

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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## Armenia Welcomes Iran Nuclear Deal

GENEVA, Switzerland (RFE/RL) – Armenia has welcomed the agreement reached between its neighbor Iran and six leading world powers regarding the Islamic Republic's nuclear program.

The talks between an Iranian delegation and senior representatives of the so-called P5+1 group – Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States and Germany – that opened in Geneva, Switzerland, on November 20 ended early on Sunday in the announcement of a “historic” deal that US President Barack Obama said provided Iran with a “dignified path” to rejoin the international community.

Armenia, which shares a border with Iran and views its southern neighbor as a major trade and economic partner, appeared equally enthused by the news coming from Switzerland.

“This is good news not only for the region but for the whole international community,” said Foreign Minister Eduard

Nalbandian in a statement published on the official website of his ministry.

“Armenia has always advocated a negotiated, peaceful solution of the issue. Although the agreement reached is of interim nature, it paves the way for a comprehensive settlement through efforts of all negotiating parties,” the top Armenian diplomat underscored.

After the completion of talks in Geneva, official Tehran welcomed the agreement, with President Hassan Rohani saying that “world powers have recognized Iran's nuclear rights” and cited the opening of “new horizons.”

According to a US government press release, Iran has agreed to halt all uranium enrichment above 5 percent and to neutralize its existing stockpile of near-20 percent enriched uranium below 5 percent within six months. Iran has also agreed to not install any new centrifuges for enrichment and not to commission the disputed Arak

heavy-water reactor, also agreeing to “unprecedented transparency and intrusive monitoring” of its nuclear program.

In return, the P5+1 countries have agreed to suspend most sanctions on gold and precious metals and on Iran's petrochemical exports. They will also allow safety-related repairs of Iranian civilian airliners. In all, the package includes an estimated \$7.2 billion in relief from sanctions for Iran.

## Ties to ADL Imperil Patrick Judge Nominee

Governor Postpones Vote

By Colleen Quinn

BOSTON (*Commonwealth magazine*) – Saying he hadn't had a chance to work on rounding up votes to ensure confirmation, Gov. Deval Patrick prevented the Governor's Council from voting on judicial nominee Joseph Berman, the governor's pick for a Superior Court judgeship last week.

Councilor Marilyn Devaney, who criticized Berman during his confirmation hearing last week for being part of an organization that refuses to recognize the Armenian Genocide, urged the governor not to postpone the vote.

“I have great respect for you, but I object to this,” Devaney said to Patrick, adding she had a letter from five councilors, a majority of the eight-member panel, who planned to vote against Berman's confirmation. “I find no joy in this governor, but it is the right thing to do,” she said.

Councilor Robert Jubinville also asked Patrick to reconsider postponing, but the governor responded: “Thank you. I'm going to postpone the vote.”

Berman came under fire last Wednesday for his membership in the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), \$110,000 in campaign contributions and his representation of a prisoner at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.



Nominee Joseph Berman

see JUDGE, page 16

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### US Praises Nagorno-Karabagh Talks

WASHINGTON (RFE/RL) – The United States has praised the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia for meeting for the first time in almost two years.

The US State Department said in a statement that the summit on November 19 in Vienna “is an important step toward restarting dialogue and demonstrates the leaders' shared commitment to bring an end to the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict.”

Armenian President Serge Sargsian and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev met under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, co-chaired by France, Russia and the United States.

After the meeting, the Minsk Group issued said Sargsian and Aliyev had agreed to advance negotiations toward a peaceful settlement and to meet again at an unspecified date in the near future.

### Voice of Turkey Has Armenian Contestant

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Turkey's attention was focused this week on Corç Seker, an Armenian from Istanbul, who spoke about his Armenian identity during a recent episode of “Voice of Turkey,” a singing competition broadcast by Star TV channel.

Seker, 32, was born in Istanbul. His mother Gyulumie Seker was also born in Turkey. Corç's father Hachik Seker was born in Sivas. They took Corç to the historical Armenian Dadyan School in Istanbul. In a conversation with “Armenpress” Corç's wife Jbid Akbas Seker, who is also Armenian, stated that all the local Armenians take their children to the Armenian schools. “Our parents graduated from the Armenian schools as well,” Jbid Akbas Seker emphasized. Among other things she noted that both she and her husband speak Armenian and almost all their friends are Armenians.

### Protests Held against Joining Customs Union

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Dozens of people rallied in front of the presidential palace this week calling on President Serge Sargsian to overturn his decision to join the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The protest was organized by former presidential candidate Paruyr Hayrikyan. The protesters were holding posters that read, among others, “No to Customs Union” and “No to the Russian Empire.” Earlier this month, Armenia signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Commission, which oversees the integration of former Soviet republics around the Russia-led Customs Union.

EU Enlargement Commissioner Stefan Fuele has said Yerevan cannot sign an Association Agreement with the bloc at a summit in Vilnius this month if it also intends to join the Customs Union.

## INSIDE

### Azadian Book

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A scene from Zangakner's latest production

## Sweet as the Sounds of a Bell: Zangakner Brings Art and Discipline to Young Charges

By Alin K. Gregorian  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

since its founding, has developed a fervent following among parents, family members and those in the community that want to encourage music and the arts, giving many concerts and performances.

Between the two age categories, 4-7 and 8-12, Zangakner has 40 participants. One person can take credit for its success: Hasmik Konjoyan.

see ZANGAKNER, page 12

## Dark Days Recalled on Eve of 25th Anniversary of Quake

By Gayane Mkrtchyan

SPITAK (ArmeniaNow) – The doctor's look is heavy with memories. For years his hands welcomed infants into this world, gave them the first embrace, not only at maternity hospitals, but in tents and temporary shelters – domiks.

“During the dark and cold years the entire hospital premises were heated

and illuminated by means of a giant Russian 75 kV generator. We would run it to make it warm enough in the delivery rooms, because an infant comes out from a warm place, wrapped in a cloud of steam so much that we had to blow a little to see whether it's a boy or a girl,” recalled Felix Grigoryan, chief obstetrician-gynecologist of Shirak province.

He tries to form his recollections into words, but before he would utter them, the heavy burden weighing on his soul

distorts his features; his face speaks for him... He was in Yerevan during the earthquake. The first report he heard was: “Nalband village is the epicenter, the power plant and water reservoir dams have not been damaged...”

“Then we came to Gumri and saw it was impossible to enter the city. On the highway from Yerevan, when approaching Gumri, there were 8-10-story buildings flanking the road – those were all

see QUAKE, page 16



## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Armenian Peacekeepers Complete NATO Mission

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The US Embassy to Armenia issued a press release this week, praising the participation of Armenia within NATO structures.

“The US Embassy congratulates the Republic of Armenia with the organization of the NATO week events held November 18-22. The US highlights the cooperation of Armenia with NATO and assists that procedure. During NATO week, the participation of Armenian peacekeepers in international peacekeeping missions was highlighted. The US Government has greatly assisted in the formation of the peacekeeping brigade of Armenia and continues to find ways to deepen that assistance. The Armenian and American soldiers serve together in Kosovo, bringing their contribution to the international efforts for the establishment of peace and stability. The Armenian peacekeepers complete their mission perfectly and with honor.”

Armenia held its seventh NATO Week within the framework of Armenia- NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan November 18-22.

## There Is no Military Solution to Karabagh Conflict: US Ambassador To OSCE

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Daniel Baer, the US Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), said he is excluding a military solution to the Nagorno Karabagh conflict. He made his comments when he was speaking about the upcoming meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers, scheduled to be held on December 5-6.

Among other things Baer underscored: “There is no military solution to the Karabagh conflict. In this respect the meeting of the presidents of the two countries was a significant step. We are glad that this meeting will have a continuation. The Foreign Ministers of the two countries will have an opportunity to meet each other.”

Previously it was reported that the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs had issued a press statement regarding the results of the recent meeting of the President Armenia Serge Sargsian and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev.

The Presidents agreed to give a new impetus to the negotiations aimed at reaching a peaceful solution. As a follow up, the co-chairs will organize working meetings with the ministers on the sidelines of the OSCE Ministerial Council which will take place December 5-6 in Kiev.

## Bust of Artsakh War Hero Ghevondyan Unveiled

STEPANAKERT (Hetq) – The bronze bust of Artsakh War hero Petros “Peto” Ghevondyan was officially unveiled last week at the Srkhavend Motorized Artillery battalion base in Karabagh.

The unveiling of the bust, which replaces a temporary gypsum model installed three years ago, coincides with the 22nd anniversary of the battalion.

Starting in 1989, Ghevondyan actively participated in the defense of Armenia’s border villages and all across the territory of Artsakh in the liberation war. In January 1993 he downed an enemy supersonic MIG-25 fighter. He handed over the prize money awarded by the Artsakh army to the families of friends killed in combat.

Ghevondyan was killed in action on February 14, 1994 in Karvatchar. There was a wounded soldier alone on the battlefield. The army ambulance refused to advance because the road had been mined. Ghevondyan got behind the wheel and picked up the wounded man. He died from a mine blast.

Ghevondyan was posthumously awarded the title “Artsakh Hero.”

# ATP, Locals to Create Green Spaces

YEREVAN – This fall, Armenia Tree Project (ATP) marks 40 seasons of planting in communities across the country. ATP’s Community Tree Planting (CTP) initiative has surpassed 1.2 million trees planted in every corner of Armenia and Artsakh. The CTP team planted 27,427 fruit and decorative trees this fall out of a total of 56,184 for the year. Some of the tree types included apricot, pear, apple, maple, poplar and Russian olive.

More and more organizations and companies in Armenia are beginning to practice corporate social responsibility, with a special focus on environmental issues. This season, ATP continued its partnership of several years with Synopsys to plant 1,160 evergreens on the campus of Yerevan State University. Dozens of Synopsys employees volunteered their day to help green the area. Employees from another company, AtTask, planted 50 trees in the Avan community of Yerevan.

In November, volunteers from the Armenian Volunteer Corps joined ATP in the village of Nor Kharberd, just outside of Yerevan, to plant 100 poplars, 70 evergreens and 80 fruit trees. The trees were donated to the Nor Kharberd Boarding school for disabled children, where ATP has been planting since 1995. The school is one of the first ATP planting sites, and is home to 286 children, all of whom have some form of disability. To date, more than 1,600 trees have been planted at the school.

After years of concerted efforts by philanthropists and other prominent advocates led by Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), the new Octet Music School opened in Gumri on September 20. Until the opening of the school, music students had been attending classes in the metal trailers that were meant to be temporary shelters after the Spitak earthquake of 1988. ATP provided 312 evergreens and 23 decorative trees for the schoolyard, which were planted during the opening by guests including British Ambassador Jonathan Aves, representatives from FAR, and Armenian President Serge Sargsian.

The president was joined by Deep Purple lead singer Ian Gillan and Do Something founder Jon Dee, who have had a special connection with this project and with Armenia dating back to the tragic earthquake 25 years ago. Approaching the building, Gillan commented that he had tears in his eyes upon seeing the school. “I already hear the music which will come from the



ATP has been providing fruit and decorative trees to Nor Kharberd boarding school for many years; the latest planting was in November with diasporans from Armenian Volunteer Corps

school. We managed to revive the music,” said Gillan.

ATP works in collaboration with many local and international development organizations. Near Gumri, in the village of Maralik, there was no public green space until Counterpart International opened the first park in the area on November 1. ATP provided



ATP’s CTP program planted more than 27,000 fruit and decorative trees this fall, including 120 trees with students at Yerevan’s Ohanyan School

665 trees to help green the park. In Armavir, ATP partnered with Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) to plant decorative trees and shrubs at four school gardens. In the villages of Shenik, Karagert, Argina, and Lernagog, 880 Syrian roses, ash trees and poplars were planted this season. “These communities were chosen because COAF has rebuilt schools in each village, and ATP continues to support their efforts to help the villages prosper,” explained CTP program manager Arthur Harutyunyan.

Norway’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also been a leading partner, with a

three year project initiated in 2012. “Thanks to a major grant from Norway, the CTP program continued planting fruit trees and shrubs in villages across Armenia,” Harutyunyan stated. In Syunik, the villages of Halidzor, Vaghatur, and Khdzoresq received 1,067 trees; in Aragotsn, Arayi received 860; in Lori, Ghurshalu and Karadzor received 940; and in Armavir, Lernamerdz and Talvorik received 450 trees. “Ninety percent of the trees funded by this grant were fruit trees, which will help sustain the people in these communities,” continued Harutyunyan.

This fall, ATP began a new initiative to help Syrian-Armenian refugee families in Artsakh. Thousands of Armenians from Syria have fled to Armenia over the past two years as a result of the ongoing conflict. The majority of these refugees settled in Yerevan, or near the city, but there are several families who have chosen to move to Artsakh. Two families in Berdzor and 21 in Kovsakan, a village in the very south, will receive 300 pear, plum, apple, sweet cherry, apricot and quince trees to help them start over in Karabagh.

ATP’s mission is to develop Armenia through community-based tree planting and environmental education. ATP seeks to reverse the loss of Armenia’s forest cover and to advocate for the sustainable use of our natural resources. ATP’s three major programs are tree planting, environmental education, and sustainable development initiatives. For more information, visit the website [www.armeniatree.org](http://www.armeniatree.org).

## Sistema Music Program Struggles to Find Instruments

YEREVAN – Fifty children between the ages of 9 and 17 are waiting in line to join the Sistema Armenia Youth Orchestra (SAYO). With two cellos, four basses and four violas the existing SAYO group of 40 young musicians can nearly double in size. Non-profit organization, ONEArmenia is using crowdfunding to buy them the instruments they need so they can stop waiting and start playing.

Music schools are very common in Armenia. However, the vast majority of

them use teaching methods that are individualistic, lacking the ability to work together for a common goal. That is where Sistema comes in. Sistema Armenia builds a community atmosphere where children learn to work together to create art. It also breaks away from old methods of teaching one on one in the classroom into the streets where art becomes public and for the people.

“Armenia is so focused on soloists and doesn’t give our kids much of an opportunity to work together,” said Anna Mikaelian Meschian, founder and executive director of Sistema Armenia. “Playing together in an orchestra is a very special and joyful experience, which requires us to listen to each other, to care about details, to communicate and to overcome all kinds of difficulties together. Experiencing the power of a moment created in unity with others is really all the kids need. The hunger for this sort of way of thinking, working and living is palpable in Armenia.”

Meschian was inspired by El Sistema,

which was founded 38 years ago in a parking garage in Venezuela with 11 children. It now teaches music to 400,000 of Venezuela’s poorest children, demonstrating the power of ensemble music to dramatically change the lives of thousands of youth while transforming the communities around them.

Sistema Armenia has only just begun and has the potential to grow indefinitely – creating jobs and building communities with youth orchestras popping up all over Armenia. Who wouldn’t want to be a part of that?

To learn more or contribute, visit <http://igg.me/at/onearmenia-music>.

ONEArmenia is a non-profit organization that crowd-funds and crowd-sources innovative projects that shift Armenia’s educational, environmental, humanitarian and cultural progress forward. The ONEArmenia network seeks to not only raise money for a project based in Armenia as a worldwide community, but to also transparently report progress of projects from start to finish.

## Correction

Due to a production error last week, the last line of a story on Sahan Arzruni’s performance in New York City, ended mid-sentence. The co-chairs of the organizing committee were Louise Tezel and Hilda Melconian. We regret the error.



## INTERNATIONAL

# Barricades Erected by Russian Guards In Georgia, Say EU Monitors

TBILISI (*The Guardian*) – Tina Bidzinashvili and her husband have harvested apples, quinces and peaches from the orchard behind their house since the perestroika years, when they were given it by the local collective farm in reward for hard work. But one morning recently, she woke up to find armed Russian border guards erecting a barbed wire barricade around one side of the orchard.

Her house might be in the Georgian village of Gugutiankari, the Russians explained to her, but her orchard is in the territory of South Ossetia, a small province that the international community believes is part of Georgia, but which since the Russia-Georgia war of 2008 is recognised as an independent country by Russia.

The wire is part of a process of “borderisation” by Russian border guards, during which EU monitors claim about 40 kilometers of fencing or barbed wire have been erected, augmented with hi-tech surveillance cameras mounted on poles. The fence follows a Soviet administrative boundary that was never previously applied in practice, and which runs through villages, and in some cases, through individual houses. For residents, it is the equivalent of a fence being erected to demarcate Kent and Sussex.

The process has received a sudden flurry of attention as Georgian presidential elections approach this Sunday. Locals say that the fence-building has been going on for months, but now with the vote approaching, being tough on Russia is important and politicians are rushing one after another to travel to the affected villages and show solidarity.

Georgian politicians say the border construction is one part of an increasingly provocative policy towards the country from Moscow, despite the victory in elections a year ago of Bidzina Ivanishvili, a billionaire oligarch who made his fortune in Russia and promised to improve Georgia’s relations with its northern neighbor.

This year, exports of Georgian wine

and mineral water, under trade embargo since 2006, were allowed back on to the Russian market. More than 10 million bottles of wine have made their way across the border since the summer, according to Georgian data. An agreement appears forthcoming that would also allow citrus fruits back into Russia, which would provide a stimulus for Georgia’s largely agrarian economy.

But the conciliatory noises from Tbilisi, and the gradual restoration of trade relations, has been overshadowed by the fence-building and by the Russian government’s decision to invite a military pilot who bombed Georgia during the 2008 war to be one of its high-profile torch bearers in a 2014 Winter Olympics ceremony. There is public pressure in Georgia to boycott the Olympics, which take place in Sochi, just a few miles from the border with Abkhazia, another breakaway province of Georgia that Russia has recognized as an independent state.

“Taking part in the Olympics was a difficult decision for us, but we decided it was the right one,” the Georgian government’s point man for relations with Russia, Zurab Abashidze, said. “But these provocative actions make it difficult for us. If it continues in this way, it is possible that we will have to rethink.”

A veteran political analyst, Alexander Rondeli, said the recent events proved president Mikheil Saakashvili, whose government sparked the 2008 war with Russia, was not entirely to blame for poor relations with Georgia’s northern neighbor: “Ivanishvili did everything to please them and what is the result? Russia hasn’t liked any of our presidents. For us, normalization of relations means being good neighbors, for them, it means turning Georgia into a satellite.”

Both sides of the border are militarized, even though the ceasefire agreement forbids it, which leads to fears that a small misunderstanding or scuffle could spark something much larger. On the Georgian side, heavily armed men in military fatigues keep guard at a cam-

ouflaged base built into the cemetery at Zemo-Nikozi, on the hills overlooking the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali. The police labels attached to their military fatigues fool nobody. On the South Ossetian side, Russia has built 19 border guard bases. Technically not soldiers, the border guards are nevertheless heavily armed, and part of Russia’s FSB security services.

An EU monitoring mission, set up under the ceasefire agreement that ended the war brokered by then French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, patrols the borderline where Russia is erecting the fences. But the monitors have little real power. They are unarmed, and are not allowed to cross into the South Ossetian side. Instead, they make daily missions in their armoured Land Cruisers along the rutted dusty tracks on the Tbilisi-administered side of the fence, reporting back satellite co-ordinates of the new constructions. In some places the fence cuts off villages from neighboring settlements they have visited for as long as anyone can remember; in other places it cuts off families from the graves of their loved ones. In extreme cases, such as in Gugutiankari, it runs through individual houses.

“They told us that if we continue to farm our orchard, we’ll be taken to Tskhinvali and put in prison,” said Tina Bidzinashvili of the border guards, who put up the barbed wire fence that has cut off her orchard from her house. “They said the only option is if we enter South Ossetia through a legally recognised checkpoint.”

The nearest checkpoint is miles away and difficult to cross. Getting to her own back garden would entail Bidzinashvili making a six-hour round trip each day. The house itself is uninhabitable – it was bombed during the war, and the family are living six to a room in the former local school, now a shelter for people who lost their homes. Their last hope was the orchard, and now that has gone too.

“We have worked hard all our lives,” she said. “And now we live like pigs.”

## International News

### Armenia faces Russia in World Chess Team Championship

ANTALYA, Turkey (Armenpress) – The Armenian national chess team is participating in the World Chess Team Championship here. In Round 1 Armenia will play against Russia – one of the favorites of the tournament. The matches are as follows: Vladimir Kramnik-Levon Aronyan, Sergey Movsisyan-Sergey Karjakin, Alexander Grischuk-Vladimir Hakobyan and Gabriel Sargsyan-Ian Nepomniachtchi.

The World Team Championship will be held from November 26 till December 5. In 2011 the Armenian national team was crowned world chess team champions in China, and are defending this title.

### Topchyan Receives Italian Order of Merit For Contributions

YEREVAN (Hetq) – Conductor Eduard Topchyan has been awarded the Italian Order of Merit for Labor signed by President Napolitano for his “exceptional achievements” in culture. The order was presented to Topchyan on November 20 by Italian Ambassador Bruno Scapini.

Also, in attendance was First Lady Rita Sargsian.

### Armenian Serviceman Killed in Syria

DAMASCUS, Syria (Armenpress) – An Armenian soldier in the Syrian Army was killed in the district of Harasta near Damascus on November 18, according to the Facebook page of Berio News. Hakob Ter Ghazarian was born in Aleppo on September 14, 1988. He worked at one of the major military centers in the district, and was bombed by the opposition rebels. The two buildings of the center were completely collapsed as a result of the explosion, causing dozens of deaths and injuries. The identity of some victims was difficult to ascertain because of the intensity of the explosion.

### Charles Aznavour Hands Prize to Baroness Cox in Geneva

GENEVA (Armenpress) – British House of Lords member Baroness Caroline Cox received the Charles Aznavour Prize for the outstanding achievements in the promotion of Europe-Armenia relations. “Aznavour personally gave Cox the prize. Ambassador Hans-Jochen Schmidt and Deputy René Rouquet, as well as representatives of the international organizations in Geneva and the Armenian Diaspora also participated in the ceremony held in Club Suisse de la Presse in Geneva.

She is a director of the Educational Research Trust, the Andrei Sakharov Foundation and the Centre for Social Cohesion. In 2006 she received an honorary law degree from the University of Dundee and was installed as the Chancellor of Liverpool Hope University in the same year.

Cox is the chair of the British Armenia All-Party Parliamentary Group. She is also a strong supporter of self-determination for the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh. Paying tribute to Cox’s dedication to the Armenian cause, Frank Pallone Jr., the co-chairman of the US Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, called her a “true Armenian nationalist who would give her life for Armenia and Karabagh.” On February 15, 2006 she was awarded the Mkhitar Gosh Medal by the President of the Republic of Armenia Robert Kocharian.

She was president of Christian Solidarity Worldwide until 2006, thereafter remaining as its patron. Between 1997 and 2000, Christian Solidarity Worldwide directly intervened to buy the freedom of alleged slaves, and in a letter to The Independent on Sunday Cox claimed to have redeemed 2,281 slaves on eight visits to Sudan.

## Egypt Expels Ambassador from Turkey, Downgrading Diplomatic Ties

CAIRO (*New York Times*) – Egypt announced on Saturday that it was downgrading its diplomatic relations with Turkey and expelled the Turkish ambassador because of “provocative” criticisms of Cairo by Turkey’s prime minister, a spokesman for Egypt’s foreign minister said.

Egypt also said that its ambassador to Turkey, who was withdrawn in August, would be permanently recalled, all but severing relations with a regional heavyweight that had been one of Egypt’s most prominent allies before the ouster of President Mohamed Morsi last July.

In retaliation, Turkey declared the absent Egyptian ambassador “persona non grata” and also downgraded diplomatic relations. Turkey’s prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was unapologetic, calling Egypt’s government a “pro-coup administration” and saying “we never respect those who do not respect people’s right to sovereignty.” Ties between the two countries had been fraying for months. Erdogan had cultivated a strong relationship with Morsi, a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, as part of Erdogan’s wider bid for regional leadership anchored by support for Islamist allies.

After Morsi’s ouster and arrest by the military, Erdogan became one of the most vocal foreign critics of the crack-

down on the Brotherhood, angering Egyptian officials by expressing solidarity with protesters and criticizing the arrests of senior Brotherhood leaders.

Erdogan’s comments on Thursday were the last straw, according to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Badr Abdel Aty, citing statements in support of Morsi and his criticism of the former president’s trial on murder charges.

Egypt said it was not completely severing ties between the countries, but downgrading the relationship to the level of chargé d’affaires. It was a further sign of the country’s rapidly shifting foreign policy since the military takeover, as officials have pursued new alliances and lashed out at old friends who have voiced any criticism.

Egypt’s relations with the United States, its closest Western ally, were troubled for months after the Obama administration spoke out against the violent suppression of Morsi’s supporters, including the killing of hundreds of protesters by Egypt’s security services.

The frosty relations led Cairo to rekindle a friendship with Russia, in what was seen as a swipe at the United States. Egypt’s isolation has further eased, as the Obama administration’s own internal feuds about its Egypt policy have come out into the open. In a

departure from the administration’s earlier, critical statements, Secretary of State John Kerry has taken to flattering Egypt’s interim leaders and denigrating the Brotherhood.

For Turkey, the diplomatic turnabout was further evidence of Erdogan’s faltering bid for regional influence that relied on cementing alliances with Islamist movements, including those in Libya, Syria and Egypt. As Syria and Libya descend further into chaos and with the Brotherhood swept from power, Turkish officials seem to have shifted to a more pragmatic approach focused on economic interests, and more in line with the government’s long-held policy of “zero problems” with neighbors.

Erdogan, though, who has made his opposition to what he calls the “coup” against Morsi a personal crusade, has been in no mood to mend fences with Egypt. On Thursday, in the comments that caused the diplomatic break, Erdogan hailed Morsi as a “real democrat” and denounced the interim rulers, saying they had no respect for “people’s sovereignty.”

“All should have stood up against what has happened to Morsi, but they didn’t,” he said.

(Kareem Fahim reported from Cairo, and Sebnem Arsu from Istanbul.)



# Community News

## Young Deacon Begins Ministry at St. Sarkis Church

By Florence Avakian

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – “My calling started even before I was aware of the Armenian Church,” says Benjamin Rith-Najarian, recently appointed deacon-in-charge at the St. Sarkis Church.

In this new assignment, he says he is filled with “mixed emotions. I have spent the past eight years preparing for this. With anything new, there is always a little anxiety. Every day, there is something new. It’s a learning experience. In the short time that I’ve been here, it has been exciting to meet people, and listen to their ideas for the church, all of which is bringing us closer to God.”

Born in Philadelphia, Rith-Najarian and his family moved to Syracuse when he was 1, then to Ojibwe, a town in northern Minnesota when he was 5. His grandparents were born in the US, but his great-grandparents, from Shabin-Karahisar, were killed in the Armenian Genocide, with the exception of his great-grandmother who survived the death march. His father, Steven, served in the US Navy and later settled in Minnesota, where the family still lives.

In his childhood, the nearest Armenian Church was in Wisconsin or Chicago, a 10-to-12-hour drive away. But his mother, Janet, who is of English and German background, and his father had instilled in him Christian values, and he had attended Christian services from a young age with his parents. “My mother was very involved in the area’s Christian churches. She read the Bible, visited nursing homes, and brought food to the homeless,” he said.

When Rith-Najarian graduated from St. John’s University in Minnesota in 2004, with a major in the natural sciences, he met the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, at the time the dean of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. He says Findikyan inspired him to attend the seminary’s college conferences – a program that would change the course of Benjamin’s life.

“I didn’t go to St. Nersess to become a priest, but to be more involved in the Armenian Church and the Armenian language,” Rith-Najarian said. But he soon realized that “all of the background, the Christian love that I had been taught in my childhood, fit with being a priest. My parents had told me the story, but it was Fr. Daniel who planted the seed and was the moving force.”

Rith-Najarian became interested in learning more about the Armenian Church, its theology, history, and people. “All of it was new for me,” he said. “I was realizing more and more that service was crucial, and that is where I was being called.” In 2004, Rith-Najarian went to Armenia and served for a month with Habitat for Humanity. He later enrolled at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary and completed his course of study in 2010.

Following his graduation from St. Nersess, he and his wife, Chicago-born Danielle Der Asadourian, whom he had met at the St. Nersess summer conferences, traveled to Jerusalem for 10 months.

Returning to the US in June 2011, the young couple moved to New Jersey, where he started an internship at St. Leon Church in Fair Lawn. For two years he worked with the parish pastor, the Rev. Diran Bohajian.

“It was everything a priest does to run a parish.” In January 2012, Benjamin began visiting St. Sarkis Church once or twice a month.

He is now the full-time deacon-in-charge at the parish. He considers his work “a special journey.” He added, “A priest is first and foremost a servant of God. As a spiritual leader in the community, he is a role model and someone who steps forward and helps his flock in time of need.”



From left, Tamar Kevonian, Sona Zeitlian and Baydzig Arabian Kalaydjian

## Hye Geen Group Tackles Topic of Keeping Culture, Language in the West

PASADENA, Calif. – On November 2, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Hye Geen group organized its fall luncheon at the AGBU Vatche and Tamar Center, titled “The US Armenia Diaspora Should Replicate the Success of the Middle East,” tackling the issue of preserving Armenian-ness in the West.

For almost 100 years, the diasporas in the Middle East have kept alive the Armenian language and traditions. Yet today, cultural centers in the Middle East are in dire straits. Cairo has lost its luster, Aleppo is devastated by war and Beirut is in decline. Cities which had once been the hub of politics, arts and literature, are now fighting to survive.

By Sona Yacoubian

Two speakers shared their thoughts about the subject. Baydzig Arabian Kalaydjian is the executive secretary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association in Boston. She has extensive experience in teaching in Beirut and Cyprus, and for a time worked as the editor of the *Zartonk* newspaper in Beirut. Kalaydjian shared her outlook of the situation based on the dispersion of Armenians around the world. She explained that there are 7 million Armenians in the world. 2.5 million Armenians live in Armenia and Karabagh and the rest are dispersed in 60 countries around the world. Emigration from Armenia is an endless exodus for greener pastures, and as she put it, 90 percent of the next generation of Diaspora Armenians will see themselves as descendants of Armenians and not as Armenians.

Kalaydjian also stressed that Western Armenian has been listed as an endangered language since 1999. She explained that a language cannot be preserved and remain vital if it is not used daily for business, school, social activities, creativity and pleasure. Kalaydjian pointed out that in 1970, there were 250 Armenian schools in the diaspora while currently there are only 170, with around 30,000 students. What is more, the numbers are shrinking year after year. Parents, as well as students, reason that learning Armenian is a waste of time as later in life it would hardly be useful in the business world. An additional complication is that there is a shortage of Armenian-language teachers because the demand is not there and communities do not have Armenian-language institutes in the diaspora to prepare young teachers. This decline is truly a shame, she said, because Kalaydjian said she firmly believes that not only do Armenian schools provide an excellent education but they also mold students into strong and exemplary individuals.

The good news is that all is not lost this is the time to engage in serious dialogue and explore different options for keeping the Armenian heritage alive.

Sona Zeitlian, a long time AGBU Hye Geen board member, as well as a respected writer and lecturer, also took the podium to share her analysis of the day’s dilemma.

She pointed out that Armenians in the diaspora usually settle in large and culturally-active cities, as they have in Los Angeles. They benefit from the excellent education offered in those centers where work opportunities are more available. While there are multiple societies and associations in the community, unfortunately their agendas are not planned to pursue the ultimate goal of guarding the Armenian spirit and heritage. These entities need to initiate programs to enhance the longevity of the communities through their activities, she said.

Zeitlian said that it is estimated that in about 10 years, the majority of youth and those under 18, will hail from ethnic minority populations. Zeitlian stressed that in this maze, the success of retaining Armenian youth within the community and preventing total assimilation will be dependent on a well-thought-out and coordinated strategy.

see PRESERVATION, page 7

## AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School Celebrates Armenian Culture

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. – The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Alex and Marie Manoogian School, on Thursday, October 24, featured a celebration of Armenian culture. As in previous years, this year’s program was devoted to the anniversary of Armenia’s independence and to the Armenian Cultural Month. Elementary students, as well as graduating seniors, who played a major role in the program, had sensed the importance of the day, not only for the school, but also for the community. On that day, in addition to the 400 students and some 45 faculty and staff, there were many parents who came to the high school auditorium.

The celebration was divided into two parts. The morning program was designed for elementary school students, while the afternoon program was devoted to middle and high school. There was an unexpected guest, Armen Ananyan, a videographer for a popular travel program sponsored by the AGBU and Viva Cell and broadcast weekly on Armenia’s H1 channel, who taped the program, to be shown in the near future.

The morning program began with welcoming remarks by Elementary and Middle School Principal Dyana Kezelian. Then, Sebouh Avedikian, head of the Armenian Department at the school, introduced the program. Under the affectionate and proud gaze of their parents, elementary-age students collectively recited Armenian poems. They watched Armenian videos dedicated to Armenia and the Armenian alphabet.

Everyone was waiting with anticipation for the play that the fifth-grade class had prepared. For the past two years, Avedikian’s students had performed two works (“The Stupid Man” and “Gigos”) by Hovhannes Toumanian. This year, as well, the students staged another classic Toumanian work, “A Drop of Honey,” spiced



The fifth-grade students get into the act.

up by the music of Alexander Spendarian and Avet Terterian. The students performed incredibly in Armenian on stage. They not only had thoroughly understood the subject matter, but also, with their ethnic costumes, looked like they had just arrived from Armenia to share this amusing, but deeply thoughtful, story to their brothers and sisters.

At the conclusion of the program, Kezelian thanked the Armenian faculty, composed of Tamissa Dakissian, Sona Vandevelde, and Dickran and Anahit Toumajan. She reserved special accolades for Avedikian for organizing such beautiful programs.

The afternoon program began with Avedikian’s 12th-grade students reflecting upon the importance of the creation of the Armenian alphabet and of the friendship between Armenia and the United States. A video was shown, demonstrating this friendship and cooperation, featuring US Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern and his wife participating in a flash mob dance scene with young

see CULTURE, page 7



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Armenian Medical Fund USA: A Year in Review

By Dr. Herand Markarian

NEW YORK – The Armenian Medical Fund, USA (AMF-USA) is a US-based 501C organization. It is the only Armenian organization in the world that is totally focused on supporting Armenian and international Tuberculosis (TB) institutions and sanatoriums that are involved in combating and controlling the spread of TB. AMF-USA was founded in New York in 1953 by John Torigian, Mihran Kalayjian and Mihran Karageuzian. The aim of the founders was to support the National Armenian Sanatorium at Azuniyeh, Lebanon, which was established in the 1920s to take care of the needs of Armenian TB patients. The sanatorium was founded and initially supported by the Armenian Apostolic, Evangelical and Catholic churches. The latter resigned and the task of keeping and supporting the Sanatorium befell on the Apostolic and Evangelical churches up to this point.

From 1953 up to this point, AMF-USA contributed monetary aid, renovated buildings, and supplied modern diagnostic equipment to the sanatorium. The aid has well exceeded the \$1 million mark.

After the independence of Armenia, it became apparent that Armenia was facing serious health issues with regard to TB. AM-USA, working closely with the Ministry of Health of Armenia, mapped Armenia and assessed the needs and issues associated with the devastating disease.

From 1990 on, aid was given to: The Abovian TB Hospital (the central TB hospital in Armenia), the Gumri, Kapan, Goris, TB hospitals. The Vanadzor hospital was fully renovated. One of the two residential buildings of the Dilijan Children's Sanatorium was fully renovated. Aid was also given to the pulmonary division of Tsojor hospital. Diagnostic equipments were donated to: The Mikaelian Hospital in

Kanaker, the Goris Hospital and the Karagerd hospital under the auspices of COAF.

## Martuni Hospital

Two years ago the organization was approached by Armenia Fund, USA about the idea of building a new hospital in the Martuni region. The group had worked there before successfully, renovating the women's ward in the Shushi hospital and building a TB diagnostic center in Stepanakert.

The city of Martuni is located in the province of Martuni in the northeastern part of Nagorno Karabagh. It has a population of 5,000. The original Martuni hospital was built in 1965 and was dilapidated, ravaged by age and sustaining heavy damage during the Artsakh liberation struggle.

A team of dedicated doctors, nurses, and other health workers unwaveringly attended to the nearly 5,000 residents in the town and 23,000 people living in Martuni province. The hospital took care of an additional 30 rural communities in the province. The hospital in Martuni serves over 1,300 patients and 18,000 outpatients annually. With the dilapidated condition of the hospital, it could not face the pressing needs, approximately 40-percent increase in the upcoming years.

The need to have a new hospital was pressing. The cost of building a new hospital was estimated to be \$1.2 million. To realize the project, the government of Karabagh contributed \$600,000, the Armenian Medical Fund, USA and Armenia Fund USA, each agreed to participate with \$300,000.

The goal was to make the hospital state of the art, equipped with pediatric, surgery, infectious disease (including thoracic and pulmonary diseases) departments, as well as therapeutic and auxiliary departments in addition to laboratories, diagnostic units and radiology screening.

Construction began in November 2011 and the opening was celebrated in May 2013.

The new hospital consists of a two-story structure with a total area of 2,470 square meters. It will be a state-of-the art facility, fully equipped to provide a range of modern health services. The basement of the new hospital will house various storage and service rooms. The first floor will host a reception hall, an emergency room and an intensive-care unit, and polyclinic, diagnostic, infectious disease

and administrative departments. The second floor will include the departments of surgery, therapy and gynecology. The hospital's electric substation and heating and air-conditioning systems will allow the hospital to run more efficiently. The complex will also feature a sizeable beautifully landscape for patient use and the aging road leading to the hospital will be leveled and repaved with new asphalt.

The executive director, Dr. Gasparyan, stated, "this is a great leap forward and it fills a critical healthcare need in the region." He's also hopeful that the new hospital will finally allow him to complete his medical staff by hiring an obstetrician-gynecologist, an ear-nose-throat specialist, and a neuropathologist. "Once our equipment and staff shortages are addressed, we will be able to offer a broad spectrum of medical services, right here in Martuni." Future plans include to have a physical therapy department. The hospital will be able to accommodate up to 22 patients and as much as 60 outpatients a day.

"The new Martuni Hospital is the second medical facility to be built in Artsakh through the efforts of the Armenian community of the Eastern United States," said Ara Vardanyan, the executive director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. "The first such facility was the Stepanakert Polyclinic, which ever since its construction nine years ago, has played an invaluable role in the health maintenance of the local population. We are extremely gratified that the future Martuni Hospital will in turn benefit the communities of Martuni and surrounding areas."

## TB Among Workers Heading Abroad

In 2010, the number of newly-diagnosed TB cases was 41.3 per 100,000 population; it was estimated that approximately 9.4 percent of these new cases were multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB). Moreover, approximately 43.0 percent of previously treated TB cases became MDR-TB in 2011. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) statistics for 2011, 21 cases of extremely-drug resistant TB (XDR-TB) were found in Armenia. WHO has classified Armenia as having a high rate of DR-TB.

With regard to migrant workers, 91 percent of migrant workers of Armenia work in the Russian Federation (RF); many of them work in

regions with the highest rates of TB prevalence. The percent of TB-HIV/AIDS co-morbidity among the participants was 4.7 times higher than among all TB patients in Armenia.

AMF-USA, the Center of Health Services (CHS) of the American University of Armenia (AUA) and the Ministry of Health of Armenia (MOH) have embarked on a critical area of major health concern to Armenia, namely Working Migrants and TB in Armenia.

The study was an operational research focusing on cross-sectional assessment of TB related knowledge, attitude, and practices among migrant workers throughout Armenia, who have had TB in the past four years and worked outside Armenia for more than three months.

The project also looked at migrants' access and utilization of TB services in Armenia and in a host country of work.

The Center for Health Services Research and Development (CHSR) of the American University of Armenia (AUA) implemented the Household TB Infection Control Pilot Project in 2012, in collaboration with the National TB Control Program (NTP) of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia and with support from the Armenian Medical Fund, USA.

In total, 136 TB patients and their family members participated in 90-minute interactive counseling sessions conducted for each family using a training manual designed for the training and counseling, a flipchart, supplemental materials, and TB brochures.

On behalf of the Board of Directors: Vahe Balouzian, president, Andrew Torigian, vice president, Mesrob Odian, PhD, treasurer, Herand Markarian, PhD, executive secretary, George Dermksian, MD, Khoren Nalbandian RPh, Greg Toufayan, and Kim Hekimian, PhD, the Armenian Medical Fund, USA expresses its deepest thanks to all those who have made donations.

The Martuni Hospital needs furnishing, diagnostic equipments and laboratory instrumentations.

The expansion of the migrant workers TB study to cover all the provinces of Armenia is a crucial health determinant.

Those interested in contributing may get in touch with AMF-USA either by email: [armedfund@yahoo.com](mailto:armedfund@yahoo.com) or by mail: 160 Waters Edge, Congers, NY 10920.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Ararat Church Welcomes New Pastor

SALEM, N.H. — The Ararat Armenian Congregational Church, located at 2 Salem St., celebrated its 100th anniversary and welcomed a new pastor and his family to the community.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, several Armenian families purchased farms in Salem. Traveling the long distance to attend church in Lawrence, Massachusetts was a hardship for



New pastor Sam Katchikian, middle, with Rev. John Moksosian, left, and Rev. Dr. Ara Heghinian

them. In October 1912, a meeting of all Armenians in the area took place, and a building committee was formed. The Northeastern Street Railway Company granted a parcel of land on Salem Street and the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ provided financial assistance. Construction was completed in July of 1913 and the church was dedicated on November 12, 1913.

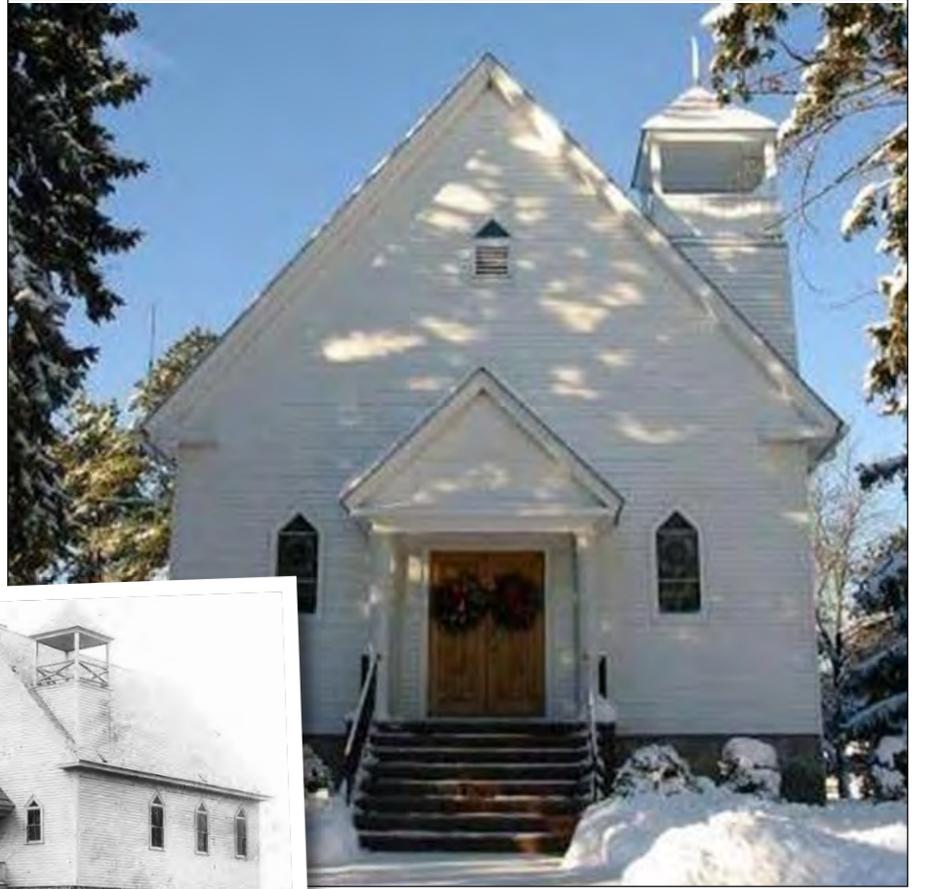
Many of the church's present members are descendants of the original 19 founders; some

of them still maintain family farms in Salem.

Much has changed over the past 100 years. Farmland was replaced by shopping malls; the Lawrence church merged with the Salem church and eventually services were conducted in English instead of Armenian. But the church continues to serve its parishioners. The church boasts an active youth group. Some of its members are sixth generation Americans, who proudly honor their Armenian faith and heritage.

On Sunday November 3, the church welcomed Pastor Sam Katchikian. The pastor with his wife Jen Katchikian and their newborn daughter relocated to Salem from Canada. Present for Katchikian's first sermon were representations of the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

Following the church service, a celebration banquet was held at the nearby Tuscan Kitchen restaurant. Guests enjoyed a hearty buffet and danced to musical selections by the Boston Kef Ensemble. Sarah Gilman, a fifth-generation member of the Ararat Church, presented an overview of the church's history. Throughout the afternoon, guests enjoyed a slideshow of more than 500 photos from events in the life of the church which played on the restaurant's many screens.



The church today and in 1913

The presentation was prepared by Salem High School student Jack Brunelle, who collected photos from church members.

Katchikian thanked those gathered for the warm welcome and the opportunity to lead the

church into its second century.

New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan issued a commendation, recognizing the Ararat Church for its faithful service and dedication to its community and state.

## OBITUARY

### Margaret M. (Maggie) Zakarian

PAXTON, Mass. — Margaret M. (Maggie) Zakarian formerly of Paxton and Highland Beach, Fla., passed away November 9, on her 89th birthday, with her family by her side.

She was predeceased by her husband of 65 years, Asbed "Ozzie" Zakarian. She leaves her niece, Susan Atamian, and her husband,



Edward, of Shrewsbury; niece Melanie Samsel and her husband, James, of Sutton and nephew, James Jamgochian, and his wife, Marilyn, of Milford, Conn.

Maggie and Asbed Zakarian were like second parents to James, Melanie and Susan.

In addition to her nephew and nieces, she leaves her sister, Shamiram "Rose" Jamgochian, six "grandchildren," Cristina Feden and husband, Jeffrey, Elizabeth Beck and husband, Ray, Lauren Fletcher and husband, Eddy, Rick Jamgochian and wife, Grace, Ross and Kirk Atamian and "great-grandchildren" Aubrey, Preston, Kenley Margaret and Elizabeth. She was predeceased by nephew Richard Jamgochian, brother-in-law Hagop "Jack" Jamgochian and sister-in-law Berjoohie Zakarian.

Margaret Zakarian was born in Worcester to Kachador and Anna Manooshian. She was a graduate of Commerce High and Becker Jr. College. She spent her early career with Massachusetts Blue Cross and Blue Shield, rising to the position of executive supervisor. She was the corporate treasurer and instrumental in the founding and success of Wirefab, a wire and metal products manufacturing company established by her husband in Worcester, soon to celebrate its 60th anniversary.

Her greatest joy in life was her family. She and her husband loved to travel together. She played the violin and was an accomplished baker.

She was active in the Armenian Church of Our Saviour in Worcester, where she chaired many Diocesan Assemblies and was Women's Guild chairperson. She and her husband were recognized by the Catholicos of All Armenians for their service and generosity to the Armenian Church, receiving the Saint Nerses Shnorhali Medal, and the Saint Gregory Medal and Encyclical, the highest honor bestowed upon a lay person by the head of the Armenian Church. In addition to dedicated service to her church, she supported the Armenian Assembly, St. Vartan Camp, St. Nersess Seminary, Fund for Armenian Relief, Armenian Library and Museum of America, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, Armenian Heritage Park and the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

The family thanks Rev. Aved Terzian, pastor of the Armenian Church of Our Saviour, for his love and support over these many years.

She was also a member of the Daughters of Vartan, Santoukht Oyttag Worcester for 45 years and Nakhgin Avak Treasurer (1977-1979) and Dirouhie (matron) of Santoukht (1979-1981).

Her funeral was held on Thursday, November 14, at the Armenian Church of Our Saviour. Funeral services were presided over by Archbishop Nourhan Manougian, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Armenian Church of Our Saviour, 87 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School Celebrates Armenian Culture

CULTURE, from page 4

Armenians in the center of Yerevan. This was followed by a group recitation by Anahit Toumajan's eighth-grade students who presented Maro Markarian's "Armenian Letters" and Vahan Tekeyan's "Poem in Homage of the Armenian Language." Then, 12th graders Ani Papazian and Celine Hana recited Yeghishe Charents' "My Sweet Armenia."

The second half of the program was devoted to the French-Armenian singer, composer and actor Charles Aznavour. Four graduating seniors (Grace Torossian, Jonathan Kakos, Ethan Stepanian and Irene Petou) recited translations of Aznavour's songs in English, after which the student body watched performances of the chanteur at various stages in his career. The excitement reached a fever pitch when

Aznavour's famous song, *Dance in the Old Fashioned Way*, was being played and suddenly, 12th-grade students Chris Kourtjian, Jonathan Kakos, Viken Yeranossian, Ethan Stepanian and Chris Aznavour politely invited

their classmates Irene Petou, Celine Hana, Rvanda Shammamie, Tamar Kalandjian and Tamar Krikorian to dance on the stage.

At the conclusion of the program, High School Principal Dr. Hosep Torossian congratulated all the participants.

lated all the participants.

For the second time in a row, the Manoogian high school has been recognized as one of the best secondary schools in America by US News and World Report.



The seniors at the school

## Hye Geen Group Tackles Topic of Keeping Culture, Language in the West

PRESERVATION, from page 4

She recalled how Armenian women had the courage and wisdom to gather the entire family and gradually build the foundation of new communities in the Middle Eastern cities right after the Genocide, as in Aleppo, Beirut, Alexandria or Cairo, where at the time, Armenian men were few and scarce. She added that women have played an important role in supporting the Armenian Church, schools and cultural activities. History has shown that Armenian women adapt quickly to their surroundings wherever that might be. Moreover, She stressed that "Women are the mortar between the bricks that hold the community together." They are capable of bringing people together to blend the different generations with each other as they have done for so long within the family circle. Through the centuries they have developed an innate and keen sense of direction towards the betterment of the self as well as family and community. Necessity of course is the mother of innovations.

It was a successful event, it was well attended and the presenters had come well prepared.

AGBU Hye Geen will take the initiative and follow the footsteps of the women who fought to preserve Armenian identity after the Genocide, who gathered their families to rebuild communities. Hye Geen wants to start with a Coalition of Armenian Women to pledge their support to strengthen the community by trying to resolve common problems.

(Sona Yacoubian is the founder and chairperson of AGBU Hye Geen)

## Trinity Christmas Bazaar to Be Held in December

By Seta A. Buchter

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston will usher in the holiday season with its annual Trinity Christmas Bazaar, on Friday, December 6, and Saturday, December 7, in the Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St. Bazaar hours are Friday, from 3 to 9 p.m., and Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Bazaar co-chairmen are Gregory A. Kolligian Jr. and Ara Hollisian, chairman and vice-chairman of Holy Trinity's Parish Council, respectively. Along with their committees, they have been working tirelessly since the summer to ensure that this year's Bazaar offers something for everyone from the young to the young-at-heart including new booths and menu options.

The Bazaar's traditional favorites will include the ever bountiful Farmer's Market with fresh fruits and vegetables; the "Country Store" with nuts and sweets; the exciting Sports Silent Auction, where you will be able to bid on Boston's favorite team tickets and sports Memorabilia; "Second Time Around;" "The Punch is Right" for Kids; Jewelry; the Sweet

Candy Shoppe; Books; and ArmenianVendor.com. New booths this year are Made in Armenia Direct and Oak Street Embroidery. The Bazaar is the perfect time to do your Christmas shopping.

Making his annual visit to the Bazaar is Santa Claus who will be stopping by on Saturday, December 7, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., to greet children of all ages and to pose for pictures.

The Trinity Christmas Bazaar would not be complete without Armenian gourmet foods, delicacies and pastries that will be sold at various booths.

Armenian dinners will be served on Friday night from 4 to 7:30 p.m., and on Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Kheyma will be offered on Saturday only. Take-out meals and an a la carte menu will also be available.

On Saturday, December 7, Santa's Playland will provide an array of engaging activities for children ages 4 to 12, in the Peter Adamian Hall. From 10 to 11:45 a.m., there will be a variety of fun filled activities including painting wooden ornaments, decorating Christmas sugar cookies, face-painting, playing musical instruments, writing a letter to Santa, the Mystery Walk, and a separate play room for chil-

dren under 3. Carnival games will include basketball, beanbag toss, golf, washer toss, Plinko, the balloon pop and, more. New this year, from 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m., is "Curious Creatures" – a live, interactive, educational animal program for children featuring a variety of exotic and unusual animals along with many fascinating, fun facts. Admission for the morning's activities and program is \$5 per child. Carnival game tickets are 50 cents each or 5 for \$2 with prizes for all. Please note that during the "Curious Creatures" program, the carnival games will be closed down.

Raffle tickets are available for purchase, \$5 each, \$25.00 for six or \$50 for 12. First prize is a 64GB iPad; second prize, 32GB iPad and third prize, 3' x 5' Bokhara Persian Oriental Rug.

A limited number of Super Raffle tickets at \$100 each are still available. Only 150 tickets will be sold. First prize is \$2,500; second prize, \$1,000; 3rd prize, \$500 and 4th prize, \$500. Tickets may be purchased by calling the Holy Trinity church office or emailing [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org).

The Bazaar Committee invites the entire community. For further information, contact the church office, email [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org), or log onto [www.htaac.org](http://www.htaac.org).

## Apartment for sale in Yerevan, Charbakh area.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Grammy Award-Winner Arto Tunçboyacyan Headlines AGBU Armenian Jazz Concert

NEW YORK – A glass bottle and a kitchen pot are not typical musical instruments, but the AGBU concert, Armenian Jazz with Arto and Friends, was not your typical event. The evening, organized by the AGBU Performing Arts Department (PAD) and sponsored by the AGBU New York Special Events Committee (NYSEC), brought together Grammy award-winning artist Arto Tunçboyacyan and rising young talents. Using household items and more conventional instruments, they created a sold-out show in downtown New York.

The event, held on Sunday, October 27, was the first of its kind to put Tunçboyacyan, a renowned percussionist, composer and vocalist, on stage with up-and-coming local musicians. They included Noah Garabedian (bass); Michael Sarian (trumpet); Lucy Yeghiazaryan (violin, vocals) and Tatev Yeghiazaryan (keyboards, piano, vocals). Before an audience of nearly 300 guests, the ensemble paid tribute to the late Paul Motian, the celebrated Armenian drummer, bandleader and composer.

Regarded as one of the most important jazz musicians of the past five decades, Motian's presence was felt throughout the night. In between sets, Tunçboyacyan, who created the genre avant-garde folk music and performed with Motian, stated, "what I experienced with Paul Motian and his music was that he added his own cultural seasoning. This is the meaning of avant-garde folk music, that you extend your imagination with your life experiences without losing your cultural seasoning." Praising the concert's success, he continued, "I think this event was a great step for our culture. Hopefully we can continue to offer a new form of avant-garde folk music."

The artists made their own contributions to the genre, performing pieces that coupled contemporary jazz with more traditional Armenian sounds. Lucy Yeghiazaryan's rendition of Motian's *Owl of Cranston* was followed by her untitled piece based on Armenian folk melodies. Later, Yeghiazaryan presented a jazz interpretation of *Nazani* by Sayat Nova. Yeghiazaryan, who works with her septet Soundsketch, as well as the ensemble the YYSisters, remarked, "I am thankful for my Armenian heritage and love of classical, jazz and other styles, which shape the music I write. It's always interesting to see what happens when you combine traditional melodies with non-traditional instruments, and playing alongside Arto was wonderful and spontaneous."

For AGBU Performing Arts Department (PAD) Director Hayk Arsenyan, the evening was part of a broader effort to bring Armenian music to a larger audience. "Providing opportunities for established and emerging artists of different generations to collaborate is central to the AGBU Performing Arts Department's work," he commented. "As we connect Armenian artists around the globe with their culture, we are also pleased to help carve out a space for Armenian jazz here in New York City, the jazz capital of the world."

The program was one of many organized by AGBU across the US and abroad. On Saturday, December 7, the AGBU New York Special Events Committee will present its sixth Annual Performing Artists in Concert at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. The event will commemorate the 25th anniversary of the earthquake that devastated Armenia. Tickets can now be purchased by calling AGBU, the Carnegie Hall Box Office or by visiting [www.carnegiehall.org](http://www.carnegiehall.org).



An ensemble of emerging artists takes the stage together in New York City for the AGBU event Armenian Jazz with Arto and Friends. From left are, Tatev Yeghiazaryan, Noah Garabedian, Lucy Yeghiazaryan and Michael Sarian.



Grammy award-winning artist Arto Tunçboyacyan performs using a glass bottle..



Tatev Yeghiazaryan, left, and Lucy Yeghiazaryan

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Since its inception in 2001, TCA's 'Sponsor a Teacher' program has raised over \$563,000 and reached out to 4,464 teachers and school workers in Armenia and Karabagh.



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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Hassan Çemal:

## Breakfast Meeting with Turkish Writer At TCA Center in Englewood Cliffs

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J. — On Saturday, November 9, at the invitation of the Armenian Democratic Liberal party (ADL), Hassan Çemal was the guest at a breakfast meeting at the Tekeyan Cultural Association Center.



Hasan Çemal

Çemal is the grandson of Jemal Pasha, one of the masterminds of the Armenian Genocide. He presented his book, *1915: Armenian Genocide*, in the Turkish language. There were several representatives of other prominent organizations, such as the Armenian Assembly of America and the Knights of Vartan. A question-and-answer period followed Çemal's presentation.

Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian offered opening remarks and welcomed all to the program. The prologue of Çemal's book had been translated

book, specifically over the use of the word "genocide," as he was preparing his speech in Los Angeles in March 2011.

He spoke about how he questioned himself about the reasons why he could not bring himself to utter the word, as he kept writing it in the margin and crossing it out several times, even though he had signed the petition that apologizes to the Armenians. He said that in his column in *Milliyet* newspaper on April 24, 2011, the title of which was, "I share the Armenians Grief over 24th of April." Moreover, he did not think that the act commemorated on April 24 was a genocide. He indicated that the Union and Progress party, which ruled the Ottoman Empire in 1915, had created "The Special Organization" that was considered deep state, did to the Armenians was planned and deliberate.

He believed that this constituted a veritable crime against humanity, and that the repudiation of this bloody legacy would not bring honor to Turkey. He still evaded the debate on genocide.

He quoted his close friend, Hrant Dink: "I know what happened to my ancestors. Some of you call this a 'massacre,' some a 'genocide,' some 'deportation' and some a 'tragedy.' My ancestors called it a 'slaughter' in the Anatolian idiom."

He questioned himself about what word to use, by rationalizing "the actions of a state that totally destroys its own citizens, and especially the most vulnerable among them, without regard as to whether they are children, women or the elderly, from the land where they have grown roots, and hurls them en routes uncharted and unfathomable, and if as a result of this, a great part of the people vanish, what aspect of humanity would then explain our squabbling over what words to use to characterize this state of things."

He agonized over the word, and questioned himself if he had a deep-rooted problem with the word "genocide," and why was he not able to say and write what he sincerely believed, in actual terms? Was it because it was taboo or fear from



From left, Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian, Shoghig Chalian, Vartan Ilanjan, Hasan Çemal, Hagop Vartivarian, Hilda Hartounian, Helen Misk and Harout Chatmajian

into Western Armenian and was read by Hagop Atamian, who had recently arrived from Syria. The full Western Armenian translation of the book will be published soon by the TCA. Following this, Hrant Gulian, of the Knights of Vartan, introduced the guest of honor, who had presented his book to about 250 attendees the previous evening at St. Leon.

The next guest speaker was Sahak Sargsyan of the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations. He emphasized the significance of such meetings, to influence the international opinion regarding the genocide of the Armenians, especially as the centennial draws near.

Çemal then read a presentation of his book in the English language. He started by speaking about his inner conflict regarding the title of his

his own community, Article 301 of the penal code or the stigma of treason?

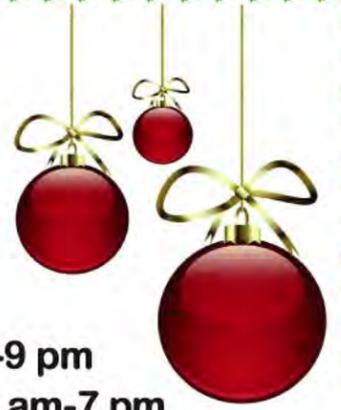
Looking back on his 67 years, and for years, defending democracy and freedom of expression, and yet, here he was, questioning the reasons for his difficulty in expressing his opinions. "I recognize your grief, I understand your grief and I am here to share your grief over the Genocide," he said.

This statement had a powerful impact on each and every attendee, especially as it came from the grandson of one of the planners of the Genocide.

Hasan Çemal's daring admission of the Genocide of the Armenians, is very much heart-felt by all Armenians.

— Shoghig Chalian

## 2013 Trinity Christmas BAZAAR



Friday, December 6, 3 pm-9 pm  
Saturday, December 7, 10 am-7 pm

### Delicious Armenian Dinners

Lamb Shish, Losh, Chicken Kebab, and Combos;  
Kheyma (Saturday lunch only)  
*served*

Friday, 4:00 pm-7:30 pm  
Saturday, 11:30 am-6:00 pm

Take-out meals and A La Carte Menu Available

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### Armenian Gourmet Foods, Delicacies and Pastries

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Khadayif, Spinach Boreg, Tourshi, Manti, Hummus,  
Simit, Yalanchi, Anoushabour, Sini Kufta, Vospov  
Kheyma, Lahmejune and more!

### Booths and Vendors

Super Country Store, Farmer's Market, Candy Shoppe,  
Sports Silent Auction, The "Punch is Right" for Kids,  
Jewelry, "Second Time Around," Used Books, Made in  
Armenia Direct, Oak Street Embroidery, Raffles,  
ArmenianVendor.com and more!

### Santa's Playland

Saturday, December 7  
Peter Adamian Hall

for children ages 4-12  
Admission: \$5 per child

10:00 a.m.-11:45 a.m.  
Various Fun-Filled Activities  
and

#### Carnival Games

Tickets for Games  
50 cents or 5 for \$2  
With Prizes for All

11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

#### "Curious Creatures"

Live, interactive, educational,  
animal program featuring  
a variety of exotic and unusual  
animals along with many  
fascinating, fun facts



### Visit with Santa

And have your photo  
taken too!

Saturday, December 7  
1:30 pm-2:30 pm

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Cultural Hall

Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston  
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# Arts & Living

## Pianist Kariné Poghosyan Makes Boston Debut at SOAR Fundraiser

By Laura Michael

ARLINGTON, Mass. — The Armenian Cultural Foundation (ACF) was the setting on November 14 for the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR) Boston Chapter's musical evening fundraiser featuring pianist Kariné Poghosyan. The concert, which was Poghosyan's debut in the Boston area, honored the 110th anniversary of composer Aram Khachaturian. Ballet transcriptions and solo piano works by Khachaturian were included in the program.

Poghosyan has been described as "extraordinary" and a "larger-than-life" pianist who gets



Kariné Poghosyan

"to the heart of the music." *New York Concert Review* called her a pianist who "has that spark." The New York-based pianist, who is originally from Yerevan, dazzled the audience with her exquisite performance. She played with such exuberance and heartfelt emotion

that Khachaturian's masterpieces came alive and concertgoers were completely spellbound and entranced in the melodies.

After the concert, SOAR Boston Chairperson Charles Garo Arakelian spoke briefly about the history of the organization, a five-year-old non-profit founded by George and Erika Yacoubian, Jr. of Philadelphia after the adoption of their daughter from Armenia. Arakelian also thanked everyone for coming as proceeds from ticket sales will be used to purchase much needed supplies for Armenian orphans in Armenia, Artsakh, Javakhh, Lebanon and Syria.

SOAR Boston Vice Chair Laura Michael also gave a brief presentation regarding SOAR's Sponsorship Program, which allows an individual to personally connect with an orphaned Armenian child or adult. The entire donation benefits the sponsored orphan — no funds support the facilities or SOAR generally, and SOAR assumes the cost of all wiring fees. The donor will receive a photo and personal profile of the sponsored individual, updates on his/her health and notes, drawings or correspondence from him/her, at least twice a year. In the case of young children or children with special needs, updates will come from the facility directors. If interested in sponsoring an orphan, visit <http://soar-us.org/enroll.html>

Guests were also invited to enjoy a post-concert wine and cheese reception with the pianist. Wine was donated by Tutunjian Estate Vineyards and hors d'oeuvres by Sevan Bakery. Poghosyan graciously mingled with guests and SOAR board members throughout the reception.

The Boston Chapter, which was originally the New England Chapter, became part of the SOAR family in February 2009. Several board members have visited various orphanages in Armenia, giving the chapter significant insight into the orphanages and their short- and long-term needs. The Board of Directors is composed of Arakelian, Michael, Secretary Talin Bekelian, Treasurer Marina Arakelian and Members Amy Croot, John Elloian, Svetlana Javakhyan, Theresa Nibi, Cheryl Ourfalian Smith, Bob Semonian, Richard Simonian and Armen Vartanyan. After several successful events in 2013, SOAR Boston will host their next fundraiser in early 2014. For more information visit <http://soar-us.org> or email [laurajmichael@gmail.com](mailto:laurajmichael@gmail.com).



Graphic artist, parishioner and Women's Guild Executive Committee member, Sonya Moroukian, created all of the artwork for the cookbook, including the cover.

## Women's Guild of St. Peter Armenian Church Publishes Cookbook

WATERVLIET, N.Y. — The Women's Guild Executive Committee of St. Peter Armenian Church recently commissioned a cookbook with tried and true, popular Armenian recipes, simply titled *Armenian Cookbook*.

More than 200 collected recipes comprise the hard cover, spiral-bound cookbook. From breads and breakfast to desserts and all in-between, women from the parish submitted their family favorites. In addition, there is also a section of Women's Guild specialties in bulk quantities such as *choreg* (rolls), rice *pilaf*, *bulgur dolma* (stuffed peppers), *kadayif* (cream-filled shredded phyllo) and *tahin hatz* (Lenten bread).

Eight tabbed sections make up the book. Each tab divider is designed with the Armenian tri-color and lettering describing the section. The artwork for the entire book — including the full-color cover that highlights both the foods and parish — was created by graphic artist and Women's Guild member, Sonya Moroukian.

The six-member cookbook committee, consisting of Valerie Demarest, Sharon Foley, Lucy Morton, Nellie Sargasyan-Pittman, Charlotte Sevazlian and Dolly Shamlan, worked nearly a year on this publication and said they are proud to have it released in time for the gift-giving season.

The book also contains a dedication to all those women both living and deceased, who gave of their time, energy and talents for the benefit of St. Peter Armenian Church; a brief history of the St. Peter Women's Guild; a poem written by Parish Priest, Rev. Stepanos Doudoukjian and Armenian culinary terms. Towards the back of the book, there are also helpful cooking tips.

"I believe that this well thought-out and beautifully-designed cookbook will be a favorite for generations to come," shared Foley. "It will make the perfect gift for the holidays and other special occasions."

These newly published cookbooks are available for \$20 each plus \$5 shipping and handling. Cookbooks will also be available for sale at the annual Women's Guild sponsored Holiday Bazaar on December 7 and 8. For more information or to order a book, email [stpeter.armch@prodigy.net](mailto:stpeter.armch@prodigy.net) or call the church office.

In 1997, the St. Peter Women's Guild also published *Flavors from Our House on the Hill* that included both Armenian and non-Armenian recipes. This new cookbook is the 100th anniversary edition to commemorate the Women's Guild 1914 establishment in this parish community.

From breads and breakfast to desserts and all in-between, women from the parish submitted their family favorites.

## Hayk Demoyan Discusses Genocide Museum Developments

By Deborah Hay

WINNEPEG, Canada — Dr. Hayk Demoyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute (AGMI) in Yerevan, was interviewed by Deborah Hay, program coordinator of the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute) on November 11 during his recent trip to Canada.

Demoyan has produced 13 publications, the most recent of which appeared in Russian, titled *Turkey's Foreign Policy and the Karabagh Conflict*, which is based on his doctoral thesis. He is also secretary of the State Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

**Deborah Hay (DH):** Dr. Demoyan, welcome to Canada. Is this your first visit to our country? Please tell us about your activities here.

**Hayk Demoyan (HD):** This is my first visit to Canada, and it is very important for me, as director of the AGMI, to be here for the purpose of signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute of the National Academy of Sciences. In addition, I took the opportunity to also meet with local centennial committees formed for the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide in 2015, as well as Armenian communities at large, to update them on the work being done at the AGMI and plans for centennial commemoration activities.

In this respect, I must say that the Zoryan Institute has already made an important contribution towards the 2015 Centennial by facilitating the relationship between the two museums. It took the initiative using its good offices to bring an official of the CMHR, Dr. Clint Curle, to visit the AGMI earlier this year, to acquaint himself with Armenia's culture and history, and especially the Armenian Genocide. This was very important because the CMHR will be one of the most significant places in the world to have a permanent exhibition on the Armenian Genocide. During the visit, we confirmed that the AGMI and CMHR have so many interests in common that it made sense for us to establish an official working agreement. The Zoryan Institute has been instrumental as a facilitator and liaison between the two museums and will maintain an ongoing role in that capacity. I am sure this cooperation will facilitate the development of joint projects between the AGMI and the CMHR.

**DH:** How far back do your relations with the Zoryan Institute go?

**HD:** I first encountered the Zoryan Institute when I met its executive director, George Shirinian, in Yerevan in 2005. When I was appointed Director of the AGMI, it seemed natural that the two organizations should explore areas of mutual interest and cooperation. Zoryan has always been generous in providing the museum copies of its publications and has participated in our conferences. In 2012, we established an agreement to cooperate in the areas of research, publication, and student exchanges. That year, Zoryan provided scholarships for two student-staff members of the AGMI to travel to Canada and attend its renowned Genocide and Human Rights University Program run at the University of Toronto. This year, another three of our student-staff were sponsored to attend. They all reported that the experience was excellent for them, both academically, and personally. Zoryan staff continues to provide materials, assistance and advice to AGMI's researchers. In see MUSEUM, page 11



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## California Lutheran University Selects *Black Dog Of Fate* as Required Reading For Freshmen

By Taleen Babayan

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — California Lutheran University became the fifth US university to use Peter Balakian's memoir, *Black Dog of Fate*, as the required book for nearly one thousand incoming freshmen. In recent years, the College of New Jersey, University of Connecticut, Sienna College and Colgate University have also made the book a core text or a required first year read.

California Lutheran University (CLU), a private liberal arts institution located in

them learn about what it might mean to participate in a global citizenship."

Bond said that Balakian's "elegant, moving and critical memoir," fit the program needs perfectly because it helped demonstrate to students the importance of discovering purpose. He noted that Balakian's "younger self" does not occur through one event or moment, instead evolving over time and after much struggle, reflection and historical and family research.

"This process isn't merely academic or narrowly personal," said Bond. "Both are fused together, as they should be, and that fits our sense of educating the "whole person."

While *Black Dog of Fate* is a personal story, focusing on Balakian's life growing up in American-Armenian family in the 1950s and '60s, unaware that his family had been victims of the Armenian Genocide, Bond remarked that the memoir went beyond that and helps others understand the importance of being aware of one's past "for the purpose of contributing to a higher good."

"Professor Balakian is showing our students one viable and noble way for developing a calling beyond mere self interest, and also one that engages the self in the context of being a global citizen," said Bond.

Balakian discussed his book with incoming freshman at CLU at the start of the academic year. The book won the 1998 PEN/Martha Albrand Prize for the Art of the Memoir and has been through dozens of printings. It was published in a 10th anniversary edition, with the addition of two new chapters several years ago.



Close to 1,000 students read *Black Dog of Fate* at California Lutheran University.

Southern California, found Balakian's memoir a compelling way to inaugurate its Freshman-Year Experience Program, which aims to integrate students into the school's academic way of life.

"In the First-Year Seminar, we are especially committed to assisting students in choosing and developing an ethical stance in their academic and professional commitments," said Prof. James Bond, associate professor of English at CLU and director of the Freshman-Year Experience Program. "A key emphasis in fostering an emerging ethical stance is helping

## Ani Batikian Gives London Concert

LONDON — Ani Batikian gave a concert on November 14 at the EBRD Hall, accompanied by pianist Roland Roberts.

The program included works by Mozart, Dvorak, Khachaturian, Bartok, Baghdasaryan and de Sarasate. She captured the hearts of London music lovers and critics with her outstanding performance.

The Armenia-born violinist entered Yerevan State Conservatoire in Armenia at the age of 15, one of the youngest students ever to study there and supported by a local scholarship. At the age of 19 she received her undergraduate degree and at the age of 20 a post-graduate diploma with honors.

In 2003 she received a full scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London, graduating with a DipRAM for outstanding performance as well as winning the top prize for violin. Later she was a student of Salvatore Accardo in Cremona, Italy.

Batikian has received numerous awards and prizes. As a recipient of the Dewar Award, she performed in The Dewar Arts Awards fifth anniversary concert held in the Scottish Parliament. She has performed on BBC Scotland Radio and given concerts at such recognised venues as Edinburgh's Usher Hall, Oxford's Sheldonian Theatre, Glasgow Art Club, Pollok House, Cowdray Hall and London's St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

She has performed as a soloist with Sinfonia Toronto, City of Oxford Orchestra, the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia, Naregatsi Baroque Orchestra, Katrineholm Symphony Orchestra of Sweden, Glasgow Chamber Orchestra and St. James' Orchestra in the UK.

She is also a winner of national and international competitions. She has performed in the Music Alp Festival in France, Levon Chilingirian Festival in Armenia, Schleswig-Holstein Festival in Germany and Cadenza International Summer Music School in England. She has performed chamber music with major musicians as Levon Chilingirian, Ida and Ani Kavafian, David Watkin, as well as the noted Hebrides Ensemble.

Batikian organized the Summer Fest at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, involving students, professionals and leading chamber ensembles in a series of concerts.

From 2007 to 2012, she was a violin lecturer at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Recently she recorded a CD of Armenian and virtuoso violin music.

For more information about her, visit [www.anibatikian.com](http://www.anibatikian.com).



Ani Batikian

## Hayk Demoyan Discusses Genocide Museum Developments

MUSEUM, from page 10

its turn AGMI is very supportive of Zoryan's researchers with necessary materials and consultation.

**DH:** Dr. Demoyan, you have been in charge of the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute for seven years now. Can you give us a brief overview of the developments of the museum during this time, especially in preparation for the Centennial?

**HD:** During my time at the AGMI, I have especially stressed three aspects: the educational role of the museum, representing the Armenian Genocide in a broader human rights context, and international cooperation with other museums and academic organizations. Parallel to this, a great effort has been made to enrich the museum's collection with important and interesting documents and items, in order to include them in conceptually new exhibitions we are working on. As the collection grows, and the museum has more and more visitors, the current construction of new blocks for the museum will enable us to double our exhibition and storage spaces. These activities are an important part of the events dedicated to the centenary of the Armenian Genocide. Parallel to this, publishing activities and the development of numerous traveling exhibitions are planned to show in museum halls and other places worldwide. This is not a full list of our activities which, for sure, will continue after 2015 with new energy and vision.

**DH:** As the secretary of the State Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, you are involved in coordinating activities both in Armenia and the Diaspora. How does your visit to Canada fit into those overall activities?

**HD:** Among the many duties and responsibilities of Secretary, I try to establish contact with

local committees and develop cooperation on a common agenda. My visit to Canada is an excellent example of the positive results that can be achieved when Armenian and Diaspora-based organizations, both academic and otherwise, cooperate.

I'd like to emphasize here that the Centennial Commission's role is not to tell the local committees what to do or what projects to undertake. Rather, it is to support them, coordinate their efforts, and ensure that all activities are done under the umbrella of the local centennial commemorating committees, represented by all community organizations equally. Effective and cordial cooperation among all community organizations will be crucial for the success of the 2015 commemorations.

I'd like to make clear that my activities as Secretary of the State Commission and those as Director of the AGMI do differ. This is particularly critical in Canada, where a Canadian crown corporation, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, is involved in promoting human rights and awareness about five recognized genocides, based on strict academic standards. We at the AGMI, being also an academic institution, will contribute to the CMHR's permanent exhibition from that perspective, providing extensive materials and information about the Armenian Genocide.

The AGMI has been dealing with broad range of topics and activities on the Armenian Genocide for over 18 years, both conducting scientific research and representing its many aspects in educational displays. Together, the AGMI and the CMHR will work on developing new projects, among them new permanent exhibitions, as a new effort to preserve national memory and to raise awareness of the importance of human rights and genocide prevention. For this reason, I consider my visit to Canada as

one of the high points of the AGMI's activities for 2013.

**DH:** You have visited Armenian communities around the world. Do you observe anything different about Canada?

**HD:** One of the significant differences in Canada is that the government here had the moral fortitude to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, despite political pressure to deny it.

Canada is one of the world's greatest proponents of multiculturalism, whereby each of the many ethnic groups in this country can preserve their particular heritage and lifestyle while still being good Canadians. Canada enables and encourages all ethnic groups to share their own history, memory and values with one another. Canada has a significant Armenian community, with churches, political, cultural and social organizations. You have here an established, international, academic institute dealing with issues relating to the Armenian Genocide, Diaspora, and Armenia for the past thirty years. My research shows that despite many challenges of assimilation, the Armenian community here is a strong, contributing component of the Canadian mosaic.

We were very pleased to see CMHR officials from Canada visit Armenia in order to strengthen their understanding of the Armenian Genocide. During the visit, we found we had a meeting of minds in our goal of combating the violation of human rights, and we have now made official the cooperation between our two museums. I am sure the exhibits in the CMHR will help Canadians learn more about the Armenian Genocide and understand why their government officially recognizes it.

**DH:** What is the objective of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two museums?

**HD:** The agreement will trigger the exchange of ideas, experiences, information and materials, exhibitions, sharing of research and advice, cooperation to advance the academic study of human rights, the Armenian Genocide and its effects, and processes seeking justice and reconciliation. It can serve as a model for other museums around the world for how to approach the Armenian Genocide through the lens of universal human rights.

Because of the enormity of the subject, I am sure that synergies with the CMHR will benefit us in Armenia in conceptualizing new approaches and new permanent and travelling exhibits, particularly the emphasis on human rights. At the same time, we hope to be helpful to the CMHR in developing the Armenian section of their exhibits, where the Zoryan institute will also be involved in an ongoing role as liaison and facilitator.

This agreement can be seen as a new starting point for education of the Armenian Genocide and for fighting against denial of the Genocide in world history. I hope it may also serve as the starting point for the establishment of a network of museums that deal with genocide and human rights. This is especially critical for 2014, a year when many countries will commemorate the centennial of the WWI, under cover of which Ottoman Turkey committed the Armenian Genocide.

**DH:** Is there anything you would like to add in closing?

**HD:** Yes. My wish is that I come back to Canada as soon as possible to realize joint initiatives and programs, both in the academic field and also regarding community activities related to the centennial. I have no doubt our joint efforts will produce successful results in pursuit of our mission.



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Zangakner Brings Art and Discipline to Young Charges

see ZANGAKNER, from page 1

Konjoyan, who moved to the US from Armenia in 2009, founded the group in 2010 at the Fein Academy in Marblehead, where she works. She has a background in childhood education and realized that if she wants to reach children, she should start early, as young as age 3, when they start to express themselves well.

"It is those years that the children have something to say to the audience," she said in a recent interview.

"The Zangakner project base is song and at the same time, we have acting and dance," she explained. "The goal of Zangakner is to encourage children's multidisciplinary cultivation."

She admits she can be strict with the children, as she assumes they can understand as much as they are given. She said that children in her older group often come up with ideas on how to interpret stage characters. "We try to do



Hasmik Konjoyan

new interpretations of old tales and stories," she said.

Konjoyan has set ideas about children and what it means to teach them – and it does not mean talking down to them. "Teaching children is a calling. It is about understanding their spirit. If you work with children, you need to work on their level. You need to elevate yourself to the kids' level. They mean what they say. They have love and they are carefree," she said.

"I see the result and the children work very hard," she said. "The children are very dedicated."

In fact, she said, the role of the teacher is vital, and as important as those of parents. "I am so grateful to my parents and my teachers. Whatever I have, it is thanks to them," she said. "When the parents and teachers stay connected, they can work better."

Now after many years as a teacher, Konjoyan has the chance to have the role of the parent in the equation, with her 20-month-old daughter.

The Zangakner motto, she said, is "Faith, Love and Dedication." Konjoyan stressed the



The Zangakner performers

She sang in the Vocal Instrumental Ensemble Arevik of the State Radio and TV, later in Elegia and Ave Maria Chamber Choirs, as well as in the Chamber Choir of the Armenian National Radio. She was a singer, co-founder and manager of the Luys Vocal Quintet, which has recorded and produced "Light to the World" (2003) and "Come to Light" (2004) CDs in Germany. Later, "Luys" CD (2009), produced in the US, was nominated as a "Best Choral Album of the Year" in numerous competitions around the world. She was a conductor of the Children Choir and a winner of the Golden Prize in the Pupil Art Competition-Festival in 2006. This was followed by "Children to the World" CD production in Germany (2007).

Konjoyan was awarded a "Model Teacher" award (Youth Centers, Yerevan, 2007), as well as a "Leading Teacher" designation (Youth Centers, Yerevan, 2009).

Zangakner has two upcoming performances. First, on Sunday, December 8, at 5 p.m., at Watertown Middle School, it will present "2014: A Musical Odyssey," featuring the humorous children's story, *Mekneri Joghoveh* by A. Khnkoyan (The Meeting of the Mice) in the first part and seasonal music in the second half.

"We will present it and all the characters were chosen by the kids and created thanks to



After a show last year, the singers and Hasmik Konjoyan enjoy themselves.

children's Christmas concert and tree-lighting ceremony.

"Zangakner is only taking their first steps to the professional stage. There is more to come. I

am so proud to say they are my students," she said.

To learn more about the group, visit its page at [www.facebook.com/Zangakner](http://www.facebook.com/Zangakner)



The members of Zangakner singing on Mother's Day

importance of music education for young children. "In civilized, educated countries, music classes are given importance and are even mandatory at a young age. It has a positive influence on a child's development. Music teaches children about feelings, ambition, discipline and dedication."

Konjoyan graduated with an honors diploma from the Yerevan State Pedagogical University, the Music Department of Aesthetic Education.

their creativity," Konjoyan said. "It is presented in a humorous fashion."

The concert's second part, she said, "is a cultural trip that shows different ways of celebrating New Year's Eves across the world, in different countries. We will present each of those nations' songs and dances."

In addition, Zangakner has been invited to sing at St. Vartan Cathedral in New York City on December 14 at 4 p.m., as part of its chil-

## Yes, We Have: Expanded Published

LOS ANGELES – *Yes, We Have: Expanded*, a sweeping overview of Armenian contributions to the US, has been released by the Armenian Arts Fund.

The 800-plus-page volume comprises more than 700 short biographies and US patents awarded to Americans of Armenian descent. The book also includes a number of more extensive entries on such luminaries as Oscar H. Banker (Asadoor Sarafian), father of the automatic transmission and inventor of the multicolor printing press, among others.

"Even after five years of research, I am still pleasantly surprised by the enormous scale and variety of Armenian accomplishments in America; it's simply breathtaking," said Stepan Partamian, who compiled the book.

*Yes, We Have: Expanded* is the fifth, and most extensive, installment of a series of books sharing the *Yes, We Have* title. Partamian launched the series in 2009.

As with previous installments of the



series, proceeds from the sale of *Yes, We Have: Expanded* will support an ongoing research and publishing project titled *The Armenian World*.

Partamian appealed to the worldwide Armenian community to support this project by purchasing copies of *Yes, We Have: Expanded* or making a financial contribution through [www.letuseducate.com](http://www.letuseducate.com). *Yes, We Have: Expanded*, priced at \$40 plus shipping and handling, is available from [TheArmenian.com](http://TheArmenian.com).



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## MASSACHUSETTS

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

**DECEMBER 6 AND 7** — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 3-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Featuring delicious Armenian dinners, a la carte menu and take-out meals; booths and vendors; Armenian gourmet foods, delicacies and pastries; raffles, and more. Saturday only: Santa's Playland, for children ages 4-12, 10 a.m.-11:45 a.m., "Curious Creatures" animal program, 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Admission: \$5 per child. Visit with Santa, 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

**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 8** — Taline, Friends and Santa Armenian Christmas Concert for Children, 3 p.m., Regent Theatre, 7 Medford St., Arlington. Advance \$27. Visit [www.talinemusic.com](http://www.talinemusic.com) or call (818) 730-3487 for more info.

**DECEMBER 15** — Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, Christmas Holiday Concert, 7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Earthquake in Armenia. Composer Konstantin Petrossian, conductor. featured soloists: Victoria Avetisyan, mezzo-soprano, and Yeghishe Manucharyan, tenor. The public is warmly invited to attend this complimentary concert.

## NEW JERSEY

**DECEMBER 31** — St. Thomas Armenian Church New Year's Eve Celebration, 8 p.m., featuring DJ Shant. Serving extensive appetizers, full course dinner, Viennese table at 12 a.m. and free champagne! Donation: \$65 for adults, children 7-12 \$20, children 6 & under free, please reserve early, space is limited. Additional entertainment for children and gifts from Santa. For reservation contact Tanya 201-941-6764, Talar 201-240-8541 or Jacklyn 201-266-4830, Rt. 9W & E. Clinton Avenue, Tenafly.



**On December 1, the Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra will perform a Christmas Holiday Concert at 7 p.m., celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence, RI at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 175 Oaklawn Avenue, Cranston, RI. The event will feature composer Konstantin Petrossian, conductor, featured soloists: Narine Ojakhyan, soprano; Giovanni Formisano, tenor and Nouné Karapetian, soprano. The public is warmly invited to attend this complimentary concert.**

## 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

**DECEMBER 7 AND 8** — St. Peter Armenian Church Annual Bazaar, 11 a.m., 100 Troy-Schenectady Rd. Albany, 12189. Vendors, raffles, photos with Santa, caricaturist Phil Singer and musical entertainment. Sponsorship opportunities available. For more information, contact the church office at [stpeter.armch@prodigy.net](mailto:stpeter.armch@prodigy.net).

**DECEMBER 13** — The Children of Armenia Fund (COAF)

10th Annual Holiday Gala, Cipriani 42nd Street, 110 E. 42nd St., New York City, titled "The Next 10 Is 100," looking back on 10 years of accomplishments. Special Guests, youth from Armenian, Master of Ceremonies Andrea Martin, Emmy and Tony Award winning actress. Cocktails and auction at 7 pm. and dinner at 8, with dancing at 10 p.m. For more information, visit [www.coafkids.org/](http://www.coafkids.org/)

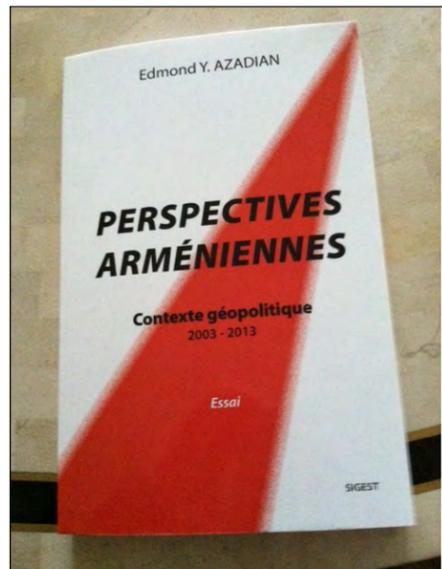
## RHODE ISLAND

**DECEMBER 1** — Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, Christmas Holiday Concert, 7 p.m., Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 175 Oaklawn Avenue, Cranston. Composer Konstantin Petrossian, conductor, featured soloists: Narine Ojakhyan, soprano; Giovanni Formisano, tenor and Nouné Karapetian, soprano. The public is warmly invited to attend this complimentary concert.

## Edmond Azadian's Essay Compilation Published in French

PARIS — A book launch was held on November 13, at the AGBU Alex Manoogian Center here for *Perspectives Armeniennes* (Armenian Perspectives), a collection of editorial essays by Edmond Azadian.

The evening was hosted by the Chobanian Institute in Paris, which was the co-sponsor of



The cover of *Perspectives Armeniennes* by Edmond Azadian

the book along with the Tekeyan Cultural Association. The book has eight chapters and comprises 100 essays extending over 330 pages.

All the essays have been published in English in the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* newspaper in Watertown, with the majority published also in Montreal's trilingual *Abaka* weekly. They were translated by Nicole Papazian, the editor of the French section of *Abaka*.

Some of the essays have also appeared in *Europe-Orient Quarterly* published by the Chobanian Institute.

As the number of the translated articles grew, the founder and director of the Chobanian Institute, Varoujan Sirapian, decided to publish them in book form.

At the reception, Sirapian first introduced Azadian and his latest book. He then invited the author to speak. Reading from a French text, Azadian outlined his philosophy as an editorialist and thanked many of those who had contributed to the French translation of the book, including Sirapian, proofreader Jean Michele Housse and Papazian. Some excerpts were read by actor/director Gerald Papasian. Each segment read was followed by a question-and-answer period.

Following the formal presentations of the book, the author autographed copies which were bought by the participants of the evening, who were later treated to a champagne reception.



From left, Gerald Papasian, Edmond Azadian and Varoujan Sirapian



## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

## A Quarter-Century Has Not Changed Much In the Quake Zone

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Many nations celebrate the glorious events of their history, Armenians tend to commemorate the more dismal pages of their past – the fall of the city of Ani to Seljuks, the Genocide, the earthquake and other chains of tragedy that form Armenian history. Ironically, one of the most exhilarating celebrations is the annual commemoration of the Vartanants War of 451 AD against the Persians; a story of a defeat, but one which Armenians consider it to be the triumph of spirit over a formidable, Godless enemy.

Thus, the stage is set to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Gumri earthquake, which took place in 1988, on December 7, at 11:41 a.m.

The 20th century has not been very charitable to the Armenians. Armenia was barely recovering from the devastation of the first Genocide of the century when in 1925 an earthquake hit Gumri. The city was then called Alexandropol and had become a center of refugee camps. Alexandropol was called the city of orphans, as hundreds of thousands of surviving children of the Genocide were gathered there under the care of international relief agencies. Despite the harsh conditions of early Soviet rule, it was a period of hope and reconstruction. The orphans who had survived the Genocide were hit once more by nature's fury, exactly like the survivors of Baku and Sumgait pogroms who had sought refuge from Azerbaijan in Armenia, only to be hit by the 1988 earthquake.

Children who were born in 1988 are adults today, ready to form their own families, yet many of them are still condemned to live in wretched conditions of *domiks* (temporary shelters), after a quarter century. The epicenter of the 7.8-magnitude earthquake was near the village of Nalband. The nearby town of Spitak was completely razed. All in all, 342 villages were damaged, with 58 them completely destroyed. At the time it was reported that 25,000 people had perished, but many witnesses challenge that figure and place the real number as high as 50,000.

By 1989, 113 countries had provided relief to the tune of \$500 million, while Azeris vandalized some relief trains.

The tragedy happened during a period of political dissent, in the last years of the Soviet Union, when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was visiting Washington. He cut his visit short and returned to the USSR.

While visiting the earthquake-ravaged north of Armenia, some ugly encounters were reported. The Karabagh independence movement had just started and people rallied around the Soviet leader to ask for justice for Karabagh. The Soviet leader scolded them, saying that in such a devastating situation, people were after politics.

Gorbachev pledged \$8 billion for reconstruction, a pledge never fulfilled because of the collapse of the Soviet Empire.

It is ironic that all three tragedies would hit Armenia at the same time: the earthquake, the war in Karabagh and the collapse of the empire.

The Metsamor nuclear power plant, which is located 47 miles from the epicenter of the quake, miraculously survived intact. It stopped functioning, just as it was designed to do in case of a quake. However, international atomic energy experts questioned the wisdom of building the nuclear plant so near the earthquake zone. The idea is frightening – just think back to what recently happened in Fukushima,

Japan, after the devastating tsunami last year.

Many international and humanitarian groups came to the rescue of the Gumri people but since so many national disasters have occurred worldwide, the Armenians have been left to help themselves. The Lincy Foundation, the AGBU, the Aznavour Foundation, Fund For Armenian Relief, the Armenian Relief Society and other groups have been helping the population of northern Armenia recover from the devastation, but after 25 years some numbness has settled in. While many Gumri families agonize still in *domiks*, there is obscene opulence nearby. A recent Versailles-style hotel built in the city next to ruins, by an oligarch is shocking, just as the unfulfilled promises to the stricken families.

The second president of the republic, Robert Kocharian, had pledged during his 1998 campaign to reconstruct the disaster zone entirely by the year 2001. But today, there are still 4500 people still living in *domiks*, while it is rumored that Mr. Kocharian left the presidency with \$10 billion in his son's coffers.

Armenia is located in an earthquake zone, with a fault line running through it. It has been punished by nature many times. Besides the 1925 earthquake the records demonstrate that earthquakes have taken place in Dvin, in 893, during the Seljuk siege of Ani in the 11th century, Cilicia in 1268 and Zangezur in 1931.

An apocryphal story is told by the prominent architect and historian Michael Mazmanian. According to this story, Leonardo Da Vinci had taken refuge in Cilicia in late 15th century, to escape political persecution in his homeland and while he was in Cilicia, an earthquake shook the region and the artist was huddled in an Armenian church with other people where he made some sketches of the church architecture, preserved in his "Armenian Papers." Mr. Mazmanian believed that Da Vinci's Armenian drawings later had an influence on Renaissance architecture. If the story is true, at least one benefit would be generated by the earthquake tragedy. (In a strange aside that shows the workings of the Soviet authorities, Mazmanian had designed the KGB building in Yerevan. On the day of its dedication, after a lavish party, the KGB chief asked that the architect stay back. After that, he spent the next 17 years in Siberia, his Soviet-style reward!)

Today Gumri still is a gaping wound in Armenia. Its population of 220,000 before the earthquake has been reduced to 125,000, not necessarily as a result of the earthquake, but also because of emigration. The birthrate of 5,000 per 100,000 of population before the earthquake has dropped to 2,000. Crime is rampant and no one is able to control the feud between the oligarchs in the city.

But the citizens of Gumri have been endowed with an unusual sense of humor. Gumri, Leninakan or Alexandropol, as it has been known throughout history, has been traditionally a hub of Armenian culture. The city has produced theater companies and put on operas; many poets have hailed from the city. The earthquake has created some gallows humor.

After so many tragedies and potential tragedies, one may wonder why people still would live in that Godforsaken part of the world: the answer is summarized in the statement of a survivor called Hrach: "We cannot blame people who have abandoned our land. Who would take care of it? It's ours, we have to keep on living, fighting, overcoming, making it prosper, be strong, my children are my greatest treasure, maybe tomorrow their lives will be more challenging, but better than ours, that's for sure."

The wisdom of common people always prevails.

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## The Church of France Has to Meet the Challenge

By Sarkis Bedoian

The consecration of the Armenian cathedral in Moscow, part of a very large complex including a school, a conference center, a museum and the seat of the prelacy, is a historic event of political significance. The cathedral, in a typically Armenian style, is decorated with bas-reliefs and friezes carved from a traditional kind of tuff, accounting for its monumental character. The interior is not affected by this aspect, since the walls and ceilings are covered by frescoes in the pastel shades giving the faithful the impression of floating between Heaven and Earth, protected by a Christ with open arms under the cupola, 60 meters high. The political meaning of such a structure is flagrant: the bulk of the Diaspora is equipping

itself with the means needed for retaining its Armenian nature and its values, but also and above all for supporting the great battles of the Armenian nation.

It was no coincidence that the President of the Republic of Armenia and the President of Karabagh were there, that the Russian Orthodox patriarch, Kirill I, was at the altar alongside the Catholicos, and that almost 1,500 guests attended an evening concert in Saint-Savior Cathedral to hear Armenian virtuosos and the Holy Echmiadzin choir accompanied by the prestigious Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra. It took the determination of the Moscow prelate, Ezras Nersisyan, appointed in 2001 to head an insolvent diocese, to tackle that stagnating project head-on. The catholicos' charisma was also needed to make the eminent benefactors aware of the essential role played by the church as a com-

munity link.

It is true that the action of Karekin II will mark the history of the church, as well as that of the entire nation. Upon completion of some immense projects, the Holy See will again become the spiritual center "of the first Christian Nation": the 22 acres assigned to Echmiadzin are going to become 128; the majority of the 15 historic buildings will be renovated and 15 new ones will be put up: a new pontifical see, a Matenadaran (manuscript library), a Vanadon (clergy housing), a baptistery, a sports and youth complex, a new mausoleum church, an open-air altar, a set of offices for the economic departments, etc. As to the spiritual and educational aspect, the 120 seminarians will become 250, and there will be a new seminary in Sevan and then another in Harijavank. Eight youth houses will

continued on next page



## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## A Proud Moment for Armenians: Courthouse Named after Gov. Deukmejian

Two prominent Armenian-Americans were recently honored with exceptional accolades, making Armenians proud of their accomplishments.

In July, the US Navy announced that a future guided-missile destroyer will bear the name of Paul Ignatius (Iknadosian), the highest ranking Armenian-American official in the Federal Government. He served for eight years in the presidential administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson as Assistant Secretary of the Army, Undersecretary of the Army, Assistant Secretary of Defense, and finally in 1967, Secretary of the Navy.

Last week, a new superior court building in Long Beach, California, was named after Governor George Deukmejian. The official dedication ceremony of the \$339 million court complex took place on November 21.

Governor Deukmejian served the State of California with distinction for 28 years. After narrowly winning his first election as governor in 1982, he was reelected in a landslide in 1986. Earlier, he had served for four years as Attorney General (1979-83), twelve years as State Senator (1967-1979) and Senate Majority Leader (1969), and four

years as Assemblyman (1963-67). In 1988, then Vice President and presidential candidate George H.W. Bush considered Governor Deukmejian as a possible vice presidential running mate. However, Deukmejian asked that his name be withdrawn from consideration in order not to leave California in the hands of a Democratic Lieutenant Governor. Had he not declined and had been picked for the Republican ticket, Deukmejian would have been elected Vice President along with Pres. Bush later that year. Subsequently, he could have run for President, and if successful, become the first US President of Armenian descent!

To honor the governor, over 500 government officials, former colleagues, friends, family members and distinguished guests attended the courthouse dedication ceremony. Congratulatory remarks were delivered by members of the California Supreme Court, Superior Court of Los Angeles County, US Congress, State Assembly, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Mayor of Long Beach, and Bar Association of Long Beach.

The half million square feet Deukmejian Courthouse includes 31 courtrooms, administrative space, detention facilities, offices for county justice agencies, and compatible retail space. The building features the latest safety and environmental innovations with functional public spaces for the efficient conduct of business and movement of people throughout the building.

Successive speakers emphasized Governor Deukmejian's strong family values and his Armenian heritage. California Supreme Court Justice Marvin Baxter (Bagdasarian), who had worked for Governor Deukmejian as Appointments Secretary, mentioned in his keynote remarks that the governor had "moved from New York to California in 1955, armed only with his law degree and high principles instilled by his Armenian-American immigrant parents.... He was an outstanding legislator, attorney general, and governor. He

earned and retained our respect through more than a quarter century of excellent public service at the highest levels."

Governor Deukmejian, a native of the village of Menands, New York, was named Courken at birth. His father, Courken, was from Aintab and mother, Elbiss (Alice), from Arapkir.

Justice Baxter recalled that the Judicial Council of California had decided with a unanimous vote to name the new building as the Governor George Deukmejian Courthouse. "This action reflects the bipartisan respect and support" the governor enjoys "throughout this nation and state," Baxter proudly proclaimed.

The 35th governor of California was the last speaker of the evening before unveiling the dedication plaque, surrounded by his wife Gloria, their children and grandchildren.

"So many parties skillfully have combined their talent and expertise to produce a truly extraordinary new courthouse building in Long Beach," stated Governor Deukmejian. "It is an outstanding addition to the skyline and to the fabric of the city, and I am proud and pleased to have my name associated with it." He called the dedication ceremony "a wonderful, touching and humbling capstone to my life and career in public service."

In a jovial mood, Governor Deukmejian made self-deprecating remarks about his well-known "lack of charisma," and his long Armenian last name which he had never considered changing or shortening. "My only concern has been that my name wouldn't fit" on the courthouse building, the governor joked to the great amusement of the guests.

One would hope that the 85-year-old governor would soon make his first trip to Armenia. It is important that the young generation of Armenians in the homeland get to know him as an outstanding role model and inspiration for their future accomplishments.

from previous page

I come into being, distributing 1,200 meals a day to the poorest part of the population and to old people, and there will be a school in Echmiadzin and an orphanage in Yerevan. The priests' tasks will be enlarged to take in visits to prisoners and soldiers ... The lay state will approve a law including courses about the Armenian religion in the secondary cycle.

This spiritual explosion is going to heighten people's awareness: almost 150 new churches will be consecrated during this pontificate, and the ranks of the clergy will expand by more than 300 members, making a total of 700 servants – half of them in the Diaspora – thus meeting the needs of a population deprived by 70 years of Communism and disoriented by the sects' discourse.

The sister churches are becoming aware of this new current: in 2001, the Catholicos brought John-Paul II, Alexis II, the Archbishop of Canterbury together in Echmiadzin – religious leaders representing more than two billion Christians in the world! France was not absent from this movement, as the diocese was created: the democratic by-laws put an end to the election "ad vitam" of the prelate, and the catholicos waived his prerogative of appointing the "apostolic delegate."

The destiny of the Church of France was then in the hands of the faithful guided by new prelate, Norvan Zakarian, who promised "evangelization of the population, organization of the catechism and training of the elites." People expected some initiatives for combatting the sketchiness of the teaching of Armenian in France, to organize the catechism at national level, to build new churches, to emphasize the priests' pastoral mission. But nothing happened on those matters – or very little. The absurd Nice conflict should have been settled by direct and frank dialog, not by sending out lawyers and the same applies to the situation of the Strasbourg parish, forcing the priest in charge there to look for paid employment in order to survive – a fact known to Mgr. Norvan – which should have been managed by the latter even if that entailed sending that priest back to the Holy See if he became "unmanageable."

But let's avoid politicization of a micro-phenomenon: when a political party begins referring to "the centralizing management, the unacceptable misuse of power" of the Catholicos, it is easy to see the resurgence of the old demons of division of the churches championed by that party during the Cold War in order to combat "the Communist propaganda tool, according to it.

For 30 years I served the Church of France as president of an ephoria, a council or a general assembly. Nobody has ever made any partisan suggestion whatsoever to us as concerns our action, and similarly I never received any voting instructions whatsoever at the time of the election of Karekin II. The Church of France must meet the challenge of again instilling faith in the young generations that do not speak Armenian and have distanced themselves from that church, take up its original teaching mission, open up to its faithful in a spirit of dialog concerning the major themes of modern society, and above all be in the vanguard of or even initiate the great political struggles of the Diaspora. Let's wager that the new prelate will accept his task.

(Sarkis Bedoian is a director of financial companies.)

## Plush hotels and caviar diplomacy: How Azerbaijan's elite wooed MPs

By Jamie Doward and Charlotte Latimer

HancockIt operates from an exclusive Mayfair address and throws lavish parties for politicians of all parties.

Ostensibly an independent trade body, the European Azerbaijan Society (Teas) regularly takes members of parliament (MPs), members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and government officials on trips to the former Soviet state, where they are put up in luxury hotels.

On previous trips, members of the Council of Europe visiting the capital, Baku, are among those to have been treated royally. According to one insider: "These are real vacations and there are many expensive gifts. Gifts are mostly expensive silk carpets, gold and silver items, drinks, caviar and money. In Baku, a common gift is two kilograms of caviar."

But human rights groups are questioning the society's use of "caviar diplomacy" to enhance the image of one of the most autocratic countries in the world, at a time when it is plagued by allegations of rigged elections and harsh treatment towards independent journalists and opposition parties.

The society is accused of being a mouthpiece for the country's elite families who own much of its oil and mining interests. It is chaired by Tale Heydarov, the London-based son of Kamaladdin Heydarov, the minister for emergency situations, who is one of President Ilham Aliyev's inner circle and is often described as the most powerful man in Azerbaijan.

"On the face of it, Teas may seem to be an independent organization," said Tom Mayne of Global Witness. "But the fact that its chair is Tale Heydarov can only raise questions about the society's impartiality and its aims."

The society, which boasts the well-connected political lobbyist Lionel Zetter as director, provides secretarial support to parliament's all-party group on Azerbaijan and has assiduously cultivated relationships with politicians from all sides, throwing glitzy receptions for MPs at their parties' annual conferences.

The society has given at least £71,740 to Tory MPs to cover trips to the country. It has also spent at least £9,700 on sending Labour MPs to the country, regularly judged to be one of the most corrupt in the world by Transparency International, while the new Labour pressure group, Progress, has held an event that enjoyed its sponsorship. In May 2011 a delegation of parliamentarians as well as peers went on a five-day visit to Azerbaijan, paid for by the society.

Separately in the same year, Baroness Eccles, and Viscount Eccles, members of the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the body responsible for monitoring Azerbaijan elections, took trips to the country which were funded by the society.

The often-extravagant nature of the welcome accorded to visiting dignitaries seems to flow from the country's first family.

According to leaked US embassy cables: "First lady Mehriban Aliyeva appears to have had substantial cos-

metic surgery, presumably overseas, and wears dresses that would be considered provocative even in the western world ...

"The first lady and her two daughters hosted second lady Lynne Cheney for dinner in September 2008. Prior to the second lady's arrival, one Secret Service agent asked 'which one of those is the mother?' Embosffs [embassy officials] and White House staff studied the three for several moments, then an Embosff said, 'Well, logically the mother would probably stand in the middle.'"

The country's own cosmetic enhancement, crafted by the European Azerbaijan Society, has seen it win support in high places. Prince Andrew is a regular visitor to the country and last year David Cameron welcomed Aliyev to Downing Street before the Olympics.

The society is also influential in British business circles. Last month it organized a high-profile trade conference promoting the UK's involvement in Azerbaijan. BP is one of the main players in a consortium intending to bring Caspian gas from the European border of Turkey to Italy.

But critics question whether the UK should focus more on the country's human rights abuses than its gas reserves. "The Azerbaijani government is engaged in a deliberate, abusive strategy to limit dissent," Human Rights Watch said in September.

Amnesty International recently called on the Azerbaijani authorities to halt their "crackdown on freedom of expression" after a journalist and a writer who criticized the government were both jailed.

However, British MPs who were part of the PACE delegation that observed Azerbaijan's elections last month, in which President Aliyev was voted in for a third term, countered such concerns.

"I have been to at least 10 polling stations," said Portsmouth South MP Mike Hancock, whose aide and lover was once paid £3,000 for work she did for the society. "I have not seen even minor shortcomings that people might complain of."

Tory MP Robert Walter, who led the team of independent observers and praised Azerbaijan for having "a large presence of national and international observers for the 2013 presidential election", said that politicians should be suspicious of third-party groups representing foreign powers.

"I have throughout my parliamentary career avoided association with groups funded by or acting on behalf of foreign governments," Walter said. "As vice-chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Human Rights Group, I think this has been a wise decision."

(This analysis originally appeared in the *Guardian*.)



# Dark Days Recalled on Eve of 25th Anniversary of Quake

QUAKE, from page 1

gone, there were servicemen everywhere... My house was gone, my mom was buried under the ruins, my little son had survived by miracle. From our building only, on Aragats street, 78 died," the 65-year-old doctor brings to light the memories buried deep in his heart for two and a half decades, unwilling to tell more of his personal story, rather focusing on his professional challenges.

In 1988, Grigoryan worked as a chief doctor at Akhuryan maternity hospital, 19 km from Gumri. In the chaos of the earthquake aftermath his profession was of top importance. He recalled how the new wing of Gumri's maternity hospital had turned into a pile of stones, while the old wing had collapsed only partially. Fifty one of his colleagues died in the ruins of the hospital, as well as 48 mothers and infants; there were some, however, who managed to escape, holding their babies in their arms.

Still, despite the devastating consequences of the natural calamity, life took its course. While many were looking for their missing family members, mourning their losses, new lives were born at the dusk of December 7 in once-beautiful Gumri (which was then Leninakan), now turned into mountains of stone and concrete, coming to prove that life would go on against all odds. Still, life would never be the same again.

"That day 12 babies were born in Gumri," recalled the obstetrician, who was 40 at that time.

Together with the surviving doctors they offered obstetric assistance in Gumri at the surviving "Railway" hospital building; medical tools from the surgical department were given to the obstetricians, delivery chairs were extracted from under the maternity hospital ruins, also the undamaged equipment and property from Akhuryan hospital was transferred here. Later tents were put out and turned into a temporary maternity hospital; then the hospital moved to one of the buildings belonging to the Textile factory; and further moved to a domik in 1989-1990.

Today chief obstetrician of the region, Grigoryan brings birthrate statistics of Gumri from the past 25 years. Before 1988, when Gumri's population was 200,000, there were

4,500 children born every year. After the earthquake, in 1989-1991, the birthrate reached 5,000. The tempo dropped, however, during the dark and cold years (after independence, when Armenia, still recovering from the earthquake that took at least 25,000 lives, was in a state of war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabagh, in an almost complete blockade, challenged with energy crisis). The birthrate fell gradually by 200-300, hitting a very low index of 1,500 in 1996.

"Three times less than after the earthquake. In 1998-2012, that 1,500 went up to 2,000 and has been steady at that level for the past five years, which is normal per today's 100,000 population," he said.

He offers an explanation of why birthrates grew especially after the earthquake.

"Gumri had 25,000 human casualties, the majority of them were children. Those women, still in reproductive age, who had no more maternity plans, bore children again to replace the ones they had lost. They were not young, still they did it. Those who had lost two children, had two babies within the following three years, that's the reason why the number of births rose. We had a 48-year-old woman delivering a child. In the years of crisis the births dropped again," he said.

Since 2001, a new maternity hospital has been functioning as the gift of the Polish government to the people of Gumri.

He recalled the extreme working conditions of the years that followed the disaster and makes an attempt to lighten up the mood with humor. He tells a funny story that happened at the hospital: "It was during the dark years. A nurse was sitting in the maternity hospital's reception room covered with two blankets and a white robe on top. She had a candle as the only source of light. A pregnant woman came to check-in, the nurse took out the inquiry form to fill – surname, date of birth, which pregnancy, and there was a question whether the water had broken. Before the woman could answer, her husband interfered, saying: 'No, doctor, I let it run not to freeze' [pipes would freeze so people often had to let the water run to prevent that]. That's how we worked," Grigoryan tells with laughter.

He said with regret that nowadays families do not have more than two children; out of the 2,000 annual births, only every 200th is a third child.

As an expert in this field, he prescribes his own remedy: "To every next child in a family the state should give 2.25 million drams (roughly \$5,000-\$6,000) at least, to motivate families and reduce the army of unemployed, because if they have no jobs, how can you tell someone living off social benefits to have a second or third child..."

Giving his assessment of what's been done to revive Gumri during all these years after the earthquake, Grigoryan said a lot more could have

been accomplished, and believes that today's generation is a broken one. He said, "God only knows which generation may help reviving it."

"Maybe the third? Our grandchildren's children? After the 1926 earthquake, there were barracks, which were taken away only in 1954; it will take at least 30 years [for the domiks to disappear]. There was the Soviet Union then [when the state provided housing], while now we are the ones building out houses," said Grigoryan, with frustration over the fact that even after all this time there are homeless families in Gumri, living in temporary tin-houses, somehow resisting the

## Ties to ADL Imperil Patrick Judge Nominee

JUDGE, from page 1

Berman is a board member of the New England chapter of the ADL. Devaney called the ADL hypocritical because it refuses to recognize the Armenian Genocide. She said she has a bias against the ADL that she would be unable to put aside when considering the nominee.

Berman, a Weston resident who is a partner at the Boston law firm Looney & Grossman, was questioned for more than four hours by the council last week. He graduated from Dartmouth College and received his law degree from The University of Michigan Law School. His practice focuses on commercial litigation, trying several cases in Superior Court each year.

Jeffrey Robbins, an attorney at the Boston law firm Mintz Levin and a member of the ADL, said that Devaney and Berman "are exactly in accord," on the Armenian Genocide, saying Berman led the effort of the New England chapter in demanding the national organization change its position.

Berman, 49, told councilors he was tempted to resign from the ADL, but changed his mind because the organization does great work in so many other areas. He thought one commission member resigning would not make a difference, and decided to stay and work for change from the inside.

Councilor Jennie Caissie had broader concerns

about the ADL. She said she objected to letters the ADL writes to the US Senate Judiciary Committee prior to judicial candidate hearings. Caissie called the letters "bona fide litmus tests" on issues ranging from abortion to the First Amendment. She said she is troubled by the positions of the ADL, and criticized Berman for not withdrawing from the group.

Caissie said she was concerned Berman would be an activist judge.

Caissie asked why the governor was postponing. "I don't know of any reason why this nominee should not be voted on today," she said. "This is breaking with the council's precedence."

Patrick said the constitution gave him the authority to set the agenda and "to bring forth for you the votes when I'm ready for those votes to be taken." He said the council will have the chance to vote.

"I am going to work hard to get the votes. I have not had an opportunity to do that," Patrick said. "I think this is a candidate who is more than ready to serve."

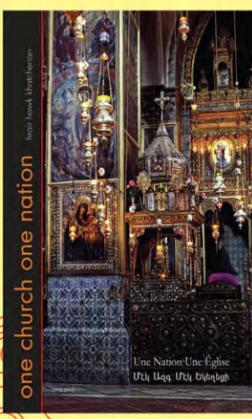
Devaney said she thinks the council members will not change their minds. "To prolong this serves no purpose," she said.

Councilor Terrence Kennedy said he supported Berman, but added he did not think the vote would change over the next week.



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**Saturday, December 7, 2013**

1pm

Includes Lunch with Taline  
Before Show

\$30 Admission

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