



Gov. Deval Patrick spoke at the program. (Jirair Hovsepien photo)

Martyrs Remembered At Statehouse Program

BOSTON — The Armenian-American community gathered at the Massachusetts Statehouse on April 15 to commemorate the lives lost — and those that thrived — in the wake of the first genocide of the 20th century.

By Thomas C. Nash
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The diaspora “rose from the ashes of genocide in a remarkable testament to the spirit of the Armenian people,” Hecht noted.

Hecht stressed the importance of meeting in the Statehouse, in the House of Representatives, as a chance to show a new generation the importance of remembering what occurred.

“It is through educating future generations that we maintain the truth of the Armenian Genocide,” Hecht added.

The day’s program was titled “Honoring the Truth by Educating the Next Generation,” paying tribute to the two Armenian schools in the state.

see COMMEMORATION, page 10

Holy Land Churches Protest New Israeli Taxes

By Arthur Hagopian

JERUSALEM — The heads of Christian churches in Jerusalem have expressed grave concern over renewed moves by the Israeli authorities to tax church buildings and properties.

While previous such moves have ended in failure, the Israelis have not tried hard to mask their intention to persist in their efforts to impose an “arnona” (property tax) on properties owned by the various churches, including those which have been vacant for some time.

In a statement issued here this week, a loose conglomeration of the 13 Christian churches officially recognized by Israel, calling itself the “Heads of the Churches of the Holy City of Jerusalem,” warned of dire consequences that would ensue should Israel carry out its plans.

“Such imposition would constitute a radical departure from the consistent practice of every previous state to have governed any part of the Holy Land, including the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate, the Hashemite Kingdom and the State of Israel itself,” the church leaders said.

“It would represent a significant worsening of the conditions of the churches in the Holy Land. It would also be in direct contradiction of the mandate of the United Nations Organization in General Assembly resolution 181, of November 29, 1947, as it applied not only to Jerusalem but also to the two national states that it authorizes to be established in the Holy Land,” they warned.

The churches argued the Israeli move would be in contravention of the so-called “status quo” agreements promulgated in the 19th century, which have governed relations between the churches and governments since Ottoman times.

Under the terms of the status quo, the Ottomans pledged to exempt church property from taxation.

see JERUSALEM, page 3

Schiff Urges Obama to Acknowledge Armenian Genocide

WASHINGTON — This week, Rep. Adam Schiff (CA-29) sent a letter to President Barack Obama urging him to properly characterize the murder of 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children as a “genocide” in his statement marking the April 24 anniversary of the start of the Genocide.

“Mr. President, you have always been a leader on the important issue of human rights,” Schiff said. “Unfortunately, both last year and in 2009, you did not use the term ‘genocide’ to describe the events of 1915-23. I ask you to return to the clarity you so forcefully expressed in 2008 and stand with the ever-dwindling number of survivors, as well as the descendants of others, who survived the Armenian Genocide and continue to suffer the ‘double killing’ of denial, by referring to it as a genocide.”

In the last Congress, Schiff was the primary sponsor of H. Res. 252, the Affirmation of the US Record on the Genocide.

Bryza Barred from Visiting Julfa Cemetery

BAKU (RFE/RL) — The Azerbaijani authorities on Thursday refused to allow US Ambassador Matthew Bryza to visit an ancient Armenian cemetery in Azerbaijan that was reportedly destroyed by them in 2005.

The cemetery, which once had thousands of Armenian cross stones, or khachkars, is located near Julfa, in Nakhichevan.

Videos that emerged in late 2005 showed Azerbaijani troops attacking the UNESCO-protected gravestones. They elicited condemnation from the European Parliament and other bodies.

The Azerbaijani government denied their destruction at the time. Still, a 2006 report by the London-based by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) confirmed that the cemetery has vanished. The IWPR said its journalist was near enough to see that the cemetery was gone.

In a statement posted on its website, the US Embassy in Azerbaijan said Bryza tried to travel to Julfa during a two-day visit to Nakhichevan that ended on Thursday.

“The ambassador’s request to visit Djulfa was denied,” the embassy said. “But authorities in Nakhchivan did discuss the Djulfa Khachkars in detail with Ambassador Bryza and pledged to work with him to facilitate a visit to the Djulfa cemetery in coming months.”

“As I pledged to do in Washington before arriving as Ambassador, I traveled to Nakhchivan to investigate what happened in Djulfa,” Bryza was quoted as saying.

Dismantling Of ‘Monument To Humanity’ In Kars Starts

KARS (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The dismantling of the “Monument to Humanity” here started on the threshold of the Armenian Genocide anniversary.

The monument will be divided into two parts. Special equipment will be brought from Istanbul for the operation that started April 16 following a decision of Erzurum administrative court after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan labeled the statue “monstrous.”

Dr. Antranig Chalabian, Author Of Historical Volumes, Dies

DETROIT — Dr. Antranig Chalabian, the author of several volumes of Armenian history, died on April 12, at his home in Southfield. He was 89.

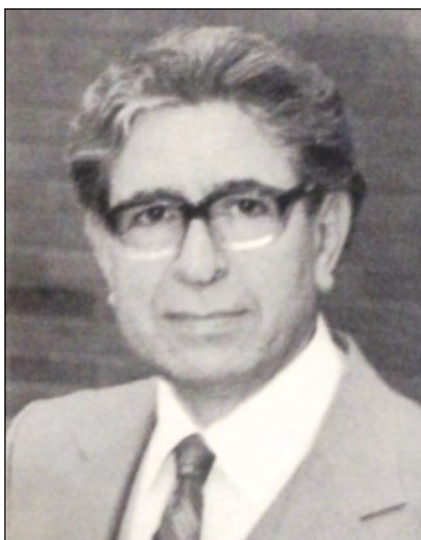
Born in Kessab, Syria, he was predeceased by his wife, Siran.

He leaves his children, Annie (and Tom) Hoglind, Dr. Jack and Gayle Chelebian and Karine and Hovsep Koundakjian, as well as eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Chalabian wrote several volumes on Armenian history and historical figures, which went on to sell well. He is best known for his biography of General Antranik.

After graduating from the local Armenian Evangelical School, he studied at Aleppo College and graduated in 1944. He taught in his former school in Kessab for one year. Then he returned to Aleppo College where

see CHALABIAN, page 20



Dr. Antranig Chalabian

INSIDE

Genocide Remembered

pages 9-14

INDEX

Armenia	2
Arts and Living	15
Calendar	16
Community News.	4
Editorial	17
International	3



ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Baroness Cox, MPs Visit Armenia and Karabagh

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — On April 18, Speaker of the Armenian Parliament Hovik Abrahamian met with a British delegation headed by Caroline Cox, chairwoman of the British-Armenian Parliamentary Friendship Group.

Abrahamian said Armenia attaches importance to boosting relations with Great Britain in various fields.

Beside, he stressed the importance of intensifying the inter-parliamentary cooperation in both bilateral and multilateral formats.

Abrahamian expressed belief that the visit of the British parliament members will contribute to the development of relations between the parliaments of the two countries.

He also briefed on the history of the Karabagh conflict, at the request of the British parliament members who are on a visit to Armenia for the first time.

The speaker also referred to the Armenian-Turkish normalization and Karabagh conflict settlement, stressing the importance of shaping an unbiased opinion in foreign countries and international organizations with respect to the matters.

The British parliament members expressed willingness to boost the inter-parliamentary relations, as well as contribute to the development of interstate collaboration.

Armenia's foreign policy, as well as issues of mutual interest were in the focus of the meeting as well.

PM Sargisian Receives UN Official

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Prime Minister Tigran Sargisian received this week Supachai Panitchpakdi, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) secretary-general, who is on a visit to Yerevan to partake in the events on the 10th anniversary of the Republic of Armenia State Commission for Protection of Economic Competition (RA SCPEC). An official from the information and press relations department of the Armenian government said that the speakers discussed the UNCTAD Voluntary Peer Review of Armenia's Competition Law and Policy.

Emphasizing the reforms by the State Commission for Protection of Economic Competition, Panitchpakdi noted that the reforms are being effected properly. The prime minister expressed gratitude to Panitchpakdi for the consecutive support in Armenia's membership to the famous organization.

President Pledges Tax Breaks for Manufacturers

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenian President Serge Sargisian has announced that companies and entrepreneurs that launch innovative manufacturing operations in the country will be eligible for major tax breaks.

At a meeting with members of leading business associations in Yerevan on April 8, Sargisian reaffirmed the government's pledge to improve the business environment. He said the government will also draft measures to encourage job creation.

"I want to declare to everyone here that that any manufacturing operation that will be set up in the republic on an innovative basis...to put it simply, if it manufactures something that is not manufactured in the republic today, we as a state are ready to help it by all possible means," Sargisian said. "We are ready to give tax privileges in the first instance.

"For instance, we are ready to exempt [those manufacturers] from profit tax for three to four years and postpone the payment of value-added tax (VAT)," he said.

The government already delays the collection of VAT from industrial equipment imported by local firms. This privilege is not automatic and has to be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Under Armenian law, the rate of corporate income tax is fixed at 20 percent for all businesses.

Armenia No Longer Eligible For US Aid Program

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenia is no longer eligible for receiving additional US economic assistance under a program designed to reward good governance and reforms around the world, US Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch said on Friday.

She said the approaching parliamentary and presidential elections in the country will be an opportunity for the Armenian government to improve its democracy and human rights record and thus again qualify for the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) program.

The US government approved \$236 million worth of MCA assistance to Armenia in 2006 to finance a rural development plan submitted by Yerevan. In June 2008, Washington scrapped a \$67 million segment of the aid package, which envisaged the reconstruction of hundreds of kilometers of rural roads.

The decision was widely attributed to a disputed presidential election held in February 2008 and a harsh government

crackdown on the Armenian opposition that followed it.

The aid cut did not affect the rest of the MCA funding, which is being mainly channeled into Armenia's battered irrigation networks. Their ongoing refurbishment is due to be completed this September.

Yovanovitch and Prime Minister Tigran Sargisian visited on Friday the central Aragatsotn province to inspect local irrigation canals that have been rehabilitated with MCA funds. They also met with farmers that have received training as part of the same scheme.

"We hope that this program has made and will continue to make a real impact on the rural community in terms of increased wealth," Yovanovitch told journalists there.

The US diplomat made clear that Yerevan cannot apply for more MCA aid for the time being. "Perhaps at some point in the future, there might be a possibility," she said. "Every year, every country is reviewed for eligibility. At

this point, Armenia is not eligible for a second compact due to where it stands on the [MCA] indicators."

Yovanovitch specified that President Serge Sargisian's administration should, among other things, hold more democratic elections. "As Armenia enters into an election cycle, with parliamentary elections next year and presidential elections the year after, there is an opportunity to boost these indicators," she said.

"Obviously, conduct on the day of elections is an important thing but so is freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, the many other things that go into general good governance," she added.

Yovanovitch urged the Armenian authorities to hold free elections, respect civil liberties and embark on other "deep and difficult" reforms in a recent speech at Yerevan State University. In particular, she stressed the importance of "ensuring that peaceful, lawful assemblies will not be harassed or broken up."

AVC Launches Teach Program to Help Improve English-Language Learning in Armenia

YEREVAN — On the occasion of its 10th anniversary serving Armenia through volunteerism, the Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC) has launched Teach, its most ambitious program to date, helping to improve the quality of education in Armenia through English-language learning.

Teach provides native English-speaking volunteer teachers to middle and high school students to complement the existing curriculum with a concentration in conversation, creative and academic writing skills and creating a globally aware and active community.

Teaching English is not new to AVC. Over the last decade many of AVC's 339 alumni have taught English as the primary or secondary focus of their volunteer service. English language teaching occurred in both formal and informal settings, in public school and university classrooms, in English language "clubs" for adults and children, at NGOs for staff and during after school and summer programs.

Sheila Terjanian was a retired economist when she took one year off in 2002 to volunteer through AVC. She had spent 30 years in public policy with the Canadian federal government. After she retired, she received a diploma in teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language, and prior to volunteering in Armenia she taught English as a volunteer in her community, working mostly with refugee women.

"As with every volunteer commitment, you always get back many times over what you give," says Terjanian. "What I remember most about our classes was the laughter we shared together. It took students a long time to get used to a classroom so unlike the traditional approaches to language learning they grew up with, but the students who stuck with it, all got it, and with enthusiasm."

Not all volunteer teachers come to Armenia with a background in teaching. Therefore the AVC Teach program provides necessary training covering a range of topics including an introduction to the local curriculum, teaching theory, as well as practical skills such as classroom management and lesson planning.

"The training was really useful because prior to coming to Armenia I had no teaching experience," said Talin Aghanian, from the United Kingdom. Aghanian, a graduate of Durham University, is currently serving for one

full year teaching English to students in Grades 6-11. "I think they [the students] like talking with me because not only am I a native speaker but I've brought with me a whole different culture that they ask a lot of questions about. My main focus is on getting students to talk more comfortably rather than focusing exclusively on writing or grammar," she explains.

The program will also provide professional development for local English language teachers, focusing on thematic and cross curricular lesson planning, use of media in the classroom, cooperative teaching (including using volunteers in the classroom) and the periodic use of native English speakers.

Joseph Hakoopian, a Cornell University graduate in English Literature, is teaching English to middle and high school students at the Yerevan Lyceum named after Anania Shirakaty. When asked why he chose to volunteer to teach English, Hakoopian says, "I wanted to volunteer in Armenia so I could work with students who are learning English as a language and as a subject matter. Before coming to Armenia, I had taught literature to students in Brooklyn and I had helped international teaching assistants improve their English speaking skills on Cornell University's campus. I had not, however, been able to work with students who were interested in improving their speaking skills while learning about something new. The Armenian classroom provided this challenge."

Hakoopian also added that learning from native speakers provides a valuable benefit. "Students in Armenia have a different language learning experience than students in the United States. I don't think you can find many American teachers of foreign languages who haven't spent time abroad in the countries where the languages they teach are spoken. Unfortunately, most English teachers in Armenia have not had the chance to study English abroad. The presence of a native English speaker encourages a fluidity of speech to which most Armenian students have not yet been exposed. Of course, they've heard some English on the Internet and in movies, but they've never interacted with a native speaker."

Hakoopian came to Armenia with experiencing teaching SAT preparation classes and is also putting that experience to good use teaching some of his

and other students prepare to take the SAT exam in May.

Teach utilizes the invaluable resource of volunteers to provide a much-needed complement to the existing curriculum while providing professional development for existing English language teachers. In addition, Teach brings the outside world closer to students' reality, helping to broaden students' experiences and understanding of the world and region in which they live.

"Talin provides our students with conversational experiences enhancing our own vigorous language curriculum," says Anush Sedrakyan, principal of the Mascedan School where Aghanian serves. "Our students have long benefited from AVC volunteers through the practical, meaningful, and often times fun use of the English language. The fruitful cooperation with AVC also provides us with the opportunity to efficiently exchange information, keep in touch with students from different countries, and enhance our knowledge on different cultural and educational issues."

To apply to participate in the AVC's Teach program, individuals must be native English speakers, at least 21 years of age and have a college degree. Prior teaching experience is not necessary as training is provided.

For more information, visit www.armenianvolunteer.org or email info@avc.am.

Georgian Defense Minister Commemorates Armenian Genocide

YEREVAN (Pan ARMENIAN.Net) — On April, Georgia's Defense Minister Bacho Akhalaia visited the Armenian Genocide Memorial, Tsitsernakaberd, to lay a wreath, in memory of those killed in the Armenian Genocide.

According to Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Hayk Demoyan, Akhalaia left a note in the register-book of honorable guests of the museum, as well as watered the tree planted by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.



INTERNATIONAL

Remembering the Lost Million at Deir Zor

By Arthur Hagopian

JERUSALEM – It is in the news again, Deir Zor, the felicitous little village in Syria which bore witness, a century ago, to the death march of hundreds and thousands of helpless victims of an organized genocide.

The once sleepy Ottoman enclave has metamorphosed into a bustling town of over half a million people – and in the past few days, another hotbed of revolt against the ruling regime.

More deaths and injuries – but nothing to equal the depredation of the Armenian refugees force-marched into exile by the marauding Ottoman forces, during the infamous 1915 persecutions that devastated the Armenian nation.

Poetic justice has seen Deir Zor become home to the third Armenian diplomatic mission in Syria, the honorary consulate of the Republic of Armenia having opened there on February 11, 2010.

But in April 1915, it was a slaughterhouse.

A million-and-a-half innocent Armenians are estimated to have perished in the bloodbath, among them the flowers of its society. The bloodthirsty swords of the 20th Century Janissaries made no distinction between thinker, writer, artist, spiritual leader, farmer.

This year, as every year since 1915, Armenians all over the world will be

commemorating the tragedy.

Here in Jerusalem, the ceremonies will be highlighted by a special symposium on April 28, conducted by the Armenian Studies Program of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and representatives of the city's Armenian community.

The Jewish initiative is aptly significant, inspired as it is in part by the descendants of victims of an even greater genocide, the Jewish “shoah” that saw six million more innocents slaughtered by the Nazis.

The organizers have chosen as chief speakers some of Israel's most prominent luminaries, Prof. Israel Charney, who will remind the world that the “memorial of a people's genocide is for all humanity” and Prof. Elihu D. Richter from the university's medical school who will lecture on a doctor's perspective, “From Memory to Prevention.”

The program will also celebrate the Armenian cultural heritage, including

Armenian poetry and music.

The Hebrew University's Armenian Studies program issued a statement noting that the April 1915 genocide destroyed “by varied estimates, between one million and 1,500,000 Armenian men, women and children in acts of organized killing and during forced marches into exile from their historical homeland, then within the borders of the Ottoman empire, towards the Syrian desert.



The Armenian Genocide Monument in the town of Deir Zor

Turkish Cypriot Politician Visits Karabagh

STEPANAKERT, Karabagh (RFE/RL) – A prominent Turkish Cypriot politician paid a landmark visit to Nagorno-Karabagh over the weekend to take part in roundtable discussions organized there by a British peace-building charity.

Kutlay Erk, secretary general of the Republican Turkish Party (CTP), reportedly shared with local officials and civil society members his long experience of face-to-face contacts with Greek Cypriots. He said such contacts are important for resolving the decades-long conflict in Cyprus.

“Before that we were enemies, but thanks to our communication we became friends. Mutual trust developed into friendship,” the Regnum news agency quoted Erk as saying at a seminar in Stepanakert sponsored by the London-based group International Alert.

“Our existing status quo is unacceptable, unstable,” he said. “We need to look for other solutions. The status quo in the Karabagh conflict zone is not the best one either.”

Erk served as the mayor of the Turkish-controlled part of the Cypriot capital, Nicosia, until 2006 and was later a special negotiator of Mehmet Ali Talat, the former CTP leader and president of the unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Talat championed reunification of the divided island and closer ties with the European Union during his 2005-2010 presidency.

According to Regnum, Erk, who is apparently the first Turkish Cypriot to set foot in Karabagh, was asked by a seminar participant about Azerbaijan's threats to shoot down civilian aircraft that will use the Armenian populated territory's sole airport currently under-



Kutlay Erk in Stepanakert

going reconstruction.

Erk appeared to disapprove of those threats, saying that Northern Cyprus has for decades had flight services with Turkey despite being recognized only by Ankara. “Despite political protests from the Greek side, there have never been any harmful actions, any threats to shoot down civilian planes,” he was quoted as saying.

Holy Land Churches Protest New Israeli Taxes

JERUSALEM, from page 1
erties from taxation, recognized their rights and granted them special privileges, in documents termed “firmans.”

One Ottoman ruler, Sultan Chakmak, even went so far as to damn any “accursed [person] or son of accursed” who dared impugn on the rights and privileges of the Armenian Church, in an edict engraved in a marble plaque that hangs at the entrance to the Convent of St James, seat of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Subsequent administrators of the Holy Land, like the Jordanians, expressed their support of the status quo and adhered to its tenets.

The churches warned that “any erosion of the understanding of the status quo agreements between the State of Israel and Christian churches threatens the well-being of the Christian churches and their ability to continue the various ministries of pastoral care, education

and health care which they provide.”

They also complained that an “arona” on Church properties would “contradict the solemn promises given to the Churches by successive Israeli governments, most notably confirmed in the wake of the June 1967 war” that saw Israel overrun Jerusalem and most of the West Bank.

The church statement minced no words in describing the Israeli move as “aggressive,” expressing astonishment at the timing, in a hint at the unpredictable political disturbances spreading across the region.

“The heads of the churches cannot understand how it could be in the interest of the state to take such aggressive action with regard to the churches, especially at this time,” it said.

It urged official relations to remain on a correct and friendly basis, confident that “such will indeed turn out to be the continuing choice of the government of Israel.”

“The Heads of Churches believe this respect is essential for the ongoing health of the relationship between the three Abrahamaic faiths which exist in Israel as well as the relationship each has with the government of Israel,” the statement said.

The churches are particularly concerned that the “abrupt imposition of unprecedented new taxation on the Christian Churches could only come at the expense of their ability to maintain their presence in the Holy Land and to continue their ministries of pastoral care, education, welfare and health.”

The heads of Churches in Jerusalem include the Greek Orthodox Patriarch, the Latin Patriarch, the Armenian Patriarch, the Custos of the Holy Land, and the Armenian Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronite, Syrian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran archbishops and bishops.

International News

‘Aghet’ Documentary on Armenian Genocide Screened in Berne

BERNE, Switzerland (PanARMENIAN.Net) – On April 13, Berne hosted the screening of Eric Friedler's, “Aghet: Ein Volkermord,” a documentary on the Armenian Genocide.

The screening was followed by a discussion with the participation of Dogan Akhanli, author of *The Judges of the Last Judgment*.

The 90-minute film brings the words of diplomats, engineers and missionaries to life, featuring an ensemble of 23 German actors narrating the original texts in simple interviews that derive their effectiveness from the selection of texts and the presentation rather than a dramatization of history.

Armenians Included in List of Russia's 200 Richest Businessmen

MOSCOW (news.am) – Russian businessmen of Armenian origin are included in the list of Russia's 200 richest businessmen of 2011, issued by Forbes.

Nikolay Sarkisov ranks 68th, with \$1.5 billion (RESO Garantiya); Sergey Sarkisov 69th with \$1.5 billion (RESO Garantiya); Daniil Khachaturov 71st with \$1.5 billion (Rosgosstrakh); Samvel Karapetyan 73rd with \$1.4 billion (Tashir Group) and Ruben Vardanyan 180th with \$500 million (Troyka Dialogue).

Russian steel tycoon Vladimir Lisin tops the rankings with \$24 billion.

Leaked Cable Reveals Security Agreements With Azerbaijan

BAKU (yerkir.am) – A cable reveals details of a meeting between Tzipi Livni and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

On February 16, 2007, Israel's ambassador to Azerbaijan, Arthur Lenk, met with the American ambassador to Azerbaijan, Anne Derse, in of Baku. Lenk briefed Derse on a meeting between Israel's foreign minister at the time, Tzipi Livni, and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev that had taken place three weeks earlier during the World Economic Forum in Davos.

On February 21, a cable about the meeting was sent from the US Embassy in Baku. According to Derse, in responding to her questions, Lenk informed her that Israel and Azerbaijan had made two security agreements. The cable did not give the details of these agreements.

Erdogan Insults French MP of Armenian Descent

STRASBURG (news.am) – A French parliamentarian who asked a question and got a sharp response from Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) turned out to be of Armenian origin.

Muriel Marland-Militello is the granddaughter of an Armenian Genocide survivor. Marland-Militello told Turkish NTV channel that her grandmother and grandfather lived in Istanbul before 1915. Her grandfather's name was Seyran. In 1915 they were warned about future events and managed to escape, she said.

Commenting on Erdogan's response, Marland-Militello said he made a mistake in the way he answered.

“From the very first sentence I understood that he said something insulting French people. I did not reply as such conduct is disrespectful in PACE,” she said.

“You are speaking about something you are not aware of,” the Turkish premier said, “You are clearly French, in Turkey you are French too (in Turkish, when somebody does not know something or speaks out of context, it is said that they are from France).”



Community News

Tom Vartabedian and Daughter to Speak on Journalism at St. James

WATERTOWN, Mass. — Veteran journalist Tom Vartabedian will be joined by his daughter, Sonya Vartabedian-Sico, in presenting a talk titled, "Keeping Journalism in the Family," on Monday, May 2, during a dinner-meeting of St. James Armenian Church Men's Club.

The presentation will take place at Keljik Hall, Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mount Auburn St., beginning at 6:15 p.m. with a social hour and dinner at 7 p.m., followed by the program.

Vartabedian-Sico was recently promoted to the post of city editor of the *Newburyport Daily News*, capping a career that spans nearly 25 years. In her new role, she handles a modest but energetic news staff and dictates editorial policy for this seacoast community north of Boston.

In addition, she edits *Newburyport Magazine*, which recently received a first-place award from the New England Press Association, an honor she had received previously while editing the social and features section of her paper.

The *Newburyport News* is a sister publication of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Eagle-Tribune*, which covers more than 20 cities and towns in Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire.

Vartabedian-Sico is a 1988 honors graduate of Northeastern University, Boston, where she interned at some of the leading papers throughout greater Boston and the North Shore. Her first job was with the *Haverhill Gazette*, where her dad spent four decades before retiring in 2006.

Both received their early training serving as correspondents with the Armenian Youth Federation, reporting on chapter activities as teenagers.

She and husband Pat — a former sports correspondent — reside in nearby Amesbury.

During his four-plus decades with the *Haverhill Gazette*, Tom Vartabedian received a number of awards from the Associated Press,



Tom Vartabedian and his daughter, Sonya Vartabedian-Sico

United Press International and New England Press Association. He still contributes a weekly column five years after retiring.

He was inducted as a master member into the NEPA and remains occupied corresponding for Armenian papers throughout the country, including the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

Last year he received the Merrimack Valley Distinguished Citizen Award presented by the Boy Scouts of America.

He has taught at the Armenian School at St. Gregory Church in North Andover more than 30 years and shares his free time presenting lectures on the Armenian Genocide to high schools throughout the region as part of the Merrimack Valley Genocide Curriculum Committee.

He is also a member of the Lowell ARF Committee, Armenian National Committee of Merrimack Valley and Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee of Merrimack Valley.

Women are welcome. For further details, contact Bob Semonian, chairman, Speakers Committee, at bobsemonian@comcast.net.



A photo of the late Roy Surabian, with his medals

Staff Sgt. Roy Surabian Receives Military Burial, after WWII Plane Downed in 1943

WASHINGTON — When a B-24D Liberator disappeared 67 years ago, shortly after its takeoff at an airbase in New Guinea during World War II, the fate of all 11 crew members was an unsolved mystery, that is, until recently. Fast forward to March 25, at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia where a full military ceremony and burial of the crew's remains took place, including that of

By Nancy Kalajian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Staff Sgt. Roy Surabian of Medford, 24, the plane's radio operator.

It took nearly seven decades, but Roy Surabian's family can now have some closure as to his and his crewmates' fate, knowing that they weren't captured. In tribute to Roy, his brother Charles Surabian of Medford traveled to Virginia for the military burial with his son Steven, and four nieces, all residents of Massachusetts.

Though there had been a search some years after the plane's disappearance, it wasn't until 1984 that the government of Papua New Guinea notified the US of plane debris and bone fragments found in a steep jungle ravine there. Then in 2004, human remains found by local villagers were carefully examined. Some years

see SURABIAN, page 5



The remains of the B-24D crew members were laid to rest formally.

Philadelphia-Armenian Community Comes Together to Provide for Spiritual Needs of Javakhk

By Lisa Manookian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

PHILADELPHIA — On Sunday, April 3, Anahid and Papken Megerian, community activists here, hosted a program at their home, bringing together several members of the Philadelphia-Armenian community and the Very Rev. Babken Salbiyan, to raise funds for the spiritual needs of the historically Armenian Javakhk, now in the Republic of Georgia.

Salbiyan is the vicar general of the Diocese of Georgia and has been in Philadelphia since mid-February, taking courses at Temple University. He also gave a presentation on Friday, March 25, as a guest speaker at a Lenten lecture sponsored by Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church in Wynnewood.

The afternoon began with a Lenten feast prepared by hostess, Anahid Megerian, after which the group gathered to listen to Salbiyan provide an update on his work in Georgia. Salbiyan began by acknowledging the Megerians for hosting him and spearheading the support given to him over the past six years in his mission to tend to the spiritual needs of the Javakhk community and assist with its other



Very Rev. Babken Salbiyan addressing the crowd, with Shake Derderian translating

humanitarian needs. The Philadelphia-Armenian community has been raising funds for Javakhk since 2004, when they first came together to help with renovations to the Diocesan Center in Akhalkalak, the main city in the center of the region. That center serves an estimated 200,000 Armenians in 130 villages. Back then there were five working churches in two villages and three cities. Now there are 30 fully functional churches and nine full-time clergyman reaching the needs of the communities.

Javakhk has been historically Armenian and its inhabitants have remained Armenian, though it is presently an autonomous region in Georgia. In July 1921, the Soviet Union's Central Committee discussed apportioning several disputed regions between Armenia and Georgia. The Lori region was joined to Armenia but the question of what to do with the regions of Akhalkalak and Zalka was transferred to the Georgian Central Communist Bureau for their recommendation. Disregarding the demands of the Armenian side, both regions were subsequently given to Georgia.

Because of the Georgian government's neglectful policy towards Javakhk and its Armenian population, this region has been seriously depopulated. Today, the number of those leaving has reached catastrophic proportions. There is a lack of modernization and jobs, severe deterioration of roads and an elderly population left in impossible conditions. The educational system is in a questionable state, with most of the Armenian schools under the threat of elimination. As in other Armenian-populated areas of the Caucasus, Armenian culture

see JAVAKHK, page 6



COMMUNITY NEWS

Staff Sgt. Roy Surabian Receives Military Burial, after WWII Plane Downed in 1943

SURABIAN, from page 4

later, Roy Surabian’s nearest living relatives – his sister Alice Surabian Kevorkian and brother Charles Surabian – submitted samples of their DNA to the US military to establish his identity from the remains. Alice died a few years later, not knowing if any of the remains belonged to her brother. But her two daughters, Cheryl Kevorkian Keane and Pamela DiBella, went to the ceremony in Virginia along with their cousins, Deborah Surabian and Valerie Tersakian, daughters of the late Robert Surabian, Roy’s older brother. Their sister, Janette Surabian Nason, was unable to attend, but was there in spirit.

“A sad thing was that our parents didn’t have any resolution. All of his life, it was a heartache. My father wondered what happened, if Roy might have been captured and might even still be alive,” reflects Deborah Surabian. “My father

had said he had a premonition something had happened. He got the message that Roy was missing. He held off telling the family and kept it to himself as a secret. He was trying to protect the family from heartache and the bad news.”

Photos, letters and badges, including the Purple Heart awarded to Roy Surabian posthumously, are carefully kept by his family: Charles, his wife Dorothy, his son, Steven and his daughter, Karen.

“I was just a kid of 14 when it happened. I didn’t have the sense to tell him to stay on the ground,” recalls Charles Surabian, now 83, in a soft voice. “It affects me now more so than when I was a kid.”

Roy Surbaian’s parents were Charles and Agavne, immigrants from Kharpert in Armenia. He attended Medford High School and learned Morse Code at the Mass Radio School before he



Charles Surabian with flag and surrounded by his son and nieces, and two military representatives



Charles Surabian, in a light-colored beret, is accepting the flag that draped the coffin.

enlisted in the US Army Air Force.

During their visit to Virginia and the Washington, DC area, each attending family was assigned a military representative. Captain Andrew Parris of the Massachusetts Army National Guard was a constant resource and support to the Surabian family. In all, families of nine crew members attended the ceremony in Virginia and they came from various parts of the US. Some families even had representation from three generations. At the undertaker’s chapel in Virginia, prior to the burial, each family was given a memorial visitor’s book and everybody there signed it.

At the cemetery, there was a 21-gun salute. There were two caskets, one for one crew member, and the other with remains from the group

of crew members. Roy Surabian was one of four crew members who could not be positively identified, most likely due to the smallness of the bone fragments found.

This military burial attracted a bevy of media coverage.

AD POWER
PROMO

PHOTOGRAPHY & COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING DESIGN SERVICES

4-COLOR PRODUCTION PROMOTIONAL DISPLAYS

MODELING PORTFOLIOS CERAMIC COFFEE MUGS

COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY SPECIAL

WEDDING PACKAGE

LOCATION PHOTOGRAPHY

4 FULL COLOR BUSINESS CARDS

BROCHURES, POSTCARDS

POWER OF THE CAMERA
Photograph - Jacob Demirdjian ®
YOUR ONE STOP INTERNATIONAL ART DEALER ®
TEL.(323)724-9630. (626) 795-4493

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.

☐ \$160 ☐ \$ 320 ☐ \$ 480 ☐ other \$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Tel: _____

Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association – Memo: Sponsor a Teacher 2010
Mail your check with this form to:

TCA Sponsor a Teacher
5326 Valverde, Houston, TX 77056
Your donation is Tax Deductible.

839 Washington Street
Newtonville, MA 02160
(617) 964-3400

KAROUN
Restaurant

*Entertainment Fridays
and Saturdays*

SMOKING AREA AVAILABLE
Eurdolian Family

Telephone (617) 924-7400

Aram Bedrosian
Funeral Home, Inc.

Continuous Service By The Bedrosian Family Since 1945

558 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02472

MARION BEDROSIAN
PAUL BEDROSIAN
LARRY BEDROSIAN

Nardolillo Funeral Home
Est. 1906

John K. Najarian, Jr.
Rhode Island’s Only Licensed Armenian Funeral Director

1278 Park Ave. Cranston, RI 02910 (401) 942-1220
1111 Boston Neck Rd. Narragansett, RI 02882 (401) 789-6300

www.nardolillo.com



COMMUNITY NEWS

Philadelphia-Armenian Community Comes Together to Provide for Spiritual Needs of Javakhk

JAVAKHK, from page 4

and spiritual values have been subject to persecution. Examples include the banning of the teaching of Armenian history and the destruction of Armenian khachkars and churches.

Under Salbiyan's leadership, ruined churches have been renovated, a weekly sermon is broadcast to the region and junior choirs, Sunday Schools and a children's religious theater troupe have been established, as well as a summer church camp for children and various sports activities. Thousands have been baptized into the church in these past 10 years.

Salbiyan's task is a heavy and difficult one. There is no income, so the clergy do not receive a stipend. Assistance is provided to them through a special fund established by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) for the community's spiritual needs. If the diaspora does not sustain the Javakhk community, the global Armenian community will suffer another loss similar to the loss of Nakhijevan.

During this gathering, a substantial sum of money was raised for the clergy to carry on with their work and sustain the local community for the coming year. The Philadelphia-Armenian community is determined and dedicated to continue sustaining this isolated group of Armenians in a very remote part of the Caucasus. Over the past six years, they have sent containers of clothing, shoes, computers, as well as Bibles and other goods through the Fund for Armenian Relief.

It takes but a few caring individuals to spark an entire community to come together in easing the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Armenia and other parts of the world. For those who wish to contribute to the spiritual needs of Javakhk, funds can be transmitted to the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, under the memo Javakhk Spiritual Fund.



Very Rev. Babken Salbiyan, flanked by hosts Papken and Anahid Megerian



From left, George Yacoubian, Sr., Very Rev. Babken Salbiyan, George Yacoubian, Jr. and Nerces Bardakjian

AGBU Young Professionals of LA Organize a Career Fair at AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School

CANOGA PARK, Calif. — On Saturday, March 12, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Young Professionals of Los Angeles invited more than 40 professionals in fields ranging from interior design and neuroscience to finance and civil service. They gathered at the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian school to share their industry insights with the high school students, as well as mentors and mentees of the AGBU Generation Next Mentorship program. This collaboration between the AGBU Young Professionals of Los Angeles, Gen Next and the school, strengthened the young professionals' involvement in the lives of young members of the AGBU family.

The student-participants interacted and engaged in discussions with professionals during the Career Fair. Prior to the career fair, an assembly was held at Agajanian Auditorium. Keynote speaker, Joe El Rady, highlighted his path from Hollywood to his current professional endeavor as the managing member of a private investment fund. His message resonated with the students on the importance of choosing a career that they are passionate about.

Career Day organizer and Young Professionals of Los Angeles (YPLA) Publicist Aleen L. Khanjian, Esq. provided a sentimental message to the students. Khanjian said, "Career day is very special to me. I was a 14-year-old, high school freshman when I met my Career Day mentor. I not only attended the same schools he went to, I worked for him until I was 25. Although it seems scary, it's also very special knowing that the relationships you forge today can change the entire course of your life."

By meeting and engaging with the various presenters, the students had the unique opportunity to learn about networking, internships, choosing college majors and they had first-hand exposure to real-life achievements that Armenians have attained in their professional capacities.

"Career Day has become a staple event of the YPs for the past two years," said AGBU YPLA Chair Yeghig L. Keshishian. "It is the very embodiment of what we, as an organization, seek to foster — namely, the enrichment of our Armenian community on both a cultural as well as professional level."



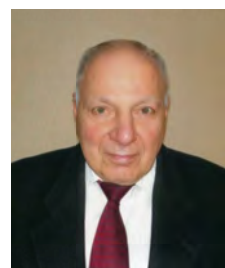
From left, Yeghig L. Keshishian, YPLA chair; Joe El Rady, keynote speaker, and Aleen L. Khanjian, Esq., event organizer

AGBU



A.G.B.U. New England District
will honor

William Aznavourian



for his 45 years of dedication to the
AGBU and the Armenian community.

Saturday, May 21, 2011 at 6:30pm
247 Mount Auburn St. Watertown, MA

Cocktail hour followed by
a tenderloin dinner and musical program.

Donation: \$40

For reservations please call or email:

Souren at 617-785-0540
smaserejian@yahoo.com

AGBU Office: 617-926-1373
agbuboston@gmail.com

Rainbow Family Day Care

By **Talin Chiloyan**

617-924-9357

talindaycare@comcast.net

Giragosian

F U N E R A L H O M E

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC
Funeral Counselor

576 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472, TEL: 617-924-0606
www.giragosianfuneralhome.com



COMMUNITY NEWS

Armen Hovannisian to Receive ArmenBar Public Service Award

SAN FRANCISCO — “It’s about time!” exclaimed Raffi K. Hovannisian, the founder of the Armenian Bar Association (ABA), who went on to become independent Armenia’s first minister of foreign affairs. He was sitting on a green bench at Liberty Square in Yerevan, an unlikely smile sweeping across his face on March 22, the eighth day of his Fast for Freedom. He had just learned that his younger brother, Armen K. Hovannisian, was to receive the Armenian Bar Association’s Public Service Award at the ABA’s annual convention planned for the weekend of April 29 here.

“Armen has never sought nor received adulation for his pivotal contributions to my life,” Raffi Hovannisian said, “and to the success of the Armenian community. He is the unnamed co-founder of the Armenian Bar Association. He is the unnamed co-founder of the Armenian Center for National and International Studies, the republic’s first independent research institution. He has been the unnamed co-creator of all the works I have realized over the years.”

Of course not all of Armen Hovannisian’s accomplishments have been off the record. He graduated summa cum laude from the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law. He began his career at the international law firm Chadbourne & Parke, where he chaired its Pro Bono Committee and ultimately received the firm’s highest honor for his continued representation of pro bono clients. Appointed by the California State Bar to its standing committee on ethnic minority relations, he represented — and defended — the interests of the Armenian-American community. And later, as an expert of environmental law, he served as assistant vice president at the Markel Corporation. Today, he is a leading member of a team of experienced litigators, retained by a

subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway, to manage complex insurance coverage disputes.

And yet, the better part of his work Armen Hovannisian has done quietly, almost in secret. From the earliest days, when he and Raffi went door to door in Fresno, to collect money for victims of the Lebanon Civil War of 1975, he has been a modest missionary for the Armenian Cause. In his college years, he conducted dozens of interviews with survivors of the Armenian Genocide and contributed them to UCLA’s oral history collection on the Genocide, which was founded and organized by his father, Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian. He taught US government and civics at Holy Martyrs Ferrahian Armenian High School in Los Angeles. And then, sitting at his older brother’s dining room table in Los Angeles, he scoured the American legal directories, searching for last names ending in -ian and -yan. These were to be the first members of the Armenian Bar Association.

“After the great vision of our founder resulted in the formation of the Armenian Bar Association 21 years ago, it has been his brother Armen who has carried the banner of the organization,” said Vicken Simonian, a founding member of the ABA, who along with Saro Kerkonian and a small group of dedicated lawyers, oversaw the ABA’s evolution into a formidable and highly influential network of lawyers and judges. “Armen has attended every meeting, participated in every pro bono activity and has both organized and lectured at countless legal seminars. He is a tireless worker for the Armenian community who is blind to petty differences between political and social groups.”

For this reason, perhaps, Armen Hovannisian has come into a new role of late. He has presided over community events across the



RADNOR, Penn. — The Armenian Sisters’ Academy is going to hold its 22nd annual Spring Scramble on Monday, June 6, at the Radnor Valley Country Club in Villanova. The day begins at 11 a.m. and includes a buffet lunch and dinner, auctions and awards presentations. In addition to a day on the links, participants can enter for two chances to win a two-year lease for a new 2011 Land Rover from Main Line Land Rover & Jaguar. The event brings in about 30 percent of the academy’s annual fundraising efforts.

Those interested in registering can do so on www.asaspringscramble.com. Corporate sponsorship is still available and most levels include four participants. Above, ASA alumni, young and old, support the ASA 2010 Spring Scramble.

country and established himself — unwittingly — as the definitive spokesman for Armenian unity and pride. Those thousands who attended the unified community requiem and remembrance program dedicated to Hrant Dink at the Glendale Civic Auditorium in March 2007, for example, were left in awe and wonder over the mesmerizing master of ceremonies: the startling power of his character, the depth and elegance of his patriotism. An extraordinary leader had been revealed to them.

“Armen has been and continues to be the confidant to all, the center and clearinghouse of

ideas and issues,” said Judge Zaven Sinanian. “He is the resident historian and the backbone of the ABA, and he has a keen understanding of the diaspora community and its relationship to Armenia.”

Indeed it is under Armen Hovannisian’s leadership that the Armenian Bar Association has become increasingly active in the development of the law in the homeland. More and more often in the past few years, members of the ABA have been deployed to Yerevan on mission to nurture ties with both private and public organizations of Armenian jurisprudence.

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator

E-SUBSCRIPTION AVAILABLE

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* will be available every Thursday, in COLOR and PDF format to all who subscribe specifically to this electronic delivery.

The annual rate is \$50.

To subscribe to this service, please fill out the following and mail it along with your check of \$50 made out to the:

Armenian Mirror-Spectator,
755 Mt. Auburn Street,
Watertown, MA 02472

☐ Yes, Please e-mail me the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* every Thursday.

My E-mail address is _____

Name and Last name _____

You can also e-mail your request to mirrorads@aol.com for faster service



His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan and
the Prelacy Ladies Guild of the
Armenian Apostolic Church of America

request the pleasure of your company at the

Mother’s Day Luncheon

honoring

Lucy Ishkanian

“Woman of the Year”

In recognition of her accomplishments as a concert pianist, and her selfless devotion and generosity to young Armenian musical artists for whom she has been a source of guidance, inspiration and professional support, and on whose behalf she has helped to create and organize many performance opportunities.

Monday, May 2, 2011

The New York Palace
455 Madison Avenue
New York City

Donation: 135 dollars

For reservations call the
Prelacy at (212) 689-7810

Reception at 12 o’clock
Luncheon at 1 o’clock



COMMUNITY NEWS

Sarkis Bedevian Is Named Armenian of the Year by the Diocese

BOSTON — Growing up in the Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem, Sarkis Bedevian has always felt a close connection with the Armenian Church.

“Since the day I opened my eyes, the church was a part of my life,” he said, in an interview in his Wycoff, NJ, home on a recent afternoon. “Whether it was at the Tarkmanchatz School or our community, we were brought up with the idea that faith, culture and tradition is what it is

Abajian Hall, the church’s community center. “We were a team when it came to doing things,” said Ruth Bedevian.

Sarkis Bedevian said one of the people that influenced him during this period was his close friend, the Rev. Carnig Hallajian.

Sarkis Bedevian also served as the superintendent of the parish’s Sunday School — a role his daughter, Peggy Geragos, recalled with special feeling. “Of my father’s many accomplishments and contributions — from his time, talent and means — I have always been proudest of his role as Sunday School superintendent at St. Leon Church when I was about 8 or 10 years old,” she said.

She recalled her father teaching her young class the hymn, *Krisdos ee mech mer haydnetsav* — an experience that has remained with her to this day. “Whenever I hear the familiar notes of that most beloved sharagan, I say an extra prayer for my father,” she said.

Bedevian expanded his involvement to the Diocesan

level, joining the Diocesan Auditing Committee in 1972. He became Diocesan Council treasurer a decade later, served as a Diocesan delegate and a member of the Diocesan Stipend Committee.

In addition, he was a member of the Armenian Church Endowment Fund. He also became a supporter of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, where he served as a member of the Board of Trustees. “My three children attended the St. Nersess summer conferences,” he said, “and I saw the value of these programs.”

In 1985, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, then-Primate of the Eastern Diocese, invited Bedevian to travel to Armenia to participate in the 30th anniversary of the enthronement of Vasken I, the late Catholicos of All Armenians, of blessed memory.

Bedevian said his first visit to Armenia was an emotional one. He recalled bending down to kiss the ground of his homeland. It was during this visit that Bedevian met the young Bishop Karekin Nersissian — who would later be elected as the 132nd Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II. Bedevian considers it a blessing and privilege to have worked with Karekin II to realize a number of projects in post-Soviet Armenia.

A few years after that visit, Bedevian committed to a major expansion of the Vaskenian Seminary in Sevan, which was completed in the mid-1990s. “The seminarians became like our children,” said Bedevian who saw the number of seminarians increase year after year. “Today we see the fruit of our labor.”

Rekindling a City’s Faith

Another project he undertook in Armenia was an initiative launched by the Knights of Vartan to build a new school in Gumri to help the city’s children who had suffered in the aftermath of the 1988 earthquake. The school, which serves about 400 students, was named Sts. Tarkmanchatz in honor of the school Bedevian attended in the Holy Land.

In 2001, the Bedevians turned their attention to Vanadzor, the third-largest city in Armenia, which was in need of a spiritual center to complement its Diocesan building. Over the next three years, a magnificent cathedral rose up on a hill overlooking Vanadzor.

The cathedral was consecrated in 2005 and given the name St. Gregory of Narek, after the great mystical poet who penned the *Book of Lamentations* 1,000 years earlier. The time of the consecration — late October 2005 — also coincided with the 43rd wedding anniversary of the Bedevians, and with Karekin II presiding, the couple renewed their wedding vows in the newly-built sanctuary.

St. Gregory of Narek Cathedral has helped to revive the Christian faith of Vanadzor’s citizens. Bedevian, who remains active in the life of the community, delights in receiving news of baptisms and weddings at the cathedral.

While working on the church project in Vanadzor, Bedevian was also inspired to build a youth center for local children, which was completed in 2009. “I felt there should be a connection between church life and social life,” said Bedevian, stressing the need to teach children about their Armenian heritage through both ancient crafts and modern technology. Children participate in classes and activities ranging from rug-weaving and needle-work to computers, English classes, painting and gymnastics. The center serves some 600 children and recently started a program to serve food to the city’s elderly population.

“Armenians are giving, loving people,” said Ruth Bedevian. “We felt Armenia was the right place for us to serve a mission.”

Sarkis Bedevian is also the benefactor of the Khrimian Hayrig Museum at Holy Echmiadzin and the founding member of the Friends of

Holy Echmiadzin.

In 2002, Karekin II presented Sarkis Bedevian with the “St. Gregory Medal,” and in 2005 with the “St. Nersess Medal” — the highest lay honors in the Armenian Church.

But the greatest honor for Bedevian was the opportunity he was given to serve as godfather during the consecration of the Holy Muron in the fall of 2008.

He recalled that this service was particularly meaningful to him, because when he was a child, his mother had made a vow that he would serve as godfather of the Christmas Eve ceremony in Bethlehem when he turned 10. Being blessed with a similar opportunity decades later gave a symmetry to his lifelong service in the Armenian Church.

“Sarkis Bedevian is indeed an exemplary man, a faithful man — the kind of man in whom we see the true depth and dignity of the Armenian Christian heritage,” said Diocesan Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian. “He has been responsible for great achievements at the highest level of our church; and yet Sarkis is always approachable, always eager to render some quiet, personal service to those around him. His spirit is that of a humble servant of our Lord.”

A true steward of the Armenian Church, Bedevian has lived by his favorite *Bible* passage: “Look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things unseen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

The presentation will be made during the assembly’s gala banquet on Friday, April 29, starting at 6:30 p.m., at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel.

For information on the banquet and this year’s Diocesan Assembly, visit, www.htaac.org.



Sarkis and Ruth Bedevian

all about.”

Bedevian will be honored as the 2011 Armenian of the Year by the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America at its 109th annual assembly, to be hosted by Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cambridge. The award will be bestowed during the grand gala banquet on Friday, April 29, at the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston.

Studying at the distinguished Sts. Tarkmanchatz School, Bedevian learned about Armenian history and language. On Sundays, he would accompany his mother, Baidasar, to the Armenian Church of the Holy Archangels.

“My mother played a big role in my life,” he said, adding that much of his early experiences in the church were inspired by his mother.

Bedevian’s father, Mgrdich, also played a role in shaping his son’s dedication to the church. A humble man, Bedevian remembers how his father would deliver butter, milk and eggs to the seminarians studying at St. James seminary.

Out of Jerusalem

After graduating from Sts. Tarkmanchatz School and completing his high school education at a local French academy, Bedevian moved to the United States to pursue college education. Arriving in New York in 1959, he enrolled at New York University, where he received a bachelor’s degree in accounting and finance.

He fondly remembers the support of the Armenian-American community during his early days in the country. He met his future wife, Ruth, at an ACYOA-sponsored event on Columbus Circle. They married in 1962 at Holy Cross Church of Union City, NJ, and later had three children: Peter, Debra and Peggy.

The couple moved to Northern New Jersey and joined the St. Leon parish in Fair Lawn, NJ. Before long, Sarkis Bedevian became a treasurer on the Parish Council, while his wife was active in the Women’s Guild. The two of them later became involved with the church expansion project, which resulted in the building of

Armenian Heritage Park

On the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, Boston



Coming in 2011

You can make the difference!

For Sponsorship/Naming Opportunities, please call
James Kalustian 781-777-2407 Charles Guleserian 617-484-6100
Haig Deranian 617-484-2215 Walter Nahabedian 781-891-7249
Dr. Jack Kasarjian 617-232-6350

Visit www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net





ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՑԵՂԱՍՊՊԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆ

TURKEY IS GUILTY OF GENOCIDE

DENYING THE UNDENIABLE IS A CRIME

Sponsored by the Knights & Daughters of Vartan, Co-sponsored by AGBU, Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of America, ADL-Ramgavars and Armenian Council of America, with the participation of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Catholic Eparchy for US and Canada, Mid-Atlantic ACYOA, AYF, Armenian Youth Organizations, and University Armenian Clubs

**THE TIME IS
NOW,
BE THERE!**

**SUNDAY,
MAY 1,
2011, AT
2:00 PM**

FREE BUS TRANSPORTATION TO & FROM TIMES SQUARE

All New York & New Jersey Armenian Churches

New Jersey Churches

Andy (201) 368-2791

Sona (201) 746-0409, (551) 427-8763

Kostan (201) 741-9789

New York Churches

John (718) 631-2247

Rouben (917) 992-8501

Queens Armenian Center, NY, 69-23 47th Ave., Woodside, NY

Raffi (646) 288-6979

Brooklyn, Front of Chase Bank 1002 Brighton Beach Ave
and Corner of Coney Island Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11235

Tigran (718) 891-8486, (917) 945-9548

**TIMES SQUARE
43rd St. & Broadway**

For more information, please visit www.knightsofvartan.org, click April 24,
www.armenianradionj.com, <http://April24nyc.com>
www.theforgotten.org, www.armenian-genocide.org, www.twentyvoices.com



96TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Martyrs Remembered

COMMEMORATION, from page 1

State Sen. Steven Tolman presented both the Armenian Sisters' Academy and St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School with Joint House/Senate Resolutions commending them for their work.

Armenian Sisters' Academy principal, Sister Cecile Keghiayan, speaking in Armenian, exhorted all Armenians to speak their native language and never to forget it.

St. Stephen's Principal Houry Boyamian noted it was her father's experience escaping the Genocide as a child of 5 that inspired him to go into education, and which eventually led to him being a principal of a prestigious school in Beirut.

"The only way for the Armenian people to avoid total annihilation is to keep the language and culture alive through education. My father is my hero, and I tried to follow in his footsteps," she said.

Gov. Deval Patrick attended the program, as he has done every year since his election, and shook hands with the survivors as well as the excited students who surrounded him.

New Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian introduced House Speaker Robert DeLeo, who was joined by several other government officials for the ceremony.

DeLeo noted that Armenians, like many other immigrant groups, have enriched the history of Massachusetts despite the trauma they had endured.

"We are truly a Commonwealth of immigrants," he said. "Thank you for keeping all those lost alive in our memories, our thoughts and our prayers."

The keynote address was given by American University of Armenia Law School Dean Tom Samuelian.

"That the Armenian Genocide happened is not really in question. President Obama said as much during his historic visit to Turkey. In fact, all US presidents have condemned it. Turkish oppression and mistreatment of the Armenians has been on the US foreign policy agenda since the late 19th century," he said.

He continued, "As eyewitnesses to the crime, the United States and many countries in Europe have all the evidence they need, beyond a reasonable doubt. Some, impelled by the evidence, have drawn the legal consequences that flow from that evidence. They condemn it as genocide and make Turkey's redemption a condition of admission into the EU. Sometimes, as in the case of Germany, they are compelled to draw the legal consequences just to live with themselves, because of their own complicity. Others, like the US, UK and Israel, balk at drawing legal consequences for fear of retaliation by their unrepentant Turkish allies."

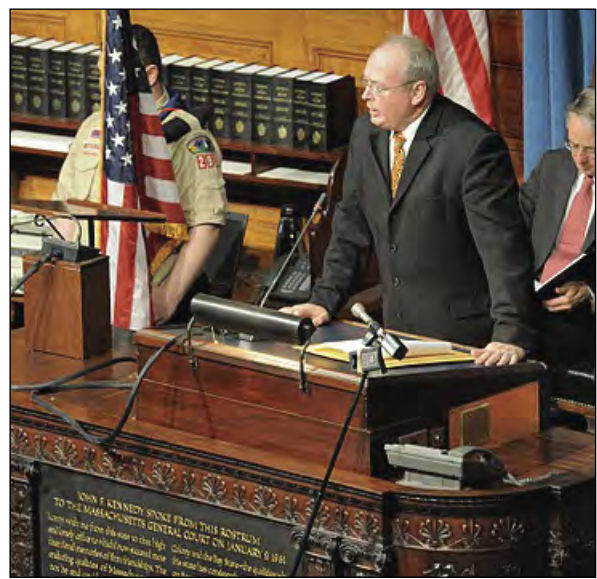
"The court of public opinion is a large, interminable brawlroom where the truth is among the least important factors. Distraction and confusion are highly effective tactics, as amply



Gov. Deval Patrick greets the Genocide survivors while an aide waits.



Genocide survivors at the program



State Sen. Steven Tolman speaks.

shown by the history of tobacco or the global warming coverup. All it takes is creating controversy — enough reasonable doubt so that reasonable people have an excuse to avoid making a decision or taking action. Since there is no closure in the court of public opinion, the talk keeps going.

"The Armenian Genocide is not an Armenian or a Turkish issue. It is a community of nations issue. It is about community norms that have been violated. And even if, for whatever reason on whatever terms, the perpetrators and victims reconcile, the crime against humanity remains to be addressed. This is not a commercial dispute that can be put behind us, swept under the rug or haggled away. Humanity was violated by the 20th-century Turkish destruction of the Armenians. Humanity was humiliated by its impotence to prevent it. The Turks lowered the bar on barbarity and the community of nations is still smarting from it."



Principal Sister Cecile Keghiayan of the Armenian Sisters' Academy in Lexington, Mass.

He added, "The Armenian Genocide is not a tiff between neighbors. It is violation of community norms. Even if the Armenians and Turks could wish away their differences, the condemnation by scores of eyewitnesses and countries and international institutions will not vanish. Nor, even more importantly, will it stop haunting the Turks."

"Today I stand before you as an American and as an Armenian. I will now speak as an Armenian, a descendant of Genocide victims and survivors, who has made my home and



Principal Houry Boyamian of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School



From left, Rabbi Howard Jaffe, state Rep. James Miceli and Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian



96TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

at Mass. Statehouse

All photos
by Jirair
Hovsepien



Tom Samuelian speaks, while state Rep. Jonathan Hecht and state Sen. Stephen Tolman listen.

accessible forum. Political and legal reality has changed, but our mentality has not yet caught up. The Armenian nation, those living in the diaspora and those living in Armenia, have not yet figured out how to pursue national goals in a coordinated, effective manner.

"Make no mistake, the reason we are here today is not



Members of the clergy, day's keynote speaker Tom Samuelian and the principals of the two schools being honored listen at the event.

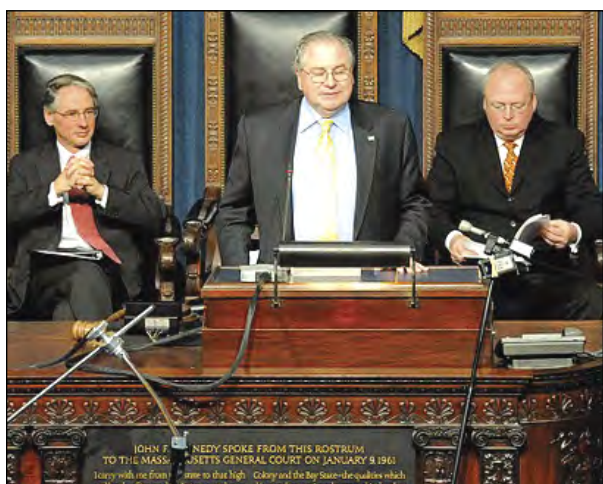


Children of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School and the Armenian Sisters' Academy mobbed Gov. Deval Patrick after the program.



Ruth Thomasian of Project SAVE

living in Armenia for the past 13 years. Until Armenians make clear what needs to be done, people will just keep talking. In this crisis-weary world, simply repeating a tale of woe and complaining about one's plight will not produce results. That was perhaps the only option when the Armenians were a people with no state and no standing in the community of nations. That changed with Armenia's independence. Armenians are in a different legal position compared to 20 years ago, when indeed, the court of public opinion was effectively the only



Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo speaks, while state Rep. Jonathan Hecht, left, and state Sen. Steven Tolman listen.



State Rep. Jon Hecht

because of special interests or the clout of an ethnic lobby, but because the Armenian Genocide is quintessentially and inescapably an American issue, and Armenian-Americans have expertise and knowledge to solve it.



Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian

"It's not easy for the United States to exercise world leadership, but if a country takes that mantle, it also assumes the corresponding duties to the community of nations. This is a lesson and a value system that both my classmate Barack Obama and I learned, even took for granted, as law students at Harvard, and which he, disappointingly, seems to have forgotten."

Also, Rabbi Howard Jaffe, who along with Lexington resident Laura Boghosian, launched the Coalition to Recognize the Armenian Genocide, was recognized by the organizers for his efforts.

The Erevan Choral Society of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston performed.

A reception in the Great Hall followed the ceremony.



96TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Knights of Vartan Continue Tradition of Times Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

NEW YORK – It was 1985. The 75th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide was approaching. Usually commemorative events were held in the halls of Armenian churches on April 24, with the exception of demonstrations in front of the Turkish embassy in New York every five years or so on “major” anniversaries. The Knights and Daughters of Vartan up until then would support existing commemorations. Sam Azadian suggested that Armenians needed to get out of their own halls and hold events in public places so that non-Armenians could learn about the Armenian Genocide. Hirant Gulian, who closely worked with Azadian, said, “Sam was involved in city government. He worked for four different mayors and served as a commissioner, and so was very well connected. As a result, he was able to reserve the location of Times Square in the heart of New York City in 1985. That’s how we started.” The Knights and Daughters of Vartan for the next 25 years organized commemorations in the same place, creating a tradition which continues this year. It will take place one week later than usual, on May 1, in order not to conflict with Easter.

Gulian, a successful jeweler in New York, was one of the initial organizers together with Sam Azadian, and today and for the last five years has served as the chairman of the commemorative committee for the Knights. He explained that the event for the first few years was solely under the banner of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan. The goal was to obtain recognition for the Armenian Genocide. Many individuals were financially and morally supportive, and volunteered personally. For example, at midnight before the event, Hratch Kaprielian and his 30 employees were busy putting up signs throughout New York to announce the forthcoming commemoration.

Beginning in 1989, all the Armenian church denominations became involved (including both the Eastern Diocese and Prelacy), and in the last five years, all the traditional Armenian political parties began participating along with the Armenian Assembly of America, which was supportive from the early years. In the past few years, various Armenian youth organizations, such as university Armenian clubs, the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America and the Armenian Youth Federation have become involved. Gulian said, “No one disagrees that we Armenians should be all working together at least in this area. Especially over the past five years, the Knights of Vartan has finally succeeded in bringing together all our organizations and groups. The Knights and Daughters of Vartan have no political agenda beyond Genocide recognition from the Turkish government, and our organizations understand this.”

The event garnered great attention. The street would be closed from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. On the average from 80,000 to 100,000 people would pass by the important central location of Times Square on that day, according to the reports of the New York City police. Two to three thousand people on average have attended each year’s event, making for a total of as many as 75,000 attendees over the last quarter century.

Speakers over the years have included various governors, senators and congressmen from the tri-state area, as well as mayors of New York like Edward Koch, who never missed a commemoration while in office. Harut Sassounian of the *California Courier* and the United Armenian Fund remarked last year that even though the Los Angeles area has a much larger Armenian population, commemorations there never have as many high-ranking politicians as Times Square. Obtaining their support and recognition of the Genocide is a crucial function of the commemoration. Many important educators, journalists and academics

have also given talks.

During the past quarter century, major American television stations gave the event coverage for somewhere between 12 and 15 of the anniversaries. Even several Turkish television stations came to record the event in the past few years. The *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post* and other American newspapers often covered the commemoration and wrote about the Armenian Genocide.

The preparatory process is an involved one. Gulian said, “It is very challenging and hard work. We have different teams working on different aspects. We begin each summer to plan for the next year. Forty to 50 people are involved getting the event organized.” The Knights have cultivated good relationships with elected officials, both individually and collectively, and support them whenever possible in a variety of ways. This therefore makes it easier to obtain their participation. Gulian stressed that “Sam Azadian’s personal connections with these elected officials made a real difference. Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York is one example. Except for the administrative work of the past five years, everything has been [Sam] Azadian’s creation. We owe him a lot.” The Knights provide updated basic background information to all speakers ahead of time.

Gulian pointed out that “all other American organizations have left the Times Square location. This means that they have lost the right to use the site, and the city no longer is inclined to give permits for its use. Consequently, we are the only organization, which has been grandfathered in. If we do not hold our event even once, we automatically will lose this right.”

This year is a unique challenge, because not only has the date been changed to avoid conflicting with Easter, but the new date of May 1 happens to be Holocaust Day. This makes it more difficult for Jewish officials because there are other commemorative events on that day that they must attend. Nonetheless, there are still many prominent politicians who are planning to participate, including Senators Robert Menendez (NJ) and Schumer; local congressmen, such as Anthony Weiner, Carolyn Maloney and Frank Pallone; and Councilman Peter Vallone Jr. and Comptroller John Liu of New York City. The politicians usually speak for about five minutes, while representatives of the various Armenian sponsors and organizations are given about three minutes each. The keynote speaker, Prof. Richard Hovannisian of the University of California, Los Angeles, will have around 10 to 15 minutes.

The Internet and Facebook are being actively used to motivate university and college Armenian students and youth organizations to participate. Over 360 young people have responded that they will attend this year. Gulian said, “we are going to set up table sand have invited all Armenian national and international organizations to send representatives. They can promote their organizations and collect addresses and other information from the general public. We want to start preparing for 2015, the 100th anniversary, so that we can have a very large and united commemoration then.”

Gulian spoke of his own motivation: “I’m just an average person, like any other Armenian, who has lost family members in the Genocide. We have the responsibility to do all that we can for their sake. I think that the time has come for us to go beyond recognition of the Genocide and work for restitution and reparations.” He modestly concluded, “I learned everything I know from Sam Azadian. Everything I do right I learned from him. Any mistakes I make are my



Thongs gather every year in Times Square for the Genocide Commemoration.

own doing.” He plans to retire from his leadership role in the Times Square commemoration after the major anniversary of 2015. He said, “After all, at a certain point you have to know when to walk away, and it will have been 30 years that I have been involved in this event.”

Gulian, a deacon in the Armenian Church, volunteers to help coordinate special projects for the Diocese and a few other organizations occasionally. He also is a founding member who served 10 years as the president of the Armenian American Support and Educational Center of Palisades Park, NJ – familiarly known as Hai Doun. It was created in 1976, and is the only Armenian organization in New Jersey with

its own building as well as stable finances.

Gulian periodically is asked why the same program is repeated from year to year. Once it was a clergyman who asked him this. He responded, “We go to church every Sunday where there is the same Divine Liturgy. Are we doing something wrong? Once a year, you can give people additional strength not to forget what happened in 1915. I think it is important to repeat some of this information every year. We have the responsibility to carry on until the Turkish government accepts its responsibility. There is some change there recently, especially among the new generation, which gives us renewed hope.”

80th

**ANNIVERSARY - BANQUET
OF THE**



**TEKEYAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION
FRIENDS OF MIRROR-SPECTATOR**

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2011

AT 7:00PM

**TEANECK MARRIOTT AT GLENPOINT
100 FRANK W. BURR BLVD.
TEANECK, NEW JERSEY**

DONATION \$125.00

FOR TICKETS CALL: SHOGHIG 201 803-0240

SIRVART 201 739-7775

SHEMAVON 718 344-7489



96TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Prof. Hovannisian Reflects on Lost Lands of Cilicia at NAASR Lecture

By Alin K. Gregorian

Mirror-Spectator Staff

FRAMINGHAM, Mass. — Prof. Richard Hovannisian brought his sharp wit and extensive knowledge to the Holy Translators Church here on April 17 at a program about a tour that the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) had sponsored to Cilicia last year.

Stepan Piligian opened the program, welcoming all to the church.

Then, Marc Mamigonian, director of academ-

ting on Armenian lands and they were sorry that they had been used by the Turks in the persecution and elimination of the Armenians," he recalled.

At the same time, he said, he and the members of his party were followed closely by the authorities.

The focus of the NAASR-sponsored trip during which Hovannisian was the resident scholar was Cilicia, the last Armenian kingdom, which began in 1078 and ceased to exist in 1375 after an invasion by the Mameluks. The last king, Levon Lusignan, ended up in France, an intermediary between that country and England, during the 100 Year War.

The lecture was accompanied by pictures from one of the tour guests, which captured both the joy many of the visitors felt, as well as the utter sense of grief and bewilderment at some of the sites, including one destroyed church, which was currently being used to store manure and many buildings in these cities and towns which, when looked at closely, contained bricks with Armenian letters or even *khatchkars*, taken out of cemeteries.

As for the Cilicia trip, he said it was increasingly difficult to find traces of Armenian heritage, not only for the obvious reasons of the government removing the old Armenian reminders, but because of the tremendous growth of cities there. The region, he said, is a major tourist attraction.

The Tarsus Mountains, he said, separate Cilicia in the south from Antelias in the north.

Gesaria, their point of entry, is now a city of 500,000. Against trend, the Soorp Garabed Church there, in the oldest part of the city, which still belongs to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, is being renovated by two brothers who hail from the city.

The group then visited Talas, a summer town above Gesaria and then Develi or Everig.

Particularly moving were shots of some of the remnants of buildings, for example a girls' school in Hajin (now Saimbeyli) that was built in 1912, only to be razed two years later by the authorities. He noted that the people of the city had defended themselves from February to October 1920, as they were beset by Kemalists.

Sis, the capital of Cilicia, had been a fortress city. Of the cathedral of St. Sophia, a glorious structure with walls that were several feet thick, only one wall remained. The rest of the walls were razed so that the residents of the city could use the bricks in their homes.

Fortunately, Hovannisian said, as the Genocide was beginning, many of the treasures of the cathedral were hauled by cart to Antelias, where they were spared destruction.

Also visited was Adana, now one of the largest cities in Turkey, Merzin, Tarsus, Dorkyol, Sanjak, Musa Dag, Bitlis, Mush, Aintab, Zeytoon and Marash.

A question-and-answer period followed the talk.



Prof. Richard Hovannisian signs a copy of one of his books.

ic affairs at NAASR, and Raffi Yeghiayan, the chairman of the Board of NAASR, spoke.

Yeghiayan said NAASR has sponsored a couple of trips to Western Armenian lands and to have Hovannisian as the resident historian on board was "a privilege." He also spoke about NAASR's expanding role in the West Coast, as well as in some southern states.

Hovannisian said that when he first traveled to Armenian lands in Turkey, along with his wife, Dr. Vartiter Hovannisian, he was sure that he would never want to go back.

He was wrong. "I thought I didn't want to see what I would see. I resisted for a very long time. It was very surprising when I went for the first time, not with an Armenian group, but with a Turkish colleague, [Fatma] Muge Gocek."

He touched on the changing nature of Turkish scholars versus their Armenian counterparts. "It is only in the last two decades that things have changed," he said. "But there have been more changes among Turkish scholars. They are increasingly challenging the government viewpoint."

Hovannisian also spoke about his first trip to Turkey, in which he said he saw first-hand the great contradictions of that country. For example, he said, the city of Trabizond was where the Armenian massacres of 1895 had started. It is a city full of extremists, from which the murderer of Hrant Dink and several other Christians in Turkey had emerged, yet the city itself had been welcoming to them and a local Turk had invited them to see the new production of the play "Baghdasar Aghbar" by Hagop Baronian.

The second contradiction, he said, was the Kurdish nature of the city. "We were received so cordially, so warmly. They told us how sorry they were. The acknowledged that they are sit-

Making a Pitch for Vigilance on April 24

As Armenian Martyrs' Day approaches for the 96th time, let's not be complacent. Instead, let us use the occasion to become vigilant. For what it's worth, let us use the

anniversary to branch out and promote awareness in each of our communities across America and other places.

At a time when apathy replaces sympathy, let's make it a point to tell our genocide

story to those who remain ignorant of it. Ask any casual Armenian why they do not get involved with April 24 and the answer is usually rehearsed.

"Same old story," they'll tell you. "I've heard it a hundred times. Why do we keep mourning? Instead, let's focus on the future."

I may tend to agree. Preaching to the choir doesn't necessarily get us anywhere. It becomes an exercise in futility. But show me a youngster delivering a recitation on where we've come since the Genocide and I'm listening.

All the human rights scholars in the world cannot compensate for the insight of a child articulating our history and culture.

A world history student in one of my neighboring high schools threw up a hand when I asked for questions following a Genocide presentation. He posed a rather rhetorical question.

"Did any good come out of the Armenian Genocide?" he wondered.

Is there anything positive to say about the loss of 1.5 million martyrs, which left our nation bruised, battered and bewildered in 1915? Well, every dark cloud has a silver lining, I told him.

"On the contrary, yes," I replied. "It made us more resilient as a people. The Genocide instilled in us the principles of democracy and patriotism. No other nation in history bled white by deportation, famine and massacre, only to create an independent republic three years later. Out of tragedy has come triumph."

"But what about the lives lost and the trauma these survivors faced over their lives?" the student wondered.

"A scar is permanent," I told him. "We are still a nation in transition. If the Genocide taught us anything, it is the ability to speak out against intolerance and demand an end to man's inhumanity toward mankind."

The presentation was part of a mission we've taken in my community with the Merrimack Valley Armenian Genocide Curriculum Committee, chaired by Dro Kanayan, a grandson to the famous freedom-fighting general by the same name.

Three years ago when we began our approach to area high schools, all were receptive. We wound up addressing a half-dozen schools. Now, they're calling us to return.

Our list is growing annually with newer schools being added. We've approached the parochial and private sector. In some cases, a public forum on human rights will follow a classroom presentation on Armenia.

Working through Facing History and Ourselves, representations from other beleaguered nations have joined the Armenians from the Jewish Holocaust, Bosnia, Darfur, Cambodia and Rwanda. Together, we tell our stories to not only educate but instill peace and equality among all.

So, on this April 24, I invite others to take a similar approach. Call your local school and ask for an appearance. Get a small group of local Armenians together and arrange for a Genocide appearance. Most teachers know very little or nothing about this moment in history. Very little is written in the history books about it.

If that doesn't work — and even if it does — try making a pitch to the service clubs in your community be it Kiwanis, Rotary, Exchange or Lions. All of them meet weekly and line up speakers at the hint of an offer.

Most will allow a 20-minute program with questions. Bring along some placards and posters, even hand-out material. It's the best educational tool we can initiate. Trust me, the passion toward Armenia will become mutual.

In each case, we show some form of gratitude for our achievements than mourn the setback. Through our respective professions and intellectual efforts, we have perpetuated the ideals of our ancestors, educated our young, inspired the non-Armenian population and kept the promise of future generations intact.

It all makes me wonder where our race would be today had it not been for the massacre. Would we have been as resilient? As energized? Would the pendulum have tilted toward obscurity?

Sure, we've grown assimilated but have remained Armenian. Our story remains a tale of generations, bent on common identity and unified practice.

We observe this anniversary, not because it will bring back the dead and restore our desecrated churches. Not because our people were dehumanized and violated.

But because we cling to the hope that maybe through education and understanding, similar atrocities can be avoided.

Pallone Calls for Robust US Assistance to Armenia on Anniversary of Armenian Genocide

WASHINGTON — Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), founder and co-chair of the Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus, last Wednesday testified before the Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Agencies to request that the committee provide significant US assistance to Armenia in its Fiscal Year 2012 appropriations bill.

"I have witnessed the positive impact US assistance to Armenia has had for the American people as well as the people of Armenia who continue to work towards

developing a better democracy," said Pallone. "I consider it a priority to fight to make sure US assistance continues to contribute to substantial development and advancement in Armenia's democratic institutions."

Pallone requested not less than \$60 million be appropriated for Armenia in FY 2012, that USAID spend not less than \$10 million in FY 2012 for humanitarian and development programs in Nagorno Karabagh, and that \$8 million in FMF and \$2 million in IMET funding be appropriated for Armenia for FY 2011.

Despite Congressional intent that \$46 mil-

lion for humanitarian and development assistance be allocated to Nagorno Karabagh, Pallone pointed out that the State Department failed to follow through on that commitment, expending less than \$13 million from 2004 to 2010.

Also on Wednesday, Pallone along with the Armenian Issues Caucus and the Armenian advocacy organizations hosted the 96th Annual Armenian Genocide commemoration on Capitol Hill. Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee Rep. Howard Berman, Sen.

Robert Menendez, Rep. Jackie Speier and other members also joined the commemoration. In the ceremony Pallone spoke about the continued denial of the Genocide by the Turkish government, and lamented our own government's inaction in using the word genocide to describe these events.

"The Armenian Genocide is a dark day in history, but it must be remembered and reaffirmed to ensure that not only are the victims and survivors honored, but that we make it clear that genocide will never be tolerated, past or present," said Pallone.



96TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Tufts University Hosts Genocide Commemoration

By Thomas C. Nash

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

MEDFORD, Mass. — Around 100 gathered in Tufts University's Goddard Chapel last Tuesday for a presentation by author Michael Bobelian in commemoration of the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The commemoration, organized by Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Darakjian and Jafarian Chair in Armenian History, began with a presentation from Bobelian titled "America and the Armenian Genocide: The Quest for Justice from

the first major worldwide aid effort became forgotten — including the country that spearheaded the effort.

"This relationship shows America both at its best and at its worst," Bobelian said. "There was no precedent or apparatus for this kind of effort. The US was at the forefront."

Bobelian traced the history from the start of the Genocide and aid campaign in 1915 to 50 years later, highlighting that what had been front-page news in the *New York Times* as it was happening had faded from the public's memory.

A precise way of measuring that memory, Bobelian noted, is analyzing the press coverage

Bobelian said of the period between World War II and 1965, when the first public commemorations took place. "These protests created a campaign for justice that has existed until today."

Bobelian outlined the struggle faced by Armenian Americans in getting both presidential and congressional recognition for the Genocide, highlighting moments ranging from

the 1985 letter signed by 69 scholars disputing that the Genocide is settled history to former Sen. Bob Dole's showdown with President George H.W. Bush in 1990.

Following Bobelian's presentation, attendees filed out of the chapel with roses to place on a memorial plaque next to the chapel. A reception at Ballou Hall followed.

Armenian Assembly Discusses Key Issues With Members of Congress in Advance Of Genocide Commemoration

WASHINGTON — Assembly Board member Annie Totah and Executive Director Bryan Ardouny discussed Armenian issues in a series of meetings with House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV) and participated in a special roundtable session with Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD).

Totah and Ardouny discussed US assistance to Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh as well as the importance of US affirmation of the

importance of Genocide affirmation and prevention," continued Totah.

Now serving in his 16th term, Hoyer has been a steadfast supporter of congressional efforts to combat Genocide denial by reaffirming the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide and the proud chapter in US history in helping to save the survivors.

Berkley, who represents the Las Vegas community in the first Congressional District of



Michael Bobelian speaks at Tufts University.

Wilson to Obama."

Bobelian's lecture drew on his 2009 book, *Children of Armenia: A Forgotten Genocide*, and *The Century-Long Struggle for Justice*, which features interviews with many of the decision makers in Washington who have played a role in the decades of advocacy for recognition. It also features an analysis of how

in the major newspapers following the initial reports of massacres. Before efforts for recognition took hold, he noted that only 30 mentions of the word genocide or massacres could be found in the nearly 12,000 stories mentioning Armenia or Armenians.

"Armenians were incapable of sustaining the memory of this event with the outside world,"



House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Armenian Assembly Board member Annie Totah

Schiff Meets with Armenian Assembly

WASHINGTON — This week, Rep. Adam Schiff (CA-29) met with Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny and discussed a range of issues, including US affirmation of the Armenian Genocide and legislative strategies for this year, President Barack Obama's upcoming April 24 statement, the need for robust assistance to Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh, as well as other key issues of importance to the Armenian community.

In addition, the two discussed Schiff's upcoming community briefing on April 28 to be held under the auspices of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America. The event is being sponsored by St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church of Pasadena and co-sponsored by the Armenian Assembly of America with Mark Geragos, Esq., serving as honorary chairman.



Bryan Ardouny, right, with Rep. Adam Schiff



From left, Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV) and Assembly Board member Annie Totah

Armenian Genocide.

"With a record number of new members of Congress this year, we must redouble our efforts and expand our outreach," stated Totah. "The upcoming Armenian Genocide Commemoration on Capitol Hill taking place on April 13 under the auspices of the Armenian Caucus co-chairs presents an opportunity for us to educate Members of Congress about the

Nevada, voted in support of H.Res. 252, the Armenian Genocide resolution, last Congress during the March 2010 House Foreign Affairs Committee mark-up of this human rights legislation.

Sarbanes, following his father's footsteps, former Sen. Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, is also a strong supporter of Armenian issues, and was a cosponsor of H.Res. 252 last year.



Arts & Living

Arlington Gallery to Host Exhibit of Paintings of Artemis Mirak

ARLINGTON, Mass. — An exhibit of the paintings of the late Artemis Mirak will mark the 20th anniversary of the Jefferson Cutter House Art Gallery. This is particularly fitting, because Artemis Mirak and her late husband, John Mirak, were the ones who made it possible for the Cutter House to become such an important venue for art exhibits. They made a gift of the Jefferson Cutter House to the Town of Arlington, in 1989-1990. The Cutter House opened an art gallery, which has hosted exhibits of local artists over the last 20 years.

Artemis Mirak was an Armenian-American, a survivor of the 1915 Genocide, who was brought to the US by distant relatives. It was in Medford and Watertown that she met John Mirak, also an orphan of the massacres. Together, residing in Winchester and Arlington, they raised four children and remained very active in local Arlington and Armenian community affairs.

The exhibit, titled "Views of the Past," will run from May 4 to 30. A preview will be held on Friday May 20, from 2 to 6 p.m. and receptions will be held on Saturday, May 21 from 2 to 6 p.m., and Sunday, May 22, from 2 to 6 p.m.

The artist's daughter, Muriel Mirak-Weissbach, will be at the Cutter Gallery with copies of her book, *Through the Wall of Fire: Armenia-Iraq-Palestine: From Wrath to Reconciliation*, which includes the personal history of her family.

Other dates for visitors are May 18, 4:30 to 6 p.m. and May 25, 1 to 4 p.m.

LCO Restoring Two Historical Armenian Sites

PASADENA, Calif. — In its 34th year, the Land and Culture Organization (LCO) is returning to Armenia again this summer to continue restoration work on two historical Armenian sites.

Last year, 37 volunteers from Armenia, Canada, England, France, Syria and the United States spent their summer restoring their Armenian legacy. This summer's campaign is gearing up, and volunteers from several countries have already begun to join.

This upcoming summer, LCO will finalize the renovation of the 17th-century Sourp Astvatzatzin Church in Yeghvard. The Yeghvard village is located in the southern Syunik Province on the border of Armenia and the liberated areas surrounding Artsakh. The project began in 2007, and the church will be consecrated this August.

A second group of volunteers will work on the Tchitchkhanavank Monastery in the Shirakamut village in the northern Shirak Province near Spitak. Shirakamut was completely destroyed during the 1988 earthquake. This caused further deterioration of the ruins, which were built on the plan of a Christian cross from the sixth and seventh centuries. This project began in 2008 and will continue for the next few years.

In Yeghvard, volunteers will be completing the surrounding walls and repositioning the grave-stones and memorials on the church grounds. Construction of Tchitchkhanavank's foundation walls will continue to be rebuilt. Architects, historical experts, skilled craftsmen and LCO Board members oversee all restoration projects.

This summer's LCO campaign will be from July 18 to August 12. In addition to the work, volunteers will enjoy weekend excursions throughout Armenia. Volunteers will have an opportunity to extend their stay and participate or attend the pan-Armenian games being held in Yerevan on August 13-21. Applications of participants must be received online at www.lcousa.org by June 1.

For more than 30 years, LCO has been one of the earliest volunteer groups in Armenia and Karabagh working to restore, renovate and rejuvenate historical monuments and sites.



AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra and conductor Bedros Papazian

AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra's First Spring Concert Is Multicultural

SOFIA, Bulgaria — AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra's first concert of the spring 2011 season took place on March 13 at the concert hall of the National Music Academy Pancho Vladigerov, under the honorary patronage of Micheline Abi Samra, ambassador of the Republic of Lebanon to Bulgaria. The evening began with opening remarks that welcomed the Lebanese ambassador and Arsen Sahoyan, the newly-appointed ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Bulgaria.

The musical cultures of three different peoples — Armenian, Lebanese and Bulgarian — were presented during the concert. On the program were numerous and varied works, headed by the world premiere of *Musica Meditativa*, performed by the Sofia Brass Quintet and AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra. This evocative work was written by Velislav Zaimov, chairman of the Bulgarian Composers Union, and received financial support from AGBU Sofia Board member Emil Mechikian.

The Sofia Brass Quintet comprises Ivan Minkov and Rumen Levordashki (trumpet), Alexander Borisov-Von Apen (zug trombone), Julian Boyadjiev (tuba) and Julia Spassova (horn). Also appearing on the program were special guest soloists from Lebanon, Fadi Rachid (guitar) and Shadi Esber (oud). In addition to works by traditional Lebanese music composers, the soloists performed pieces by Bulgarian composer Rossen Balkanski and Armenian composer Alexander Spendaryan.

At the end of the concert, Sonia Avakian-Bedrosian, chairwoman of AGBU Sofia, thanked Ambassador Abi Samra for her patronage and congratulated Ambassador Sahoyan on his new position. She also thanked the Cultural Department of the Sofia Municipality for their continuous support of the orchestra, and congratulated all the musicians and conductor Bedros Papazian on their high level of professionalism. Bedrosian expressed her gratitude and admiration for the two soloists of the evening, Rachid and Esber, and congratulated them on their contribution to the development of Armenian culture in Bulgaria.



Some of the guests at the March 13 AGBU Sofia Chamber Orchestra concert in Sofia, Bulgaria stand together. From left, former ambassador of Armenia to Bulgaria, Hasmig Dachtayan, current ambassador of Armenia to Bulgaria, Arsen Sahoyan, Ambassador of Lebanon to Bulgaria Micheline Abi Samra and chairwoman of AGBU Sofia, Sonia Avakian-Bedrosian

AMAA Celebrates 20th Anniversary Of Orphan, Child Care Program

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — The Beverly Hills Hotel was the beautiful setting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Orphan and Child Care luncheon and children's fashion show celebrating its 20th anniversary. A sold-out crowd of more than 500 guests and supporters of AMAA's Orphan and Child Care programs were welcomed by the luncheon chairs, Sandy Bedrosian and Maro Yacoubian, who welcomed the crowd. The co-chairs of this event worked for months to make every aspect of the luncheon enjoyable for all the guests.

Henry Segel, 13, grandson of Joyce Stein, advisor and national co-chair of the Orphan and Child Care Committee, gave a moving devotional about charity and asked the audience to



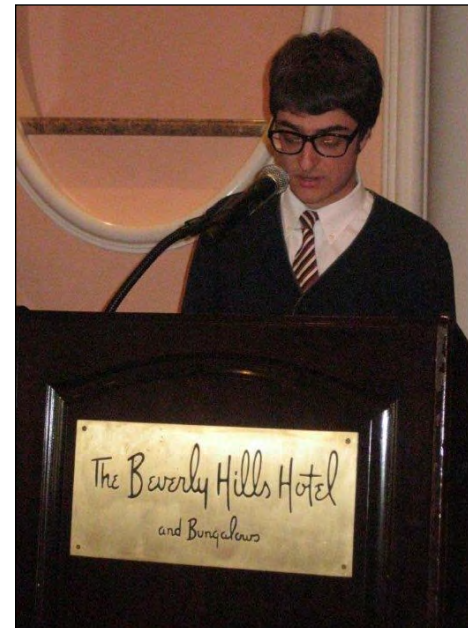
Nellie Soames and Henry Segel

"not turn a blind eye to the poor" and remind everyone that it is "our responsibility to fund and nurture those less fortunate" by being generous in caring for Armenia's needy children. Segel offered a prayer asking God to keep "us charitable, so that we may continue to put shoes on these children's feet, to put food on their plates and to give them beds to sleep in."

Stein's interview with Nellie Soames, 9, captured everyone's attention. She explained that she donated \$250 of her own money for the needy children in Armenia.

Levon Filian, the executive director of the AMAA, thanked everyone for attending and for their continued support of the AMAA programs and projects, specifically, the orphan and child care projects.

see AMAA, page 16



Nar Gulvartian



ARTS & LIVING

AMAA Celebrates 20th Anniversary of Orphan, Child Care Program

AMAA, from page 15

This year's record-breaking silent auction was especially spectacular – there were many items to bid on. Christina Jabarian, the silent auction chair, with the help of many committee members, especially Sandy Bedrosian,

her daughter, Sara Kalemkiarian who incorporated new technology and programs to efficiently close out the auction. Diane Cabraloff and her daughter, Anush, worked to help with the close out as well. The guests left the event with a bag full of



Members of the Child and Orphan Care Committee



Young models strut down the runway during the fashion show.

goodies, including products donated by Jessica Vartoughian of Jessica Nails, and raisins donated by LindaKay Abdulian. The gift bags with the AMAA logo were created and donated by Arsi Seraydarian.

helped procure items which made the auction a tremendous success. Each of the guests received a pearl cross donated by Christina and Harout Jabarian.

During lunch, Nar Gulvartian, son of Lucy Gulvartian, presented a moving video describing the poor and substandard conditions in which many of Armenia's children live. Maro Yacoubian and her son, Vahe Yacoubian, 12, encouraged everyone to sponsor a child.

After dessert, the children's fashion show was introduced by Marilyn Bezdikian and Ani Zakari, who coordinated this year's show. The show was sponsored and produced by Nordstrom Glendale. Sabrina Agbabian, the 14-year-old granddaughter of Elizabeth Agbabian, shared her memories of being an AMAA child/orphan care model since the age of 3. She said, "Every person in this room has made a difference, and with all of our generosity, love and kindness combined, we can have a large impact on many children in Armenia."

The finance and reservations chair, Sandra Kalemkiarian, who works tirelessly every year for the success of this event, was joined by

Svazlian's Book on Genocide to Be Released in Turkish

YEREVAN – On the threshold of April 24, Prof. Verjine Svazlian's *The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors*, will be released in Turkish, in addition to the Armenian and English editions already published.

The Turkish edition of the book will be printed by the Belge Publishing House, led by Turkish human rights activist Ragip Zarakolu.

Svazlian said that Zarakolu agreed to issue the book in his publishing house during his visit to Armenia in February.

Svazlian, has written down (also tape-recorded and video-recorded, word by word, fragment by fragment), studied and published, during a period of more than 50 years, the various relics of the oral tradition as well as the documentary testimonies and historical songs in Armenian and Turkish of the eyewitness survivors of the Armenian Genocide, who were deported from over 100 localities of Historic Armenia, Cilicia and Anatolia, and resettled in Armenia and in the diaspora.

Svazlian, an ethnographer and folklorist, was born in Alexandria, Egypt. Her father, writer Garnik Svazlian, himself was a survivor of the Armenian Genocide.

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

- APRIL 28 – May 1 – 109th Annual Diocesan Assembly** hosted by Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, Boston Park Plaza Hotel; log onto www.htaac.org/assembly for Assembly events, including those open to the community, and registration. For further info, contact Holy Trinity at (617) 354-0632 or office@htaac.org.
- MAY 1 – St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School Mother's Day Afternoon Tea and Fashion Show**, Sunday, 2 p.m., at Oakley Country Club, 410 Belmont St., Watertown. Donation, \$60. For tickets, contact Roupina (617) 543-9951 or Salpi (617) 750-2498.
- MAY 1 – Martyr's Day 96th anniversary observance**, sponsored by the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee of Merrimack Valley, 3 p.m. Wood Hill Middle School, 11 Cross St., Andover, featuring Yeraz Dance Ensemble of New York. Adult admission, \$10; students free. Refreshments to follow.
- MAY 7 – Spring Dance sponsored by the AWWA to benefit the Armenian Nursing Home**. Featuring the Jason Naroian ensemble at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown, from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Tickets are \$25. For tickets, call Melanie Khederian at (617) 694-1057 or e-mail mkhederian@gmail.com
- MAY 17 – 12th Annual St. James Armenian Church Golf Tournament**, Marlborough Country Club. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, ladies are invited. For details and reservations, call Ron Tashjian (508) 209-0118 or Dick Janjigian (781) 329-4398.
- MAY 21 – "Hiking in Armenia's Mountains, Valleys and Villages,"** an illustrated talk covering the Siunik area of Southern Armenia, given by Joe Dadgigian and Dik Dagavarian of Merrimack Valley, 6 p.m., ARS Community Center, 142 Liberty St., Lowell. Presented by the Lowell ARF Committee; dinner and program, \$20 adults, \$10 students.

NEW JERSEY

- MAY 21 – Tekeyan Cultural Association's Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group presents comedy master, Krikor Satamian**, from Los Angeles, in a one-man stand-up comedy show, at 8 p.m. at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Theologian, 353 E. Clinton Ave., Tenafly. Donation: \$65. For reservations and more info, call: Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850 or Noushig Atamian at (718) 344-5582.

NEW YORK

- MAY 1 – Armenian Genocide Commemoration at Times Square**. Be There. Turkey is Guilty of Genocide, Denying the undeniable is a Crime. Sunday, 2 p.m., 43rd and Broadway, New York City. Sponsored by Knights and Daughters of Vartan, Inc. Co-sponsored by AGBU, Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of America, ADL-Ramgavars, Armenian Council of



Krikor Satamian, pictured above, will flex his comedic muscles in a stand-up comedy show on Saturday, May 21, at 8 p.m., at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Theologian, 353 E. Clinton Ave., Tenafly, NJ, presented by the Tekeyan Cultural Association. For reservations and info, call Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850 or Noushig Atamian (718) 344-5582.

America with the participation of: Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Catholic Eparchy for US and Canada, AYF, Armenian Youth Organizations, Armenian University and College Clubs. For free bus transportation to and from Times Square, call Diocese (212) 686-0710; Prelacy (212) 689-7810; NJ, Sona (201) 746-0409, (551) 427-8763; Holy Martyrs, John (781) 631-2247; St. Sarkis, Ruben, (917) 992-8501; Vartanantz, Kostan, (201) 741-9789; Paramus, Andy, (201) 368-2791; Holy Cross NJ, Very Rev. Vazken Karayan (201) 865-2790; Queens Armenian Center, Raffi, (646) 288-6769 and Brooklyn, Tigran, (978) 945-9548 or visit www.knightsofvartan.org, click April 24, <http://april24nyc.com>, www.armenianradionj.com or www.theforgotten.org.



COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Tempers Rising in Diplomatic Exchanges

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Emulating President Richard Nixon's highly-successful ping pong diplomacy with China's president, Serge Sargisian tried to engage Turkey in a football diplomacy, which raised some hopes at home and heaped upon him a tremendous amount of kudos from the world diplomatic community. But that diplomacy hit a snag when Turkey dug its heels in refusing to approve the Protocols before the settlement of the Karabagh issue.

Although the Protocols did not call for any such preconditions, Turkey raised the ante by embarrassing the supporters of the Protocols and continuing to keep Armenia under blockade.

Turkish leaders would like to imply that the lifting of the blockade is a favor to Armenia, whereas the blockade is in violation of international law and is a roadblock for Turkey's path towards its aspirations to join the European Union.

Turkey is trying to wait out the complete depopulation of Armenia so as to see the latter disappear from the global map. Certainly leaders in Ankara are overjoyed to see droves of Armenian citizens abandoning their ancestral homeland, driven out by economic necessity. And the blockade is one of the contributing factors to that economic hardship.

After stalling the approval of the Protocols, Turkey was under diplomatic pressure as the ball was in its court. To move that ball somewhere else, Turkish diplomacy has resorted to the principle of "the best defense is an offense" and has unleashed a diplomatic campaign against Armenia. One such attack took place on April 13, when both Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu used the opportunity afforded to them at the European Council's spring session in Strasbourg. Erdogan has tried to kill more than one bird from the Strasbourg forum, by insulting a French parliamentarian who had questioned him about religious freedom in Turkey. Such a macho attack was mostly for domestic consumption, in view of the parliamentary elections in Turkey on June 12. Erdogan has learned by experience that standing up to the Europeans earns him high marks among the Turkish electorate.

The other target was Armenia, whose leadership had blamed Turkey for the failure in the passing of the Protocols.

"When it comes to opening borders with Armenia, we have our own criteria. We cannot allow Armenia to trample on the rights of our Azerbaijani brothers. In order for the doors to be opened, problems have to be solved. That is why the Protocols were signed in the first place. We are not scared of anyone. If Armenia can overcome its fear from the diaspora, then problems can be solved."

The statement above raised some pointed questions, first suggesting that pre-conditions for signing the Protocols were back on the table. Initially, both countries had agreed to negotiate without pre-conditions. And Turkey should be the last nation talking about "occupied territories," while keeping 38 percent of Cypriot territory under occupation, as stated in the rebuttal by Eduard Shahnazarov, the press secretary of the ruling Republican Party in Armenia, who also indicated that Turkey has committed genocide and occupies Western Armenian territory.

Prime Minister Erdogan has resorted to his old arsenal of using the canard of 70,000 illegal Armenians working in Turkey. That weapon was also used, before him, by the former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller. However, the 70,000 figure is grossly exaggerated, as knowledgeable sources put that figure at 10,000 maximum.

Erdogan's other target is to drive a wedge between Armenia and the diaspora, blaming the latter for its supposed intransigence in the issue of the Genocide.

After raising the issue of illegal Armenian workers in Turkey, Mr.

Erdogan has magnanimously added that "we could expel them from our country, but we don't do it, because hardships at home have forced them to leave their country."

But the response was not delayed, as Republican Party deputy Karen Avakian has asked, "how many million illegal Turks roam in Europe?" "And besides," he added, "the Armenian immigrants are not in a foreign country, they are on their ancestral lands."

Foreign Minister Davutoglu, in support of his prime minister, has attacked Shahnazarov, pontificating in a condescending statement that he should study international law before accusing Turkey of genocide and aggression in Cyprus.

But most revealing in these exchanges of barbs is not in their diplomatic content nor their political effect, but a scandal, which is full of potential dangers, as Turkey becomes a major player in the world diplomatic arena.

During the Strasbourg session, the Turkish president of the European Council, Mevlut Cavusoglu, has blocked the Armenian representatives from speaking in the session, to create an unobstructed forum for Mr. Erdogan. This makes international diplomacy a mockery as the council's president confused the European Parliament with a Turkish bazaar. But we cannot blame him for holding that position, as European representatives are to blame for electing a conniving Turk to that position.

Indeed, the Prosperous Armenia party representative, Nayira Zohrabian, was supposed to be the third speaker and Zaruhi Postanjian the fourth, but after allowing a free hand to Mr. Erdogan for his diatribes, they discovered that Cavusoglu had moved them to the numbers of 21 and 27, respectively.

This Turkish intrigue opens up a can of worms; wherever Turkey occupies an influential position in any international forum, that position will be used against Armenia, as was proven recently time and again.

When Turkey became the rotating president of the United Nations Security Council, it helped Azerbaijan to win a favorable vote at the UN General Assembly on the issue of Karabagh. Similarly, when Turkey assumed the presidency of the Islamic Council, again that council passed resolutions against Armenia on the Karabagh issue.

The moral of the story is that those who believe that Turkey will be under closer scrutiny and thus better behaved by joining the European Union, and that we will enjoy a next-door civilized neighbor are in the wrong. Once they are members of that body, the representatives of Turkey will use their voting power against Armenia every step along the way.

Besides the Armenian parliamentarians, President Serge Sargisian has seized the opportunity on April 13, during his visit to Slovenia and made the following statement: "Slovenia has resolved its problems with its neighbors peacefully, whereas our neighbor Turkey, which aspires to join the European Union, refuses to open the borders, contrary to its international obligations."

Referring to the Protocols, Mr. Sargisian added: "Yerevan will not take any steps towards approving the Protocols, as long as Turkey has not approved them. Turkey is proposing pre-conditions before approving the Protocols, namely the settlement of the Karabagh issue. Armenia has not accepted those pre-conditions and never will."

One may wonder where do Erdogan and his government get the encouragement to bully Armenia. Despite Erdogan's row with Israel, and despite his dissension with the NATO Alliance on the conflict in Libya, the US is still continuing to cajole Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Indeed after reading the US State Department's annual report this year portraying Karabagh and Armenia as aggressors and occupiers of Azeri territory, Erdogan will never think of taming his arrogance versus Armenia.

LETTERS

Take a Bow, Aram Arkun

To the Editor:

I just want to congratulate Mr. Aram Arkun on the excellent story he did on my life and career in journalism, specifically at the *New York Daily News* [January 29 edition]. How he managed to get all that information out of me was amazing. I'm more used to asking questions rather than answering them. Bravo, Aram.

I got and still am receiving comments about the article from both within and outside of the Armenian community. One I liked came from Mr. Robert (Bob) Keane, a former top editor at the *Daily News* and later chief of staff — second in command — at the *Long*

Island New York Newsday. He said, in part, "Thanks for sharing the profile from the *Mirror-Spectator* — I read every word. It's good to see you're loved and appreciated by the Armenian community. The rest of us love and appreciate you, as well."

"You had a terrific career, George. We were lucky to have been part of The News, and part of the newspaper business, while it was still king."

Another letter that warmed my heart came from Hilary Holowink, of Milford, Conn. She wrote in part, "What a lovely article about a wonderful man. Thank you so much for sending it. I spent time with my parents (Dr. Armen and Joanna Haig) this past weekend. I'm sure that you already know this, but since it was our topic of discussion, it bears repeating — you makes us all proud to be Armenian...I am forwarding the article to [my daughter] Victoria, who is at Princeton

Seminary. I hope it will serve as an impetus to her to pursue a career in communications in the future."

On another note, I would like to make a correction in the article (all my fault). I got some numbers mixed up. About the Armenian Martyrs' Day Pilgrimage to the Statue of Liberty to say "Thank you, America" for opening its doors to us, that took place in 1975, marking the 60th anniversary of the Genocide, and it was attended by 60 survivors at the event, not 75. The pilgrimage was arranged by the Prelacy of the Armenian Church. The chairman of the Sponsoring Committee was Mr. Armen Boyajian.

Thank you, Aram Arkun. If I didn't have my 15 minutes of fame before, I sure got it now.

— George Maksian
Englewood Cliffs, NJ

THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Established 1932

An ADL Publication

EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR

Marc Mgrditchian

PRODUCTION

Dilani Yogaratnam

CONTRIBUTORS:

Elizabeth Aprahamian, Daphne Abeel, Dr. Haroutiune Arzoumanian, Edmond Azadian, Prof. Vahakn N. Dadrian, Diana Der Hovanessian, Philip Ketchian, Kevork Keushkerian, Sonia Kailian-Placido, Harut Sassounian, Mary Terzian, Hagop Vartivarian, Naomi Zeytoonian, Taleen Babayan

CORRESPONDENTS:

Armenia - Hagop Avedikian
Boston - Nancy Kalajian
Philadelphia - Lisa Manookian

Contributing Photographers:

Jacob Demirdjian, Harry Koundakjian, Jirair Hovsepian

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July, by:

Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509
Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: **editor@mirrorspectator.com**

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

New York/New Jersey Office

560 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632
(201) 800-1164

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

U.S.A.	2nd Class	\$75 a year
	1st Class	\$120 a year
Canada	Air Mail	\$125 a year
All Other Countries	Air Mail	\$190 a year
	Display advertising rate: \$7 per column inch	

© 2010 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, P.O. Box 302, Watertown, MA 02471-0302

Copying for other than personal use or internal reference is prohibited without express permission of the copyright owner. Address requests for reprints or back issues to:

Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509

Check us out at
mirrorspectator.com



COMMENTARY

Wrong Path in Armenia

By Nubar Dorian

All Armenians in the diaspora are quite familiar with the sadness, grief, suffering, exile and relocation of those who escaped the Genocide. Here in the US, drawing from lessons and experiences from our past, we developed a value system, making us obedient to law and order, love of education, rewards of hard work and blessings of freedom. As a consequence, we have been extremely proud citizens of America. Next to the Holy Bible, the greatest treasure we possess is the document that proclaims us American citizens.

We also forgot our homeland of Armenia and by all accounts and means, have always helped her. Long before Turkish occupation and the Genocide, the Soviet regime and the great earthquake of 1988, every Diasporan Armenian gave support, love, talent, time and treasure to the precious homeland. When Armenia declared independence some 20 years ago, it was a most thankful moment of prayer, pride and joy for us all. With foremost and firmest promise, we determined to help the homeland in every way possible to ensure her security, health and progress.

The people of Armenia, in turn, were deeply appreciative of our help. They demonstrated honest appreciation, deep love and heartfelt admiration for all that we did and still do, to improve their lot. Diasporan Armenians who visited the homeland experienced greatest warmth, deep love and fellowship and never forgot this most unique experience.

Since the election of Serge Sargisian as president of Armenia, unprecedented and somewhat questionable practices were sought by him and his cabinet to further solidify relations with Diasporan Armenians. The government started to shower some leaders, philanthropists and wealthy Armenians in the diaspora with royal banquets, citations, honors and medals. His government even created a new position of Commissioner For Armenia-Diaspora Relations, who traveled across the Armenian world, extolling us to love Armenia more, give more, care more and promise never to forget the homeland. Not satisfied with all these and to further offer gloss and flattery to diaspora, the president of Armenia is offering dual citizenship to certain Diasporan Armenians of his choosing. The who and why is still obscure and highly questionable. The very idea of dual citizenship is divisive, misguided and totally absurd. This idea, or practice, should be buried in the deepest pit in Armenian soil and never see daylight again.

Unfortunately, this is not all. Lo and behold, the president of Armenia is considering restructuring the constitution of Armenia to include a number of Diasporan Armenians as members of parliament. This misbegotten and misguided concept seems not only unprecedented, but ridiculous. Is it to satisfy the ego of some Diasporan Armenians, who receive this honor? There must be a thousand-and-one questions regarding this scheme and before any more time is spent on it, it should join the same pit and never see sunrise or sunset again. President Serge Sargisian and his governing body are rushing from the ridiculous to the sublime and spending precious time to seduce Diasporan Armenians.

It is tragic, disturbing and sad to read or hear of demonstrations, protests, hunger strikes, discord and chaos in Armenia. Are we to assume that our beloved homeland is becoming like a kite whose line has been cut off? Truth, stark naked truth, demands that good government work for the governed and abandon all schemes, pretense and misrule.

As sure as I am that God's sun breaks into a hundred million sapphires over Armenian Lakes, and that any Diasporan Armenian visiting Armenia feels he or she has stepped on the earth of God's Eden of Genesis, that sure I am that all Diasporan Armenians — some eight million of us — will love more, do more, sacrifice more for homeland Armenia, if the president of Armenia and his governing body make more effort, put more passion, zeal and dedication and eliminate disunity, discord and especially, all dramatics.

(Nubar Dorian is former co-chair of the Armenian Assembly in Washington DC.)

For The Sake of Clarification

By Hagop Vartivarian

For a while now, certain members of the mass media, both in Armenia and the diaspora, have publicized certain communiqués connected to the Armenian Church of Switzerland, by means of which they wish to disorient the public opinion.

The issue pertains to the decision reached during the last meeting of the Supreme Council of the Mother See, which was convened March 17-19. Alongside various internal ecclesiastical issues, the problems existing within the Armenian Diocese of Switzerland were taken under consideration. Archbishop Norvan Zakarian, Pontifical Legate to Western Europe, and Archbishop Yeznik Petrossian reported on them.

The Parish Council of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Switzerland, chaired by Eugene Papazian, had decided to declare Switzerland a separate diocese and had prepared a draft of the diocesan by-laws and submitted it to His Holiness Vazken I, then Catholicos of All Armenians. Acceding to the request presented to him, His Holiness issued an encyclical in 1993, which proclaimed Switzerland to be a separate diocese and approved the draft of the by-laws submitted. In the very same year, Very Rev. Vicken Aykazian, pastor of the Geneva parish, was appointed diocesan primate. As of September 1992, he had already been ordained a bishop. The various parishes functioning in Switzerland — Geneva, Thessen, Neuchâtel, Zurich, Baden and Kreuzlingen, as well as the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical organizations operating in Switzerland, had served as the basis for this patriarchal decision, anticipating the necessity of elevating the representation of the Armenian Church to a high level.

In light of the discussions at the Supreme Council's meeting this March, His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, appointed Rev. Mesrop Barsamian, vice chancellor of the Mother See, as diocesan vicar, in order to undertake the reorganization of the diocesan life in Switzerland and, at the same time, to serve as pastor of the Armenian community in Geneva. It was also decided at this meeting to invite the current pastor in Geneva, Fr. Abel

Manukian, to the Mother See for him to serve in another capacity.

The newly-appointed diocesan vicar, accompanied by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, arrived in Geneva on April 9. Then, on April 10, Archbishop Hovnan accompanied Father Mesrop to officially present him in the Saint Hagop Church of Geneva.

In response to this decision made by His Holiness Catholicos Karekin, on March 25, the parish council of Geneva sent an open letter to Catholicos Karekin II, stating its opposition to the decision made and stressing that the decision to make Switzerland a diocese was unacceptable and illegal, with the argument that only the general assembly of delegates of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Switzerland could make that decision by democratic choice.

I gained an understanding of all the details of this matter by contacting certain members of the Supreme Council and Armenians living in Switzerland. I should also say that, according to the information I've received, all the other church parish councils functioning in Switzerland, outside of Geneva, are in agreement with the arrangement made by His Holiness.

According to the very by-laws of the Armenian Church, as is the case with all churches — Catholic, Orthodox, etc. — a parish must be subject to a diocese with a primate. In the case of Switzerland, this matter was resolved back in 1992 during the reign of Vazken I of blessed memory. In becoming a separate diocesan structure, Switzerland would remain under the jurisdiction of the Mother See.

Surely, the Armenians in Switzerland, whom we consider very respectable in other regards, will regain their sober-mindedness, and law and order will soon be reestablished within that community.

In these days especially, we must be glad that Catholicos Karekin II wishes to reestablish law and order within all the diocesan structures of the Armenian Apostolic Church, despite his busy schedule. In the final analysis, this work too remains within the realm of his obligations, as Catholicos of All Armenians. And we must be glad for this.

(Hagop Vartivarian is chairman of the New York chapter of Tekeyan Cultural Association and is chair of the ADL Press Committee.)

Setting the Record Straight Regarding Swiss-Armenian Diocese Appointment

In response to the article "Swiss-Armenian Community Reacts to Echmiadzin Mandate" that appeared in the Saturday, April 9 edition, and to numerous articles written by members of the association that falsely claims to represent the entire Armenian community of Switzerland, I feel a duty and an obligation to set the record straight, and to denounce the half-truths that have been circulated in various medias, including the press and the Internet.

On the April 9, the newly-nominated Locum Tenens (interim primate) of the Armenian Diocese of Switzerland, arrived in Geneva, accompanied by His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America. The Supreme Spiritual Council during its regular meeting, held on March 17 to 19, in the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin under the presidency of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, had decided to appoint Rev. Mesrop Parsamian, to serve as a Locum Tenens of the Armenian Diocese of Switzerland. Fr. Mesrop Parsamian has been nominated to this post to contribute to the reorganization of the Diocesan life and to prepare the election of the future Primate of the Diocese. The nomination of Parsamian is the result of many years of requests by the parishes that are not recognized by Geneva, nor by the various Armenian organizations under the influence of the Geneva church and its Council. For 18 long years these parishes have been asking for unified organization of Armenian parishes, which in Christianity is called a diocese.

One must ask oneself what is to be gained by not recognizing the other parishes? Is the fact of not recognizing the other parishes a means of channeling funds from various Swiss Armenian foundations to serve a hidden agenda? The responses to these questions will soon be made clear.

The following is a brief review of the situation in Switzerland for the past 18 years.

The Articles of Association of the "Armenian Apostolic Church of Switzerland," with headquarters in Geneva, came into existence in 1985. At that time our church in Switzerland was very young, with a priest as our spiritual guide. Article 1 accurately describes the situation of that time, declaring that we were under the authority of the Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians, and were administratively attached to the Diocese of Western Europe, in Paris. These Articles of Association were approved at that time by the Supreme Patriarch himself, and not by any bishop.

In September of 1992, the Supreme Patriarch decided to separate our church from the Diocese of Paris and to transform it into the Diocese of Switzerland. It was also at this time that our acting

priest, Father Viken Aykasian, was ordained as Bishop and Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Switzerland by the same Supreme Patriarch. Since 1992, each successive Supreme Patriarch has confirmed these decisions.

It was after these events that in 1992 the Council, with the assistance of our new Bishop, undertook by tremendous effort to organize parishes in regions where there was a "large" Armenian population. During the whole of 1993 we witnessed the creation of several parishes throughout Switzerland. Certain of these parishes succeeded in procuring a church, so that Armenian national and religious traditions could live on. Our parish in Neuchâtel is one of the fruits of these efforts.

From the time of its inception, the duty of the Council of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Switzerland was to act in accordance with the Articles of Association and with all of the proclamations from the World Organization of the Armenian Apostolic Church, whose authority is located in Echmiadzin, to engage in a process of transformation of the Association in the spirit of Article 1, and of the decisions made by the Supreme Patriarch.

What we still observe today is that each successive new Council, elected by merely 100 or so participants, has never worked in the direction specified in the Articles, and this has been going on for over 18 years! We have, therefore, ceased to be surprised at the confusion that currently prevails in our entire community in Switzerland. We hold accountable the presidents and the members of the Council of the Association of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Switzerland. It is disingenuous on the part of such a small group in one corner of Switzerland to claim to represent all of the Armenians in all the geographic areas of Switzerland.

We find this attitude both scandalous and unworthy of the leaders of a religious association. In addition to this, we declare that this behavior is incompatible with Article 2 of the above-mentioned Articles of this same Association. This article talks about developing, organizing and even financing the church activities in other Armenian populated regions of Switzerland.

In conclusion, we find that successive Councils have never abided by, and continue to not abide by, either the Articles of their Association, or the World Organization of the Armenian Apostolic Church and, above all, they are working against the interest of the Armenians living in other geographical areas of Switzerland.

— Alen Ugnat

President,

Parish of Neuchatel-Jura

Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Switzerland

OPINION



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Serj Tankian to Join LA Armenians To Protest against Obama on April 21

Armenian-Americans are offended that President Barack Obama is going to launch his reelection campaign in Los Angeles this week, on the eve of April 24, having failed to honor his solemn promise to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide.

A special Task Force has been set up to organize a communitywide protest to remind the president of his many unkept promises. All major Armenian-American organizations have been activated. Press releases have been written, the airwaves flooded with interviews and ads regarding the demonstration, thousands of flyers printed and distributed, protest signs and banners prepared and buses chartered to transport the public to the site of the president's fundraiser on April 21.

The news of the planned Armenian protest must not have been well received by the White House. Neither the president nor his staff would want to come to a major city to launch his reelection campaign, in the face of disenchanted voters who question his credibility in front of

TV cameras.

Until this week, White House officials had paid little attention to a March 28 letter from Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) Chairman Ken Hachikian, inviting the president or a cabinet member to participate in the annual commemoration by laying a wreath at the Armenian Genocide Monument in Montebello, Calif., on April 24. Given the prospect of a major protest rally on the occasion of the president's visit on April 21, Democratic officials asked ANCA Western Region to send a follow-up letter, inviting the president to stop by the Genocide Monument in Montebello, situated minutes away from his appearance in Culver City.

It is highly unlikely that the president would make such a gesture to respect the memory of Genocide victims on April 21, particularly since three days later he will be issuing a statement on the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, in which once again he will shy away from using the word genocide.

The dangled carrot of a presidential visit to Montebello should not deter the Armenian community's resolve from showing up in large numbers outside the president's fundraiser in Culver City. In fact, whatever interest the White House may be showing regarding the Armenian community at this time might well be due to the planned protest.

It is not realistic to expect that the president will acknowledge the Armenian Genocide in the next two years, nor do so if reelected for a second term. Under these circumstances, rather than begging him to use those two "forbidden" words, at every campaign stop Armenian-Americans should raise serious questions about President Obama's credibility and suitability to lead the nation for another four years. Should Armenian-Americans continue

to remain silent, they would be encouraging all other elected officials to deceive the community with empty promises.

The Armenian Genocide Community Task Force, the organizing body of the April 21 rally, has issued an urgent call to action, asking Los Angeles Armenians to participate in large numbers in order to let President Obama hear the community's "profound disappointment at his failure to honor his campaign promise" and "deliver justice to the Armenian people." In its announcement, the Task Force pointed out that a large turnout would not only send a loud and clear message to the White House, but also publicize Armenian political demands among millions of people around the world who would be watching the presidential visit on national and international television.

It is salutary that prominent Armenian-American musician Serj Tankian will be participating in the April 21 protest. Moreover, Tankian posted a message to his 570,000 Facebook fans, urging them to support the protest: "On Thursday, April 21 at 3 p.m., everyone in Southern California is urged to join in a public protest urging President Obama to uphold his promise and recognize the Armenian Genocide. This issue has always been of extreme importance to Serj and his family."

Special arrangements have been made to provide transportation to the public by buses starting at 1:30 p.m. from St. Mary's Church in Glendale, Rose & Alex Pilibos School in Hollywood, and Ferrahian High School in Encino. Those planning to drive to the rally should arrive around 3 p.m., at Sony Studios, 10202 W. Washington Blvd. in Culver City, Calif.

The larger the number of participants, the more visible their presence and the more audible their voices will be at the rally.

Anti-Defamation League the Big Bully on the Block

by David Boyajian

Like a recurring nightmare, the Anti-Defamation League is back, this time with over 100 billboards in Greater Boston promoting the group's "anti-bullying" program. As we'll see, the real bully is the national ADL. It has long conspired with Turkey – which bullies its ethnic and religious minorities, journalists, and dissidents – to deny the Armenian genocide of 1915-23 committed by Turkey, and to bully Congress into not bringing an Armenian genocide resolution to a fair vote.

Recall that a few years ago the ADL's alleged anti-bias program, "No Place for Hate," was tossed out (NoPlaceforDenial.com) by Watertown, Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Easton, Lexington, Medford, Needham, Newburyport, Newton, Northampton, Peabody, Somerville, Westwood and the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

They said that due to its stance against Armenians the national ADL lacked the necessary credibility on human rights to sponsor an anti-bias program. The ADL's anti-bullying curriculum suffers from a similar problem: A bully cannot credibly tell young people not to bully.

The national ADL still refuses to unequivocally recognize the Armenian genocide. While ADL director Abraham Foxman's statement of August 21, 2007 used the word "genocide," it also implied that the murder of 1.5 million Armenians was not intentional. For mass homicide to be genocide, however, the UN Genocide Treaty requires intent by the perpetrator. Fortunately, the Mass. Municipal Assoc. and several cities threw out "No Place for Hate" even after Foxman's statement because they saw through his hocus-pocus.

Why had the ADL jumped into bed with Turkey? Jewish political commentators admit that in the 1990s Israel and Turkey, which then had excellent relations, made a deal: A few leading Jewish American organizations, including the ADL, would act, in effect, as Turkey's lobby.

The ADL hasn't denied its efforts against Armenians. Indeed, several years ago the US Holocaust Museum's chief of staff, William Parsons, told me that the ADL had been working against recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

There's also a troubling link between the ADL and the controversial American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). The Jewish

Daily Forward [September 2, 2006] reported that AIPAC "quite actively supported Turkey ... to prevent the so-called Armenian Genocide resolution from passing." And last year former AIPAC official Keith Weissman admitted to the *Washington Times* [June 8] that it had "lit up the phones" to defeat the Armenian resolution.

Incredibly, Derrek Shulman, the New England ADL's new head, is a former "political director" of AIPAC. It's another disturbing sign that the ADL's anti-Armenian policies remain essentially unchanged.

Many principled Jewish-Americans have, however, asked the ADL to undo the damage it has done and support the Genocide resolution. And several Jewish organizations such as the Jewish American World Service have supported the Armenian resolution. Jewish and non-Jewish genocide historians overwhelmingly recognize the Armenian Genocide, as do the International Association of Genocide Scholars, 40 US states (including Massachusetts), the European Union Parliament, more than 20 countries (including Canada, France, Sweden and Argentina), the Vatican, and World Council of Churches. Yet the national ADL persists in its contrarian stance.

The ADL, of course, promotes Holocaust recognition and reacts vociferously against perceived acts of anti-Semitism. Yet it displays gross insensitivity by collaborating with a major human rights violator, Turkey, to block recognition of another ethnic group's genocide. Can such an organization be trusted to design humane, fact-based programs, whether about anti-bullying or called "No Place for Hate"? The answer is obvious.

And suppose a school system adopts the ADL's alleged anti-bullying curriculum. Sooner or later, students and parents will discover that it was created by a group that doesn't practice what it preaches. Duplicity is not a value that schools should be teaching.

Moreover, ADL school programs are frequently taught by visiting ADL employees. They all know that the bullying Abraham Foxman fired Derrek Shulman's predecessor, Andrew Tarsy, for finally deciding to say that the Armenian genocide is a fact. "If we stray from Foxman's political line or tell the truth about the Armenian genocide," ADL instructors must be asking themselves, "will we be fired like Tarsy was?"

Let's be frank: The ADL has a political agenda. Fortunately, since every Massachusetts school district was required to adopt an anti-bullying curriculum by January 1, the state has

many fine such programs that, unlike the ADL's, aren't politically motivated.

The anti-bullying billboards that Stephen Ross, president of Clear Channel Outdoor Boston Division, provides free of charge to the ADL should display the names of those other programs. Clear Channel should remove the ADL name and logo.

And is it fair that the PeaceofArt.org human

rights group must pay for its two Clear Channel billboards about the Armenian genocide, while the hypocritical ADL gets 100 billboards for free?

Finally, if the anti-bullying movement is to be credible to parents and young people, it must disassociate itself from the ADL. If not, the movement will be seen to be as insincere and hypocritical as the ADL.

Beyond Preservation: Element Band Creates Bridge to Our Past, Bridge to the Future, Bridge to the World

I spent a recent afternoon at the Armenian Home in Flushing, NY, interviewing three Armenian Genocide survivors. In the four years that I have been doing these yearly interviews, the number of survivors in the home has dropped from nine to three.

Obviously, this trend is inevitable, but as I saw one less face each year, the same questions continued to trouble me. Will our quest for acknowledgement and justice be as effective when there are no survivors left? Did these survivors teach their children about their Armenian identity and culture? Will future generations be able to carry on with the struggles of maintaining our heritage?

With each passing year and the loss of another Genocide survivor, we drift further away from Anatolia, and further away from our culture, our history and our roots. As a Diasporan Armenian, one of my biggest fears for the future of our community here in the United States and abroad is the loss of our Armenian sense of self. I worry that our 3,000-year-old history will not be carried forward to future generations and our remarkable songs, language and cultural traditions will slowly dissipate and eventually become untraceable. But from time to time my concerns are assuaged, and after attending a recent performance of the Los Angeles-based world music group Element Band, I realized that if anything, our music would certainly survive in years to come.

Having listened to Element Band's music – best described as a fusion of Armenian folk, Mediterranean and Latin music, with a hint of Flamenco, Tango and Rembetika sounds – over the past couple of years, I finally had the opportunity to see them perform live last month in Englewood, NJ. This performance marked their first East Coast tour, which included stops in Boston and Washington DC, in a cultural event organized by Hamazkayin Eastern USA, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Armenia.

Founded in 2005 by musical director and composer Ara Dabandjian, the group has made waves in the world music scene during its brief history. The versatile musicians – each talented in his own right – include Ara Dabandjian (accordion, guitar, oud); Shant Mahserejian (violin, mandolin); Soseh Keshishyan (vocals, guitar); Heibert Sarian (vocals, piano); Karni Hadidian (vocals, piano); Krikor Sarafian (guitar); Roman Samokish (bass) and Armen Meshefejian (drums/percussion). The band has certainly made a name for themselves, having performed in such high-profile venues as Los Angeles's Ford Amphitheatre and the Skirball Cultural Center, as part of their acclaimed Sunset Concerts series. Their multilingual repertoire ranges from Spanish and French to Arabic, Persian, Portuguese, English and Armenian.

Element Band's masterful navigation between cultures and musical styles has made it possible for them to bring Armenian music to a global audience, and to inspire young

see FUTURE, page 20



Dr. Antranig Chalabian, Author of Historical Volumes, Dies

CHALABIAN, from page 1

he taught English and arithmetic to the middle school classes from 1944 to 1949.

In the summer of 1949, Chalabian moved to Beirut, where his family had settled in 1945. He taught English for one year at the AGBU Hovagimian-Manoogian High School. Then he took a position in the physiology department of the American University of Beirut, where he remained for 27 years. During his last 14 years there, he worked as a free-lance medical illustrator, illustrating almost entirely three medical books and thousands of research papers. Meanwhile he contributed articles to the city's *Djanasser*, *Spiurk* and *Nayiri* papers.

In 1977, Chalabian and his family immigrated to the United States and settled in Detroit. At that time he became public relations director at the AGBU Alex Manoogian School.

In 1984 he published his first bi-lingual book *General Antranik and the Armenian Revolutionary Movement*. The book became an instant best seller and was printed in more than 75,000 copies in Armenia. He donated the proceeds from that print to the Karabagh freedom fighters. In 1989 the History Department of the University of Armenia invited him to defend his exhaustive historical study. Upon a successful defense he was awarded a doctorate in history. The book was later translated into Turkish and Spanish.

In 1991 he published his second book in Armenian titled, *Revolutionary Figures*. Dr. Arra Avakian translated the book in English. In 1999 he published his third book, *Armenia After the Coming of Islam* in English. The book became very popular and had two printings. In 2003, he published his fourth book in Armenian titled *Dro*. His son translated the book into English. In 2009 Indo-European Publishers printed the book.

Chalabian was also an invited contributor to *Military History* magazine, where he published articles dealing with Armenian history.

Chalabian collaborated with Dr. Stanley Kerr after discovering the latter's personal notes in the

attic of the Physiology Department. Kerr had moved to New Jersey after retiring in 1965 from his career as the chairman of the Biochemistry Department of the American University of Beirut. However, he had left his notes behind assuming that the notes were long lost through the years. Kerr had kept his notes and taken hitherto unpublished pictures while serving in Near East Relief. In 1919, he was transferred to Marash, where he headed the American relief operations. The outcome of their collaborative work was the publica-

tion of Kerr's *The Lions of Marash* in 1973.

While collaborating with Kerr, Henry Wilfrid Glockler, a one-time controller at AUB and a neighbor of the Kerrs in Princeton, entrusted Antranig Chalabian his personal memoirs. Chalabian edited the memoirs and had it published in Beirut in 1969 by Sevan Press. The book is titled *Interned in Ourfa*.

Chalabian received numerous accolades and recognition. Armenian organizations in various states invited him to lecture. The mayor of

Southfield designated in 2005 a day as Dr. Antranig Chelebian Day in recognition of his goodwill ambassadorship of the city through his readers worldwide.

A memorial visitation will be held on Saturday, April 30, 5 to 6 p.m., at the Armenian Congregational Church, Southfield.

Memorial donations in his memory may be made to the AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School or Armenian Congregational Church or Tekeyan Cultural Association.

Element Band Creates Bridge to Our Past, Bridge to the Future, Bridge to the World

FUTURE, from page 19

Armenians to explore their musical heritage. In just a few short years, Element Band has resurrected and modernized traditional Armenian songs for the next generation of Armenians.

"The idea was to take all Armenian songs and make it palatable to non-Armenians and the young generation of Armenians," Ara Dabandjian told me in an interview after the band's performance in Englewood. "And I'm happy to say it's worked so far."

When I first heard the group's inaugural album, "Yev O Phe," released in 2006, feelings of nostalgia washed over me. Many of the songs, including *Anush Hayreniq* and *Sareri Hovin Mernem*, were ones I would sing as a child in Armenian School on Saturday afternoons. Another one that held meaning to me personally was *Nubar, Nubar*, a song I had not heard for over 20 years, and one that my grandmother, a Genocide survivor, would sing to me as a little girl. It is safe to say that had Element Band not recorded these songs, I very well may have never have heard them again. Living in a country that prides itself on assimilation, the Armenian identity is just as – if not more – vulnerable to succumbing to a mass culture, and Element Band has indeed ensured the survival of Armenian music in the diaspora.

"We did not want to take the Armenian soul out [of the songs], but to add a twist that makes

it more modernized," said Dabandjian.

The band also provides young people with a sense of cultural responsibility. The fact that the members of Element Band, motivated solely by their connection and dedication to their Armenian roots, took the time to learn these Armenian folk songs and put their own unique stamp on it, awakens us to do our own part in preserving our rich heritage.

But to say that Element Band has succeeded only in preserving traditional Armenian music would be selling them short and missing the point of the broader context of the group's existence. While their first album featured only traditional Armenian music, their second, "Oo" (2009), incorporated international hits as well, including the famous Persian love song *Soltane Ghalba*, (King of Hearts), the traditional Spanish Christmas carol *Los Peces* (The Fish in the River) and the Greek folk song *Oso Varoon* (As the Iron Bars Clash). Opening themselves up to the rest of the world helped expose Armenian culture to a wider audience.

"My goal has always been to serve Armenian music to non-Armenians," said Dabandjian. He added that the group didn't start with world music but felt that "with our second album, it was time for me to introduce non-Armenian songs we always wanted to do." In fact, Dabandjian plans to go even "more world" with his band, fulfilling his vision. "I think the world

needs to hear our music."


World music stations in Los Angeles already play Element Band's tracks on the air and the group has acquired a significant non-Armenian following, some of whom were in the audience during their East Coast concerts. "We have to open our eyes and minds and to look toward the future and be proud that non-Armenians appreciate Armenian culture and our music," said Dabandjian.

On an unlikely warm evening in March, I sat alongside a sold-out audience and listened intently to Element Band's energetic, raw and emotional performance of 20 back-to-back songs. From *Noune* to *Guantanamo* to *Bingol* I watched the performers, in awe of their musical talents and proud that these musicians on stage were like me, Diasporan Armenians. Most importantly, they weren't only Armenian by name. They emanated their Armenian-ness with an energy as contagious as the beat in *Sari Siroun Yar*.

And while I sat in the living room of the Armenian Home recently, worried about what would happen when we lost our Genocide survivors, I thought back to Element Band's performance and my subsequent conversation with Ara, and realized that, there is hope after all.

(Taleen Babayan works at the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America and is a former reporter for the *Mirror-Spectator*.)

FRIENDS OF ARMENIAN CULTURE SOCIETY
SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2011 AT 8:00PM
SYMPHONY HALL, BOSTON



BOSTON POPS

Featuring
WORLD-RENOWNED SOPRANO
HASMIK PAPIIAN
and
BOSTON POPS ORCHESTRA
KEITH LOCKHART,
CONDUCTOR


60TH ANNUAL ARMENIAN NIGHT AT THE POPS

For more information,
Please visit www.FACSBoston.org or write to info@FACSBoston.org

ԹՄՄ ՄՀԵՐ ՄԿՐՏՉԵԱՆ ԹԱՏԵՐԱԽՈՒՄԻ
ԽՆԴՈՒՔԻ ԵՐԵՎՈՅ

ՄԵՆՔ ԱՍԱՆԿ ԵՆՔ ...
Կատարողությամբ՝

ԳՐԻԳՈՐ ՍԱԹԱՄԵԱՆԻ



Շաբաթ, Մայիս 21, 2011
Երեկոցեան ժամը 8ին

Greek Orthodox Cathedral, St. John The Theologian
353 East Clinton Avenue, Tenafly, NJ 07670

Տոմսեր ապահովել
Մարի Զօքեան 201 745-8850
Նուշիկ Արամեան 718 344-5582

Մուտքի Գուլեր 65 տոլար (Գերադեալ ճաշ եւ գինի)

Advertise in the Mirror-Spectator