

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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## Syrian Rebels Swap Crosses Atop Churches for Al Qaeda Flags

BEIRUT (AFP) – Jihadist fighters linked to Al-Qaeda set fire to statues and crosses inside churches in northern Syria on Thursday and destroyed a cross on a church clock tower, a watchdog said.

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

the religious furnishings inside, the Syria Observatory for Human Rights said.

They did the same at the Armenian Catholic Church of the Martyrs, and also destroyed a cross atop its clock tower, replacing it with the ISIL flag, the Observatory said.

(REUTERS)



Flags of the al-Qaeda-linked Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant are hung to replace crosses on The Martyrs Church in Raqqa.

Most of Raqqa, located on the banks of the Euphrates River and capital of the province of the same name, fell to anti-regime fighters in March.

Where the ISIL dominates in the city, it imposes a strict version of sharia (Islamic law) on the populace.

The London-based Observatory denounced these attacks “against the freedom of religion, which are an assault on the

(ISIL) fighters entered the Greek Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation in the northern city of Raqqa and torched

Syrian revolution.”

Not only have there been attacks on Christian places of worship in Syria, a pre-

dominantly Sunni Muslim country wracked by more than two years of civil war, but also on Shiite Muslim mosques.

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### TCA Executive Director To Speak at AGBU Hye Geen Program

PASADENA, Calif. – AGBU Hye Geen will hold another event in the series celebrating its 20th anniversary. AGBU Hye Geen will present the issue of the changing Armenian Diaspora and whether the US Armenian community can replicate the success of the Middle East, on November 2 at the AGBU Pasadena Center, 2495 East Mountain St.

The first speaker, Tamar Kevonian will review gender inequality in the Los Angeles Armenian community. The publisher of *Mosaic Magazine* and subsequently a contributor to various Armenian publications, Kevonian has tackled social issues within the US community.

Baydzig Arabian-Kalaydjian, a former educator, editor of Middle Eastern newspapers and at present executive director of the Boston-based Tekeyan Cultural Association, will discuss the changing Armenian Diaspora and evaluate the US Armenian diaspora in replicating the success of the Middle Eastern communities.

A question-and-answer period will follow the talk.

Sona Zeitlian, author of studies about Armenian women, will offer concluding remarks. She will review the options for investing in the future and dwell on the role of organizational networks to insure the active involvement of the urban settlers in the US.

The program will start at 11 a.m.



Baydzig Kalaydjian

### Vartan Gregorian Honored in Scotland at Carnegie Birthplace

DUNFERMLINE, Scotland – Part of a park donated by Andrew Carnegie to the people of Scotland was named after Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, on October 14. During the ceremony, a pathway was dedicated as “Vartan’s Way” at Pittencrieff Park in Andrew Carnegie’s birthplace of Dunfermline. The ceremony was part of weeklong celebrations in Scotland surrounding the 2013 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, an honor awarded by the family of Carnegie institutions to recognize those who embrace Carnegie’s philosophy of using their private wealth for the public good.

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Vartan Gregorian plants a tree at the Scotland park.



BOSTON – Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, who was running in the October 15 primary ahead of the December 10 special election to fill the US House of Representatives seat vacated by now-Sen. Edward Markey, came in second, narrowly losing to Katherine Clark in a large Democrat field. A more detailed story on the primary will appear in next week’s paper.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### President Hands out Awards at National Academy of Sciences

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President Serge Sargisian, on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, signed decrees bestowing honored titles and medals to members of the academy for their contributions and services in the fields of science and education.

The president awarded some of the members with the order of Saint Mesrop Mashtots, others with the medal of Anania Shirakatsi or Movses Khorenatsi.

According to another decree, signed by the president, a number of members have received titles.

### Sargisian to Attend EU Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian President Serge Sargisian plans to attend the upcoming European Union (EU) Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius on November 28 and 29, the *Lithuania Tribune* reported.

The news was confirmed by Armenian Ambassador to Lithuania Ara Aivazyan at a recent meeting with the Deputy Speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas, Gediminas Kirkilas, the Seimas.

The statement also says that Armenia plans take active participation in the Eastern Partnership Programme, despite the fact that on September 3 Sargisian announced Armenia’s decision to join the Moscow-led Customs Union and take part in the formation of the Eurasian Economic Union.

“Ahead of the Vilnius Summit, Armenia will seek to strengthen a political dialogue with the EU and its member states, aimed at promoting mutual understanding,” the statement said.

Armenia wants an achievement resolution to be signed during the Vilnius Summit to consolidate its achievements over three years of negotiations on the association agreement.

### Mirror-Spectator Wins Diaspora Ministry Award

YEREVAN – Earlier in October, the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* received a certificate from the Armenian Diaspora Ministry, as the top newspaper in the diaspora.

The Diaspora Ministry jointly awards the certificate annually, working in conjunction with the Armenian Journalists’ Union.

The certificate also comes with a monetary award.

An article with further details will appear in next week’s publication.

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## News From Armenia

### Activist Appeals Armenia's Decision to Enter Customs Union

YEREVAN (PanArmenian.net) – The decision to enter the Customs Union was not taken democratically, by means of discussions and consultations, said human rights activist and head of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor Office Arthur Sakunts, at a press conference this week.

He also said that he plans to appeal to the Constitutional Court requesting to declare the decision illegal.

Rule of Law NGO chairman Artak Zeynalyan said he is opposed to Armenia's decision to join the Customs Union, adding that that decision was "in violation of the principle of publicity."

### Armenians Hack Azerbaijani Website

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Ahead of the forthcoming Armenia-Italy match, the Armenian Cyber Army hacked the website of the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan. The information security specialist Samvel Martirosyan published about it in his Facebook profile, Armenpress reports. The Armenian hackers left the message "11 heroes: the Armenian national football team" and a video on the Azerbaijani website.

### Philanthropist Izmirlian Receives Honors

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President Serge Sargisian received the Supreme Patriarch and the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and Swiss-Armenian philanthropists Dikran and Helena Izmirlian on October 15.

The Department for Mass Media and Public Relations of the Armenian President's Office reported to Armenpress that Sargisian praised the Izmirlian Foundation's past and present charitable projects, both in Armenia and in Artsakh (Nagorno Karabagh) Republic, which include the latest venture, the reopening of Izmirlian Medical Center in Yerevan, under the auspices of the Armenian Church.

In addition, Sargisian awarded the Order of Saint Mesrop Mashtots to Dikran Izmirlian, in recognition of his contribution to the strengthening of Homeland-Diaspora ties and his patriotic activities for numerous years. The Izmirlian family members also attended the awarding ceremony.

On his part, the benefactor Izmirlian stressed that it is owing to his devoted parents that he and his family are conducting patriotic activities. "Armenia is and always will be in our hearts," he said.

### Students of Synopsis Receive Diplomas

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – One hundred and two students who successfully graduated from the joint educational program of the Department of Education of Synopsis Armenia and partner universities received diplomas this week.

Director of Synopsis Armenia CJS Hovik Musayelyan, when delivering the diplomas, congratulated the students, pointing out that the company continues its activity in Armenia through the technological university educational programs promoting the development of the economy of the country.

### Mexican Ambassador to Armenia Appointed

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The newly appointed ambassador of Mexico to Armenia, Ruben Alberto Beltran Guerrero, handed his credentials to President Serge Sargisian.

Sargisian congratulated Guerrero and stated that he is hopeful that Guerrero will spare no effort for the strengthening of relations between the two countries. The sides laid a heavy emphasis on the significance of regular mutual visits and activities.

## Armenian Scholar Urges Putin to 'Annex' Karabagh

By Naira Hayrumyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – While mass actions of protests against migrants, especially Caucasus natives, were being held in Moscow on Sunday, with calls for ousting all of them from the Russian capital and while riot police were dispersing protesters near the Biryulyovo market, in Yerevan a heated discussion went on around the letter of Karabagh movement activist, writer and publicist Zori Balayan's letter calling on Russian President Vladimir Putin to "annex" Karabagh to Russia.

October 12 marked the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Gulistan on the results of the Russian-Persian war, in which Russia won. According to that treaty, much of the Persian Empire land, including the Karabagh khanate, was ceded to Russia "in perpetuity." The fact that Karabagh was a part of the Russian Empire in accordance with the Treaty of Gulistan has been mentioned by Russian experts since it became clear recently that no one can give an answer to the question of what will be the fate of Karabagh in

the event of Armenia's joining the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

There has been no answer to this question until today, and it looks like Russia, with the help of its "friends" in Armenia, is preparing a variant of recognition and, thus, political annexation of Karabagh. It is not without reason that an international conference titled "The National-Liberation Struggle of Karabagh: from Gulistan to the Present Day" was held with pomp in Karabagh a week before the 200th anniversary of the treaty. The very name of the event already indicated that the transition from the Persian into the Russian Empire in Karabagh is considered as the beginning of the "national-liberation" struggle. And so on the day of the anniversary of the treaty Balayan, who is considered all but a number one enemy in Azerbaijan, wrote a 10-page letter to Putin in which he cited lots of arguments in favor of the Karabagh problem being the problem of Russia as much as that of Armenia and said that Russia should solve this issue by recognizing Karabagh as it did in Gulistan. Balayan, who stood at the sources of the Karabagh movement and frequently went to Moscow

to try to convince Russia to recognize Karabagh's independence, after the war in Karabagh worked for the "unification" of the Armenian nation by organizing two round-the-world trips by sea visiting major ports with Armenian communities along the way and making a lot of writing on state budget money.

The letter provoked a strong reaction on the Armenian segment of online social networking sites. Some said that Balayan is, probably, out of his mind, others argued that while a few years ago this letter would have been taken in Armenia "with understanding," now no one understands who Russia should save independent Karabagh from now. Still others argued that the letter was written in consultation with the authorities of Armenia and Russia. Either way, it is clear that Russia is preparing some acts in connection with Karabagh, which may be accompanied by a "generous" political recognition of the NKR and its inclusion in the future Eurasian Union as well as the deployment of Russian troops in Karabagh. It is not excluded that the newly renovated Stepanakert airport will be put into operation but already under the aegis of Russia.

## Opposition Activist to Seek Full Acquittal After Release by Amnesty

By Siranuysh Gevorgyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – A freed opposition youth activist has vowed to seek full exoneration despite a partial acquittal and release from the appeals court under the general amnesty act on Monday.

The court in Yerevan ordered Tigran Arakelyan's release after ruling that parts of the charges against him must be dropped and his six-year prison sentence reduced to three years.

Arakelyan, a leader of the opposition Armenian National Congress (ANC) youth wing, had spent more than two years in jail after being arrested in August 2011 and later sentenced on charges of assaulting a police officer.

Interestingly, the incident that happened two years ago and as a result of which seven activists were detained (four of whom, including Arakelyan, were then indicted and tried) put an end to a political dialogue between the opposition bloc and the authorities. All along the opposition has considered the cases against Arakelyan and three other



Tigran Arakelyan

activists to be politically motivated.

Arakelyan, who at the previous court hearing stated that he did not need amnesty and that he wanted acquittal, announced that he was going to appeal the decision at the Court of Cassation in order to achieve a complete acquittal.

In the evening Arakelyan met with ANC members and supporters in

Yerevan's Saryan Park. He thanked them for the support during these two years and said that he would be more active and would take steps aimed at finding more "in-depth solutions."

ANC parliamentary faction secretary Aram Manukyan said that their struggle was not only for the release of Arakelyan, but to exclude the presence of people persecuted for their political views in Armenia.

"Our goal is to make sure no one becomes a political prisoner no matter what party affiliation they may have," he stated.

ANC faction leader Levon Zurabyan, meanwhile, again accused the authorities of thwarting the dialogue two years ago with unreasonable action.

"These authorities have proved that they are ready to sacrifice the best processes that could lead to the recovery of our society for the sake of revenge, for political persecution, for creating an atmosphere of intimidation," he claimed.

"We had been in dialogue over holding early parliamentary and presidential elections to form a legitimate government in Armenia. Are they ready to talk about these issues today? Probably not. But our cause from now on will be to force this talk on these authorities," Zurabyan concluded.

## Yerevan State University Opens to Diaspora

YEREVAN – The Distance Learning Laboratory at Yerevan State University (YSU) announced this week the launch of DistanceLearning.am – a pioneering program of English-language courses, which can be taken by anyone with access to a computer.

"For too long our language, culture and history have been kept in select universities of the world," said Dr. Artashes Khurshudyan, director of the virtual program. "But now we must deliver to the demand of the 21st century. Contemporary education itself must be democratized and become as accessible as possible. This distance learning program will also contribute to the dissemination of Armenian issues across the world."

For years the Distance Learning Laboratory, which is housed in the Department of Sociology, has been developing this program – which is the University's first diaspora-oriented initiative. Now Armenians everywhere are invited to take YSU-certified courses in the various eras of Armenian History, Genocide, Comparative Genocide and the Armenian Diaspora. These have been developed by leading experts, scholars and professors from all over the world.

"DistanceLearning.am is a virtual university in itself," Khurshudyan added, "A virtual university where courses in Armenian Studies are being taught 24 hours a day. At any moment anybody in the world can walk into our university and begin or continue his education."



## INTERNATIONAL

## Armenian Church to Participate in World Council of Churches' 10th Assembly

BUSAN, Korea – The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) begins at the end of October and will bring together Christians from around in the world. Participating in the assembly will be the Armenian Church.

The assembly is attempt at renewing the worldwide ecumenical movement – infusing it with honesty, humility and hope, according to the WCC general secretary.

Regarding this purpose, Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, WCC general secretary, and a Lutheran pastor from the Church of Norway said, it is “through humility, honesty and hope that we can live together as humanity and a Church in a world, where justice and peace are fundamental initiatives and not merely words.”

The theme of the WCC assembly is a prayer “God of life, lead us to justice and peace.”

The assembly will take place from October 30 to November 8 in Busan, Republic of Korea.

There will be around 3,000 participants from Asia, Pacific, Africa, Europe, Middle East, North America and Latin America, including a large number of

young people and several thousand Korean Christians.

Tveit said he sees the legacy of the WCC, which began in 1948 and has continued during the past 65 years in the assembly. “The member churches,” Tveit said, “will be harvesting fruits of the work of the WCC since the last WCC assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2006, while setting directions for a new ecumenical vision for the future.” There are 345 member churches in the WCC and nearly all will be represented at the assembly.

“Churches will engage in open and accountable conversations,” he said, about issues important to the church today such as mission and evangelism, faith and order, justice, peace and unity. This dialogue is significant for the WCC assembly as “justice and peace imply effectively addressing core values of the kingdom of God, the will of God, the creator,” Tveit added.

The outgoing WCC Central Committee announced that they hoped the assembly would initiate “a pilgrimage of justice and peace” that could unite Christians in a unique way.

“This call makes us look beyond our boundaries and limitations journeying

towards being a Church together. The assembly will bring a realization of what we have received. But, we are not finished with our tasks and we have to continue our work and prayers for the Christian unity,” said Tveit.

The WCC assembly will feature varied spiritual expressions from churches around the world. Having the assembly in South Korea is significant, Tveit explained. “The assembly will be a place for the global fellowship of the churches to express solidarity with the Korean churches, which have suffered separations and had been calling for the reunification of the divided Korean peninsula,” he said.

“Praying that this is an assembly where we all meet the God of life, we also look forward to move forward together in a pilgrimage for justice and peace,” Tveit concluded.

The first WCC Assembly took place in Amsterdam, Netherlands in 1948. Since then assemblies have been held in Evanston, US, 1954; New Delhi, India, 1961; Uppsala, Sweden, 1968; Nairobi, Kenya, 1975; Vancouver, Canada, 1983; Canberra, Australia, 1991; Harare, Zimbabwe, 1998 and Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2006.

## Turkey Must Return Armenian Churches Rightful Owners: Aram I

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Catholicos Aram I of the See of Cilicia participated in the third Convention of European Armenians.

In his opening remarks, Aram I urged Turkey to “return the Armenian churches to their legitimate owners, the Armenian people.”

He said: “Numerous studies, publications, lectures, seminars and conferences, substantiated by historical evidences and eye witness accounts, for

decades provided concrete articulation of the Armenian people’s struggle for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Contacts with political circles and collaboration with people within civil society further helped build awareness with respect to the Armenian Genocide. This first genocide of the 20th century has become now an integral part of the international agenda.”

He added, “The question of the Armenian Genocide is acquiring a new form and expression; it is generating a renewed interest and a new reaction. These factors and developments, referred to briefly, with their implications need to be taken into serious consideration as we try to reassess and reactivate our efforts. However, we must be realistic. We must bear in mind that activism may soon reach a dead end if it is not consistent with the geopolitical realities and interests of the present world.”

Aram I stressed the need for a “new strategy, a new entry point and a new emphasis in order to avoid stagnation and embark on a new process.” He said, “Without undermining the vital importance of these [academic and intellectual] efforts, it is time that we focus our attention on reparation. The Antelias Conference, organized by the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, was precisely a tangible step along these lines. It spelled out those provisions and entry points that international law may provide in the direction of reparation. At the same time, it highlighted limitations, ambiguities and uncertainties within the existing international law.”

Speaking about the Armenian Church properties Aram I said that they “cannot be considered ‘abandoned’ because the Armenians did not leave their properties by their own choice; they were threatened and forced to leave them. Hence, the Armenian properties were seized by force and confiscated by state. Confiscation of properties under all circumstances is not only illegal, but is also a crime against humanity. The Armenian people are the

legitimate owners of their properties.”

Concluding his remarks Aram I said: “Our claim is legitimate. Nor can one ignore its moral, ethical and religious dimensions and implications. Turkey must be courageous to accept the truth, if it is really committed to human rights, if it believes in harmonious coexistence, meaningful dialogue and close collaboration among nations, states and religions, it must take a concrete step in the direction of reparation by returning the churches to their rightful owners, the Armenian people. This is, indeed, high time for Turkey to act, instead of reacting, by changing its policy of denial, negativism and obstructionism to that of reconciling with its past.”

The main speakers of the conference were: Charles Tannock, Fausto Pocar, Henry Theriault, Caroline Fournet, Ragib Zarakolu, Theophanis Malkidis, Otto Luchterhandt.

The conference was attended by a number of specialists of genocide and international law as well as representatives of European Parliament.

## Armenia’s Vice Prime Minister Holds Meetings in Lyon

LYON, France (Armenpress) – Vice Prime Minister of Armenia Armen Gevorgyan on October 15 left for Lyon from Paris, where he had a meeting with Mayor Gerard Collomb and the head of the Regional Council of Rhones Alpes.

Yerevan Mayor Taron Margaryan also attended the meeting. The two sides held a discussion on the issues related to the prospect of the development and the current level of the cooperation between Armenia and France. In particular, they touched upon the 20-year-old partnership between Yerevan and Lyon.

## International News

### Tennis Ace Nalbandian Announces Retirement

BUENOS AIRES (PanArmenian.net) – Argentina’s David Nalbandian announced his retirement from professional tennis after 13 years on the Association of Tennis Professional (ATP) World Tour. According to the ATP World Tour website, he amassed 11 titles and reached a career-high World Number 3 in 2006. He finished in the year-end “Top 10” of the Emirates ATP Rankings five times.

Nalbandian cited a shoulder injury as the cause of his decision. “I can play matches, but my shoulder won’t let me continue my career,” he shared with the media in Buenos Aires. “I can’t play like that at a [professional] level. It’s tough because I have to announce my retirement from the sport that gave me so much. I’m very grateful.”

Nalbandian reached his last final at the Brazil Open in Sao Paulo earlier this year, losing to Nadal in the Spaniard’s second tournament back to the ATP World Tour after an injury layoff.

After announcing his retirement from the ATP World Tour at a media conference, Nalbandian took to Twitter to say that he would play a series of farewell exhibition matches with Nadal beginning 21 November. “It’s a long way to those matches,” said Nalbandian. “I’m still in rehab from my injuries and I need to keep training.”

### Eight Citizens Injured by Damascus Attacks

DAMASCUS (Armenpress) – Eight citizens were wounded after alleged terrorists launched mortar shells on the residential area of al-Midan this week.

According to the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), shells fell on the area, causing the injury of eight citizens and material damage to the area.

The source said that the terrorists also launched mortar shells on al-Abbasyeen residential area, adding that the attack caused only material damage.

### Amnesty International Reports Azeri Election Violence

BAKU (Armenpress) –According to Amnesty International, several tactics were employed by authorities during the campaigns leading up to the October 9 elections, including harassment, terrorizing, ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests, unfair trials and false accusations.

John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia program director at Amnesty International explained, “In the condition of the daily reports on the new arrests of the activists of the civil society, it is difficult to follow the speed of the current prosecutions and the exact number of the dissidents that are subjected to them. The harassments are so pervasive and of frequent character that it is difficult to accurately assess how bad the present situation is.”

### New Armenian Cathedral Opens In Moscow

MOSCOW (RFE/RL) – A new cathedral of the Armenian Apostolic Church opened on September 17. Armenia’s Catholicos Garegin II presided over the consecration ceremony held to celebrate the church’s opening.

Guests at the ceremony included Armenia’s President Serge Sargisian and Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as representatives of other religions.

The cathedral is the largest outside Armenia and can hold up to 1,000 worshippers.

Its construction began eight years ago and was funded by Russia-based Armenian and Russian sponsors.

It is only the fourth functioning Armenian Apostolic church in the Russian capital and is intended to serve Moscow’s sizeable Armenian community.

Besides the cathedral, the church complex includes a chapel, educational complex, residential building for the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, museum and an exhibition hall.

### Syrian Rebels Swap Crosses Atop Churches for Al Qaeda Flags

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Additionally, Christians clerics have been kidnapped, and some brutally murdered, by jihadists.

In January, the Middle East director of Human Rights Watch, Sarah Leah Whitson, said: “The destruction of religious sites is furthering sectarian fears and compounding the tragedies of the country.

“Syria will lose its rich cultural and religious diversity if armed groups do not respect places of worship.”

The New York-based group said that “while some opposition leaders have pledged to protect all Syrians, in practice the opposition has failed to properly address the unjustified attacks against minority places of worship.”

At the outset of the rebellion against President Bashar al-Assad, rebels welcomed the support of jihadist groups, largely made up of foreign fighters.

But the jihadists, where they have reached a position of dominance in specific parts of the country, are increasingly alienating the native population.

On Thursday, an ISIL commander from the United Arab Emirates was killed in fighting with Kurds in the north of Syria, the Observatory said.



# Haigazian University Celebrates its Founders' Day

BEIRUT – Haigazian University celebrated its Founders' Day on Monday, October 14, 2013, in the presence of university president, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, Armenian Ambassador to Lebanon Ashot Kotcharian, Austrian Ambassador Ursula Fahringer, Beirut Marathon Association President May El Khalil, Board members, faculty, staff and students.

The processional march kicked off the annual event, which pays tribute to the university's founders. Following the Lebanese national

anthem, a prayer of invocation was offered by the campus minister, Rev. Bruce Schoup.

This was followed by a tribute to the founders delivered by the Dean of Arts & Sciences, Dr. Arda Ekmekji.

Ekmekji highlighted the founding institutions, the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of the Near East (UAECNE) and the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). After acknowledging the collective efforts and initiative of the university's Board of



Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, left, with Maxime Chaya



Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, left, Lebanese-Armenian artist Krikor Norikian

Trustees and president, the faculty, staff and students, Ekmekji pointed out the importance of the development and growth of the academic institutions, through the establishment of its continuing education programs, the opening of new centers and conferences, publications, exhibitions, and signing of joint agreements.

Haidostian delivered a speech, placing particular significance on the human nature, which remains the same, despite the change of times.

"As we open a new academic page every year, by repeating so much, by restating of facts, we realize that each new student brings new life and each academic year has its opportune par-

good readers, good thinkers, and, as a result, good learners."

"There's an Everest in each one of us," said sportsman, explorer, champion, sailor, record breaker and Bank Audi's corporate ambassador, Maxime Chaya. Chaya said that the keywords for his challenging path are: passion, perseverance, belief and determination. With these virtues he ensured that "everyone will reach his own Everest." Chaya, who recently returned safely from his latest adventure of sailing the Indian Ocean in 57 days, invited students to never give up and create change.

Lebanese-Armenian artist Krikor Norikian

## Worker Safety: Concerns Raised for Armenian Migrant Workers in Russia

By Gohar Abrahamyan

MOSCOW (ArmeniaNow) – Protests against labor immigrants that have been accompanied with riots and mass disturbances in Moscow in recent days have raised concerns in Armenia considering the fact that a lot of citizens and natives of this South Caucasus country live and work in Russia.

Disturbances erupted in the Western Biryulevo district in the Russian capital over the weekend after the murder of a young Russian allegedly committed by a Caucasus native staying in Moscow as a migrant worker.

A few hundred angry people staged what began as a peaceful protest in Biryulevo on Sunday, demanding a full investigation of the murder case, but the protest quickly grew into disturbances and clashes with police accompanied with nationalist calls against "Khaches" (a derivative from the Armenian name "Khachik" used as a general name for Caucasus natives in Moscow).

More than a thousand people were reportedly arrested as a result. A criminal investigation into the disturbances was launched.

Protests and riots on ethnic grounds have become more frequent in Russia in recent years. The main resentment is directed at immigrants from Russia's North Caucasus as well as the former Soviet republics of the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Calls for restricting entry to citizens of these countries to Russia have also been voiced on a regular basis.

Armenians heard a xenophobic rant in Russia after a heavy truck driven by an Armenian citizen plowed into a bus near Podolsk last July killing 18 passengers and injuring many more. Mass detentions of "illegal" labor migrants and their placement in 'migrant camps' began shortly afterwards, with many Armenians also suffering because of the actions of Russian law-enforcement agencies.

Earlier, in December 2010, Moscow saw a big scuffle on ethnic grounds later dubbed Manezhnaya Unrest after Russian nationalists

were angered by an allegedly biased investigation of an ethnic Russian soccer fan's murder by a Caucasus native.

Talking to ArmeniaNow Yerevan-based Caucasus Institute director, political analyst Sergey Minasyan expressed the opinion that the campaign against illegal labor migrants was a domestic political issue in Russia and that the process that has deep roots will probably continue deep into the future. At the same time, he insisted that it had no link to any particular country.

Still, what is viewed by many as "domestic policies" sends shockwaves across the entire former Soviet space.

Alexei Navalny, who finished second in Moscow's mayoral elections last month and has ambitions to become the new opposition leader in Russia, wrote on his blog on Monday that he had initiated a campaign to collect signatures in support of establishing a visa regime for citizens of Central Asian and Caucasian republics.

A few days ago a similar appeal was issued by Russian ombudsman Vladimir Lukin. Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin did not welcome such calls, insisting that preventing citizens of former Soviet countries from entering Russia without visas did not meet the interests of Russia which, on the contrary, should attract the former Soviet republics and not repel them.

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Vanadzor office head Artur Sakunts, who on Monday announced that he would appeal the decision by the Armenian government to join the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan in a court of law, said that the authorities in Yerevan have done nothing to safeguard Armenian citizens in Russia from such treatment despite the fact that campaigns against labor migrants in Moscow and other major Russian cities have been conducted regularly.

"I don't think that the Armenian government can demonstrate the will to help Armenian migrants there. The Armenian-Russian relations are such that Yerevan does not dare to say a single word against it," Sakunts claimed.



Students present a t-shirt to Maxime Chaya.

ticalarities," said Haidostian.

He considered that a university also changes with the change in the student body, but few things at a university will remain unchanged. In this context, Haidostian added that, "at Haigazian University, we aspire to inspire students to also be good viewers, good listeners,

offered Haigazian an oil painting titled "Orange Atmosphere" dated 1993, thus enriching the University's collection.

Haidostian presented Chaya and Norikian with plaques of recognition and appreciation, after which everyone rose to sing the alma mater.

## Spanish Hotel Network to Open Armenian Location

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Representatives of the Hotel Network of Spain announced that they will open branches in Armenia. The Deputy Minister of Economy of Armenia Ara Poghosyan said that the network representatives intend to visit Armenia in 2014. "The representatives of the hotel business will come to Armenia with a cognitive visit, during which they will get acquainted with the necessary conditions to establish a hotel business in Armenia. The visit is organized by the State Tourism Agency of Spain. The agreement was made during our visit to Spain in 2012," said

Poghosyan.

The joint program is designed to increase the number of tourists coming to Armenia, thus fostering the development of the substructures. Several internationally-known hotel networks function in Armenia, among them Best Western, Tufenkian and Hyatt.

The number of tourists visiting Armenia increased during the months of January-July 2013 by 14.3 percent. According to the data provided by the National Statistical Service of Armenia, within the abovementioned period, 321,279 people arrived in Armenia.

# Community News

## Diocese Presents Author's Talk on Human Trafficking

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – Lara is a lovely 16-year-old girl from a poor family in 1990s Armenia. A merciless and greedy oligarch in the newly independent country offers to manage her in a modeling career. The father refuses and is killed. Her poverty-stricken mother accepts the offer, and Lara is taken, brutalized and sent first to Moscow, and later to the oil-rich kingdom of Dubai, where she is forced into prostitution.

Lara is the main character in a gripping new novel titled *A Place Far Away* by Vahan Zanyan. The novel and its background into the crime of human trafficking was the subject of a talk by Zanyan at the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) on September 26. An audience of more than 150 gathered in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium to hear the author.

The talk was sponsored by the Diocese's Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center and the Armenian Studies program, along with the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR).

Rev. Daniel Findikyan, director of the Zohrab Center, welcomed the audience and called the evening "unique." Previous events "have basked in the glories of our history and culture. But tonight, we will hear of a dark issue, become aware, and hopefully take action," he said.

"As Christians, we have the responsibility to speak the truth," he said, and praised the author Zanyan for his "heroic work and personal sacrifice."

Gilda Kupelian, coordinator of the Diocesan Armenian Studies program, introduced the speaker as a global energy expert and consultant who has traveled extensively in Asia and Latin America.

Zanyan began by pointing out that the collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in enormous economic and social changes. One phenomenon that was not written about was the severe social dislocation that occurred.

"Overnight, the entire socio-economic support mechanism was removed," he said. "Every country of the former USSR experienced an escalation in crime and mass poverty. Those well off were able to cope; but the large majority lost everything. Many families were torn apart. There was severe poverty, but the criminal elite thrived. This was a recipe for disaster."

The author explained that how he met a victim of Armenia's human trafficking market – sadly representative of so many young girls taken by force. She and her family were threatened and beaten. Because of the high rate of poverty, innocent underage girls and also boys, become trafficking victims, Zanyan said.

Ten and 11-year-olds in Armenia are "targets for trafficking. They are stolen from the streets and sent to Dubai and Turkey. These traffickers have resources and don't face governmental budget problems. They get [the children] false passports, with false ages." Some of the most well organized traffickers are women.

Though the book is fiction, the main character is a composite of four real-life young girls who were trafficked. According to the author, around 80 percent of the trafficking scenarios in the novel are based on actual events. "It delves into the socio-economic nature of village poverty," he said, "which leads to a mass exodus from Armenia that is continuing, and facilitates the traffickers in their evil deeds."

"We don't like to talk about the subject because it is painful: it is considered shameful to show our dirty laundry," Zanyan said.

But he said public awareness needs to be raised – especially in the countries where the trafficking market operates. The book was written in English to expose it to a wider audience; see TRAFFICKING, page 9



The St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School team

## ABMDR New England Walk Of Life Smashes Participation Record

WATERTOWN – The New England Support Group of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR) hosted its second annual Walk of Life on Saturday, September 28.

The event kicked off at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center at 11 a.m., taking participants on a 2.2-mile route culminating at Watertown's annual "Faire on the Square." Distinguished Reverend Avedis Boynerian (of the Armenian Memorial Church) and Reverend Gregory V. Haroutunian (of the First Armenian Church) offered a blessing at the onset of the walk, and Jack Antounian, president of the Armenian Business Network (ABN), officiated the event.

The walk attracted over 200 participants from a variety of age groups, twice the number of walkers from the previous year. "We are so thankful for the tremendous enthusiasm our community leaders demonstrated: they stepped forward, set up teams, encouraged their constituents' participation in the walk, and the results were fantastic," said ABMDR Board member Alvar Badalian.

Eighteen walking teams were formed by supportive individuals and community organizations, including the Armenian Business Network, ACYOA, AGBU Young Professionals Boston, Armenian Library and Museum of America, Amaras Art Alliance, AYF Boston Nejeh Chapter, Belmont High see WALK, page 7



Young walkers



The Erebuni Armenian School team

## Casino Night Raises Support for Bone Marrow Registry

LOS ANGELES – More than 200 supporters attended the third annual Casino Night of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR), held on September 27. The highly anticipated event was hosted by Michael and Amy Boyadjian at their home in Glendale.

After being greeted by the hosts and ABMDR representatives, guests enjoyed delectable appetizers and an open bar across the sprawling, beautifully decorated terrace, where a profusion of flowers and candles set the evening's tone.

Following a sumptuous dinner, Michael and Amy Boyadjian formally welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their enthusiastic support of the ABMDR cause. "We firmly believe in the humanitarian mission of this wonderful organization, which helps save the lives of so many across the globe," said Amy Boyadjian, a member



Casino Night hosts Michael and Amy Boyadjian.

of the ABMDR Board of Directors and the 2013 ABMDR Woman of the Year. Subsequently she invited Dr. Frieda Jordan, president of ABMDR, to deliver remarks.

"I'd like to thank Michael and Amy Boyadjian for their gracious hospitality and generous support," Jordan said, and went on to convey her gratitude to the guests for making the Casino Night one of ABMDR's most successful fundraising events year after year.

Jordan also spoke about some of the organization's recent achievements. "Our lab in Yerevan has just completed a new harvest of bone marrow stem cells from a donor and sent them to a transplantation center in Germany, where one of our patients will undergo a life-saving transplant," she said.

"At this very moment," Dr. Jordan continued, "we have among us a donor who has been identified as a match for a patient in Portugal, and she is ready to donate her stem cells to make possible that patient's transplant."

Subsequently, as Jordan wished good luck to players, they were invited to take their seats at the casino-style tables, which featured a variety of games including poker, roulette, and black jack. The high level of excitement was complemented by the gourmet offerings of a cigar and cognac bar. Guests also had the opportunity to purchase lottery tickets in support of ABMDR.

Elsewhere on the terrace, a dance floor set up for the occasion filled up with revelers who danced into the night to lively music provided by a DJ.

At the conclusion of the event, lottery winners were announced and presented with gifts.

For more information, visit [abmdr.am](http://abmdr.am).



Guests had a great time while supporting ABMDR's life-saving mission.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Family Establishes Marc Tognozzi Memorial Fund at Paros Foundation

TARZANA, Calif. — The Tognozzi Family has recently established the Marc Tognozzi Memorial Fund through the Paros Foundation to memorialize the untimely passing of their son, Marc, in May, to benefit charitable projects in Armenia.

“With the creation of the Fund in Marc’s memory, I am hoping to be able to fund projects through The Paros Foundation that fall within my son’s passion for children, education and his love of Armenia,” said his mother, Esther (Chelebian) Tognozzi.

The fund has already allocated support to several of The Paros Foundation’s 100 for 100 projects for prosperity to recognize the upcoming centennial of the Armenian Genocide. Through the Adopt-a-Classroom project, a classroom in the village of Hatsik in Armenia’s Armavir Region was completely remodeled including new doors and windows,

window blinds, electrical upgrades, flooring, paint, chalkboards and desks for the children in memory of Marc Tognozzi. In addition, via the Keep Warm initiative, more than 50 families living in extreme poverty in Armenia’s Shirak Region will receive a one-month allocation of firewood for heating and cooking. Finally through the Share-a-Pair Winter Boots project, more than 400 needy children will receive warm winter boots this year.

Tognozzi was born and baptized to Jan and Esther (Chelebian) Tognozzi on April 27, 1985 in Tarzana. He enthusiastically celebrated his Italian and Armenian ancestry with all the culture, traditions and cuisine of each. He enjoyed school, travel especially to Armenia and Kessab, outdoor adventure, camping, fishing, and working in the family business. At age 15 he completed the US Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps

(ROTC) program, including a full coronation ceremony at the Coronado Naval Base in San Diego. He then joined the California Air Force Auxiliary Civil Air Patrol program. By 17, he had also completed and earned many Boy Scout merits and badges as a member of the local Armenian chapter throughout his youth.

He died abruptly at age 28. He leaves his mother and father, sisters Nyree and Danielle, and fiancée Alina. He was the oldest of 12 grandchildren and the second oldest of his 11 first cousins.

Donations to the Marc Tognozzi Memorial Fund are accepted online at <http://www.paros-foundation.org/marc-tognozzi-fund/>. Or via mail to: The Paros Foundation, 918 Parker Street, Suite A14, Berkeley, CA 94710. The Paros Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. All contributions to The Paros Foundation are tax



Marc Tognozzi

## OBITUARY

### Edward Nubar Guleserian President of Sheraton Commander Hotel

BELMONT, Mass. — Edward Nubar Guleserian, of Belmont and Scituate, president of the Sheraton Commander Hotel in Cambridge, passed away suddenly on October 7. It was his 76th birthday. Just after he kissed his wife that morning he said, “It’s a good day. It’s my birthday.”

His funeral was held on October 10 at St. James Armenian Apostolic Church in Watertown. Officiating were: Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Very Rev. Krikor H. Maksoudian, Rev. Arakel Aljalian, Rev. Arsen Barsamian, Rev. Mampre Kouzouian, Rev. Vasken Kouzouian, Rev. Krikor Sabounjian, Rev. Khachatur Kesablyan, Rev. Vard Gyozyalyan and Rev. Antranig Baljian.

He is survived by his wife Nancy (Aghaian) Guleserian, his daughter, Dr. Kristine Jane Guleserian of Dallas, and his son, Michael Edward Guleserian of Cambridge; his sister, Mary (Guleserian) Bergoudian; his niece, Susan Hazarvartian and family; his nephew, Tad Guleserian and family; his niece, Joy (Guleserian) Foley and family and his niece, Melanie (Guleserian) Metz and family.

He was the youngest of three children born on October 7, 1937 in Arlington, to Armenian immigrant parents, Dertad and Vergin (Mahserejian) Guleserian, both originating from Aintab, Turkey.

His christening ceremony was at the St. James Church and was followed by a traditional shish kebab dinner at the Aghaian Farm in Sherborn, ironically the home of his future wife, Nancy.

He graduated from Watertown High School in 1955 and received a Bachelor of Science degree in metallurgical engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1960. After being briefly commissioned as an Army Artillery Officer stationed at Ft. Sill, Okla., he was recruited as a metallurgist to the Bethlehem Steel Corporation in Buffalo, New York.

It was also in 1960 at an Aintab Convention at the Cliff Hotel in Scituate where he met a young girl in a green sweater, Nancy Aghaian. He met Nancy again at an Armenian dance held at the Sheraton Commander Hotel in 1965. After talking with her that evening, he travelled back and forth from Hamburg, NY to Sherborn. Their first date was on New Year’s Day 1966, at the Ice Capades.

In February 1967, the couple got engaged

and on June 3rd that same year they were married at the St. James Armenian Church. Their reception followed in the George Washington Ballroom at the Sheraton Commander. They were blessed with two children, Kristine Jane, now a pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon at Children’s Medical Center in Dallas, and Michael Edward, the General Manager of the Sheraton Commander.

After relocating to the Boston area from New York in 1969, they resided in an apartment in the Sheraton Commander Hotel. In July 1972 they bought their summer home in Scituate and several years later their current home in Belmont.

Upon his return to Boston, Edward Guleserian also became active within the Armenian community and local civic organizations.

He was president of the Sheraton Commander Hotel where a restaurant named Dertad’s was opened in the late 1970s, in his father’s honor.

He was a Parish Council Member at the St. James Church and had served as Bazaar Chairman. He was a member and past president of the Council of Armenian Executives, member of the St. James Men’s Club and member of the Mr. and Mrs. Group, where he served as treasurer for many years.

He was a former director of Catholic Charities Cambridge/Somerville, a Board Member of the Greater Boston Hotel Association, treasurer of the Cambridge Hotel Association, director of the Harvard Square Business Association, treasurer and director of the Cambridge Center of Commerce and long-time member and president of the Cambridge Rotary Club. He considered it an honor to help feed the homeless at Thanksgiving and ring the bell in Harvard Square for the Salvation Army during the holidays every year.

He also served as former President/Director of Hugo’s Lighthouse Restaurant in Cohasset, incorporator of the Mt. Auburn Hospital and treasurer and director of the New England Backgammon Club.

He was a partner in Patten Manor Realty, Adams Realty Associates and Commander Realty Associates.

For his untiring commitment to the Cambridge community, the mayor of Cambridge designated the corner of Garden Street and Berkley Street as the Edward N.



Edward Guleserian

Guleserian Square in 1997.

A decade later, he and his wife Nancy were recognized as parishioners of the year at St. James Church and were honored recipients of the prestigious St. Nersess Shnorhali (the

Graceful) Medal in 2007.

In 2011, his son Michael opened the restaurant Nubar, in the Sheraton Commander, with the name chosen this time in his honor.

His most enjoyable times were spent relaxing at the beach house in Scituate, where he shared his love of boating, fishing and cooking with his family. He was known for his plentiful garden, sharing his tomatoes, being the master of the grill, playing a good game of cards, watching his Boston/New England sports teams and his devilish grin when joking around or playing pranks on his closest friends. Spending time with the dogs, Gigi and Gus, always brought a smile to his face. He loved his wife dearly and knew just how to push her buttons even when unprovoked. There will be no mention of casino trips or his ritual of scratching lottery tickets.

He will always be remembered for his kind heart, soft-spoken nature, selflessness, generosity, honesty, loyalty, sense of humor and most of all, endearing love for his family.

Interment was in the Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge. Donations in his honor may be made to St. James Armenian Apostolic Church, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472.

(An abbreviated version of this notice appeared on the front page last week.)

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## ABMDR New England Walk of Life Smashes Participation Record

WALK, from page 5

School Armenian Club, Erebuni Armenian School, Hamazkayin Boston, Homenetmen Boston, Team Hope, Lexington High School Armenian Club, Team Namaste, Team Poreeg, Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston, St. James Armenian Church, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School and Watertown High School Armenian Club.

"It was my honor to participate in this year's Walk of Life Walkathon – an event that brought out the best in our community," Antounian said. "My gratitude and special thanks to our local ABN members who volunteered and marshaled the walkathon, and made sure it was a safe and fun event for all who took part in this noble walk."

"For the second year, the Boston-based Dana Farber Cancer Institute has been our major sponsor and we thank this important establishment for their help," said Tamar Melkonian of the Walkathon Committee at the closing ceremony. "We also thank our local supporters, the Doctors Express for their donation, Arax Market for providing our walkers with refreshing fruits, and, of course, a world of gratitude to the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center for giving us a home base to start our walk."

The St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary

School team was awarded the prize for most funds raised, while the Erebuni Armenian School won the distinction of largest team. Alec Zareh Zarifian won the award for individually raising the most funds independently. These winners were each rewarded with a cluster of trees to be planted in Armenia in their honor. This symbolic gift was a generous donation by the Armenia Tree Project ([armeniatree.org](http://armeniatree.org)).

"We were humbled by the enthusiasm that the youngest in our community showed towards this event and their desire to help those in need; their participation was truly an inspiration," said Badalian.

More than \$14,000 was raised through the walkathon in support of ABMDR's life-saving work.

"Every step taken during the walkathon brings hope for a long-awaited bone marrow match for a fellow Armenian struck with a life-threatening disease like leukemia or other blood-related illness," said Dr. Frieda Jordan, president of ABMDR. "Since the unique genetic makeup of Armenians makes it extremely difficult to find suitable bone marrow matches among the existing international bone marrow donor registries, ABMDR's database serves as a vital resource when crisis strikes."



The walkathon, which kicked off at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, drew enthusiastic community support.

## Ararat Armenian Congregational Church Celebrates 100th Anniversary

SALEM, N.H. – The Ararat Armenian Congregational Church opened its doors on November 12, 1913. One hundred years later, on November 3, 2013, church members, which include many descendants of the church's founders, will gather at the Tuscan Kitchen Restaurant in Salem to celebrate the 100th birthday of their spiritual home.

The centennial celebration will also present an opportunity for the church's new pastor to meet the community. Sam Katchikian, a native of Montreal, is moving to Salem with his wife, Jennifer, and baby daughter. His first Sunday as pastor will coincide with the 100th anniversary of the church.

In the late 1800's, Armenian immigrants came to America seeking a place where they could work, live and worship in a free society. Many found work in the mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts where a sizable Armenian community formed and churches were established. Several Armenian families purchased farms in Salem. Traveling to Lawrence for church became a hardship. In 1912, a committee was formed for the purpose of building an Armenian church in Salem. The Northeastern Street Railway Company donated the land at 2 Salem Street, and the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ provided grants and loans for construction. The building was completed the following year, and a dedication ceremony was held on November 12, 1913.

Later, a parsonage was added next door. Later still, the Armenian Protestant Churches of Lawrence and Haverhill, Massachusetts merged with the Ararat church. The founders hoped the building of a church would allow them to practice their religion while nurturing and preserving their Armenian culture and heritage. One hundred years later, their dream lives on. New Hampshire's only Armenian Church is home to a vibrant congregation.

The church has an active youth group and Sunday school. Every year the congregation, young and old, works to provide a shish kebab supper for the people of Salem. The congregation supports the needy near and far, from volunteering at a local soup kitchen to organizing fundraisers for children in Armenia.

For more details, contact [janigian@comcast.net](mailto:janigian@comcast.net)



Rev. Sam Katchikian, left, with John Janigian, church moderator

## Armenian Bar Association to Honor Justice Poochigian

FRESNO – This city was a beginning for the early generations of Armenians who came to the US. The Central Valley continues to bear its fruit and produce the great examples of Armenian-American contributions to the fabric of America. One such example is California Court of Appeal Justice Charles "Chuck" Poochigian.

The Armenian Bar Association will "return to its roots" on October 26 for the occasion of honoring Poochigian for his service to the legal

profession, his appointment to the appellate bench and his contributions to the Armenian-American community. The "gnkahayr" or godfather of the tribute dinner and program will be California Supreme Court Justice Marvin Baxter. Baxter and Poochigian are both members of the Armenian Bar Association and remain active in its conferences, programs and workshops.

Many of Fresno's pioneering Armenian families, including the Poochigians and the Baxters, found their first scratches of earth and handfuls of destiny in the vineyard acres and fruit orchards reminiscent of their ancestral homesteads in Kharpert, Van, Bitlis and Erzeroum.

The Armenian Bar Association has encouraged the Armenian community to attend the Judges' Night Reception and Dinner which will be held at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church Hall on Saturday, October 26, with the reception beginning at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m. For ticket prices and information, contact the Armenian Bar Association.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Campus Cultural Survival: A Look at Armenian Student Societies

By Gabriella Gage

Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN – With the fall semester in full swing, Armenian student groups, societies and clubs are once again organizing events and bringing together students through their heritage. Here's a spotlight on some of the most active student societies and clubs at colleges and universities throughout the US.

## NYU Armenian Club

**Club Foundations:** Founded several years ago, the original Armenian Club at NYU lapsed and was revived three years ago by a small group of undergraduate and graduate students, many of who are still active members.

**Members:** There are currently 50 members.

**Goals of the Organization:**

The goals of the NYU Armenian Club include creating a solid network for the Armenian community at NYU, and to promote Armenian NYU/NYC events, including various academic and social events, lectures, film screenings and guest speakers.

**Why it Matters:** "New York is one of the most diverse cities in the United States, and the world; that being said, the Armenian community in NYC includes a formidable student body, young professionals and graduates, many of them NYU-affiliated," said club co-founder Hegine Nazarian.

"It is the responsibility of the Armenian community (NYU's club included) to constantly network and organize events, as well as build a solid foundation for future generations, with regard to education, jobs, internships and study abroad programs," she added.

**Events:** The NYU Armenian Club organizes various types of events, including film and documentary screenings, guest speakers (both academic and non-academic), and social events. One recent event included a social-networking event, combining the Armenian clubs from NYU, Columbia, Fordham and Rutgers. NYU's club is affiliated with the above-mentioned schools and has created a college union to merge all the listed clubs, to facilitate communication and mutually host events.

## Tufts University Armenian Club

**Club Foundations:** "It was a work in progress," said founding member Lisa Setrakian. "As a freshman I expected to find a substantial Armenian population and a well-established club on campus. Soon I realized this was no longer the case for Tufts but at the same time I started to meet several other Armenian freshmen (from Armenia-born to third generations), including Knar Bedian. Knar and I decided to re-establish the club on campus and after recruiting and taking perhaps one too many bonding



trips to Watertown over the course of two years, we were finally recognized as an official club on campus."

**Members:** The club has 25 members, including those on the e-list.

**Goals of the Organization:** The Armenian Club of Tufts works to promote greater awareness and understanding of Armenian culture of campus. The goals are to bring students together with an interest to learn about Armenia-related issues and to help connect Armenian students to their heritage. The club works to create a stronger bond with other Armenian clubs in Boston and the greater Boston Armenian community.

**Why it Matters:** "The value we place on having an Armenian student group on campus is reflective through out mission statement. We believe there is an inherent bond among Armenians even though each member of our beloved population has a different and unique story to tell. It is important to maintain connections with our heritage and spread awareness of the richness of our culture and homeland," said Setrakian.

**Events:** As a relatively new organization, the group is learning

what types of events are more or less effective and what events they can hold without a budget. "So far we have organized outings to Armenian festivals in Watertown and lectures on campus; we also work with Armenian staff to hold an April 24th memorial event. This year we are going to participate in a campus-wide event where each cultural club on campus will have the food of their culture featured," said Setrakian.

"We value creating a bond between the other Armenian students in Boston so we are constantly in touch with a greater Boston Armenian club group to organize events (lectures, cultural nights, dinners) and stay connected," she added.

## MIT Armenian Society

**Club Foundations:** The club has existed in the past, but after a lull the society was founded in 2009 by three original members, Arsen, Tigran and Sahak.

**Members:** There are approximately 10 undergraduate and 10 graduate student members.

**Goals of the Organization:** The MIT Armenian Society seeks to promote understanding of the Armenian culture, history and heritage a) within the organization, and b) within the community. The Society seeks to enhance interaction among Armenian students at MIT. Keep current with news of Armenians locally and internationally. Maintain contact and ties with other Armenian Student Organizations and the Armenian community. Provide Educational services to the Armenian community.

**Why it Matters:** MIT Society President Vazrik Chiloyan said, "I believe it is important to have an Armenian student group to both educate the MIT public about our culture and heritage and



the issues that Armenians face today in the world, and to provide a cultural community for us Armenians to bond and spend time together."

**Events:** The Society organizes both educational as well as social events throughout the year. "We have hosted joint Armenian clubs throughout Boston socials and dances, as well as had networking events with the Armenian professors at MIT and have had many of them give us discussions on their work," said Chiloyan.

## Columbia University Armenian Society

**Club Foundations:** The Columbia University Armenian Society has been active since the 1970s.

**Members:** About 30 active members plus another 30 inactive or irregular in participation.

**Goals of the Organization:** The objective of the Armenian Society of Columbia University is to unite all students of Armenian descent throughout the university. The organization is represented by students and alumni from around the world. The ASCU serves the Armenian community at large by promoting Armenian culture, heritage, and history through the organization of social, educational, and charitable events. The ASCU also networks with other Armenian and non-Armenian organization in effort to raise cultural awareness in our society.

**Why it Matters:** "It's important to unite students of Armenian descent throughout the university," says a Society representative.

**Events:** President Lucine Z. Kinoian said, "We have frequent social events to simply have fun and spend time with other club members, as well as lectures and networking events that allow us to make a bigger impact on the local community. Our upcoming even, although the details are still in the work, is to host Rifat Bali, scholar and noted author of *Model Citizens of the State: The Jews of Turkey during the Multi-Party Period*."

Some members just participated in an event Rutgers Armenian Club had in New Brunswick, NJ. Columbia is hoping to put together a backgammon tournament and/or another social event between the Armenian clubs in the tri-state area, including but not limited to, Fordham, Queen College, Rutgers, and NYU.

## Armenian Students Association of Northeastern University

**Club Foundations:** The Armenian Students Association at Northeastern University was founded in the Spring of 2012 because a few Armenian students at Northeastern connected with each other and felt there was void to be filled for Armenian members of the community. The founding group was Daniel Chakmakjian, Victoria Hines, Stephen Hollisian and Jaclyn Janigian.

**Members:** There are close to 25 members and membership has doubled from last year.

**Goals of the Organization:** The goal of ASANU is to provide opportunities for all members of the Northeastern community to experience Armenian culture and learn more about it. The group is also



a way for Armenian members of the Northeastern community to stay connected to their culture while living away from home.

**Why it Matters:** Founding member Daniel Chakmakjian explained, "We feel it is important to have an Armenian student group on campus because it fills a gap that many Armenian students feel when they first leave their Armenian community to go to college. In addition it is important for us to be a presence in the community so others become aware of (and often interested in) Armenian culture."

**Events:** Many of the events organized involve bringing speakers to the university to talk about relevant topics in the Armenian community. "We are planning to bring Margaret Ajemian Ahnert to campus in January (Date TBD) to speak about her book, *The Knock at the Door*," said Chakmakjian.

The Association often plans joint events with the Armenian clubs at BU, MCPHS, MIT, Tufts, BC and Suffolk. Chakmakjian explained, "It is a goal of all of our clubs to build strong relationships with each other and ensure that we help each other be successful in the future."

## Stanford Armenian Association

**Club Foundations:** The Stanford Armenian Student's Association was founded in 1979 by a small group of passionate students who wanted to establish a camaraderie of Armenians and educate the Stanford community about issues that are important to Armenians.

**Members:** There are around 20 members with new members every year joining from the US, Armenia and the diaspora.

**Goals of the Organization:** The ASA seeks to integrate Armenian culture into student life, educate members and the community about Armenian issues, culture, traditions, raise money for long-standing charity Act for Armenian which provides assistance to underprivileged rural village children in Armenia, organize both education and social events to create a strong Armenian community at Stanford and in the surrounding area and create a lasting alumni network that connects past and present students of Stanford.

**Why it Matters:** Nairi Strauch, president of Stanford ASA, said, "It is important to have an Armenian group on campus to connect with other Armenian students, maintain our Armenian identity and create a network of ambitious Armenians."

**Events:** Last year the Stanford ASA participated in a large fundraiser for the Hidden Road Initiative which was founded by member Nanor Balabanian.

"We also organized a tech networking event, during which Armenians organizations in the US and Armenia connected with the student body and the Silicon Valley Community about relevant tech projects," said Strauch.

Upcoming events will include faculty, guest, and alumni speakers. "We plan to have more joint events with other California university ASA's this year," said Strauch.







## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Artyom Geghamyan Named Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Carr Center For Human Rights Policy

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Artyom Geghamyan has been named a 2013-2014 fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, part of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Geghamyan's research focuses on transitional justice issues in Eastern Europe and former soviet socialist republics.

As an Edward S. Mason Fellow, he recently received his Master in Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School of Government where he focused on leadership development, public policy and international human rights. He holds a JD and Master of Laws from Yerevan State University School of Law and a PhD in European Union Law and Integration from Public Administration Academy. He holds an LLM in International and Comparative Law from Indiana University School of Law.



Artyom Geghamyan

He has written scholarly articles on the issues of EU law and human rights, taught courses on the European Convention on Human Rights and the practice of the European Court of Human Rights at Yerevan State University.

He managed the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Justice's department responsible for representing the government before the European Court of Human Rights and implementing its judgments into the domestic legal system. Prior to coming to Harvard, Geghamyan served as a legal officer at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, working on the implementation of European Court of Human Rights judgments in several countries, including Armenia, Finland, Sweden, Slovakia and Malta.

He is a fellow of the UK Ministry of Justice and John Smith Trust program on good governance, social justice and the rule of law, which is designed for the next generation leaders. He was awarded the US Department of State Edmund E. Muskie Fellowship and the Public Service Fellowship in 2009.

## Armenian Assembly Terjenian-Thomas Internship Program Reaches Milestone of 1,000 Students

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America announced that with the summer 2013 class, more than 1,000 college students have completed its Terjenian-Thomas Summer Internship Program over the past 36 years.

The 2013 intern class included Ani Acopian of Easton, Penn.; Ariana Andonian of Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.; Bobby Avakian of Bedford, Mass.; Sareen Avsharian of Northridge, Calif.; Alexander Azarian of Old Tappan, NJ; Greg Boyajian of Bloomfield Hills, Mich.; Margaret Flatley of Brookfield, Wis.; Ava Gurekian of Waltham, Mass.; Matthew Hanessian of Chicago; Christina Najarian of Far Hills, NJ; Nora Petrosyan of Stepanakert, Nagorno Karabagh Republic; Tatiana Sarkissian of Pasadena, Calif. and Hamlet Tamazian of Malibu, Calif.

"My fellow interns, staff working at the Assembly, and the numerous events of the program made for a truly gratifying professional and personal experience," stated Assembly Communications intern Bobby Avakian.

In addition to living on campus at Georgetown University and working at various organizations and institutions throughout the greater metropolitan Washington area, the Assembly interns met directly with dozens of Members of Congress, prominent Armenian-Americans and industry leaders.

As part of the "Capitol Ideas" program, this summer

Assembly interns met with Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Armenian Genocide resolution sponsors Reps. David Valadao (R-VA) and Adam Schiff (D-CA), Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA), and fellow Armenian Caucus members Reps. Jeff



The interns with Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.)

Denham (R-CA), Jackie Speier (D-CA), Frank Wolf (R-VA), Nita Lowey (D-NY) and John Sarbanes (D-MD).

The Assembly's "Capitol Ideas" program is designed to give Armenian students unique exposure to US policy makers and the opportunity to engage members of Congress on issues that matter most to them. Encouraging young Armenians to take an active role in their local community, state, and federal government is a top priority for the Assembly's Terjenian-Thomas internship program.



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## Diocese Presents Author's Talk On Human Trafficking

TRAFFICKING, from page 5  
but it has been translated into Armenian – and is being read throughout Armenia.

Exposing the phenomenon is important for three main reasons, Zanyan explained. First, it is necessary to alert the potential victims. These are naïve, vulnerable, poor, underage victims who believe the traffickers' promises of a better life – including that of becoming models, nannies, salesgirls, waitresses, etc. Some of the girls "voluntarily" apply for the job through these false promises because there is no other way to feed their family.

"It doesn't happen in the rich areas," the author said. "These girls are desperate."

Second, bringing the subject into the light of day acts as a deterrent. "Nothing pleases the traffickers more than silence. If we give in to silence, we are also participating," he declared.

Third, exposing the issue makes government agencies more diligent in the protective role. In 2004-2005, there were reportedly 200 Armenian girls in Dubai jailed for prostitution. But once this state of affairs was exposed in Edik Baghdassarian's documentary, "Desert Nights," the Armenian government started paying attention and acted to bring the girls back to Armenia. Zanyan revealed that both he himself and Baghdassarian have received threats for their exposure of the ongoing crime.

"Because the government has poor resources, there is inadequate enforcement. But the government follows what makes noise," Zanyan said.

There is now a serious dedication of resources in Armenia to counteract the problem. Government-sponsored Internet ads warn that trafficking of minors is a crime; and local police are more informed about the issue. "Before, the victims themselves were consid-

ered the criminals. Today, the police know about the shelters for the children. But more resources are needed," Zanyan said.

Zanyan mentioned two organizations trying to directly prevent this merciless crime in Armenia, to which the net proceeds from the sale of *A Place Far Away* will go.

The NGO called ORRAN (which means "haven" in Armenian) gathers the poorest children in Yerevan to feed and educate them. "By removing both girls and boys from the street, ORRAN has rescued hundreds of potential victims from trafficking," he noted.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which has worked in Armenia since 1994, also rescues the victims by giving them shelter, sustenance, medical, social and legal care and vocational training. But Zanyan revealed that some girls brought into the shelter have trouble reintegrating into society.

Additionally, as was noted in the question and answer session, the Fund for Armenian Relief's Children's Center in Yerevan is dedicated to reaching out to and protecting vulnerable children and youth in the country – victims of abuse, homelessness, as well as crime – and training them for a productive re-integration into society.

During the talk, selections from the book were read by the author and by Elise Antreassian, coordinator of Christian Education at the Diocese.

Following a question-and-answer session, a *kinetson* (book-blessing) ceremony was conducted, with the author, Odabashian and Rev. Mesrob Lakissian, participating. During the reception that followed, the talk generated many discussions, as attendees showed their interest in the subject matter.

# Arts & Living

## Satamian Awarded for Half-Century Of Theater

LOS ANGELES – The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Vatche & Tamar Manoukian Center Banquet Hall was teeming with invitees in a festive mood. They had come to join in the August 18 celebration of honoring the AGBU Western District Artistic Director, Krikor Satamian, by Armenia's several theatrical and cultural institutions.

Guests included members of the Krikor Satamian Theater Group, chairman and members of the AGBU Western District Committee, chairmen of local AGBU Chapters, AGBU members, community leaders, the Armenian press, as well as the honoree's family members, friends and guests.

Satamian, with his theatrical longevity of 53 years, has become an icon both in Armenia and the Diaspora. He started his theatrical career in Lebanon by joining the newly established AGBU Vahram Papazian Theater Group in 1960 and several other Lebanese theatrical groups, acting in four languages. He is a graduate of the American University of Beirut (AUB). He attended the London School of Film Technique and the Bristol Old Vic Theater School in England. After one season of acting at the Belgrade Theater in

Coventry City, England, he returned to Beirut to take up the positions of artistic director of the renowned AGBU Vahram Papazian Theater Group and lecturer of drama at AUB.



Krikor Satamian

In 1972, he took the AGBU Vahram Papazian Company on a tour of Armenia and three years later, to France, England and Cyprus. Upon the invitation of the Bristol Old Vic Theater School, he went to teach at his alma mater before immigrating to the US in 1976. In New York City, he joined the Colonnades Theater Lab as one of its resident directors. After directing his first play for the Off-Broadway company, he was invited to the Hope Summer Repertory Company to direct on three consecutive occasions.

In 1978, he joined the AGBU in New York City as its National Artistic Director and since then he has founded several AGBU theater companies in Boston, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. He was the managing director and host of the AGBU Spotlight Armenians TV program in New York City.

In 1988, he moved to Los Angeles and took the position of artistic director of the AGBU Ardavazt Theater Group which he had founded in 1979 together with the then AGBU Executive Director Haig Messerlian and AGBU Western District Director Parsegh Kartalian. Satamian has so far directed 79 plays, three operettas and acted in 86 plays. He has also appeared in several American films and TV sitcoms.

On Sunday, October 30, 2011, the AGBU Western District Committee celebrated his Golden Jubilee in recognition of his invaluable service to the Armenian language and culture through Drama. He was presented with several awards including the AGBU President's Award as well as gold medals from Armenia's Cultural Ministry and the Ministry of the Diaspora.

On August 25, 2012, at a "Thank You Dinner" given for the sponsors of the AGBU see SATAMIAN, page 11



Sayat Nova Dancers pay tribute to the troubadour with a namesake dance.

## New England Armenians Celebrate 300th Anniversary Of Sayat Nova's Birth

WATERTOWN – On Sunday, October 6, the New England Armenian Community celebrated the 300th anniversary of the birth of troubadour Sayat Nova. The free event was held at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center.

A cast of performers presented lyrical Armenian songs and poems of the troubadour, both in traditional form and with modern interpretations and expressions. The audience showed its appreciation at the conclusion of the concert with a standing ovation – singing and applauding long after the performance had ended.

The troubadour was born in 1713 in an ethnically diverse and linguistically plural part of the world – the South Caucasus. He became fluent in most languages of the region, writing, see SAYAT NOVA, page 13



Aleksan Harutunyan



From left, Martin Haroutunian and David Ayriyan

## ADAA Entertainment Industry Panel Features Headliners at Nov. 8 Awards Event

LOS ANGELES – The Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance (ADAA) presents its first industry panel at the WGA Theater in Beverly Hills on November 8 at 7 p.m., to discuss how Armenian artists can navigate their careers in entertainment.

"Make the Connection: Linking Armenians in the Entertainment Industry" will feature a VIP panel that includes Ovation-nominated director and former CAA literary agent Michael Peretzian; film producer Robert Papazian (Rome); novelist Aris Janigian (This Angelic Land) and Emmy-winning TV producer Hank Saroyan. More VIP panelists will be announced closer to the event. The panel will be moderated by ADAA founder, writer/producer Bianca Bagatourian.

The panel is an opportunity to learn strategies straight from current industry leaders. A wine and cheese reception will follow. Tickets are available on <http://www.itsmyseat.com/events/232924.html>.

On the same evening, ADAA will be presenting the fourth Biennial Lillian and Varnum Paul 2013 Screenwriting Award. Finalists for the \$10,000 prize are: "1915," by Garin K. Hovannisian & Alec Mouhbian; "The 13th Image," by Yervand Kochar in collaboration with Jeani Di Carlo; and "The Second Journey," by Levon Minasian & Eric de Rocquefeuil. The three finalist screenplays are being evaluated by an esteemed honorary jury: Anahid Nazarian (Producer, American Zoetrope Productions), Michael Goorjian (Emmy-Winning Actor) and Hank Saroyan (Emmy Winning TV Producer).

The Lillian and Varnum Paul Screenwriting Award is administered by ADAA through the generosity of the Paul Family through the Western Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church, under the auspices of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese.

For more information about ADAA, its activities and how to contribute to its mission, visit <http://www.itsmyseat.com/events/232924.html> or [www.armeniandrama.org](http://www.armeniandrama.org).

## Komitas Film to Benefit SOAR

PHILADELPHIA – The feature-length documentary film, "Music to Madness - The Story of Komitas," about the life of the famous Armenian priest and composer Komitas will soon be released for screenings. The film is written and directed by David Deranian and produced by Salient Clear. All net proceeds from the film will benefit the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR.)

The film tells the story of Komitas and the tragedy he experienced during the Armenian Genocide and seeks to contextualize the Genocide as part of the ongoing violence in the world. The tragedy of one man's life is explored – Komitas; a peaceful, loving and intelligent man with prolific musical ability that witnessed the Armenian Genocide first hand, with the result of leaving him confined to a mental institution in France.

To fund the film, the company producing the film, Salient Clear, is seeking financial contributions to raise the additional funds necessary for completion of the film which is currently in postproduction. Contributions can be made through an Indiegogo fundraising campaign at: [http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/music-to-madness-the-story-of-komitas?show\\_todos=true](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/music-to-madness-the-story-of-komitas?show_todos=true).

Additional details about the film, including a trailer, can be found on [www.KomitasTheMovie.com](http://www.KomitasTheMovie.com).



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Artist Zabel Belian's Exhibition Shows Her Artistic Versatility

DETROIT – As the saying goes, if you want a job done, give it to the busy person. That busy person in this case is Zabel Belian, director of the Belian Art Center, exhibition chairman of the Fine Arts Committee of St. John's Armenian Church in Southfield, potter, art instructor, gracious hostess and full-time gifted artist.

As one visits her exhibition, one gets the impression that her life is only confined to art, because what she creates is so meditative and deliberate that an artist needs a tremendous amount of time to observe nature and life situations, reason them, analyze and then reflect all those impressions through artistic media.

Every year the Fine Arts Committee organizes a collective art show featuring local or internationally-recognized artists, in conjunction with the annual festival. This year the featured artist was Belian, presenting a dazzling array of close to 100 pieces in watercolor and acrylic. The show opening took place on September 26; the show itself ran through September 29 and was visited by thousands of guests.

For a long time Belian has enjoyed a reputation as an imaginative potter; her functional creations have always

been marked with an artistic flair. Daily usable items are colored and shaped in Belian's hands to become art pieces. By necessity, her functional and decorative pieces require the

and original vision.

Watercolor is an unforgiving medium: unless the artist has already her/his conceptual design in her mind, the work



Zabel Belian discusses her works at the exhibit.

hand of an assembly line, but she has endowed her pieces with artistic expression. Her preferred colors in the ceramic pieces are hues of oranges, but the artist has always a surprise in store, coming up with other unusually striking color combinations, which you assumed could be achieved only on canvas.

This year's exhibition brought out the other dimensions of Belian's talent. Her watercolors and acrylic paintings reveal a delicate feminine hand, touching her subjects graciously and rendering them alive. Her traditional Armenian costumes evoke nostalgia for a bygone era, sometimes in static mode and other times in dancing positions. The depiction of the Armenian churches express the architectural variety of houses of worship, sometimes forgoing artistic interpretation to preserve the historic authenticity (i.e. the sixth-century Garmavor). She is at her best when she takes an anonymous church and develops her own artistic atmosphere, breathing with life

cannot be completed successfully, because there is no room for error. Belian has mastered watercolor, with her pieces infused with an effortless air, which probably comes after long deliberation by the artist. Her still-life paintings are delicately embroidered, especially when featuring a pomegranate or a walnut. She knows how to make a still life come alive.

In addition to watercolors, Belian has a variety of paintings in acrylic. Some of her paintings reveal intriguing approaches as they are executed in pure manner of contemporary great artists like Helen Frankenthaler, Jackson Pollock and others. This approach reminds us of Arshile Gorky's developmental period, when the artist emulated Braque, Picasso and Cezanne, until he found his own style. Similarly, Belian found her voice and vision through emulating great artists first. She has already found her own style, therefore these latest experiments of emulation fall within the realm of her artistic fantasies. Her style can be categorized as mostly realistic, with a streak of impressionism and always with the presence of a romantic element.

What was most impressive in this show was the artist's courageous approach to the challenges of differing media, mastering most and offering an amazing presentation to the art lovers.

— Edmond Y. Azadian



Among the committee members were, from left, Charles Merigian, Ara Belian and Jack Kazanjian

# Krikor Satamian Awarded for Half-Century of Theater



Krikor Satamian in some of his roles on stage

SATAMIAN, from page 10

Theater Group, the Theater Committee, under the chairmanship of Ara Babayan, surprised the guests by announcing that upon the request of the Theater Committee and the approval of the Western District Committee, the Theater Group was renamed AGBU Krikor Satamian Theater Group (AGBU KSTG).

In July of this year, word came from Armenia that several theatrical organizations have named Satamian as the winner of this year's Theatrical Awards. Unable to travel to Armenia because of his involvement in the final rehearsals of "Charley's Aunt," Prof. Yervant Ghazantchyan, artistic director of Yerevan's Hagop Baronian State Theater of Musical Comedy, decided to come to Los Angeles and personally deliver the awards to Satamian. Hence, the celebratory atmosphere that surrounded the Banquet Hall on August 18.

After dinner and music provided by violinist Meroujan Markarian, it was time for the program to begin. Krikor Simonian, chairman of the AGBU KSTG, welcomed the guests and invited Ghazantchyan and Satamian to the stage. After a few remarks by the professor, he presented the honoree with the following prestigious awards: the Gold Medal of the Union of Theater Practitioners of Armenia, the Ardavazt Competition Prize of the Union of Theater Practitioners in Armenia, the Gold Medal from the Fridtjof Nansen Foundation of Armenia and the Kohar Kasparian Medal from the Armenian

Singart Union NGO.

Satamian, in his turn, thanked Ghazantchyan for taking the time and the trouble to come to the Los Angeles and present him the awards personally. He also thanked the theatrical and cultural organizations of Armenia that had awarded him with their medals, as well as the Armenian press, members of his theatrical group, and the invitees.

Upon the request of the public, Ghazantchyan gave an interesting and optimistic overview of the theatrical activity in Armenia. He assured the audience that the future looks more and more promising in view of the hundreds of talented young people joining the performing arts.

Krekor Karaguezian, chairman of the AGBU Western District Committee-sponsors of the event, thanked Ghazantchyan and the organizations in Armenia, on behalf of AGBU and suggested that in the future Armenia consider rewarding more artists from the Diaspora who have devoted their lives to promoting the Armenian language, heritage and culture. He also thanked the members of the special committee that organized the evening's event in such a short time, namely Simonian, Ara and Sonia Babayan and Haig Messerlian.

At the end of the official program, the invitees surrounded the honoree, Satamian, to congratulate him for the awards he received from his peers in Armenia.



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## Vahan Zanoyan Highlights Human Rights Issue in New Book

SADDLE RIVER, N.J. – When energy consultant Vahan Zanoyan traveled to Dubai for work, he couldn't shake off a conversation he had with a young woman from Armenia, who told her how she had arrived in the city: as a victim of sex trafficking. (See page 10 for another story on Zanoyan.)

That encounter and the chilling story he heard prompted him to take action through literature. The author of the newly-published crime novel, *A Place Far Away*, Zanoyan underscores the sinister motives of human traffickers and their helpless victims, many of whom are from the former Soviet bloc.

One of the many perils the newly-independent republic of Armenia faced after 80 years of Soviet rule, was the rise of corruption and power-hungry oligarchs who had free reign on Armenian soil. According to Zanoyan, they have had a hand in taking young Armenian women and selling them into the sex trade.

The Southern California-based Zanoyan, who's currently on a book tour through the US and Canada to discuss *A Place Far Away*, visited the Upper Saddle River Library on Tuesday, September 24, where he spoke about his motivations for writing the book and the challenges he faced.

The story focuses on Lara, a 16-year-old girl from a poor village in Armenia who is forced into prostitution after a corrupt oligarch murders her father. Soon after, Lara finds herself in Moscow and then Dubai as part of a human trafficking ring. Along with the help of a Swiss investigative journalist, she fights to free herself and to be reunited with her family in Armenia.



Vahan Zanoyan

While discussing the plight of sex trafficking in Armenia, Zanoyan stressed the importance of prevention and cited two organizations in particular that help in this realm, including Orran, an Armenia-based NGO that helps at-risk children and elderly, and the United Methodist Committee on Relief, (UMCOR).

These organizations help vulnerable people in Armenia who are struggling so they do not seek assistance from those who will exploit them. Zanoyan noted that the girls who are forced into prostitution believe the deceptive men who approach them with fraudulent promises of turning them into famous actresses or models.

Touched by personal stories he heard from innocent young women whose lives took an unimaginable turn, Zanoyan stressed he wrote this book to shed light on an important issue that needs to be discussed and brought into the public eye.

Following a stirring reading from *A Place Far Away*, Zanoyan took questions from the audience and signed copies of his book.

*A Place Far Away* can be purchased in both print and electronic versions at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). All proceeds will go to Orran and UMCOR.

– Taleen Babayan

## Tchobanian Institute Donates Books to Issahakian Library

By Jan Varoujan

YEREVAN – In celebration of Avedik Issahakian Days, the Tchobanian Institute of Paris donated 21 books in French to the Issahakian library of Yerevan on October 5.

The festivities began in the multi-purpose hall of the library. Poetries, songs and presentations followed. Vice Minister of the Culture Arev Samuelian was present.

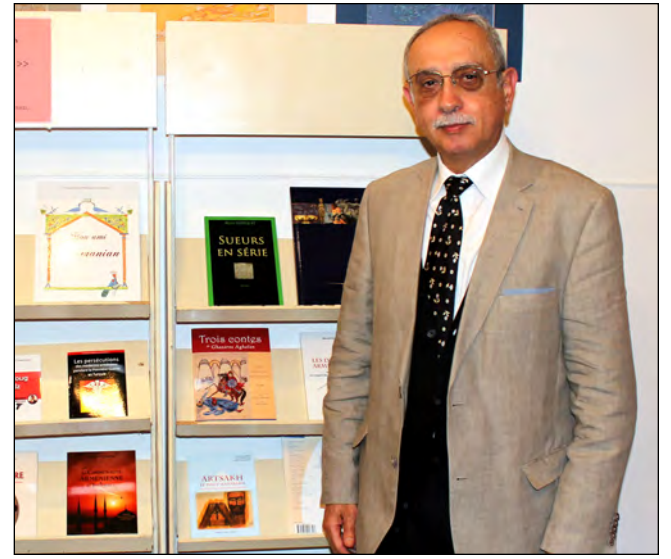


Varoujan Sirapian speaks at the event

H a s m i k Karapetyan, the director of the library, and V a r o u j a n Sirapian, the CEO and founder of the Tchobanian Institute, had met in 2011 and an agreement was signed between both institutions to offer a number of books in

French to the library on the occasion of the opening of the French section, to promote the Francophonie in Armenia, one of the objectives of the institute.

Sirapian explained the colossal work realized by Archag Tchobanian, founder of the "Mouvement arménophile" in France at the beginning of the 20th century – a movement to make the suffering of the Armenian people known, but also to collect cultural treasures. Sirapian then presented the works and the publications of the Tchobanian Institute. Because the institute seeks to spread the French language in Armenia, Sirapian remarked that it was rewarding to donate the first 21 books (published by Editions Sigest) of what he hopes would be many more. Thanks to the agreement signed between the parties, every year the



Varoujan Sirapian with the donated books

Tchobanian Institute will continue to offer books in French to the Issahakian library.

Before ending his speech, Sirapian congratulated Hasmik Karapetyan, the director, for her "serious and passionate work," and her dedication to satisfying library patrons.

## Armenian Review Publishes New Issue

WATERTOWN – The latest issue of the *Armenian Review* was published earlier this month. The issue included articles ranging from historic textual analysis to current political issues.

In the first article of the current issue, Albert Stepanyan reexamined and analyzed sections from Moses Khorenatsi's *History of the Armenians*. The analysis not only focused on the content of the sections from the Khorenatsi's work, but also dwells into epistemological and semantic interpretations of the work by looking at Greek and other Armenian sources.

The second piece, authored by Rouben Shougarian, was an account of a diplomat's assessment of Turkish-Armenian Track I and II diplomacies. The piece offers a survey of bilateral relations and the context in which the two countries attempted to have rapprochement and normalization of relation but without much success.

The third and fourth pieces were a dialogue between Taner Akçam on the one hand and

Ugur Umit Ungor and Mehmet Polatel on the other. The dialogue started with a review essay by Akçam examining and critiquing Ungor's and Polatel's book *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property*. In the lengthy essay, Akçam tries to deconstruct and points out some of the issues which make the book problematic. In their response, Ungor and Polatel respond to the critique and go even further by providing more detailed explanations about their research and methodology. This exchange should prove to be quite interesting for the readership as it is not often that scholars working on Armenian issues engage in a critique of their work in an academic forum.

The recent issue of the journal also featured book reviews and review essays by Levon Chorbajian, who reviewed four books dealing with the Armenian Genocide and its aftermath; Lerna Ekmekcioglu whose review essay of the book dealing with the memoirs of Levon Yotnakhparian provided a unique insight into the life of a prolific individual and helps re-read those memories in the context of Armenian Genocide literature; Levon Saryan's review of a recent book on Tigranes II and Vartan Matiossian's review of Garegin Nzhdeh's selected works, completes the issue.

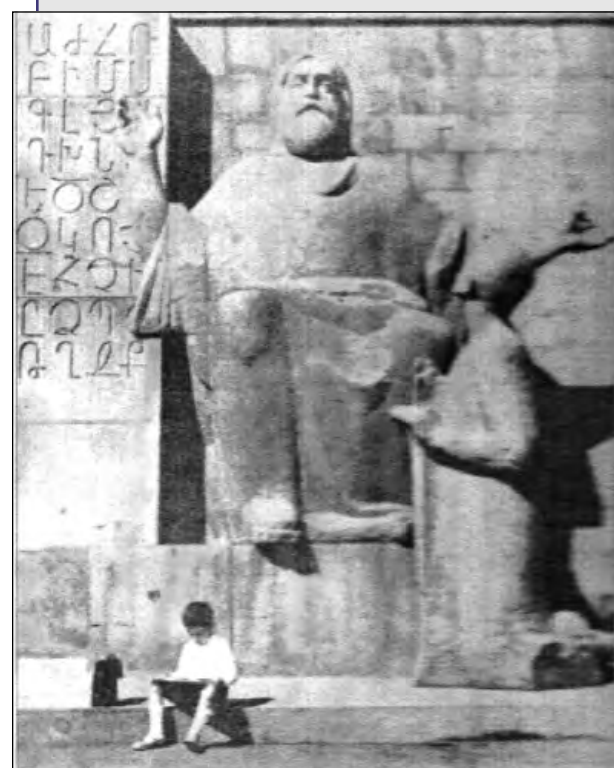
The *Armenian Review* also welcomed Dr. Talar Chahinian to join the editor, Dr. Asbed

Kotchikian in the editorial team as an assistant editor. Chahinian holds a PhD in comparative literature from UCLA and lectures in the Department of Comparative World Literature at California State University, Long Beach.

Her current book project examines the Western Armenian literary tradition within the World Literature model, by comparatively analyzing the Post-WWI and Post-WWII literary centers of Paris and Beirut, respectively, and their intellectual exchange with literary and journalistic institutions in Soviet Armenia, North America and the greater Middle-East. She contributes regularly to the online journal, *Critics' Forum*, and directs the Saroyan Project, which works to enhance Armenian-language instruction in Chamlian Armenian School in Southern California. Chahinian's joining of the *Review* team, according to the *Review*, will expand the journal's geographic reach as well as its academic disciplinary horizons.

The current issue of the *Armenian Review* may be ordered by itself or as part of a subscription to the journal from its website, [www.armenianreview.org](http://www.armenianreview.org). All subscription, order and renewal inquiries should be addressed to the publisher by writing to the Armenian Review, Inc., 80 Bigelow Avenue, Watertown, MA 02472-2012; by emailing [orders@armenianreview.org](mailto:orders@armenianreview.org).

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## MASSACHUSETTS

**OCTOBER 18 and 19 — St. James Annual Bazaar!** Delicious shish, losh, kheyra and more! Fabulous pastries, manti, kufte and toorshi! Children's activities, vendors galore, farmer's market. Fun! Friends! Family! 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily, at the church hall, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown.

**OCTOBER 19 — Hye Kef 5**, featuring Leon Janikian, Joe Kouyoumjian, Greg Takvorian, Ken Kalajian, Bob Raphalian and Jay Baronian, Haverhill, 7:30 p.m., Michael's Function Hall, 12 Alpha St. Tickets \$40, students \$30. Includes individually-served mezza platters. Proceeds to benefit all Armenian churches in Merrimack Valley and New Hampshire. Call either John Arzigian, 6-03-560-3826, Sandy Boroyan, 978-251-8687, Scott Sahagian, 617-699-3581, or Peter Gulezian, 978-375-1616. No tickets will be sold at the door. For advance tickets, please call a committee member. Organized by Armenian Friends of America.

**OCTOBER 20 — Book Launch for President Calvin Coolidge & the Armenian Orphan Rug** by Dr. Hagop Martin Deranian, 3 p.m. hosted by Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St., Arlington. Reception and book signing to follow. Free and open to the public.

**OCTOBER 20 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church's 52nd Anniversary Banquet;** Stewardship Sunday, immediately following church services, Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Honoring "Parishioner of the Year," Deacon Gregory Krikorian and recognizing outgoing Parish Council members, Lt. Col. Robert G. Lang, Jr., Richard Sahagian and Armen Skenderian. Donation: \$25 per person; seating by paid reservation only. RSVP by October 15. For more info, contact the church office at 617-354-0632, office@htaac.org or log onto www.htaac.org.

**OCTOBER 24 — K. George and Carolann S. Najarian, MD Lecture on Human Rights: In Our Midst: Slavery Unmasked;** 7 p.m., Faneuil Hall, Boston, with keynote speaker Siddharth Kara, director at the Carr Center Program on Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery, Harvard Kennedy School of Government. For further information, email info@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.

**OCTOBER 26 — Fall Harvest Bazaar, First Armenian Church,** 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. Noon — 8 p.m. Armenian delicacies - manti, choreg, kufte and more. Enjoy kebab dinners (lamb, beef or chicken with pilaf and salad,) losh, boreg, paklava, pastries and more in our festive hall or takeout. 617-484-4779, or www.firstarmenianchurch.org. Handicapped and MBTA accessible.

**OCTOBER 29 — Julia & the Zerounian Ensemble**, in an enchanting cabaret evening of songs from around the world. 7:30 p.m., Regattabar, Cambridge. For information and reservations, visit <http://www.getshowtix.com/regattabar/moreinfo.cgi?id=3031>

**NOVEMBER 1 and 2 — 57th Annual St. Stephen's Bazaar,** 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown. Open to the public; lamb, losh and chicken kebab,



**On October 20 at 3 p.m., the Armenian Cultural Foundation will host a book launch for *President Calvin Coolidge & the Armenian Orphan Rug*, written by Dr. Hagop Martin Deranian. The Armenian Cultural Foundation is located at 441 Mystic St., Arlington, Mass. Reception and book signing to follow this free event.**

Armenian pastries, gourmet food, harvest store and silent & live auctions.

**NOVEMBER 7 — Avak luncheon**, noon, Jaffarian Hall, St. Gregory Church, 158 Main St., North Andover, speaker, Dr. Edward Khantzian, clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, "Impressions of a Keynote Visit to Armenia."

**NOVEMBER 8 and 9 — Annual Autumnfest Bazaar sponsored by the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe**, 110 Main St., Haverhill, Friday 12-8 p.m. and Saturday, 12-7 p.m. Lamb, losh and chicken kebab and kheyra. Dinner served all day. Pastry table, Armenian cuisine, gift basket raffles and raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit our new website [www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org](http://www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org) or call 978-372-9227.

**NOVEMBER 16 — Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) 38th Annual Luncheon Auction**, Burlington Marriott, Burlington; 11 a.m. silent auction and bidding; Guest auctioneers Al Kaprielian and Cindy Fitzgibbon; \$60 per person, Visa and MasterCard accepted. For reservations and info, contact: [awwauction@gmail.com](mailto:awwauction@gmail.com).

**NOVEMBER 16 — Second annual Mer Doon Benefit Dance**, 7:30 p.m. to 1 a.m., Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown. Featuring John Berberian, Bob Mougamian, Mal

Barsamian and Bruce Gigarian. Mezza, dessert table and more. Tickets: \$40 adult, \$30 student; for tickets and table reservations, please call Mark at 617-256-5358.

**DECEMBER 6 — Anniversary celebration by Lowell "Aharonian" Gomideh**, 6:30 p.m., St. Gregory Church, North Andover; dinner and program honoring 50-year members Steve Dulgarian and Joe Dagdigian; remembering the 25th anniversary of the earthquake in Armenia; soloist Nina Hovsepian, accompanied by Mary Barooshian; donation, \$20 adults, \$10 students.

**DECEMBER 6 AND 7 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar**, Friday, 3-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge.

**DECEMBER 15 — Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra-Christmas Holiday Concert**, 7 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Save the date, details to follow.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**NOVEMBER 3 — Ararat Armenian Congregational Church Celebrates 100 Years: 1913-2013.** Join the historic Armenian American community of Southern NH for a celebration lunch at Tuscan Kitchen restaurant, 67 Main St., Salem; 1 p.m. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, contact [janigian@comcast.net](mailto:janigian@comcast.net).

## NEW JERSEY

**OCTOBER 26 and 27 — St. Thomas Armenian Church Food Festival and Bazaar**, Saturday, 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Kebabs, sweets, vendors, raffles, kid's fun, White Elephant and more. For info, call (201) 567-5446; 174 Essex Drive (corner of Route 9 W & E. Clinton Ave.), Tenafly.

**NOVEMBER 23-24 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group** celebrates 15th Anniversary with production of Hagop Baronian's "The Perils of Politeness" (Kaghakavaroutyan Vnasneruh) directed by Gagik Karapetyan from Armenia; Dwight Englewood High School, 315 E. Palisade Ave., Englewood, NJ. Nov. 23, Saturday at 8 p.m. and Nov. 24, Sunday at 4 p.m. For tickets; \$50, \$35, \$25; call Marie Zokian (201)745-8850 or Missak Boghosian at (212)819-0097 or (347)365-6985.

## RHODE ISLAND

**OCTOBER 20 — Program in honor of the dedication of the 100 anniversary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church**, with the Cultural Committee and ACYOA presenting the Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble in a program titled "Song and Dance.. Seta Paskalian - Kantardjian, artistic director and Choreographer; Andranik Mouradian, musical director, Armen Hovhannisyan and Salbi Mailyan, vocalists from California. 3 p.m., Roberts Hall, Rhode Island College, 300 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Providence. Donations: Adults \$20, Students \$10, children under 12 free. Tickets available at the Church office (401) 272 7712, The Deli (401) 461 4774, Sonya's Market (401) 941 9300.

## New England Armenians Celebrate 300th Anniversary of Sayat Nova's Birth

SAYAT NOVA, from page 10

and composing and performing in Armenian, Georgian, Persian and Azerbaijani, contributing enormously to the poetry and music of his time.

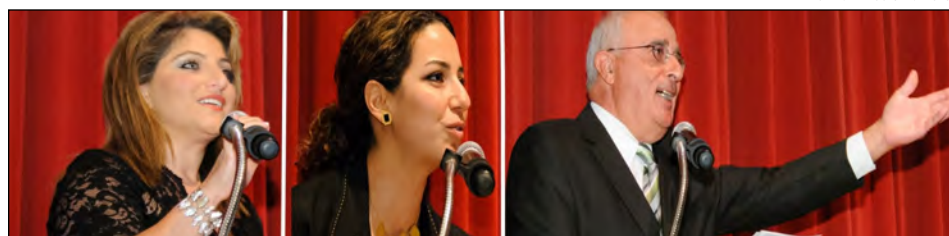
Mistress of Ceremonies was Lousineh Ayanian who offered excerpts from Sayat

Nova's verses, while Ani Arakelians-Avakian and Berj Chekijian recited entire poems written by the bard himself or from the works of other poets paying homage to the *gousan* (troubadour). An appearance by folk singer Aleksan Harutunyan took the audience back to

VIKEN KARAGUESIAN PHOTO



Conductor Artur Veranian led the Armenian Chamber Chorus of Boston



From left, Lousineh Ayanian, Ani Arakelians-Avakian and Berj Chekijian

Armenia and back 300 years. Enhancing this experience was the sound of master *kamancha* player David Ayriyan.

Three performing groups also participated in this tribute.

Award-winning conductor Artur Veranian led his newly-formed Armenian Chamber Chorus of Boston, presenting three of his own arrangements of Sayat Nova's songs; while composer and classical pianist Ara Sarkissian led his

Musaner Armenian Folk Jazz Ensemble. And members of the Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston (SNDC), under the direction of choreographer Apo Ashjian, took to the stage performing dances to the music of Sayat Nova, with Garen Avetissyan, *kamancha* in hand, depicting Sayat Nova.

The celebration was a collaborative effort between two organizations — SNDC and Amaras Art Alliance.



## COMMENTARY

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror Spectator

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## COMMENTARY

## Ilham Aliyev 'Elected' Azerbaijan's President...Before the Election

By Edmond Y. Azadian

While some Armenians continue disputing President Serge Sargsian's election, the election in neighboring Azerbaijan has an entirely different script. Indeed "The Great Game round-up" reported on October 13 that "Azerbaijan released the election results before voting had even started. Still, one expects certain rituals in these authoritarian elections, a fealty to at least the appearance of democracy, if not democracy itself. Thus, it was a bit awkward when Azerbaijan's election authorities released the voting results a full day before voting had even started."

Since the authorities had laid their plans a long time before the election, therefore it was not difficult to predict the outcome wherein lies the cause of their impatience to herald to the world that for the next five years the Aliyev dynasty will continue ruling Azerbaijan as their own private real estate management firm, using and abusing the petrodollars to cater their opulent lifestyle, while building up their military hardware to keep the lid tight on any popular discontent. The fear-mongering policy of Ilham Aliyev's administration is directed as much against Armenians as it is toward the Azeri public.

Neither the internal refugees nor the local people benefit from their country's oil boom, and the Azeri government continues to keep the tensions rising with Armenia, holding the latter as a scapegoat causing the misery of Azerbaijan's internal refugees.

It is reported that 70 percent of the electorate has voted, with 85 percent of those vote going to Aliyev, a scenario reminiscent of the Soviet era when Aliyev's father would win 99 percent of the votes. Out of 5,162,000 voters, 3,126,000 voted for the incumbent president. On the eve of the election, the BBC had announced that the election in Azerbaijan is a formality to consolidate Aliyev's rule. The pre-election atmosphere was described by the same news agency as "full of fear and apathy."

The official sources have announced that the opposition candidate Jamil Hassanli has garnered 200,000 votes which in reality may be much more. The election farce was played openly in view of the entire world community; Azerbaijan's rubber stamp parliament amended the country's constitution to allow Mr. Aliyev to run for a third term. Then many problem journalists were jailed and opposition candidates were harassed and intimidated to render Mr. Aliyev's election a piece of cake.

It is no surprise that on election day, John Dalhuisen of Amnesty International characterized Aliyev as a "despot and

gravedigger of democracy."

The US Department of State has extended a cool reception to the election "results," characterizing them as "undemocratic." However, another coincidence has underlined even further the US position as President Obama has sent a message to Azerbaijan stating: "My wife Michelle joins me to extend our best wishes to the Muslims in America and around the world on the occasion of Islamic Eid-e Ghorban, hoping that they achieve their pilgrimage successfully." He had conveniently "forgotten" that it was election day in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan's Defense Minister Safar Abiyev has met with the US ambassador in Baku, Richard Morningstar, complaining about such characterization, which does not compare favorably with the 2008 elections in Armenia. The latter had been called "fraught with massive fraud." Yet it was accepted by the State Department. He has also used the opportunity to ask Washington to lift the restrictions of paragraph 907 of the Freedom Support Act "which keeps Azerbaijan under pressure."

On the other hand, EU representatives have announced that "we accept election results as proof that Azerbaijan is moving towards European integration." The Russian Foreign Ministry went along with the warm sentiments, adding that Aliyev's reelection will further contribute to the consolidation of friendship between Baku and Moscow.

A despot is being wooed by Europe and Russia, contributing to the reckless behavior of Aliyev's regime. No matter how ludicrous the elections may be, its oil absolves it of all its faults.

Irrespective of the fraudulent elections and their adverse characterization in the international media, "the New Great Game Round-up" reports, "In Azerbaijan, the EU focuses on energy instead of democracy. The news came three days ahead of the German federal elections on September 22 and went nearly unnoticed: EON, Germany's biggest energy group, signed a gas deal with Azerbaijan. The company will import 40 billion cubic meters of natural gas over the next 25 years from the Shah Deniz field, Azerbaijan's biggest natural gas field in the Caspian Sea."

This political duplicity provides the license to Azerbaijan to behave recklessly with impunity. During the presidential elections Azeri forces have broken the ceasefire on the Karabagh front for the 1,400th time this year alone. OSCE representatives don't even dare slap Azerbaijan on the wrist for this behavior.

To add insult to injury, Azerbaijan currently occupies a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council and may influence cece ce any resolution affecting Armenia.

As we can see democracy has many faces; it means different things to different people, most of them with unsavory taste.

## Lebanon Has Cause for Shame in its Treatment of Syrian Refugees

By Robert Fisk

I stopped to buy walnuts in Sidon last week from a sunburned man sitting on the pavement of the old *souk*. Like the walnuts – soft, almost creamy inside their iron-hard husks – he came from the Syrian town of Bloudan.

In years gone by, I would take the steam train from the old Haj station in Damascus up to Bloudan and Zabadani, the loco so slow that passengers could sometimes jump out of the carriages to pick fruit and then clamber back aboard. Bloudan was a kind of forested spa, all soft-flowing streams and watermelons and crude cement houses and big posters of Hafez al-Assad, the dictator father of Bashar. There were Palestinian training camps in these hills and a regional headquarters for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard – Lebanon was only eight miles away – and the smugglers' trails ran from Bloudan and Zabadani across the Anti-Lebanon range into the Bekaa Valley.

Bloudan is a Christian town – Zabadani is largely Sunni – and they have been on the front lines of Syria's war; those old smuggling trails now help to bring the tens of thousands of Syrian refugees into Lebanon,

swelling now to 1.3 million, of whom at least 780,000 have been registered by the UN. This means that one in four of the people of Lebanon are now Syrians. It feels like it, too. The poor beg in the streets of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre, the rich cut in front of me in their smart cars with registration plates showing they come from as far away as Raqqa and Deir ex-Zour and Deraa. A few of the vehicles boast bullet holes – as so many Lebanese cars did during the 1975-90 civil war – and almost half the people I meet in an average day in Beirut are Syrians.

They work on the building sites in the side street outside my home.

Two years ago they all supported Bashar. Then the poorer labourers proclaimed the Free Syrian Army as their heroes and the supervisors turned out to be pro-regime "mukhabarat" intelligence agents.

Now the rebel faction on the building sites is silent – no Islamists they – while the pseudo-cops keep their mouths shut. The wealthy Syrians have moved into swish apartments downtown. I sometimes find that when I travel from Beirut to Damascus at the weekend, half the Syrians I want to see are not in Damascus at all. They are spending the same weekend in Beirut.

There is cause for much shame in this massive influx of refugees. When the

Lebanese fled to Syria during their civil war, they were treated with great care by the regime. Now the Lebanese resent the huddled masses from the east. They are beaten in the immigration queues, cheated with exorbitant rents and, in some towns (Christian, I am sorry to say), told to stay off the streets after 8pm.

Christian Palestinians from Damascus are living in penury in one-room shacks in the only Christian Palestinian refugee camp in Dbayeh. The Sunni Palestinians from Syria have fetched up in the hovels of Sabra and Chatila to exchange their stories of horror with the tales of massacre and savagery visited upon their Palestinian brothers and sisters of this forsaken Lebanese camp at the hands of Israel's cruel allies 31 years ago.

And it's not hard to see why Najib Mikati, the outgoing "ghost" Prime Minister in the equally ghostly Lebanese government, is now talking of "investigating" each Syrian arrival to discover if they meet "the legal conditions of a refugee" – whatever that is – and the implications are obvious: those who have arrived in Lebanon to gather support for the Damascus regime or for the Syrian resistance will be chucked out.

Easier said than done. Lebanese ex-general Michel Aoun's crackpot and largely

*continued on next page*



## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Justice Dept. Records Reveal: Azerbaijan Pays Millions to US Firms

Awash in billions of petrodollars, but lacking a moral compass, Azerbaijan has been busy handing out loads of money to anyone who is willing to heed its propaganda.

Baku's bribery scheme, known worldwide as "caviar diplomacy," has now ensnared Washington's movers and shakers. Apparently, there is no shortage of Americans who are eager to sell their souls for a fistful of dollars. As a novice in the field of lobbying, Azerbaijan has quickly learned the tricks of the trade from its 'elder brother' Turkey, a well-versed master of political deception.

The website of the US Department of Justice lists the names and amounts paid by various Azeri entities to 11 American firms:

- Azerbaijan's Embassy in Washington pays \$35,000 per month to Patton Boggs "for advice and assistance on US-Azerbaijan bilateral relations"; \$18,250 per month to Melwood Communications to assist in "media relations and communications strategy"; \$20,000 per month to the DCI Group for "public relations and media outreach, and building relationships with think tanks" and \$45,000 per month to The Podesta Group to carry out public relations.
- The Livingston Group, named after former House

Speaker Bob Livingston, who left public office in disgrace, has so far received close to \$2 million for lobbying on behalf of Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry.

- The International Bank of Azerbaijan pays Jefferson Waterman International (JWI) \$25,000 per month "to develop relations with American institutions" and "media relations strategy." JWI receives another \$25,000 per month from "The Presidency of Azerbaijan" for counseling on media strategy. Azerbaijan's Ministry of Finance owns 51 percent of the shares of the International Bank of Azerbaijan.

- The Azerbaijan America Alliance has so far paid Fabiani & Company \$2.4 million "for planning and executing strategies to encourage research and advocacy about the Azeri people, country, culture and international relations." A recent gala dinner in Washington, hosted by the Azerbaijan America Alliance, was attended by 700 guests, including Obama administration officials, members of congress and foreign diplomats. Notorious congressional opponents of Armenian issues attended the banquet, including Senators Saxby Chambliss and Richard Burr, House Speaker John Boehner and former Cong. Dan Burton.

- Roberti White LLC is paid \$20,834 per month by SOCAR USA, the American subsidiary of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan, to explore business opportunities in the US.

- Since money is no object, even the Consulate General of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles can afford to hire its own public relations firm. Over the years, it has engaged the services of Sitrick and Company (\$50,000 per year); The Toolshed Group LLC (\$35,000), founded by Jason Katz, former Director of Public Affairs for the American Jewish Committee and The Potomac Square Group (amount undisclosed) "to provide media outreach...and interaction with editors."

Now comes yet another ex-congressman who is chasing Azerbaijan's Almighty Dollar. Former New York Cong.

Michael McMahon is handling public affairs/government relations for the so-called "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus," a territory recognized only by its occupying power - Turkey. McMahon, who served on the House Foreign Affairs Committee until his defeat in 2010, is leading the lobbying effort on behalf of Herrick, Feinstein LLP of New York which won a \$200,000 per year contract to arrange congressional visits to occupied Northern Cyprus and improve its public image in the media. McMahon also handled the development and construction of Turkey's expanded Consulate in New York City.

It is, therefore, not surprising that McMahon's name surfaced last week, trying to legitimize President Ilham Aliyev's falsified re-election in which he gained 85 percent of the vote, while his nine opponents collectively received the remaining 15 percent.

While international observers criticized Aliyev's re-election as "unfair and rife with fraud," The New York Times quoted McMahon as stating that the vote was "honest, fair and really efficient. There were much shorter lines than in America, and no hanging chads," a reference to the disputed ballots in Florida during the 2000 US presidential race.

Shockingly, The NY Times fell victim to McMahon's ploy, deciding to title its article on the fraudulent vote as "Observers Differ on Fairness of Election in Azerbaijan." The Times thus equated one man's pro-Azeri propaganda with the overwhelming evidence of widespread fraud confirmed by respectable international observers, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Fortunately, The Times pointed out that "the split in assessments seemed to reflect an aggressive lobbying effort by the Aliyev government to portray the election as fair."

Armenian-Americans cannot compete with Azerbaijan's lavish handouts. They don't have to. Since the truth is on their side, they do not need to spend millions on lobbying to present the facts as they are.

## Lebanon Has Cause for Shame In its Treatment of Syrian Refugees

from previous page

Christian "Free Patriotic Movement" wants the border closed; and since Mr Aoun supports Bashar al-Assad - and since most refugees in Lebanon are anti-Assad Sunni Muslims - you can see why Mr Aoun wants the frontier blocked.

But there are deeper concerns, which afflict both the Lebanese army and the Internal Security Force, the only two viable institutions in Lebanon: that the great refugee camps spreading down the Bekaa valley might turn into miniature Ein el-Helwehs.

Ein el-Helweh is the vast Palestinian camp in Sidon whose 100,000 (or more) refugees are crammed into slums controlled by armed Palestinian militias which operate outside the law of Lebanon. Subjected to the country's oppressive work restrictions, the Palestinian factions include Hamas and the PLO - but also Islamists, a faction of al-Qa'ida and members of Muslim groups wanted for their part in a Salafist insurrection in northern Lebanon six years ago.

A cancer in the body politic, as far as Lebanon is concerned; a pit of hopelessness for the 100,000 whose lands in Palestine were seized by the new Israeli state in 1948.

But the Lebanese army now fears that the blossoming Syrian camps in the Bekaa will yield the same, bitter fruit: armed groups supporting both the impoverished Free Syrian Army and the ever-more-powerful Sunni Muslim al-Nusra front and al-Qa'ida affiliates who are fighting to "liberate" Syria from Assad's government.

The Lebanese cannot afford to let the cities of Syrian refugee tents turn into armed camps outside the sovereignty of Lebanon, run by Syrians carrying their own weapons outside the law.

But can the Lebanese prevent this infection when Syrian suffering is on such a scale? On Saturday night I found three Syrians - two of them only 14 years old - selling white roses on the Beirut Corniche near my home.

Amir came from the Damascus suburb of Douma a year ago. His right leg had been torn off by a shell. Hadi and Hani were brothers from Hama. Hadi's hand had been amputated by a shell fragment eight months ago. Only Hani was untouched. I bought a white rose. Three Syrians, only one complete.

(Robert Fisk is a columnist for the *Independent* newspaper. This column originally appeared in the October 14 edition of the paper.)

# Armenians and the Purple Heart

By Taniel Koushakjian

**T**his past August marked the 231st anniversary of the establishment of the "Badge of Military Merit," known today as the Purple Heart, by General George Washington on August 7, 1782. When I first heard this news, I was drawn to the memory of my grandfather, US Army Sergeant Ara Odabachian. Although a well-decorated soldier in his own right, he did not receive a Purple Heart, but there had to have been some Armenians who did. After all, thousands of Armenians have fought valiantly in the US Armed Forces, with verified records dating as far back as the Civil War.

According to Prof. Ray Raymond, upon his victory at Yorktown, General Washington's "officers were on the verge of mutiny because of lack of pay, rations and supplies withheld by a corrupt and negligent Congress. Worse, Congress had taken away the authority of his general officers to recognize their soldiers' courage and leadership by awarding commissions in the field. Congress simply could not afford to pay their existing officers let alone any new ones. As a result, faithful service and outstanding acts of bravery went unrecognized and unrewarded. Washington was determined to end that. So from his headquarters perched 80 feet above the Hudson, he issued a general order establishing the 'Badge of Distinction' and 'Badge of Merit.'"

Our country's oldest military award, the Badge of Military Merit was intended to be permanent; however, the end of the Revolutionary War marked the end of the award. That is until 1932, 150 years after its inception. On the bicentennial of George Washington's birth:

"By order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart, established by General George Washington at Newburgh, August 7, 1782, during the War of the Revolution

is hereby revived out of respect to his memory and military achievements.

By order of the Secretary of War:  
Douglas MacArthur  
General, Chief of Staff"

So that morning I thought to myself, "How many Armenians have received the Purple Heart? Somebody has to know!" To my astonishment, no such list existed, until today.

With the assistance of the Assembly's ARAMAC-Pennsylvania Vice Chair Paul Sookiasian, who is active with his local Pennsylvania Armenian-American Veterans Association (PAAVA), he directed me to the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor registry. There I was able to search and compile a list of nearly 80 confirmed Armenian recipients of the Purple Heart. In addition to this list, I consulted one of the most important publications on Armenian-American military figures, the 1996 *Triumph and Glory: Armenian World War II Heroes*, by Richard N. Demirjian. I found one name that was not in the registry and there has got to be potentially more Armenians who have served that do not carry the "ian."

From the Assembly's 2006 National Advocacy Conference, to the designation of the Colonel George Juskalian US Post Office in Centreville, Virginia in 2010 and other activities honoring our service men and women, the Armenian Assembly of America has a strong record of raising awareness of and honoring Armenian veterans of the US.

I know this list is incomplete. Therefore, I am asking anyone with more information about Armenian-Americans who have received the Purple Heart to contact the Assembly at [info@aaainc.org](mailto:info@aaainc.org). With the help of the Armenian-American community we can complete this list and together raise awareness of the proud Armenian presence in the US Armed Forces.

(Taniel Koushakjian is the communications director for the Armenian Assembly of America. He can be reached at [taniel@aaainc.org](mailto:taniel@aaainc.org) and on Twitter @Taniel\_Shant.)

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# Vartan Gregorian Honored in Scotland at Carnegie Birthplace

GREGORIAN, from page 1

"For 15 years, I have endeavored to be a good steward of Andrew Carnegie's legacy as head of Carnegie Corporation of New York," Gregorian said. "But it is important to note that the good work of Carnegie Corporation is not, of course, 'Vartan's Way' but will always be 'Andrew's Way.' This great honor is ultimately a reflection of the example Mr. Carnegie set in establishing a family of organizations to do 'real and permanent good in this world.' I am deeply touched by the generosity of my Scottish colleagues."

The 76-acre Pittencrieff Park or "The Glen," as it is known locally, is one of Scotland's most popular urban parks, welcoming more than 750,000 visitors annually. The park is now the location of the Carnegie UK Trust's headquarters.

Andrew Carnegie called Pittencrieff Park "the most soul-satisfying gift I ever made or ever can make." Carnegie spent the first 13 years of his life in Dunfermline before emigrating to the United States in 1848.

Prior to joining Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1997, Gregorian served as president of Brown University and as president of the New



York Public Library. Earlier, he was the founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania and also served as provost there. He is the recipient of numerous fellowships, scores of honorary degrees, and many awards, including the American Academy of the Institute of Arts and Letters' Gold Medal for Service to the Arts, the National Humanities Medal, and the Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civil award. In 2009, President Barack Obama appointed him to serve on the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. He has written *The Road To Home: My Life And Times; Islam: A Mosaic, Not A Monolith* and *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, 1880-1946*.

Martyn Evans, chief executive of the Carnegie UK Trust, said: "Since joining the Corporation in 1997, Vartan has been an incredible asset to not only Carnegie Corporation of New York but also the family of Carnegie organizations worldwide. He believes passionately in philanthropy and over the last 16 years has steered the Corporation on its mission to honor Andrew Carnegie's drive for access to education and knowledge, interna-



Vartan Gregorian at the plaque marking "Vartan's Way"

tional peace and healthy democracy."

"It is most fitting that his achievements should be recognized in the park Andrew Carnegie donated to his beloved hometown of

Dunfermline."

As part of the ceremony, Gregorian planted a tree using a ceremonial spade once used by Andrew Carnegie.

## California State Assemblymen Achadjian Named Legislator of the Year

GLENDALÉ — The Armenian National Committee of America Western Region (ANCA-WR) will honor California State Assembly member Katcho Achadjian with the ANCA-WR "Legislator of the Year Award" at the annual banquet to take place on Saturday, November 30 in Hollywood.

"Through Assembly member Achadjian's dedication and commitment to Hye Tad, the ANCA-WR has been able to significantly advance issues of concern to Armenian Americans in the halls of the State Capitol. Achadjian's ability to use the power of the pen to educate his colleagues in the California State Assembly and Senate,

introduce key pieces of legislation of concern to our community, and to assist organizing a contingency of California legislatures to travel to Armenia and Artaskh (Karabagh), speaks volumes to Achadjian's commitment to fundamental principles of truth, fairness and justice to pursue our cause," said Raffi Kassabian, ANCA-WR board member.

Achadjian was sworn in for his second term on December 3, 2012 to represent the 35th Assembly District which includes San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria and Pismo Beach.

He founded a successful local small business in 1978, and has built it up to employ some 30

workers at three locations. Prior to his election to the legislature, Achadjian served for three terms as an elected member of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors. He served as board chairman in 2001 and again in 2006. He was also appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to serve as a member of the California Coastal Commission. He served as a member of the commission until his election to the Assembly in 2010.

Since taking office, he has worked for government reform and accountability. He is a member of the Assembly Committees on Accountability and Administrative Review, Banking and Finance, Transportation and Joint Legislative Audit.

Achadjian introduced the Return of Churches Bill in the California Assembly in 2012.

The Assembly Joint Resolution called on the Republic of Turkey to respect religious freedom and return church properties to its minority

communities. Achadjian took a firm stance to end religious discrimination and sent a clear message to the Republic of Turkey that Armenians would continue to fight against the final stage of Genocide — denial.

Achadjian was also instrumental in protesting the Azerbaijani Parliamentary and State Oil Company (SOCAR) delegation visit to the California State Capitol.

"I am proud to have stood shoulder to shoulder with Assembly members Nazarian, Wilk and Patterson and Armenian Americans from throughout the State to protest the Azeri government's aggression and efforts to use its oil wealth to purchase international legitimacy," said Achadjian. From hosting the Nagorno-Karabagh parliament speaker in the State Capitol to his most recent trip to Armenia with Speaker Perez, Achadjian represents the Armenian-American issues in the State of California.

## SHIFT-Tech Offers \$25K Mobile App Development

YEREVAN — ONEArmenia is shifting the landscape of Armenia once again. SHIFT: Culture, launched in the spring, invited the global community at large to pitch their wildest idea for reinventing an aspect of the Armenian arts. On their one-year anniversary they've launched SHIFT-Tech, a call for people around the world to submit their mobile app ideas — and compete to get \$25,000 in support to develop them.

Armenia has become one of the leading information technology nations among CIS and Middle Eastern countries. A number of high-tech companies from Europe, Russia and the US are also operating large development and R&D centers in Armenia. With a booming IT sector, which takes up 20 percent of the country's annual GDP, start-ups are popping up all over the country. The world's premier, full-featured mobile photo editor, Picsart, Inc., for example, was founded there and has more than 77 million users.

The top five submissions will be invited to pitch their idea to a review committee. The winner will be connected with Social Objects, a mobile app development start-up in Yerevan, to turn the idea into actualized software. In addition to having a development team build their app, part of the \$25,000 in-kind grant will go to marketing and taking the app to market. Portions of potential profits from the winning app will go toward funding ONEArmenia community projects.

"SHIFT-Tech offers enough support for a start-up team to focus fully and realize their app idea and build a functioning, viable product for a big global marketplace," said Nigel Sharp, founder of LionSharp Solutions — a creative technology start-up. "Awareness of the technology possibilities will improve and hopefully inspire more people to look towards the engineering and mobile development capabilities in Armenia," added Sharp.

ONEArmenia's SHIFT Initiative was started to move Armenia away from the standard narrative that has stalled its fight to get on solid ground since independence: that of a dusty, post-Soviet nation, struggling against itself to give its people something to look forward to; dependent on the legacies of an ancient past rich with kingdoms full of art, science, invention and leadership to give its youth something to be proud of. "Now is the crucial window of time to shift the young generation's attention toward the future, where the digital age makes anything and everything possible," said initiative leaders.

SHIFT-Tech was launched on October 5. Applications will be accepted until November 5.

ONEArmenia is a non-profit platform that seeks to boost environmental, humanitarian and cultural projects in Armenia. It uses crowd-funding and crowd-sourcing to involve anyone with an Internet connection in boosting projects that are geared toward making tangible changes in Armenia. The ONEArmenia network aims to make it possible to not only raise money for a project based in Armenia as a worldwide community, but to also track the progress of said project with complete access to financial information.

## New Publication Presents British Media Reports on the Armenian Genocide

BEIRUT — A two-volume book titled *The Times of the Armenian Genocide: Reports in the British Press, 1914-1923* by Katia Minas Peltekian has been released.

The two-volumes compile more than 1,000 items collected from British newspapers between 1914 and 1923. Through articles, reports, editorials, correspondences, letters to the editor, announcements, as well as the proceedings of the British parliament, the book shows the extent of the official and unofficial British interest in the Armenian people and in the on-going massacres in the Armenian provinces in what is now called east Turkey.

These reports not only tell the story of a genocide, but also give details of the peace negotiations at Sevres and Lausanne, and how the Armenian Question was finally swept under the rug when the West seemingly regarded its interests to be more important than granting the persecuted people their basic human rights.

Peltekian is an independent researcher who collects newspaper articles. She has degrees in English literature and education from the American University of Beirut (AUB, Lebanon) and Dalhousie University (Canada).

She taught English at AUB (1988-2005) and Haigazian University (2005-2012).

As a hobby, she compiles daily news items for the Armenian News Network [www.Groong.org](http://www.Groong.org) and translates many articles about Armenia and



Katia Minas Peltekian

Armenians that appear in the Arab press into English.

Her first book was published in 2000 and titled, *Heralding of the Armenian Genocide: Reports in The Halifax Herald (1894-1922)*, and compiled one Canadian newspaper's articles and reports on the on-going massacres and deportations of the Armenian population.

At the time, the book was distributed free to Canadian members of parliament, a few officials and public libraries, in addition to university libraries around the world and Genocide research centers.