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Turkey to Return Seized Property to Minorities

By Sebnem Arsu

ANKARA (*New York Times*) – The Turkish government said it would return hundreds of properties that were confiscated from religious minorities by the state or other parties over the years since 1936 and would pay compensation for properties that were seized and later sold.

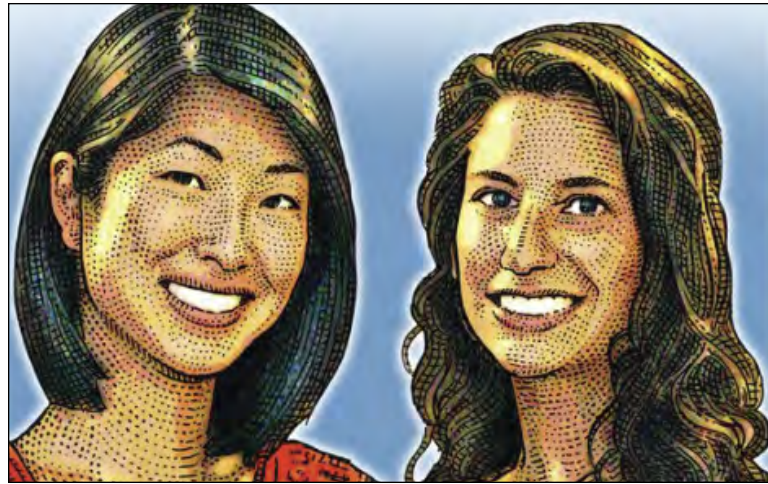
Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan made the announcement on Sunday to representatives of more than 150 Christian and Jewish trusts gathered at a dinner he hosted in Istanbul to break the day's Ramadan fast. The government decree to return the properties, bypassing nationalist opposition in Parliament, was issued late Saturday.

The European Union, which Turkey has applied to join, has pressed the country to ease or eliminate laws and policies that discriminate against non-Muslim religious groups, including restrictions on land ownership. Many of the properties, including schools, hospitals, orphanages and cemeteries, were seized after 1936 when trusts were called to list their assets, and in 1974 a separate ruling banned the groups from purchasing any new real estate.

Disputes over the groups' properties have tied up Turkish and European courts for decades, and the European Court for Human Rights has ordered Turkey to pay compensation in several cases related to religious minority rights in recent years.

"Like everyone else, we also do know about the injustices that different religious groups have been subjected to because of their differences," Erdogan said at the dinner, according to the semiofficial Anatolian News Agency. "Times that a citizen of ours would be oppressed due to his religion, ethnic origin or different way of life are over."

In contrast with its staunchly secular predecessors, the Islam-inspired government of Erdogan's Justice and Development Party, known as AKP, has been more sympathetic and attentive to Turkey's non-Muslims, including Jews and Christians. It has enacted a number of measures since 2002 to



A *Wall Street Journal* graphic featuring Yuki Kotani and Michelle Javian

Story with a Heart

Javian and Friend Help Heart Disease Victims And Their Families

NEW YORK – Michelle Javian transformed personal tragedy into an opportunity to help others in pain. Her father's death from heart disease opened her eyes to the need for financial, moral and informational support of victims of this disease and their families, who often have to travel to hospitals in distant cities for treatment and face great financial distress along with the direct effects of the disease. She and Yuki Kotani, whose father has struggled with heart disease and who herself has a congenital heart defect, founded a New York City-based nonprofit organization called Harboring Hearts in order to alleviate the needs of other sufferers and their families as much as is humanly possible.

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator

Javian, born in Queens, grew up in Long Island and was active with her family in Holy Martyrs Armenian Church in Bayside. She went to Sunday school, picnics and Camp Nubar and still has numerous Armenian friends. She graduated from Georgetown University with a degree in health studies, which focuses on the administrative or economic side of health professions. Then she moved to Manhattan and began a marketing job in the healthcare division of Bank of America. The normal progression of her career was interrupted by her father's sickness. He was in the hospital for nearly two years, and then passed away in April 2008.

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bring Turkish law more into compliance with European Union standards on minority rights, so that Turkey's application to join the union could advance.

The decree issued on Saturday removed legal impediments that had continued to block the return of the properties even after amendments were enacted in recent years to allow it.

"There have been changes made to existent legislation at least five times since the government of the AK Party, but they have not been very satisfactory in practice," said a Greek government official who asked not to be identified because of his diplomatic position. "We hope this time the changes would make a real difference in implementation."



YEREVAN — ADL Eastern District Committee Co-Chairs Edmond Azadian and Papken Megerian are visiting Armenia to meet with government and ecclesiastical officials regarding the issues the ADL and the diaspora in general are facing now. Azadian, above center, and Megerian, right, met with Diaspora Minister Hranoush Hagopian, left, in her office this week.

Turkish-Armenian Genocide Study 'Unacceptable'

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – President Serge Sargsian called on Thursday his critics' assertions that unlike his predecessor Robert Kocharian, he embraced Ankara's idea of a joint Turkish-Armenian study of the 1915 mass killings and deportations of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire as "disinformation."

In a rare and unusually-swift reaction to a media report, his press secretary, Armen Arzumanyan, demanded that an Armenian online journal "correct" an article saying that "Serge Sargsian accepted something that was rejected by Robert Kocharian."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Yerevan Municipality Continues Removal of Street Kiosks

YEREVAN (Hetq) – The head of the Yerevan Municipality's Department of Trade and Services stated this week that the dismantling of non-functioning street kiosks and those with expired leases is continuing throughout downtown Yerevan.

The official also said that 2,240 retail locations in temporary structures had already been registered throughout the capital.

Sixteen such retail operations have been registered on Abovyan Street alone. Two have been dismantled for having expired contracts with the city and another four were slated for removal last week.

New Sentencing in Missile Scam

NEW YORK (AP) – A federal appeals court in New York has ordered new sentencing for an Armenian immigrant sent to prison for 22 years for plotting to sell anti-aircraft missiles, and other military weapons to an FBI informant.

The second US Circuit Court of Appeals said Tuesday that a judge incorrectly calculated the factors used to determine the seriousness of the crime carried out by Artur Solomonyan.

Otherwise, the appeals court upheld the conviction and sentencing of Solomonyan and five others. They were sentenced in 2009 on arms trafficking and conspiracy charges. The only weapons actually delivered were a dozen firearms, including a machine gun.

A lawyer for Solomonyan did not immediately return a phone message for comment.

General Amnesty Declared in Karabagh

STEPANAKERT (RFE/RL) – Authorities in Nagorno Karabagh declared on Tuesday a general amnesty, which they said will lead to the early release of about 20 percent of the territory's prison population.

The Karabagh parliament approved a corresponding bill put forward by Bako Sahakian, the unrecognized republic's president.

Officials in Stepanakert refused to specify how many convicts will be set free as a result of the amnesty dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Karabagh's declaration of independence from Azerbaijan. The total number of persons serving prison sentences in Karabagh is also not known.

The bill stipulates that the amnesty will not apply to individuals convicted of murder, rape, robberies and other grave crimes. It will mainly affect those sentenced to up to three years' imprisonment or underage convicts.

Other prisoners serving longer sentences can have their jail terms cut by at least one-third if they participated in the 1991-1994 war with Azerbaijan or are related to individuals killed in the fighting.

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Karsh and ALMA

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Police Focus on Solving Yerevan Robberies

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Armenian police pledged on Thursday to spare no effort to identify and prosecute those responsible for a series of high-profile robberies in the capital.

“I want to assure you that we will do everything to quickly solve those crimes because they are fraught with much more dangerous consequences,” Lt. Gen. Alik Sargisian, the chief of the national police service, said.

Sargisian referred to recent months’ armed attacks on the Yerevan houses of five wealthy individuals. They have reportedly followed the same pattern, with masked men breaking into the mansions early in the morning, beating up the owners and stealing large amounts of cash and other valuables.

The police and state prosecutors believe that all five robberies were the work of a single gang.

Sargisian said the investigation is handled by a special team of high-ranking police officers, under his direct supervision.

The inquiry was criticized by Prosecutor General Aghvan Hovsepian on Tuesday, who suggested that police were late in investigating the initial crimes properly.

Lebanon Ambassador Ends Mission in Armenia

YEREVAN (Times.am) – President Serge Sargisian this week received Lebanon’s ambassador to Armenia, Jibrail Jeara, who is ending his diplomatic mission in Armenia.

Sargisian thanked Jeara for his service and activities in Armenia. “Our nations have had friendly relations for many centuries and I am happy that our relations are developing now as well,” said Sargisian and hoped that the new ambassador would follow suit.

More Health Violations At Yerevan Supermarkets

YEREVAN (hetq) – Spot checks by the Food Safety Inspectorate at various Yerevan City supermarkets have revealed a number of violations.

Hayk Minasyan, an Inspectorate staffer, said that inspection teams spotted several items without the required Armenian labels.

Yerevan City has recently made the news for selling a variety of oatmeal where past expiration dates had been hidden with labels leading customers to believe that the product was still “consumable.”

Opposition Suspends Talks Again

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The opposition Armenian National Congress (HAK) suspended its dialogue with the government on Friday in protest against the continuing imprisonment of one of its activists arrested earlier this month.

HAK accused Armenia’s governing coalition of reneging on what it said was a pledge to ensure the quick release of Tigran Arakelian.

“The existence of political prisoners is making the continuation of the dialogue impossible,” the bloc said, adding that it will be ready to resume talks if Arakelian is set free.

The statement was issued shortly after HAK representatives failed to attend the next meeting with coalition negotiators scheduled for Friday morning.

Chief negotiator Davit Harutunian condemned the withdrawal. “This means that HAK lacks the political will to properly continue this process,” he said.

Arakelian was one of seven members of the HAK’s youth wing who was arrested on August 9 after clashing with police in disputed circumstances. He is facing up to 10 years in prison on charges of assaulting police officers.

The six other youths are facing less serious charges. They are free pending an investigation.

FAF and AGBU Announce Launch of NUR Plan in Karabagh

STEPANAKERT – The launch of NUR Plan in Karabagh by Fruitful Armenian Fund (FAF) and the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) was announced at press conferences held here on August 15 and Yerevan on August 16, with the participation of representatives from both organizations.

Following the agreement signed last January between Karabagh Prime Minister Ara Harutunyan and Argentinean-Armenian entrepreneur Eduardo Eurnekian, FAF presented the general concept of NUR, a plan aimed at changing the future of the educational system. NUR will be implemented with the cooperation of AGBU, the world’s largest nonprofit Armenian organization, which will be providing on-the-ground support to ensure the success of the project.

NUR has been conceived following the concept of One Laptop Per Child (OLPC). OLPC is an educational program developed at the Boston-area MIT university. OLPC has successfully married a hands-on approach to education with an affordable laptop computer, the XO, which was designed for educational purposes. XO is not a conventional laptop. It is a waterproof computer with durable batteries that are charged through solar cells. The units, which have Armenian keyboards, are designed to be drop-resistant and they are made so that information cannot be lost.

The program will be providing XO laptop computers to first- to fourth-grade students and their teachers. As part of the agreement, the government

of Karabagh has agreed to provide Internet access at participating schools.

In the first stage, which begins September 2011, 160 teachers from

future stages of the project.

“NUR is close to AGBU’s mission. The Union is interested in educational projects. Collaboration within the frame-



From left, AGBU Central Board member Vasken Yacoubian, entrepreneur Eduardo Eurnekian, Chief Executive Director of FAF Ana Cristina Schirinian and NUR Program Manager Sebastian Arias-Duvall.

schools in the Karabagh cities of Stepanakert and Shushi will start training through an intensive three-week course on SUGAR, the educational software used by XO. They will also attend a six-week virtual course to incorporate further updates on the different programs to be used with the students.

The government will also oversee that the remaining cities and towns in Karabagh will receive hi-speed Internet service so that they can participate in

work of NUR is favorable for all parties. With this, we will be developing one of the most valuable potentials of the Armenian nation – the human being,” said Vasken Yacoubian, AGBU Central Board member.

“This is a new way of learning. We learned with books, they will learn with computers. They only need to have it, the rest they will do on their own,” said Ana Cristina Schirinian, executive director of FAF.

Sargisian Again Threatens to Scrap Turkish-Armenian Accords

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – President Serge Sargisian on Tuesday again threatened to formally annul Armenia’s normalization agreements with Turkey if Ankara continues to link their parliamentary ratification with the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict.

He indicated that Yerevan will wait for no more than several months for an unconditional normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations, which is envisaged by the two protocols signed in 2009.

“The Turkish side has to understand that these protocols are not an open-ended opportunity,” Sargisian told an annual meeting in Yerevan of Armenian ambassadors and other senior diplomats.

“Many of our [foreign] friends advised us to wait until the [June] parliamentary elections in Turkey,” he said. “So in the next several months we will see whether there has been a change of approaches in Turkey after those elections. But frankly speaking, the past two months have not given us grounds for optimism.”

“On the basis of those observations, we will also decide our further steps regarding the protocols,” he warned.

Sargisian already threatened to withdraw Yerevan’s signature from the protocols in January. He said that the Turks “destroyed” the Western-

backed rapprochement between the two historical foes with their Karabagh linkage.

Shortly after the signing of the protocols in Zurich attended by top diplomats from the United States, Europe and Russia, Ankara made clear that the Turkish parliament will not ratify them without decisive progress in the Karabagh peace process. Azerbaijan

However, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other Turkish leaders have continued to state that Turkey will not establish diplomatic relations and open its border with Armenia until a Karabagh settlement acceptable to Azerbaijan.

Tensions between the two neighboring states rose further later in July after Ankara accused Sargisian of voicing Armenian territorial claims on Turkey. Erdogan publicly demanded that the Armenian leader apologize for the “provocation.” Officials in Yerevan rejected the accusations.

Sargisian insisted on Tuesday that despite the lack of tangible results, he does not regret embarking

on a policy of rapprochement with Turkey shortly after taking office in April 2008. “I think that those present in this audience understand that that initiative has boosted Armenia’s international standing and dispelled our partners’ illusions about a new and contemporary Turkey,” he said.

Sargisian has been accused by critics in Armenia and its worldwide diaspora of making too many concessions to the Turks in the normalization process and gaining little in return. One of them, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation party, quit his coalition government in protest in 2009.

“The Turkish side has to understand that these protocols are not an open-ended opportunity.”

—President Serge Sargisian

welcomed this condition.

Sargisian responded by freezing the process of protocol ratification by Armenia’s parliament in April 2010. In a televised address to the nation, he said he decided not to scrap the agreements altogether at the request of the United States and other foreign powers.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton praised this stance as “very statesmanlike” when she visited Yerevan in July 2010. Clinton reportedly pressed the Turkish government to unconditionally comply with the Protocols during a visit to Istanbul last month.



ARMENIA



Participants and counselors at the Antranik Scout Camp

AGBU Scout Camp Hosts 400 Scouts in Armenia

LORI, Armenia – AGBU's Antranik Scout Camp in the Lori region, continues to be a hub of the organization's international scouting activities. This year, the four-year-old camp welcomed 400 scouts from AGBU troops in Aleppo, Beirut, Damascus, Kamishly (Syria), Los Angeles, Montevideo, Tehran and Yerevan.

Under the leadership of AGBU-AYA of Lebanon's Executive Director Kevork Santourian, Camp Antranik opened its doors from June 30 to August 2, for three sessions that allowed the scouts of Armenian heritage to explore Armenia's nature, visit its landmarks, volunteer their time for community service projects and form friendships with other youth.

This year, the AGBU scouts were joined by

the newly-formed Haiki Serund (The Generation of Haik) from Karabagh.

The opening of the first session took place on July 3, and the official flag ceremony was attended by Rev. Torgom Tonikian, diocesan vicar of the Gugark Diocese, officials of the Lori region and numerous guests. Participating in the first session were the groups from Tehran, Montevideo and Beirut, as well as the preparatory group from Yerevan. The groups from California, Aleppo, Damascus and Kamishly participated in the second session, while the groups from Yerevan and Karabagh formed the participants during the third session.

The scope and outreach of this AGBU pro-

gram in Armenia continues to expand each year, as exemplified by the first-time participation of scouts from Montevideo. The Uruguayan scouts, who have an obvious love of music, performed a musical adaptation of "Ourakh Avatum" (In Happy Town) in the neighboring city of Vanadzor and they composed a special song for the Antranik Scout Camp, which has already turned into a popular march.

Camp participants spent unforgettable weeks in the homeland, helping to forge their Armenian identities and a love for a land they were unfamiliar with. During their visit to Holy Echmiadzin, they received the blessing of Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians.

Destitute Breast Cancer Patient Stripped of Medical Pension

By Larisa Paremuzyan

YEREVAN (Hetq) – In 2005, Ofik Evoyan had one of her breasts removed after a cancerous tumor was discovered.

The woman was registered as a third-class disabled person and granted a 12,000 drams (\$33) monthly pension. That pension has now been taken away by a medical examining committee in Lori.

Arman Daghbashyan, who heads the committee, argues that the woman is sick but not disabled.

Harutyun Mikayelyan, an oncologist at the Alaverdi Medical Center, strongly disagrees with the decision of the committee.

Evoyan went for a check-up this May at the Yerevan Oncology Institute and was given an affidavit stating that she suffers from cancer and that typhus has been discovered on her thyroid gland, among other ailments.

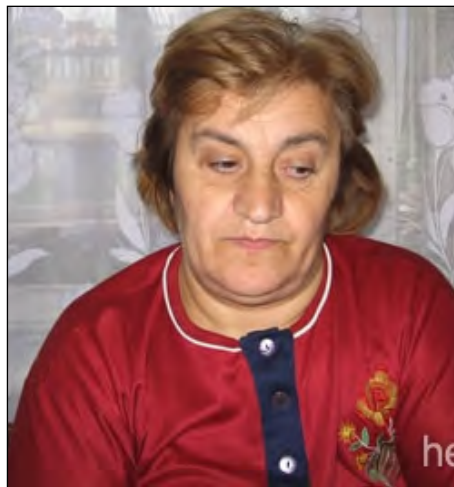
Doctors warn that she must undergo an intensive examination regimen.

Evoyan says that Daghbashyan doesn't believe the authenticity of the institute's medical report and that is why he decided to reclassify her third-degree disability status.

"He says that I got the report through the help of friends," says Evoyan.

A few days later after making his decision, Daghbashyan demanded that the woman have herself admitted to the Yerevan #1 Hospital for tests.

Mikayelyan says that the tests have yet to determine whether the medical conditions list-



Ofik Evoyan

ed in the institute's report have any connection with the tumor or not.

Mikayelyan adds that Evoyan got the institute's notice in May and presented it to the medical investigations committee on June 10 in order that her status be decided.

If the committee had any doubt, it should have sent the woman for additional tests immediately thereafter, when Evoyan was still registered as disabled and could avail herself of free medical testing.

Now, being stripped of her status, Evoyan has to admit herself like a regular patient and pay several thousands drams to get tested. The woman cannot afford to do so.

Mikayelyan says that the woman may even be issued a certificate saying she is healthy.

"But how can she be considered healthy when one of her breasts has been removed, she has a tumor and can't flex her hands. Evoyan was to get a lifetime pension starting next year. Now they are telling her that she can't get a classification group."

Evoyan says that her health has deteriorated after the 2005 surgery.

The medical examining committee had given her a second-class medical status from 2005 to 2010.

She says that a temporary committee president named Petrosyan downgraded her status to a level three without even looking at her case file.

Evoyan took the downgrade in stride – at least it would pay for her medication.

None in her family of seven have a steady job. One of her daughters receives a social subsidy of 19,000 drams.

But she only feels resentment for Daghbashyan.

Evoyan has no formal education and worked as a cleaning attendant for many years.

"Given her condition, she can't work as a cleaner. If she had some type of profession, Mrs. Evoyan might get an office job and use her good right hand," says Mikayelyan.

Hetq tried to get in touch with Daghbashyan who heads the medical examining committee. We were told that he's away on vacation and will be back on September 12.

Hetq was able to talk to him by telephone on August 28.

"Ofik Evoyan's condition has improved. Yes, she is sick but not disabled. That's why she hasn't been classified as such," Daghbashyan said.

Armenian Military Probes Another Non-Combat Death

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Military authorities have launched a criminal investigation into the non-combat death of yet another Armenian soldier, which highlighted their continuing failure to root out chronic abuses within the army ranks. Armenia's Defense Ministry reported at the weekend that Aghasi Abrahamian, an 18-year-old conscript serving in an army unit near Nagorno Karabagh, died shortly after being hospitalized with serious injuries late on Friday.

A ministry statement said that military investigators are now trying to establish the causes of Abrahamian's death. It said they opened a criminal case under a Criminal Code clause dealing with involuntary manslaughter caused by beatings.

The ministry's Investigative Department reported no arrests among military personnel as of Monday evening.

Abrahamian's grief-stricken relatives insisted, meanwhile, that the conscript was beaten to death and that the investigators should treat the case as a deliberate murder.

"My boy was brutally beaten to death," his mother, Gayane Abrahamian, said in her Yerevan apartment where Abrahamian lay in state on Monday.

"I sent a healthy boy [to the army] and I expected to get back a healthy boy, not a dead body," she cried.

Gayane Abrahamian added that she last spoke to her son by phone three days before his death. "He said he is fine but I didn't like his mood," she said.

Gevorg Sahakian, another relative, said there were numerous injuries on the young man's head, face and body. He also claimed to have seen what looked like a stab wound on the right side of Abrahamian's abdomen.

According to the Defense Ministry, the soldier was unconscious when he was brought to a Karabagh military hospital.

The mysterious death came as another blow to the Armenian military's assurances that it has stepped up its fight against violent army crime. The problem has had a greater public resonance in the past year.

Dozens of military personnel have been arrested, fired or demoted since August 2010. Still, human rights groups and families of dead soldiers continue to assert that the military authorities are not doing enough to tackle the problem.

According to military prosecutors, 43 Armenian soldiers were killed by fellow servicemen, committed suicide or died in various accidents or illnesses last year. By comparison, 11 soldiers died in skirmishes with Azerbaijani troops.

There is no official data yet on the number of non-combat deaths in 2011.

Vartan Sevan, another soldier, was found dead in his military unit in the southeastern Armenian town of Goris on August 19. Military officials claimed that he committed suicide after learning that his girlfriend had married another man.

But Sevan's mother and sister strongly reject that explanation, saying that Vartan did not have a girlfriend. They also say that he had complained of mistreatment at the hands of an army officer.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Turkish Military Renews Air Attacks on Kurdish Bases in Iraq

ANKARA (AFP) – Turkish jets bombed bases in northern Iraq used by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in a fresh campaign last week that killed as many as 160 rebels, the military said Monday.

"Based on the results of exploration and target analysis work held between August 23-24, Turkish air force jets hit targets of the separatist terror organization in the Zap and Gara regions between August 25 and 28 in 21 sorties," the military said in a statement.

It said between 145 and 160 rebels were killed in the air attacks and more than 100 were wounded. The number of Kurds "rendered inactive" in air raids the week before stood at between 90 and 100, it added.

Heavy artillery fire was directed at 38 targets "in coordination with the air operation," the statement said.

PKK spokesman Ahmet Denis confirmed the military conducted an air campaign against the group's bases on the dates the army mentioned, but said there were no casualties.

Israel Wants UN's Flotilla Report Delayed

ISTANBUL (*Hurriyet Daily News*) – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suggested a few days ago that the Palmer Report on the Israel Defense Forces' raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla, in which nine Turkish activists were killed, be delayed by six months, Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported Monday.

The suggestion was made to the Turkish government and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, but the Turkish government rejected Netanyahu's proposal, claiming it was not serious. Israeli Foreign Ministry Spokesman Yigal Palmor said on Monday that this information was leaked by the Israeli Prime Ministry and a confirmation was not to be expected. The UN investigative committee into the raid, headed by Geoffrey Palmer, is currently due to publish the report this Friday, September 2.

The Palmer Report about the events that occurred onboard the Turkish aid ship Mavi Marmara in 2010 has been delayed three times already.

According to an official in Jerusalem, Netanyahu's latest suggestion to postpone the report's publication by six months was not warmly welcomed in Ankara.

EU Selects New Georgia Crisis Envoy

PARIS (*Azg*, AFP) – French diplomat Philippe Lefort was named Friday as the European Union's new special envoy to the South Caucasus and the three-year-old row between Georgia and Russia, AFP reports, according to EU Business.

A former ambassador to Georgia and deputy chief of mission at the embassy in Moscow, Lefort takes over the Georgia crisis job from fellow Frenchman Pierre Morel and the South Caucasus portfolio of Sweden's Peter Semneby.

"Philippe Lefort has an in-depth knowledge of the region and years of experience working there at the very highest level," EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said in a statement announcing the appointment.

"I am confident that he is an ideal choice for the EUSR [special representative] for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia and that he will enhance the EU's role in this sensitive region," she said.

As the special representative for a region that includes Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, Lefort will encourage these countries to pursue political and economic reforms to strengthen cooperation agreements with the EU.

He will also act as mediator in Geneva-based talks between Russia and Georgia aimed at resolving differences stemming from their war in August 2008.

Town Hides Family in Fight Against Deportation

By Christian Gehrke

KUHLUNGSBORN, Germany (*Spiegel Online*) – German authorities recently ruled that a family of Armenian asylum seekers should be deported after 13 years of living in the country.

But they never showed up to the airport. Residents of their town hid the family for almost two weeks until officials agreed to review their case.

For almost two weeks, the Baveyan family had been missing. Rumor had it that residents in the Baltic Sea coast town of Kuhlunsgborn, Germany, were concealing their whereabouts from police and immigration officials to prevent their deportation, though no one would say more.

Their efforts, along with widespread protest, seem to have paid off – at least temporarily. The family emerged from hiding on Tuesday after officials agreed to extend their visas by four weeks pending review of their case in the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

"We are happy," mother Kristine Baveyan told regional daily *Ostsee Zeitung*. "But it's not over yet."

The small victory came after a state commission narrowly ruled in February that, after 13 years in Germany, the family of four would have to be sent back to Armenia. Officials suspect that the family father, political asylum seeker Artur Baveyan, may have a criminal background, though they have not revealed any details. Artur, along with his wife Kristine and their two children, were subsequently scheduled for deportation this month. But the Baveyans didn't show up.

In the meantime, around 200 of the some 7,000 residents of the town in the eastern state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania took to the streets to protest their deportation. The Baveyans are reportedly well-liked and have many friends in the seaside resort community. Artur owns a doner kebab shop, while

Kristine helps elderly people with their day-to-day concerns. Both of their children, 12-year-old Geworg and 9-year-old Anne, were born in Germany and have grown up with the language and culture. The youngsters receive good grades in school and are members of local sports clubs.

A group of protesters recently gathered in front of the Baveyans' doner kebab shop. Holding signs in the sunshine, the children's schoolmates and teachers said they didn't want to see the children go.

Members of local football club FSV Kuhlunsgborn also turned out to express their unwillingness to part with youth team forward Geworg Baveyan.

Among the crowd were also Artur Baveyan's work colleagues and pensioner Joachim Robrahn, who has known the family for six years. Kristine helps him with his household chores. "This is mainly about the children," he said. "If they were to be deported now, they would be foreigners in their own country. One can't just pack a bag and move away after 13 years."

According to Robrahn, each family member would have been allowed to carry just 12 kilograms (about 26 pounds) of luggage on their journey – forcing them to leave most of their belongings behind.

One young man claiming to have close contact with the family while they were in hiding said they were fearful of their uncertain future.

"They are afraid each time they hear a siren and are terrified," he said. "The children are traumatized and the mother actually needs psychological treatment."

One of the family's lawyers, Stefan Taschjian, has filed two cases with the Schwerin administrative court appealing the deportation decision, local daily *Ostsee Zeitung* reported earlier in the week.

"I feel terrible for the children," state Interior Minister Lorenz Caffier said before the family came out of hiding.

Turkey Mulls Cutting Economic Ties with Israel

By Ran Dagoni

WASHINGTON (*Jerusalem Post*) – Turkey has informed the US that Israel's refusal to apologize for the IDF operation to thwart last year's Turkish flotilla bringing supplies to the Gaza Strip will not go unpunished.

The flotilla was attempting to break the naval blockade that Israel has imposed on the territory. Eight Turkish citizens and one US-Turkish citizen aboard one of the vessels, the Mavi Marmara, were killed in the operation when Israeli commandos taking over the ship were assaulted.

The Turkish government says Israel's refusal to accede to Turkish demands for an apology will naturally lead to further deterioration in relations between the two countries. Among other things, Turkey is examining the possibility of cutting off economic ties with Israel completely, according to a report in Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet*.

Despite the Turkish threat, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's decision not to issue an apology is final, people familiar with the matter said.

According to reports in Washington, the US pressured Israel to try to reach agreement with Turkey on a formula for an apol-

ogy, but so far, Netanyahu has refused to concede on the matter. However, in response to a US request, Israel has asked UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to defer the release of the Palmer Commission report on the Mavi Marmara incident, to enable further negotiations with Turkey to take place.

According to *Hürriyet*, among the reprisals being considered by Turkey are the downgrading of diplomatic relations between the two countries to the level of second secretary, suspension of all economic and political ties and an older threat: a visit by Erdogan to the Gaza Strip. There is also no doubt that Turkey will be an enthusiastic supporter of the Palestinians' initiative to win UN recognition of a Palestinian state.

Prof. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, associate professor of international relations at Ankara's Gazi University described relations between the two countries to Turkish newspaper *Zaman*: "The relationship between Turkey and Israel has deteriorated somewhat on the surface, but deep underneath there really is no change in the relationship. Economically, we have seen some decrease in tourism, but the red lines have not been crossed, and the US will not let two of its most important allies in the Middle East cross those lines."

"But even I can't change this ruling."

But the controversy gained so much attention in the region that state Gov. Erwin SELLERING stepped in. With state municipal and parliamentary elections coming up in September, he called for the commission to review the family's case once more.

Kuhlunsgborn Mayor Jeane Wohlschlegel agrees with taking such action.

"Here on the Baltic Sea coast we don't have a lot of foreigners," she said. "But when it comes to deportation, it needs to be decided on a more individual basis in the future. This is about children who speak fluent German, get good grades and have a bright future in Germany."

Head of AAC Iraqi Diocese Inspects Armenian Construction in North Iraq

BAGHDAD (PanARMENIAN.Net, *Armenian Weekly*) – Earlier this month Archbishop Avak Asadourian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Iraq, paid a pastoral visit to the autonomous region of Kurdistan in Northern Iraq, mainly to inspect the work of a new church, which is being built in the village of Havresk (Hye Verejh) in the province of Duhok.

According to the *Armenian Weekly*, Asadourian traveled to the village of Havresk and met with the residents of the village in the Levon Pasha hall. During the meeting the Primate listened to the villagers and offered some solutions to their concerns.

Asadourian also visited the Armenian communities of Erbil and Duhok cities in a non-official capacity and delivered the sermon during the Divine Liturgy celebrated in the St. Nersess Shenorhali Armenian church in Duhok city.

Due to a state of insecurity, especially in Baghdad and Mosul since 2003, the Armenian communities in Iraq have been experiencing inner migration as is the case with other Christian denominations and minorities. As a consequence, a number of Armenians relocated to the Kurdish autonomous region of Iraq. Hence, the Armenian Diocese of Iraq is faced with the obligation and Christian duty of building new churches for the faithful.

The new house of worship is being built through a donation by the association of churches in Germany and Switzerland, with the coordination of CAPNI Foundation.

During his visit, Asadourian supervised the progress of the work and offered details pertaining to arrangements specific to the Mother church.

Due to limited funding the church was not built in an entirely Armenian architectural style; the church is expected to be completed early next year.

Asadourian was accompanied by the parish priests of the churches of Zakho and Duhok, Fr. Artoon Khalatian and Fr. Masis Shahinian, respectively. Also, accompanying Asadourian were two Parish Council members from Erbil.

Returning to Erbil, Asadourian presented his condolences to the families and relatives of two recently-killed Armenian men.

Community News

Armenian Bar Association Hosts Rising Stars Awards Reception

PASADENA, Calif. — On July 28, the Armenian Bar Association held its inaugural “20 Rising Stars under 40” awards ceremony at the Pandora on Green restaurant.

The Rising Stars award recognizes 20 Armenian legal professionals under the age of 40 who have distinguished themselves in their professions and who have made an impact on their respective communities. This year’s honorees span the globe, coming from Toronto, Boston, Hong Kong and Los Angeles, among other locations.

Master of Ceremonies Garo Hovannisian introduced each honoree. He noted that “each of the award recipients has a remarkable story. Their accomplishments in their professions and their commitment to community and Armenian interests set them apart.” He added, “We’re excited not only for their accomplishments thus far, but for the prospect of what lies ahead for each of them, both professionally and in terms of their contributions to the advancement of the Armenian communities worldwide.”

Armenian Bar Chairman Edvin Minassian followed Hovannisian’s introductory remarks. He noted, “Today’s Rising Stars award recipients represent the best in the Armenian legal community. When we honor them we likewise honor the profession we have chosen, one that ultimately stands as a bulwark against arbitrary government and assures that the rights of the individual shall remain at the forefront. By the same token, today’s honorees are not only individuals to whom we in the Armenian community

see AWARDS, page 7



From left, Glendale City Councilman Rafi Manoukian, Edvin Minassian and Armen Hovannisian



From left, Armen Akaragian, ArmenBar Executive Director Jacklin Boyadjian and Garo Mardirossian



YP Chicago members participated in a marathon and successfully raised \$4,000 to be used towards scholarships to send kids to Hye Camp.

AGBU Young Professionals of Chicago Award 10 Scholarships to Kids to Attend Local Camp

CHICAGO — Earlier this summer, the AGBU Young Professionals (YP) of Chicago awarded 10 scholarships to assist Armenian youth in the Chicago area to attend Hye Camp, a weeklong, Christian-based camp for Armenian children 8 to 15 years of age, who want to learn more about their heritage and the teachings of the Armenian Church. Every year dozens of families apply for scholarships, though there are always a few parishes that struggle to raise enough money for the kids.

Following the mission of the Young Professionals to take a leadership role and make a positive impact on the community, the group set its sights on raising enough funds to send a minimum of two kids to the camp, which is run by the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America.

On Sunday, June 26, YP Chicago participated in the “Race to the Taste” 5K run in Chicago to raise money for the scholarships. The group received donations totaling \$4,000, enough for 10 scholarships to be awarded on behalf of YP Chicago. Allison Haidostian, a member of the YP Chicago Steering Committee, commented, “It was so energizing to see everyone together on race day. Not only did we far surpass our fundraising goal, but we created a lot of buzz in the community and grew stronger as an AGBU YP group. I look forward to seeing this become an annual tradition.”

The Young Professionals drew support from members of the community young and old, as well as from individuals from such distant states as Texas, Virginia and California. Among those running with the Young Professionals was 15-year-old Peter Boyajian of Oak Forest, Ill., who finished first among competitors under 18 years of age in a race that featured over 1,100 runners. “We are overwhelmed to have received such broad-based support for this worthwhile cause. No child wishing to learn about their Armenian heritage should ever be denied this gift because of financial reasons,” said Arina Mavilian, chairperson of the AGBU Young Professionals of Chicago.

YP Chicago is part of a growing network of YP groups and supporters around the world who are committed to preserving and promoting the Armenian identity and heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs for young Armenians between the ages of 22 and 40. For additional information or to join YP Chicago’s e-mail list, visit their website <http://yp.agbuchicago.org/>.

“Not only did we far surpass our fundraising goal, but we created a lot of buzz in the community and grew stronger as an AGBU/YP group.”

—Allison Haidostian

AIWA’s Sixth International Conference to Be Held in San Francisco

LOS ANGELES — The sixth International Conference of the Armenian International Women’s Association, the first to be held in the United States, has attracted a broad array of participants active in business, social services, non-profit organizations, education, government and the arts.

Members of the host Los Angeles affiliate, headed by President Diane Cabraloff, have planned three days of speakers, panelists and discussions.

The Palace Hotel in historic San Francisco will be the site of the event, October 6 to 10. The conference will open on Thursday, October 6, with a reception and continue on October 7-9 with panels, luncheons and other activities. Special events include a book exhibit featuring Armenian women authors, an optional Friday night at the theater to attend Adriana Sevahn Nichols’ new play, “Night Over Erzinga,” and a closing dinner cruise on San Francisco Bay.

The goal of the conference is to bring together a strong and active network to address critical issues that will advance the position of Armenian women worldwide. It follows a series of successful AIWA international conferences beginning with London in 1994, Paris in 1997, Yerevan in 2000, Geneva in 2004 and Buenos Aires in 2008.

Participants will include Jackie K a n c h e l i a n Speier, member of Congress from California; Mary Ellen Iskenderian, president of Women’s World Banking; Swanee Hunt, Harvard School of Government and former US ambassador to Austria and Dr. Arda A. Ekmekji, dean of Arts and Sciences, H a i g a z i a n University, Beirut.

Also participating will be Lara Setrakian, TV reporter, Dubai; Cristina Shirinian, president, Armenia International Airports, Argentina; Anahit Ordyan, director of Administrative Affairs, American University of Armenia; Silvia Tirakian, president, Harvest Song Ventures, New York; Dr. Mary Khachikyan, director, Family and Health Association, Yerevan; and Mary Catherine Bateson, author.

Further information about the conference and about AIWA’s programs is available from AIWA (aiwainc@aol.com or www.aiwa-net.org) or from AIWA/Los Angeles (anittaa2at@aol.com or www.aiwala.org).



Rep. Jackie Speier, congresswoman from California



Mary Ellen Iskenderian, president, Women’s World Banking



Swanee Hunt, former US ambassador to Austria



COMMUNITY NEWS

Washington Parish Celebrates its Name Day and Honors Local Leader

WASHINGTON — The Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God was doubly special for parishioners at the St. Mary Armenian Church. Alongside the traditional celebrations of the feast day, including the Blessing of Grapes ceremony, which are shared with Armenian churches everywhere, Assumption is also the “Name Day” of the Washington parish.

On Sunday, August 14, parishioners welcomed Diocesan Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian for their annual observance. The Primate celebrated the Divine Liturgy and performed the Blessing of Grapes service. He spoke about the life of St. Mary, emphasizing that her response to God’s request is a lesson for all Christians.

“Our aspiration as Christians is to summon the faith to hear God’s call in our lives,” Barsamian said, “and to summon the courage to answer — whatever the cost to us personally — ‘Behold, I am the humble servant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to His word.’”

Referring to the Diocese’s ongoing focus on lay ministry, Barsamian reminded parishioners “to be open to God’s invitation, and to trust in God’s greater purposes for our lives.”

Following the services, the Parish Council hosted a luncheon where the community honored the council chair, Zakar Shahverdian, for his many years of service. Barsamian presented Shahverdian with the Diocese’s St. Vartan Award.

Shahverdian has been involved with St. Mary Church for three decades. For the past five years, he has chaired the Parish Council; prior to that, he spent 10 years as the council vice chair.

He also helped organize the Armenian community in nearby Baltimore, where some 120 families

regularly gather for services and where an Armenian School allows young people to grow familiar with their language and heritage. Shahverdian, who lives in Maryland, said that Baltimore has a growing community that hosts picnics and other activities throughout the year.

In Washington, he has been active in various Armenian causes, including assisting with Genocide-recognition efforts on Capitol Hill. He has never been to Armenia, but his wife, Patricia, traveled there after the 1988 earthquake and has

since been involved in supporting orphanages in the homeland.

“In anything that has to do with the Armenian community and the Armenian Church, I am involved,” he said. “As long as I live, I’ll be helping.”

Shahverdian says he draws his inspiration from his late mother, who moved to the United States from Iran to build a better life for her family.

“He is a role model because he loves what he is doing and he does everything with humility,” said

St. Mary parish’s pastor, Rev. Hovsep Karapetian.

Shahverdian added that he was surprised to receive the St. Vartan Award. “It was humbling,” he said. “I am grateful to the community for recognizing me.”

Close to 150 people attended the luncheon this month. Parish Council Vice Chair Mike Tashjian served as the master of ceremonies. The day also included a blessing of *madagh* and a musical program featuring soloist, Vivian Chakarian, and oud and bouzouki player, Mihran Kochyan.

Holy Trinity ‘Family Festival’ and Church School Opening, September 18

By Seta A. Buchter

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Always an anticipated event on the fall calendar, the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston is preparing for its annual Trinity Family Festival, which will be held on Sunday, September 18, beginning at noon on the church grounds at 145 Brattle St.

The Festival Committee invites everyone for a day of fun and fellowship. Richard Sahagian, one of the co-chairs of the Festival Committee and vice chairman of Holy Trinity’s Parish Council, states: “With more music, more games, more food and more fun, this year’s Trinity Family Festival is a great opportunity to reconnect with family and friends. I’m looking for-

ward to seeing you all there.”

Armenian food will be available throughout the afternoon as well as take-out meals, beverages, Armenian coffee and a variety of pastries and desserts. During the Third Yalanchi Cook-off, guests are invited to taste test and vote for Holy Trinity’s best yalanchi. Top honors last year went to Arlene Terassi; second place to Vartan Krikorian and tied for third place, Maral Ayanian and Yn. Arpi Kouzouian. Children’s and family games will begin at 1:30 p.m., and include relay races, face painting and the watermelon-eating contest for children and adults. The younger generation will be able to enjoy the Moonwalk for Kids from noon to 5 p.m. Armenian music will be provided by the Greg Krikorian Ensemble, featuring Greg Krikorian, oud and vocals; George Righellis, guitar and vocals; Ara Jeknavorian, clarinet; Charles Dermenjian, dumbeg and Michael Sabounjian on the keyboard.

The ancient tradition of the Blessing of the *Madagh* will take place at 4 p.m. and the winners of the raffle drawing will be announced at 4:30 p.m. This year’s raffle prizes include \$1,000 cash, first prize; \$300, second prize and \$200, third prize. Tickets can be obtained by calling the Holy Trinity Church office, emailing office@htaac.org or buying them on the day of the festival.

The morning will begin with the Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m., celebrated by Fr. Vasken A. Kouzouian, pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Church. Following the Divine Liturgy, there will be a Special Blessing of all those baptized at

Holy Trinity Church over the past 50 years. This is the first event of “Celebrate 50: Celebrating 50 Years on Brattle Street in Faith, Hope and Love, 1961-2011” — a year-long celebration of Holy Trinity’s 50th Anniversary on one of the most historic streets in America.

Holy Trinity Church’s Armenian and Sunday Schools will kick-off the 2011-2012 year on the morning of Sunday, September 18, with registration for the Armenian School at 10 a.m. and for the Sunday School at 10:15 a.m. in the Peter Adamian Hall of the church complex. Sunday School classes will be held from 10:30 a.m. to noon with students and their families attending church during the latter part of the morning for the Special Blessing celebrating baptisms.

The Sunday School program, which ranges in grades from Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, is open to all children and youth, ages 4 to 17. To be eligible for Sunday School, a child must be 4 by September 1. For information regarding the Sunday School program, contact Seta A. Buchter, Sunday School superintendent, at seta@htaac.org or the church office.

The Armenian School program is for children ages 4 and above, and meets on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Armenian School classes will begin on Sunday, September 25, at 9:30 a.m. For further information about the Armenian School program, contact Naira Balagyoizian, Armenian school administrator, at nairab@verizon.net, or the church office.

For further information, contact the church office at office@htaac.org or visit www.htaac.org.

Babayan Honored by American Urological Association

WASHINGTON — Richard K. Babayan, MD, professor and chair of the Department of Urology at Boston University School of Medicine and chief of the Department of Urology at Boston Medical Center (BMC), was honored by the American Urological Association (AUA) at their annual meeting here, for his contributions to the field of medicine, the specialty of urology and the AUA.

Babayan received the Distinguished Service Award for outstanding service to the AUA Foundation, AUA Leadership Program and the AUA Board of Directors. “This award is testimony to the work of individuals who have made significant contributions to our subspecialty,” said AUA Awards Committee Chair Paul F. Schellhammer, MD.

He is a founding member of the Endourological Society and has been actively

involved in minimally-invasive therapies within the field of urology. His clinical interests include benign prostatic hyperplasia, prostate cancer, urologic oncology and endourology. Babayan performed the first robot-assisted radical prostatectomy in Boston and is currently one of three urologic surgeons at BMC using the daVinci Robot for minimally invasive urologic procedures.

Babayan has been actively involved in local and national urologic organizations. He was the New England Section representative to the Board of Directors of the American Urological Association from 2005-2009. He is a past president of the New England section of the AUA and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Association of Practicing Urologists.

He is married to Sonya Nersessian and is the father of Julie and Christopher Babayan.

OBITUARY

Armand Suvajian

ATHENS, Tenn. — Armand Suvajian, 86, of Athens, formerly of North Providence, RI, died on Friday, August 19, at home.

He was the husband for 29 years of Gloria

(Flynn) Suvajian.

Born in Providence, he was the son of the late Harry and Angel (Kazanjian) Suvajian.

He was a meat cutter for many years and was the former owner of the Edgewood Market in Cranston, and later was a meat inspector at the former Valley Steak House in Warwick before retiring in 2003.

He was a WWII US Navy veteran, a mason and a member of the Knights of Vartan.

Besides his wife, he is survived by two sons, Stephen Suvajian and his wife, Jane, and Greg Suvajian; four step-children, Lori Bailey and her husband, Bob, Terry Speicher and his wife, Jean, Dale Speicher and his wife, Jo Ann, and Kevin Speicher and his wife, Valerie; eight grandchildren, Jessica, Robert, Lindsay, Danielle, Greg, Dave, Gina and Steve; twin great-grandchildren Camryn and Aaron and two brothers, Greg Suvajian and his wife, Carol, and Harry Suvajian and his wife, Eliza. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Thursday, August 25 at Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church in Providence, followed by interment with military honors at Highland Memorial Park in Johnston, RI.

To leave online condolences, visit www.nardolillo.com.

Michael Krikorian

Received Purple Heart

FORT WHITE, Fla. — Michael Krikorian of Florida passed away after a long illness, on August 16. He was 88.

He served in the US military during WWII as a pilot. He was the recipient of the Purple Heart and the Medal of Honor for his service.

He was an airline captain for Northeast and Delta Airlines for many years and retired as a captain.

He is survived by his sister, Bertha Hoyen; his brother, Harry Krikorian, of Watertown, along with his children and several nieces and nephews.

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COMMUNITY NEWS



Save the Date

Celebrating 50 years on Brattle Street
in Faith, Hope and Love
1961 - 2011

- Sunday**
September 18
2011
A Day of Celebrating Baptisms
Divine Liturgy - Join all those baptized at Holy Trinity between 1961 and 2011, for a special blessing. Trinity Festival following
- Sunday**
October 16
2011
A Day of Celebrating Marriages
His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, to celebrate Divine Liturgy - Join all those married at Holy Trinity between 1961 and 2011, for a special blessing. Champagne Reception following
- Sunday**
May 6
2012
A Day of Celebrating Children
Children's Party for ages 12 and under
A very special children's 50th Anniversary Celebration
- Saturday**
May 12
2012
A Day of Celebrating
Golden Jubilee Gala
Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall
- Sunday**
September 30
2012
A Day of Celebrating Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
Commemorative Banquet honoring the memory of the dedicated members of the Building Committee with their families participating

A cordial invitation is extended to the community.

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Armenian Bar Association to Hold Mid-Year Meeting in Detroit

By Betty Apigian Kessel

DETROIT – It may interest you to know that we have an active Armenian Bar Association here in the Metro-Detroit area. If you look through the listings in the *Yellow Pages*, you will be impressed at the sheer number of attorneys whose names end in “ian,” male and female alike.

The exciting news is the Armenian Bar Association will be holding its Mid-Year Meeting in downtown Detroit September 22-24. Plans have been made to assure those attending that they will always remember Detroit as the city marked with the reputation that knows how to treat its guests in a warm and welcoming mid-western fashion. You'll be happy you decided to attend.

According to Bar Association Board member, attorney Kathryn Ossian, the official kickoff reception will be held on Friday evening at the firm of Miller Canfield located on Jefferson Avenue. Attending guests will be dining on a delicious Middle Eastern dinner with continuous entertainment by the Les Williams Trio playing Motown favorites. Jazz violinist, the incomparable Harry Hovakimian, will be offering sweet Armenian melodies.

On Saturday, the business meeting will take place at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center located on the Detroit River with Windsor, Ontario, Canada viewed from just across the river, a really lovely sight particularly in the evening with thousands of lights reflecting off the river. The Renaissance Center is also General Motors World Headquarters.

The first panel of the day will focus on Birthright Armenia, a non-profit organization that offers diasporan young adults opportunities for true cultural immersion in Armenia. Panelists Linda Yepoyan, executive director of Birthright Armenia, will enlighten the audience about the organization and Mandy Ani Messer, a 2009 participant in the program, will share her actual experience in Armenia.

The second panel is “The Use of Economic Experts in Litigation.” Panelist Mick Kahayian, director of Stout Risius, will present the expert perspective and attorney Richard Apkarian, partner, Dickinson Wright, will offer the litigator perspective on the topic. The final panel will discuss Corporate Compliance and the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Panelists, the Honorable Richard Hartunian, US Attorney, Albany, NY; Joe Papelian, deputy general counsel Delphi Corporation and Tom Cranmer, principal and managing director, Miller Canfield, will offer varying perspectives from the corporate,

prosecutorial and defense side on this important topic.

Saturday night's optional dinner is at Fishbone's in Detroit's popular and colorful, Greektown. Other optional events too are planned. On Thursday night you can join the group in Miller Canfield's Comerica Park suite to see the Detroit Tigers take on the Baltimore Orioles. On Friday, they are taking a tour of the historic Ford Motor Rouge factory, always an exciting and educational opportunity where visitors will see F-150 Trucks being assembled in a state-of-the-art plant.

Registration is now open. Don't miss out on the 2011 Mid-Year meeting in Motown. For more information go to www.armenianbar.org/events/details/135.

Kathryn Ossian is the only board member from Michigan serving since May 2010. She is also chairing the planning committee for this meeting assisted by eight Armenian attorneys located in South East Michigan and one in Toronto an associate in her firm's Toronto office.

Ossian is a principal and leader of Miller Canfield's Information Technology Team, as well as deputy leader of the Litigation and Dispute Resolution Practice Group, covering over 25 years and includes extensive experience in negotiating and drafting software licensing agreements, distribution and maintenance and other information technology agreements, computer law, consulting clients in Internet law and intellectual property dispute resolution.

She is a certified faculty member at the University of Phoenix, teaching graduate level business law courses. She is listed in the Information Technology Law Section of *The Best Lawyers in America*, as well as *Michigan Super Lawyers*. Ossian is a frequent speaker and has published several articles relating to her areas of practice. She graduated magna cum laude from the Detroit College of Law and has been a licensed attorney since 1984.

The Armenian Bar Association was formed in 1989 to provide an arena for lawyers of Armenian heritage and other interested individuals to come together socially and professionally and to address the legal concerns of the Armenian community.

Based in southern California are chair of the Armenian Bar Association, Edwin Minassian, and Jackie Boyadjian, executive director of the Armenian Bar Association.

My thanks to Krista Licata Haroutunian of Bingham Farms, Mich. law firm of Haroutunian, Licata, Haroutunian for introducing me to Kathryn Ossian of Miller Canfield law firm so that I can inform my readers of the accomplishments of our fellow *Hyes* in the world of law.

Armenian Bar Association Hosts Awards Reception Honoring Young Activists

AWARDS, from page 5

may point with pride. They are also, and ultimately more importantly, individuals who have already made their professional mark in the larger society as well.”

The association's vice chairman, Garo Ghazarian, also encouraged the recipients to stay the course and continue to excel, both professionally and with regard to their commitment to the Armenian community.

The 2011 Rising Stars award recipients are Ani E. Ajemian (Sherin & Lodgen, Boston), Armen Akaragian (Mardirossian & Associates, Inc., Los Angeles), Michael R. Amerian (Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney, Los Angeles), Henri Arslanian (UBS Investment Bank, Hong Kong), Ara A. Babaian (Ervin Cohen & Jessup LLP, Beverly Hills, Calif.), Nareg Gourjian (Gourjian Law Group, Glendale), Annie P. Marandjian-Hovanessian (Vulcan Materials Company, Los Angeles), Ara Jabagchourian (Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy LLP, Burlingame, Calif.), Raffi Kassabian (Reed Smith, LLP, Los Angeles), Lara Kayayan (Home Savings of America, Los Angeles), Karnig Kerkonian (The

Kerkonian Law Firm, LLP, Evanston, Ill.), Alex Khachaturian (White & Case LLP, Washington, DC), Hovanes Margarian (The Law Office of Hovanes Margarian, Sherman Oaks, Calif.), Armen S. Martin (Liner Grode et al., Los Angeles), Mampr Pomakian (LAUSD, Office of General Counsel, Los Angeles), Suzanne J. Prysak (Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago), Chris K. Safarian (Safarian & Choi, Los Angeles), Nicole J. Simonian (Bryan Cave LLP, Santa Monica, Calif.) and Fernand Vartanian (ACE INA Insurance, Toronto, Canada).

More than 250 guests attended the gala awards ceremony. Among the many prominent attendees were Zaven V. Sinanian (Judge, Los Angeles Superior Court), Chahe-Philippe Arslanian (Judge, Superior Court, Toronto, Canada), Antranig Kasbarian (Chairman, ARF Central Committee, Eastern US, and executive director, Tufenkian Foundation), Garo Mardirossian (immediate past president of the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles) and Steven Dadaian, Esq., (senior policy advisor, Armenian National Committee).



COMMUNITY NEWS

Los Angeles Men's Basketball Team Is Pan-Armenian Games Champions

YEREVAN — On Sunday, August 21, the Los Angeles men's basketball team defeated Sochi, Russia, 93-86, in overtime, in a highly-contested championship game in Yerevan, Armenia to win the fifth Pan Armenian Games championship. The game was televised via satellite live in Armenia and the diaspora. Approximately 1,100 fans were in attendance at Miga Arena for the finals, including President Serge Sargsisian.

Sargsisian presented each Los Angeles player and coach with their gold medal as well as the championship cup. Mike Danielian, Los Angeles basketball team captain, scored 49 points in the championship game, tying the individual championship game scoring record set in 2003.

Twenty-four teams participated from Armenia, Artsakh, Russia, Australia, Austria, Canada, Syria, Egypt, Georgia, Turkey, Argentina, France, Lebanon, Iran and the United States from August 13-21. More than 3,200 athletes from more than 100 cities worldwide participated in 10 different sports competitions.

The Pan-Armenian Games are organized by the government of Armenia. Sargsisian stated, "The Pan-Armenian Games are an extremely important event which is meant to unite Armenians from various sports across the globe. It helps the strengthening of Armenia-

Diaspora ties."

In the preliminary rounds, Los Angeles defeated Aleppo (Syria), Stepanakert (Artsakh) and Tehran (Iran). Sixteen of the 24 teams advanced to the play-off round. As a result, Los Angeles played Aleppo (Syria) again in round 16, followed by Cairo (Egypt) in the quarterfinals. Los Angeles then had to face Tehran (Iran) in a re-match in the semi-finals. Sochi (Russia) defeated Glendale in the other semi-final game, which prevented the anticipated Glendale-Los Angeles matchup in the finals. Los Angeles won seven straight games in an eight-day period.

The members of the gold-medal-winning Los Angeles basketball team members are: Artin Adjamian, Aret Akbork, Vahram Amayakyan, Zack Armen, Mike Danielian, Ara Demirjian, Kevork Demirjian, Eric Halejian, Andrei Taniel Oztemel and Ara Vartanian.

Carl Bardakian, a former NCAA Div. I assistant basketball coach and current United States representative to the Basketball Federation of Armenia, is the Los Angeles head coach. Zorik Isajane, Glendale College assistant basketball coach, and Levon Altiparmakian, New York-New Jersey Armenian Churches Sports Association basketball representative, served as assistant coaches.



The members of the team with Armenia's President Serge Sargsisian after their victory



Eric Halejian faces off against an opponent from Sochi.



Eric Halejian mid-air



Eric Halejian, right, with Los Angeles Men's Coach Carl Bardakian

AGBU Generation Next Mentorship Program Receives \$5,000 from the Vons Foundation

GLENDALE — On August 17, the Vons Foundation presented AGBU's Generation Next (GenNext) Mentorship Program with a \$5,000 check. The money will be used to fund the development of a film and music studio for students.

The donation was sponsored by Glendale resident Edgar Azaryan, 29, a financial analyst at Vons headquarters who moved to Glendale after completing high school in Armenia and earning a degree from California State University, Northridge, in Los Angeles. "Here you have this great group of mentors and they help the youth choose their right path," Azaryan said. "I have role models in my life. I believe that I'm here because of them."

Dozens of teens witnessed the presentation of the check. The celebration attracted, among many others, Joylene Wagner, president of Glendale Unified School District Board of Education; Nayiri Nahabedian, a school board member and one of the founding members of GenNext; Talin Mangioglou, a representative from state Sen. Carol Liu's office; Hrag Yedalian,

from Council member Paul Krekorian's office; Ardy Kassakhian, Glendale city clerk; Osheen Keshishian, editor of the *Armenian Observer* and a lecturer at Glendale Community College; Tomik Alexanian, AGBU Western District vice chairman and Ron De Pompa, Glendale police chief.

"Hopefully, this will be something that develops into a passion for some of our youth as they acquire new skills, develop their talents and find creative ways of expressing themselves," said Yasmin Alpay, executive director of the AGBU Western District Chapters.

AGBU's Generation Next Mentorship Program assists youth in Southern California of Armenian descent by providing them with positive role models, guidance and support. Through one-on-one mentoring, monthly group activities and parenting seminars, the program assists and supports Armenian students who are faced with difficult choices in today's increasingly intense and competitive school environment. To become a GenNext mentor, visit www.agbugennext.org.



Members of the Vons Foundation, AGBU's Generation Next Mentorship Program and other attendees during the presentation of the check donation



COMMUNITY NEWS

Story with a Heart

New Yorker Javian Helps Heart Disease Victims And Their Families

HEART, from page 1

Javian recalled, "While he was there, there were so many families that had traveled to the city for treatment from all around the world."

Javian met her organization's cofounder, Kotani, at this period. Kotani's father had come from Japan because of his own illness and was going to be operated on by the same surgeon as Javian's father. Javian realized, "There were so many families without financial resources to stay in the city. I was 25 years old and passion gave me the energy to start this."

The two decided to help the families of heart disease sufferers. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, yet no organization existed to help families overcome the high costs of staying in the large cities where the major hospitals that carry out heart transplants and other complex operations are located. It took more than eight months for the necessary paperwork to be processed, but in April 2009, one year after Javian's father's death, they were able to formally found their organization.

Initially they relied on information from social workers about which families had the greatest needs. Javian said, "Every little bit helps, because even a little assistance is more than these families could have ever dreamed of."

When Harboring Hearts does not have the

resources to help directly, it refers families to other organizations.

Up until the present, Harboring Hearts has been able to help around 250 families. Some of these were helped financially with housing. For example, Javian related, "a single mother and son were in New York, and the son needed heart surgery in Boston. We connected with the Sheraton Hotel owned by an Armenian family there, and got a discounted rate. Harboring Hearts paid for their stay for one week." In New York it has also subsidized people's rent. In all, it has donated \$40,000 for rent and living expenses. Many of the families with members suffering from heart disease and needing help with housing are single mothers with children.

Harboring Hearts has organized community events in New York Presbyterian Hospital. At one event it provided more than 75 families with hot heart-healthy meals and care packages. Javian and others talked to each of the families and arranged a performance with a singer.

Another of Harboring Heart's important functions is to connect families to others so that they can talk about their problems.

Although Harboring Hearts was helping on a case-to-case basis up until now, with its website and the greater press coverage that it is receiving, families have begun to contact it directly. Javian said, "We now need to figure out how much we can do and how much to help each family."

The organization's board of directors, which includes at least one fellow Armenian, Ryan Melkonian of Melkonian Capital Management, will be meeting to discuss the



From left, Jessica Melore, Yuki Kotani, Michelle Javian and Hadley Mongell at the Southampton event

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best way to expand operations. Javian says, "We hope as we expand to have our own facility where we can help over 60 families in a four-bedroom site in Manhattan."

Javian is the only full-time employee at present, with Kotani working part-time as president of the board. Javian said, "I do a little bit of everything. My main objective is to raise awareness about our organization, and to continue fundraising and build partnerships. I'm taking things one step at a time." She relies on volunteers and interns to help with the growing workload. This was the first summer that Harboring Hearts had interns. It had several, including an Armenian named Nieri Avanesian. Avanesian came from Michigan to New York through the Armenian General Benevolent Union's summer internship program.

Javian noted, "It was nice to connect with somebody who was also Armenian. My experience with having her work with me day in and day out over the past two months has been beneficial for both of us. She was an extremely hard worker, very dedicated and very bright."

Avanesian in turn said, "The experience with an Armenian supervisor has been invaluable. Much of my work here has been out-

reach for sponsorship from other companies and organizations. Being able to access the Armenian network for this sort of thing has been immensely helpful, and a great, rewarding experience to see how excited Armenians are to help one another."

All kinds of people have been supporting Harboring Hearts, but because of her personal background, Javian has received much inspiration from Armenians in her work. She said, "While growing up and going to Sunday school, I saw that the Armenian community as a whole was always about giving back. Mrs. Lynne Jamie, the principal at Holy Martyrs Sunday school, almost like an angel, was always helping others. She was an extremely big influence on who I am, along with my family. My father had a big heart, and discretely helped others. Many of my Armenian girlfriends have also been really supportive and helpful."

Harboring Hearts is working hard to raise money for its work. Javian said, "We are diversifying how we raise money. When we started, it was the beginning of the recession. We get grants from foundations and individuals. We network — we are always on Twitter and Facebook. On Facebook, we raised \$300 in one day when each person donated just one dollar."

Special events are part of the fundraising arsenal Javian and her team employ. Most recently, on August 13 they organized a summer fete in a hotel in Southampton, NY (on Long Island) which more than 250 guests attended. Guests attending learned about the organization's mission and participated in a live auction with prizes. The proceeds from the auction helped a single mother in Brooklyn who is waiting for a heart transplant and has had to stop working.

Harboring Hearts seems to have a big future ahead and no doubt, Armenians will continue to be among its great supporters.

As Avanesian has written, "For such a wonderful organization as Harboring Hearts to have been developed by an Armenian-American should be a great source of pride to all Armenians everywhere. It shows that not only are Armenians correctly labeled as good business people, but that Armenians are generous, giving and warm-hearted."

For more information, see www.harboringhearts.org, <http://www.facebook.com/harboringhearts> and <http://twitter.com/HarboringHearts>.

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Arts & Living

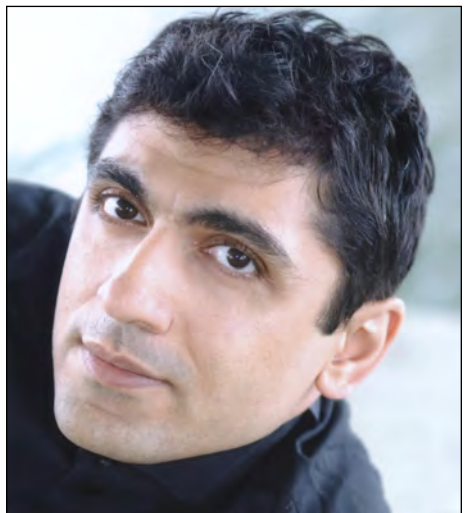
Pianist Vardan Mamikonian In Concert at Fresno State

FRESNO — Award-winning pianist Vardan Mamikonian will perform at the opening recital of the Philip Lorenz Memorial Keyboard Concert Series at Fresno State. The concert will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, September 18 in the Concert Hall on the Fresno State campus.

The concert is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program of Fresno State. Babayan will be performing works by J.S. Bach, Busoni, Chopin and Liszt.

Having performed to acclaim in such prestigious venues as the Musikverein in Vienna, Carnegie Hall in New York, Wigmore Hall in London and Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Mamikonian returns to Fresno for another display of his “impeccable virtuosity, and, more so, a rare fullness to his touch, sensitivity and refinement of phrasing, and ceaseless attention to architectural balance” (*Le Figaro*, Paris).

Born into a musical family in Yerevan, Mamikonian began studying the piano at the age of 7 and quickly showed exceptional talent. After completing studies in Armenia, Mamikonian continued at the Moscow Conservatory for two years and then moved on to the Tchaikovsky Conservatory where he became a pupil of Valery Kastelsky, himself the last pupil of the legendary teacher Heinrich



Vardan Mamikonian

Neuhaus. Later he continued studies with Russian virtuoso Lazar Berman. In 1991 Mamikonian immigrated to France and took French nationality. He currently makes his home in Paris.

A decisive moment in his career came in 1992 when he won the World Music Masters Competition in Monte Carlo, which led to numerous engagements throughout the world.

Mamikonian has toured extensively throughout Europe, Asia, North and South America, as well as the Middle East and has performed in the world’s great concert halls under conductors such as: Valery Gergiev, Vladimir Fedoseyev, Eliahu Inbal, Rudolf Barshai, Vladimir Spivakov and Lothar Zagorsek.

Mamikonian has devoted much time to the study and performance of a French repertoire and has been acclaimed as one of the great interpreters of the music of Debussy and Ravel. Mamikonian has also brought many works of the 20th century to the public’s attention, most notably the compositions of the Armenian composer Arno Babadjanian, as well as the French composer Henri Dutilleul, with whom he has worked closely. Mamikonian has recorded extensively for radio, television and has made numerous recordings for the German label Orfeo. Several of these recordings have received awards from the international press.

For more information on the concert, contact the Armenian Studies Program.



Norman Rockwell

ALMA to Be New Home For Permanent Exhibit Of Karsh Photographs

Renovations Underway to Make Museum Ready

WATERTOWN, Mass. — The Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) is going to be the new home for many iconic images from one of the most renowned portrait photographers of the 20th century, Yousuf Karsh.

The photographer captured the images of some of the world’s most noted and inspiring personalities, such as Pablo Picasso, Winston Churchill, Helen Keller, Aram Khachaturian, Ernest Hemingway, Eleanor Roosevelt and Vartan Gregorian, to name a few.

Karsh, who was born in Mardin, Western Armenia, was sent by his anxious parents to Canada to escape the Armenian Genocide. He learned about photography from his uncle, George Nakash, but clearly he was more gifted than anyone had anticipated. In his lifetime, someone had truly arrived if they sat for a Karsh portrait.

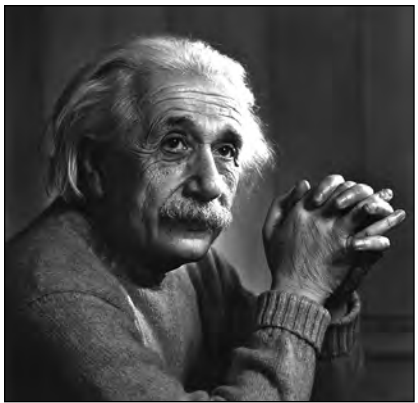
Karsh and his wife, Estrellita, moved to Boston, where he died in 2002.

Recently, Estrellita Karsh, gifted the museum with an impressive collection of his portraits. Estrellita Karsh said she felt that ALMA was a fitting home for her late husband’s works and said, “Yousuf had great pride in his Armenian heritage and it would have meant so much to him knowing that representative portraits of his work are being housed at the Armenian Library and Museum of America.”

ALMA board members decided it would be the perfect time to redesign the space and layout of the first floor of the Bedoukian Gallery, before the masterpieces arrived at their new home. Using this permanent collection as a tipping point, ALMA has been renovating its first floor since June — specifically the Bedoukian Gallery, reception area and gift and book shop.

Years of exhibitions and events had left the Bedoukian Gallery in need of

see KARSH, page 12



Albert Einstein

Armenian Scholar Brings Notice To Einstein

By Tom Vartabedian

PRINCETON, N.J. — When people hear of the work being done by Alice (Abeghian) Calaprice, their eyes bug out in disbelief.

The question they may pose might sound redundant: What is a non-physicist doing with such a keen interest in Albert Einstein — enough to write seven books on the noted scholar, address audiences throughout the world and spend the past 33 years of her life researching the man?

Call it serendipity, or to put it mathematically: $E=mc^2$, which equals a fascinating world waiting to be discovered by Calaprice, formerly Abeghian to those who knew her during her AYF days in California before moving to New Jersey and back.

“People are always — needlessly — impressed when I tell them I write books about Einstein,” she points out. “He was so very human. In everyone’s mind, he was this icon, but in his archives you find him joking with his friends and talking about all sorts of things. I got to like him.”

When Calaprice conjures up an impression of the famous physicist, it’s not merely the stereotypical, bushy-haired genius that gushes forth. Instead, we find a real, multi-dimensional persona who makes an intimate impression: that he liked sailing, was not above extra-marital affairs and was often insensitive to others.

The Einstein she was quick to discover was often sarcastic and tired of fame quickly. As for his hair, she told CBS News that, “He must have been a cartoonist’s dream.”

It all goes back to the late 1970s when Calaprice began working at the Einstein Archives in Princeton, NJ, where Einstein lived from 1933 until his death in 1955. At her disposal were 42,000 documents, academic papers, speeches, notes, travel diaries and letters.

Calaprice has read most of them and familiarized herself with the entire lot. Her husband, Frank, was a professor of physics at Princeton and life appeared good with two children and a challenging job.

“I was hired to do a computerized index,” she recalled. “About 90 percent of the documents were in German — a language I knew from childhood. I also knew computers and some physics jargon. It seemed a perfect fit.”

Two years later, the job was complete and Calaprice went to work for Princeton University Press. By 1984, she was senior editor and was soon assigned to oversee the editing and production of *The Collected Papers of Albert Einstein*.

Working with Helen Dukas, Einstein’s secretary since 1928, Calaprice began reading what was then thought to be a collection of 10,000 documents, 90 percent of them in German, with a two-year deadline to complete the index. It turned out to be more like 42,000 documents.

“Sometimes we worked day and night,” she said. “I didn’t understand it all. Much of it was learned by osmosis. One thing I learned was that Einstein was extremely quotable.”

As the years trickled on, so did the books and publications, four of the seven being quotation compilations containing approximately 1,600 quotes, organized by subject matter.

Another of her books is letters to and from children, wishing Einstein a happy birthday or comparing him to an uncle of sorts. Youngsters would report to him their difficulty with math, looking for solutions.

see EINSTEIN, page 13



ARTS & LIVING

'Rescue Me' Veteran Callie Thorne Tackles her First Starring Role on USA's Hit 'Necessary Roughness'

By Bruce Fretts

LOS ANGELES (TVGuide) — Callie Thorne was stuck in New York City gridlock recently with her mom when she spied a familiar face. "I was like, 'Ma, Ma, look!' and I point and there's me on the back of a bus, and we both started shrieking," says the star of USA's new drama, "Necessary Roughness," laughing. "There was this convertible of guys next to us, and my mother goes, 'That's my daughter!' They were taking pictures and they said, 'Get out of the car!' I was like, 'I will not get out of the car!... OK, I'll get out of the car.' I'm such a loser."

Her admirers beg to differ. When Calliope Thorne was born, her astrologer mother "had

comedy pilot cowritten by Leary. When FX decided not to move forward with that show, "we scooped her up and, man, were we thrilled," says Shapiro. "She has the whole package the part requires — she's sexy, funny and tough as nails, but she's also very empathetic."

Getting "Roughness" helped Thorne through a difficult patch. "When I got the phone call that FX was passing, I was in hysterical tears," she recalls. "Within two hours my agents called, and they were like, 'Get it together; we're sending you a script and if you like it, you've got to get on a plane tomorrow.' I knew from the first few scenes how well-written it was. I didn't even finish reading it — I was like, 'Yes, please! When is my flight?'"

Roughness represents Thorne's first leading role after nearly 15 years of supporting parts. "I like that position of being an integral part of the story but not really having to feel the weight of whether something is a failure or a success," she admits. "But it's always in the back of an actor's mind: 'What would it be like if I became that A-story person?' This is all brand-new for me and I'm having a ball. But I'm not going to lie — it's pretty scary."

Thorne has no reason to fear. "Roughness" debuted with a strong 4.7 million total viewers and she seems more than ready to take the ball and run with it. "This is just the beginning of Callie's peak years," says Leary of his 41-year-old costar. "We were lucky she was still available when we went to do 'Rescue Me.'"

Every time Peter and I come up with something, there's a part in it for her, but my fear is she's going to get so big we won't be able to afford her anymore."

In the meantime, Thorne can still be seen in the final season of "Rescue Me," as Sheila deals with the traumatic brain injury suffered by her firefighter son, Damien (Michael Zegen). "The responsibility grounds Sheila," says Tolan. "She has someone to look after and love, someone who isn't going to leave. She finally has her man, which turns out to be her son." Confesses Thorne, "It's not something I saw coming, but I really like it. Sheila is still bananas, but it takes a backseat to her starting to give a lot more than take, and that's different from anything I've done with the character."

Such a busy work schedule doesn't leave Thorne with much time for a personal life — and that's fine with her. "I have nothing to complain about, because my social life is on the 'Necessary Roughness' set, laughing with the crew and the actors," she says. "I love every second of it."

"Necessary Roughness" airs Wednesday at 10/9c on USA, and "Rescue Me" airs Wednesday at 10/9c on FX.



Callie Thorne

a spiritual vision of the word Calliope, the muse of voice, music and poetry," says the actress, who later shortened it to Callie. "Here we are, all these years later, and I'm fulfilling my name."

(She is the granddaughter of Beatrice Davidian Oshana, whose family has been active in the Armenian community of New Britain, Conn. for three generations.)

Thorne has served as a muse to David Simon (who wrote for her in her breakthrough role as a cop on "Homicide: Life on the Street" and later cast her as McNulty's long-suffering ex-wife on "The Wire"); Denis Leary and Peter Tolan (who hired her for a brief guest gig on "Rescue Me" that stretched into a seven-season stint as feisty 9/11 widow Sheila Keefe) and now "Necessary Roughness" co-creators Liz Kruger and Craig Shapiro.

They wrote the role of single-mom celebrity shrink Dr. Dani Santino for Thorne, unaware that she was unavailable at the time because she was shooting "Two Chicks," a



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Ernest Hemingway, 1957



Martha Graham, 1948

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ARTS & LIVING

ALMA to Be New Home for Permanent Exhibit of Karsh Photographs

KARSH, from page 10

renovations. Thanks to Estrellita Karsh, ALMA was able to engage Keith Crippen, head designer for the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston, to lead not only the design plans for the gallery, but the Karsh Exhibition and the exhibition of ALMA's collection. Crippen, who also had designed the 2008 Karsh exhibit at the MFA and more recently the museum's new Art of the Americas Wing, has raised the level of professionalism in his design of the museum and has passed along his vision for ALMA to trained carpenters and technicians so they may install new features that will give the galleries a state-of-the-art appearance. In addition to the new walls, ceilings and lighting, new climate-controlled display cases have been purchased and fresh signage will line the gallery.

Additionally, the Bedoukian Gallery will feature a new soundproofed media room, with theater seating and a flat screen monitor, that will show documentary films on Karsh, as well as various films and documentaries on Armenian-related topics.

To celebrate this gift and to help raise further funds, a gala celebration will be held Friday, September 16, at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston. ALMA's execu-



Estrellita and Yousuf Karsh



George Bernard Shaw

tive vice president, Michele Kolligian, will be chairing this event. "Not only will we be recognizing this wonderful artist and the gift from his wife, Mrs. Estrellita Karsh, we will also be celebrating the new face of ALMA,"

Kolligian said.

The weekend of art and renewal will culminate with the opening reception of the exhibition, "Karsh: Celebrating Humanity" at ALMA, on Saturday, September 17, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Gala guests, friends and supporters of ALMA are all invited to this complimentary opening and reception.

A committee has been organized by ALMA Trustee Bob Khederian to lead the fundraising efforts for the new renovations of the new gallery. A special plaque will be mounted in the Bedoukian Gallery, specifically for the donors of the new renovation fund.

"The old face of ALMA was of protecting and safeguarding objects. The image I always think of is a dragon guarding treasures in a cage, but no one can see them. There has recently been a shift to a younger generation of board members who think very differently and feel this wonderful collection deserves to be showcased in proper fashion. What's the point in having this amazing collection if no one knows about it," said Gary Lind-Sinianian, ALMA's curator.

ALMA's chairman, Haig Der Manuelian, further explained that on top of their desire to have more visitors come to ALMA from the Armenian and non-Armenian communities and to increase their membership by 100 percent, he also hopes that the increased exposure will bring awareness to Armenians who

may have artifacts. Once they see ALMA for themselves and its rare exhibits, he said he hoped they would see that the museum can be the new home for them.

Alongside the Karsh exhibit, that night ALMA will showcase a sampling of their diverse collections, from religious artifacts, to textiles and instruments. One of the most



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prominent items displayed outside of the Karsh collection will be the *Garabed Gospel Bible* from Armenia, which took 11 years to make and was completed in 1207. The book was passed down in a family of priests for 39 generations before finding a home at ALMA from the last living member of the Garabedian family of Wisconsin.

Lind-Sinianian explained that once a book was blessed, it became a living being. Even during the Genocide, people would often rather die than not protect their Bible. This one in particular was viewed as a healing object, drawing Armenians from across the country to rub rags on its cover. After doing so, they would stick the rags in their own clothing in hopes of curing themselves. The Bible will be on display in one of the new climate-controlled display cases.

For more information on ALMA or reservations for the gala, call the museum, email info@almainc.org or visit www.almainc.org.



ARTS & LIVING

'The Colour of Pomegranates' DVD

By Sam Tipton

LONDON (The Film Pilgrim) — As the opening caption of the film sets out, "The Colour of Pomegranates" is designed to be a figurative treatment of the work of legendary Armenian troubadour Sayat Nova ("Master of Songs" in Persian). Director Sergei Paradjanov's 1968 work is already semi-legendary itself and now it comes to DVD in the UK for the first time.

Paradjanov attempts to emulate the lyrical qualities of Nova's work, and in doing so manages to forge an incredibly stylized and peculiar visual language for himself. The film begins by depicting Nova's youth, continues through to his coming of age, his discovery of the female form, his experiences of love and his eventual death. This is all achieved almost solely through figurative visual language, there is very little dialogue to speak of, and the only captions we see are excerpts from Nova's poems and songs. As such, and like a lot of art-house cinema, a successful viewing of the film requires a degree of patience and understanding, but it is a more rewarding experience for doing so.

The most striking thing about the film is the way in which Paradjanov has constructed almost every single shot to resemble a painting. An incredible amount of thought was clearly put into the framing and the positioning of every item and subject we see on the screen. Much credit must also go to Stepan Andranikyan (art director) and Suren Shakhbazyan (director of photography), as the film's mise en scène essentially becomes a series of tableaux, filled with far more symbolism and iconography than could ever be fully perceived in one viewing alone.

Camera techniques are also manipulated successfully by Shakhbazyan, the most notable of which is surely the use of deep focus. This adds further layers and depth to the already immaculately conceived works of art that constitute each shot. One particularly astounding image portrays what must be 100 to 200 sheep being herded through a room, whilst in the very background we see the lone figure of a priest and two followers deep in prayer. There is a palpable theme of man's place within nature throughout the film, and this particular scene can also be interpreted as quite a brilliant visual mockery of religion. This is largely what "Pomegranates" is trying to do; Paradjanov wants to bring the beauty and the meaning that he saw in the imagery of Nova's poems and recreate it into a visual language that many more people can experience and understand.

It should, however, be pointed out that this film will not be enjoyed by everyone. It is cinema in its purest and most poetic form, every shot is meticulously constructed as a work of art in itself. Viewing requires the ability to appreciate and critically analyze what is being presented. It can be an arduous procedure but it is one that yields far more meaning and intellectual stimulation than any mainstream cinematic experience in the end. It may not be as entertaining as the latest summer blockbuster, but this is not what "Pomegranates" is about; it is about a pure encapsulation of beauty and cinematic intelligence, in this regard it is a resounding success.

DVD extras include a documentary that exceeds the length of the film itself. Although this may seem excessive, it is actually interesting viewing and includes many useful insights from filmmaker and writer Daniel Bird. There is also an extensive commentary from anthropologist Levon Abrahamyan and a small featurette by assistant director Levon Grigoryan, titled "Memories of Sayat Nova." For fans of the film and those who wish a bit more comprehension of the themes and Nova's work, the extras certainly won't disappoint.

"The Colour of Pomegranates" was released on August 29 in the UK.

C A L E N D A R

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 16 and 17 — "A Weekend of Art and Renewal" by the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), featuring the works of Yousuf Karsh.

• **September 16** — Friday, ALMA will host a gala celebration at the Fairmont Copley Plaza, Boston, honoring the life and works of Yousuf Karsh, and the permanent collection of his portraits gifted by his wife, Estrellita Karsh. Reservations can be made online by visiting ALMA's website, www.almainc.org, or by phone (617) 926-2562, ext. 31 or 4.

• **September 17** — Saturday, Opening Reception of the exhibition "Karsh: Celebrating Humanity," in ALMA's newly-designed Bedoukian Gallery, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 65 Main St., Watertown. For more details visit ALMA's website, www.almainc.org, or call the administrative office at ALMA (617) 926-2562, ext. 31 or 4.

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 or visit www.htaac.org.



On September 18, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, will hold its Trinity Family Festival, from 12 to 5 p.m., featuring delicious dinners, children and family games, as well as Armenian music by the Greg Krikorian Ensemble. For information, contact the church office at (617) 354-0632, e-mail office@htaac.org or visit www.htaac.org.

Armenian Scholar Brings Notice to Einstein

EINSTEIN, from page 10

Suddenly, the spotlight began growing brighter. Much to Calaprice's chagrin, she was suddenly in demand for talks, documentaries, TV and radio shows throughout the world.

"I tend to be a pretty shy person," she admits. "But my life has been immeasurably enriched because of these books so I have an obligation to comply. Publishers expect you to push their books. By now, I feel I've earned the right to avoid that kind of personal stress and limit myself to printed interviews."

She has visited 45 countries and spoken as one of only a handful of women who have specialized in Einstein.

In 2005, she published three books during the centennial year of the Special Theory of Relativity. That got her lunch at the German Embassy in Washington, DC; an appearance in Canada and the dedication of the Einstein statue in Princeton.

Calaprice recalls reading about an exchange of letters Einstein had with Boghos Nubar Pasha, son of a three-time president of Egypt (Nubar Nubarian) and Armenia's delegate to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

"My family seems to be a bit befuddled about my continuing Einstein work, but they're used to it," Calaprice said. "I generally get a 'That's nice, mom' from my kids when a new book is out, but I don't make a big deal out of it. My friends seem to get more excited, maybe because they understand the process better. I've really enjoyed getting fan letters from all over the world and I've answered them all."

Calaprice admits Einstein was not particularly family oriented.

"He had pleasures and faults like any other guy," she said. "He liked women, smoked a pipe, sailed, traveled, but most of all, he loved art, literature and music. He was very international-minded and a pacifist until Hitler came along. Einstein spoke out courageously for his people while in Germany and a price was put on his head by the Nazis so he left in 1933."

No question in her mind that Einstein changed the way society sees the universe. Few would ever suspect he was an independent loner, largely self-taught — a high school dropout who failed his technical college entrance exam, entered that technical college by the skin of his teeth and had a hard time bowing to authority. Einstein is said to have hired assistants to help him with the advanced math components of his work.

"The fact he was chosen 'Person of the Century' by *Time* magazine in 2000 says it all,"

Calaprice noted. "To many, Einstein is more of a mystery than he should be. Any literate person in the world has heard of him. His discoveries still impact the world today, along with his political, social and religious ideals — even though not everyone will agree with them."

Einstein had left Berlin by the time Calaprice was born there and he died before she moved to Princeton. It was as if the two had eluded one another, only in person but not in spirit.

"He was much more than a physicist," she felt. "He was a true humanitarian and concerned about all peoples of the world, not just Jews. He spoke out on many subjects, making my quotation books possible. I want to finish the *Einstein Encyclopedia* and another book a friend wants me to co-author."

Calaprice bills herself as an adventurer. Aside from visiting 45 countries, she has taken flying lessons and experienced many cultures. She has also hiked the Southwest and Death Valley.

"I've been privileged to meet a lot of eccentric characters through my interest in Einstein," she notes. "It is always important to have role models who are older than you. I've gotten to the age where I'm running out of goals."

Calaprice was born in Berlin in 1941 to a German father and Armenian mother. Her grandfather, Artashes Abeghian, published a German-Armenian grammar book and dictionary, along with a map of ancient and modern Armenia; translated the works of the German poet Goethe into Armenian and was memorialized with an Armenian postage stamp in the mid-1960s. Her father was a German POW in France, while her mother worked for the United Nations International Refugee Organization and Armenian National Committee to Aid Homeless Armenians (ANCHA).

She graduated in 1963 from the University of

California at Berkeley, with a degree in sociology and minor in Near Eastern Studies.

She has a daughter, Denise, with doctorate in evolutionary biology and ecology from Princeton and is now a clinical researcher; her son David



Alice (Abeghian) Calaprice displays the books she has written about Albert Einstein.

went to Carnegie-Mellon and is a software engineer and vice president of engineering and her former husband, Frank, is a physics professor at Princeton. She has four grandchildren.

She translated into English the German transcript of Soghomon Tehlerian's trial for an advisor at Berkeley and translated Armenian folktales into English as a teenager, many of which were published.

Her books on Einstein include: *The Quotable Einstein* (Princeton University Press 1996); *The Expanded Quotable Einstein* (PUP 2000); *The New Quotable Einstein* (PUP 2005); *The Ultimate Quotable Einstein* (PUP 2011); *Dear Professor Einstein* (Prometheus 2002); *The Einstein Almanac* (John Hopkins University Press 2005) and *Albert Einstein: A Biography* (with Trevor Lipscombe) (Greenwood Biographies 2005).

Her upcoming book is *The Einstein Encyclopedia* (under contract with Princeton University Press with two co-authors).



COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Ten Years after September 11, 2001

What follows is a message from Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

By Archbishop Khajag Barsamian

On Sunday, September 11, 2011, the faithful of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America are joining our voices with millions of our fellow Americans – and with people around the world – to offer prayers on the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on America.

Like so many others, with the approach of this milestone I have tried to recollect what it was like on that day a full decade ago. Americans of our generation have taken to greeting every 11th of September in the same way – and I imagine we will continue doing so for the remainder of our lives.

I vividly recall the spontaneous gathering in the sanctuary of St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral in New York City, on the afternoon of September 11, 2001. I recall looking out from the altar, and seeing all manner of people: familiar faces alongside new ones from off the street. A number of people had narrowly escaped the disaster zone, and bore traces of dust and debris from the collapsing Twin Towers. They had instinctively come to a place of peace and prayer, like so many others in that great march northward through the city, which choked the streets around us with the refugees from southern Manhattan.

Although we did not know it at the time, three hours earlier, in the very midst of the terrorist attacks, others had followed the same instinct. On Flight 93, a young man facing what he knew to be the final minutes of his life, spoke on a cell-phone to a telephone operator he had never met. He asked her to pray with him, and together they recited the 23rd Psalm. Having uttered these words, Todd Beamer and the brave passengers on the doomed Flight 93 proceeded to take the plane back from the hijackers, derailing the terrorists' plan, at the cost of their own lives.

This was only one of the many stories – heart-breaking and inspiring at the same time – which we learned in the aftermath of 9/11. Ten years later, those stories have become a part of

our national culture: a part of America's own story. Perhaps for that reason, the personal, human toll of that day has receded into the background: a part of history we all share, but take for granted.

But on this solemn, milestone anniversary let us promise never to forget these stories, or the people who lived them. Let us never forget the families of those who lost loved ones in the 9/11 attacks – among them, people from our own community. Our thoughts are with them, as with all who have suffered and sacrificed in the long aftermath of that day.

Let us vow that their examples, their sacrifices, have not been made in vain; that each of us, to the best of our ability, will continue the struggle to preserve freedom, justice, and true peace against those who do not hold life sacred. And we pray too that – should we ever face our own fateful hour – God will summon from us the same courage He drew from our lost countrymen, on that terrible day 10 years ago.

Above all, as I search these ten-year-old memories, the words of the 23rd Psalm impress themselves upon me, as they did so powerfully on that day:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.

He leads me in the path of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I fear no evil; for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23)

May we all likewise dwell in our Lord's house, now and always. May He keep watch over the souls He drew to His kingdom on 9/11, and bestow His peace on their loved ones. May He grant guidance to our leaders, and strengthen the resolve of those who stand in defense of our country. And may He always shed His shining grace on the United States of America.

(Archbishop Khajag Barsamian is the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America [Eastern].)

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US Presidents Inherit 'Tradition' of Armenian Genocide Non-Recognition

By Gohar Karapetyan

The policy of evading the pledges given to the Armenian voters becomes more and more obvious every year. April 24, the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, the day when millions of people hold breath to hear the word Genocide pronounced by the head of state, but alas...

Looking closely at the policy pursued by the previous and current US Presidents, we can easily presume that worsening of relations with Turkey is definitely not in the interests of the United States.

Back in 2000, George W. Bush, then presidential hopeful was "sincerely" assuring of the beginning of a new era of justice. But as the US president, Bush never uttered the word Genocide and adhered to a policy contrary to the interests of the Armenian community.

Turkish Parliament member Hasan Korkmazdcan's letter recently released by whistleblower website WikiLeaks appeared as another proof of the unconditional "subjection" to Turkey. In the letter dated April 18, 2005, the Turkish politician expresses hope that the White House will support Ankara's position. "Turkish studies proved that the Armenian claims are the result of fanaticism. We are hopeful that you will resist this campaign, which is based on a false interpretation of events which found no proof in the archives of the Ottoman

Empire," Korkmazdcan wrote.

Furthermore, President Bush did not support the non-binding congressional resolution recognizing the massacre of 1.5 million of Armenians as Genocide, which was however, passed, despite the White House's opposition.

Bush's main excuse was "combating terrorism." "We deeply regret the sufferings that befell the Armenian people in 1915 but adoption of similar resolution would irreparably damage our relations with NATO's key ally in the war against terrorism," Bush said.

So, the presidential administration took up a firm position on the Armenian Genocide, throwing the matter beyond the competence of legislators. "This is the issue to be considered by historians but not lawmakers."

On January 19, 2008 then US Senator, now US President Barack Obama released a statement: "Two years ago, I criticized the Secretary of State for the firing of US Ambassador to Armenia, John Evans, after he properly used the term 'genocide' to describe Turkey's slaughter of thousands of Armenians starting in 1915. I shared with Secretary Rice my firmly held conviction that the Armenian Genocide is not an allegation, a personal opinion, or a point of view, but rather a widely documented fact supported by an overwhelming body of historical evidence. The facts are undeniable. An official policy that calls on diplomats to distort the historical facts is an untenable

policy. As a senator, I strongly support passage of the Armenian Genocide Resolution (H.Res.106 and S.Res.106), and as President I will recognize the Armenian Genocide."

On April 24 commemorative speeches President Obama has yet to mention the Armenian Genocide by name, but the Armenian phrase *Meds Yeghern* (the Big Calamity).

President Obama stated: "On this solemn day of remembrance, we pause to recall that 95 years ago one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century began. In that dark moment of history, 1.5 million Armenians were massacred or marched to their death in the final days of the Ottoman Empire. Today is a day to reflect upon and draw lessons from these terrible events. I have consistently stated my own view of what occurred in 1915, and my view of that history has not changed. It is in all of our interest to see the achievement a full, frank and just acknowledgment of the facts. The *Meds Yeghern* is a devastating chapter in the history of the Armenian people, and we must keep its memory alive in honor of those who were murdered and so that we do not repeat the grave mistakes of the past"

President Obama, just like Bush betrayed his promise to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide, continuing the tradition of his predecessor.

(This opinion piece originally appeared in PanARMENIAN News.)



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Same old Turkish Trick: Make Promises, Get Praised, but Deliver Nothing

Turkish leaders came up with a new ploy last week to impress world public opinion with fake magnanimity toward the country's long-oppressed minorities.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan signed a decree last Saturday that supposedly will return hundreds of buildings that belonged to Christian and Jewish community foundations or charitable trusts. There are currently 162 such trusts (vakfs) registered in the Republic of Turkey.

Back in 1936, the Turkish government demanded that all non-Muslim foundations declare their property holdings. In 1974, Turkish courts illegally stripped these foundations from all properties acquired after 1936 and even some that belonged to them before that date. Last week's decree requested the foundations to submit to the government within the next 12 months the list of properties confiscated from them – now worth billions of dollars – including schools, hospitals, orphanages and cemeteries. If and when Parliament adopts this decree, the Turkish government is pledging to either return the seized properties or pay compensation for those sold to third parties. It is important to

note that this decree does not cover the hundreds of thousands of private properties that were confiscated by the Turkish authorities from Armenians and other minorities during and after World War I.

Before anyone starts thanking the Turkish leadership for its “kindness” or “fair-mindedness” toward its non-Muslim citizens, one needs to scrutinize Ankara's motives and anticipate its possible next steps.

Although Erdogan's ruling party has more than sufficient votes in Parliament to pass the proposed measure, no one should be surprised if this “generous” offer is considerably watered down in terms of the number and types of properties it covers and their current value, conveniently blaming these restrictions on the opposition parties. Erdogan's previous promises to return confiscated properties to minority foundations were mired in bureaucratic red tape, causing lengthy delays and failure to honor almost all requests.

Most probably Turkish officials decided to issue this decree after losing several major property claims filed by Armenian and Greek foundations in the European Court of Human Rights. Clearly, Turkey can ill afford to lose hundreds of similar lawsuits. Adnan Ertem, head of Turkey's administration of charitable trusts, told Sabah newspaper that by dealing internally with non-Muslim foundations, the government would be able to avoid paying much larger sums, including damages and court costs, should it lose the lawsuits filed in the European Court. Ertem claimed that there are 370 confiscated properties that should be returned to minority foundations.

More important than saving money, Turkey would spare itself the embarrassment of losing hundreds of court cases which would tarnish its reputation in the eyes of the world, particularly at a time when it is trying to join the European Union. In addition, Turkey has already scored a major pro-

paganda coup by merely promising to return these properties. The international media has published glowing news reports of this “magnanimous” Turkish gesture, before a single piece of property has been returned to the minorities. No one should be surprised if Turkey uses this new decree as a propaganda tool to counter recent US congressional demands for the return of church properties to their rightful owners.

Likewise, no one should be surprised if Turkish leaders brazenly demand that the Armenian, Greek and Israeli governments reciprocate with a gesture of their own toward Turkey. Turkish officials should be reminded that by returning the confiscated properties they are not doing a favor to the religious minorities. Such misplaced gratitude would be akin to a robbery victim thanking a thief who for selfish reasons decides to return a small portion of what he has stolen.

Even though the Turkish media has prematurely characterized the Erdogan decree as “historic” and “revolutionary,” in practice, it is less enforceable than the Turkish government's obligations under the Treaty of Lausanne which provides the country's Armenian, Greek and Jewish minorities much greater protection under international law. While domestic laws can be amended at any time, Turkey's international treaty obligations can not be restricted by governmental decree. Fearing for their own safety, none of the non-Muslim communities have dared to file a complaint with the United Nations or international courts, despite the fact that successive Turkish governments have violated the provisions of the Lausanne Treaty since its ratification in 1923.

My advice to Turkey's minorities would be not to withdraw their lawsuits from the European Court of Human Rights until they recover their confiscated properties or receive appropriate financial restitution.

Armenian Church Needs Female Deacons

By Rev. Arnak Kasparian

The Armenian Church is still not treating women as equals to men. The argument against giving women full rights is an old one. The basic argument goes like this: God became man in order to bring salvation to the world. Since God incarnate was a man, it follows and that His fundamental work on earth must be carried out by men, and furthermore, since the church is the Body of Christ (a male person), it follows that those who do the work of the Church must be male. So, we find our Armenian Church a male-dominated institution starting from the very top on down – the Catholicos, the bishops, the priests, the deacons and the clerks (*tbirs*). In fact for much of our history most of our choir members, assembly delegates and Parish Council members were men.

First let me make a comment about Jesus. The Bible says that God became man, which means God became a human being. In fact, in the book of Genesis, it says that “God created man in his own image, male and female he created them.” The division of mankind into men and women is merely a biological function of reproduction. Men and women are both human, made in the image of God. One is not inherently superior to the other, and the social roles developed between them is a distinction made by society and not by God.

If we in the 20th century in America cannot accept mankind as two equal alternatives of humankind, male and female, how can we expect that 20 centuries ago, in a remote corner of the world, that God would become a female person in order to do his work on earth? Society would not have accepted it back then, when there was a patriarchal culture, but we should know better today. God can express himself through men and women equally. Finally, although we called God “the father,” that is also a convention. Obviously God and the angels do not biologically reproduce, therefore they are neither male nor female.

The emphasis in our church on male domination is simply wrong and male-made, hardly the will of God. Through the centuries, this patriarchal view of the world started to change

and women have slowly begun to be granted the equal status they deserve. There was a time when there were no women in the choir, on the Parish Council, nor were they Diocesan delegates or Diocesan Council members. Progress is being made, but still more progress needs to be made. Only time will tell.

So far, we do not see women serving as deacons in the United States. In fact, most Armenians do not realize that traditionally the Armenian Church has had female deacons. Historical documents record the names of some eastern deaconesses from the fourth to the sixth century. The most celebrated of these is Olympia, a deaconess and a friend of Patriarch Hovhanness Voskeperan (St. John Chrysostom, fourth century). There are a number of references to ordination of deaconesses in the Armenian Church. The oldest one is an 11th-century Mashtotz (Manual of Ordination) kept in the Isle of San Lazzaro, Venice, Italy. Another one, dated 1216, has “an ordination service for women deacons, which are deaconesses.” A third reference is one in Holy Echmiadzin, dated 1314, with a canon “to ordain a deaconess.”

Years ago, when former students of the Jerusalem Seminary came together for a meeting in Jerusalem, I met a deaconess of the Armenian Church from Istanbul who was a visitor. The late Patriarch of Jerusalem, Archbishop Guregh Israyelian, had a sister in Julfa, Iran, who was a deaconess.

In the National Library of Galatia, Istanbul there is a book for the ordination of clergymen. It has a chapter titled “Ordination of women deacons, called deaconesses.” (My main source of information is from *Hayouhin Badtnootian Archev* by Fr. Vartan Hatzooni. Venice, St. Lazzaro, 1936)

We can see from this evidence that even though most members of the Armenian Church today do not know that we have had deaconesses in the Armenian Church in the past, the fact of the matter is that we have had them, and in the not so recent past at that. I believe the time has come, at least in our Diocese, to revive the practice of raising women in our church rituals. There is no reason not to ordain them as “tbirs” or even deaconesses.

During the 1986 Diocesan Assembly (the

highest authority of the Diocese), in Racine, Wis., with a vote of 96 to 22, it was decided to ordain women as deacons in our church. Since the passing of this resolution, no official report has been given on its status. We need to ask the question, why?

Why are we so resistant to change? After all the evidence I've presented, why do we still not understand that the Armenian Church has traditionally ordained women as deaconesses? Even the main door that leads to the Cathedral of Holy Echmiadzin has this inscribed on its wooden panel: “In memory of Arch Deaconess Hripsimeh Alek Tahiryanyans.” What better precedent can we ask?

The Primate of our Diocese, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, once when he ordained clerks (*tbir*) and blessed the choir members, gave both the girls and the boys the four minor orders. With a smile, I said to him: “Now these girls will be able to hold candles during *Badarak*, but will they be able to incense (do *kshots*)?” With a smile in return he answered, “Don't hurry, in time.” I do not know how long we have to wait. How much time do we need to revitalize old and revered practices? We need answers regarding our 1986 resolution.

(Rev. Arnak Kasparian is a resident of New Milford, NJ.)

LETTERS

Focus on the Word ‘Genocide’ Belittles Battle with Turks

To the Editor:

The coining of the word, “genocide,” gives Turkey an advantage in its denial of the crime against humanity that it perpetrated on the Armenians. Our concentrating on the application of that word, in effect, reduces the fight between us and the Turks into a battle over one of legalistic definition. Besides, the word, “genocide,” has lost its sinister connotation reflecting its profligate use these days to describe all sorts of aggressive behavior. What difference does it make what one calls our tragedy. We should instead base our accusations on the historical fact that the indigenous Armenian people of Anatolia were summarily wiped out by Turkey. If Turkey denies this, how else would it be able to explain the disappearance of that population from its territory.

— Berge Tatian

Academic Thanks Fellow Scholar Libaridian for Column

To the Editor:

Thank you for printing Dr. Jirair Libaridian's article. Bravo to Dr. Libaridian who has put in writing what I have been trying to convey in my various lectures to Armenian communities in the US and Canada (and being criticized). His excellent historical analysis should hopefully wake the leadership in Armenia and the diaspora to act.

— Dr. George Bournoutian
New York



Moscow-Armenian Community Rolls out Red Carpet at ATP Benefit Event

MOSCOW – Armenak Agababyan, the owner of Saxon Porcelain Manufactory of Dresden, hosted a cocktail party to benefit Armenia Tree Project (ATP) at the Dresden art gallery in Moscow in July. The gallery exhibits contemporary and traditional fine artwork. It is located in the very heart of Moscow's historical, cultural and business center in Gostiny Dvor, next to Saint Basil's Cathedral.

The Armenian community came together for this first-ever benefit event for ATP in Moscow. Some of the organizers included Emmanuil Dolbakyan, Hasmik Grigoryan, Aram Hakobyan, Zhanna Melkonyan, Suren Mkrtchyan, Karlen Muradov, Valery Petrosyan and Albina Sukiasyan. The event was attended by more than 90 people from different organizations, including the Ararat Cultural Center, Armenian Union of Russia and Hayordats Tun, as well as representatives of the Moscow government.

Two prominent artists exhibited their work in

work and shared her personal impressions of ATP from her trip to Armenia last spring. Nalbandyan described ATP's tree planting, environmental education and poverty reduction programs and screened the "Every Tree" film about ATP. She presented a slideshow of photographs taken by ATP Executive Director Jeff Masarjian during last spring's tree planting season in order to illustrate the scale and scope of the organization's work.

Moscow State University Prof. Valery Petrosyan gave a speech on environmental protection and ecology issues in Armenia and the importance of ATP's mission. Petrosyan is a professor of chemistry, rector of Moscow's Open Ecological University and a United Nations expert on chemical safety. "As odd as it sounds, I am also a foreign member of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia," he explained.

Before the event Nalbandyan met with Bishop Yezras Nersisyan, the Primate of New Nakhijevan and Russia, at the construction site of the Armenian Church. She presented him with an ATP tree-planting certificate and he recalled learning about ATP's mission during a visit to the Armenian community in Boston. Nersisyan blessed the upcoming event and noted the importance of the unity of Armenians in projects that benefit the nation.

Nalbandyan presented ATP tree certificates to several guests that evening. "The idea that there is a tree growing in Armenia in my name warms my heart and connects me even more

with my motherland," said Aram Hakobyan.

"I've had all kind of gifts in my life and I thought nothing would surprise me anymore. I haven't had a tree given to me before. Amazing – my tree will breathe the Armenian air," added Zhanna Melkonyan in appreciation.

"This is more than just a gift. This is so meaningful and moving. I am grateful to learn about ATP, which does outstanding work in our homeland," emphasized Hasmik Grigoryan.

Next, Albina Sukiasyan stood up and encouraged guests to support ATP. Each member of her family sponsored the planting of a tree by ATP as a tribute to the head of the family, Emmanuil Dolbakyan. "Help Armenia Tree Project to help you," announced Suren Mkrtchyan Jr., who distributed ATP postcards



Volunteer Astghik Nalbandyan presented an overview of ATP's mission during a benefit event at the Dresden art gallery in Moscow, which featured exhibits by Zhanna Melkonyan and Irina Alaverdova and a performance by the Anima Musica string quartet.



Moscow State University Prof. Valery Petrosyan discussed ecological issues in Armenia and the importance of ATP's mission during a benefit event in Moscow.

support of the event: Zhanna Melkonyan, Honored Artist of Russian Federation, and Irina Alaverdova, a member of the European Academy of Natural Sciences. Paintings from Alaverdova's series, "Bach's Clavier in Birch Alleys," were exhibited to complement the theme of the event.

Right from the beginning, guests became acquainted with one another and started discovering ATP through brochures, magazine articles, photo albums and postcards produced by the organization. They enjoyed the exhibitions as well as classical music performed by the Anima Musica string quartet, along with cognac and traditional hors d'oeuvres.

ATP volunteer Astghik Nalbandyan from the United States presented the organization's

and donation envelopes to participants.

Guests made gifts to ATP during the evening and businessman Arthur Tonoyan was on the top of the list. An auction donation of Armen Meruzhanyan's book, *Armenia in Historical Pictures, Traditions, and Legends* also took place.

Aram Hakobyan donated one of his paintings for the auction. One individual even offered to provide the land he owns in Ashtarak for ATP's further expansion. Donations were made by Julietta Grigoryan, Valery Petrosyan, Natalia Sevumyan, Albina Sukiasyan, Lusine Tonoyan and Yulia Yanikova.

"We are grateful for the efforts of Astghik Nalbandyan and our host Armenak Agababyan for initiating this benefit event in Moscow," noted Executive Director Jeff Masarjian. "Our thanks go out to the community for attending and for financially supporting our programs. We raised awareness about Armenia's rich natural heritage and the group sponsored another 100 trees which ATP will plant in Armenia this fall. We plan to expand ATP's outreach to even more communities of the diaspora in the coming months and hope to receive a similar reception."

For more information about ATP, visit www.armeniatree.org.

Turkish-Armenian Genocide Study 'Unacceptable'

STUDY, from page 1

Arzumanyan described that claim as "overt disinformation" in a letter issued by the presidential press office.

The article, posted earlier in the day, referred to one of the most controversial provisions of the two Turkish-Armenian normalization protocols that were signed in Zurich in October 2009.

The idea of such a study was first floated by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a 2005 letter to Kocharian. The then-Armenian president rejected it as a Turkish ploy designed to scuttle greater international recognition of the Genocide.

Shortly after taking office in April 2008, Sargisian indicated that he is ready, in principle, to accept the proposal. "We are not against the creation of such a commission, but only if the border between our countries is opened," he declared during a June 2008 visit to Moscow.

Sargisian changed his rhetoric after an uproar caused by the Protocols in Armenia and its worldwide diaspora. Armenian critics of his policy of rapprochement with Turkey said that the very existence of the history sub-commission would call into question the Armenian Genocide and make it easier for Ankara to discourage more countries from officially recognizing it.

The Sargisian government rejected the criticism, saying that the Turkish-Armenian panel

would not seek to determine whether or not the World War I-era slaughter of some 1.5 million Armenians constituted genocide.

Sargisian appeared to have gone further in an April 2010 interview with the German magazine *Der Spiegel*. "The creation of the [Turkish-Armenian history] commission would make sense only if Turkey finally confessed its guilt," he declared. "After that scholars will be able to jointly determine the causes of that tragedy."

"Setting up such a commission would mean calling into question the fact of the genocide perpetrated against our people," he said, echoing a key argument of his critics.

The presidential spokesman similarly insisted on Thursday that the sub-commission in question was not supposed to tackle "historical issues pertaining to the genocide."

Sargisian was interviewed by *Der Spiegel* amid growing indications that Erdogan's government will not ensure the Protocols' ratification by Turkey's parliament before a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict acceptable to Azerbaijan.

Erdogan and other Turkish leaders also linked the non-ratification with a January 2010 ruling by Armenia's Constitutional Court. The latter concluded, among other things, that the Protocols cannot stop Yerevan from seeking Genocide recognition in the international arena.

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