

## Karabagh Celebrates 20th Anniversary Of Declaration of Independence

STEPANAKERT (RFE/RL) – President Serge Sargisian led thousands of people on Friday in a march through Stepanakert that marked the 20th anniversary of Nagorno-Karabagh's declaration of independence from Azerbaijan.

The crowd, also comprising Catholicos Karekin II, the supreme head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, and Karabagh's entire political leadership, gathered in the main town square and marched to a monument to the victims of the 1991-1994 war with Azerbaijan.

Sargisian and the other dignitaries laid flowers at the memorial and an adjacent cemetery where hundreds of Karabagh Armenians killed in the fighting were laid to rest. A Karabagh honor guard marched there during the ceremony in tribute to the dead.

The bitter war, which left an estimated 30,000 people dead on both sides, began three months after the legislative council of the former Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast declared the mostly Armenian-populated territory an independent republic on September 2, 1991.

Official celebrations of the anniversary



Armenian President Serge Sargisian (center) leads a march in Stepanakert that marks the 20th anniversary of Nagorno Karabagh's declaration of independence from Azerbaijan.

began on Thursday, with Nagorno Karabagh President Bako Sahakian handing awards to military personnel and other

local residents. Sargisian attended and delivered a speech at the ceremony.

see INDEPENDENCE, page 16



The "Ground Zero Cross," composed of steel columns from the World Trade Center towers that were forged in the shape of a cross by the intense heat underground which fused them together

## Remembering 9-11

NEW YORK – I got up late that day and was taking the express bus to work in midtown Manhattan from Forest Hills in Queens. When the first plane crashed into the North Tower (Building One) of the World Trade Center (WTC), nobody knew what had happened. We thought it might be an accident. We saw the second crash from a distance and realized that it had to be much more than an accident. One person had a radio and searched for news. As we approached the

Midtown Tunnel, the bus was stopped and made to turn around by the authorities. Manhattan was being isolated and all traffic into the heart of the city was halted. This was unprecedented and we began to worry about the scale of the danger taking place. Some became scared of what might happen next. On the trip back, we could see the smoke billowing from the towers, and the collapse of the South Tower of the WTC. When I eventually made it back home, my wife, who at that time was not working, was in tears, not knowing what had happened to me. Her sister-in-law had called from Moscow, saying she heard that buildings were collapsing in New York, and asked how we were. I rushed to the television to see the footage of the collapse and learn more about what was going on.

continued on page 7

## Soccer Win Sparks Jubilant Scenes in Yerevan

By Elina Chilingarian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Hundreds of people poured into Republic Square on Tuesday, September 7, to celebrate yet another impressive victory of Armenia's national soccer team that gave it a real chance of qualifying for the 2012 European Football Championship.

Armenia crushed Slovakia 4-0 in the Slovak city of Zilina to earn its fourth victory in eight matches played in Group B of Euro 2012 qualifying over the past year. It was also the team's most convincing and important away win to date.

Vartan Minasian, the team's 37-year-old coach, hailed the "fantastic" performance of his players, mostly aged under 24, against a nominally stronger side that did well in last year's World Cup. "I am very proud of my team," Minasian said at a news conference.

see SOCCER, page 3



The members of the Armenian national soccer team celebrate after handily – and shockingly – defeating Slovakia, with a score of 4-0.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Darchinyan Defends IBO World Title in Armenia

YEREVAN – Vic Darchinyan defended his International Boxing Organization (IBO) bantamweight world title against South African Evans Mbamba here on September 4.

Judges awarded Darchinyan the unanimous-decision victory after 12 rounds.

The bout marked the first time a professional world boxing championship match has been staged in Armenia.

### Possibility of Genocide Recognition in Israeli Knesset Increases

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Armenian community in Israel is looking forward to the discussions of the resolution on the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, at the Israeli Knesset expected in October. Hakob Sevan, head of the Armenian Cause Office in Jerusalem, said the Knesset is on summer break currently.

"The discussion will take place in October but we are in touch with the members of the Education Commission which will discuss the issue and are aware of the developments. Some members of Knesset, political figures, intellectuals are raising the issue on their personal initiative," he said.

Speaking about the possibility of recognition of the Armenian Genocide, Sevan said the chances have increased recently. "I think today Israel will try to use the Armenian Cause for exerting pressure on Turkey," he said, stressing that the recent changes in the policy of Israel relating to the Armenian cause are turning points.

### Nagorno-Karabagh Surge in Tourism

STEPANAKERT (RFE/RL) – Authorities in Nagorno Karabagh say the number of foreign tourists visiting the region jumped by almost 50 percent in the first half of this year, following a similarly sharp rise recorded in 2010.

"More than 3,000 foreigners visited Nagorno Karabagh in the first half of 2011, a 49-percent increase from the same period of 2010," the Foreign Ministry announced.

The official figures do not include residents of Armenia.

According to the statement, citizens of 24 countries visited the territory this year, notably the United States, France, Russia and Iran, which have sizable Armenian communities.

The statement also spoke of a growing tourist influx from more farther-flung places such as Japan, China and New Zealand.

It said the forthcoming reopening of the territory's sole airport will "greatly facilitate" tourism.

## INSIDE

### Salute to Armenia

page 11

#### INDEX

Arts and Living	10
Armenia	2, 3
Community News	5
Editorial	14
International	4





## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## New Arrests Expected in Connection with Murder Of Aghasi Abrahamyan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Materials are being prepared in connection with the murder of conscript Aghasi Abrahamyan and new arrests are expected, military prosecutor Gevorg Kostanyan said at a news conference this week. “It is not only a crime but an immorality. The fact that a crime has been committed is extremely condemnable,” he said.

The military prosecutor noted that from the very beginning the case received great attention. “I have personally visited the scene and assumed the operative, multi-sided and full examination of the case. The situation in this respect is dynamic, the number of accused and arrestees will increase,” Kostanyan said.

The forensic examination of Abrahamyan’s body found evidence of violence on his body. On that day, the conscript was taken to a hospital, unconscious, and later died.

## Armenia’s Capital to Host Digitec Expo 2011

YEREVAN (news.am) – The Armenian capital will host the seventh annual DigiTec Information and Telecommunication Technologies Expo, October 7-9.

The event is organized under the auspices of Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian, the Union of Information Technologies Enterprises said.

The exhibition will bring together representatives of innovative engineering companies, such as Bitlismen, Pegasus Logic, Olymp Engineering, Ovak Technologies, Project Integration, Rafa Solutions, Innovative Solutions and others.

A number of events, including ArmRobotics (Armenian Robots Open Championship show) and DigiTec Job fair, will be held within the framework of exhibition.

## Armenians, Germans Discuss Technology

YEREVAN (armradio.am) – Armenian German consultations on the control of dual-use technology were held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on August 29.

The Armenian delegation comprised representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Economy, the National Security Service, the States Revenue Committee and the Center for Nonproliferation Studies.

The German side was represented by the delegation of Germany’s Federal Office for Economy and Export Control, which is authorized to control the dual-use item technology.

## Farm Fishing Spurs Economy, Depletes Water Resources

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – The government of Armenia is satisfied with the development of the country’s fish-breeding industry, which is a good incentive for economic growth and export.

However, the water resources of the Ararat Valley are being depleted, thus as a consequence, drinking and irrigation water springs in Ararat and Armavir provinces are drying up.

At the same time, fish breeding keeps increasing. According to the agriculture ministry data, in 2010 some 5,430 tons of fish were produced and this year that number is expected to reach 7,000.

The farms operating in the Ararat valley siphon 800 million cubic meters of water, which has led to the drying up of artesian springs in the highlands.

Simon Andreasyan, Ararat province’s Hovtashat community leader, says as a result of the farms, 110 out of Hovtashat’s 130 springs have dried up. Thus, he says, villagers are unable to work the 1,730 acres of the village’s 2,570 acres of arable land and only 500 heads of livestock now remain out of the initial 1,300.

# Yerevan Denies 2008 Vote Rigging

By Irina Hovhannisyan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Armenian authorities strongly denied on Tuesday a senior US diplomat’s reported claims that the February 2008 presidential election was rigged in favor of Serge Sargsian.

Garegin Azarian, the chairman of the Central Election Commission (CEC) who administered the disputed vote, said that Joseph Pennington, the former US charge d’affaires in Yerevan, cited no concrete facts to back up the claims in a March 2008 cable disclosed by WikiLeaks late last week.

According to the CEC, Sargsian swept to a landslide victory with almost 53 percent of the vote, while his main opposition challenger, former President Levon Ter-Petrosian, came in a distant second with only 21.5 percent.

Pennington suggested in the leaked document that in fact Ter-Petrosian garnered between 30 and 35 percent of votes and should have qualified for a run-off against Sargsian. “Mounting evidence ... has called into question the government’s claim that Prime Minister Serge Sargsian won a legitimate first-round majority on February 19,” he

wrote to the US State Department.

“Did they [US officials] set up the precincts?” Azarian said. “Did they count the ballots? Did they tabulate the election results to make such statements?”

“There were violations during the elections,” he said. “Nobody denies that. But just because there were violations doesn’t mean the election results were rigged. Those are different things.”

Galust Sahakian, a deputy chairman of Sargsian’s Republican Party of Armenia (HHK), likewise denied massive vote rigging. “Those are gossips, empty talk,” he said. “If it’s up to WikiLeaks to decide who was elected and who wasn’t, I don’t think that’s respectful towards our society.”

Azarian also argued that Western election observers mostly deployed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) concluded that the presidential ballot was held “mostly in accordance” with demo-



Garegin Azarian, chairman of the Central Election Commission

cratic standards. “One should simply read the OSCE report on the elections and see that no such thing is written there,” he said.

The State Department distanced itself from the OSCE-led monitoring mission’s largely positive verdict, describing the ballot as “significantly flawed.”

Armenian election monitors also alleged serious fraud. Ter-Petrosian and his opposition movement went further, accusing the authorities of falsifying election results to formalize a handover of power from outgoing President Robert Kocharian to Sargsian.

## Mayor Assures Parliament over Kiosk Closures

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Representatives of Yerevan’s municipal administration assured parliament on Friday that Mayor Karen Karapetian will scale back the ongoing closure of commercial kiosks across the capital that has provoked angry protests by their owners.

Karapetian’s deputy, Taron Markarian, and other senior municipality officials met with representatives of the parliament factions to explain Karapetian’s highly-controversial efforts to regulate street trade.

Stepan Safarian, a senior deputy from the opposition Zharangutyun party, said that they pledged to submit documents explaining the wisdom of those efforts and specifying the criteria for the selection of small shops subject to demolition.

More importantly, Safarian said, they insisted that the process will affect only those kiosks that are located in the city center. The number of such properties will be reduced from 266 to 190, he said.

According to the mayor’s office, some 900 of over 3,000 kiosks operating in Yerevan have been shut down since the beginning of the year. Karapetian claimed last month that they either lacked valid government licenses or were located on “central streets” and “interfered with the normal work of the city.”

The state human rights ombudsman, Karen Andreasian, disputed that claim, saying that at least some of those closures were illegal. He urged kiosk owners to continue to fight for their businesses.

Safarian, whose party is strongly opposed to the mayor’s actions, suggested that the municipality seems to have softened its stance in the face of the criticism. “Given that the number of kiosks [slated for closure] has been curtailed, it can be said that there is some change,” he said.

Naira Zohrabian, a deputy from the

## Armenian Civil Service ‘Still Under Patronage Pressure’

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Ministers and other senior government officials continue to aggressively lobby for patronage appointments of new civil servants connected with them or their political parties, the head of a body overseeing Armenia’s state bureaucracy said on Tuesday.

Manvel Badalian, chairman of the State Council on Civil Service, claimed to have resisted such pressure, saying that job competitions administered by the body are fair and objective.

“I am the head of an independent body,” Badalian said. “My position is not lower than that of a government member. I excluded and continue to exclude a [successful] official pressure.”

“There may be requests. But the biggest pressure comes from friends, neighbors, relatives, former classmates,” he said.

An Armenian law adopted in 2002 mandates the selection of ministry personnel and other civil servants on a solely competitive basis that takes into account their professional qualifications, rather than political views or affiliations. Badalian’s council, formed by the president of the republic, is tasked with holding job contests, evaluating civil servants’ performance and protecting them against arbitrary dismissal.

“Recently we had an unpleasant case – unfortunately such cases are

not rare – where representatives of a particular ministry made every effort to make one candidate pass the tests because that’s what was instructed by their minister or a regional governor,” said Badalian. He did not name those officials, though.

Badalian also complained that civil servants are still frequently forced to join one of Armenia’s three governing parties or do so in order to please their bosses affiliated with those parties. “When there are contests for vacant posts, as a rule, we see among contest participants members of a party with which the head of that agency is affiliated,” he said.

The official already voiced such complaints at a May 2010 meeting of Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian’s cabinet. “Our parties seem to be becoming employment centers,” he said.

Representatives of the ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) and its two junior coalition partners, Orinats Yerkir and Prosperous Armenia, denied any involvement in the alleged practice at the time.

Badalian on Tuesday also urged civil servants not to resign and thus forego legal protection after disputes with their superiors keen to get rid of them. He said such instances are a regular occurrence in Armenia. “There is nothing we can do in these cases,” he added.

pro-government Prosperous Armenia Party (BHK), expressed hope that the municipality will come up with a mutually acceptable solution. “I think we will manage to find a solution,” Zohrabian said.

“It is important to maintain the city’s external appearance, but it is even more important to protect the rights of small and medium-sized businesspeople who manage to meet their socioeconomic needs with small shops,” she said.

Several dozen kiosk owners who gathered outside the parliament building in Yerevan were unconvinced, however. “They are just taking a break so that we stop protesting and gathering,” one woman said, dismissing Karapetian’s assurances.

“They have repeatedly promised that they won’t touch this or that kiosk only to summon their owners and say that it’s now their turn,” said another owner.





## ARMENIA

# Paros Lighthouse Foundation's Shelter/Women's Center Opens

PTGHOUNK, Armenia — The Paros Lighthouse Charitable Foundation celebrated the grand opening of its shelter/women's center in the village of Ptghounk in the Armavir region. This impressive facility is the first of its kind in Armenia. Special guests from around the world, Armenian government officials and NGO representatives attended the opening ceremony on July 2. Very Rev. Barthev Gulumian blessed the altar in the prayer room as well as the staff and residents a few days following the event. The building is the achievement of California residents, Zuhra and Seta Ghazarian, who have been inspired to serve their homeland by their humble wish to fulfill God's work.

The Ghazarians have constructed the center to assist pregnant girls, abused mothers and their



Sewing is one of the skills the residents learn.

babies, feed the elderly, offer Bible study classes for people in the surrounding community and, with local clergy, perform the sacrament of Holy Baptism in the Armenian Church. Fifteen rooms safely house and feed neglected mothers with their babies as well as pregnant women. In addition,



The elderly receive nutritious meals.

tion, the complex accommodates the foundation's administrative offices, medical exam rooms, dental office, restaurant-style kitchen, reception hall and sewing and computer training centers. All services are provided free of charge.

The shelter is currently home to three teenage mothers and their babies. Each of these young women relates a heart-rending



Paros grand opening with Zuhra and Seta Ghazarian and other dignitaries

story of abuse and tragedy.

As part of a program helping the elderly, once a week, senior citizens from nearby villages are picked up by the foundation's van and driven to the center where they receive a three-course, home-cooked meal in the dining room.

Seta Ghazarian noted, "In the US, seniors receive Social Security and Medicare. Here in

Armenia, they are often a forgotten sector of society, especially the ones who don't have grown children to care for them. Most stay hungry. The organization has compiled a list of needy elderly from five local villages in the Armavir region. In addition to providing a healthy meal, every week they receive basic living essentials.

Other programs include weekly Bible Study.

An in-house gynecologist and therapist provide more vital services. The gynecologist works five days a week and gives free check-ups to women from the surrounding villages. Seta Ghazarian explained that "50 percent of the women have gynecological problems" that require hospital care. An in-house therapist is available to counsel the shelter residents and women from the nearby villages. These services and treatments, including hospital stays, are offered free of charge.

Zuhra and Seta Ghazarian have been providing assistance to the poorest of the poor in Armenia since 2000. For more information and to donate, visit [www.parosfoundation.org](http://www.parosfoundation.org).



The new center

## Armenian Chess Players Rewarded For World Championship Win

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenia's leading chess players will receive 7.5 million drams (\$20,400) each for their victory in the 2011 World Chess Team Championship, the government announced on Thursday.

Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian again congratulated Armenians on the "glorious victory" as his cabinet allocated 45 million drams in award money to the national Chess Federation.

The federation headed by President Serge Sargsian will distribute the sum to the five grandmasters and their coach Arshak Petrosian who represented Armenia in the championship held in the Chinese city of Ningbo last month.

The prestigious title was contested by the national teams of the world's 10 leading chess nations, including Russia, Ukraine, India and Azerbaijan.

The Armenian team led by Levon Aronian, the world's third highest ranked chess player, dominated throughout the 12-day tournament, winning five games and drawing the four others.

The Armenian players received a hero's welcome upon their return home. Thousands of people greeted them at a late-night ceremony organized in Yerevan's Liberty Square and broadcast live by state television on July 28.

The team mostly consisted of players who won two consecutive world Chess Olympiads in 2006 and 2008. Those victories earned them domestic stardom comparable to the popularity of the world's leading athletes.

Chess has been one of Armenia's most popular sports ever since Tigran Petrosian, a Tbilisi-born Armenian, became a world champion in 1963. The country currently boasts one of the largest per-capita numbers of chess grandmasters in the world.

Sargsian has actively promoted the ancient game while in office. Earlier this year, his government decided to make chess a mandatory subject in primary schools.

# Historic Soccer Win Sparks Frenzy in Yerevan

SOCCER, from page 1

The shock win moved up the Armenians to third place in the group standings with 14 points, three behind leaders Russia, who drew zero-zero with Ireland in Moscow earlier on Tuesday. Ireland, which is second on 15 points, will host Armenia in Dublin on October 11 for the final and possibly decisive game of the qualifying campaign.

Armenia already beat Slovakia 3-1 in Yerevan last October, an unexpected result that marked the beginning of its best-ever performance in Euro and World Cup qualifiers.

The victory sparked jubilant overnight scenes in the capital, with hundreds of fans converging on Republic Square to wave national flags, chant "Armenia!" and dance. Scores of cars honking their horns circled the sprawling square in the meantime.

The ecstatic crowd was reportedly joined and praised by Ruben Hayrapetian, chairman of the Armenian Football Federation, in

the early hours of Wednesday.

"This impressive victory wasn't sensational but the score was," Slava Sargsian, a veteran football commentator, said.

"It was a fantastic game," agreed Senik Karapoghossian, another commentator. "In my view, the second half [of the Slovakia game] was the best 45 minutes of play in the [post-Soviet] history of Armenian football."



Armenia's Valeri Aleksanjan battles with Slovakia's Filip Holosko in Zilina (AFP photo)

The success will further heighten expectations from the national team ahead of its last two qualifiers. Armenia will play Macedonia in Yerevan on October 7.

Yura Movsisyan netted in the 57th minute after the Slovak defense failed to clear a corner kick for his fourth international goal. Henrik Mkhitaryan added the second with a low, long-range shot in the 70th that took Slovak goalkeeper Jan Mucha by surprise.

Gevorg Ghazaryan scored 10 minutes before the end and substitute Artur Sarkisov finished the Slovaks off in injury time.

With two more games to play, Slovakia is fourth in Group B with 14 points. Armenia is third, also on 14 and three behind leader Russia. Ireland is second on 15 points.

The members of the Armenian team are: Roman Berezovsky, Sargis Hovsepyan, Karlen Mkrtchyan, Artur Edigaryan (Artur Yuspashyan, 90), Marcos Pizzelli (Edgar Manucharyan, 73), Gevorg Ghazaryan, Yura Movsisyan (Artur Sarkisov, 85), Hrayr Mkoyan, Valeri Aleksanyan, Henrik Mkhitaryan and Levon Hayrapetian.

(AP contributed to this story.)





## INTERNATIONAL

## International News

## Baku Is Balking at Eurovision 2012 Organization

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Azeri officials are experiencing difficulties with the organizing body of the Eurovision 2012 song contest. The 2012 edition of the contest will take place in Azerbaijan, the country of the winning song.

“Currently, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is discussing reserve variants,” chairman of the Armenian Public Television and Radio Council Aleksan Harutyunyan told journalists in Yerevan.

“As to our participation in Eurovision 2012, the Armenian delegation is waiting for security guarantees from the European Broadcasting Union, as Azerbaijan’s semi-guarantees are not enough,” he said.

Ell/Nikki from Azerbaijan, who received the highest number of points from voters and juries from the 43 countries participating in this year’s edition of Eurovision, managed to gather 221 points altogether - followed by Raphael Gualazzi from Italy with 189 points and Sweden’s Eric Saade who collected 185 points.

Armenia’s Emmy did not reach the final with the song, Boom Boom.

## WikiLeaks Gets to Problem of Javakheti Armenians

TBILISI (arminfo) – WikiLeaks has published several secret dispatches of American diplomats about the problem of Armenians of Javakheti and Georgia in general. A report containing the details of the meeting of Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan, head of the Georgian Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church, with US Ambassador to Georgia John Tefft, on June 16, 2009, says that the bishop singled out three important issues for the Armenians of Georgia: the possibility of using Armenian as an official language at the local level; the creation of opportunities of education for the ethnic Armenians and the return of disputed church property.

For his part, the US ambassador promised to discuss the given issues with the Minister for Reintegration Temur Yakobashvili. Another dispatch, dated September 29, 2009, says that the representatives of the local authorities and non-governmental organizations of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki of Samtskhe-Javakheti region were optimistic about their future in Georgia, but expressed their concerns over maintenance of their cultural and language heritage.

Most of the 300,000 ethnic Armenians in Georgia live in these two towns situated at the south of the central part of the country.

## Ex-Ambassador of Georgia: We Don’t Want Armenian Churches

YEREVAN (PanArmenian.Net) – WikiLeaks whistle blowing website released February 26, 2010 cables on a meeting with a former ambassador of Georgia to Armenia, Georgy Tabatadze, addressed by ex-ambassador of US to Armenia, Marie Yovanovitch, to the US Department of State.

Yovanovitch cites Tabatadze’s statement referring to a conflict between the Armenian Apostolic and Georgian Orthodox Churches over Armenian churches located in Georgia.

“We don’t want the churches. Everyone knows they are Armenian churches,” Tabatadze said. “Yet it would only be fair to the Georgians to receive other churches in return.” He specifically pointed out non-operating “Georgian” churches in northern Armenia currently on the state registry with the Government of Armenia. Tabatadze noted that while there are no ethnic Georgians in that area who would use the churches, it is the principle of reciprocity that matters. “In future, Georgian Orthodox church could establish monasteries there,” Tabatadze said, according to the cables.

Earlier, however, Georgian historians refused to recognize the presence of Armenian churches on the territory of Georgia.

## Turkey Suspends Military Ties with Israel

ANKARA (Guardian) – Turkey has pursued its diplomatic offensive against Israel by confirming it is suspending defense industry contracts and threatening further sanctions, after that country’s refusal to apologize for the deaths of nine activists on board the Mavi Marmara 14 months ago.

The Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, said he was considering a trip to Gaza next week, where he would be assured of a hero’s welcome. He repeated a warning that Turkish naval vessels would step up activity in the eastern Mediterranean.

Since the release last week of the Palmer report of the UN investigation into Israel’s deadly assault on the Gaza-bound Turkish vessel, Turkey has expelled Israel’s ambassador, plunging relations between the two countries to a new low. Erdogan has also promised to lobby in support of Palestinian attempts to win recognition as a state at the UN later this month.

Speaking to reporters in Ankara on Tuesday, Erdogan said: “Trade ties, military ties, defense industry ties, we are completely suspending them,”

although his office later said he was referring to military and defense trade, not overall trade between the two countries, worth \$3.5 billion last year.

The UN investigation, chaired by the former New Zealand Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer, concluded that Israel’s naval blockade of Gaza was justified but it had used “excessive and unreasonable” force when it stopped a flotilla of aid ships approaching the Palestinian enclave in May 2010.

The much-delayed report was published on Friday after months of delicate negotiations between Israel and Turkey on the wording of a proposed Israeli apology for the deaths of nine activists – eight Turkish citizens and a Turkish-American – and the payment of compensation to their families. Israel in the end refused to apologize, triggering fresh Turkish anger.

Israel’s ambassador and other senior diplomats in Ankara have been ordered to leave by Wednesday, and diplomatic status has been downgraded to the lowest level.

On Monday dozens of Israelis were detained at Istanbul airport in what

was perceived by Israel as punitive harassment. Passengers were questioned for up to two hours and some were strip-searched.

Erdogan told reporters he planned to visit Cairo next week, and might go from there to Gaza. “We will make our final decision after consulting with our Egyptian friends,” he said.

The Turkish prime minister would be guaranteed an emotional welcome by Gazans, who see him as a champion of their cause. Erdogan has been strongly critical of Israel’s blockade of the Gaza Strip and condemned its three-week military assault in 2008-9. A visit would make Erdogan the first world leader to officially visit Gaza since Hamas took control more than four years ago.

Alon Liel, a former senior Israeli diplomat who served in Ankara, said: “Israel and the US will do everything possible to stop a visit. [Erdogan] will be received there as a god.”

Erdogan could attempt to persuade Egypt to downgrade its relations with Israel during his visit, Liel added. “Turkey may be ready to invest a lot of money and effort in building Egypt as a regional ally.”

## UN War Crimes Court Jails Ex-Yugoslav Army Chief

THE HAGUE (AFP) – A UN war crimes court sentenced ex-Yugoslav army chief Momcilo Perisic to 27 years in jail on Tuesday for helping the Bosnian Serb army murder and persecute Bosnian Muslims including at Srebrenica in 1995.

His sentencing sparked mixed reactions in the Balkans, with Serbia calling it excessive and Bosnia too lenient.

Perisic, 67, the Yugoslav army’s highest-ranking officer, was found guilty of 12 of 13 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including at Srebrenica, scene of Europe’s worst wartime atrocity since World War II, as well as the shelling and sniping of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo during its infamous siege from 1992-95.

He is the first official from the Belgrade-controlled Yugoslav republic to be convicted for crimes committed in Bosnia. Belgrade has always denied any involvement in the war in Bosnia.

Bakone Moloto, presiding judge at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, said Perisic knew the Bosnian Serb army’s actions “encompassed grave crimes against the civilian population”.

Yet the former chief-of-staff gave personnel, officers, weapons and logistical support to the Bosnian Serb army, the VRS, as well as the self-proclaimed Republic of Krajina’s army (SVK), knowing it would be used to wage war and commit crimes against civilians.

In 1994, the Yugoslav army supplied more than 7,500 shells and over 25 million infantry bullets.

Judges found Perisic guilty on four charges at Srebrenica, where some 8,000 Muslim men and boys were murdered after the UN-protected enclave was overrun, as well as the 44-month sniping and shelling siege of Sarajevo. He was also sentenced for his role in the shelling of Zagreb by Croatian Serbs in May 1995.

Perisic “was aware that the VRS was conducting a campaign of sniping and shelling during the siege of Sarajevo”, the judges said.

Moloto, clearing Perisic on a count of



Momcilo Perisic (l) at the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

extermination at Srebrenica, said however the former general “could not have foreseen” that the Bosnian Serb army would exterminate Muslims after the UN-protected enclave fell. Yet after learning of the massacre he still provided support for the Serb troops.

“You kept providing assistance to the VRS for months after being informed of the VRS’s enormous massacre in Srebrenica,” the judge said.

Prosecutors in March asked for life imprisonment against Perisic, a close collaborator of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic who died in his Hague detention cell in 2006.

Perisic is the only senior Yugoslav official to be sentenced before the court for the Srebrenica massacre after Milosevic, also implicated in the mass killings, died mid-trial.

The 18 other defendants for their role at Srebrenica are mainly Bosnian Serbs including former army chief Ratko Mladic, the court’s most-wanted man until his arrest in May.

Judge Moloto said that although Perisic had a “collaborative relationship” with Mladic and substantially helped his operations, “the evidence does not establish that he exercised effective control over him.”

Perisic’s lawyer Gregor Guy-Smith said Tuesday his client was disappointed with the judgment, saying he would appeal.

## Armenian Ambassador Hands Credentials to Czech President

PRAGUE (Armenpress) – The Armenian ambassador to the Czech Republic, Tigran Seyranyan, handed his credentials to President Vaclav Klaus, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs press office reported.

Congratulating the ambassador on the appointment, Klaus said he is pleased with the friendly relations between the two countries. He voiced hope that the newly-appointed ambassador will contribute to the reinforcement of Czech-Armenian cooperation.

Seyranyan expressed his gratitude for the kind reception and expressed his readiness to exert efforts for the development of multi-sided relations.

During the conversation they touched upon Armenian-Czech economic cooperation, the settlement of the Karabagh conflict and regional issues.



# Community News

## Armenian Pleads Guilty in Medicare Fraud Case

BRUNSWICK, Ga. (*The Brunswick News*) – After being flown from Los Angeles to stand trial in federal court in Brunswick, an Armenian man accused of laundering money for phony medical supply businesses, pleaded guilty Monday.

Sahak Tumanyan, 43, pled guilty in US District Court to one count of conspiracy to launder money in an \$8 million Medicare fraud scheme that involved Brunswick Medical Supply, a fake business at 1603 Gloucester St., and other bogus businesses in Savannah, Macon and other cities.

US Attorney Brian Rafferty alleged the false businesses were stealing Medicare information from doctors and patients and then making false claims for medical goods that never existed.

As a part of a plea offer from Rafferty, the charge against Tumanyan's wife, Hasmik Tumanyan, 38, was dropped.

Hasmik Tumanyan originally faced the same count as her husband on a 10-count federal indictment.

The Tumanyans were rearrested after making bond because prosecutors said they tried to flee back to Armenia before their trial.

Sentencing for Sahak Tumanyan will happen at a later date. He faces a maximum of 20 years in federal prison and up to \$500,000 in fines, according to First Assistant US Attorney James Durham.

Along with the Tumanyans, nearly 40 federal witnesses had been scheduled to fly to Brunswick.

The lead defendant in the case, Arthur Manasarian, 49, pleaded guilty August 4 to one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud and another count of aggravated identity theft.

Manasarian is also awaiting sentencing. He faces 12 years imprisonment, more than \$500,000 in fines and possible restitution when he is sentenced.

Also charged are two other Armenians, Gegham Sargsyan, 56, and Khoren Gasparian, 27, who are hiding in Armenia and Russia, according to Durham.

Toni R. Lowery, 27, of Savannah was charged in an original indictment, but his case was dropped in December.

The case is believed to be part of a nationwide crime syndicate that has fleeced Medicare of \$163 million, according to US Attorney Edward J. Tarver.

## Feds File Charges in ATM Fraud Case

OAKLAND, Calif. (*San Francisco Chronicle*) – Two alleged Armenian gang members arrested by Pleasant Hill police with guns, hundreds of cloned debit cards and more than \$56,000 in cash face federal charges in the case, court records show.

Arman Vardanyan, 22, of Las Vegas and Eduard Arakelyan, 20, of North Hollywood (Los Angeles County) have been charged in US District Court in Oakland with access-device fraud and possession of unauthorized access devices.

Pleasant Hill police arrested the two July 10 after they responded to reports of a pair of suspicious men hanging around an ATM at a Citibank at 700 Contra Costa Blvd.

A search of both men, their car and their room at the Pleasant Hill Inn uncovered two loaded and concealed handguns, 963 re-encoded debit cards and \$56,599 in cash, US Secret Service Special Agent Paul Grimm wrote in an affidavit.

Bank surveillance video showed the men making withdrawals totaling \$21,270, Grimm wrote. The account numbers on the cloned debit cards were from more than 32 banks, authorities said.

Both men are free on bond.



From left (back): Talin Yacoubian, Lisa Kalustian, Richard Mushegain, Margaret Mgrublian, Aline Maksoudian, Joyce Stein, James Melikian and Bryan Ardouny; (front), Dr. Ronald Suny and Dr. Norman Naimark

## Assembly Hosts Book Presentation by Suny And Naimark

WASHINGTON – The Southern California Regional Council (SCRC) of the Armenian Assembly of America hosted a book presentation on August 27 at the University Club of Pasadena, featuring Dr. Ronald Suny and Dr. Norman Naimark.

Naimark and Suny provided an overview and described the genesis of their recently-published book, *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*. Both discussed how the project grew out of the Workshop on Armenian and Turkish Scholarship (WATS). Also edited by Fatma Muge Gocek, the just-released volume includes contributions by more than a dozen specialists.

In his presentation, Naimark noted that the scholarship on the Armenian Genocide had dramatically progressed in the last three decades. In the preface, Naimark states that “after reading these contributions, which represent the ‘state-of-the-art’ in the field, no scholar could contend that there was not genocide in the Armenian case.” The purpose of the book, Naimark indicated in his presentation, was to explore the root causes and factors that led to the Armenian Genocide.

Suny recalled his first experience with WATS and the challenges therein. As he notes in the book, “while there are certainly many Turks who deny the Genocide...there are also Turks, many of them intellectuals and scholars, who are trying under very difficult political conditions, to rethink their own history, even the history of the Ottoman mass murders of the Armenians.”

In addition to discussing WATS, Suny provided the context for the book and, also having just returned from a nearly two-month visit to Turkey, expressed his sense that more and more people recognize the tragedy of the Genocide. The presentation was followed by a lively question-and-answer session as well as a book signing under the auspices of Abril Bookstore.

Suny currently serves as the Charles Tilly Collegiate Professor of Social and Political History and is also the director of the Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies at the University of Michigan, as well as emeritus professor of political science and history at the University of Chicago. Suny was the first to hold the Alex Manoogian Chair in Modern Armenian at the University of Michigan.

Naimark holds the Robert and Florence McDonnell Chair in East European History at Stanford University. He is also senior fellow of the Hoover Institution and of the Institute of International Studies. He has also served as director of Stanford's Center for Russian and East European Studies and chaired Stanford's History Department. Prior to Stanford, Naimark was a professor of history at Boston University and a fellow of the Russian Research Center at Harvard.

“On behalf of Norman and myself, I would like to extend our appreciation to the Armenian Assembly and its Southern California Regional Council for hosting this event. We will continue our efforts to increase awareness of this historic crime against humanity and hope that our book will eventually be translated into Turkish,” stated Suny.

Armenian Assembly board member Lisa Kalustian, stated, “the presentation offered a fresh perspective on the causes of the Armenian Genocide.” “I welcome the positive feedback from participants and I look forward to the Assembly's continued community outreach,” added Kalustian.

“The presentation offered a fresh perspective on the causes of the Armenian Genocide.”

—Lisa Kalustian

## Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Director Joins Genocide Education Project

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. – The Genocide Education Project (GenEd) added Dr. Hayk Demoyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Armenia, to its Advisory Board.

“We look forward to strengthening our partnership with the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, working together to develop accessible and relevant instructional materials to ensure that the lessons of the Armenian Genocide are not forgotten,” said Raffi Momjian, executive director of the Genocide Education Project.

Beginning with a 2010 visit to the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute by GenEd's education director, Sara Cohan, the two organizations have shared information regarding effective approaches to teaching students about genocide in the classroom, through the museum experience and ways to expand teaching of the Armenian Genocide both in Armenia and US.

“Our collaboration with the Genocide Education Project represents an intersection of our mutual mission to raise awareness within the international community about the first genocide of the 20th century and to help ensure that the next generation has learned about this crime against humanity,” stated Demoyan.

Demoyan has been director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute since 2006. He received his PhD from the Institute of Oriental Studies at the National Academy



Dr. Hayk Demoyan

of Sciences of Armenia and is a history lecturer at Yerevan State University. He has written several books on the Armenian Genocide, Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Turkish foreign policy.

The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute conducts ongoing research and exhibits. Since its establishment in 1995, the institute has increasingly become an important resource for scholars, the international community and members of the public seeking to expand their understanding of the Armenian Genocide. For more information on the museum's work, visit [www.genocide-museum.am](http://www.genocide-museum.am)

Other members of GenEd's Board of Directors and Advisory Board include Dr. Richard Hovannisian of UCLA, Dr. Joyce Apstel of New York University, Dr. Henry Theriault of Worcester State College, Dr. Peter Balakian of Colgate University, Dr. Stephan Astourian of UC Berkeley and Dr. Israel Charny of the Institute on Holocaust and Genocide.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Wisconsin Hye Notes

By Naomi Zeytoonian

Summer in the Midwest brought with it high temps and the weekend picnics drawing great crowds. The annual commemoration for the 96th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in the Midwest was hosted this year by St. Mesrob Armenian Church in Racine. Clergy and guests attended from the Wisconsin parishes and nearby Illinois.

Sincere congratulations to Perry Paragamian and his lovely wife, Pat, as the entire St. Mesrob Parish paid tribute to "Mr. Armenian Fest." Perry has been the vibrant chair for Armenian Fest for many years and though he says he has "retired," he is still in there helping out the new chairs for the fest. Danny Mantis and Ani Grigorian are his new "protégées," and this year as in the past it went off like clockwork on Sunday, August 7 at Festival Hall.

In May, we attended the Diocesan Assembly in Boston at the Park Plaza Hotel. The ice-breaker for the Women's Guild featured a keynote speaker from the Council of Churches in Massachusetts.

Laura Everett was an outstanding speaker with her inspirational message for women. The Women's luncheon honored the "Woman of Wonder" (WOW). This year's honoree was Helene Dorian of Belmont, Mass. Helene has worked diligently for her parish of Holy Trinity and for the Women's Guild's and Women's Central Council, as well as the many organizations she has participated in. The close of the assembly featured the banquet honoring Sarkis Bedevian.

Many of our youth attended the sports weekend in Philadelphia in May. Others made their plans to attend St. Nersess Conferences and summer camps, while still others traveled abroad. A moving video online featured the youth on a journey to the Holy Land; our representative from the Midwest was Alex Ouzounian from St. Mesrob. Traveling to Armenia with Birthright Armenia and FAR were Ani Grigorian and Crystal Densmore, Armida and Tigran Markarian were also in Armenia visiting her parents in Yerevan, with their darling daughter. Most unfortunately, shortly after the Markarians arrived home, Tigran's dad passed away quite suddenly. He resided with them in Chicago. Our sympathies to the entire family.

Our sympathies also go to the Musserlian family on the passing of their mother, Baidzar, who was the oldest member of the parish in Racine, at the age of 95. Our condolences to the families of Dan Dorian and Thomas Stephanian of Belmont and Concord, Mass.

Dan Dorian was an active member of the Diocesan Council and Tom Stephanian was a staunch member of the Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge and the former owner of Tommy's Lunch in Harvard Square.

In June, Dr. Jack Kevorkian of Royal Oak, Mich. passed away at age 83, as a result of kidney failure and pneumonia. He was incarcerated for his part in assisted suicide deaths with dignity. He was brilliantly portrayed



The ladies, including honoree Helene Dorian, cut the cake.

by Al Pacino in the movie, "You Don't Know Jack."

We visited the Soorp Haroutune Armenian Cemetery in South Milwaukee with Terry Peterson. This cemetery is owned and maintained by the Holy Resurrection Church in South Milwaukee and is probably the only Armenian Cemetery in the United States.

The Women's Guild Central Council and the Diocese of the Armenian Church has announced a pilgrimage to the Holy Land celebrating Armenian Christmas in Jerusalem and departing from New York on January 13-22. This is a guided tour led by the clergy and the fare includes air, hotel and meals. The Holy Land is a beautiful site to visit and if you have never been there, it should be a priority on your calendar. For more information and details, contact wgcentralcouncil.1986@gmail.com.

Recently, there was a very inspiring story online, titled "Vartabedian's Story, the Gift of Life." The story detailed his experience with heart surgery and how much his family meant to him throughout this ordeal. How much he truly enjoyed his grandchildren and how every new day is most important. "Yesterday was the past, today is the present, that's why it's called a gift," he says.

## OBITUARY

## John Z. Daniels

CRANSTON, R.I. — John Z. Daniels, 88, of Cranston and Cape Coral, Fla., died on Saturday, September 3, at Our Lady of Fatima Hospital in North Providence.

He was the husband of Elinor C. (Jillson) Daniels.

Born in Providence, he was the son of the late Harry and Mary (Hagopian) Daniels.



John Z. Daniels

He was affiliated with his family business, the former Z. Daniels Company, on Cranston Street in Providence for many years before retiring.

He graduated from Bryant College and was a WWII US Navy veteran.

He was a member of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church of Providence and

served on its Parish Council. He was a member and past president of the Providence Central Lions Club, past master of Warwick Lodge #16 and was a member of Scottish Rite Valley of Providence, St. John's Commandery #1 Knights Templar and the Rhode Island Shriner's.

In addition to his wife, he leaves his son, John Z. Daniels Jr. of Bradenton, Fla; granddaughter, Amanda Daniels of Florida; sister, Virginia Hanoian of East Providence and nephews, Harry Hanoian of Massachusetts and Ronald Hanoian of California. His brother, Malcolm L. Daniels, predeceased him.

The funeral service was on Thursday, September 8 at Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church. Interment with military honors was in Swan Point Cemetery in Providence.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church, 70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI 02908.

Online condolences may be left at [www.nardolillo.com](http://www.nardolillo.com).

### Metropol-Residence 2 Mashtots Ave. Yerevan. Armenia

Ideal for Family vacations

Daily, weekly and monthly low rates, starting \$65.00 per day/ residence

The four star residences at the heart of Yerevan with a kitchen and private bathroom is an ideal place to stay for families and couples. This luxurious residence is convenient for whatever purpose your visit is.



Reservations in English please call Sevag at 011-374-93211217  
Reservations in Armenian please call Onnig at 011-374-94435445



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

## Giragosian FUNERAL HOME

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC  
Funeral Counselor

576 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472, TEL: 617-924-0606  
[www.giragosianfuneralhome.com](http://www.giragosianfuneralhome.com)

Alfred Demirjian  
Data Recovery  
Computer Forensic Specialist

20 Concord Lane Cambridge, MA 02138  
tel 617 491 1001 aa@techfusion.com cell 617 797 5222

techfusion.com  
Where data is never lost





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Remembering 9/11

from page 1

That day of attacks on civilians on American soil became unforgettable for me, though my own experience was not as immediate as that of many others. A feeling of inviolability was lost. While heavily armed soldiers or national guardsmen guarded strategic points in the city, I was shaken to see, for the first time in my life, armored vehicles in Manhattan. Makeshift memorials throughout the city added poignancy to the air of New York already laden with the dust of the remnants of the WTC. That dust hung heavy in the air for several years.

For most Americans, and most particularly for New Yorkers and Washingtonians, 9/11 turned into a defining event indelibly engraved on people's psyches. Everybody can say where they were that day and can tell a story of his own. Novelist and critic Peter Sourian compares it in this sense with the Kennedy assassination. Armenian-Americans, like all other Americans, were a part of this. Some were victims, others survivors and the rest witnesses of one sort or another. A number of Armenian-Americans individually or through their institutions have or are contributing to the understanding and legacy of 9/11. This article can only present a few examples from this ongoing story and will not attempt to discuss the Armenians who were killed in the attacks.

## Survivor Jon Simonian

I worked at the Hartford Steam Boiler insurance Company, whose New York offices were on the 30th floor of World Trade Center Building Two. That morning, I got to work about 8 a.m. My normal routine was subway, pick up a newspaper, coffee and hard roll and start the work day.

I was sitting at my desk at 8:45 a.m., probably halfway through the paper, when three of us in the office felt this heavy thud – like an anvil dropped on the floor above us and then we felt a big vibration that shook the office. Co-workers Tom Donnelly and Roseann Yoffredo had no idea what it was. It was our first signal that something was wrong.

Later we realized that the first plane had hit WTC Building One and the impact was so forceful that we felt it in Building Two. Tom Donnelly said, "I think I just saw something, but I'm not sure what it was." Within 15 seconds, the three of us were looking out the east window and we could see two troubling things: we saw office paper, 8 1/2 by 11 sheets, floating down in the air and we saw people running away from the building, looking up towards the building. We knew something bad had happened.

Within one minute, I went back to my desk and called my wife, Charlene. I said something happened and asked her to put on the TV to see if there was any news. Nothing was on yet. I told Charlene something happened and it looks serious.

I feared an explosion and I immediately knew to vacate the building. I told Charlene that I was going to leave and if I did not make it, "remember that I love you and our children and take care of them." I then hung up the telephone.

Within another minute, I smelled smoke, a fact which I attribute solely to my Armenian nose. Co-workers Tom and Roseanne did not yet smell anything. I said "let's get out of here." They said the procedure is to stay put.



Simonian family picture, from left, Charlene, Jon, Jon Jr. and Jennifer Simonian in 2011

My response was, "you do what you want, but I'm gone." I got paper towels from the kitchen area, wetted them to put over my nose and mouth in case there was smoke and gave some to my friends. I said let's leave now. We can always come back tomorrow to take care of the computers and office business and I left the office alone.

I walked around the corner, down the hallway and past the elevators. I saw a couple of people standing at the elevators and asked them if they knew what happened. They said no; I said if something bad happened, you shouldn't take the elevator. I then walked some 30 flights of stairs down to the lobby.

It took me 15 minutes to walk down the 30 stories. The stair-

way was clean, well-lit and well-marked. On the staircase, I saw no more than 20 or 30 people, certainly not a lot. There was no panic, no smoke ... just people walking down, like I was.

Then all of a sudden on the 10th floor, there was nobody around me anymore. Later I learned there was an announcement on the loudspeakers that you could go back to your work area. I did not hear it and maybe this was why everybody disappeared, but I would have kept walking down anyway. There was never any doubt in my mind that the correct thing to do was vacate the building.

Tom Donnelly and Roseanne Yoffredo left our offices and walked down the staircase about two minutes after me. They heard the announcement, but they kept walking also. It was the right thing to do. On the last 10 floors or so, I saw only one other person on the staircase.

When I got to the lobby of Building Two, I could see debris outside all over the place. There was a guard and I asked what happened. He said he did not know, but the outside doors are closed, so you can only go to the main concourse. The building had been secured from the outside. After I talked to the guard, I saw Tom and Roseanne come out of the stairwell.

There had to be 2,000 people milling in the concourse. This was a big area, where the subways and trains from New Jersey came in. It was the commercial hub of the World Trade Center complex. The bank, stores, restaurants were all there. The man I bought my newspaper from was still there, the coffee lady was there and people were standing around talking, having a cigarette and drinking coffee. Despite the disruption that we now knew about in Building One, Two World Trade Tower appeared okay and operating.

Tom, Roseanne and I walked through the crowd, out the door on the south side of the building and onto Greenwich Street. I walked 130 yards (I paced this out later) where there was a pay phone and I called Charlene. She said there was an explosion; "they think a plane hit the WTC. Are you okay?" I said, "I'm fine, but there is a lot of chaos here. I'm coming home."

Charlene offered to call both Tom's family and Roseanne's family to tell them they were safe, but both said they would do it themselves. Roseanne then left to get her ferry to Staten Island and Tom left to get his ferry to New Jersey.

I hung up the phone and started to walk south down Greenwich Street. I took literally five steps and I heard this tremendous boom. I looked up and the building that I had just vacated... there was a huge, orange fireball blowing out of the wall. My first thought: if I had not gotten out of that building, I would be dead – which of course turned out not to be true.

Five seconds after that, big pieces of concrete hit the street 20 or 30 yards away from where I was standing. I thought, how inglorious to escape the explosion and get hit on the head by a piece of concrete in the street. I walked to the Bowling Green subway station, stayed there 10 or 15 minutes and watched what happened.

By that time there was chaos. Fire engines, sirens, ambulances, smoke, panic, people running away all over the place. I tried another phone to call Charlene but nothing was working. People around me couldn't use their cell phones. People started saying an airplane had hit the second building. I couldn't tell. I knew about a bomb incident 10 years earlier and thought it was explosions in the building. How could it be two airplanes?

I feared the possibility of civil disturbance. Maybe it was a coup against the US government. If that were the case, you needed money. I went to a Chase bank on lower Broadway and took out all the money in my checking account, \$3,500 to be exact.

Subway and buses were not operating downtown. Walking was the only way to move. Street traffic stopped. No cars or taxis. Hundreds of people were walking across Water Street toward the Brooklyn Bridge. Obviously the authorities shut down all communications and transportation. Twenty minutes after the second plane hit the World Trade Center, everybody knew something very bad had happened and everything in the area was sealed off.

Above Canal Street, phones were working and I was able to call Charlene and tell her that I was safe. That was the first communication she had that I was safe. She then called our two children, Jon David who was 15, and Jennifer, who was 13, to tell them.

On that call, I instructed Charlene to go to the bank and take out all the money she could and to go to the supermarket and get all the food and water that she could get. By that time, she was only able to take out \$1,000 and she got some food. Everybody else had the same idea, so there were limits to withdrawals and the stores were full of people seeking supplies.

I walked up Bowery and then First Avenue. About an hour or so later, I got to 34th Street and Saint Vartan Cathedral. I went to Saint Vartan to say a prayer and get a drink of water. They had scheduled a noon service, which they asked me to stay for, and I did. People said that I appeared in shock, but I knew that was not true. Nobody in shock has the clearness of mind to make the decisions I did about leaving, money, food, escape



Mourners at Ground Zero

route and so forth. I left to continue on my way home to 92nd Street, some three miles away.

I probably got home at close to 2 p.m.; I got my big hug and kiss from Charlene and Jennifer and then we went to pick up Jon David at his school on the West Side of Manhattan. Schools correctly did not dismiss their students until a parent came to pick them up. Charlene had picked up Jennifer at Chapin School, which was close to home, and we were going to Collegiate School to pick up Jon Jr. When we went to the Collegiate auditorium to get him, Jon David got tears in his eyes. So did I.

Once home, which was at about 3 p.m., it was pretty clear that the World Trade Center attack was a terrorist event and emergency measures were in place. All major bridges into Manhattan were closed. Warplane flew routes around Manhattan and every 10 minutes we heard a jet fly by. Another security measure was the deployment of aircraft carriers from Norfolk News, Va., into the Atlantic around New York and Washington. Obviously, our authorities were not convinced this attack was over. That too was a correct decision to make.

I looked at Charlene and asked, "why are we here? Why not go to Uncle George and Aunt Alyce's house in Connecticut and avoid a possible second danger?" I called my Uncle George, who said, "Yes, absolutely, come to New Britain if you can get here."

Although I knew the major road arteries in New York were closed, I knew the local streets well enough to try to reach Connecticut without using the major highways. The four of us packed passports, money, some clothes and a pot of pilaf that Jon David was making for supper and got in the car.

We drove up First Avenue, across the 138th Street Bridge into the Bronx, up the Grand Concourse and Fordham Road toward Pelham and got access to I-95 in Pelham. We reached Connecticut; we stopped at a McDonalds and had hamburgers and pilaf for supper that evening. We made it to New Britain around 9 p.m.

We spent the next two days at Uncle George and Aunt Alyce's and by then things in New York had calmed down and we came home. Jon David and I spent those two days playing golf and Charlene and Jennifer went shopping and did the things that mothers and daughters do. Our New Britain family including the Holy Resurrection parish and the Country Club of Farmington took great care that their New York City friends were welcome among them.

After we got back to New York, two noteworthy things happened. One was that I quickly realized that I may have problems about airplanes and being trapped in inescapable places; specifically I was not sure how I would react about flying and I was fearful about getting trapped in an elevator.

In a couple of weeks, planes started flying again. I bought a Jet Blue ticket to Palm Beach Florida, stayed overnight and flew back. Thank God, no problem.

I got stuck in an elevator once for about 30 seconds and traffic stopped moving in the Holland Tunnel once for about five minutes. Each time, I had a minor panic attack. I've gotten over the tunnel business; I know you can get out of the car and walk out. I've never been stuck in an elevator since then. I'm not sure how I'm going to handle that if it happens again. Hopefully, I will be okay.

Second, my very capable personal physician at the time, Dr. George Gorham, made me to go to a psychiatrist to talk about this event, just in case there might be lingering issues. I went to five very expensive sessions and the conclusion was that I am fine and know how what to do to solve problems. So much for \$2,500, but thanks, Dr. Gorham, I know you did the right thing.

Finally, the City of New York is still doing a good job monitoring the 20,000 people of so who were directly involved in the World Trade Center incident. Every six months they follow up

*continued on next page*



COMMUNITY NEWS

from previous page

on a medical and psychological profile. So far, so good. By God’s grace, that’s the case forever.

I know two people who died in the World Trade Center. God take care of them and their survivors. For me and my family, the World Trade Center issue has passed. Thank God I was below where the planes hit. My mind was clear and my instincts were good. I never second-guessed what to do. I worked in tall buildings all my career. I always paid attention to the fire and emergency instructions. You know you don’t go up; you don’t take the elevator; you put something wet over your nose and mouth to breathe.

Eyewitness Lisa Kadehjian

At the time I was about three blocks away from the World Trade Center. I worked very near it. I was vice president of compensation at the Bank of New York. When the first plane hit, nobody knew what was happening. There were all sorts of rumors as to what had happened. When I reached our office, the building was already burning so I was relying on rumors. Then I saw the second plane hit from the windows. At that point we realized it was some kind of attack. We had to get to a safe distance from the area and avoid falling debris. There were a lot of people on the street and a lot of confusion. We realized that we had to get off the street. Nobody expected the buildings to fall.

I and a group of people from my company went farther south just to get away from the immediate area. The father of one of our coworkers worked in a nearby building nearby, which was further away from the WTC. We were inside there when the building fell, so we had no idea what was going on. We heard a huge rumbling and a very loud noise. The windows all went black and we couldn’t see anything. We relied on radio or other news. We finally heard that the buildings had fallen. We waited a while and then started walking uptown. There were masses of people. What struck me was how hopeful everybody was. There was a sense of community – we were in this together.

I walked to the Armenian Evangelical Church in midtown where my mother worked and stayed there until the subways were running and we were able to go home. I had spoken to people on the phone but I don’t remember it. I don’t remember how we got home to Queens, or when.

For about two weeks we couldn’t return to our offices. Some people were just too traumatized to return but I always felt that as soon as I could go back I would. It was like defiance. I was going to continue with my normal life.

Obviously I thank God that I was not affected directly. I know a lot of people who lost family members and friends. I did lose a classmate from high school who worked for Cantor Fitzgerald. In that sense I’m very grateful. It is part of my everyday life because I work down there. It’s always there; there is always a reminder. Over the years it has been a big scar in the area. I actually work closer now to the site, in the World Financial Center, right behind it. It is very important to everyone here that the site is rebuilt and the scar is covered.

I think there always has to be some sort of remembrance. The memorial site is a great idea. There has to always be a reminder that this occurred and knowing the damage that happened to the people and the place...but there also in my opinion should be rebirth and regrowth. You can’t let anybody knock you down and you don’t get back up. Maybe the same attitude comes from our history as Armenians, where we have a sense of resilience – that even after being knocked down we get up and back.

Commemoration

Immediately after the terrorist attacks, as Hagop Vartivarian, chairman of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York, summarized in an article published in Beirut in *Zartonk* in October 2001, Armenian organizations cancelled or postponed their meetings and dinners. Armenians of great and modest means alike participated in general American fundraising campaigns. Wealthy individuals donated large sums of money. Soon Armenians also found various ways to

remember or commemorate the 9/11 events.

There have been quite a few prayer services in the past and many more are taking place on the 10th anniversary of the attacks in Armenian churches throughout this country. This year September 11 happens to coincide with a major feast day of the church, and for this reason, the traditional requiem service or *hokehankisd* cannot be performed. However, special dispensation has been made in several cases, such as at the Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs, for a requiem service for members of the Armenian community who lost their lives in the attacks. Other churches in the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) will instead have special prayers recited.

September is customarily the beginning of the fall season of Armenian events, as people return from their summer vacations. The solemnity of September 11 conflicts with the joyous nature of these events, but some Armenians have attempted nonetheless to continue with their usual schedules by making changes. The Senior Armenian Church Youth Organization Sports Weekend, for example, opened with a prayer for the 9/11 victims on September 11, 2009 in Huntington Beach, Calif. The Armenian Festival of Orange County (California) added a commemorative program on the night of September 11, 2010, with a “nationally-recognized 9/11 authority,” Angie Kardashian, speaking along with local community leaders. Element Band, an Armenian group, presented a musical tribute to 9/11. A portion of the net proceeds of the festival were to be donated to the Orange County Fire Fighters’ Benevolent Association. The remainder of the two-day festival continued as in previous years.

Some Armenian institutions have dedicated stone crosses, or *khachkars*, to the victims of the September 11 attacks. The cathedral of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of America erected a seven-foot-tall *khachkar* last September. Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II officiated during its consecration and Los Angeles’ mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, participated in the ceremonies.

Perhaps it was inevitable, considering the importance of the Armenian Genocide to today’s Armenians, that one church decided to commemorate the two tragedies together. Saint Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church in Scottsdale, Ariz., inaugurating a monument sculpted by Kaspar Gharibyan to the victims not only of 9/11 but also of the Armenian Genocide. It was unveiled on April 22, 2011 and will be consecrated on September 18 by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese. The commonality between the two events commemorated, according to remarks given by one priest in April, is that innocents became victims of violence at the hands of other human beings.

Armenian-Americans are also part of broader non-Armenian commemorative efforts. For example, Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, served as the chair of the jury selecting the designer of the Ground Zero memorial to the 9/11 victims.

Armenian Aid and Sympathy

Seven first aid responders who had gained useful experience during the 1988 earthquake in Armenia were among the first to come to the US to aid American victims. Some Armenian-Americans like psychiatrist Dr. Louis Najarian applied the experience they gained in helping Armenian earthquake victims, and in his case, a method of aiding disaster victims in Armenia, to helping victims in New York.

Later, Armenians from the Republic of Armenia contributed to commemorations in the United States. One example is the “Message of Freedom and Hope,” an exhibition of 44 paintings by Armenian children moved by television reportage of the 9/11 events. It was hosted by the Embassy of Armenia and the Caucus on Armenian Affairs in the Rayburn Congressional Building in Washington, DC, on September 13, 2004, with support from the Kamk Benevolent Fund of Armenia.

The Republic of Armenia and various Armenian organizations and individuals over the years have made many statements and dec-

Going to Zero

By Peter Balakian

1.  
A canvas with less turpentine, more hard edges, less bleeding, that was good for beauty, Frankenthaler in Art News

in the dining car crammed with parkas and laptops  
micro-waved cellophane, plastic plates and canvas bags,

and the valley under fog as the cows disappeared  
and when the green came back into view, I could see

the SUVs floating on the Thruway, the cows oblivious  
to the revved engines of trucks. The river glistened

all the way to Albany, and I could see flags on Baptist churches  
and resurrection trailers, “God Bless America” on pick-ups –

“United We Stand” laminated to billboards  
as the fog settled then lifted, and when I woke

a flag the size of a football field hung from the gray tower of the GW,  
where the tractor-trailers jammed beneath its hem

as something sifted down on the silver-plated Hudson.  
And then the lights went out.

2.  
The faces on 7th Avenue blurred in the chaos of vendors and liberty  
scarves, freedom ties, glowing plastic torches, dollars and polyester –

and inside Macy’s I was hit by cool air as “Stars and Stripes Forever”  
floated down from women’s fashions into the quiet aisles of Aramis  
and silk scarves.

I wanted to buy the Frankenthaler, a modest, early print,  
minimal, monochromatic; surface and perspective in dialogue;  
on 24th off 10th –the gallery still smelled like wood and plaster –

but I didn’t stop, and when the train reached the Stock Exchange  
the Yom Kippur streets were quiet, and the bronze statue of  
Washington  
was camouflaged by national guard. I was walking my old mail route  
now

like a drunk knocking into people, almost hit by a cab  
until the roped-off streets cut me at the arm. At Broadway and Liberty  
the fences wound around the bursts of dust rising

over the cranes and bulldozers, over the punched-out windows –  
I stared through a piece of rusted grid that stood like a gate to the  
crystal river.  
I was sweating in my sweatshirt now, the hood filling with soot,

as I watched with others drinking Cokes and eating their pizza of dis-  
belief.  
Zero began with the Sumerians who made circles with hollow reeds  
in wet clay and baked them for posterity.

At Broadway and Liberty. At 20 floors charred and standing.  
At miasma people weeping. Anna’s Nail Salon, Diakichi Sushi,  
the vacant shops, stripped clean in the graffiti of dust-coated windows.

Something blasted from a boom box in a music store,  
something, in the ineffable clips of light,  
disappeared over the river.

Reprinted from Peter Balakian’s *Ziggurat*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press,  
2010 (paperback forthcoming, 2011)

larations supportive of the US with respect to the 9/11 terrorism. Ambassador Garen Nazarian, Armenia’s representative to the United Nations, recently wrote to the *Mirror-Spectator* about Armenia, the UN and the international aspects of 9/11. He said, “The implications of the 9/11 tragedy a decade ago did not stopped with the United States. They

impacted the entire world community. That is why Armenia believes that the whole system of the United Nations should be engaged in the fight against international terrorism.” Nazarian stated: “I would like to assure everyone that the Republic of Armenia will continue to  
*continued on next page*





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# TCA Arshag Dickranian School Starts its 2011-2012 Academic Year

LOS ANGELES — Following the example of several unified school districts, this year the traditional “Back to School Day” ceremony of the TCA Arshag Dickranian School’s 31st academic year took place on August 29, at 8:15 a.m., a full week earlier than usual.

The event took place at the open courtyard of the campus where students ranging from pre-kindergarten toddlers to seniors had gathered under the guidance of their teachers and the watchful eyes of their parents. Among the guests were St. John Armenian Church parish priest, Fr. Manoug Markarian, school benefactress Cynthia Norian, Board Chairman George

K. Mandossian, Vice Chairman Parsegh Kartalian, Board Treasurer Angine Garibyan and Board member Diran Depanian.

Principal Vartkes Kourouyan started the program by extending his greetings to the students, teachers and parents alike, and then called upon Markarian to conduct the morning prayers and give his blessings. He then invited Norian to share her thoughts. “My parents founded this school so that children like you could learn the Armenian language and history.” She said, “You are the legacy of the Armenian heritage. I have full confidence in your diligence and wish you an industrious



ADS students at the 2011-2012 academic year opening ceremony



From left: Board Chairman George K. Mandossian, Vice Chairman Parsegh Kartalian, benefactress Cindy Norian, Fr. Manoug Markarian, Board member Diran Depanian and Board Treasurer Angine Garibyan

school year.”

Mandossian welcomed everyone on behalf of the School Board of Trustees. After greeting the students, the teachers, the parents and working committees, he touched upon the challenges the board was facing due to the ongoing economic crisis and called for the cooperation of all to ensure the success of the scholastic year.

The program concluded with the closing remarks of Kourouyan, who wished the students success in their endeavors and declaring the new scholastic year open.

Located at 1200 North Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles, the TCA Arshag Dickranian Armenian School is a federally tax-exempt, pre-K to 12th-grade private educational institution. For more information, visit [www.dickranianschool.org](http://www.dickranianschool.org).

## Remembering 9/11

from previous page

support and contribute to all actions undertaken by the United Nations in this regard. The United Nations can play a very positive role encouraging member-states to exchange operational information about the terrorists and their networks. Particular effort should be made in order to prevent terrorists from getting access to weapons of mass destruction. The United Nations should also double its efforts in the fields of economic development and poverty eradication, since these are the strategic battlefields in the war against terrorism.

“Armenia has already demonstrated her commitment to and has lent support to the international struggle to combat terrorism. We are state parties to the UN, Council of Europe and CIS counter-terrorism instruments and have enacted necessary national legislation for their timely implementation. It is imperative that all nations, without exception, increase their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and abide by the principles of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.”

### Artistic Transformation

We are too close still to the 9/11 attacks to assay their cultural impact, but Armenian-American writers and artists have already begun to deal with them in their works. Intellectual and author Peter Balakian has grappled with their meaning. His most recent book of poetry, *Ziggurat* (2010), is a meditation on the pain and aftermath of 9/11 which explores many universal themes. His Armenian background and his scholarly and poetic work in particular on the catastrophic trauma of the massacres and genocide of the Armenians — including the phenomena of collective and individual memory of that which is no longer there — have prepared him for and contribute to his understanding of this new human calamity [See his poem “Going to Zero” from *Ziggurat* in the sidebar].

Sculptor Kardash Onnig, who lives in upstate New York, was in Karabagh in September 2001 and created his own memorial. He described it recently: “On 9/11, I was in Shushi. I heard about it from a neighbor. In the morning I drew an American flag in black ink in mourning and hung it on the front of my house. By noon there were a dozen candles and a stack of flowers laid under the flag; by evening the flowers had grown to a foot deep and condolences came

pouring in from passersby. There was a sadness in the village, unlike the anger and hate of Muslims in the US.”

Linda Ganjian contributed to an exhibition of proposals in 2003 for 9/11 memorials called “Multiple Memorials” at Viridian Gallery in New York. The exhibition was organized by Mary Miss and Elliot Maltby. Ganjian explains, “My idea was to tie translucent ribbons around posts around New York, as wishes for the return of the missing (remember the “missing” posters!). I was referencing yellow ribbons and also the tradition of tying rags on branches as a way of making a wish that I saw in Armenia.”

Non-Armenians aware of the tragedies in recent Armenian history have mined this material for their own creative works. In July and August 2011, a play by D. Tucker Smith opened in Hollywood called “Quake.” It was the story of the meeting of a Jewish businessman whose wife died on 9/11 (though not from the attacks) and an Armenian immigrant woman who lost everything in the Spitak earthquake in 1988.

The effects of 9/11, ranging from political to social to psychological, will continue to reverberate for a long time to come.

## Armenian Heritage Park

On the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, Boston



under construction

### Sponsorship/Naming Opportunities

James Kalustian	781 777.2407
Charles Guleserian	617 484.6100
Haig Deranian	617 489.2215
Walter Nahabedian	781 891.7249
Dr. Jack Kasarjian	617 232.6350

### DONATE

online: [www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net](http://www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net)  
check: Armenian Heritage Foundation  
25 Flanders Road  
Belmont, MA 02478

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



KAROUN  
Restaurant

Entertainment Fridays  
and Saturdays

SMOKING AREA AVAILABLE  
Eurdolian Family





# Arts & Living

## Jerusalem Students Gain Invaluable Experience at St. Nersess Seminary

By Florence Avakian

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — “Jerusalem is our home, and we would like to live and work there,” said Nicole Kassabian, 17, and Vania Koutoujian, 18. These two teenagers were on the trip of their lives, having made the 11-hour plane ride to New York from Jerusalem to participate in the St. Nersess Seminary Summer Studies Program.

This project was the brainchild of Rev. Mardiros Chevian, dean of St. Vartan Cathedral, who conceived and planned it six years ago, with funding from generous donors. A major benefactor for the past several years has been Russell Kashian of Wisconsin, whose own children have participated in the St. Nersess programs.

Also supporting the program this year were David Melian of New York, Karyn and Keith Bilezerian of Massachusetts, Kristen and Glen Dabaghian of New Jersey and Pam Young of New York, all of whom have benefited from the St. Nersess programs in their youth.

For the past six years, two outstanding students from the St. Tarkmanchats School have been privileged to come to New York each year, and gain special insight about their faith at St. Nersess Seminary, as well as rub shoulders with Armenian youth from America, resulting in lasting friendships.

“I receive great satisfaction from seeing the interaction between the Armenian youth of Jerusalem and America, the relationships that are formed and the great possibilities for the future that can come from these relationships,” said Chevian. “This project benefits the youth of the Holy Land and America as they learn from each other and appreciate each other as brothers and sisters.”

**Unforgettable Experience**  
“Our time at St. Nersess has been amazing. Our faith was strengthened with all the new information we learned,” said Koutoujian, with Kassabian concurring. “The Bible studies, discussions, worship services and fellowship with the young people of our age added up to an unforgettable experience. The fact that we have the same culture as our new Armenian friends in America is something very special. We learned from each other’s cultures. This bond will last forever,” added Kassabian.

While they were in New York, the two students visited the Diocese of the Armenian Church and St. Vartan Cathedral and had a special meeting with the Diocesan Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian. And like all eager visitors, they saw all the famous tourist sites in this renowned international city. “This trip has been inspiring, adventurous and eye-opening,” they both agreed enthusiastically.

Both students were born in Jerusalem, with Koutoujian’s father also born in Jerusalem, and mother hailing from Jordan. Kassabian’s father was born in Lebanon, and her mother in Kessab, Syria. Kassabian with her family has lived within the safe confines of the Armenian Patriarchate, whereas Koutoujian and her family reside a few miles away in an Arab section, which she said is also very safe.

They are especially emotional when they relate their experience at Jerusalem’s St. Tarkmanchats School from which they graduated this year. “We were brought up as brothers and sisters, with everyone living close to each other, and knowing each other,” commented Kassabian, with Koutoujian adding, “Our teachers have been like our parents. There is absolutely no discipline problem. Everyone receives personal attention. There has always been a  
see STUDENTS, page 13



The YerazArt musicians from last year

## YerazArt Announces Two Initiatives in Armenia

BOSTON — The YerazArt Foundation, a Boston-based non-profit organization dedicated to the support of young Armenian musicians, has announced the establishment of two educational programs in Armenia: a comprehensive instrument donation program and annual conservatory scholarships.

Taking a hiatus from its annual North American concert tour, the YerazArt Foundation focused this year on the planning and implementation of new initiatives aimed at strengthening Armenia’s musical foundations.

The instrument donation program was designed in an effort to alleviate the financial burden of remote music schools and meet the needs of the student body. After an extensive research targeting the Shirak region, YerazArt decided to channel its assistance to Music School No. 4, named after composer Arshak Brutyan, and located in earthquake-stricken Gumri. YerazArt’s Armenia director, Arman Padaryan, coordinated with the school’s director, Khoren Vardanyan, to assess the school’s requirements and subsequently, YerazArt purchased and donated a set of brand new instruments, including 10 violins, two trombones, one trumpet, one clarinet and two guitars to the school.

“We are extremely grateful to the YerazArt Foundation for its generous and timely gift to our school. We were in dire need of a replenishment of our inventory and I’m confident that these new instruments will have a significant impact on the quality of our instruction as well as on the performance of our students,” stated Vardanyan.

YerazArt is now in the process of helping another school, the reputable Kanakeravan Art School, with instrument donations as well. Located in a village neighboring Yerevan, the Kanakeravan School offers arts, music and dance classes and needs some additional instruments to complete its repertoire.

The talent/need-based scholarship program was meant to assist promising students wishing to further their musical instruction in Armenia with the aim of pursuing a career in music. This year, YerazArt sponsored two YerazArt Young Armenian Musician Scholarships at the Yerevan Conservatory, covering the full tuition costs of two students for the 2011-2012 academic year.

“The challenges facing Armenian musicians are many, throughout the various stages of their musical education. We tried to address some of these hurdles, namely the poor quality and scarcity of instruments available at music schools, and the lack of funding for higher education. We are truly excited about these two initiatives, and look forward to developing them further in the coming years,” said YerazArt representative Nicole Babikian Hajjar.

On the local front, the foundation will hold its annual fundraiser on September 24 at the home of Raffi and Nina Festekjian.

To learn more, visit [www.yerazart.org](http://www.yerazart.org).

Group Focuses  
On Instrument  
Donation and  
Scholarships  
For Young  
Musicians

## Lark to Present Concert in Honor Of 9/11 Victims

LOS ANGELES — Under the patronage of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate, Western Diocese of the Armenian Church, and George Deukmejian, 35th governor of California, Lark presents a commemorative concert in honor of the victims of the attacks on 9/11, joining countrywide activities to mark the 10th anniversary of the fateful day.

Lark holds dear its position as a cultural organization, representing primarily those of the Armenian Diaspora, as one branch of the many differing diasporan communities that make up Southern California.

The evening, a celebration of heroism, opens with Beethoven’s *Egmont Overture*, a work of heroic proportions, as a testament to the country’s resilience in the face of the first great tragedy of the new millennium. Rachmaninov’s haunting meditation, *Piano Concerto No. 2*, follows, performed by Lark’s newest graduate, Meghrie Babikian, and the Lark Orchestra. The concert closes with a commemoration of those victims who lost their lives in the attacks, with Mozart’s *Requiem*, under the conductorship of Vatche Barsoumian.

The concert takes place on Sunday, September 11, 8 p.m., preceded by a pre-concert reception at 6:30 p.m., at the St. Leon Armenian Cathedral of the Western Diocese (3325 N. Glenoaks Blvd., Burbank).

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

## St. Nersess Fundraising Reception Set for September 24

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — A benefit reception, titled “Evening under the Stars,” will once again be held on the grounds of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, on Saturday, September 24.

“This gathering provides the opportunity to support the most vital institution for the future of the Armenian Church in North America,” said Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, seminary dean, adding, “Old friends and new come together to mix and mingle while learning about the ongoing and future endeavors of St. Nersess. This year is especially significant as the Seminary is in the midst of its 50th anniversary commemoration.”

Last year’s event drew nearly 150 people who gathered under an elegant candlelit tent off the back patio of the Seminary building.

One first-time attendee, Mona Khorozian of Fort Lee, NJ, had nothing but praise for the event. “I thought the evening was wonderful. There was a very relaxed atmosphere with a host of dedicated people that were so welcoming. I felt that it was family I was spending the evening with.” Mona, and her husband Raffi, have already committed to attending this year’s reception.

This reception will begin at 7 p.m. with guests being greeted and served by college-aged and young professional volunteers who have attended recent St. Nersess Summer Conferences. Those enjoying the evening can look forward to hearing from these young people as they, as well as the seminary dean and board members speak about the importance of the only seminary of the Armenian Church in the western world.

Other highlights of this year’s reception include an auction of several one-of-a-kind items, such as prime New York Giant tickets  
see SEMINARY, page 13





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# 'Salute to Armenia' Takes Place in Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — This year marks the 20th anniversary of Armenia's Independence. For this occasion, the Armenian Music Festival of Rhode Island Inc., supported by The Armenian Euphrates Evangelical Church, Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church, Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church and Armenian organizations of Rhode Island, will present "Salute to Armenia."



Conductor  
Konstantin  
Petrosian

This special program, dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Armenia's independence, will be held on Saturday, September 10, at 7 p.m. in Saints Peter & Paul Cathedral, Providence.

The Republic of Armenia's ambassadors to the United States and the United Nations have accepted invitations to participate in "Salute to Armenia." Federal, state and local dignitaries will also be invited.

The commemorative concert will include performances by: Metropolitan Opera singer Yeghishe Manucharyan, Victoria Avetisyan (Massachusetts), Garo Nishanian (Canada), Kate Norigian, Joanne Mouradjian, David Ayriyan, Debra Takian Pjojian, David Gevorkian, Gohar Manjelian, David Alexander, Mher Saribekyan, Alexan Tokatlian (New York), The Armenian Chorales of Rhode Island and Greater Worcester and the Philharmonic Community Symphony Orchestra of Rhode Island. Konstantin Petrossian is artistic director and conductor.



Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island

Guest composers from Armenia, Martin Vardazaryan and Levon Chaushyan, will also be in attendance.

In addition to traditional Armenian music, the program will premier songs composed especially for this event by Armenian composers.

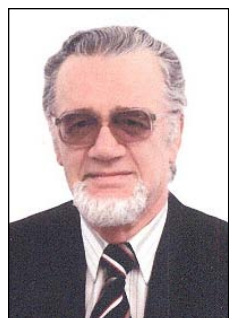
Admission is free and open to the public and all are invited to a reception following the concert.



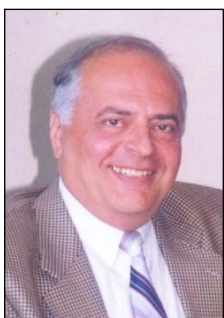
Alexander Tokatlian



Garo Nishanian



Martin Vardazaryan



Levon Chaushyan



The Worcester Chorale

## 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.



Yeghishe Manucharyan



Victoria Avetisyan



Joanne Mouradjian



Kate Norigian





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Balian's Novel Approach Brings Armenian Saga to the Masses

By Lucine Kasbarian

Armenians often wish for a tale about the Armenian Genocide and its aftermath that would make a blockbuster film and draw attention to their cause. John Balian's new book, *Gray Wolves and White Doves* (CreateSpace/Amazon.com), may be that tale.

## Book Review

Largely autobiographical, this atmospheric novel is presented through the eyes of an innocent young boy trying to make sense of the world as he grows up amid repressive conditions in Western Armenia/Eastern Turkey during the 1960s and '70s.

This fast-paced, multi-layered narrative takes readers from Hanna Ibelin's (aka Jonah Ibelinian's) close-knit family life in the perilous Asia Minor region of Palu to terror and tragedy while en route to Syria's Kamishli, to a bleak existence on the mean streets of Istanbul.

Facing the disintegration of his family, Hanna is promised salvation abroad. Guardians enroll him in the Armenian seminary of Jerusalem, where he takes his Armenian name Jonah Ibelinian and practices Armenian customs in comfort and safety. But as Jonah begins to adjust to this new life, he encounters inter-ethnic strife, clerical corruption, deception and banishment for alleged insurrection against the Turkish state.

While on the lam in Europe, Jonah searches for lost kin as he stays just one step ahead of his pursuers. As he hides from the Turkish secret police, fugitive Jonah is coaxed by a former rival to conduct a secret mission in exchange for acceptance. Jonah also searches the depths of his own conscience as he is told that his mission is to be carried out at the Turkish Airlines counter at Orly Airport on the outskirts of Paris.



Author John Balian

As the story crescendos into a dynamic climax, buried secrets and hidden identities and motives are revealed – leading the gripping saga to a fulfilling conclusion.

*Gray Wolves and White Doves'* storyline is laced with intrigues and betrayals, ancient traditions, comic relief and accurate historical depictions fused together by the protagonist's indomitable will to live in freedom and dignity. This literary achievement is already being put on par with Billy Hayes' autobiographical thriller, *Midnight Express*. While *Gray Wolves and White Doves* stands on its own merits, author John Benjamin Sciarra aptly points out that Balian's treatment further elevates it because "...by setting [the novel] in the shadow of the attempted annihilation of Armenians by

Turks, the historical background becomes as meaningful as the story itself."

Protagonist Ibelinian possesses many fine qualities often attributed to the Armenian people: Christian values, love of family, drive, talent and a strong work ethic. The grace and humility with which Jonah faces down impossible odds offers readers a model to emulate and an opportunity to place their own personal challenges into perspective. And by presenting his story as a cross between Raffi's epic, *Khentè*, and a John Grisham novel, Balian captures the interest of general readers while introducing them to the Armenians – a people whose history has been hijacked, culture appropriated and appeals for justice disregarded.

On Wednesday, September 28, at 7 p.m., the St. Gregory Men's Club will sponsor a presentation and book signing by Balian at the St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church's Atrium, 1131 North St., White Plains, NY, 10605.

To learn more and to purchase the book, visit <http://johndbalian.com>.

(Reviewer Lucine Kasbarian is the author of *The Greedy Sparrow: An Armenian Tale*.)

## Congrats to The Improper Bostonian

**BOSTON —** *The Improper Bostonian* is celebrating its 20th anniversary this month. The glossy magazine, now helmed by the very competent Wendy Semonian Eppich, reaches close to half a million readers every two weeks. Its lighthearted tone and glossy, photograph-laden pages, including the popular "Improper Sightings," have made it one of the few success stories in recent publishing history. The staff of the *Mirror-Spectator* congratulates the staff of the *Improper* for a job done properly.



# AIWA

Armenian International Women's Association

## 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 6-10, 2011



# SAN FRANCISCO

ADVANCING, INSPIRING, INNOVATING, AND STRENGTHENING

### Three Full Days of Presentations and Discussions on:

- Advancing Women's Rights and Issues
- Inspiring Leaders and Entrepreneurs
- Innovating Developments in Media and Technology
- Strengthening Our Cultural Identity

### More than 25 Stimulating Speakers and Panelists Including:

- Hon. Swanee Hunt, Founding Director, Women and Public Policy Program, Harvard University Kennedy School of Government
- Hon. Jackie Speier, Member of U.S. Congress
- Mary Catherine Bateson, Author
- Mary Ellen Iskenderian, President and CEO, Women's World Banking

### Social Activities and Cultural Events Including:

- Luncheons • Receptions • An Evening of Theatre
- Gala Dinner Cruise on San Francisco Bay • Wine Country Tour

For more information please visit our website: [aiwala.org](http://aiwala.org) or call Anita Tashjian (323) 394-3586

**AD POWER**  
**PROMO**

PHOTOGRAPHY & COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING DESIGN SERVICES

4-COLOR PRODUCTION  
PROMOTIONAL DISPLAYS  
MODELING PORTFOLIOS  
CERAMIC COFFEE MUGS  
COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY  
WEDDING PACKAGE SPECIAL  
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





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## Day of Celebrating Baptisms Marks Beginning of 50th Anniversary Celebration of Holy Trinity Church

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — This September, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston begins a year-long celebration of its 50 years on Brattle Street with special events planned throughout the year, to which an invitation is extended to the community to participate.

The first event of “Celebrate 50 – Celebrating 50 Years on Brattle Street in Faith, Hope and Love, 1961-2011,” takes place on Sunday, September 18, with “A Day of Celebrating Baptisms.” All those who have been baptized at Holy Trinity Church during the past 50 years are invited to attend. A special blessing celebrating baptisms will take place in the church sanctuary following the Divine Liturgy. The Divine Liturgy commences at 10 a.m. and will be celebrated by Rev. Vasken A. Kouzouian, pastor of Holy Trinity Church. Parishioners and friends are invited to witness this special service. Following church services, everyone is invited to the Trinity Family Festival, which will be held on the church grounds.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee is co-chaired by Aram and Becky Hintlian and Harvey and Valerie Kolligian Thayer.

Other events planned during the year include “A Day of Celebrating Marriages” on Sunday, October 16, with Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), celebrating the Divine Liturgy, followed by a champagne reception; “A Day of Celebrating Children,” on Sunday, May 6, 2012; “A Day of Celebrating,” a Golden Jubilee Gala on Sunday, May 12, 2012 and “A Day of Celebrating Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” on Sunday, September 30, 2012 – a Commemorative Banquet honoring the memory of the dedicated members of the Building Committee with their families participating.

Kouzouian stated: “Fifty years ago, our fathers and mothers, grandparents and great-grandparents dreamed a great dream for their children. It was their hope to create a house of worship that would stand as a firm foundation in their lives. It was their hope that upon this foundation, families would baptize their children and worship according to the traditions of our church, and that couples would embrace the sacrament of marriage. They built their house of worship on Brattle Street as a labor of love. Their labor of love was founded on faith, based on hope and offered to all future generations to make part of our lives.”

What started as a dream in 1954, when Holy Trinity Armenian Church was located on Shawmut Avenue in Boston, became a reality on September 17, 1961, when the church was consecrated on Brattle Street in Cambridge. The first Divine Liturgy was celebrated by the Primate, Archbishop Sion Manoogian, in the presence of a record-breaking crowd. The godfather of the cross was Nishan Simonian and 16 other individuals served as godfathers for the consecrated pillars. Church services were followed by a banquet in the church hall in the presence of many guests. This day marked a milestone for the faithful of the Holy Trinity Church community.

For further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church office at [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org), or log onto [www.htaac.org](http://www.htaac.org).

# CALENDAR

## MASSACHUSETTS

**SEPTEMBER 18 — Trinity Family Festival**, 12-5 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Delicious dinners; moonwalk for kids; children and family games, starting at 1:30 p.m., Armenian music by the Greg Krikorian Ensemble. Yalanchi cook-off. Blessing of Magdagh, 4 p.m. Raffle drawing for cash prizes, 4:30 p.m. For information, contact the church office at (617) 354-0632, e-mail [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org) or visit [www.htaac.org](http://www.htaac.org).

## NEW YORK

**SEPTEMBER 15 — 20th Anniversary of Armenia’s Independence. Celebration**, 6-9 p.m., at St. Vartan Cathedral Plaza, New York City. Entertainment, music and mezze included. Beverages available. Admission, \$10. Hosted by the St. Vartan Cathedral Council. For more info, call (212) 686-0710, ext. 141.

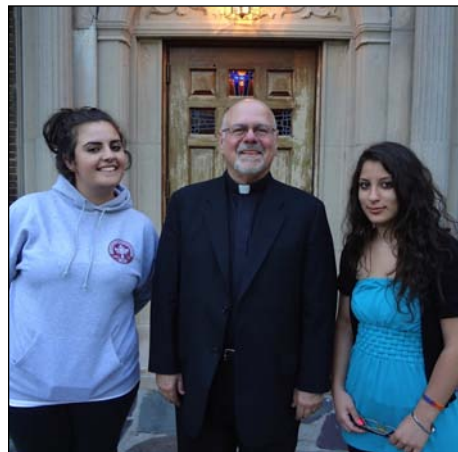
**On September 15, a celebration of the 20th Anniversary of Armenia’s Independence, hosted by the St. Vartan Cathedral Council, will take place from 6 to 9 p.m., at the St. Vartan Cathedral Plaza, in New York City. Entertainment, music and mezze are included; admission is \$10. For more info, call (212) 686-0710, ext. 141.**



## Jerusalem Students Gain Invaluable Experience at St. Nersess Seminary

STUDENTS, from page 10  
wonderful nurturing atmosphere.”

They especially praise the principal of St. Tarkmanchats, Fr. Norayr Kazazian, and point out that under his tutelage, the school has advanced greatly, with new books, new teachers and several renovations. The school, for grades 1-12, has approximately 110 students, and is 82-years old. Four languages are taught – Armenian, English, Hebrew and Arabic. The



From left, Nicole Kassabian, Fr. Mardiros Chevian and Vania Koutoujian

education is modeled on the British system, and all subjects are taught in English.

If there is a downside to the life at St. Tarkmanchats, it is that these two young women will be leaving the school, now that they are graduating. “It’s very sad,” commented Kassabian, “because we’re not going to see the same people. Our life and routine was so carefully planned for us. Now we are experiencing some confusion and insecurity.”

And what of the future? Kassabian who loves painting and works in a Jerusalem ceramic shop, plans to attend a university in Belgium, and study biology. She hopes to work in a laboratory in Jerusalem and make her home there.

Koutoujian, who is also talented in arts and crafts and works in the same ceramic shop making pottery, will be attending Hebrew University where she will study psychology or English literature, with the goal of teaching at St. Tarkmanchats.

Coming from an Armenian background has been especially meaningful for both young people. “I have never woken up and wanted to be other than Armenian,” said Kassabian. “Being Armenian is different because we’re a minority.” For Koutoujian, to be Armenian “is an honor. It comes with a responsibility. We have to make our heritage survive and grow.”

## St. Nersess Fundraising Reception Set for Sept. 24

SEMINARY, from page 10

provided by seminary board member Steve Mekenian; a gold-star necklace donated by Mirijohn Givlekian of Royal Jewels in Rye and dinner with the dean, offered by Findikyan. More details on these and the other auction items can be found online at [www.stnersess.edu](http://www.stnersess.edu). Final bids will be taken up until 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 24 during the “Evening Under the Stars” with the highest bidder announced at that time.

Hosts are also being sought to help underwrite the costs for this event. Those interested can visit [www.stnersess.edu](http://www.stnersess.edu).



Last year’s benefit reception brought smiles to the faces of attendees who enjoyed good food and drinks.



The “Evening under the Stars” provides a chance to reunite and reminisce about their past St. Nersess experiences.





## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

# Political Stalemate in and around Armenia

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Ever since the negotiations between the ruling coalition and the opposition came to a grinding halt, Armenia has entered into a period of domestic political stalemate. There was already a stalemate externally with its neighbors, with Karabagh's unending negotiations going nowhere, the Protocols being shelved by the Turkish parliament and love/hate relationships continuing with Georgia.

Armenia's cab drivers constitute the most sensitive political pulse of the country. As soon as one gets into a cab, the driver has a political speech ready for the passenger, beginning with the soaring food and fuel prices and ending with a diatribe against the oligarchs who are plundering the country.

But these days, cab drivers are ominously silent, possibly indicating the hopelessness of the situation. These worries seem to be concentrated on the option of finding a country which can accept their children for education or job opportunities.

When the government coalition and the opposition decided to begin several rounds of negotiations, the opposition was losing steam and the government had run out of alternatives. They both needed each other. Although negotiations were supposed to be secret, both sides were leaking positive stories regarding the developments.

The opposition was running out of steam because of the defections of some of its elite members who were joining the Free Democrats movement, whose platform had yet to be defined. On the opposite end, more radical elements, which favored a violent overthrow of the government, were disillusioned with opposition leader and former President Levon Ter-Petrosian's recent moderate and rational approach.

On the other hand, the government coalition was running into disarray, after the defection of the ARF and rising tensions between President Serge Sargisian's Republican Party and former President Robert Kocharian's Prosperous Armenia Party. Although the latter's leader, Gagik Zaroukian, had signed an agreement to participate jointly in the upcoming elections, other leaders indicated otherwise – that the party may run on its own ticket.

Thus, fractious infighting that had weakened the two opposing groups had paved the way for the opponents to start negotiations.

The opposition had set some manageable conditions to pave the way for negotiations, and the government met those conditions.

The main topic on the agenda was immediate elections. But, in fact, both parties knew deep down that premature elections were out of the question. The government was gaining time and the opposition was insisting on early elections. Yet in fact, the negotiations were about the future shape of the government. Sargisian was probing his opponents to see what percentage of the opposition representation in the next parliament would guarantee his reelection.

Outside the framework of these negotiations, a realignment of other forces is taking place. Robert Kocharian is playing the gray cardinal in Armenian politics. When his two-term presidency expired, he tried to imitate his master, Vladimir Putin, by electing his protégé, Serge Sargisian, with the understanding that after his first term Sargisian would cede his seat to Kocharian. But Sargisian does not seem ready to give in. Thus Kocharian is watching the developments grudgingly while planning his own coalition with the ARF and perhaps with the help of former minister of foreign affairs, Vartan Oskanian, who is ready to publish his own paper and form a new party.

Should the negotiations yield some serious results, Kocharian may take more assertive steps to plan his comeback.

But the negotiations were halted for rather insignificant reasons: some young activists of the opposition were incarcerated, six of them were released. One still remains in jail, offering an excuse for the opposition to interrupt the negotiations. Ter-Petrosian is planning a new rally on September 9 at Liberty Square. Some extreme elements believe that all hell will break loose on that day. But given the precedents, Ter-Petrosian may present a conditional ultimatum, to satisfy his followers and to have the coalition fulfill his conditions.

Currently, it seems that both sides are trying to gain more time and to size up their interlocutors.

In the meantime, the government is in no panic. There are ample opportunities for diversions; first came the 20th anniversary of Karabagh's independence, which was celebrated with great fanfare. Next, Armenia will celebrate its own 20th anniversary, with even greater flourish.

It seems that after the dust settles, following the political rally and anniversary celebrations, the two sides will find a way for *modus vivendi* and gear for the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections.

Whether the negotiations resume or not, or whether they yield any results, people do not pin many hopes on the outcome of those negotiations.

There is a general apathy, which is very dangerous. People are looking for a way out of the country. That's even more serious than any political stalemate.

## 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 Hovanesian, 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](http://www.mirrorspectator.com)

E-Mail: [editor@mirrorspectator.com](mailto:editor@mirrorspectator.com)

For advertising: [mirrorads@aol.com](mailto: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](http://mirrorspectator.com)

By George Bournoutian

I was invited to present a paper at the conference on the Armenians in Poland last year, but the eruption of the volcano in Iceland postponed my visit. I was asked to come this year to examine the Armenian archives in Warsaw and to meet with the scholars who are currently working on Armenian topics.

My knowledge of Polish and my mother's Polish origins opened numerous doors and I found a treasure trove of Armenian manuscripts, rare books and paintings.

The Armenians of Poland were originally concentrated in Lvov, Kamenets-Podolsk, Zamosc and other cities and, as I have indicated in my writings, had converted to Catholicism in the 17th century. Following WWI, Poland reemerged as a state and Lvov and Zamosc were included within its borders. Unlike the Armenians Catholics in Ukraine (under Soviet rule), Armenian Catholics fared well in Catholic Poland. The Armenian cathedral in Lvov and the various Armenian Catholic churches housed manuscripts, books, paintings, vessels and vestments, some of which had been rescued from the Armenian churches in Ukraine during and after the Russo-Polish War of 1920-21 and were sent to Gdansk and other Polish cities.

Some of the important manuscripts were kept in the University of Lvov. The most important was manuscript no. 58, which contained the travelogue of Simon of Poland (*Simeon Lehatsi*). The manuscript was examined by Fr.

Nerses Akinean of the Armenian Mkhitarist Congregation in Vienna, who copied it and printed it in the official Mkhitarist periodical *Handes Amsorya* (Fall 1932-Spring 1935). A year later Akinean published the work in a separate volume with Armenian and German titles. The book contained additional data, colophons, glossary, index and an abstract in German. During WWII, at the time of the German occupation of Lvov, the original manuscript disappeared and was presumed lost. Thus, in 2006, when I decided to prepare the first English translation of the book, I had to rely on Akinean's volume. In 2007, just as my book, *The Travel Accounts of Simeon of Poland*, went into press, I heard that the original had been found and was to be displayed, for a short time, in France. I made a note of this in my translation.

During my recent visit to Poland, I discovered the secret of its survival. After WW II, when the borders of Poland in the east were absorbed by the USSR, Lvov became part of Ukraine. Realizing the danger, all important Armenian manuscripts, rare books, paintings, vessels and vestments were secretly sent by the Armenian Catholic clergy in Lvov to Wroclaw for safekeeping. Between 1946 and 1949, some of the most important items were sent to the National Library in Warsaw. Among them was manuscript no. 58, bound in light red leather, composed of 198 two-sided, neatly written and very legible folios – just as Father Akinean had described it. I was given special permission to examine it, spent some hours comparing parts of it with Akinean's copy and found it exactly the same.

The Armenian community in Poland is composed of two groups. The first group numbers some 2,000 who lived there prior to 1990. This group is assimilated and generally cannot speak or read Armenian. The second group arrived after 1990 and is estimated to be over 25,000. Ironically, it is the members of the first group, who are actively involved in maintaining the historical Armenian presence in Poland and to educate the Polish public about the role of the Armenians in Poland. In 2006 they received a grant from the Polish government and created The Foundation of Culture and Heritage of Polish Armenians. They collected some of the Armenian manuscripts, rare books and paintings from Gdansk and other parts of Poland and have housed them in a secure house-museum in Warsaw. Armenian church vessels and vestments are still in Wroclaw. The foundation issues an Armenian newspaper (*Awedis*), an Armenian calendar, various publications, sponsors conferences and helps doctoral students interested in conducting research on the Armenians in Poland. Their funds are small and their staff is composed of just four individuals, Polish Catholic Armenians, whose families date back to the 17th century. In my humble opinion they are performing a heroic task and are worthy of our support. Among the rare books and manuscripts I found an Armeno-Kipchak dictionary and the original 14th-century decree from King Jagiello confirming the order of King Casimir the Great granting special privileges to the Armenians of Poland.

(George Bournoutian is a senior professor of history at Iona College.)





## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Turkey Can Run, but Can't Hide From the Long Arm of US Law

World heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis once warned one of his opponents: "You can run, but you can't hide." This same warning now applies to the Turkish government and two of its major banks.

Last December, when three Armenian-Americans filed a multi-million dollar lawsuit in US Federal Court against the Republic of Turkey, the Central Bank and Ziraat Bank, the Turkish government ridiculed the charges, claiming "sovereign immunity."

The Armenian-American plaintiffs were seeking \$64 million in compensation for confiscation of their properties in Adana, Turkey, in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide. The plaintiffs were also demanding additional millions of dollars for the accrued rent and interest the US government paid Turkey in the past 60 years for use of the strategic Incirlik Air Base, located on Armenian-owned land.

Since one of the first steps in filing a lawsuit is to serve a copy of the court documents to the defendants, the three Turkish entities concocted elaborate schemes to avoid

receiving the legal papers, in order to delay or obstruct the trial. As a result, the plaintiffs' attorneys had to go to extraordinary lengths in the past nine months to deliver the court documents to the Turkish defendants.

Ironically, after making every effort to block the serving of court papers, the Central Bank and Ziraat Bank filed a motion on June 1, 2011, seeking dismissal of the case, arguing that they had not received the proper documents.

On August 2, 2011 US Federal Judge Dolly Gee rejected the Turkish request, asserting that the plaintiffs' representatives "made several attempts to serve the Bank defendants at their addresses in New York City. After being repeatedly denied access to the buildings and, in one case, being misdirected as to Ziraat Bank's actual location, the process servers left copies of the summonses and complaint with the building security guards. Plaintiffs' counsel then mailed additional copies to the each of the Bank defendants at these same addresses."

The judge ruled that the Republic of Turkey had been adequately served with legal documents and ordered the Turkish entities to present their pleading in court no later than August 19, 2011.

The plaintiffs' attorneys faced greater difficulties in serving the court documents to the Turkish authorities than to the New York offices of the two banks. On January 26, 2011, the English and Turkish versions of the complaint were mailed to the Ministry of Justice in Ankara, as required by the Hague Convention. On March 1, 2011, Turkey informed the plaintiffs' lawyers in writing, its refusal to accept the court papers, claiming that the lawsuit infringes Turkey's "sovereignty and security."

After exhausting all other channels, the plaintiffs' lawyers submitted the court documents to the US

Department of State on April 14, 2011, asking the latter to present them officially to the Turkish government. On June 20, 2011, the State Department advised the plaintiffs that the documents were forwarded through diplomatic channels to the Republic of Turkey.

The American Embassy in Ankara transmitted the documents with a "diplomatic note," warning the Turkish government that under US law "a defendant in a lawsuit must file an answer to the complaint within 60 days from the date of notice or face the possibility of having judgment entered against it." The US Embassy strongly urged the Turkish Foreign Ministry to comply with the requirements of United States laws or face "a default judgment."

On August 29, 2011, after the mandated 60 days had expired and no response received from Turkey, the attorneys for the Armenian-American plaintiffs asked the Federal Court to enter a default judgment against the Turkish defendants.

Vatan newspaper reported last week that the two Turkish banks, alarmed by the serious prospect of losing a multi-million dollar lawsuit due to their failure to respond to the US Federal Court, rushed to hire a lawyer and asked for more time until September 19, 2011 to file a response.

Should the Turkish defendants not show up in court on September 19, the Federal Judge could enter a default judgment and order that their assets in the US, up to the value of the judgment, be seized and turned over to the Armenian-American plaintiffs.

The Turkish government can no longer hide from its responsibilities for the devastating damage caused to the Armenian people as a result of the Genocide. It is high time for Turkey to acknowledge its long history of colossal criminal acts and make appropriate amends.

# Why I Had to Leave *The Times*

By Robert Fisk

He is a caliph, I suppose, almost of the Middle Eastern variety.

You hear all these awful things about Arab dictators and then, when you meet them, they are charm itself. Hafez al-Assad once held my hand in his for a long time with a paternal smile. Surely he can't be that bad, I almost said to myself – this was long before the 1982 Hama massacres. King Hussein would call me "Sir," along with most other journalists. These potentates, in public, would often joke with their ministers. Mistakes could be forgiven.

*The Hitler Diaries* were Murdoch's own mistake, after refusing to countenance his own "expert's" change of heart over the documents hours before *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* began printing them. Months later, I was passing by the paper's London office on my way back to Beirut when the foreign editor, Ivan Barnes, held up the Reuters wire copy from Bonn. "Aha!" he thundered. "The diaries are forgeries!" The West German government had proved that they must have been written long after the Führer's death.

So Barnes dispatched me to editor Charles Douglas-Home's office with the Reuters story and I marched in only to find Charlie entertaining Murdoch. "They say they're forgeries, Charlie," I announced, trying not to glance at Murdoch. But I did when he reacted. "Well, there you go," the mogul reflected with a giggle. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." Much mirth. The man's insouciance was almost catching. Great Story. It only had one problem. It wasn't true.

Oddly, he never appeared the ogre of evil, darkness and poison that he's been made out to be

these past few days. Maybe it's because his editors and sub-editors and reporters repeatedly second-guessed what Murdoch would say. Murdoch was owner of *The Times* when I covered the blood-soaked Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanon in 1982. Not a line was removed from my reports, however critical they were of Israel. After the invasion, Douglas-Home and Murdoch were invited by the Israelis to take a military helicopter trip into Lebanon. The Israelis tried to rubbish my reporting; Douglas-Home said he stood up for me. On the flight back to London, Douglas-Home and Murdoch sat together. "I knew Rupert was interested in what I was writing," he told me later. "He sort of waited for me to tell him what it was, although he didn't demand it. I didn't show it to him."

But things changed. Before he was editor, Douglas-Home would write for the Arabic-language *Al-Majella* magazine, often deeply critical of Israel. Now his *Times* editorials took an optimistic view of the Israeli invasion. He stated that "there is now no worthy Palestinian to whom the world can talk" and – for heaven's sake – that "perhaps at last the Palestinians on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip will stop hoping that stage-strutters like Mr. Arafat can rescue them miraculously from doing business with the Israelis."

All of which, of course, was official Israeli government policy at the time.

Then, in the spring of 1983, another change. I had, with Douglas-Home's full agreement, spent months investigating the death of seven Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners of the Israelis in Sidon. It was obvious, I concluded, that the men had been murdered – the grave-digger even told me that their corpses had been brought to him, hands tied behind their backs, showing marks of bruising. But now Douglas-Home couldn't see how we would be "justified" in running a report "so long after the event."

In other words, the very system of investigative journalism – of fact-checking and months of interviews – became self-defeating. When we got the facts, too much time had passed to print them. I asked the Israelis if they would carry out a military inquiry and, anxious to show how humanitarian they were, they duly told us there would be an official investigation. The Israeli "inquiry" was, I suspected, a fiction. But it was enough to "justify" publishing my long and detailed report. Once the Israelis could look like good guys, Douglas-Home's concerns evaporated.

When he died, of cancer, it was announced that his deputy, Charles Wilson, would edit the paper. Murdoch said that Wilson was "Charlie's choice" and I thought, so, all well and good –

until I was chatting to Charlie's widow and she told me that it was the first time she had heard that Wilson's editorship had been her late husband's decision. We all knew Murdoch had signed up to all manner of guarantees of editorial independence, oversight and promises of goodwill when he bought *The Times* – and had then fired his first editor, Harold Evans. He would deal with the trade unionists later.

Charles Wilson – who much later became, briefly, the editor of *The Independent* – was a tough, friendly man who could show great kindness, as well as harshness, to his staff. He was kind to me, too. But once, when I was visiting Wilson in London, Murdoch walked into his office. "Hallo, Robert!" Murdoch greeted me, before holding a jocular conversation with Wilson. And, after he had left, Wilson said to me in a hushed voice: "See how he called you by your first name?" This was laughable. It was like the Assad smile or the King Hussein "Sir." It meant nothing. Murdoch was joking with his ministers and courtiers.

A warning sign. Still in west Beirut, where dozens of Westerners were being kidnapped, I opened *The Times* to discover that a pro-Israeli writer was claiming on our center page that all journalists in west Beirut, clearly intimidated by "terrorism," could be regarded only as "blood-suckers." Was the paper claiming that I, too, was a bloodsucker? In all this time, Murdoch had expressed exclusively pro-Israeli views, and had accepted a "Man of the Year" award from a prominent Jewish-American organization. *The Times* editorials became more and more pro-Israeli, their use of the word "terrorist" ever more promiscuous.

The end came for me when I flew to Dubai in 1988 after the USS Vincennes had shot down an Iranian passenger airliner over the Gulf. Within 24 hours, I had spoken to the British air traffic controllers at Dubai, discovered that US ships had routinely been threatening British Airways airliners and that the crew of the Vincennes appeared to have panicked. The foreign desk told me the report was up for the page-one splash. I warned them that American "leaks" that the IranAir pilot was trying to suicide-crash his aircraft on to the Vincennes were rubbish. They agreed.

Next day, my report appeared with all criticism of the Americans deleted, with all my sources ignored. *The Times* even carried an editorial suggesting the pilot was indeed a suicider. A subsequent US official report and accounts by US naval officers subsequently proved my dispatch correct. Except that *Times* readers were not allowed to see it. This was when I first made contact with *The Independent*. I didn't

believe in *The Times* any more – certainly not in Rupert Murdoch.

Months later, a senior night editor who had been on duty on the night my Vincennes report arrived, recalled in a letter that he had promoted my dispatch as the splash, but that Wilson had said: "There's nothing in it. There's not a fact in it. I wouldn't even run this gibberish." Wilson, the night editor said, called it "bollocks" and "waffle." The night editor's diary for that day finished: "Shambles, chaos on Gulf story. [George] Brock [Wilson's foreign editor] rewrites Fisk."

The good news: a few months later, I was Middle East correspondent for *The Independent*. The bad news: I don't believe Murdoch personally interfered in any of the above events. He didn't need to. He had turned *The Times* into a tame, pro-Tory, pro-Israeli paper shorn of all editorial independence. If I hadn't been living in the Middle East, of course, it might have taken me longer to grasp all this.

But I worked in a region where almost every Arab journalist knows the importance of self-censorship – or direct censorship – and where kings and dictators do not need to give orders. They have satraps and ministers and senior police officers – and "democratic" governments – who know their wishes, their likes and dislikes. And they do what they believe their master wants. Of course, they all told me this was not true and went on to assert that their king/president was always right.

These past two weeks, I have been thinking of what it was like to work for Murdoch, what was wrong about it, about the use of power by proxy. For Murdoch could never be blamed. Murdoch was more caliph than ever, no more responsible for an editorial or a "news" story than a president of Syria is for a massacre – the latter would be carried out on the orders of governors who could always be tried or sacked or sent off as adviser to a prime minister – and the leader would invariably anoint his son as his successor. Think of Hafez and Bashar Assad or Hosni and Gamal Mubarak or Rupert and James. In the Middle East, Arab journalists knew what their masters wanted, and helped to create a journalistic desert without the water of freedom, an utterly skewed version of reality. So, too, within the Murdoch empire.

In the sterile world of the Murdochs, new technology was used to deprive the people of their freedom, of speech and of privacy. In the Arab world, surviving potentates had no problem in appointing tame prime ministers. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

(Robert Fisk is a Middle East correspondent for *The Independent* newspaper.





# Still Going: French Crooner Aznavour, 87, Gears up for Tour

PARIS (AFP) — He may be 87, but don't suggest to French crooner and veritable national monument Charles Aznavour that his forthcoming tour is a farewell tour. "I have never, ever used the word farewell," he quickly points out.

The legendary singer-songwriter pleased fans the world over when he announced plans for a month-long residency at Paris' landmark Olympia theatre starting September 7, followed by a nationwide tour.

Aznavour's stint in the capital is a return to the stage that launched his career 55 years ago. Close to 1,000 songs and some 60 films later, there is — once again — speculation that he may choose the moment to announce his retirement.

"Some of the press say anything!" he said. "I said that I was going to do one of my last tours. But when (US director) Martin Scorsese presents his latest film, you don't say he's not going to make another."

Aznavour said he is embarking on his new tour without first-night nerves — but a bit of anxiety.

"I used to get nervous, at the start, when the audience hadn't come to see me but from the moment they did, it stopped," he said.

Anxiety, on the other hand, "it's about the set, the songs. Was I right to do this tour? Should I have stopped before?" he said.

Born in Paris in 1924 to Armenian parents, Aznavour — originally Aznavourian — grew up in the city's poorer neighborhoods before finding a home on the stage.

Starting out in cabaret, he later teamed up with young songwriter and composer Pierre Roche and the iconic Edith Piaf, who would take him to America and a solo career.

In 1954, he rose to prominence with his live renditions of *Sur Ma Vie*, followed by one of his biggest hits *Je m'voyais déjà* in 1960 — the same year he starred on screen in Francois Truffaut's "Shoot the Piano Player," which catapulted him to fame abroad.

A couple of years later he took New York's Carnegie Hall by storm before touring the world and seeing his songs sung by stars from Ray Charles (*La Mamma*) to Liza Minnelli and Fred Astaire.

Aznavour is not only one of France's most



Charles Aznavour

popular singers but the first French performer to have a recording that went platinum in Europe. He has sold more than 100 million records worldwide.

In 1998 he was named Entertainer of the Century by CNN and *Time* Online.

The octogenarian is aware he may not be able to carry off performances as he once did and may have to make concessions to his years.

"If I need to sit down, I'm going to sit down, if I need to sing while standing, I'll sing standing," he said matter-of-factly.

"That doesn't mean I'm helpless, but you have to know your age.

"My memory is getting worse and worse, so I'm just going to tell the audience the truth: I will probably have an autocue at some point," the singer said.

"I don't complicate things, because the audience isn't complicated. I have told them everything until now, including when I had a hair transplant," he laughed.

Ahead of the tour, Aznavour is publishing *From One Door to Another*, a collection of

thoughts and memories, and will release "Always," a new album of original songs.

From a generation of French "chanson" masters where lyrics are king and the tune a prop, the album is pure Aznavour with story-songs on the passing of time, on war, love and desire.

"I'm often asked if I am thinking about a

woman as I write," he said.

"No, I think about the beauty of the words first then the subject follows by itself."

"I owe everything to French literature, I'm a voracious reader, I buy an enormous number of books, and beautiful books, because I like it when my hands are able to touch something as beautiful as my eyes can see," said Aznavour.

His current reading list features the latest offering by French-Afghan author Atiq Rahimi, some Turkish literature and "a spot of the *Bible* and the *Koran*..."

For his Olympia shows and the 20 dates that follow, he has selected "some new songs, some old, some very old and some all-time favorites."

The new? "Well, I have a new musician who plays the duduk," he said, referring to a flute-like traditional woodwind instrument from Armenia, where Aznavour set up an aid foundation and was granted citizenship in 2008 by presidential decree.

"So I am going to sing a song that I recorded with a duduk but that I have never been able to play on stage," he adds enthusiastically.

"I'm like every other artist, I like doing things that nobody else does: performing at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, at the Kremlin, St. Mark's Square in Venice... I get a real kick out of that," he said.

"At my age, I'm not stopping anyone else from doing it. Just the opposite, I think I am paving the way."

## Karabagh Celebrates 20th Anniversary Of Declaration of Independence

INDEPENDENCE, from page 1

"Tomorrow is a blissful day not only for Artsakh (Karabagh) but for the entire Armenian nation," he said. "It's a holiday of human and national liberty; it's a holiday of human and national dignity; it's a holiday of restoration for once abused human rights; it's a holiday of victory for historic justice."

"Once Artsakh was Armenian pain, today it is Armenian pride," he added. "The Republic of

The Karabagh-born president further reiterated that Armenians would never agree to any settlement of the Karabagh conflict that would place the territory back under Azerbaijani control. "Whatever was possible in 1923 is not possible in the 21st century," he said, referring to Karabagh's incorporation into Soviet Azerbaijan.

Sargisian and his predecessor, Robert Kocharian, also a native of Karabagh, expressed confidence earlier this week that the international community will eventually recognize Karabagh's secession from Azerbaijan.

Despite championing such recognition, both men have long resisted calls by some Armenian opposition groups for Armenia to formally recognize Karabagh as an independent state. They believe that the unilateral move would seriously complicate a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Kocharian, who governed Armenia from 1998-2008, also took part in the Stepanakert march. He declined a comment when approached by an RFE/RL correspondent.

Also attending the celebrations were other prominent Karabagh Armenians holding high-level government positions in Yerevan. One of them, Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian, held up Karabagh society as a model for Armenia.

"In Artsakh, there is virtually no gap between the rulers and the people and such an exemplary society that can also be developed in the Republic of Armenia," Ohanian said.

"Karabagh has moral, historical and legal grounds to have its independence recognized by the world," said Arkady Ghukasian, a former Karabagh president who now works as a senior diplomatic adviser to Sargisian.



Armenian President Serge Sargisian and Catholicos Karekin II lay flowers at the grave of a Karabagh Armenian soldier, on September 2.

Nagorno Karabagh is an established state with all essential structures."

Sargisian, who commanded Karabagh's Armenian forces in 1991-1993, contended that the disputed region's population would have "perished" had it not defeated, with Armenia's substantial help, the Azerbaijani army. "We chose life, and today we celebrate the victory of life over death," he said.

## The Armenian Mirror-Spectator

YES, I would like a 1-year subscription to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator.

USA/Second Class Mail \$75.00

CANADA /Air Mail \$125.00

USA/First Class Mail \$120.00

☐ THE SUBSCRIPTION IS FOR ME

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... STATE ..... ZIP .....

☐ THE SUBSCRIPTION IS A GIFT FOR:

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... STATE ..... ZIP .....

Please make check payable to: The Armenian Mirror-Spectator and mail to:  
755 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472-1509

All payments must be drawn on US banks

# SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

Check us out at  
[www.mirrorspectator.com](http://www.mirrorspectator.com)