I’d just left a great studio and was now a producer! I turned down the VP of sales and marketing job but he was persistent and asked me to take a week to think about it. I contemplated and realized what a great challenge this would be for me.

That’s really what drove me to say yes. This studio was a diamond in the rough and I saw tremendous potential — I knew we could turn this place around. And I really respected and trusted Bob. Once I arrived, I didn’t waste any time. The phone wasn’t ringing but that wasn’t going to deter me. I called prospective clients daily. With the support of industry friends producer Michelle Imperato Stabile and FOX VP David Starke, I brought their feature “Alvin and The Chipmunks” to the studio right away. I joined the Association of Independent Commercial Producers and lobbied for commercial production and we were soon flooded with commercial business. I called my friends at ABC and NBC and we brought new television shows to Sunset Gower. Within a year, business was booming and we became the go to studio lot by producers and production executives.

Sunset Gower was soon sold to a real estate company Hudson Capital and I heard it was one of the largest real estate transactions in Los Angeles. GI Partners, in just over two years, made a hefty profit! The revitalization of Sunset Gower Studios worked.

**JW:** Wow. And I believe it sold for over \$200 million, so you’re right, the revitalization efforts really did pay off. Now that you’ve left the studio, what are you working on next?

**TM:** Don’t worry, I left the studio in a very good place with all of the stages booked. Right before my departure, I secured a long-term deal for Aaron Sorkin’s new HBO drama about a cable news show. Scott Rudin and Alan Poul are exec producing it, and I’m blown away by the talented team they and HBO have assembled for this sure-fire hit. When my friend



Terri Melkonian with Gerard Butler

Michael Hill, who is the senior VP of production at HBO, first called me about the pilot script, I told him we have to do whatever it takes to bring this show to Sunset Gower Studios.

At this same time, I was thrilled to secure the new Shonda Rhimes drama “Scandal” — with the help of my favorite studio exec, Gary French, who is ABC’s co-head and senior VP of production. He is one of the most ethical and kindest people I have met in this industry and his cool demeanor hasn’t changed one bit since I knew him at Universal. Shonda is such a gifted writer with already two hit shows, “Private Practice” and “Greys Anatomy” — and she can now call Sunset Gower Studios her new home!

After leaving the studio, it was time for me to venture on my own and I launched a development and production company, Terrimel Productions. I can’t describe how great it feels to have the freedom to pick and choose whom I want to work and align myself with now. I’ve built great relationships with producers, writers, directors and studio executives over the years and now I have the opportunity to work with them in a different capacity than when I was at Sunset Gower and at Universal. I am reading film scripts daily and receiving projects in different phases of production. Some need additional funding and some need distribution only — if the project meets the criteria, I can step in and help close the deal. I’m also developing television projects and getting a lot of concept pitches, including some from my 11-year-old son! I’m currently developing an unscripted new media project that has a fun gaming component to it and this show can work on multiple platforms. I am extremely busy these days but at the same time, I’m having a lot of fun working with people I love.

**JW:** What do you feel is lacking in the productions (reality included) today? Why do the producers become so complacent?

**TM:** Our industry is moving and changing at rapid speed and we have to keep up with the new technologies and opportunities to stay on top of our game or we become insecure and stagnant. I’m a believer in being an innovator and thinking outside of the box. Business-as-usual attitude will not lead you to success these days. Knock down roadblocks and create your own path to get where you want to go. Knowledge is power so don’t stop learning. I was recently admitted into the Producers’ Guild of America (PGA) and attend many conferences which also include think tank panels. The PGA gives us an opportunity to network and share ideas among our peers and I would recommend producers join this great group. I try to attend their film screenings followed by question and answer — it’s inspiring to hear the filmmakers sharing their experience. Recently, I attended the “Machine Gun Preacher” screening and realized I know one of the executive producers on the panel. This gave us a chance to connect again and we’ve planned to meet

soon. It was good to run into Gerry Butler again, too — he gave a powerful performance in the film and he’s a great guy for any lucky producer to work with. The PGA also offers great learning seminars that producers can take advantage of — I recently completed a six-part certification program on Film and TV Finance. I can now pitch more effectively to the networks having learned about their financing methods and ROI. With recent technology upgrades, the opportunities for producers/filmmakers are endless. Any creative individual can purchase a high-grade camera and editing software at an affordable price — you can shoot video and upload it on YouTube instantly. Or, create a sizzle reel to pitch an idea to a studio or investors. You can create a web series and get it funded by a company by offering product integration and sponsorship. Contact corporate marketing departments or their ad agencies. The webside can later be pitched to a network as a possible TV series. The bottom line is, there are many more opportunities for independent filmmakers today so go out and find one that fits and make it work.

**JW:** You are like a shooting star. Really. Who else has your energy, passion and talent?

**TM:** I think the world of producing is changing but not because I’m now a part of it. I want to be on the cutting edge and be ready for the changes as they come and create the opportunities for myself. Happiness in life comes from finding a deep passion for your work and then success will come to you in a very organic, unforced, way. We are all born with unique talents — we need to discover our gifts, however unassuming they might be and develop them to serve our life’s purpose and we will, in turn, find true happiness and satisfaction.

**JW:** Can you give a few words of advice to aspiring producers, directors? How would you advise them to “make it work” in a city that is so often seen as “impossible.”

**TM:** Learn your craft, have an immense desire and passion for what you choose to do, and just go out and make it happen for yourself. Don’t wait for others to open doors for you, create opportunities for yourself and open your own doors. Stay true to yourself and don’t compromise your integrity and reputation for quick success — always protect your greatest brand, you.

**JW:** Finally, how do you maintain such a positive attitude with life and career challenges?

**TM:** I’m driven in life not by the achievement of personal financial success but by maximizing my abilities to achieve the highest levels of my capabilities. I don’t define myself or my happiness by my job title. I try to find a good balance in my life and acknowledge every day of life as a gift I am truly grateful for. I cherish every moment I spend with my family and they are my priority. I value my friendships and stay away from those that are consistently negative. I have a happy disposition and will always see the glass as half full — that’s just my nature.

(For more information, visit [terrimelproductions.com](http://terrimelproductions.com).)

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## CALIFORNIA

**NOVEMBER 19** — The Armenian EyeCare Project will hold its ninth Annual Newport Gala, honoring Gov. George Deukmejian, on November 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Balboa Bay Club, Newport Beach. For info and reservations, call (949) 675-5611.

## FLORIDA

The Armenian Cultural Association of America, Inc. presents: **Armenian Heritage Cruise XV**. Leaving January 21, 2012. 15th Anniversary Celebration. For more info, visit [www.ArmenianHeritageCruise.com](http://www.ArmenianHeritageCruise.com).

## MASSACHUSETTS

**NOVEMBER 4-5** — Annual Bazaar sponsored by Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, 110 Main St., Haverhill, Friday, 12-8 p.m.; Saturday, 12-7 p.m. Armenian cuisine served all day. Pastry table, Country Store, Gift Basket Raffles and Raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit [www.hyepointechurch.org](http://www.hyepointechurch.org) or call (978) 372-9227.

**NOVEMBER 4-5** — “Alleluia,” It’s St. Stephen’s Bazaar Time. 55th Annual St. Stephen’s Church Bazaar, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Armenian gourmet food, pastries, arts and crafts, silent and live auctions. Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown.

**NOVEMBER 6** — Preview of “Deported/ A Dream Play,” a new play about the Armenian Genocide, with award-winning playwright Joyce Van Dyke, director Judy Braha and actors reading scenes from the play that premieres next March in Boston. Armenian Library and Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown, 3-5 p.m. Free and open to the public.

**NOVEMBER 11** — The Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge Number 1 annual ceremony at the Renaissance Waterfront Hotel on Long Wharf, Boston, Friday. Guest speaker, Primate of Artsakh, Archbishop Pargév Martirosian. Reception, 7 p.m.; dinner, 8 p.m. Man of the Year is Aurelian Mardiros, Community Leader Award to Registrar Rachel Kaprielian and the Faithful Knight Award to John Peterson.

**NOVEMBER 12-13** — Save the date. ADAA Fourth Annual Boston Armenian Film Festival. Fresh Pond Cinemas, Cambridge. See [www.armenianandrama.org](http://www.armenianandrama.org).

**NOVEMBER 17** — Party at the Other Park! Benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park Endowment. Fenway Park, Boston. Advance reservations only. For details and reply form, visit [www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net](http://www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net).



On November 6, a reading of “Deported/A Dream Play,” about the Genocide, by award-winning playwright Joyce Van Dyke, pictured above, will feature director Judy Braha and actors reading scenes from the play, at the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), 65 Main St., Watertown, starting at 3 p.m.

**NOVEMBER 19** — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston presents 25th anniversary performance, “Journey Through Time,” with new choreography and music. Robinson Theater, Waltham High School. For tickets, [www.itsmyseat.com/sayatnova](http://www.itsmyseat.com/sayatnova) or Apo: (339) 222-2410. [www.sayatnova.com](http://www.sayatnova.com).

**NOVEMBER 19** — Holiday Kef, featuring Richard Hagopian and his Kef Time Ensemble. Saturday, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. Adults,

\$45, students, \$25. UMass Lowell Conference Center, 50 Warren St., Lowell, (978) 934-6920. Cash bar only. Mezza, coffee, dessert. Sponsored by Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe. For info call Mike (978) 682-3946 or Richard (978) 374-0687.

**DECEMBER 2-3** — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, Friday, 3-9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Lunch and dinners offered. Booths include: farmer’s market, country store, candy, gourmet, pastries, wreaths and poinsettias, jewelry, second-time around, sports silent auction and more. Santa’s Playland, Saturday 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

**DECEMBER 11** — Christmas Holiday Concert: Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, 3 p.m., church sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Conductor Konstantin Petrossian. For further info, contact the church office at [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org) or (617) 354-0637.

## NEW JERSEY

**NOVEMBER 13** — St. Stepanos Armenian Church Women’s club invites you for an Armenian concert by the AREKAG Children’s Choir, conducted by Vago John Ohanyan. Following church services, 1184 Ocean Ave., Elberon. Thanksgiving Lunch will be served. Tickets: \$30, adults; \$10, children, 10 and under. Call Linda Patrino (732) 449-5249, Noria Buchakjian (732) 929-0776.

## NEW YORK

**OCTOBER 30** — Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble of St. Vartan Cathedral, New York City, presents Independence celebrating the 20th anniversary of Armenia’s “Independence.” Twentieth anniversary of Karabagh and 20th anniversary of the Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble. 150 Performers. 5 p.m., Felician College, 262 Main St., Lodi. Donation: \$100, \$50, \$40, \$30 and \$25. For tickets, call Marie (201) 745-8850, Sossy (201) 779-9007, Diocese (212) 686-0710. Purchase tickets online at [www.shushidance.org](http://www.shushidance.org).

**DECEMBER 3** — The AGBU/NYSEC presents the fourth annual AGBU Performing Artists in Concert, at 8 p.m. Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. 154 W 57th St., New York City. Tickets, \$65. For info, call AGBU at (212) 319-6383, ext. 124. To purchase tickets directly through the Carnegie Hall Box Office: [carnegiehall.org](http://carnegiehall.org). Carnegie charge: (212) 247-7800. Box Office: 57th Street and Seventh Avenue.

**MAY 19, 2012** — HMADS Gala Dinner Dance. Details to follow, June 25. HMADS 30th Commencement Exercise at 8 p.m., Kalustyan Hall.

## NAASR Talk Pays Tribute to Lemkin

LEMKIN, from page 14

crimes against the Armenians, Mouradian noted, for Lemkin came to a head with the case of Soghomon Tehlirian, who assassinated Talaat Pasha, one of the three of Ottoman leaders who devised the policy of Armenian extermination. Tehlirian assassinated Talaat in Berlin where he had fled after being found guilty of crimes by a military court in Turkey. Tehlirian was traumatized by witnessing the deaths of all his family members, which the court found, absolved him of guilt.

Lemkin was a student in Lvov, then part of Poland and now part of Ukraine, when the assassination took place in March 1921. The events made him think what recourse individuals had against any government which had put into place a policy of extermination. From that starting point, he dedicated himself to first defining that mass extermination and then making sure that it was punishable. He also wanted to help the Armenian people get some sort of justice, even if only symbolic.

Among the reasons the US used for not ratifying the convention were that they referred to a territory under Soviet rule and that they were afraid the descendents of slaves would use the

measure in court to receive compensation.

Mouradian listed some of the many phrases Armenians have used since the tragic events took place, some of which are still in usage, including *Medz Yeghern*, *Aghed*, *Medz Voghperkutyun*, *Hayaspanoutiun* and *Chart*.

As for *Medz Yeghern*, he said, Armenians often use it but it became “a four-letter word” once Pope John Paul II and President Barack Obama used it in order to avoid using the word “genocide.”

Mouradian detailed the numerous instances in which Armenian publications started using the translation of genocide (*tzeghaspanutium*)

to refer to the events of 1915-1923. One of the first examples, he said, was in *Haratch* in 1945.

Interestingly, he said several people wrote letters to the editors of Armenian publications at the time — the height of the Cold War — asking them not to use the word genocide, as it would cause problems for the US and help the Soviet Union.

“The US forgot Lemkin. He was someone who should have been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize, but by the mid-1950s, it was over for him,” he concluded.



Raphael Lemkin

## Peace Concert in LA to Honor Stevie Wonder

Flora Martirosian and Arto Tunçboyacıyan to Perform

LOS ANGELES — Artists for Peace (AFP) will host one of the largest peace events of the year on November 1 at the Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk. The Never Again Peace Concert this year will honor Stevie Wonder for his continuous efforts as the United Nations Messenger of Peace.

The “Never Again” Peace Concert is an annual event that brings together some of the hottest artists from around the world for an evening celebrating life and survival. Performances by American artists Chaka Khan, Eric Benet, Pras and Malina Moye will be accompanied by world music performances by Flora Martirosian, Arto Tunçboyacıyan and Alexia Vassiliou, among others. The artists will perform hits of their own as well as a special selected tribute song for this year’s honoree.

The Never Again Peace Concert serves to increase awareness and create better understanding of the injustices of discrimination. In the words of founder Martirosian, “We must do everything we can so that, in this day and age and beyond, we make sure we educate our youth to be more understanding and harmonious.” Martirosian goes further on to say, “It is with great respect and pleasure that we are able to give the United Nations Messenger of Peace, the legendary Stevie Wonder the AFP Angel Award for his ongoing work to help others through change.”

Proceeds from the concert event goes to benefit several charities, including Children with Leukemia in Armenia, The Chaka Khan Foundation, We Are You Foundation and Genocide Memorial Museum, to name a few. Tickets are now available through all Ticketmaster outlets.

For more information, visit [www.Artists4Peace.org](http://www.Artists4Peace.org).





## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

# Armenia's Armed Forces under Scrutiny

By Edmond Y. Azadian

During the Karabagh war, the ragtag Armenian armed forces scored a historic victory against overwhelming Azeri forces and liberated a piece of Armenian territory long languishing under Azeri misrule. That victory was achieved because morale was high and the Armenian soldiers were inspired. After a tenuous ceasefire, Armenia and Karabagh were engaged in state building, which included a swift organization of their armed forces, because a no-war, no-peace period had ensued, following that cease-fire, which kept everyone on their toes.

Today we are being reassured that the Armenian armed forces possess the necessary military technology and the man power to defend Armenia against possible Azeri aggression, despite Baku's military build up through its Petrodollars. We are being further reassured that Azerbaijan would have already attacked Armenia — making good on its threats — had it not been deterred by the might and combat-readiness of the Armenian armed forces.

Despite all these assurances, there are some disquieting incidents in the armed forces, which undermine the morale of the servicemen; these are the alarming number of peacetime deaths in the army. Although the figures vary, nonetheless they are troubling.

It is said that the army reflects the image of the civil society. If that is true, in Armenia's case there is some healing to be done within the army.

The corruption in the army was well known and bearable until unexplained deaths began to increase. The recruiting officers have always had lucrative positions to give dispensation to any recruit for a price. Additionally, normal furloughs and discharges were allowed through bribes, which certainly found their way into the higher echelons of the army. There is no way to uproot this kind of corruption, because that corruption is committed by the same officers tasked with guaranteeing discipline in the army and keeping the hands of leadership clean. It was a way of life society tolerated, though with a degree of resentment. Now, however, the increasing number of the deaths has alarmed the families and society as a whole. The army brass is under pressure by human rights groups to do some explaining.

Only on October 9, three new draftees died: Vladimir Assatryan, 19, Yourik Nercissian, 19, and Aram Melkonian, 21. All three deaths have been ruled to be suicides.

Valerik Mouradian died in March 2010. According to his mother, he had seen his superior officer stealing gas from the army, and he had reported the incident to his mother over the phone.

A few days later, the mother received the tortured body of her son. "What has my son done to be torn apart like that? I wanted to be the last mother whose son is killed in peacetime. I wished he was killed by a Turk to make me proud that my son died defending the borders of our homeland."

According to unofficial reports, 30 soldiers have been killed this year, and only nine by enemy fire. The public relations person at the Ministry of Defense, Gegham Harutunian, has stated that last year 54 soldiers died and the official figures for the current year will be released at yearend. He assured the public that

the number of such incidents is decreasing. But that is no consolation to the mothers who have lost their sons. Those mothers, dressed in black, have demonstrated in front of the presidential palace demanding explanations for those killings.

Some of the new recruits have been sent to psychiatric wards after the brutal treatment they have received from their superiors.

Every time a soldier is killed, news comes out that it is a case of suicide, even before an investigation has begun. Even if the findings are true, the mothers would like to see the responsible parties who have driven their sons to commit suicide to be identified and punished.

In reference to the controversial cases of death in the armed forces of Armenia and civil society's response, Deputy Minister of Defense Vladimir Gasparyan said during a recent interview on H1 Public TV that some human rights organizations are trying to politicize the issue and have made a habit of criticizing the army. "I suggest to them to refrain from those personal attacks, because they are affecting the army's combat capacity."

He further accused those critics of being foreign agents.

However, human rights activist Arthur Sakunts, head of the Helsinki Citizen's Assembly of Vanadzor, has discounted those threats as "means by officials to divert public attention."

The issue has been politicized especially in the hands of the opposition, which never misses the opportunity to criticize the government. This year when Armenia could not make in the first 10 of Eurovision song contest, some opposition papers explained that Armenia lost because it does not have a legitimate government.

But the issue has become a political hot potato and it has to be resolved somehow before the public loses complete confidence in its armed forces.

Minister of Defense Seyran Ohanian is a most erudite and articulate government official. He is also a war hero who has lost a leg in the Karabagh conflict.

An Azeri newspaper wished that the bullet which hit Ohanian's leg instead had been aimed at his heart!

Unfortunately some people have publicly called for his resignation, because he has not been able to resolve the issue of peacetime killings. He is the most astute military leader who has put fear in the Azeri hearts and he should be able to bring this painful phenomenon to a close.

Two years ago, the Writers Union of Armenia surprised me in Dzaghgadzor by celebrating my 50 years of literary activity. Ohanian dropped in to award me the Marshal Baghramian Armed Forces Medal. I thought it would be politically incorrect to ask an embarrassing question in that setting. But these killings were so much on my mind that I asked him anyway, "Mr. Minister, why should a young man serve in the armed forces and defend the homeland, when that homeland in return has incidents of hazing, beatings, shipping to psychiatric wards and death sentences?"

He was surprised by the question and he answered: "No commander would like to intimidate and hurt his soldiers. We have taken the issue seriously and we will control the situation."

Two years later the beatings and killings are shamefully continuing. Therefore, the question is still valid: why would a young man serve in the army to defend Armenia?

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# Turkey and Neighbors: Disaster Diplomacy

By Giorgi Lomsadze

The tremors that rippled through the South Caucasus from neighboring Turkey's powerful October 23 earthquake brought with them a diplomatic opportunity. But not all offers of help have managed to cross the region's political fault lines.

"Thanks, but we should be fine," Ankara told Armenia, the world's least Turkish-friendly country — and one well acquainted with earthquakes — after Yerevan offered to help.

By no stretch of the imagination would aid cooperation fix the outstanding issues in Turkish-Armenian relations, but it might have had symbolic value. After all, more than 100 years ago, it was the city of Van — now hit hard by the earthquake — that was the epicenter of the 1894-1896 massacre of ethnic Armenians, a disaster bitterly begrudged by Armenians to this day. (For the official Turkish view about what

happened, see: [www.mfa.gov.tr/massacres-by-the-armenians-against-the-turks.en.mfa](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/massacres-by-the-armenians-against-the-turks.en.mfa).)

But Turkey was not ready to have that symbolism exploited and have a positive moment with Armenia. Instead, Ankara indicated that, at times like these, it would rely on itself and good friends like Azerbaijan.

Three planes carrying emergency assis-

tance and aid workers have been dispatched to Turkey from Azerbaijan.

Georgia, which falls into the pretty-much-a-friend category, said aid to Turkey would be available upon request.

(This commentary originally appeared in EurasiaNet.org.)

## Notice to Contributors

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* welcomes articles, commentaries and community news from our readers. In order to assure the accurate and timely publication of articles submitted, please note the following policies:

- All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10 point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.
- Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are encouraged.
- All submissions should include the name of a con-

tact person and a daytime telephone number.

— Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is 12 noon on Monday of the week of publication.

— Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director. Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.

— The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.

— Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.





## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## The Unmasking of Namik Tan, Turkey's Ambassador to the US

I received a revealing message last week from Benjamin Yafet, a Turkish Jew who had immigrated to the United States in 1976. He is a retired professor and high tech entrepreneur in Arizona.

Professor Yafet disclosed that in recent years he has been transformed from a staunch supporter of Turkey to an anti-Turkish crusader. He explained that he was "disgusted" with Turkey when Hitler's *Mein Kampf* became a bestseller in that country. Since then, he has had "1,001 reasons" for being totally "fed up" with Turkey's hypocritical policies. In fact, he was so disgusted that he informed Ankara that he was renouncing his Turkish citizenship!

In his e-mail, Yafet enclosed a 1998 *New York Times* editorial titled, "Turkey's Destructive Generals." The editorial harshly criticized the generals for imprisoning Recep Erdogan, then mayor of Istanbul and now prime minister of Turkey. Mayor Erdogan was forced out of office for reciting an Islamic poem! The *Times*' editors were displeased with "Turkey's politically meddlesome" and autocratic gen-

erals who muzzled free speech, closed down Islamic schools, and arrested businessmen who were financing Islamist politicians.

As a loyal supporter of Turkey, Yafet sent a scathing letter to the *Times*, defending the draconian measures taken by the military junta against the Islamic Welfare (Refah) Party, the predecessor of Erdogan's Justice and Development (AKP) Party.

Yafet then mailed a copy of that letter to the Turkish Embassy in Washington, proudly notifying them of his "good work" on behalf of his native land. Within days, he received a letter of appreciation from Namik Tan, then "Counselor and Embassy Spokesperson," and now ambassador of Turkey to the United States. Counselor Tan praised Professor Yafet, stating that his "rebuttal was an astute, lucid and rational argument, which handled the issues with profound insight and understanding and corresponded, in many aspects, to how we also approach the subject."

A close reading of Yafet's letter to the *Times* reveals why Counselor Namik Tan had offered to him such lavish praise. Likening Erdogan's ideology to that of the Nazis, Yafet accused his political party of "preaching the end of democracy itself" aiming "to replace it by an Islamic theocracy." He went on to explain that "a careful reading of the party program does exhibit an agenda that is a carbon copy of the reactionary Iranian Ayatollah's ideology. A direct application of the party doctrines would deprive Turkish women of their hardly acquired civil rights and they would first lose their right of not wearing the chador (veil). The Welfare Party was totalitarian in essence, racist and anti-Semitic in philosophy and anti-democratic by definition.

This list does not even include the worldwide implication of the foreign policy they wanted to impose on Turkey."

In concluding his letter, Yafet warned that the Islamic Party would withdraw Turkey from NATO, close down US bases, threaten Israel, side with Libya, Iran and Sudan and support Hamas and Hizballah. Yafet went as far as asking the *Times*' editors to apologize to the Turkish generals!

In his last week's e-mail, Yafet found it ironic that the same Namik Tan who had thanked him for his anti-Erdogan letter back in 1998 is now representing an Islamist government that he so passionately despised only a dozen years ago.

It is truly amazing that the Turkish government would send to Washington in 2010 an ambassador who had opposed Erdogan's Islamist party and supported the generals who had imprisoned him. While it is understandable that Erdogan himself may have not been aware of Mr. Tan's 1998 letter, it is highly unlikely that his superiors at the Foreign Ministry were unaware of his pro-military and anti-democratic views. After all, Mr. Tan has been a career diplomat since 1982 and served as deputy undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara prior to his ambassadorial assignment in Washington.

It remains to be seen how the prime minister would react to the unmasking of Ambassador Tan. Erdogan may decide to castigate Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu for appointing an ambassador with such anti-Islamist views to represent the AKP government in the United States.

Indeed, Tan may face the same premature exit from Washington as his predecessor, Ambassador Nabi Sensoy, who was forced out in 2009 after an argument with Davutoglu.

# An Open Letter to Facing History and Ourselves

(The following open letter is addressed to Facing History and Ourselves Executive Director Margot Strom, Associate Executive Director Martin Sleeper and Board Chairwoman Tracy Palandjian.)

I am deeply offended and disappointed to learn that one of our nation's foremost genocide education organizations — Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO) — has elected to "partner" with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to sponsor a panel discussion on "The New Anti-Semitism: A Contemporary Discussion in Historic Faneuil Hall" in Boston on November 7.

Abraham H. Foxman, ADL National director, will be one of the panelists.

I respectfully urge you to withdraw FHAO from its partnership with the ADL for this event.

Mr. Foxman and the national ADL have denied the factuality of the Armenian genocide of 1915-1923 committed by Turkey. And they have used their considerable influence to actively assist the government of Turkey to defeat Armenian genocide resolutions in the U.S. Congress. A political agreement two decades ago among Turkey, certain organizations such as the ADL, and Israel brought this about ([www.noplacefordenial.com/2007/08/press-kit-history-of-lobbying-against.html](http://www.noplacefordenial.com/2007/08/press-kit-history-of-lobbying-against.html)).

Since the summer of 2007, due specifically to their disapproval of the ADL's genocide denial and lobbying efforts against the Armenian-American resolution, more than a dozen major Massachusetts cities and towns have ceased their affiliation ([www.noplacefordenial.com](http://www.noplacefordenial.com)) with the ADL's so-called "No Place for Hate" program.

In April of 2008, for precisely the same reasons, the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), which represents every city and town in the state, also severed ties with "No Place for Hate."

The national ADL drew widespread condemnation from principled Jews, human rights advocates, editorialists and others. These events made national and international news (<http://npfdnews.blogspot.com>).

To deflect growing criticism, on August 21, 2007, Mr. Foxman issued a statement which masqueraded as an acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide. The statement not only used deceptive and dishonest language, such as "tantamount to genocide," but also

implied that the Armenian killings were not intentional but rather merely the "consequence" of Turkish "actions." FHAO is aware that Article II of the United Nations Genocide Convention specifically requires "intent" for killings to be considered genocide. "Consequences" is, however, the opposite of "intent."

Cities, towns and the MMA weren't buying Mr. Foxman's act. They severed ties with the ADL's "No Place for Hate" even after the ADL statement.

The ADL has yet to unambiguously recognize the Armenian Genocide. And Mr. Foxman continues to oppose passage of the Armenian Genocide resolution, contemptuously calling it a "counterproductive diversion."

Neither Mr. Foxman nor the ADL has ever apologized to the Armenian people for their actions.

The ADL has stated that any diminishment of the Holocaust is anti-Semitic and constitutes hate speech. Yet the ADL has diminished the Armenian genocide. By its own definition, therefore, the ADL is guilty of hate speech. Would FHAO partner with an organization and man that diminished the Holocaust and opposed the many Congressional resolutions on the Holocaust? Why, then, would you partner with the ADL? This is incomprehensible, especially as FHAO has long had an educational program on the Armenian genocide ([www.facinghistory.org/resources/collections/armeniangenocide](http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/collections/armeniangenocide)).

We know that the ADL and similar groups' appeasement of Turkey — for example, Mr. Foxman presented Prime Minister Erdogan with a "Courage to Care Award" a few years ago — has failed dismally on an international level as well.

I am at a loss to understand why or how your partnership with Mr. Foxman has come about. One hopes that ADL members among FHAO's donors and its treasurer, Elizabeth Jick, who is an ADL Executive Committee member, did not unduly influence your decision.

I respectfully call upon you to withdraw FHAO's partnership with the ADL in the November 7 event. I hope that when FHAO considers the facts and the long-term credibility of its programs and dedicated staff, it will do the right thing.

— David Boyajian  
Belmont, Mass.

# The Hazards in Turkey's New Strategy

When fighters from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party killed 24 Turkish soldiers in the eastern province of Hakkari, the Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, immediately ordered 10,000 soldiers to cross into Iraq and find the militants. "This is an operation to get results," Mr. Erdogan said.

Besides provoking one of the largest ground operations against the Kurdish fighters in recent years, the resurgence of the group, known as the PKK, shows the difficulties

By Judy Dempsey

Ankara now faces in adjusting a foreign policy that was based on its ambitious "zero problems" strategy in the region.

"The zero problems strategy in practice meant dealing with autocratic regimes. So when the Arab Spring happened, it exposed the fundamental flaws of that policy," said Sinan Ulgen, chairman of the Center for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies, an independent research group in Istanbul.

"The zero problem policy was over-optimistic, almost naïve in the belief that difficult problems could be solved easily," Mr. Ulgen added.

Turkey may now be paying the price for its belated defense of human rights in the region, most notably in Syria and Iran. Ankara is abuzz with speculation that these countries may have been behind the PKK attacks.

Syria and Iran are accused of supporting the PKK right from the beginning in 1984, when the PKK started fighting the Turkish state to have the 20-million-strong Kurdish population recognized as a minority within its own autonomous Kurdish region.

When Mr. Erdogan's Justice and Development Party was elected in 2002, it developed a foreign policy aimed at realigning the country's role in a highly volatile region consisting of the Caucasus and the Middle East.

That zero problems policy was designed by Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu in order to build strong economic, political and social ties with Turkey's immediate neighbors.

In practice, that policy meant shifting away from Turkey's traditional reliance on the United States and its close military ties with Israel to a regionally based strategy aimed at Turkey becoming the main player in the neighborhood.

As a first step, Ankara improved ties with the Syrian regime. Human rights played no role between Damascus and Ankara even though Ankara has used that argument to champion the rights of the Palestinians.

Nothing came of an initiative to mediate between Israel and Syria on the Golan Heights. The lack of success was due to Israel's bombing of the Gaza Strip in 2008-9, which angered the Turkish public, as much as to Ankara's overconfidence in its diplomatic overtures.

There were attempts, too, at negotiating a solution to the Iranian nuclear program, which is worrying the United States in particular.

Again, Ankara paid scant attention to the crackdown on the Iranian opposition, much to the disappointment of civil society movements in the region. This damaged Turkey's foreign policy credentials, according to analysts. Its Iran initiative proved to be unsuccessful diplomatically.

As for Turkey's attempts at normalizing relations with its neighbor Armenia, with whom diplomatic ties were severed in 1992, the zero problems policy has not lived up to expectations, either.

After secret talks in Switzerland, in 2009 a protocol was signed with the hope of restoring diplomatic ties and reopening of the borders.

The thaw ended soon. Azerbaijan, which traditionally has had very close ties with Turkey, was from the outset suspicious about any breakthrough. The Azeri authorities feared they would lose leverage over Armenia if restoring diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey was not linked to the resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.

see STRATEGY, page 20





# Shengavit Archeological Preserve Shows History of Yerevan

By Joseph Dagdighian

YEREVAN — The foundation of Yerevan is often cited as 782 BC, the year the Urartun city of Erebuni was founded by Argishti I on a hill within the borders of the modern city. While Yerevan may be considered the direct descendant of Erebuni, mankind has lived there for many thousands of years before King Argishti I built his city.

Visitors arriving at Yerevan's Zvartnots airport pass the US Embassy on the way to Yerevan's center. In back of the embassy is a small, man-made lake. Rising above the lake's opposite shore is the Shengavit Historical and Archeological Culture Preserve. Within the preserve are excavations revealing settlements from the end of the fourth to the beginning of the second millennium BC, as well a small museum containing artifacts found at the site. The neatly-arranged artifacts are labeled in English,

Armenian and Russian. The actual archeological site spans an area of six hectares (about 15 acres), though during the Soviet era a hospital was built over part of the site, destroying forever the yet-unexamined archeological evidence underneath.

The Shengavit archeological record contains four layers, each about four meters (12 feet) in depth representing distinct phases of habitation. The lowest and oldest layer contains the archeological record of inhabitants living around 4000-3000 BC, while the uppermost, most recent layer is dated to about 2000 BC. Scholars believe the site was continually inhabited for more than 2,000 years. Found within the oldest Stone Age layer were crude stone tools and other items, while the upper layer revealed sophisticated pottery, the presence of agricultural activity, cattle raising and copper tools as well as stone molds used to cast copper implements. Buildings were constructed of unbaked clay bricks set upon stone foundations with connected circular and rectangular rooms. The inside walls of the rooms

were plastered. There was evidence that the walls were painted, though that evidence no longer exists. Within the rooms were found triangular hearths set upon stands. The circular rooms contained centrally located stone pedestals upon which columns rested to support the roof. Floors were made of pebbles covered with clay.

The Shengavit culture was spread throughout the Ararat valley and was influential as far as

zero) for the maintenance and renovation of the site. The site desperately needs to install running water (there is no water at the site), a sewage line (there is none), rest rooms, and a phone line (there is none). They need a dozen or so boards to repair the benches (they were denied \$100-150 needed for the bench repairs by the head of Yerevan's Shengavit district — there are budgetary constraints). The museum building dates



Shengavit excavation, with the American Embassy in the background

## The Hazards in Turkey's New Strategy

STRATEGY, from page 19

Since 1994, Nagorno-Karabakh has been held by Armenia. The ethnic Azeri population has fled the enclave, while ethnic Armenians have mostly fled Azerbaijan.

As a result of Azerbaijan's conditions, the talks have stalled. Instead of trying to maintain the momentum even at the risk of poorer ties with Azerbaijan, Mr. Erdogan backed away.

"Turkey should have remain focused on the Armenian issue, which, after all, is its immediate neighborhood, instead of broadening its foreign policy," said Richard Giragosian, director of the independent Regional Studies Center in Yerevan, Armenia.

"Turkey did not have the capacity for resolving the conflict with Armenia," said Tom de Waal, a specialist on the Caucasus at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington. "Turkey wanted to run before it could walk."

Then came the Arab Spring.

Suddenly, Turkey realized that it was running a serious risk of being shunned by the newly emerging democratic forces because it had paid

so little attention to human rights in its zero problems policy. It quickly reinvented its strategy.

Turkey was one of the first countries to aid Libya's rebels, providing \$300 million in cash, and it was one of the first to call for the resignation of the former Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak.

Its change of heart with Syria and Iran is even more radical. Turkey is now openly criticizing the Syrian regime. Its relations with Iran are also strained, especially as Ankara agreed last month to deploy part of the U.S. missile defense shield on its territory.

If Turkey continues to pursue a foreign policy anchored on human rights, it can win respect and support in the region. But no such policy can work, say analysts, if Turkey excludes the Kurds from it.

(A version of this article appeared in print on October 25, 2011, in The International Herald Tribune with the headline: The Hazards in Turkey's New Strategy. It also appeared in the New York Times.)

## More than 500 Die in Turkey Quake

QUAKE, from page 1

In fact, also on Sunday, about five hours away from Van in Diyarbakir, a baptism ceremony was held in newly-re-consecrated Saint Giragos church for Armenians whose families had been forced to convert to Muslim faith during the time of the Genocide.

Sunday's quake and at least one of the dozens of subsequent tremors was felt in Yerevan, as some residents in the Armenian capital fled their buildings in fear.

Armenia is among countries that have offered assistance in search and rescue.

Israel's defense minister says Israel will help Turkey aid earthquake victims "as soon as possible," after Turkey accepted Israel's offer of assistance.

A ministry spokesman said Turkey asked for emergency housing units and Israel was checking what else it could do.

The two countries were once close allies, but Turkey has shifted to seeking a wider Mideast role while harshly criticizing Israel.

Armenian President Serge Sargsian, who was on a state visit to Russia, sent a message of condolence to Turkish President Abdullah Gül.

"I learned with profound pain about the powerful earthquake that occurred in Van and about the destruction, human losses and the people trapped under the collapsed buildings. I feel sorrow about that, express my condolences and inform you that Armenia's specialized rescue division is put on alert to be able to reach the epicenter as soon as possible and start immediately its rescue operations," read Sargsian's message.

People in Armenia were alarmed by the powerful earthquake, which sent tremors to the entire region, including Georgia and Iran.

The tremors in Armenia measured three to five points on the 12-point scale, the National Seismic Protection Service of the Armenian Emergency Situations Ministry said. There were neither casualties nor damage in the republic.

The Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America expressed its sorrow over the lives lost in the earthquake, while expressing gratitude for the safety of its tour participants.

"We are greatly relieved to report that the delegation of Armenian pilgrims, who had departed from the Eastern Diocese earlier this week to take part in the re-consecration of the historic Armenian Church in the city of Diarbekir (Dikranagert), are safe and were not affected in any way by the earthquake. The group of Diocesan leaders led by Diocesan Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian were far from the strike zone and did not experience any of the tremors or aftershocks, Archbishop Barsamian reported in a telephone interview on Sunday morning," the Diocese said in a statement.

Plans for later this week which would have taken the pilgrims to Van, the historic Armenian region which was seriously affected by this morning's disaster were cancelled; instead, the pilgrims visited the St. Kevork Church in Derek, near Mardin. They will travel to Istanbul as scheduled on Tuesday.

(Stories from the Associated Press, ArmeniaNow, Reuters and Itar-Tass were used to compile this report.)

western Armenia, Cilicia, northern Mesopotamia and Palestine. Obsidian tools from Armenia were found in the Middle East. Anthropologists, analyzing human remains from Shengavit tombs, believe the "Armenoid" skull type typical of current day Armenians evolved in this region. Shengavit was linked to other settlements in the region, all of which demonstrated a similar culture and were connected by trade. While there is no record of the language used at the time, scientists believe that a non-Semitic, non-Indo-European language or family of languages was prevalent, traces of which remain today within the Armenian language.

While it can not be stated that the early residents of Shengavit were "Armenian," as the Armenian nation, people and language may not have been formed at that time, it is likely that the tribes living in the region ultimately coalesced to form the Armenian people and the Armenian language. At a much later time migrating tribes introduced Indo-European elements into the Armenian language.

Initial excavation of the site began in 1936 by Joseph Orbeli (1887-1961) and Eugeni Bayburtyan (1898-1938) and lasted for two years; then the site was abandoned. Orbeli was the director of the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. Bayburtyan apparently was a bit too nationalistic; he was arrested by Stalin and was never seen again. From 1945-1950 Sandro Sardaryan (1912-1995) studied the site and then, from 1950-1983, led a new excavation of Shengavit. Yuli Tamanyan, being an architect and member of the excavating team, performed the site's measurements. He was the son of famed architect Alexander Tamanian who, in 1925, developed the general layout of Yerevan. In 1967 Sardaryan published a study "Primitive Society in Armenia" in English describing Shengavit and other ancient settlements within the Armenian highlands.

Currently on the Shengavit preserve one may view the foundations of ancient dwellings and visit Shengavit's nicely-arranged museum. The director of the Shengavit Historical and Archaeological Culture Preserve is Vladimir Tshagharyan, an experienced archeologist and architect with considerable experience in managing and preserving Armenia's large number of historical and archaeological sites. He is assisted by Vano, an experienced construction worker, and Gayane, a guide who is fluent in Armenian, English, Russian and perhaps a few other languages. The three-person staff is severely underpaid, receiving salaries that are impossible to live on in Armenia. They are, in effect, volunteers as their motivations are the preservation of Armenia's important historical and archaeological record. In addition to inadequate pay, there is zero budget (not an exaggeration — it's actually

from 1920 when it was constructed to serve as a station for Red Army officers. The roof needs repair and the museum walls need reinforcement in order to support the used air conditioners, which were donated to the museum.

My wife and I spent a day visiting building supply stores where we bought enough material to start the most critical repairs before the arrival of winter weather. The staff does all the repair and maintenance work, including digging trenches for a sewer line and for a water connection. Part of the preserve was illegally sold to a private individual. The director has gathered extensive documentation on this illegal sale and presented the evidence to Yerevan City Hall. He is assured that the matter will be rectified. If it is not, he says, he will go to court — though hiring a lawyer will require funds, which he does not have. If it comes to this, and one hopes it won't, the Diaspora will need to help. Moreover the site is not fenced in. I visited the site on two consecutive days. On the second day a new pile of trash had been dumped on the site. Fortunately there is a policeman stationed at the site during off hours to protect the valuable artifacts in the museum and the undiscovered ones, which still lie underground.

This is an important site not just for the study of the formation of the Armenian nation but for studying the ancient history and culture of the entire region. This past summer a group of American archeologists from Pennsylvania were researching the site until the really hot weather arrived, at which point they returned home. They plan to return once the weather cools down a bit. It is embarrassing for foreign visitors to see that such an important site is so severely underdeveloped and ignored, except for the few people who are desperately trying to maintain it. Of course there are severe financial shortages in Armenia, but a recent UN survey indicated that Yerevan has more expensive cars per capita than any other major city.

Tshagharyan has ambitions to establish the amenities needed by visitors. The site needs to be secured with a fence surrounding the area. The illegally-sold land must be returned. The antiquated museum building needs to be renovated and ultimately replaced with a more modern facility with a library, an area to study and preserve artifacts, and an area where visiting archeologists can conduct their research. Tshagharyan is considering the establishment of a non-profit organization or an NGO to oversee donations to the site.

The Shengavit Historical and Archaeological Culture Preserve is only a 15-20-minute taxi drive from the center of Yerevan. Its entrance is in back of the Shengavit hospital on Bagratunyats Street, on the opposite side of Yerevan Lake from the US embassy. Visitors are welcome throughout the week other than on Mondays when most museums in Armenia are closed.