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Edmond Azadian in the classroom, with young Ardag, on the right

Tekeyan Shows Appreciation to Armenia's Teachers by Distributing Aid

YEREVAN – Nine-year-old Ardag studies at Vahan Tekeyan No. 92 school in Yerevan. He has decided to become a doctor when he grows up. Edmond Azadian, a member of Tekeyan Cultural Association Board of Directors, during a recent visit encouraged him by saying, “After a few years I will be back to hear about you, if you have become a doctor or not.”

Ardag and his 606 schoolmates are studying at the Tekeyan School in Yerevan and have their own dreams about the future. And at school, their teachers are educating them to become first good human beings and then good Armenians, who would be helping their country.

see TEACHERS, page 9

House Members Urge White House to Release Armenian Orphan Rug for Display

WASHINGTON – This week, more 30 members of the House of Representatives signed a letter to President Barack Obama urging him to release the Armenian Orphan Rug for public display, reported the Armenian Assembly of America. The letter initiative was spearheaded by Armenian Genocide resolution sponsors Representatives David Valadao (R-CA) and Adam Schiff (D-CA) and enjoys broad bipartisan support.

The letter to Obama states, “This historic rug was hand-woven by orphans of the Armenian Genocide. It was made in an American-sponsored orphanage run by a US charity created by an act of Congress. The carpet, which has over 4 million hand-tied knots, was presented in 1925 to President Calvin Coolidge as a symbol of gratitude for American aid and generosity. President Coolidge noted that, “The rug has a place of honor in the White House where it will be a daily symbol of goodwill on earth.”

“The decision by the Administration to block display of the Armenian Genocide rug is as inexplicable, as it is hurtful to the

see RUG, page 12

Tekeyan and Sister Organizations Hold First Ever International Consultation in London

LONDON – The international consultation of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) and its sister organizations took place November 8-9 in Kensington, Tara Cophorne Hotel London, organized and hosted by the London Chapter of TCA.

Attending were 18 delegates from Canada, the US, Greece, Egypt, France, Switzerland, Lebanon and the UK, representing three of the four major Trusts of the TCA, with the fourth Trust being represented informally.

Two senior figures of the TCA who were unable to attend due to unforeseen emergencies were briefed and their input sought whenever needed.

In his opening speech, the chair of the London Chapter, after welcoming the delegates, gave the background of the consultation, reviewed briefly the current situation of the organization as well as the

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Seated, from left, Varoujan Sirapian, Sarkis Khatchadourian, Haroutiun Arzoumanian, Edmond Y. Azadian, Papken Megerian, Vartan Ouzounian, Taline Avakian, Violetta Barzankian-Kaydan; standing, from left, Garo Boyadjian, Vartan Nazerian, Sossi Yerissian, Krikor Shigaher, Kevork Erzinkazsian (Rapporteur of meeting), Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian (chair of meeting), Nar Khatchadourian, Garen Arevian and Arthur Touryan

Canadian Museum for Human Rights and Armenian Genocide Museum Institute Sign Memorandum of Understanding

WINNIPEG, Canada – Stuart Murray, president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), and Dr. Hayk Demoyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute (AGMI) of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) today that will facilitate collaboration for the promotion of human rights through joint projects and education.

The CMHR and the AGMI will

exchange knowledge and expertise, educational materials, and exhibitions with respect to human rights, share research and advice, cooperate to advance the academic study of human rights and reconciliation, the Armenian Genocide and its effects, and processes seeking justice and reconciliation, and work together to educate people on issues of human rights, in both national and global contexts.

“Respect and protection for human rights is hard to build, but easy to

destroy. Every society that embraces human rights has to be continually vigilant to promote and protect those human rights,” Murray said. “We are very pleased to be joining hands with the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute to promote education, awareness and dialogue about human rights.”

The official signing of the MOU between the CMHR and AGMI has been facilitated by the assistance of the

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Armenia Sends Message of Condolence To Philippines

YERVAN (ArmeniaNow) – President of Armenia Serge Sargsian on Monday offered his condolences to President of the Philippines Benigno Aquino III over the deadly typhoon that had struck the island country in recent days, according to the presidential press service.

The typhoon Haiyan killed thousands of people and caused huge devastation to the country, situated on islands in the western Pacific Ocean. Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos have been displaced after the high winds and floodwaters destroyed their homes.

Armenian Quarters of Aleppo Bombarded

ALEPPO (Arminfo) – According to the Facebook page of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Aleppo, the Armenian quarters of the city have been bombarded by blasts.

As a result, the local population has had difficulties obtaining electricity and water.

A six-year-old Armenian child was killed by a bomb blast on Monday, while an earlier bomb damaged the local Armenian Church Complex.

Ankara Asks for Swiss Mediation in Karabagh Settlement

ANKARA (Arminfo) – Turkey has requested support from Switzerland to help overcome conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan to open the way for Ankara to repair ties with Yerevan.

During a visit to Switzerland in mid-October, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told Swiss officials that Turkey is ready to normalize its relations with Armenia, but he made it clear that “Yerevan should first leave the Azerbaijani territories it has occupied,” Turkish sources said. The foreign minister said “once Switzerland convinces Armenia to leave the occupied territories,” Ankara will open its borders with Armenia.

The Swiss officials responded positively to Davutoglu’s proposal. Davutoglu, during his recent visit to Switzerland, had pointed out that relations with Armenia are important for Turkey and that Turkey is trying to find new ideas and solutions to develop and cover more ground when it comes to the ties. He hinted that Turkey would increase its efforts to form better relations with its neighbor in the coming days.

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News From Armenia

Catholicos Condemns Terrorist Acts Against Christians in Syria

ECHMIADIN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, criticized the terrorist attack near the Holy Translators Armenian National School in Damascus, which claimed the lives of several children. The catholicos described this attack against a school “unacceptable” and emphasized that Christian communities are often targets in the Syrian conflict.

He offered his condolences to the families and friends of the victims, stressing that the Mother See will maintain its support to the Syrian Armenians.

On November 17 a requiem service will be offered at the Mother Cathedral for the victims and for peace in Syria.

Deputy Speaker Regards Turkey's Statement as 'Bluff'

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia does not accept any prerequisites in Armenian-Turkish relations, said Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Armenia Eduard Sharmazanov this week.

Sharmazanov was responding to the statement made by Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoglu that the opening of Armenian-Turkish border is possible in the coming years if the Republic of Armenia takes its troops out of the territory of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh. “I believe everybody knows that it is not dignified to speak to Armenia with ultimatums. We have stated for many times that no prerequisites are acceptable for us. So this step by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey is just a bluff,” he stated.

Sharmazanov called on Turkey to use its influence on Azerbaijan, so that the latter takes out its troops from the occupied territories of Nagorno-Karabagh, Martunashen, Shahumyan, Getashen and northern part of Martakert.

Uruguay Minister of Sport and Tourism Visits

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Minister of Sport and Tourism in Uruguay Lilian Keshishian on November 12 visited Yerevan State's sports college of Olympic Reserve, stated that there is no similar athletic educational institution in her country and that the experience of Yerevan College is quite interesting for her.

The Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs of Armenia Yuri Vardanyan accompanied Keshishian. The sport leaders of Uruguay and Armenia visited boxing, weightlifting, wrestling and other gym-halls in the athletic college, photographed with the athletes holding their practices here.

She paid a visit to the Museum of the College and made a note in the book of honorable visitors.

Keshishian thanked the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the college staff for the warm reception.

Yerevan Signs Memorandum with EEC

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia has signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC), which oversees the integration of former Soviet republics around the Russia-led Customs Union.

The document was signed on November 6 during talks between Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsian and visiting senior officials from the Customs Union's member states – Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

The memorandum was approved by presidents of the three member states at a summit held in Minsk last month.

Moscow has said the union will be widened into a Eurasian economic union, modeled after the European Union, by 2015.

Cosmic Ray Division: Shaping Students into Scientists

YEREVAN – Several bright, young university students, who conducted their theses work at the Cosmic Ray Division of the Yerevan Physics Institute (YerPhI), entered a new milestone in their careers.

Hripsime Mkrtychyan and Hasmik Rostomyan finished their master's degrees in physics at Yerevan State University and accepted offers to join the staff of the Cosmic Ray Division. There, they presented the results of their research at the “Thunderstorms and Elementary Particle Acceleration” (TEPA 2013) international conference hosted at CRD's Nor Ambert Research Center on Mt. Aragats from September 9 to 13.

Mkrtychyan thesis was titled “The Electrical structure of Thunderclouds and Initiation of the Thunderstorm Ground Enhancements (TGEs).” Rostomyan's was “The Maximal Energy of Solar Accelerators: Evidence from Space and Earth's Surface Measurements.” Both researchers described mechanisms by which subatomic particles are accelerated by natural forces in the environment. The CRD frequently presents opportunities



Patrick Fasano, 2013 Summer Intern at CRD from the University of Notre Dame at CRD's Nor Ambert research station

for promising young scientists and engineers, including students, to present their research results at international scientific forums.

Both Mkrtychyan and Rostomyan were recent recipients of the Kirakos Vapurciyan Scholarship for CRD students. This scholarship was established by the Vapurciyan family according to the will of the late Kirakos Vapurciyan of Michigan. In her letter of gratitude to the Vapurciyans, Mkrtychyan stated “I would like to express my gratitude to you and thank you for such an honorable reward. I am deeply appreciative of your support. This award has encouraged me to conduct deeper observations in my field. Thank you again!” Rostomyan expressed similar sentiments in her letter to the Vapurciyans.

Computer scientist Hayk Avagyan, a recent graduate of Yerevan State University, also accepted a position at the CRD. He is helping develop new algorithms for data analysis and the correlation of data from the Aragats Space Environmental Center with data from other astroparticle physics experiments.

From the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, physics undergraduate Patrick Fasano, with the support of the Nanovic Institute for European Studies at Notre Dame, interned at the CRD this past summer. Fasano spent 10 weeks assisting graduate students with upgrades and improvements to CRD's data storage and processing software, as well as studying the physics of “Thunderstorm Ground Enhancements,” a newly-discovered, high-energy phenomenon which accelerates cosmic ray particles



The Harutyun and Nadya Vapurciyan bonus recipients, front row, from left Tigran Karapetyan, Hasmig Rostomyan, Narine Khachatryan, Mari Gasparyan, Bagrat Mailyan, Anoush Hakopyan and Artur Reymers; back row, from left, Karen Arakelyan, Ara Babayan, Levon Vanyan, Hayk Avagyan, Pavel Solakhyan, Hripsime Mkrtychyan

within thunderclouds.

When Notre Dame physics professor, Ani Aprahamian, suggested to Fasano that there may be an internship available in Armenia, he did a quick Google search and study of Armenia. There was little time for him to consider this opportunity, but he decided to go for it.

Fasano was mentored by Bagrat Mailyan and Artur Reymers, both young physicists who received their PhDs within the past few years. According to the two, Fasano is a very bright young man with a bright future in science. Besides his work at the CRD, Fasano toured the country and participated in lunch-time debates with the other young scientists. He says he looks forward to going back to Armenia and the CRD as soon as possible.

Thirteen of the CRD's young scientists and staff received performance-based bonuses from the Harutyun and Nadya Vapurciyan family for their outstanding work and their resolve to continue pursuing excellence in Armenia.

“I have their picture on my mirror, and I look at them every day and I am so proud,” said Harutyun Vapurciyan of these talented young people.

“All in all, we are pleased with the progress of our students and our young and seasoned scientists who mentor our students,” says Prof. Ashot Chilingarian, the director of Yerevan Physics Institute and the head of its Cosmic Ray Division. “I, together with the CRD's entire staff, express our profound thanks to the Vapurciyan family, some of whom have visited CRD's facilities in Armenia.” CRD's staff, as well as members of the Support Committee for Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division (SCACRD) congratulate Hripsime and Hasmig for their recent accomplishments, offer them their support, and wish them well in the coming years.

More information on the Cosmic Ray Division and the Support Committee for Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division is available at <http://crdlx5.yerphi.am/> and at www.crdfriends.org, respectively.

US Ambassador Urges Improved Business Climate to Entice Foreign Investments

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – There are significant US investments here, especially in information technology, but in other sectors as well. This was the answer put on his video blog by the US Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern to an Armenian citizen who recently asked the ambassador on Facebook why aren't there any American investments in Armenia.

“These mutually-beneficial economic ties promote Armenia's long-term development and create jobs and wealth in both countries,” Heffern noted. Large American IT companies such as Synopsis, Microsoft, VMWare, Mentor Graphics and National Instruments have worked in Armenia for several years. Other IT companies have recently signed deals to come here as well, including Oracle, IBM and Intel. These companies want to build on Armenia's tremendous success in the IT sector, the fastest growing sector here. “You will also find hotel investments and smaller American businesses, such as cafes and restaurants, but I agree there could be more US investment in Armenia, especially considering close, people to people ties between our two countries. That is why we at the embassy are doing what we can to bring more US companies to Armenia through joint ventures or other mutually beneficial arrangements,” he added.

However, private companies determine on their own where to invest, based largely on the local business climate, he admitted. Attracting foreign direct investment is a highly competitive proposition. There are many factors that companies consider, one key one is predictability, he said. “Companies naturally make investments in countries where they are confident of success; this is what investors need transparency in local laws and regulations especially in customs and taxes, a level playing field with local companies, large and small to ensure fair treatment and rule of law to ensure that contracts are respected and any disputes will be resolved impartially. So while the embassy is actively promoting US-Armenian economic ties, the most effective way in increase investment here would be to improve the local business climate,” Heffern concluded.

He also stated that the US side is promoting these improvements by working with the government of Armenia on its reform agenda, to increase transparency, improve customs, enhance rule of law and reduce corruption.

The high level interagency US-Armenia Task Force meets annually to promote these close bilateral economic ties. “Let's do what we can to improve our economic cooperation,” Ambassador concludes.



INTERNATIONAL

Amid Stormy Relations, Russian Film Festival Takes Place in Georgia

By D. Garrison Golubock

TBILISI (*Moscow Times*) – As Russian-Georgian relations remain resolutely frigid despite an impending change of presidents in Georgia, a small group of film lovers showed Russian films in the Georgian capital. The fourth annual Russian Film Festival took place from November 6 to 10 in Tbilisi, bringing an array of new Russian productions south of the Caucasus.

“The Russian Film Festival in Tbilisi remains one of a few – if not the only – institutional forum aimed at fostering dialogue between Georgian and Russian cultural elites and engaging with Georgian audiences,” wrote Constantine Lusignan-Rizhinashvili, executive produc-

er of the festival, in e-mail correspondence with *The Moscow Times*.

Lusignan-Rizhinashvili said the festival screens more than 40 new films each year, including feature, documentary, short, experimental and animated films made predominantly in Russia but also including entrants from other post-Soviet countries.

In previous years, the festival has been warmly received by the Russian film community and has been attended by leading Russian filmmakers, producers, actors and critics. Directors such as Pavel Lungin, Sergei Soloviyev, Eldar Rayzanov and Alexei Balabanov have all had retrospective screenings in prior years, while this year’s program will feature a retrospective of the works of Andrei and Avdotya Smirnov.

Holding the festival is not without

challenges, and locals have not been entirely welcoming in previous years. “Part of Georgia’s cultural elite have effectively boycotted the event since its launch in 2010,” Lusignan Rizhinashvili wrote. “There are those on the extreme who draw parallels with the infamous screenings of German films in occupied Paris during World War II, and those who have turned into loyal supporters.”

Apart from those hostile to Russia, the festival’s audience is also limited by the language barrier – while Georgia was once part of the Soviet Union, resurgent nationalism in the past 20 years has resulted in a drastic decrease in Russian language use. The younger generation in particular, which did not study Russian in school, has been extremely difficult to attract.

This year, the festival changed its model somewhat by trying to encourage cooperation between Georgian and Russian filmmakers. An “industrial workshop” was conducted for the first time, and the festival also created a platform for young filmmakers to pitch proposals for funding in 2014, making the festival into an incubator for talent as well as cultural exchange.

Despite the festival’s continued success in the face of considerable obstacles and animosity, the festival has received very little support from government or private enterprise. According to festival organizers, Georgian businesses are reluctant to appear to support a cause in any way connected with Russia, and the government prefers to remain neutral and uninvolved.

While the Russian Culture Ministry has supported the festival in the past two years, the program is still self-funded for the most part, relying on ticket sales for revenue.

While many Georgians remain lukewarm about Russian culture, festival organizers feel the project is important for advancing rapprochement between the two nations, and aim to continue expanding in future years.

Road from Home in Iran

TEHERAN – David Kherdian’s *The Road from Home: The Story of an Armenian Girl* has been released in Persian in Iran.

The novel focuses on the genocide of Armenians during WWI.

Kherdian re-creates his mother’s voice in telling the true story of a childhood interrupted by one of the most devastating holocausts of the century. Vernon Dumehjian Kherdian was born into a loving and prosperous family. Then, in the year 1915, the Turkish government began the systematic destruction of its Armenian population.

The 240-page Persian rendition of the book has been translated by Shahla Soheil and has been published by Thaleth Publications.



Tekeyan and Sister Organizations Hold First Ever International Consultation in London

TCA, from page 1

democratic and liberal credentials of TCA as established by the ADL and regretted the absence of a few chapters from the Middle East who could not attend due to various reasons.

This was the first meeting of its kind since 1947, with the theme being “Integration, Complementarity and Sustainability.” Over the course of two days, the delegates reviewed the situation of the various chapters and sister organizations in the Diaspora and Armenia, in order to chart a new way ahead with a new vision and mission statement. This was primarily an exercise in foresight, where various matters related to financial, operational and structural issues were discussed.

A thorough analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were debated and the resultant indicators were integrated into a future plan of action. The participants listened and debated the keynote presentations covering such themes as the media, future trends, management models, innovative approaches and TCA relationships with major organizations and institutions.

In an ever-changing and competitive world with its clear impact on the diaspora and hence on TCA and its sister

organizations, and in order to be prepared better to face these challenges, a number of resolutions, with set time-lines were approved. Amongst these:

1. To organize formally a global network to be established virtually in the Tekeyan Centre in Yerevan, but hosted and operated from Boston;

2. To establish a four-member Ad Hoc Committee in order to review the written and electronic media and prepare an action plan within six months.

3. To establish a nine-member Global Coordinating Committee (GCC) to act as the “spokesperson of the TCA,” to act as a think tank and a forum for problem-solving and dispute resolution, to fine-tune the new mission statement of the TCA along the guidelines suggested at the meeting, to monitor and oversee the implementation of the resolutions locally and globally along set time-lines.

Members of the GCC will include representatives of the four major Trusts. Three slots are currently left open, one of which is reserved for the chair of the ADL pending a successful resolution of all divisive issues in our family of organizations. The GCC will submit its report to the follow-up meeting to be held during the first half of 2015 at the Tekeyan Centre in Yerevan.

On the evening of November 8 there

was a formal cocktail reception given by the London Chapter in honor of the participants to which about 50 guests representing community-based structures were invited. After the welcoming words of the Chair of the London chapter, Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian, the Primate of the Armenian Church in UK and Ireland Bishop Vahan Hovanesian welcomed the participants and wished for success for the TCA family in its continuous devotion to Armenian culture and values. On behalf of the delegates Edmond Azadian, member of TCA Central board of US and Canada, spoke, thanking the host committee and outlining the organization’s mission. As the ambassador of Armenia to the Court of St. James was out of the country, his representative, Ara Margarian, conveyed in his turn the embassy staff’s best wishes for the future, adding that TCA is a vital force in the communities wherever it exists.

On the evening of November 9, a formal dinner completed the social agenda of the meeting.

The consultation was closed by its chairperson after the customary speeches and good wishes at 5 p.m., on November 9.

Signed: Consultation Chairperson and Rapporteur

International News

Turkey Destroys another Armenian Cemetery

ISTANBUL (*Haberler.com*) – According to this Turkish news site, as reported by *Armenpress*, Turkish treasure hunters don’t let anything stand in their way when they are looking for possible riches buried, including Armenian churches and cemeteries.

Recently, the target was the Armenian cemetery near Lake Barazh in the province of Batman.

Many cemeteries belonging to the Armenians near the lake were razed before. Treasure seekers took advantage of the fact that the lowered water table allowed easier access to the cemetery.

Putin to Visit Armenia Next Month, Tycoon Says

MOSCOW (*ArmeniaNow*) – Russian President Vladimir Putin will pay a visit to Yerevan upon the invitation of his Armenian counterpart Serge Sargsian early next month, the Chairman of the Union of Armenians of Russia (UAR) Ara Abrahamyan said.

RFE/RL’s Armenian Service quoted Abrahamyan this week as saying that the Russian leader will arrive in Armenia on a working visit on December 1 or 2.

Abrahamyan also confirmed plans for an Armenian-Russian business forum to be held in Yerevan on December 1-4. The UAR president, who is also a leading businessman, himself will be among some 500 businessmen and local leaders expected to arrive in Armenia from Russia ahead of Putin’s visit.

No official source either in Moscow or in Yerevan has reported about Putin’s plans to visit Armenia yet.

Sargsian has invited his Russian counterpart to visit Yerevan several times since the latter returned to the Kremlin as president in 2012. Several times such visits were announced in the past, but did not take place.

WCC Takes Decisive Step Toward Recognition of Armenian Genocide

BUSAN, Korea – The World Council of Churches (WCC) has taken a decisive and courageous step this week as it moved to remind the nations of the world of the Armenian Genocide of 1915, and to impress upon them a recognition of the horrendous tragedy that befell the Armenian nation, and of the need for reparations to be made.

In a minute adopted at its 10th Assembly meeting here, the WCC announced it would seek to organize an international conference in Geneva on April 24 next year, to urge “recognition of and reparation for the Armenian genocide, with the participation, among others, of WCC member churches, international organizations, jurists, historians and human rights defenders.”

Father Pakrad Bourjekian, who was representing the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, stated that it was mainly through the efforts of the Armenian delegation, which also included Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Eastern Diocese of America’s Ecumenical Director, and Bishop Hovakim Manoukian, head of the Ecumenical Department in the Mother See of Echmiadzin, noting their “efforts and the uncompromising support and solidarity.”

The WCC was acceding to requests from leaders of the Armenian church, in particular His Karekin II, Catholicos of All the Armenians, lodged prior to the 10th Assembly meeting, for the WCC to initiate programs to observe the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

The 10th assembly, which wound up its deliberations this week, also wants to organize an ecumenical prayers service commemorating the victims of the Armenian Genocide at the cathedral of Geneva in conjunction with the international conference and invite members of the WCC to pray for the memory of Armenian martyrs, and also for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.



Community News

Veteran's Day:

Khachadourian Pays it Forward

By Beth Volpert

GRAYSON, Ga. (*Gwinnett Citizen*) – Harry Khachadourian was born in Palestine to Armenian parents fleeing from Turkey. Khachadourian grew up as an Armenian Christian in a war-torn Palestine. He spent many years moving from one “safe” place to another. His father and uncle owned a shoe factory in Palestine in the 1940’s and after the King David Hotel was bombed, Khachadourian said his life began to resemble the movie “Exodus.”

The family lived in Lebanon, Amman and then finally, Jerusalem before moving to Upstate New York. “We were so happy to be there,” said Khachadourian. “Our sponsors prepared cheese sandwiches on American bread and served us cold milk; it was so strange to us, but we loved every bite.”

Having come from such a volatile region, Khachadourian, his brother, sister and parents set out to make America their true home. They became accustomed to the new foods, the weather and the culture. In 1963, Khachadourian moved to Chicago and then, in 1965, he joined the US Army. He trained as a helicopter maintenance technician and inspector with the 175th Helicopter Assault Company. “I would repair and then go up with the pilots on the test flights to make sure the helicopters were ready,” he said.

Khachadourian said he felt strongly about “giving back” to the country that



Harry Khachadourian in 1971

offered he and his family refuge from his war-torn home. “I joined the army, but I really wanted to go to Vietnam,” said Khachadourian. “It was important to me.”

Khachadourian finally got his wish with a tour of duty in 1971-1972. His company was known as the Outlaws. As the war came to an end, the Vietnamese military began to take over the use of the helicopters, but the nose cover of Outlaw 13 came home with Khachadourian. “I have it in a shadow box and take it to our reunions,” he said. “One day, I will donate see VETERAN, page 7



Patriarch Manougian leads a special prayer service for Catholicos Karekin II.

Eastern Diocese Welcomes Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem

NEW YORK – “If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem...” is the Biblical phrase signifying the emotional and spiritual power of the sacred site that is home to three of the world’s major religions. And for Armenians who have played a pivotal role in Jerusalem since the seventh century, the impact of this statement is immeasurable.

On Sunday, November 3, the Armenian community of greater New York had the opportunity to learn more about the centuries-long Armenian presence in Jerusalem, when Archbishop Nourhan Manougian, the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, visited the Eastern Diocese.

Manougian presided over the Divine Liturgy at New York’s St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral, which was celebrated by the Very Rev. Norayr Kazazyan, principal of the Sts. Tarkmanchatz School at the Armenian Patriarchate. Also taking part in the service were Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern); Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian; the Very Rev. Simeon Odabashian, Diocesan Vicar;

the Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian, dean of St. Vartan Cathedral; the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, director of the Diocese’s Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center; other area clergy and St. Nersess Seminary students.

The patriarch delivered a sermon on the temptations Christians face in today’s secular culture. “As Christ resisted the temptations of injustice and evil, we also have to follow His example,” he said. “Those who only seek material pursuits do not find God’s mercy.”

Also during the Divine Liturgy, Manougian led a special prayer service for Catholicos Karekin II on the occasion of the 14th anniversary of his consecration and enthronement as the 132nd Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

In the afternoon, community leader Hrant Gulian welcomed guests to a celebratory luncheon at the Diocesan Center. Gizirian opened the program with a prayer. Vartan Abdo, director of the Armenian Radio Hour of New Jersey, served as the master of ceremonies.

Abdo, who was born in Palestine, pointed out that the Patriarchate gave a home to the survivors of the Armenian Genocide where they received “spiritual, physical, and mental nourishment.” He went on to say that “our hope today is with the youth,” and spoke about the Diocese’s recent pilgrimages to the Holy Land for young adults across the parishes. A video of one such youth pilgrimage to Jerusalem was shown. Three young pilgrims – Sarine Atamian, Olivia Derderian, and Eric Silk – described the many sites they had visited in the Holy Land and the powerful emotions they had experienced there.

Ambassador Garen Nazarian, Armenia’s permanent representative to the United Nations, emphasized the special meaning that the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem has for Armenia. “It served as a haven for the Armenian refugees after the Genocide and despite the turmoil that continues in the Middle East, it is necessary to visit this holiest of shrines,” he said. He also spoke about the importance of protecting the Armenian sites in the Holy Land, and added that Armenia

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‘Odar’ Connection Bolsters Armenian Community

By Tom Vartabedian

The next time you go by an Armenian church or community center take a good look around and you may notice something peculiar.

Many of the top executive roles are being filled by “odars” who heed the call to duty.

Not that this is bad. In some cases, they are more Armenian than their Armenian spouses or the lineage they relinquished. Many enjoy the best of both worlds.

A while back, I attended a *Badarak* in which the pastor gave an entire sermon about our heritage being diluted by mixed marriages and encouraged his congregation to mobilize their people by “sticking to their own kind.”

Most of those attending church that day took exception to his remarks. There were non-Armenians in the choir and even had roles on the altar. They were the ones who enhanced his church population, not diminished it.

A month ago in Merrimack Valley, an Armenian church honored two individuals who were woven into the Armenian mainstream by spouses born into the Armenian nation. Jeremy Oldham was ordained a sub-deacon at Sts. Vartanantz Church in Chelmsford while Pat



Jeremy Oldham is ordained a sub-deacon in the Armenian Church.

Amboian was honored for her years of dedicated service and commitment.

In Amboian’s case, her work throughout the general Armenian community remains exemplary, especially her role with the Genocide commemoration while husband John continues his role as an activist toward many causes. They make the perfect pair and are rarely seen apart.

As for Oldham, he became part of the community 15 years ago after meeting his Armenian wife, Denise Adamian. A barbecuing stint at a church bazaar led to a role at the altar. In that capacity, he learned to perform different parts of the Holy *Badarak* at Sts. Vartanantz Church, Chelmsford.

“Jeremy is truly a unique individual in terms of his dedication and determination to learn how to read classical Armenian and the various chants in our service,” said Deacon Ara Jeknavorian, with whom he serves. “He certainly is a source of inspiration for others of his kind. We have a culture that’s meant to be shared and appreciated by all humanity.”

When Oldham was baptized into the Armenian Church at St. James shortly after proposing to his wife, his father-in-law Harry Adamian opted to serve as his godfather.

“For me, it’s been a series of invitations, each one carrying me a little further down the Armenian path,” he brought out. “There was no turning back.”

He’s become a Parish Council secretary and has attended Armenian school over the years to learn the language. Their two children, Samantha, 10, and Harry, 7, are involved. His mother-in-law, Diana Adamian, lives with the family.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Bar Association Returns to Fresno with a Flourish

FRESNO – On the weekend of October 25-27, members of the Armenian Bar Association from across the country united to recognize and honor California Court of Appeal Justice Charles “Chuck” Poochigian and several members of Fresno’s judiciary branch for their dedication to public service and their Armenian heritage.

The Association’s pilgrimage to Fresno, one of the oldest Armenian-American communities in the US with its roots dating back to the late 1800’s, started off with a Friday evening dinner at the century-old Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. ArmenBar members sat side by side with Fresno Armenians, young and old alike, and shared ideas and their vision for the future of the community in Fresno at the church’s Annual Bazaar.

On Saturday, October 26, professor of Armenian Studies at California State University Fresno, Barlow Der Mugrdchian, guided association members on a four-hour tour of the many historic sites of Fresno County. The tour included visits to the statue of David of Sassoun that adorns the Civic Center. This was followed by an expedition to the Ararat and Massis Armenian Cemeteries located on the west side of the city. Members paused to reflect on the contributions of notable figures, such as world literary giant William Saroyan and Armenian hero Soghomon Tehlirian. In the presence and shadows of thousands of modern-day Khachkars, members contemplated the sacrifices and successes of their ancestors and paid homage at the tombs of the very first settlers of the Armenian community in Fresno.

The tour next took the attendees for a visit to century-old St. Gregory’s Armenian Church in Fowler, where Father Yeghia Hairabedian greeted the delegation and traced the history of the farm community and congregation. From there, the group moved to Simonian Farms on the edge of Fresno’s wide country roads, where the attendees had a chance to pick fruit in a tribute to Armenian farmers and families who brought with them the talents they developed in their hometowns of Kharpert, Moush, Bitlis, Van, Erzerum and Dickrangerd to make the Central Valley of California one of the greatest food-producing areas in the entire world.

The tour was capped with a visit to California State University Fresno’s Armenian Studies Department. There the guests had a chance to observe the many programs the university has developed in educating students in the

Armenian language, history and culture. Ghazarian stated, “We are thankful to Prof. Der Mugrdchian for taking his valuable time to educate us about the rich and vibrant history of Fresno.”

Following the Fresno Armenian heritage tour, Armenian Bar members were invited to attend a private reception and meeting at the recently-constructed California Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District. Located in Fresno’s “Old Armenian Town” section, the attendees had the unique opportunity to hear Poochigian, along with Presiding Justice of the Fifth Appellate District Brad Hill and the highest sitting Armenian-American jurist in California, Supreme Court Associate Justice Marvin Baxter, greet the Armenian Bar and guide the guests to the court’s library, conference room and pointed out the unique architectural features of the building which conjure images of Yosemite National Park in many of its architectural motifs and details.

On Saturday evening, the Association hosted its Judges’ Night dinner gala in the grand hall of Holy Trinity Church. The event drew nearly 200 guests representing a broad cross-section of Fresno’s legal community. Several law firms, including Baker Manock, Baradat & Paboojian, Dowling Aaron, Coleman & Horowitz, Lozano Smith, McCormick Barstow and Tomassian, Pimentel & Shapazian served as sponsors for the festivities. Joining the law firms as sponsors were Fresno Armenian families that are very active in and have served the community for generations, including the Apkarian, Messerlian, Parnagian and Poochigian families.

Former ArmenBar board member and Los Angeles attorney, Garo K. Hovannisian, served as the evening’s Master of Ceremonies. Hovannisian welcomed the guests and invited Father Vahan Gosdanian to offer the evening’s invocation. Hovannisian then drawing a parallel to a teacher at a boarding school, whose students refer to him as “Oh captain, my captain” and hailing him as an inspiring leader who sets an array of examples of public service by his deeds, welcomed Ghazarian to the podium to deliver his remarks.

Ghazarian solemnly opened his presentation by asking that all those present rise for a moment of silence to reflect on the memories of those who are buried in the Armenian cemeteries of Fresno, and honor the sacrifices made by those earlier generations of Fresno Armenians who, out of the ashes of the

Armenian Genocide, built a vibrant community for all those who came to America in the years and decades that followed. Ghazarian stated, “Why are we here? Why did the Armenian Bar decide to come to Fresno? Is it because Fresno needs us? No, it’s because we need Fresno.”

Ghazarian urged the young and old lawyers of Fresno to renew their commitments to not only the legal canons of their profession, but also to the moral canons of being Armenians. He said that while speaking, reading and writing in Armenian are wonderful traits to possess, they are not exclusive, and not being proficient in these abilities does not preclude those from being Armenians through and through. To be an Armenian, Ghazarian continued, “one needs to feel the need and urgency in his or her soul, and be of service to the Armenian community and to the Armenian Cause – Hye Tad.”

Finally, Ghazarian thanked Fresno for giving the Armenian Bar its founder, Raffi K. Hovannisian, and concluded by pointing out that “we, as Armenians, owe a debt of gratitude to the US, our adopted homeland, for all the opportunities that are available to us, to excel as human beings and to do so while maintaining our identities as Armenian-Americans.”

The audience was treated to a musical interlude by talented Fresno tenor Berj Apkarian who lifted the spirits of the audience to even higher plateaus with his virtuoso performance of traditional Armenian songs. Thereafter, in a surprise presentation, retired California Supreme Court Justice Armand Arabian, presented copies of his autobiographical book, *From Gravel to Gavel*, to Baxter and Poochigian.

Baxter was then invited to the podium to address the guests and say a few words about the evening’s honoree Poochigian. A native of Fowler, California, Baxter eloquently described that while the first Armenians to the Central Valley were given refuge from the horrors of the Ottoman Empire, they were not exactly welcomed with open arms. He recounted how the ancestors of Fresno’s Armenian community had to endure the outright discrimination that came with restrictive land covenants and preclusion from many social and fraternal organizations. Baxter recalled how this differential treatment resulted in the phenomenon of the Armenians living closely together and forming the social organizations and fraternal bonds that would help the community survive to the present day. Baxter praised the Armenian Bar for recogniz-

ing and honoring Fresno’s native son, Poochigian.

Former chairman and current Vice-Chairman Armen K. Hovannisian paid tribute to Poochigian highlighting his adherence to the values that his forefathers brought with them to Fresno from Armenia nearly 100 years ago. “As an outstanding model of these values, Poochigian,” Hovannisian explained, “has rightfully earned a reputation of honesty, integrity and decency, as well as the singular recognition of being a man among men, an example among examples and a judge among judges.”

Hovannisian commented, “Chuck Poochigian is the most dominant and complete carrier of those genetics,” Hovannisian then asked several Fresno County Superior Court judges who were present to stand and be recognized for their lifetime achievements and dedication to the administration of justice. Among that group were Superior Court Judges Brian Arax, David Kalemkarian, Debra Kazanjian, Edward Sarkisian, Houry Sanderson, John Vogt and James Aaron (retired).

Poochigian praised Hovannisian and the Armenian Bar Association for all of its worthy accomplishments over the years in service not only to the Armenian-American community, but also to Armenia. Poochigian was then presented with an Armenian peacock painting by Glendale artist, Seroon Yeretsian, with an inscription recognizing Poochigian for the extraordinary example he has been to his community.

Ghazarian concluded by stating, “The memories made by the Armenian Bar’s pilgrimage to California’s Central Valley and the Armenian-American community are engrained in the minds and hearts of those who were fortunate to be able to spend the last weekend of October 2013 in Fresno. We look forward to and vow to soon return home to Fresno in the near future.”

AMAA Opens West Coast Office

GLENDALE – After several meetings, the Board of Directors of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) approved a reorganization of the Association and the expansion of its services.

Effective November 1, current Executive Director Levon Filian will begin the process of opening a West Coast office of the AMAA and give direction to that office as the West Coast executive director. “For some time, there has been discussion about opening a field office in California to improve the work of our organization by its proximity to the large Armenian Community in Southern California. We are hopeful that there will be an official opening of the office in January 2014,” said Dr. Joseph Zeronian, president of the AMAA board.

The Restructuring Implementation Committee, co-chaired by Louis Kurkjian and Thomas Momjian, is now in the process of searching for an executive director/chief executive officer to lead the AMAA and give leadership to the Paramus, NJ office, the West Coast office and the Yerevan office. It is expected that it will take several months to identify and screen candidates and eventually call a person to take on these responsibilities.

In the interim, the Board of Directors has acted to call Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian as interim executive director/CEO, as of November 1. In that capacity, he will direct the activities of all AMAA personnel and be responsible to the Board of Directors. Melkonian, who is in the US on his rotation between the US and Armenia, is a member of the Armenian clergy and is familiar with the mission work of the AMAA.

Founded in 1918, the AMAA is a non-profit charitable organization whose “purpose is to serve the physical and spiritual needs of people everywhere, both at home and overseas.” The AMAA is a “nonsectarian Christian organization that renders its services to those in need without discrimination.”

For additional information, visit www.amaa.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Eastern Diocese Welcomes Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem

VISIT, from page 4

supports the mission of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

In the spirit of the day, a group of religious selections were sung by Deacons Vahe Bagdasarian and Narek Garabedian, and St. Vartan Choir soloists Hasmik Meikhanedjian, Narine Ojakhyan and Anahid Zakaryan. Khoren Mekanejian, the Diocese's coordinator of Music Ministry, accompanied on the piano.

Barsamian noted that with the election of the

financial assistance.

"We are asking people of all professions to come and help us with their knowledge, experience, and financial support," he said. "The Patriarchate is a treasure of the Armenian Church, and it is our duty to protect and preserve it."

Visit to Boston

On Friday, November 3, close to 300 people gathered at St. James Church in Watertown, Mass., to welcome Manougian to Boston.

The evening began with a *hrashapar* service of welcome in the church sanctuary, followed by a reception in the church hall. Barsamian, as well as New England area clergy and deacons, took part in the service. Representatives from the Massachusetts Council of Churches were also present, including Executive Director Rev. Laura Everett.

Berj Chekijian served as master of ceremonies. Chekijian once had Manougian and Barsamian as students at the Armenian Seminary in Jerusalem.

Aaron Derderian, a member of the St. James ACYOA, and Danielle Malconian, a member of the ACYOA of Holy Trinity Church of Cambridge offered reflections on the 2013 Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. A video highlighting the pilgrimage program was also shown. Malconian presented a check to the patriarch in the amount of \$500, which was raised by the Holy Trinity ACYOA Seniors.

Manougian expressed his gratitude to the Boston community for their warm welcome. He spoke about Jerusalem's historic role in the Armenian Church, and the need for ongoing support of the Patriarchate's ministries.



Patriarch Manougian speaks at the Diocesan Center about the importance of preserving Armenian Jerusalem.

97th Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem last January "a new chapter began in the Jerusalem Patriarchate, which will direct the journey of our church and nation."

"It is crucial that we maintain our ancient and holy places in Armenia and the Holy Land," he said. "The tie must be preserved between Armenia, Jerusalem and the diaspora."

Manougian began his address by paying tribute to those who built New York's St. Vartan Cathedral. "This kind of unwavering commitment is needed in Jerusalem," he said, and went on to discuss challenges facing the Armenians in Jerusalem, including the need of clergy and



New England area clergy and altar servers with Patriarch Manougian and Archbishop Barsamian.

OBITUARY

Barbara Young

BELMONT, Mass. — Barbara (Johnson) Young died on November 6. She was born on May 7, 1936, in Medford.

She was the wife of the late Manoog Solomon Young.

She leaves her children, Armen Young and his wife Kelley of Littleton, and Adrina Gobbi and her husband Richard of N. Billerica; grandchildren Jake and Mariah Gobbi and Christopher and Lauren Young and brother Aram Johnson of Lexington.

She was the daughter of the late Henry and Stella (Canarian) Johnson and granddaughter

of the late Aghavnice Canarian.

Services were at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown on Tuesday, November 12. Interment followed in Highland Meadow Cemetery, Belmont.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in her memory to St. James Armenian Church, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), 395 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA 02478 or ALS Mass. Chapter, 315 Norwood Park South, 1st Floor, Norwood, MA 02062.

She was a longtime member of St. James Choir and Women's Guild.

DETROIT — The St. John Armenian Church Fall Festival took place on September 27 through 29. Tekeyan and ADL metro Detroit Chapter members worked hard to support this event, which annually draws more than 5,000 people. John Yavruian a member of St. John's, organized all the volunteers needed. Above and at right, Metro Detroit Tekeyan/ADL volunteers cook for the event, with Captain Jack Alexanian.



Donation

In memory of her husband Asbed Zakarian, Margaret Zakarian donated \$2,500 to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* on October 25.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

'Odar' Connection Bolsters Armenian Community

ODAR, from page 4

"Learning the dialect and chants was daunting at first," he admits. "I had a hard time pronouncing the words and making the correct sounds. Many people helped me with the pronunciations. It has remained a work in progress."

His ordination was truly a memorable day, being in front of a packed congregation and given the rites by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, primate. His pastor, Rev. Khachatur Kesablian, was bursting with pride. In attendance was Oldham's family from North Carolina.

"I'm hoping my next step will be a full deacon," he confirms.

Amboian is Irish through and through. She's described as a "Jill-of-all-trades" inside the Armenian Church, even serving as Parish Council chairwoman; she sings in the choir, has taught Sunday School and remains active on committees.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to embrace such a beautiful heritage," she has often repeated to others. "I may be considered an 'odar' but I feel very Armenian."

The first time Father Lenny Faris walked into Holy Cross Armenian Church in Lawrence, he was a young man working at his dad's grocery store where the late Rev. Vartan Avakian was a familiar customer.

One day, he decided to investigate after hearing the sounds of a beautiful choir from an open window and began attending Sunday Badarak. His Lebanese background was no deterrent.

The director (Mary Bogosian) invited him to join and he remained a part of the chorale for the next 10 years, learning how to read and write Armenian, pray as well.

Through those fateful moments in his life, it led to a career with the church. He is now Rt. Rev. Archmandrite Leonard Faris, pastor of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Lowell — a parish with 150 families comprised mostly of Middle Eastern faction.

"Though we have no Armenian blood in our family, we have many Armenian friends," he pointed out. "I still remember my prayers in Armenian and can celebrate the Soorp Badarak with one of the Armenian priests."

His closest friend was the late Rev. Vartan Kessabian. The two often visited one another and sermonized in each other's churches.

"I have been inspired by His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan and His Grace Anoushavan Tanielian," he noted. "We're all spiritual brothers in Christ, committed to perpetuating our faith and heritage. I often think back to those earlier days and how they influenced my life."

Hearing Karen Guzelian sing the Badarak on Sunday mornings at St. Gregory Church in North Andover, one would never know she was of Greek ancestry (Plakas) without an ounce of Armenian blood. She married an Armenian husband named Charles. You see her regularly. He seldom appears.

The two children became woven into the heritage, thanks to her. Michael was ordained as an acolyte. Both he and sister Krista were part of the Armenian/Sunday School. Krista also sang in the



Rev. Fr. Leonard Faris got his upbringing inside an Armenian Church before turning to the priesthood.

"

choir before college.

Karen served four years as a trustee member and taught Sunday school for many years.

"My husband's glad to see his children involved with the heritage," she brought out. "The kids needed another influence in their lives and they found it inside an Armenian Church."

At one point, every major executive post inside St. Gregory Church was assumed by an "odar." Trustees. Men's Club. Ladies Guild. Bingo chairman when it existed.

Today there's a scholarship in memory of two individuals — David Brundage and Hector Bizios — both of whom wed Armenians. Hector Bizios was indispensable with the Bingo mission, helping to raise thousands of dollars to nurture the upkeep.

As for Brundage, nobody sold more Prelacy raffle tickets.

"The fact I'm not Armenian has nothing to do with my Christian spirit and love of God," he once proclaimed.

Veteran's Day: Khachadourian Pays it Forward

VETERAN, from page 4

it to a museum, but for now, the men like to see it and talk about our time in Vietnam."

Khachadourian credits his wife, Terry Khachadourian, with helping to find peace with the PTSD that he and so many of his fellow servicemen suffer from. "Terry is a nurse and she could see the suffering in me," said Harry Khachadourian. "I sought help from the VA and now I am helping others." Helping others is therapeutic for a man who said that there are things that veterans can never forget. "Talking to someone about it really helps," he explained. Terry Khachadourian said she sees her husband as an everyday hero who gives selflessly. "I wanted people to see what he does for his fellow veterans," she said. "Honoring his commitment is important to me."

Harry Khachadourian regularly spends time with veterans at retirement facilities and volunteers at Evercare, a hospice program. He said he knows firsthand how helpful it is to have someone listen to his own stories and this is just one more way that he can give back to the country he loves. Family friend, Cyndi Troutman, said, "The fact that Harry is active with the veterans in hospice care speaks volumes about his commitment to his country. He takes it very seriously."

His advice to students who are considering

the military includes taking the time to visit veterans and learn from their experiences. "It would mean the world to these guys if some of the JROTC students would come listen to their stories," said Harry Khachadourian. "Both would benefit because these veterans have so much to offer future soldiers."

PFC Austin Smith of the Grayson High School JROTC agreed with Khachadourian. "In my opinion, spending time with veterans prepares us with a background you can't get from a book," said Smith. "I find their stories very interesting and am looking forward to the next time we visit the wounded veterans." Smith and his fellow JROTC students have plans to serve veterans by visiting them and showing their respects for the sacrifices they have made for their country.

For Khachadourian, continuing to serve the country he loves is his way of showing gratitude for finding a safe place to grow up. "This country means everything to me," he said. "Working with veterans is as important to me as it is to them." Making a difference, veteran to veteran, is the way Harry Khachadourian said he finds peace with the memories of being a child of war and of being a soldier. Gathering with his fellow veterans is a continual gift that he both gives and receives. Cherishing the US as his home is the force that drives his service.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

November Dance to Help Mer Doon Continue Its Mission to Change Girls' Lives in Armenia

By Noushig Hovhannesian

WATERTOWN and PHILADELPHIA — Tigranouhi Karapetyan, co-founder and president of Our Home - Mer Doon in Echmiadzin, Armenia recently sat down for an interview, to speak about Mer Doon's unparalleled mission. This writer had written about Mer Doon a few years ago upon return from a two-month service trip to Armenia. A visitor had the chance to witness, firsthand, the mission of Mer Doon and the incredible value it creates in the lives of those who are accepted into the organization. It was easy to see Mer Doon's dedication, commitment, compassion, and the change these principles have the power to create, in light of so much hardship in the country.

Mer Doon is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that houses and provides a supportive family environment for orphaned Armenian young women who have aged out of state-funded orphanages. It is currently providing housing for 10 young women, each furthering their education and pursuing a useful skill or vocation. The young women also receive a religious education, learn French, Russian and English in-house, and are trained by the staff in personal and social skills. It is regrettable to report that most emancipated orphans end up living on the streets, minimally educated and unskilled, and often fall prey to lowly opportunists who take ownership over them and exploit them in the worst ways imaginable.

Mer Doon was founded on the premise of providing a loving home environment to young women where they are supported in a manner in which not only are their basic needs met, but the proper development of their character is held supreme and their education is made a priority.

Founded in 2005, Co-Founders Karapetyan and US Board Member Julie Ashekian have seen the fulfillment of Mer Doon's mission many times over with each young woman who has become self-sufficient, earned a college degree and married and created a family of her own. Karapetyan, who lives in Echmiadzin with her husband and two children, is treated as a surrogate mother to each of the young women, even by the Echmiadzin community at large. As she speaks of Mer Doon, in her gentle tone one can sense her deep love for the young women of Mer Doon and her commitment to the fulfillment of Mer Doon's mission. Ashekian lives in Kensington, Conn., with her husband, Clement Ashekian, who is a fellow board member. She is an adored grandmother to the young women and is particularly committed to the women's education. Every young woman who is admitted into the organization must be serious about her education.

Mer Doon's reputation has moved many accomplished Armenians to take part in its mission including singers Nune Yesayan and Sirusho, producer Alexander (Sasha) Mirzakhanyan, Armenian Social Minister Lala Ghazaryan, and First Lady of Armenia Rita Sargsisyan, who has visited Mer



The mayor of Echmiadzin, Karen Grigoryan, is flanked by some of the young women of Mer Doon and their friends.

Doon on many occasions. The mayor of Echmiadzin, Karen Grigoryan, makes frequent, informal visits to Mer Doon and is very supportive of the organization. He has attended several of the weddings, traveling for hours to be in attendance for the daylong affairs. On a recent occasion, when during the ceremony the minister asked that the father of the bride stand, Grigoryan graciously took on the role.

Being an orphan in Armenia carries an unfortunate stigma and the opportunity for a fulfilling marriage for young orphan women is scarce. Mer Doon's deep commitment to the proper fostering of the young women has reversed, wholly and entirely, the opportunities that are available to them, both in their independence and in marriage. Karapetyan, as the mother figure in the lives of the young women, is asked to accept the plea for a hand in marriage. When a young man expresses interest in one of Mer Doon's young women, not only must he be accepted by Karapetyan, but his family also is introduced to her before the young woman is permitted to date. Mer Doon weddings are a town-wide celebration in Echmiadzin, anticipated by the community. Because Mer Doon's funds are limit-

ed, weddings are funded by donors and supporters. The wedding day is designed to be a very special occasion for the bride, often specifically themed and aligned with her interests, such as Mariam Pipoyan's wedding this summer who had a soccer-themed celebration. Merchants in the community donate their services — from beauty services, gifts, pastries and celebrities' musical talents and appearances.

In *Yerevan Magazine's* May/June 2013 issue, Mer Doon was highlighted as "A True Inspiration." The writer noted, "Those who had the pleasure of visiting, it is an experience they never forget and the girls leave an indelible mark in their minds."

On Saturday, November 16, Mer Doon will host a second annual dance at St. James' Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center in Watertown, MA and will be featuring music by John Berberian, Bob Mougamian, Mal Barsamian and Bruce Gigarjian. All are invited to attend, but seating is limited, so please make reservation quickly.

More information for reservations can be found at <http://www.mer-doon.com>.

A Child's Vigilant Fight against Cancer

By Tom Vartabedian

CRANSTON, R.I. — On the surface, Ani Ayanyan is like most 9-year-old girls. Beautiful. Kind. Intelligent.

She follows the Boston sports teams and does very well in her Grade 4 classes at the Oaklawn School. It is okay if she prefers gym over other classes. Art and writing are in close pursuit, though.

Kids around the playground call her "Sporty Spice" because she is so athletic. It is easy to see why. She plays ice hockey, soccer, baseball, basketball, tennis and swims. She also bowls better than most her age and looks forward to her role with Armenian Scouts at Sts. Vartanantz Church.

"I'm always joking with her that with a closet full of clothes, she somehow always ends up wearing her sporty team jerseys," said her mom, Deanna.

This year, she was set to play flag football when fate intervened. The youngster was diagnosed with cancer and is waging the biggest fight of her life.

"We will fight this with everything we have and continue keeping the faith every step of the way. Ani is a fighter," her mother said.

Just recently, the child went through a 12-hour surgery to remove a grapefruit-sized tumor near her brain.

"I call her my warrior," said her mom. "She talks so freely about her ordeal. Ani even Googled some information and found out that eating cherries causes cancer cells to commit suicide. So we're on the hunt to find cherries in November."

It all happened so quickly. Two weeks into the school year, she woke up vomiting with a terrible headache. After waking from a nap, her left eye became visibly larger than the right. A call was played immediately to her pediatrician.

"At first, I thought maybe it was a thyroid condition, something like Graves disease," her mom said. "Ani had passed all her neurological tests. Maybe she was getting migraines since they're hereditary in our family."

An MRI revealed a "monster" tumor causing a partial blockage around both optic nerves, invading the nasal cavity and eye socket. Thankfully, the disease is 100 percent treatable.

The surgery took place in mid-October. Treatments will begin over the next week with chemotherapy and proton radiation five times a week for six weeks at Massachusetts General Hospital.

A month's hiatus will follow, then more chemo will be administered as needed. The family is prepared to face the ordeal with a great deal of faith and fortitude.

"I lost my mom to a rare form of stomach can-

cer eight years ago," said Deanna Ayanyan. "The side effects from treatment are so vivid in my mind. I'm just sickened at the thought that my innocent 9-year-old girl who is so full of energy is going to face such a trauma in her life. Both my children have been very positive through this."

The day she was discharged, Ani Ayanyan had one remark for her surgeon and it had nothing to do with the procedure she had just faced. Instead, it was about Elvis Presley.

"Do you like Elvis?" she asked the doctor.

"Yes," he replied.

In her best Elvis voice, she sang out a "thank you" to the man who had just saved her life. A high-five salute followed.

"It was just one of those Ani moments that puts a smile on my face and gives me the courage and strength to continue with my positive outlook for a great prognosis," said Deanna Ayanyan. "It is very therapeutic for me to share this with others."

Ani wanted her dad to count the stitches in her head — there were 75. Her biggest concern when told about the effects of chemotherapy was the type of wig she would be wearing. With typical moxie, she chose one of singer Rihanna's hairstyles.

Her mother said, "I told her I have a new superhero and her name is 'Ani Ayanyan' and she's a warrior."

The young fighter just giggled and replied,



Ani Ayanyan refuses to give in or let obstacles stand in her way.

"Mom. I'm no superhero. I can't fly!"

A benefit called Ani's Angels is planned for later this month at PJ's Pub in Johnston. Those wishing to help with her medical expenses can send a check payable to Deanna Ayanyan, 18 Briar Hill Drive, Cranston, RI 02912.



COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Stephen's Elementary School Celebrates Armenian Cultural Day

WATERTOWN – For the 14th consecutive year, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) held Armenian Cultural Day celebrations on its campus at the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center in the fall.

The event this year, which took place on October 24, gathered students, teachers, administrators and student-families to commemorate the rich cultural heritage shared by Armenians around the world.

The day began with a presentation on Komitas by two guest musicians, Ara Sarkissian and Martin Haroutunian. The two played a medley of traditional Armenian melodies,

including Gakavig, Antsrevn Yegav, Keleh Keleh and Yeranki. The performance was followed by a presentation by the Grade-5 students – in both Armenian and English – about the Armenian language, religion and history.

Next in the program was a talent show featuring the musical gifts of several SSAES students from the third through fifth grades.

"It was heartwarming to see the children radiate such pride in their Armenian culture and heritage," noted Tanya Haserjian, an SSAES parent who has two children at the school.

Following the student performances, Diana Adamyan, a 13-year-old violinist from Armenia,



Students in Grade 3 present dioramas of Armenian tradition.



Students attended the Armenian Cultural Day celebration.



Students in Grade 2 pose in front of their family trees.

took to the stage and charmed the audience with a phenomenal performance which included Keler Tsoler and Groong from Komitas as well as several other pieces. The event concluded with a display of SSAES students' culturally-based projects, which ranged from dioramas and paintings depicting traditional Armenian scenes to family trees.

Said teacher Morgan Grunwald, "As a new teacher at the school, I am not only enjoying learning more about Armenian culture but am encouraged to see that my third-grade students are proud and eager to share their heritage with me."

SSAES was founded in 1984. The school has distinguished itself with its bilingual cur-

riculum, academic strength, devoted staff and low student-to-teacher ratio. SSAES is the only Armenian day school to be fully accredited by the Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE), the accrediting body for independent elementary schools. AISNE has commended the school for "creating an environment where all the students love to read and appear committed to academic excellence" and for recruiting a talented and dedicated staff. The AISNE accreditation puts St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School academically on par with other prestigious private schools in the region. To learn more about SSAES, visit www.ssaes.org.

Tekeyan Shows Appreciation to Armenia Teachers by Distributing Aid

TEACHERS, from page 1

The Sponsor A Teacher project, which is implemented by the TCA, serves to help the teachers. It was established in 2000 and since then, every year, all the schools in Armenia and Artsakh named after the prince of Armenian poets, Vahan Tekeyan, the namesake of the organization, receive financial help.

On September 20, the members of Yerevan TCA visited the No. 92 school to hand the checks to each teacher and staff member. Each teacher received \$130 and staff members \$30.



From left, Gayane Muratyan, Tekeyan School No. 92 Principal Tsovinar Mardanyan, Edmond Azadian and Hagop Minassian

Each year this amount is handled to teachers in the presence of members of committee and members of Tekeyan from US and Canada. This year Azadian and Hagop Minassian from Detroit visited the schools and the classes named by Ared Khntirian and the late editor Hagop Boghossian as well as the library which was renovated by the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

The last time that Minassian had visited the school was in 2001. He says that through the years the school has changed a lot, but unfortunately the students' number has decreased. Therefore, he said, this donation for teachers is encouraging, especially for the heroic job that they are doing, although they believe also that the fund raising process is not easy. Azadian said, "If we say to people that we are building a church, they immediately donate money. If we say we are building a second church, they do give a second time without even asking if we are in need of that church. But when we ask for the sake of helping a teacher who is not well paid, unfortunately the fund raising will not be smooth, but rather difficult."

– Inga Bedrosian

AIWA Chicago Holds Its Inaugural Cocktail Party Featuring Carrie Nahabedian

CHICAGO – The newly established Chicago Affiliate of the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) held its inaugural cocktail party on a pleasant Monday evening on October 28th. Over fifty members and guests met at the acclaimed NAHA Restaurant, located at 500 N. Clark St.

The keynote speaker was the award-winning chef, Carrie Nahabedian, who shared her success story, emphasizing the importance of love in everything one undertakes.

Over artfully created hors d'oeuvres and wine, AIWA members and event attendees networked, inspired and met new friends.

Sonya Doumanian, AIWA Life Member, is one of the founders of AIWA Chicago Affiliate. She was instrumental in bringing the six-member interim committee together, which was subsequently approved by the Boston headquarters to become the AIWA Chicago Board. Doumanian told the story behind the formation of the chapter and the enthusiasm the interim committee had in establishing AIWA in Chicago.

The Very Rev. Aren Jebejian, the pastor of St.

Gregory the Illuminator Church in Chicago, blessed the food and the initiative.

The evening continued with the presentation of the charter and the introduction of the board members by the President of AIWA Chicago Veronika Moroian. The current board includes: Moroian, president; Tamar Wasoian, vice president; Greta Doumanian-Harley, secretary; Hourri Gueyikian, treasurer; Ruzanna Tantushyan, corresponding secretary and Sonya Doumanian adviser/liaison.

In addition to raising awareness about the organization, the program helped those attending remember their Armenian roots and express their dedication to help women across the globe.

Among the friends of the organization who were present on October 28 were Ann M. Lousin, professor of law at the John Marshall Law School and one of the first members of AIWA; Leona Mirza, professor of mathematics education at North Park University, who became an AIWA Life Member at the Chicago's inaugural event at NAHA and Missak Galian, editor of *Parev Monthly*.



Arts & Living

Gamavor Production Keeps Papazian-Sahagian Fortified

By Tom Vartabedian

WATERTOWN – After two hit theatrical productions, what does one do for an encore?

If you're Hourig Papazian-Sahagian, you keep the wheels turning.

The 87-year-old executive producer/director is relentless in her pursuit to tell the Armenian story through stage work, music and a bit of sass.

It's not always easy working with a group of amateurs, but she's managed to turn the diamond in her rough into a sparkling jewel with an ensemble that calls itself The Way We Were.

Her latest performance of "The Hye Legion – the Gamavor Story," on November 10 at St. Stephen's Church was played to a standing ovation.

The event was sponsored by the Ladies Guild, which left no stone unturned with a reception that followed. More than 100 attended the 75-minute musical and there wasn't a passive moment in the crowd.

When asked how many had Gamavors (Legionnaires) inside their family, half the audience stood to its feet wearing star medallions made especially for the occasion.

"The bus trip from New Jersey was just as spirited as the production," she reported. "We have three generations tightly woven together and they collaborate very well."

The Watertown appearance of Gamavor marked the fifth for this 35-member ensemble



Executive Producer/Director Hourig Papazian-Sahagian is all smiles after her production of "The Gamavor Story" at St. Stephen's Church Nov. 10.

with previous New England stops at North Andover and Providence, RI.

Prior to this, the group enjoyed rave reviews with "Hello Ellis Island," a story also set to music on the immigration process following the Genocide. This, too, hit home with its libretto.

If anything, Papazian-Sahagian is mulling a third script – this one having to do with the melting pot and assimilation. Although still in its inception phase, the playwright feels folks will respond to it, particularly inside the American mainstream.

"Who hasn't gone through it?" she reflects. "We've all tried to keep our kids ethnically sound and adherent to their roots. It could be the perfect scenario for another show. I'm giving that some thought."

So excited was the octogenarian after the show, she barely had a moment to enjoy her chore and coffee. People approached her to see PLAY, page 12



From left, Father Garabed Kochakian, Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian

Monsignor Andon Atamian's Book Feted In Detroit

DETROIT – On Wednesday, October 23, the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School, the Cultural Society of Armenians from Istanbul (CSAI) and the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Detroit jointly organized a book launch ceremony honoring Monsignor Andon Atamian, pastor of St. Vartan Armenian Catholic Church, on the occasion of the publication of his book, *Gaydz yev Ambrob*.

A capacity audience attended, among them guests from Montreal and Toronto.

Dr. Nadya Sarafian served as the emcee. Anahid Toumajan read excerpts from the book, while Edmond Y. Azadian made an in-depth presentation of the book, both in Armenian and in English.

In his comments, Azadian said that Atamian's book, at 254 pages, is titled *Lightening and Thunder*. Although it is a threatening title, he said, the content is most soothing and comforting because its lightening serves only to illuminate the human soul and the thunder dispatches his prayers to the Almighty. It is a book see DETROIT, page 11



Edmond Azadian at the lectern.



Guests and speakers, including Monsignor Atamian, fourth from right.

David of Sassoun Volume To Launch at Fresno State

FRESNO – Dr. Vida Samiian, dean of the College of Arts & Humanities, will give the opening remarks at a formal book-launching of the new volume, *David of Sassoun: Critical Essays on the Armenian Epic*, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 21 in the Industrial Technology Building Auditorium, Room 101, on the Fresno State campus.

David of Sassoun is the fourth volume in the Armenian Series of the press at California State University, Fresno, established by the Armenian Studies Program and funded by the M. Victoria Karagozian Kazan and Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan Endowment. The publication of this volume was also made possible through a grant from the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund.

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Barlow Der Mugrdchian, co-editor of *David of Sassoun* with Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, will discuss the history behind the epic and why the discovery of a new variant in California became so important. Der Mugrdchian will outline how the book was conceived and the significance of the articles by the contributing scholars.

Dr. Sergio La Porta, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State, will give concluding remarks for the evening.

David of Sassoun is a collection of essays by the world's foremost scholars on the great oral epic of Armenia, including Charles Dowsett, Kouymjian, Aram Ter-Ghevondian, Earl R. Anderson, Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, Frédéric Feydit, Arpiné Khatchadourian, Aram Tolegian, Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, Vahé Oshagan and includes an original poem on David by Ashough Hovnani.

The epic poem survived until the 1970s orally, passed on, generation after generation, for more than a thousand years by anonymous village bards. Today it is recognized as the Armenian epic with the Armenian culture encompassed in its pages.

The lecture is free and open to the public. Copies of the book will be on sale.

For more information on the lecture contact the Armenian Studies Program.

Hamazkayin Eastern US Seeks Submissions for Annual Tölölyan Prize in Literature

WATERTOWN – The Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of Eastern US seeks submissions for the second annual Minas and Kohar Tölölyan Prize in Contemporary Literature.

Named after one of the major Armenian literary critics of the second half of the 20th century and his wife, a teacher of literature for decades, the prize will recognize work by writers in North America. Poetry, short stories, novels and drama are all welcome, as are works of creative non-fiction. There will also be a financial award of \$1,500 each for the Armenian and English language awards.

The jury will consist of Dr. Sima Aprahamian (Montreal), Dr. Vartan Matiossian (New York/New Jersey), Gourgen Arzoumanian (California), Yervant Kotchounian (California) and Prof. Khachig Tölölyan (Connecticut).

The prizes will be announced at Hamazkayin's Annual Pan Gathering in May 2014.

All submissions must be sent electronically to tololyan_award@hamazkayin-usa.org as a PDF file (highly encouraged) or in hard copy format to Hamazkayin Tololyan Prize Committee at 80 Bigelow Ave, Watertown, MA 02472, by January 31, 2014. All submissions must be accompanied by the Tololyan Prize Application found online at <http://bit.ly/167vSsM>.



ARTS & LIVING

Art Fair in Istanbul Showcases Works by Armenian Artists

ISTANBUL (Public Radio of Armenia) – Since 2010, art fair Contemporary Istanbul has been offering a special section called “Art from Armenia.” Although there are currently no diplomatic ties between Turkey and Armenia, there is a growing cultural relationship which promises a brand new future for both countries. With the aim of discovering regional art and gathering Armenian artists and Turkish art lovers, “Art from Armenia” has hosted many Armenian painters in Istanbul over the past three years, *Today’s Zaman* reports.

This year’s “Art from Armenia” selection, on display until Sunday at the IstanbulCongressCenter, features paintings and sculptures by six Armenian artists:



Art fair in Istanbul featuring Armenian artists

Daron Mouradian, Vahram Davtian, Emil Kazaz, Armen Gevorgian, Ara Mikaelian and Ruben Grigorian.

Aram Sargsyan, the curator of the exhibition in 2011, has contributed to the exhibition this year as well. According to Sargsyan, people in Istanbul have respect for art. “I have seen many paintings on the walls of restaurants and they were high standard paintings. So in Istanbul, you do not have to go to a museum, you are exposed to art everywhere.”

Mentioning the history of art in Armenia, Sargsyan is very proud of the young generation artists who are contributing to the development of traditional Armenian art. Noting that Armenia has many talented artists, Sargsyan said the Armenian Art

Association alone currently has around 1,200 members. “I would like to contribute to this exhibition with many other Armenian artists in the coming years,” he added.

This year, artist Mouradian is one of the fair’s special guests from Armenia. His paintings offer a combination of themes from mythological tales from the East and the West. Based on the Bible and mythology, his world of fantasies tells the viewers a story they’ve never heard before.

When asked about the stories in his paintings, Mouradian said his only story was the painting and the rest was up to art lovers. “I only paint. And people who are looking at my paintings read the story they see there. It is up to their imagination,” he added.

This is Mouradian’s second visit to Istanbul in nine years. However, he said he was not able to see any art in Istanbul during his first visit, in 2004. His response tells a lot about the cultural relationship between Armenia and Turkey. Starting from no relationship, now we can imagine a closer dialogue.

Onno Ayvaz, a collector and the coordinator of the exhibition, was the person who made this exhibition possible.

He recalls: “A friend of mine, who is an antiquarian, invited several artists from Armenia to showcase their work in Contemporary Istanbul. But they did not accept his invitation. He called me at the last minute, asking for help. So, four years ago, I contributed to the exhibition with selected works by Armenian artists from my own collection.”

Ayvaz was surprised by connoisseurs’ interest in the first “Art from Armenia.” He was asked to contribute in the following years as well. Ayvaz’s contribution and the huge interest paved the way for “Art from Armenia” to become a staple on the fair’s program.

Ayvaz says this exhibition helps strengthen the relationship between the two countries: “Art is a very meaningful way to communicate. Armenians and Turks, people who had lived together for hundreds of years, have been separated for the past 100 years. This is how I see this situation. And you can feel the [similarity] in culture, in perception. Here [in this art fair] it is like we were never separated from each other.”

However, Ayvaz is troubled by bureaucratic difficulties arising from the lack of diplomatic relationships between the two countries. All the paintings in the exhibition are from his private collection because it is currently not possible to import paintings from Armenia. Those who want to do so have to obtain special permission from the Turkish government to transfer art work from Armenia.

“These bureaucratic processes are very exhausting. Seemingly, you can get that permission, but bureaucrats are very hesitant to help because there are no diplomatic ties between the two countries,” he said. “Nevertheless, we’ll keep trying and, who knows, maybe next year we can really bring works of art from Armenia to Contemporary Istanbul,” he said.

Monsignor Andon Atamian’s Book Feted in Detroit

DETROIT, from page 10

penned by an inspired orator to inspire his readership, he added.

The book is divided into three sections. In the first section the author delves into the complex

misery of the Armenian people, touching almost all subjects: Mesrob Mashtots – creation of the alphabet; the Genocide; the resurrection of the independent republic; continued denial of the genocide by Turkey, etc.

The second part covers moralistic and religious topics: human condition, dilemmas in life and man’s relations with his creator.

Atamian never contrasts his devotion to his creator with his commitment to his Armenian heritage.

The writer never pays lip service to moral values; he implements them in his daily life and he partakes them with the youth. His message is extremely convincing because he is sincere and he speaks from the heart, according to Azadian.

The last section of the book is dedicated to Iraq, once was a prosperous country which has since been reduced to ashes. Said Azadian, “he

Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2013



Since its inception in 2001, TCA’s ‘Sponsor a Teacher’ program has raised over \$563,000 and reached out to 4,440 teachers and school workers in Armenia and Karabagh.



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

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

Name _____

Address _____

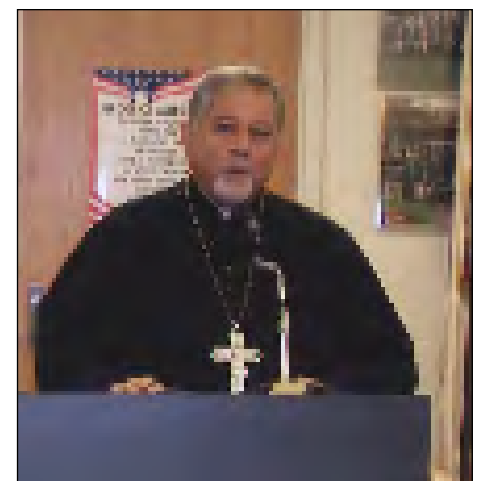
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Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association – Memo: Sponsor a Teacher 2013
Mail your check with this form to:

TCA Sponsor a Teacher
5326 Valverde, Houston, TX 77056

Your donation is Tax Deductible.



Father Atamian at lectern

communicates with the remnants of the Armenian community decimated and tormented, with their churches destroyed, their lives scattered.”

He noted, “All in all, it is an inspirational book by an inspired pastor, addressed to the readers who wish to live morally healthy lives.”

Atamian gave the concluding remarks, which were very emotional. He thanked the speaker, the program participants and the enthusiastic audience. Then the clergy joined the author to baptize the book in wine. Following the *Kinetson*, the women of the CSAI presented a buffet.



ARTS & LIVING

Ara Hagopian's Artwork Selected For Lowell Exhibition

LOWELL, Mass. — “Jazz Music,” an abstract tropical fish drawing by Wakefield native Ara Hagopian was one of two of his works selected by the Brush Art Gallery for inclusion in its current exhibition, In Cold Blood: Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish. The show is juried by Carel Brest van Kempen, whose work has been exhibited worldwide.

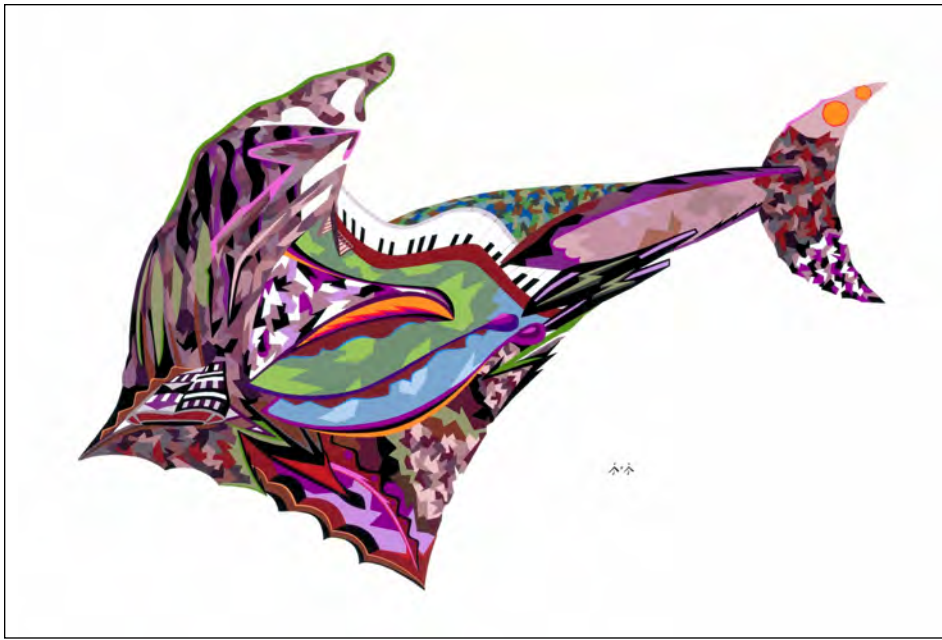
Hagopian's “Jazz Music,” was published along with its origins story in a collection of his works this summer, titled, What Happened to Vicky Lee? A Collection of Stories, available at vickyleethebook.com. The book features 25 of Hagopian's stories with illustrations.

“When I heard music by jazz greats Freddy Hubbard and Stanley Clark, I was inspired to

draw an abstract fish, with electric lines and jagged patterns,” Hagopian said. “New music is like a hidden staircase in an old, familiar house and the sounds transform into pictures on the newly-revealed walls. ‘Jazz Music’ is one of those pictures,” he added.

Hagopian will be discussing his art and his book on the “Jordan Rich Show,” WBZ NewsRadio 1030, on November 23 at midnight. The exhibition runs through December 7 at the Brush Gallery, 256 Market St.

Hagopian, 48, is a Massachusetts artist, writer and photographer. His pen-and-ink drawing “The Magnificent Recovery” was selected by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for their 2008 summer art auction.



“Jazz Music” by Ara Hagopian

House Members Urge White House to Release Armenian Orphan Rug for Display

RUG, from page 1

Armenian community,” Schiff explained. “The rug is not only a symbol of the resilience of the Armenian people through their darkest days, it also serves as a tangible expression of the inherent truth that not only were 1.5 million people killed in the first genocide of the 20th Century, but that the American government was a central player in efforts to call attention to the plight of the Armenian people and provide relief to survivors.”

In recent weeks, news reports surfaced alleging that the White House succumbed to pressure from the Turkish government and purposely blocked a planned December exhibition of the carpet at the Smithsonian Institution.

The White House issued a statement saying that, “The Ghazir rug is a reminder of the close relationship between the peoples of Armenia and the United States. We regret that it is not possible to loan it out at this time.”

The White House did not offer an explanation as to what, or who, was preventing the release of the rug.

Meanwhile, the Assembly has been in close contact with key Administration officials urging that the rug be prominently displayed, not only at the Smithsonian, but also at the White House and made available for display in the US Capitol.

“I am deeply moved by this action,” Dr. Hagop Martin Deranian, author of the book Calvin Coolidge and the Armenian Orphan Rug, told the Assembly. “This issue has come to light after many years of hard work. We are speaking on behalf of the weavers and what they would want us to do. I am hopeful that this momentum will continue and that the rug will soon be available for public viewing.”

In 1925, Dr. John H. Finley, editor-in-chief of the New York Times and vice-chairman of the congressionally-chartered Near East Relief organization presented a rug made by orphans of the Armenian Genocide to Coolidge. The rug was made in appreciation of America's generosity in aiding the survivors of the Armenian Genocide. It was previously displayed at the White House in 1984 and 1995, but not since, an issue which the Assembly has raised with successive Administrations.

For more than a decade, the Assembly has called on the White House and the State Department to facilitate the release of the Armenian Orphan Rug for public display. “The Armenian Assembly, once again, calls on the White House to release the Ghazir rug,” stated Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. “It is a piece of American history and it belongs to the American people,” stated Ardouny.

Gamavor Production Keeps Papazian-Sahagian Fortified

PLAY, from page 10

offer their appreciation. Tiring as it was from playing the keyboard and directing her cast, she greeted one and all with her usual charm.

“Judging by the emotional reaction of Gamavor relatives in attendance during all our shows, it's safe to say that if Gamavor veterans were alive today, they would take pride in the knowledge that they have finally emerged from the faded pages of forgotten history,” she added.

Rev. Antranig Baljian welcomed the gathering to his church, calling the Gamavors an inte-

gral part of Armenia's history and the catalyst behind its liberation movement during World War I.

“It was a very emotional time for those living in the Diaspora to send their loved ones off to war in the homeland,” he said. “The courage and humanity of these unsung heroes epitomizes our strength and vitality as a nation serving God.”

Special thanks went to the Guild and Sona Aslanian for their efforts in bringing the troupe to Watertown.

Members and Friends of the
Detroit Chapter
Tekeyan Cultural Association
invite you to join us as we honor

Nora Azadian

for her tireless work on behalf of the
Tekeyan Cultural Association
and the preservation of
our rich Armenian heritage

Cocktails, Mezza, Memories & Fun
Sunday, November 24th at 5 pm

at the Belian Art Center
5980 Rochester Road, Troy
(on Rochester Road at Square Lake)
RSVP to Hagop Alexanian
at 248-334-3636

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Մեր Մկրտչեան Թատրախումբ
Tekeyan Cultural Association ~ Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group

Join us at the TCA Mher Megerdchian
Theatrical Group Cast Party to celebrate

“Perils of Politeness”

&

**The 15th Anniversary of the
Theatrical Group**

Sunday, November 24, 2013 at 7:30 pm
St. Thomas Armenian Apostolic Church
East Clinton Ave. & Rt. 9W
Tenafly, NJ 07670

\$40 Donation
BYOB

For information/tickets please call Marie Zokian 201-745-8850



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CONNECTICUT

NOVEMBER 23- Holiday Fair 10-3pm, Holy Resurrection Armenian Church, 1910 Stanley Street, New Britain. Featuring Armenian food & pastries, Vendors for holiday shopping, Kitchen Cafe, Santa appearance from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Admission is free. For more info, contact the church office at 860-223-7875.

MASSACHUSETTS

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.

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.

NOVEMBER 16 – 50th anniversary celebration of the Lowell Armenian Relief Society Center, 6:30 p.m., 142 Liberty St., Lowell, MA. Appetizers, cocktails, music. Free admission, donations welcomed. Reservations by Nov. 9, please call either Sona Gevorkian, (781) 275-8875, or Sossy Jeknavorian, (978) 256-2538.

NOVEMBER 17 – "The Survival of Empathy: Zabel Yessayan and Post-Genocidal Armenian Literature," presentation by Columbia University Professor Nanor Kebranian. 2 p.m., Armenian Cultural Foundation, Arlington. Sponsored by the Armenian International Women's Association, with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and the Armenian Cultural Foundation.

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; remember-



The Knights of Vartan, Arshavir Lodge No. 2, and the Daughters of Vartan Santoukht Otyag No. 5, will host a lecture and dinner at the Church Hall of the Armenian Church of the Saviour, 87 Salisbury St., Worcester on November 25, at 6 p.m. Guest speaker Joseph Dagdigian will discuss and show photographs of rarely-seen sites taken during his trip to Armenia. Reservations at 774-261-0108.

ing the 25th anniversary of the earthquake in Armenia; soloist Nina Hovsepien, accompanied by Mary Barooshian; donation, \$20 adults, \$10 students.

NOVEMBER 22 and 23 – Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church of Chelmsford Annual Bazaar, 10 a.m.- 8 p.m., 180 Old Westford Road, Exit 32 off Route 3, Drum Hill Rotary. Event will feature lunch and dinner served from 12

noon to 7 p.m. Takeout available. Homemade Armenian food with a wide variety of dry goods, jewelry, white elephant tables, arts and crafts. Come bring the children, eat, play games, browse and meet old friends and new ones.

NOVEMBER 25 – Lecture and dinner by the Knights Of Vartan Arshavir Lodge No. 2 and Daughters Of Vartan Santoukht Otyag No. 5, 6 p.m., Church Hall of the Armenian Church Of Our Saviour, 87 Salisbury St., Worcester. Guest Speaker Joseph Dagdigian will discuss and show photographs of rarely seen sites taken during his trip to Armenia: "Exploring The Hidden Armenia." A roast beef dinner catered by Ron Pahigian is \$15 per person. Reservations at 774-261-0108.

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 7 – St. Asdvadzadzin Armenian Church of Whitinsville Annual Bazaar, hosted at the Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church, 25 Cross St., 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; dinner served from 11:30 a.m. onward and ample parking available.

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.

MICHIGAN

NOVEMBER 24 – Members and friends of Detroit Tekeyan Cultural Association honor the retiring chairman of the TCA CHAPTER, Nora Azadian, 5 p.m., Belian Art Center, Troy.

NEW YORK

DECEMBER 7 – The Sixth Annual AGBU Performing Artists in Concert, 8 p.m., Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, 154 West 57th St., presented by the AGBU New York Special Events Committee to benefit its performing arts programs in commemoration of the 1998 earthquake in Armenia. Under the direction of violinist Nazig Tchakarian, the event will feature arts fellows from Bulgaria, France, Mexico and the US. Tickets: \$35, \$65, for more info, contact 212-319-6383.

Canadian Museum for Human Rights and Armenian Genocide Museum Institute Sign Memo of Understanding

MUSEUM, from page 1

International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute of Canada) - a Canadian organization which advances scholarship and public awareness relating to issues of universal human rights, genocide, and diaspora-homeland relations. Representatives of the IIGHS officially witnessed the signing and will serve an ongoing role as liaison and facilitators.

"The Armenian Genocide is an important human rights story," said Demoyan. "The concept of crimes against humanity was developed in response to this horrific series of violations against the Armenian people. The intent of the Ottoman Turkish government to annihilate its Armenian citizens is not only a crime against humanity, but also genocide. The denial of the genocide by the inheritors of the perpetrator state and others is itself a violation of the human rights of the survivors and their descendants. This partnership will help bring the story of the Armenian Genocide to a wider audience, to the benefit of generations to come."

During and after the First World War, the

leaders of the Ottoman Empire (the forerunner of the modern-day Republic of Turkey) made a brutal attempt to destroy the empire's entire Armenian population, targeting them on ethnic and religious grounds, along with other Christian subjects-the Assyrians and Greeks. The Genocide began in 1915 with the execution of Armenian leaders. Then authorities rounded up Armenian men, women and children. The victims were massacred or forced on death marches through the desert. Many died of starvation. The perpetrators tried to hide these mass killings from the world.

The first international reaction to the Genocide resulted in a joint statement by

France, Russia and Great Britain, in May 1915, where the Ottoman Empire atrocities directed against the Armenian people was defined as "new crimes against humanity and civilization." In 2004, the Canadian House of Commons passed a resolution to recognize this genocide.

"By raising awareness of the Armenian Genocide, we hope to remind people of the importance of breaking the silence on human rights violations. We look forward to working with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights on this goal," said Demoyan.

One of the audience, Jack Garabed, a Manitoban descendant of an Armenian Genocide survivor, came to see this historic partnership and shared the story of his father, Garabedi Haroutounian. He spoke of his grandfather being taken away one night and murdered. They took his father away and placed him in an orphanage. He believes his Grandmother escaped into Egypt with some of the younger children. His father was forced to change religion. The Salvation Army arranged to have three children in the orphanage, including his father, transported to Canada. Haroutounian left the other two boys in Montreal and continued on to Manitoba. He was fascinated by the train ride, and wanted to extend it as far as he could. The train brought him to Winnipeg, and from there he was placed with farmers in the Killarney area.

The CMHR is the first museum in the world solely dedicated to the evolution, celebration and future of human rights. It is the first national museum in Canada to be built outside the National Capital Region.

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COMMENTARY

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COMMENTARY

Profusion of Medals: Compensation or Compromise?

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The Russian novelist Anton Chekhov once wrote a satirical short story about the significance of medals in 19th-century Russian society. The story dwells on the predicament of a poor teacher who is invited to a dinner party in high society circles. To prove that he deserves the honor, he decides to borrow a medal from a friend. Upon arriving at the party, however, he encounters an acquaintance, who knows that he has not received such an honor. The teacher tries to hide the medal, devising many ruses which eventually spoil the dinner and the evening. But before taking his leave, he discovers that his acquaintance is also in the same boat, trying to hide his own borrowed medal.

Chekhov ridiculed characters chasing such vanities. He died in 1905 and yet, since then, not much has changed in that part of the world when it comes to tributes.

The Soviet inheritors of the Russian Empire also stressed the significance of those medals, to the point that many anecdotes and jokes were cracked about Leonid Brezhnev, a particular devotee of medals. As the chevrons on his lapel extended, Armenians were wondering that they had never seen hyphenated chevrons.

Today, those coveted medals can be bought at the Vernissage, the glorified flea market in Yerevan, for pennies.

But, on the other hand, the tradition seems to be entrenched in Armenia so much so that pretty soon no tourist will return from Yerevan without a medal awarded by an authority or agency in Armenia.

The same may apply also to the church. It looks like soon the recipients of medals will outnumber Armenians who have been deprived of such honors.

In the past, the people who were awarded such medals were few and far between. But today, the abundance of such medals leaves everyone baffled and devalues the honor. Some recipients even wonder what good deed they have done for Armenia in order to deserve such honors.

It looks as if the time has come to revise the value system in Armenia, where they seem to be banking on the naiveté of Diasporan Armenians. It is true that for some people, those medals serve as an effective bait to get them to make some contributions. But, as time goes on, with the proliferation of those honors, the value system is undermined and deserving people cannot be distinguished from the ones who have taken the bait and been elevated to a rank to which they don't belong.

There is a saturation point where the law of diminishing returns is activated.

Yet another group in the diaspora is critical of generous distribution of those questionable honors, that is, until their turn arrives. At that point, they believe that unlike undeserving honorees, they are meritorious and have fully earned the honors.

But eventually, they are bundled in the same batch of people who had been wearing those medals, whether they deserved them or not.

Come to think, by the unrestricted dispensation of those medals, the authorities, eventually, insult the intelligence of the Diasporan Armenians, believing that those methods can buy influence, loyalty and sacrifice.

Any contribution to or sacrifice for Armenia loses its value the moment the motivation becomes reciprocal compensation. And unfortunately, our poor homeland has not much more to offer than those pieces of metal to reward those contributors.

It is really very difficult to differentiate who is more naïve: the people who shower those honors or those who get the medals? Maybe both.

When those medals were awarded sparingly, the recipients were distinguished members of the community and they stood above the multitudes. But today, when the spigot of those awards has been turned loose, the value of those medals is dead on arrival.

Individuals with self-esteem need to think seriously if the medals they have received truly signify an appreciation for a righteous deed or whether they have been decorated with an ulterior motive.

Of course, the generous distribution of medals needs to be distinguished from the prizes awarded to the writers, scientists, scholars and performers by the government or by other organizations, since the latter come with monetary compensation, which will go a long way to inspire new pieces of literature or composition, or new volumes of academic work.

Now that there is a large army of medal bearers, where do we begin to raise our value system?

Of course, the change has to begin from the top. But before adopting a new system, there has to be a change in our people's mentality and attitude. Brezhnev is dead and his medals have been buried with him; we cannot buy them at the Vernissage anymore.

Once we change our mentality, it would be rather easy to come up with a new value system. Committees of unbiased and qualified scholars may be assigned with the task; people who truly are familiar with the face (and the heart) of the diaspora and Armenia. They can come up with a short list of candidates who should be vetted properly, before being nominated for the awards. That way, no recommendation can be smuggled on the list of nominations if all they have done is treat a minister to lunch or given a lavish present.

During the last 21 years, from the ashes of the ragtag fighters an effective army was formed in Armenia. Legislative and executive branches of government were put in place. Therefore, Armenia's value system should also correspond to those developments. If fewer people from the diaspora are medaled, the Diasporan-Armenians will feel more honored, not less, if and when their turn comes.

If today Anton Chekhov were to be resurrected, I have no reason to hide my own medals. But, in my soul searching, I will always wonder where I stand in the value system of those who have awarded the medals to me.

Note: This article is dedicated to the memory of my dear friend, the late Arsen Demerjian who motivated me to write about this topic before his untimely death.

Who Earns Russia's Protection?

By Gohar Abrahamyan

MOSCOW (ArmeniaNow) — A Russian colonel's statement made in an interview with the Russian defense ministry's official newspaper early last month — Armenian media, however, covered the news only Thursday — has stirred unease in Azerbaijan, as some interpreted it as a threat of war against Azerbaijan by Russia.

Chief of the 102nd Russian military unit, Colonel Andrey Ruzinski announced that if Azerbaijan attacks Nagorno-Karabagh, the Russian military mission in Armenia: "can be involved in the hostilities in accordance with Russia's commitments within the CSTO frame." Ruzinski also added that the Russian military unit in Armenia is equipped with C-300B anti-ballistic missile, Smerch artillery, BUK- 1-2 anti-bal-

listic missile systems, zenith-missile division and MIG-29 jet fighter aircrafts. Azeri media interpreted it as a threat while head of Defense Ministry's security department, Russian Major General Anatoli Vasyak said Thursday night that the Russian military base would never get involved in the Karabagh conflict, as Nagorno Karabagh is not Russian or Armenian territory; hence has no connection to Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), haqqin.az reports. Prior to Ruzinsky's statement, Armenian experts shared the opinion that the CSTO agreement had nothing to do with active hostilities directly in the territory of Nagorno Karabagh.

Political analyst Tigran Abrahamyan said in reference to Ruzinsky's statement that it is interesting that Anatoly Vyborny, the Russian chairman of the committee on defense and security of CSTO Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective

Security Treaty Organization, pointed to the fact that Russia has been selling large amounts of weaponry to Armenia's arch-foe Azerbaijan: "During today's meeting an issue was raised to the effect on whether it's time to work out a legal mechanism that would prevent such supplies in the future."

According to the analyst, in this way Russia is trying to emphasize the seriousness of its relations with Armenia, especially after Armenia's September 3 decision on joining the Customs Union. "To some degree this was an answer not only to the periodical bellicose rhetoric on Azerbaijan's part, but also the aggressive steps on the border, especially frequent recently. Moreover, the Russian side states openly that any incursion against Armenia and Karabagh, be it by separate incidents or large-scale hostilities, is a threat against Russia," said the analyst.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Armenia Should Renounce Turkish Protocols Long before Genocide Centennial

Expecting a public relations nightmare during the Armenian Genocide Centennial, Turkish officials are anxious to prevent further damage to their country's already tarnished reputation.

Even though they have no intention to open the border with Armenia, Turkey's leaders are pretending to do so by constantly issuing fake conciliatory statements. By falsely claiming that Turkey is in the process of patching up its differences with Armenia, Ankara's hidden agenda is to discourage additional countries from recognizing the Armenian Genocide.

However, given Azerbaijan's paranoid reaction to any talk of Turkey opening its border with Armenia, Turkish officials are forced to retreat by warning that the Armenia-Turkey border would remain closed, unless 'progress' is made on the Karabagh (Artsakh) issue.

Such contradictory Turkish statements have been issued countless times, ever since Armenia and Turkey signed Protocols in 2009 to open their mutual border and establish diplomatic relations. As recently as last week, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told a closed session of the

Turkish Parliament's Foreign Relations Committee that preparations are underway to open the border with Armenia. When confronted by an opposition parliamentarian about Turkey's true intentions, Davutoglu quickly reversed himself, stating that Armenia must first withdraw from Karabagh before the border could be opened.

The foreign minister made similar remarks a month ago while visiting Switzerland, when he announced that Turkey was looking for "creative ideas" to improve its relations with Armenia. Davutoglu's creative or rather clever ploy is to avoid looking like an obstructionist, while making excuses for his country's refusal to ratify the Protocols.

Back in 2009, the Turkish government appeared eager to ratify the Protocols which included various extraneous matters, including the formation of a committee of historians to study archival documents on the Armenian Genocide. When Azerbaijan vehemently objected to Turkish plans to open the border with Armenia, Turkey announced that it could no longer ratify the Protocols, even though it was clearly in its national interest to do so. Thus, despite its claims of being a major regional power, Turkey caved in to Azerbaijan's veto. During his remarks in the Turkish Parliament on November 6, Davutoglu sheepishly reiterated that his country would open its border with Armenia only after obtaining Azerbaijan's permission.

Clearly embarrassed by this leak to the press, a Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman denied that Davutoglu had made such a statement. This is not a credible denial as Turkish officials have made similar statements many times before. One plausible explanation for reviving the prospect of opening the border and railway link to Armenia could be Turkey's intent to pressure the newly-elected President of Georgia who refuses to support the long-planned Kars-Tbilisi-Baku railway which was expected to circumvent Armenia.

To put an end to continuous Turkish exploitation of the

Protocols, President Serge Sargisian should carry out his promise of three years ago, when he warned that unless Turkey 'shortly' ratifies the Protocols, he would reconsider his position on this issue, implying that Armenia would withdraw from this agreement. Since the Protocols are still not ratified four years after they were signed, Sargisian should declare them null and void.

Understandably, Armenian officials are reluctant to take such a drastic step, as they are concerned that the major powers would blame them for the Protocols' failure. Armenia would prefer that the Turkish side be the first to withdraw from the Protocols, and thereby bear the blame for their collapse. Turkish officials could be playing the same blame game, by waiting for Armenia to be the first to withdraw.

In my view, Armenia can no longer afford to wait. With the centennial of the Armenian Genocide less than 18 months away, Armenia's president should do what he promised three years ago and withdraw his government's signature from the ill-fated Protocols. Armenia could not be blamed for this action, as Turkish officials have repeatedly announced that they have no intention of ratifying the Protocols.

Not surprisingly, Davutoglu also declared last week that Turkish efforts to counter Armenian plans for the 100th anniversary of the Genocide are moving forward 'at full speed.' In order not to allow Turkey to undermine worldwide Armenian commemorations for the Genocide Centennial, Armenia's leaders must renounce the Protocols long before April 24, 2015.

Furthermore, given the Turkish government's century-old intransigence to acknowledge its culpability for the Genocide and refusal to make appropriate amends, Armenian officials should announce that they plan to seek justice, at long last, by applying to local, regional and international courts.

Appreciation:

Patriarch Torkom Manoogian: Prince of the Church of Armenia

By Hagop Vartivarian

"The Armenian people have a just cause; they must make their voice heard everywhere."

A year has already passed since the death of Patriarch Torkom Manoogian.

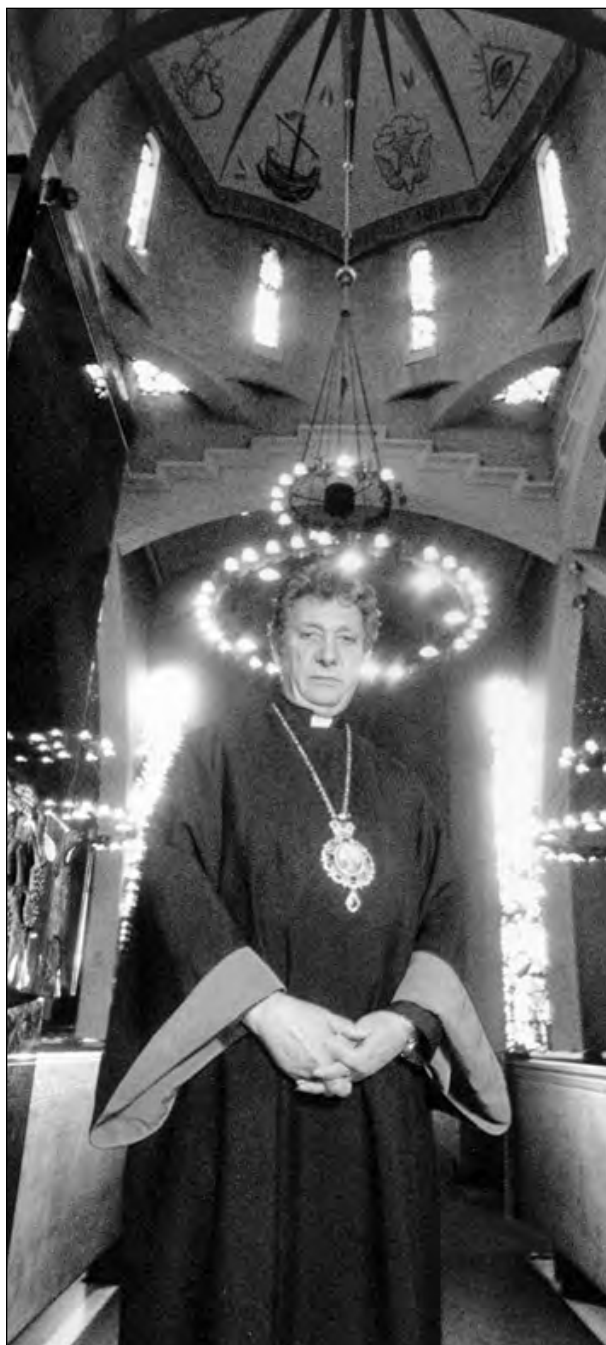
Armenian Americans still mourn his loss. He spent the greater part of his life in the service of the largest diocese, in the United States and Canada. His service and mission were to keep the diocese unshakably faithful to the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, to preserve national values – our language, culture, traditions, ancestral heritage and virtue – among the new Armenian-American generation, to preserve the ecclesiastical system, to maintain fraternal diaspora-homeland relations, to preserve the Great Dream, as travelers on that path and to keep the doors of Armenian churches open to new emigrants from the Middle East.

And he did all this with complete devotion, faith and love. He knew the value of true intellectuals – he who bowed before the Armenian teacher who teaches our native language, he who understood how to properly venerate our culture's promoters, he who established brotherly ties to those admirable intellectuals, Peniamin Nourigian, Antranig Antreassian, Souren Manuelian, Mihrtad Tiryakian, and the Vahe Haigs and the Hrach Yervants who dedicated their talents to connecting the new generation to our land and homeland – to Van, Kharpert, Sasoun and Cilicia.

On these cold shores, he praised the inimitable genius of Komitas. He interpreted the poetry of the prince of poets, Vahan Tekeyan. He honored the martyred writers. He sang and recited their works spiritually, with heart and nostalgia. This was because he himself was an orphan from Van who knew exile and deportation, the deprivations of the Arabian desert and the humanity of the good Arab people. And he grew up in the Armenian national and spiritual atmosphere of Jerusalem, the Holy City, surrounded by Armenian refugees and great teachers like Koushagian and Oshagan.

Patriarch Torkom directed all his love to the reborn homeland, Soviet Armenia. There he found the steadfast refuge of our dreams, of our plans for the future. Every day he disseminated the spirit of patriotism a little more among Armenian Americans, and made Yerevan, the land of Siwnik, and Mother Araxes loved. Through pilgrimages he impelled the Armenian-American masses to recognize that in the end, our homeland is the land of our Armenia – but only with its Ararat.

With the construction of the cathedral of St. Vartan in the heart of New York City, he bestowed pride upon the Armenians that they were not immigrants any longer, but an established, stable collectivity within this great land – a presence in the full



sense of the word. The great political, spiritual and cultural figures of the time visited there, from Henry Kissinger to Cardinal John O'Connor, and that idol of classical music, Placido Domingo. The cathedral turned into a meeting place as much

for ecumenical spiritual assemblies as for political and cultural affairs. It became the starting point for commemorations of the anniversaries of the Armenian Genocide, a podium for political demands and a concert and exhibition hall for cultural life. The anniversaries of deserving figures, such as Patriarch Gregory the Chain Bearer of Jerusalem, Catholicos Mgrdich Khrimian and poet Vahan Tekeyan, were celebrated here. In the cathedral, New York Armenians became acquainted with Lusine Zakarian, the Lisitsian sisters, Simon Simonian, Sero Khanzadyan, Antranig Dzarougian, Vartkes Bedrosian and Zori Balayan.

Torkom Srpazan was always in motion. From one corner to the other of this vast land, he managed to inspire his parishes and people. He did this in a fatherly fashion; he did this as the great shepherd of the diocese. He did not know the meaning of fatigue, but completely devoted his time to the well-being of our community. During his term in office, new sanctuaries of Armenian faith and culture rose up every year, along with new Saturday schools. New books and music albums were issued, in equal numbers in English and in Armenian.

New promising youth came to serve the church. He brought new priests to America from Jerusalem who today are worthy occupants of patriarchal or diocesan offices.

He remained close to the members of the great family of the Tekeyan Cultural Association because the archbishop found with them true intimacy. He liked and respected them greatly because he believed in their ideological path and agreed with their Armenian national patriotic work. He unconditionally kept the doors of the diocese wide open for their activities.

Finally, he became the cleric who served the American Eastern Diocese of the Church of Armenia for the longest period as Primate and as a priest. He was an irreproachable cleric, an exemplary personality, the likes of whom unfortunately are few today in the ranks of the Church of Armenia.

In addition to his numerous other talents, it must be stressed that he was a good interpreter of Komitas.

During the sad days of the Earthquake, Manoogian took the well-known physician Dr. Edgar Housepian and the great American-Armenian philanthropist Kevork Hovnanian to the disaster zone, to Leninakan and Spitak. He led efforts to send aid, and properly praised the assistance provided to Armenia by the United States.

He served for a period of time as locum tenens in the Mother See after the death of Catholicos Vazken until the election of Karekin I.

He was elected as Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, and accomplished many things. I will write about them in my forthcoming article.

His own words are worth remembering: "The time has come for us to go beyond our [Armenian] national boundaries and make our voice audible in international circles."

(Translated from the original Armenian)



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