

# Sargisian Wins Re-Election

## ADL US and Canada District Committee Congratulates President

By David M. Herszenhorn

YEREVAN (New York Times and Armenpress) — President Serge Sargisian easily won re-election to a second five-year term, according to preliminary returns released on Tuesday by the Central Election Commission.

The returns showed Sargisian with about 59 percent of the vote, enough to win the presidency outright and avoid a runoff. The former foreign minister, Raffi Hovannessian, was a distant second with about 37 percent, the returns showed.

Armenians went to the polls on Monday with Sargisian heavily favored to win and maintain stability in a country that has become an increasingly important, if uneasy, United States ally in monitoring Iran's nuclear ambitions.

A veteran politician, Sargisian, 58, is generally viewed as having presided over modest economic improvements in recent years, even as the country has struggled because of closed borders with Turkey and

Azerbaijan, its enemy in a continuing war over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabagh.

But while Sargisian's victory has been predicted for months, there have been some unexpected developments in the campaign. One challenger, Andreas Ghukasian, a political commentator who manages a radio station in the capital, Yerevan, has been on a hunger strike, demanding that the incumbent be removed from the ballot.

Another challenger, Paruyr A. Hayrikyan, was shot in the shoulder in late January in what the authorities described as an assassination attempt, although there was no known motive. He is a former Soviet dissident who promoted Armenian independence and has run unsuccessfully for president several times.

Hayrikyan briefly considered invoking a constitutional provision to delay the election for two weeks as a result of his injury, but he ultimately decided to allow the bal-



President Serge Sargisian casts his ballot on Tuesday. (New York Times photo)

loting to proceed.

Sargisian's second term will be watched closely for any sign of progress in resolving the war with Azerbaijan and for any indication that Armenia would reduce support for economic sanctions against Iran, as they make life more difficult in both countries.

The conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh continues at a low simmer with periodic

see ELECTION, page 2

## Hovannisian Tells Sargisian to Concede to 'People's Victory'

By Siranuysh Gevorgyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) — Raffi Hovannisian, the official runner-up in the February 18 presidential election, gathered his supporters in Yerevan's central Liberty Square late Tuesday afternoon to declare himself the rightful winner of the election, suggesting that the officially declared president-elect, Serge Sargisian, should concede defeat.

see HOVANNISIAN, page 2



Raffi Hovannisian

## Ninth Anniversary of Guren Margaryan's Murder Commemorated

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — February 19 marked the ninth anniversary of the killing of Armenian armed forces member, Lt. Guren Margaryan.

Margaryan, 26, was hacked to death, while asleep, by a fellow Azerbaijani participant, Lt. Ramil Safarov, in Budapest while the two were enrolled in a three-month English-language course within the framework of NATO-sponsored Partnership for Peace program.

On April 13, 2006, Budapest District Court sentenced Safarov to life in prison for murdering Margaryan. On February 22, 2007, the court rejected the Azerbaijani military officer's appeal against the verdict, precluding the possibility of pardon for 30 years.

By a decree of then-President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, Margaryan was awarded with a posthumous Medal for Courage on February 19, 2005.

In 2012, Safarov was extradited to Azerbaijan, where he was supposed to serve out his sentence, but was instead pardoned by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and treated as a conquering hero.

see MARGARYAN, page 16



Lt. Guren Margaryan



Dr. Arshavir Gundjian addressed the gathering sponsored by the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party in Montreal, in support of President Serge Sargisian. See story and photos on page 7.

## OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Visits Genocide Memorial

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — President of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly Riccardo Migliori visited the Tsitsernakaberd memorial on February 19, to pay tribute to the memory of Armenian Genocide victims.

Migliori laid a wreath at the memorial and observed a moment of silence for the memory of 1.5 million victims. He also visited the Armenian Genocide Institute-Museum, becoming acquainted with the historical documents of the Armenian Genocide. Migliori also planted a tree in the Memory Alley.

Migliori said "The goal of our visit is to get acquainted and understand what really happened in 1915. Many countries are not aware of [the] Armenian Genocide and time is needed in order [for] all [to] recognize Armenian Genocide."

Italy, from where Migliori hails, officially recognized the Armenian Genocide in 2000.

## Azeri Novel Showcases Courage

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Mass persecutions initiated by Azerbaijani authorities against Azerbaijani writer Akram Aylisli are aimed at politicizing literature, said the president of the Writers' Union in Armenia, Levon Ananyan. *Stone Dreams*, a novel on the massacre of the Armenians in Azerbaijan, has become the subject of Azeri criticism.

"The country and environment the author is living and working in is too unfavorable for creating [such] literature pieces," said Ananyan. He added that Aylisli managed to express two decades of anguish in one book.

"*Stone Dreams* is a call targeted to humanity, tolerance and harmony. What happened is a challenge against the regional and balanced development of the world," said Ananyan.

## Kerry to Begin Tour of Europe, Asia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Secretary of State John Kerry will travel to four European countries as well as Turkey, Egypt and the Gulf February 24 to March 6, on his first trip as the top US diplomat, the State Department said on Tuesday.

Kerry will visit London, Berlin, Paris and Rome, where he will attend a gathering of foreign ministers to discuss the civil war in Syria, and then move on to Ankara, Cairo, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi and Doha, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland told reporters at her daily briefing.

Kerry was sworn in as secretary of state on February 1, replacing Hillary Clinton.

## INSIDE

## Impulsive Buy

Page 10

### INDEX

Arts and Living	10
Armenia	2
Community News	4
Editorial	13
International	3



## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Film Festival on ‘Conflict and Reconciliation’

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – An international film festival, titled “Conflict and Reconciliation in the Central-Eastern European Cinema” opened this week in Yerevan. The film “Three Stories of Galicia” opened the festival at the Blue Hall of the Moscow Cinema.

## National Assembly Speaker to Visit Latvia And Estonia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Eduard Sharmazanov, vice president of the National Assembly and head of the Armenia-Estonia Parliamentary Friendship Group, met with Priit Turk, ambassador of Estonia to Armenia on February 15.

Welcoming the ambassador, Sharmazanov expressed satisfaction that Armenian-Estonian relations are going on positively. He informed him that in the National Assembly an Armenian-Estonian Friendship Group has been formed. At the same time he noted that he has invited his Estonian colleagues to visit Armenia and jointly discuss the perspectives of cooperation of the two parliaments. He also reported that the head of the national assembly, Hovik Abrahamyan, will visit Latvia and Estonia in the near future.

Turk noted that during meetings with the president of Armenia and the foreign minister, the development of cooperation in different spheres, particularly, the inter-parliamentary relations of the two countries were highlighted.

He praised Armenia’s efforts toward integration into the European Union (EU).

In the course of the meeting issues concerning the Armenian-Turkish relations and peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabagh problem were also discussed. Sharmazanov praised the Estonian authorities’ balanced position on the NKR issue and supporting its resolution through peaceful negotiations within the Minsk Group framework.

## Border Calm despite Azeri Violations at Contact Line

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The situation at the Karabagh (Artsakh) and Azerbaijan contact line and Armenia-Azerbaijan border remains calm despite intensified tensions in the area, Armenian Defense Ministry spokesman said.

Artsrun Hovhannisyan said that at present, the situation in border villages of Tavush province can be assessed as normal.

The head of Chinari village administration, Samvel Saghoyan, also said no gunshots were heard in the village.

## Ghazanchyan Brings Serbian ‘Virus’

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Yerevan Theater for Young Spectator premiered “The Virus” on February 14. The author is prominent modern Serbian playwright Sinisa Kovacevic.

In a conversation with Armenpress, the Art Director of the theatre Hakob Ghazanchyan stated that he became acquainted with the Russian version of the play during his visit to Ulyanovsk.

He noted: “Serbian theater expert Dragana Boskovic suggested [I] read the play. I should say that I liked the play very much. Some time later I had an opportunity to meet the author in Belgrade. And we came to an agreement that I [would] stage his play beginning [this] year, after I [came] back to Yerevan.”

Among other things Ghazanchyan noted that the Serbian playwright demanded no royalties. He also noted that Kovacevic was present at the Yerevan premier.

# Sargisian Wins Re-Election

ELECTION, from page 1  
violence along the line of contact, including frequent exchanges of gunfire and occasional casualties. Peace talks led by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, which is led by the United States, Russia and France, have mostly stalled.

Armenia has traditionally relied heavily on Iran as an economic partner, but those ties are now constrained by the sanctions over Iran’s nuclear program. Iran insists its purposes are peaceful, but Western powers accuse Tehran of seeking the technology to build nuclear weapons and have imposed a broadening array of United States, United Nations and European Union sanctions.

Armenia has supported the measures, while continuing to engage in some trade that circumvents them, like swapping its electricity for natural gas from Iran with no money changing hands.

“Having Iran as your economic life-line is not a good position to be in,” said one senior Western diplomat, who asked not to be identified to avoid creating any tension with players in the region.

“They have been very, very careful, very, very good, at some cost to Armenia, to honor international UN, US and EU sanctions against Iran,” the diplomat said. “But it’s increasingly difficult for them to do that.”

International election observers have fanned out across Armenia in recent days. Initial reports suggested that Sargisian’s party had made some inappropriate use of government resources to promote his candidacy, a common criticism of incumbent candidates in former Soviet republics. But observers say the overall political climate has improved, with opposition candidates,

for instance, enjoying better access to coverage by the news media.

Still, Armenia faces a peculiar problem when it comes to potential election fraud because of the hundreds of thousands of Armenian citizens who live abroad, including in the United States – one of the largest percentage diasporas in the world given Armenia’s population of 3.1 million, according to the World Bank.

With few exceptions, absentee balloting is not permitted. That means the Armenian election rolls are filled with the names of people who will not appear in person to vote, creating the potential for fraudulent use of those names.

Sargisian faced relatively weak competition after his two strongest potential challengers and their parties announced last year that they would not compete – former President Levon Ter-Petrosian of the Armenian National Congress and Gagik Tsarukyan of the Prosperous Armenia Party. Tsarukyan is a wealthy businessman, lawmaker and the head of Armenia’s national Olympic committee.

Sargisian and his wife, Rita, paused Monday to speak with reporters after voting in Yerevan. “I have voted for the security of our citizens and our families,” he said, according to aysor.am, an Armenian news site.

### Congratulatory Messages

Sargisian received several messages of congratulations upon winning the election. Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin called Sargisian after the official preliminary results of the Armenian presidential elections had been publicized.

Putin said he is confident that the Armenian-Russian strategic partnership, cooperation, bilateral relations,

which are growing, will keep developing steadily.

The president of the European People’s Party (EPP), Wilfried Martens, also congratulated Sargisian.

He said, “I warmly congratulate President Sargisian for his election victory and I look forward to personally congratulating him at the Enlarged EPP Summit of March 14. Also, I am pleased with the fact that these elections were the country’s best-ever organized and were mostly in line with international standards, as stated by the international election observation missions (OSCE, CoE, EP, ODHIR). I am confident that the country’s democratization process will be further enhanced under the leadership of President Sargisian.”

This victory represents clear support from the citizens for the democratic and economic forward movement, he said.

Martens also congratulated Heritage party leader Raffi Hovannisian for running a good campaign and scoring a strong election result.

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the center-right, which currently includes 74 member-parties from 40 countries, the presidents of the European Commission and the European Council, 15 EU and 6 non-EU heads of state and government, 13 members of the European Commission and the largest Group in the European Parliament.

Also, in the US, Edmond Y. Azadian and Papken Megerian, cochairmen of the ADL District Committee of US and Canada, congratulated the president. The two said, “In this political climate, we consider Serge Sargisian to be the conscience of Armenian and its best hope for a stable future.”

## Hovannisian Tells Sargisian to Concede to ‘People’s Victory’

HOVANNISIAN, from page 1

Hovannisian, a 53-year-old US-born lawyer who leads the opposition Heritage party, gave Sargisian until 5 p.m. Wednesday to accept “the people’s victory” and start the process of the transition of power to the people. Otherwise, he warned, the incumbent needs to be prepared for Hovannisian and his supporters to take “further steps.”

The opposition candidate did not elaborate on what those steps might be.

According to the preliminary results of the Monday ballot announced by the Central Election Commission earlier today President Sargisian polled around 59 percent of the vote, while Hovannisian gained close to 37 percent of Armenian voters. Hovannisian, however, stated on Tuesday that the election was rigged with “widespread fraud” and that he was the real “elected president.”

“It is clear to everyone that the Armenian people gained an 80 to 20 victory yesterday, it has celebrated and will make a reality our national civil victory. No one will take this victory from our conscience, voice and our constitutional right. It belongs not to Raffi or Serge, or others, but it belongs to the Armenians, to all of our citizens, and let no one, whatever his name or position is, dare take this

right away from our people,” said Hovannisian.

“Close to midnight yesterday I urged our main competitor, Mr. Sargisian, our current president, who had a great contribution to the Karabagh liberation and statecraft, to become the first president in 20 years to have the right, courage and morality to accept the people’s victory. Unfortunately, he hasn’t been able to do that. It’s not [too] late yet. Tomorrow, at 5 p.m., we will all meet here for a pan-national rally and before that I [invite] Mr. Sargisian to have a public or private meeting with me so that together we [can] organize the transition of power to the people of Armenia.”

Supporters and activists who came to the meeting with Hovannisian – their number reaching some 3,000 – occasionally chanted “Raffi President” or “Raffi, Elected President.” Those attending Hovannisian’s rally were mostly middle-aged and older, although there were also young supporters among the participants.

Speaking about the violations that took place during the election, Hovannisian said that they were occurring everywhere and that eventually it proved to be a rigged and unfair election, failing to reflect the will of the people. Meanwhile, international observers

who monitored the Armenian elections said on Tuesday that the “serious” violations they observed could not have affected the overall outcome.

Hovannisian insisted that such an opinion could not be foisted on the Armenian people, adding that if Sargisian met his demand, he would be “forgiven on behalf of the Armenian people and the law.”

“I want to shake hands with Sargisian and tomorrow, before 5 p.m., accept his congratulations on the victory of the Armenian people,” said the Heritage Party leader.

Hovannisian also declared that he was ready to cooperate with all political forces in forming a future government.

“All can become forces participating in the future legitimate government of national accord. I reckon that the time for partisanship has gone and civil society and political forces must come and participate not in the future government, but must become a factor of public governance. For five years there will be Heritage, Dashnaktsutyun, the Armenian National Congress, Prosperous Armenia, the Republicans and mostly non-partisan names, who will serve. But if they deviate from the letter of the law, do business at the expense of people, they will have to answer for that,” said Hovannisian.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Thousands of 'Secret Armenians' Living in Anatolia

ISTANBUL (*Hurriyet*) – Hundreds of thousands of Turkish citizens living in Istanbul and in eastern Anatolia are concealing their Armenian roots, an Argentine journalist of Armenian origin has said.

## Greeks Eye Resettling in Turkey, Says Patriarch

ISTANBUL (*Hurriyet*) – Many Greek citizens are looking to move to Turkey due to the dire economic situation back home, Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew has said, as reported by the daily, *Milliyet*.

According to the Orthodox spiritual leader, both Greeks who left the country in the past, as well as those with familial roots in the country, are seeking to go east to Turkey, the daily reported earlier this week.

"Although Prime Minister [Recep Tayyip Erdogan] invites [the Greeks of Istanbul origin], it is not easy for them to return. But I wish they would return. In Athens, there is a federation for those who are of Istanbul origin. This federation demands the return of their citizenship from the Turkish government," Bartholomew said.

Turkish citizenship could be granted to them in order to encourage their migration to Turkey, he said, but added that the move would not be enough on its own because those who have departed possess no land or real estate in Turkey.

"[Their properties] were either sold or occupied. Their children do not speak Turkish. They study at foreign schools in Athens, Thessaloniki, or other parts of Europe. They need to find a job and have some guarantee for future," the patriarch said.

Bartholomew also emphasized the significance of the Fener Greek Patriarchate. "It is a 17-century-old institution, the oldest establishment in the Balkans and the region. So, the future of this institution also concerns Turkey," Bartholomew said.

Bartholomew also referred to the events in September 6-7, 1955, during which many minorities of Turkey, including the Greeks, had to leave Turkey as a result of pogroms against them, reducing Turkey's Greek population from 120,000 to just a few thousand.

The patriarch also touched upon a recent parliamentary question about the reopening of Hagia Sophia as a place for Muslim worship.

"We want [Hagia Sophia] to remain a museum. It served as a Christian church for nearly a millennium.

If it is to be opened for prayers, it should be a Christian church again, since it was established to serve as a church, not as a mosque," he said.

Avedis Hadjian, a reporter for La Nacion, one of the biggest newspapers in Argentina, said there was a significant community of a "mysterious minority known as secret Armenians" that have converted to Sunni Islam or Alevism in an effort to blend into society.

Hadjian said no one knew the precise number of "secret Armenians" in the country since a majority of them are afraid to reveal their true identity.

"A secret Armenian in Palu [in the eastern province of Elazı] told me that that Turkey is still a dangerous place for Armenians," he said, adding the secret Armenians typically chose to eschew contact with members of the Armenian community that are especially active in Istanbul.

"Some of them reject their identity even though they know and accept that their grandfather or grandmother was an Armenian, while others hide it from their children," Hadjian said.

Many of the "secret Armenians" live difficult lives, he said, recounting the story of Rafael Atinci, "the last Armenian" of the northern province of Amasya, who was brought up as a Christian. Altinci, who studied in the same Armenian secondary school as slain Turkish-Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, later converted to Islam and raised his daughter as a Turk despite considering himself an Armenian.

Another "secret Armenian," Mehmet Arkan, a lawyer in the southeastern province of Diyarbakır, told Hadjian that he did not know his roots until he was 7 years old.

"He fought with a Kurdish child and returned home telling his father that he had been called 'Armenian.' That's when his father mentioned that, as a matter of fact, they were Armenians but that he could not tell it outside the home," the journalist said.

"It is less dangerous to live as an Armenian [now] compared to 10 years ago in Diyarbakır," says Arkan, noting that Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality had paid for the restoration of the historical Surp Giragos Armenian Church in the old city.

Hadjian also noted the story of the Ogassian family, which lived in the Bagin village in Palu before emigrating to the United States following the events of 1915. But one of their little children, Kirkor, stayed in the village after perhaps being abducted by a Kurdish family.

Kirkor later married another orphan of Armenian origin and converted to Islam. After a number of years, however, their relatives made contact with them. Nowadays, Kirkor and his wife have a son who is an imam in the town of Harput, while their nephew is the archbishop of the Armenian church in New York, Hadjian said.

## George Garanyan's Widow Speaks About Her Husband's Love for Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – George Garanyan's name is linked to the history of the Soviet jazz. His wrote the soundtrack for more than 50 movies. The People's Artist of Russia died from cardiac arrest at the age of 75 in 2010. The musical heritage he left is inestimable.

Armenpress recently had a conversation with Garanyan's widow, Nelli Garanyan, about the activity of the foundation after George Garanyan and his love towards Armenia.



George Garanyan

Armenpress: In the end of 2012 George Garanyan's foundation and "Accord" music store initiated an action aimed to support the regional musical libraries of Russia. Will the foundation implement programs in Armenia?

Nelli Garanyan: Sure, we would love to cooperate with Armenia, but the truth of the matter is that there is a lack of initiative. I personally have no contacts within Armenia. George was dreaming about taking me to Armenia and showing me everything there. We would love to cooperate with the

conditions your family keeps until now?

NG: By all means I could not compete with him in making tolma. I always follow attentively all the events in Armenia. For instance, Sergey Manukyan is our favorite musician and George always used to say that is one of the unique musicians to work on the international level. He had a very gentle attitude towards his Armenian roots and immense love towards Armenia and everything relating to Armenia.

Armenpress: Did Your husband use any Armenian expression while talking to You?

NG: He used to say "tsavd tanem."

## International News

### Envoy Congratulates Georgian Patriarch on Birthday, Enthronement

TBILISI (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Armenian Ambassador to Georgia Hovhannes Manukyan met with the Patriarch of All Georgia Ilia II.

At the meeting, the envoy, on behalf of incumbent President Serge Sargsian, offered congratulations on the patriarch's 80th birthday and 36th anniversary of his enthronement.

Ilia II thanked Manukyan, expressing his confidence that the two nations and churches will strengthen their ties and resolve their differences through trust and mutual understanding.

The two also discussed the political ties of the two nations, stressing the importance of preservation and restoration of Armenian churches in Georgia, Armenia's Foreign Ministry reported.

### CIS Economic Forum to Be Held in Moscow

MOSCOW (Armenpress) – With the support of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Executive Committee and Banking and Financial Council, the CIS business center for economic development will hold an international economic forum on March 13. The topic of this forum will be "Present-day challenges and prospects for integration development in the Commonwealth."

The forum is aimed at the discussion of prospects of further strengthening economic cooperation. It will also touch on a number of issues concerning implementation of Free Trade Agreement and common economic space.

There will be an opportunity for the participants of CIS international economic forum to get acquainted with the integration programs of different economic spheres.

### Armenian Jewelers Showcase Most Expensive Yellow Diamond at Exhibition

PARIS (Armenpress) – The Armenian Jewelry Association presented the world's most expensive yellow diamond at the Co/art exhibition held in the InterContinental Hotel.

The price of the diamond is \$15 million. According to *Nouvelles d'Arménie*, the jewelers worked on the 110-carat masterpiece for nine months.

The owner s HB group company owner Hagob Bardaglyan.

Twenty three Armenian jewelers from Armenia and the diaspora presented their works at the exhibition.

### Syrian Refugees Reach 850,000

ALEPPO – More than four million people inside Syria are in desperate need of aid, an increase from 2.5 million in September, the United Nations (UN) humanitarian agency said Tuesday, Feb 19.

"We are watching a humanitarian tragedy unfold before our eyes," Valerie Amos, the UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, told reporters.

A graphic from her office showed how the need for humanitarian aid had spiraled from March last year, when about 1 million people were listed, to 2.5 million in September and four million by January 2013.

She described the situation in the war-torn country as "devastating."

The UN says at least 70,000 people have been killed in the two-year conflict, while some 2.5 million have been displaced by the fighting but remain in Syria.

Earlier Tuesday, the UN's refugee agency said the number of Syrians who have fled their conflict-ravaged homeland has now topped 850,000.

Most of the refugees have fled to neighboring Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq.





# Community News

## Prof. Richard Hovannisian To Receive Narekatsi Medal at March Banquet

LOS ANGELES – Prof. Richard Hovannisian has been named the 2013 recipient of the Narekatsi Medal of Achievement. The award will be formally presented to him by the Friends of the UCLA Armenian Language and Culture Studies on Saturday, March 16, during the Friends' 11th annual banquet, a community event which will take place at the Armenian Society of Los Angeles Hall, in Glendale.

The Narekatsi Medal will be conferred on Hovannisian in recognition of his extraordinary academic achievements as well as his roles as a Genocide researcher and defender of the Armenian cause against denialism.

"It would be impossible to imagine the global Armenian academic landscape of the past five decades without the outstanding contributions of Dr. Hovannisian," said Prof. S. Peter Cowe, head of UCLA's Narekatsi Chair in Armenian Studies. "A key factor which has always set Dr. Hovannisian's work apart is his gift for complementing scholarship with public activism: he is not only a prolific teacher, historiographer, and author, but a staunch champion of civic and human rights."

Now a professor emeritus, Hovannisian has lectured at UCLA for 50 years, beginning in 1962. He was the first holder of the university's Armenian Educational Foundation Endowed Chair in Modern Armenian History, which he held from 1987 until his retirement in 2011. The chair has since been renamed the Richard Hovannisian Chair in Modern Armenian History (established by the Armenian Educational Foundation).

Hovannisian has written several definitive books on modern Armenian history, including the four-volume *The Republic of Armenia* series. He has also organized the UCLA conference series *Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces*, which he launched in the late 1990s. The proceedings of these landmark conferences have been edited by Hovannisian and published as invaluable documentary resources pertaining to historic Western Armenia.

In the course of his career, Hovannisian has lectured in more than 40 countries and in nearly 500 universities, museums and other institutes on Armenian history and the Armenian Genocide. In addition to teaching at UCLA, he has served as Distinguished Visiting Professor at a number of American universities, including UC Berkeley and Chapman University. In 2010 he was voted by the UCLA Student Body as the Most Inspirational Teacher of the Year.

Hovannisian's advocacy work has placed him at the forefront of efforts to counter denial of the Armenian Genocide. He has spoken in the British House of Lords, testified in hearings of the US Congress, the State of California, and the International People's Tribunal in the Sorbonne, and given numerous television and radio interviews regarding the Genocide.

As significantly, Hovannisian has served with numerous organizations dedicated to human rights and Genocide awareness. He is on the Board of Directors of Facing History and Ourselves as well as the Claremont Center for Human Rights; and was the president of the Armenian Monument Council, a founder of the Armenian Assembly of America, chairman of the Armenian National Institute and founder and six-time president of the Society for Armenian Studies.

Hovannisian is a Guggenheim Fellow and the first social scientist from the diaspora to have been elected to the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, in 1990. He has been honored by Jewish World Watch, Facing History and Ourselves, and various US national, state, county, and city bodies. He is also the recipient of encyclicals and medals from Karekin II and Aram I, catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia; and from Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin I and Karekin II of the Holy See of Echmiadzin.

Proceeds from the Friends' March 16 banquet will benefit the Narekatsi Chair in Armenian Studies and its Visiting Professorship Program.



CARMAC tractors and Heifer staff

## Heifer International Promotes Systemic Change In Armenia

WATERTOWN – Heifer International's Armenia Program has been in operation since 1999, but its relationship with the country predates the founding of the organization in 1944. After the Armenian Genocide, Heifer founder Dan West and fellow members of his congregation, the Church of the Brethren, traveled overseas to assist survivors of the Genocide. It was then that West first witnessed the resilience of the Armenian people and demonstrated his dedication to aiding others through agricultural empowerment.

**By Gabriella Gage**

Mirror-Spectator Staff

West founded Heifer with the aim of providing gifts of livestock, seed and trees, along with agricultural training to help villages worldwide feed themselves. According to Associate Director of Philanthropy for the Eastern Region Paul Yeghiayan, West started Heifer with "the belief that providing people with the means to create their own future, free from poverty and hunger, was the most valuable contribution any person or organization could make."

Seventy years later and independence, not dependence, remains Heifer International's guiding principle. In Armenia, systems for organized change are desperately needed. Poverty affects one-third of the Armenian population and the limited economic opportunities mean thousands of families lack food security and income. Due to the poor health of much of the livestock, there are shortages of the essentials of meat, milk and other animal-derived products. Yeghiayan said, "food security is national security."

So far, Heifer Armenia's flagship endeavor, the Armenia Smallholder Farm Project, has assisted more than 8,000 families in building small, viable farm businesses. Heifer works closely with women and children who are economically vulnerable and provides agricultural training, animals (cows, goats, sheep, chickens, and more), access to veterinary care, seed and development of leadership skills.

Pierre Ferrari, president and chief executive officer of Heifer International, agreed that the key to improving quality of life in Armenia lies in the creation of systemic changes, not just temporary solutions, which from an agricultural and economic standpoint, calls for the "improvement of productivity and quality in alignment with the market." He added, "One of the best ways of connecting people in these villages is through trade."

Achieving long-term goals requires both forethought and community empowerment. "One of the first stages in the long-term development of Armenia, has been to organize the Heifer communities in Armenia and repair psychological damage of the Soviet igniting the Armenian spirit which is very entrepreneurial – it's about rebuilding social capital," said Ferrari.

According to Ferrari, another key component of change is the luxury of patience. "One of the challenges here is the pace at which change happens. These pastures are incredible assets, but you have to have the patience with which to build a social capital. Heifer raises the money to provide this patience," he said.

Through fundraising and patience, Heifer provides new tools to connect farmers with the marketplace, increase dairy production, combat livestock issues and address problems with the soil in various regions of Armenia. Reseeding the pastures has been one of the key steps to improving agricultural production and

see HEIFER, page 5



Youth involved in Heifer Smallholder Farm Project

## UAF Contributed \$23M in Aid to Armenia in 2012

GLENDALÉ – The United Armenian Fund contributed a total of \$23 million of assistance to Armenia during fiscal year 2012, including \$22 million worth of mostly medicines and medical supplies, and \$1 million to renovate six schools in the earthquake zone, according to the latest audit of its financial statements.

The UAF devoted less than 2 percent of its revenues to administrative expenses, allocating the remaining 98 percent to assisting the people of Armenia and Artsakh, according to the audit. During its 23 years of operations, the UAF delivered to Armenia a grand total of \$654 million worth of relief supplies on board 158 airlifts and 2,029 sea containers, as of September 30, 2012.

The UAF is the collective effort of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Relief Society, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America.

For more information, contact the UAF office at 1101 North Pacific Avenue, Suite 204, Glendale, CA 91202.

## Margaret Ahnert to Speak At St. James Men's Club

WATERTOWN – Award-winning author, businesswoman, TV producer and philanthropist, Margaret Ajemian Ahnert, will speak at the St. James Armenian Church Men's Club dinner meeting on Monday March 4. Ahnert will discuss her distinguished book, *The Knock at the Door*, a journey through the darkness of the Armenian Genocide.

Robert Morgenthau, former District Attorney for New York, grandson of Henry Morgenthau Sr. US Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during World War I, said, "*The Knock at the Door* is an inspired, beautifully-written chronicle of one of the worst eras in human history. Had such books been written long ago, another holocaust, which followed 25 years later, might never have happened."

Hugh L. Carey former governor of New York said, "In *The Knock at the Door*, Ester's daughter has captured the haunting details of her mother's compelling story. The author invites us into her family circle, offering a fascinating glimpse of the Armenian culture and its painful history. Through the work of the author, we come to know Ester's wit, wisdom, and charm as they come to life on each page of this unforgettable story."

In *The Knock at the Door*, Ahnert releases her mother's terrifying experience as a young woman during the Armenian Genocide of 1915. The book has been translated into eight different languages and was named "Best Historical Memoir of 2008" at the New York Book Festival as well as one of the "Best Books of 2007" by USA Book News.

Ahnert, born in New York City has a master's degree in fine arts and literature from Goucher College, Baltimore, and a bachelor's from Goddard College, Vermont, and is a graduate of the Barnes Foundation of Fine Arts, Merion, Penn. She has lectured as a docent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art and taught art appreciation in elementary schools.

She holds a 100-ton master captain's license and is an avid hunter and fisherwoman. She has received a host of humanitarian awards including the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and in 2010 she established the Margaret Ajemian Ahnert scholarship program, which supports female journalists in Armenia.

The social hour starts at 6:15 p.m., followed by a complete Lenten dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$12 per person. The dinner meeting will be at the St. James Armenian Church, Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center-Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn St. The public, including women, are welcome.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Time Square Genocide Commemoration to Be Held on April 21

NEW YORK — A large throng is expected to participate in the 98th Anniversary Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide to be held in Times Square (43rd St. & Broadway) on Sunday, April 21 from 2 to 4 p.m. The organizers invite people of all backgrounds to join together to commemorate the Armenian Genocide and subsequent genocides during Genocide Awareness Month and to speak out

against this horrendous crime against humanity. The theme of the Armenian Genocide Commemoration is "Turkey is Guilty of Genocide: Denying the Undeniable is Criminal." The event will pay tribute to the 1.5 million Armenians who were massacred by the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire and to the millions of victims of subsequent genocides worldwide. Speakers will include civic, religious, humanitari-

an, educational, cultural leaders and artists. This event is free and open to the public.

Dennis R. Papazian, PhD, immediate past National Grand Commander of Knights of Vartan and founding director of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, and Dr. Mary A. Papazian, president of Southern Connecticut State University, will preside over the ceremonies.

Dr. Dennis Papazian comments, "Recent momentous events encourage me to believe that the long vigil of the Armenian people waiting for recognition of their genocide by the Turkish government may be coming to a positive conclusion. An influential Kurdish leader in Turkey, a member of Parliament and vice-president of the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Congress, Ahmet Turk, admitted that the Kurdish people played a significant role in the 'torture and massacre of Armenians, Assyrians and Yezidis' during the Armenian Genocide and apologized to the Armenian people. Turk stated, 'Our grandfathers and fathers were used in the injustices perpetrated against Armenians, Assyrians and Yezidis. There is blood on their hands. With the blood of these peoples they bloodied their own hands. Thus, as their children and grandchildren, we apologize.'"

He continued, "A second momentous event was the publication of a book in Turkey entitled *The Armenian Genocide* by Hasan Cemal, the grandson of Cemal (Jamal) Pasha, one of the three main authors of the Armenian Genocide. Hasan Cemal, a member of the Turkish establishment and a newspaper columnist, began his inquiry into the Armenian Genocide following the killing of Turkish diplomats by a group of young Armenians who went by the name of ASALA. At first, Hasan Cemal supported the official government point of view, and as he became more knowledgeable, finally concluded that indeed there was a genocide of the Armenians perpetrated by the Young Turk party which controlled the Ottoman government in 1915-1923. The book has inspired many members of the Turkish elites to reevaluate their denial of the Armenian Genocide."

Papazian adds, "Itzak Alaton, the owner of one of the largest corporations in Turkey, urged

the Turkish Socio-Economic Research Center to pursue the Turkish recognition of the Armenian Genocide." "April 24, 1915 is just around the corner," stated Alaton, "let us change our denialist policies. I am tired of the fear to face our past. Let us raise our voices to our deputies in Ankara and those deputies should raise their voices to their political parties and leaders in order for us to open our skeleton-fill closets."

He concluded, "These three significant events which took place without any reprisal from the Turkish government imply that a positive change may be in the air."

The 98th Commemoration is organized by the Mid-Atlantic chapters of the Knights & Daughters of Vartan, and co-sponsored by Armenian General Benevolent Union, Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of America, Armenian Council of America and the Armenian Democratic League-Ramgavars.

Participating Organizations include the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Prelacy of the Armenian Church, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Catholic Eparchy for US and Canada, Mid-Atlantic ACYOA, AYF, Armenian youth organizations, as well as Armenian university and college clubs.

For more information visit <http://april24timesquare.com>.

## Armenian Genocide Commemoration Essay Contest for High School and College Students

NEW YORK — High school and college students are invited to participate in an essay contest to actively support the 98th Anniversary Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide that will be held in Times Square on Sunday, April 21, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Co-sponsors of the contest include the Knights & Daughters of Vartan, an international Armenian fraternal organization with headquarters in the US, and Facing History and Ourselves, an international educational and professional development organization.

One winner and two runner-ups will be selected by a panel of judges. The first, second- and third-place winners will receive \$300, \$200 and \$200, respectively. The winners will also be recognized at the Armenian Genocide Commemoration at Times Square on Sunday, April 21, and depending on time constraints, may read their essays.

The question to address in this year's essay is the following: "Why is it important for schools nationwide to include the Armenian Genocide in the core curriculum?"

The essay should be 800 words maximum, double-spaced 12 point Arial type: Include student's full name, age, teacher's full name and subject area, name of high school or college, year in school, hometown/state, phone #, and email address at the top of each page of the essay.

The three winners will be contacted directly and announced to the mainstream and Armenian media the week of Monday, April 8.

Submit essays via email by Friday, March 29, to [april24nyc@gmail.com](mailto:april24nyc@gmail.com).

Founded in 1985 by the late Sam Azadian, former New Jersey resident, who lost four siblings during the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian Genocide Commemoration at Times Square has honored the 1.5+ million Armenian lives lost during the horrific events of the 1915 Genocide of the Armenians by the Young Turk Government of the Ottoman Empire. This internationally-recognized annual event draws thousands of Armenians and non-Armenian participants to commemorate the solemn occasion. The event features speeches and tributes delivered by prominent political figures and civic leaders, officials of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, representatives of major Armenian-American organizations, distinguished scholars and educators as well as high-ranking Armenian and non-Armenian clergy.

**Co-Sponsored  
by Knights &  
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Facing History  
and Ourselves**

## Massachusetts State House Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide



# Friday, April 19, 2013

**Free buses will leave St. James and St. Stephen's Armenian Churches  
at 8:30 a.m. (Courtesy of Knights of Vartan)**

**Details to follow**

## Heifer International Promotes Systemic Change in Armenia

HEIFER, from page 4

hope in these villages. Heifer offers training to the farmers, many of whom are women, while also providing opportunities for many of the men who have left for employment, to return to their villages to with a new viable source of income in the land.

One current initiative that seeks to aid in the realization of Heifer Armenia's long-term goals is the Community Agricultural Resource Management and Competitiveness project (CARMAC), which is a partnership project between Heifer Armenia and Agricultural Reform Support Project Implementation Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture of Armenia and is co-funded by the Government of Armenia through a World Bank loan, Heifer International and farmers' cooperatives.

CARMAC focuses on improving the output productivity of smallholder livestock farmer in 55 villages throughout Armenia by improving the quality of meat and milk, increasing milk and meat production, improving agricultural equipment, creating pasture management and improving rural infrastructure. This kind of systemic change plans to directly benefit 4,400 families (19,900 people) and indirectly benefit 24,000 families (95,000 people).

Currently Heifer is attempting to raise a total of \$3.7 million, of which they currently have \$1.3 million, so that the World Bank and the Ministry of Agriculture will do their part by providing \$5 million for the project. "This is a great investment opportunity in the social capital in Armenia for the Armenians of the diaspora," explained Ferrari.

Heifer has employed their message of building civil societies in all of the countries they operate in, many sharing some of the same hurdles as Armenia, by fostering sustainability in communities, not dependency on Heifer.

The paid staff positions for Heifer Armenia are all filled by local community members. Heifer has also worked with the Children of Armenia Fund, the Armenia Tree Project, youth programs that foster civic responsibility and several local NGOs.

In addition to a variety of gift amounts, Heifer also offers the opportunity to sponsor one of the Heifer villages in Armenia. Heifer invites those traveling to Armenia to schedule a tour of training facilities to see the work in villages first hand.

For more information or to donate to Heifer International, visit [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org) or contact Yeghiayan at [paul.yeghiayan@heifer.org](mailto:paul.yeghiayan@heifer.org).





## COMMUNITY NEWS

## OBITUARY

## Anne N. Merian

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Anne N. Merian, daughter of the late Neshan and Arshalous Najarian, was born May 17, 1923 and died at her home on February 14, 2013.

She is survived by her three brothers and their wives, Michael and Alice Najarian, K. George and Dr. Carolann S. Najarian, and Nishan and Anahid Najarian, and by her nephews and nieces Michael, Gary, Stephen, David, Robert, Richard, Patricia, Nancy, Sonia and Ara and their children.

Merian graduated from Cambridge High and Latin and then attended Boston University. After graduation, she became a pioneer for women in the publishing field, working as an editor of medical textbooks for McGraw Hill in New York City until the early 1970s. She then moved back to Cambridge where she continued working as an editor with Little Brown & Company, in their medical textbook division until her retirement. She was widely recognized within her profession as an outstanding editor with many major medical textbooks to her credit.

She loved to travel and did so with her family and friends, including a memorable trip to Armenia in the 1990s. She took great pride in her Armenian heritage, and in that spirit willingly gave of her time and professional expertise by editing English texts for various people and organizations, including for the Zoryan Institute when it was still located in Cambridge.



Anne N. Merian

Despite the difficulties imposed by failing health, Merian maintained a wonderful sense of humor as well as a deep reverence for the written and spoken word until she died.

Funeral services will be held on February 25, at 11 a.m. at St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church, 38 Elton Ave., Watertown, MA 02472.

At the family's request, donations in lieu of flowers may be made to St. Stephen's Church at the above address, or St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown, MA 02472.

## Aram-Sumpad Khachoyan

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. — Aram-Sumpad Khachoyan of New Britain died Saturday, February 9, at The Hospital of Central Connecticut, New Britain campus.

He was the husband of the late Margarete Wirtz Khachoyan.

Born in Turkey during the Armenian Genocide, he was the son of the late Rev. Arsen and Yeretzgin Peruse (Hagopian) Khachoyan.

He and his wife were the former owners of Mr. K's Luncheonette, first located on Farmington Avenue and later on Jefferson Street, in Hartford. Before retiring, he was active in neighborhood organization projects.

He worked tirelessly throughout his life to further Armenian causes, especially for the universal recognition of the Armenian Genocide. He was an archdeacon in the Armenian Church and sang the complex liturgy every Sunday, almost entirely from memory, until his heart was too weak to allow it. Even then, he still tried. His commentaries, poems and short stories have appeared in numerous Armenian newspapers and periodicals.

He leaves a daughter, Peruse E. "PK" Khachoyan of New Britain; son and daughter-in-law, Arsen and Roxanne Khachoyan of Rocky Hill; niece Zarouhi D. Khachoyan of Windsor and brother-in-law, John Zakarian of Belmont, Mass. He is also survived by many nieces, grandnieces, and grandnephews. He was the brother of the late Hrach G. Khachoyan and Saruhi Khachoyan Zakarian.

The family extend their thanks to Mahmood H. Yekta, MD, his primary care physician for almost 40 years, for his skill as a physician and the depth of his humanity, as well as the hospital.

Funeral services were held on Friday, February 15, at the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection, New Britain. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in Fairview Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to "Our Home-Mer Doon," providing education and essential life skills to female Armenian orphans (18-22), C/O 84 Ellsworth Blvd., Kensington, CT 06037-2728; or the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), 55 East 59th St., New York, NY 10022-1112.

To leave a commentary for the family in the on line guest book, visit [www.ericksonhansen.com](http://www.ericksonhansen.com)

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Montreal ADL Rallies in Support of Serge Sargisian

MONTREAL – Upon the directive of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party's (ADL) Eastern US and Canada District Committee, a rally was organized by the ADL Montreal Chapter in Montreal's Tekeyan Cultural Association Center on Wednesday, February 13, in support of the presidential candidacy of the incumbent president, Serge Sargisian.

The gathering was attended by ADL members, representatives of the community's organizations and members of the community concerned about current Armenian issues. They had come to be informed about the campaign currently in progress in Armenia, the platform of Sargisian, who won reelection, and various political analyses of the pre-electoral situation in Armenia.

Following the anthems of Armenia and the ADL, brief addresses were presented by



Dr. Arshavir Gundjian



Ara Balian

Montreal leaders Dr. Hrair Der Kevorkian, Arto Manookian and Ara Balian, who concentrated on various aspects of the President's pre-election platform. Video presentations were then screened that demonstrated achievements and progress materialized in Armenia under the 5-year leadership of Sargisian.

Keynote speaker Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, a veteran leader of worldwide ADL and of Armenian-

Diaspora organizations, then elaborated on Sargisian's political career, offering arguments on the incumbent president's management of critical issues related to Armenia and the Armenian people worldwide: building and strengthening the army, his incessant efforts towards a peaceful and just settlement of the Karabagh conflict, his efforts of establishing friendly relations with neighboring countries, the development of Armenia's economy and lastly, the pursuit of the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the international community. The speaker concluded and stressed that the most effective person to constructively pursue these thorny and complicated issues to their successful culmination will be Sargisian.

"A successful conclusion of these fundamental issues is essential not only for Armenia and our brethren in Armenia, but also for the Armenian Diaspora in general. That is why the Armenian Diaspora should unequivocally support the candidacy of Serge Sargisian, who has laid down a solid groundwork for these issues, to continue for a second 5-year term as President of the Republic of Armenia," said Gundjian and reiterated the ADL's continued traditional support of the statehood of Armenia as a priority to all other considerations.

A dynamic exchange of opinions at a question-and-answer period further clarified the importance why the Diaspora should support Sargisian's re-election.



Dr. Hrair Der Kevorkian



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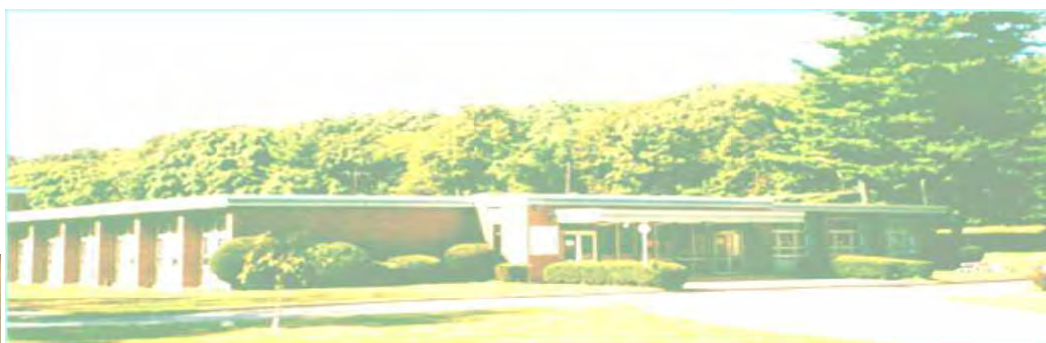
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**New York**  
**METRO**

# Independent Armenia, President Serge Sargisian Celebrated At ADL Event

CLIFFSIDE PARK, N.J. — The New York-New Jersey chapter of the Armenian Democratic Liberation organization (ADL) celebrated the emergence of an independent Armenia as well as its president, Serge Sargisian, at an event on February 9.

The support that the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party has lent to Armenia's integrity, remains, as well as in support of the current president and his quest for a safe and prosperous Armenia.

Inspired and motivated by these important events as well as sentiments, the ADL chapter, with the support of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America (Eastern Diocese), Knights of Vartan, the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Catholic Eastern Diocese, The Armenian Assembly of America and the Tekeyan Cultural Association, organized an evening of support for President Serge Sargisian, that took place on February 9 at the Palisadium. Despite the snowstorm, supporters gathered from far and near.

The evening's master of ceremonies, Hagop Vartivarian, first welcomed the different organi-



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian



From left: Krikor Salbashian, Papken Megerian, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Hagop Vartivarian and Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian



Hagop Vartivarian

Daily's editor, Baydzig Kalayjian, who had arrived from Beirut especially for this event, invigorated the attendees with her warm and heartfelt speech. She noted that the community had gathered with pride to stand beside its beloved motherland. "For the past 70 years, we have always supported it within the different eras and struggles, for the sake of the rebirth of our independent motherland," she said.

Then Artemis Nazarian, a community benefactor, made an impromptu heartfelt announce-

ment, that she has fond memories of her uncle, who was a Ramgavar, and had taught her Armenian language and history in the Agoumups, and the Ramgavars have always remained in the same parameters, and enthusiastically proclaimed "long live the Ramgavars and long live Armenia!"

Van Krikorian, chairman of the Armenian Assembly of Assembly, spoke of the very sound foreign policy that the current government of Armenia has developed under the leadership of



Baydzig Kalayjian, left, and Vicki Hvanessian, second from right, were among the guests.



From left, Sarkis Bedevian, Irma Der Stepanian, Sarkis Paskalian and ADL District Committee Co-Chair Papken Megerian

zations and attendees, welcoming the guest of honor, Primate of the Diocese of the Eastern Armenian Church of America, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, AMAA's president, Dr. Levon Filian and Father Garabedian and benefactors Mr. and Mrs. Nazar Nazarian, Hratch Toufayan, Sarkis Bedevian, Andreas Roubian, Papken Megerian, ADL District Committee co-chair, Dr. and Mrs. Raffi Hovanessian, Irma and Sylva DerStepanian, Mr. and Mrs. Saro Hartunian, Mr. and Mrs. V. Aynilian, Dr. Jacques Gulekjian and Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian for their support.

As the national anthems of Armenia and the ADL anthems were sung, the attendees stood

with National pride and a sense of gratification for a triumphant victory soon to be claimed.

The attendees were treated to festive nationalistic Armenian music and dance performed by Houyser and Talar Zokian. The festivities continued after the cocktail and dinner reception. Artist Roudig Der Bedrossian presented his hand painted oil canvas of president Serge Sargisian, to be hung in the new facility of the TCA Greater New York.

The forum continued with the president's military video aimed towards secure Armenia.

Vartivarian then invited the representatives of the organizations to the podium. Zartonk



Levon Filian of the AMAA



New York  
METRO



Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian of the ADL



Artemis Nazarian



Van Krikorian of the Armenian Assembly



Young TCA members Harout Barsoumian, Talar Zokian, Diran Jebejian, Hratch Zokian and Taleen Babayan

farsightedness of president Serge Sargisian, and announced ADL's endorsement of the president, and called for the combined efforts of all of our Armenian organizations, to attract international public opinion toward our just cause and belated reparations.

Barsamian concluded the event with his prayer after acknowledging the community



Krikor Salbashian and Norair Megerditchian

president Serge Sargisian.

Filian spoke of the importance of Armenian unity and harmony.

Harout Chatmajian, co-chair of the New York/New Jersey TCA, spoke of the TCA's past support of the motherland since its inception of 1947. Its mission was to teach, prepare and rebuild a generation of patriots. The TCA, he said, is happy about the establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora under the leadership of President Serge Sargisian.

Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian, co-chair of the TCA, spoke on behalf of the Eastern United States and Canada ADL committee, who had graduated from Yerevan State Medical Institute 39 years ago, spoke of Armenia's independence 21 years ago, ADL was the second most popular body of representatives after the Armenian National Movement, under President Levon Ter-Petrosian, having 17 representatives. He spoke of the economic and social struggles, the Karabagh conflict and the earthquake and the return to the liberal democratic form of government under the leadership, prudence and



From left, Dr. Jacques Gulekjian, Norair Megerditchian and Henri Dimijian

leaders and organizations. He spoke of Armenia's forward march into the 21st century, noting, "We must march with faith. We have witnessed the status of our people improve over the past generation, our flag being raised at the United Nations, a national dream come true, and the forward progress of our republic. We in the diaspora are also part of this march; we have been a part of this journey from the very beginning. We are part of a cause much greater than ourselves. The significance of this forum taking place two days after the unique Armenian feast day dedicated to the Vartanantz Saints. For they understood- and proved with their lives- that our service to the nation needs to be grounded in service to God."

— Shoghig Chalian



From left, Artemis Nazarian, Nazar Nazarian and Harry Toufayan



Harout Chatmajian, TCA New York/New Jersey Chapter co-chairman





# Arts & Living

## Sorority Holds Fashion Show to Help Armenian Orphans

By Christina Moffitino

NORTHRIDGE, Calif. (*Daily Sundial*) – In the fashion world, well-noted designers go big or go home. The sisters of the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) Alpha Gamma Alpha sorority took on that idea on when they hosted their first annual charity fashion show, *Imagine Runway to Relief*.

The show was a yearlong process that finally made its debut Saturday, February 9, at the Northridge center.

Alpha Gamma Alpha made it a goal to raise \$10,000 to donate to the Society for Orphan Armenian Relief (SOAR). SOAR supports orphaned Armenian children.

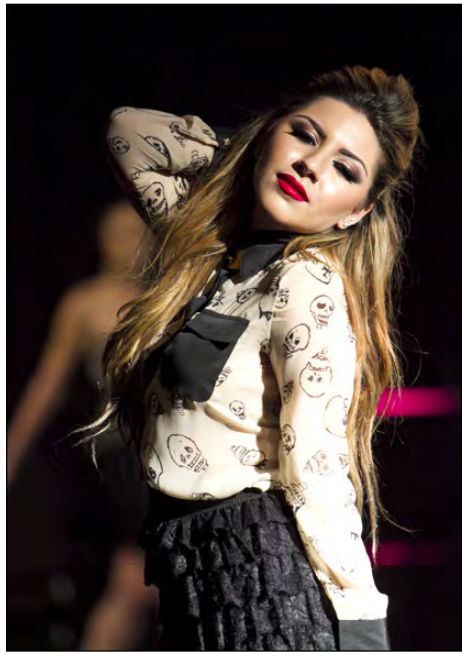
Alpha Gamma Alpha philanthropy chair, Marine Piliposy, chose to work with SOAR because they directly handle the problems happening in other countries.

“The organizers travel to assess the situation, see what needs to be changed and pays to oversee the construction and make improvements. The money isn’t lost in the process,” said Piliposy.

CSUN’s chapter of Alpha Gamma Alpha prides themselves on connecting to Armenian culture and assisting with Armenian causes. They established an ongoing relationship with SOAR to help renovate a different orphanage every year.

With the dangerous war raging in Syria, the sorority also wanted the fashion show’s money to aid the Syrian relief efforts. The war left many children without the essentials like food and warm clothing. “Hopefully we raised enough to split the profits both ends,” Piliposy said.

The sorority’s goal was ambitious for their first event, but fundraising efforts were not limited to the fashion show ticket sales. They anticipated close to 200 guests and the house was



A model walks down the runway at the “Imagine: Runway to Relief” charity fundraiser to benefit the Society for Orphan Armenian Relief. (Photo credit: Charlie Kaijo)

almost full the night of the show.

The sorority also contacted their sorority sisters across the nation in hopes of gaining their support through donations.

Alpha Gamma Alpha hopes that with the fashion show’s silent auction, donation box, ticket sales and national chapter donations they will make their goal.

The entire fashion show was a CSUN community effort. Models volunteered to walk the runway with clothes donated by local stores and designers.

see SORORITY, page 12

## VERONICA SAGHERIAN *Impulse*

### FOR TAKING THE OVERSTATEMENT OUT OF STATEMENT JEWELRY

Purchasing a necklace is not an existential decision. Nor is anyone solving world hunger or global warming whenever she purchases a pair of earrings. So with all due respect to the many dealers of fine jewelry out there, buying a bauble – no matter how exquisite or expensive – should be an act of pure joy rather than a high-pressure decision. And just as often, it should be an act of impulsivity. We’re not absolutely certain that’s precisely why Veronica Sagherian named her new venture “Impulse,” but we’d like to think so. After years of putting investment pieces in the hands of women at Adamas Fine Jewelry, she knows more than a thing or two about people’s buying habits. And sometimes they just want to walk in, point at something they’ve fallen in love with instantly, and walk out with it. No hemming or hawing, or consulting with the family accountant. Maybe they want it because it’s something they won’t find anywhere else in this region (a risqué resin creation of French artist Dominique Denaive). Or it’s a talisman both delicate and streamlined (cocktail rings by Suzanne Kalan). Or maybe, just maybe, they just want it because they want it. And that’s precisely the point.



Veronica Sagherian in *COUP Boston* magazine

# Impulsive and Glamorous

## Cool as Ice, Siblings Branch out with Stylish Jewelry Store

WELLESLEY, Mass. – Browse through publications about style in Boston and you will likely come across two names when it comes to jewelry worn by the local glitterati: Veronica Sagherian and Anto Aboyan.

Sagherian and Aboyan have made a mark on the local scene with their first store, Newton’s Adamas Fine Jewelry, since 1997. Whereas Adamas, meaning diamond in ancient Greek, specializes in high-end, elegant jewelry as well as bespoke designs, the duo’s latest venture, *Impulse*, in Wellesley, is aimed at women who want to be stylish and wear pretty jewelry, without considering whether or not the purchase

is going to make a deep impact on their wallets.

In the almost Zen space of *Impulse*, which opened its doors in November, shelves suspended by barely-discernible wires showcase chunky semiprecious necklaces and modern bracelets, as well as elegant gold and diamond earrings.

Adamas has been on the Best of Boston list by *Boston Magazine* four times for best fine jewelry and best custom design. The siblings were also recognized by *JCK Magazine*, the leading industry magazine for jewelers. And just this month, Sagherian was named among the top 25 style visionaries in Boston for starting *Impulse*, by *COUP Boston* magazine.

Sagherian, a Belmont resident, said opening Adamas was something she and her brother had thought a lot about. Aboyan already had a jewelry business downtown, Boston Bijoux, with a cousin, in the Jeweler’s Building on Washington Street. The brother and sister decided to combine their skills and start a new venture and one that would be in the suburbs.

Sagherian got her degree in economics from Boston College. “All my life I wanted to be an attorney, but I worked in that field and realized that it wasn’t for me. I needed to find a more creative field.”

Her brother, by contrast, has been working in the business since he was 10 as an apprentice. Aboyan, of Waltham, is a goldsmith and designer with many years of experience. He was only 19 when he opened his first store on Washington Street.

“Anto and I always wanted to work together and with my management strength and his business sense and jewelry knowledge, we thought we would make a good team,” she said recently.

“Adamas is a slightly different take on a jewelry store with a niche in custom design. The kind of people who shop there basically want high quality and some

see JEWELRY, page 11

## Armenian-American Poets to Read at Zohrab Center

NEW YORK – Three distinguished Armenian-American poets will read from their works in a literary evening on Wednesday March 13, at the Zohrab Center in New York. Abraham Terian, Lola Koundakjian, and Gregory Djanikian will read from their work in English and Armenian.

Terian, a native of Jerusalem, is professor emeritus of Armenian Theology at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. An internationally-renowned Armenologist and theologian, his poetry represents an significant aspect of his creative output, if less well known than his scholarly writings.

Koundakjian is an internationally regarded and published poet whose work has been translated into Ukrainian and Spanish.

Djanikian, director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Pennsylvania, and a native of Egypt, has been called “a gardener of the human spirit.” His work has been published in several collections and has appeared in a number of magazines and journals.

Conversation and refreshments will follow the reading, along with the opportunity to purchase the authors’ books.

The poetry evening is open to the public. A \$5 donation per person will support the work of the Zohrab Center. Students with ID will be admitted free of charge.

## Central Library to Host Writer, Activist Nancy Kricorian

GLENDALE – On Wednesday, March 20, writer/activist Nancy Kricorian will present her newly published book, *All the Light there Was*, followed by a discussion.

The program will begin at 7 p.m. at the Glendale Central Library Auditorium, 222 East Harvard St. The presentation is in English. Admission is free, but seating is limited. Library visitors receive three hours free parking across the street at The Market Place parking structure with validation at the loan desk.

*All the Light there Was*, was inspired by the life of resistance leader and Armenian Genocide survivor, Missak Manouchian.



Nancy Kricorian

Kricorian delved into the Armenian experience in Paris during World War II, interviewing survivors, including the last living member of Manouchian’s team.

Kricorian weaves her historical research, her own Armenian heritage and her life-long commitment to human rights causes into this tale. The story explores the Armenian immigrant experience through the eyes of a precocious young heroine, 14-year-old Maral, who lives with her family in Paris, like many others who survived the Armenian Genocide in their homeland.

Kricorian, author of the novels *Zabelle* and *Dreams of Bread and Fire*, is a widely-published essayist and activist. After graduating from Dartmouth, she studied and worked in Paris before earning an MFA in writing at Columbia University.

The program is sponsored by the Library, Arts & Culture Department, Abril Books and the Friends of the Glendale Library.

For information, contact Elizabeth Grigorian at the Glendale Library Arts & Culture Department.





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## Kristina Ayanian Crowned Miss Massachusetts' Outstanding Teen

BOSTON – Kristina Ayanian was crowned February 17 as Miss Massachusetts' Outstanding Teen 2013. She will represent Massachusetts at the Miss America's Outstanding Teen Pageant.



Kristina Ayanian

The teen pageant is the younger-sister event in the Miss America Organization and is for girls ages 13-17.

Ayanian, 15, attends Burlington High School. The high school junior plays the piano. Her pageant platform is "Food is Not a Privilege – It is a Right: Fighting Hunger Today."

She was the winner in the acting category at the 2007 National American Miss Massachusetts Jr. Pre-Teen Pageant; and also the winner in the acting category at the 2008 National Miss Massachusetts Teen Pageant.

She was first runner-up at the 2012 Miss Massachusetts' Outstanding Teen Pageant.

The national pageant is scheduled for August 9-18 in Orlando, Fla.

The pageant was established in 2005 to make scholarships available to winning contestants.

## Impulsive and Glamorous in Wellesley

JEWELRY, from page 10

thing a little unusual," Sagherian explained. The jewelry is created "based on their input," including bringing in items they have for repurposing.

Adamas does approximately half its business in wedding and engagement rings. Often men might come in looking for just the right ring and ask for guidance from Aboyan and Sagherian.

The duo saw there is a place in the market for an equally tasteful store that can offer customers stylish jewelry for far less, with semi-precious stones. In Impulse, the range is from \$150 to \$7,000, with most items under \$1,000.

Traditional fine jewelry is made up of gemstones like sapphires and diamonds. However,

Sagherian may have started with a business background, but she has accumulated a great deal of knowledge about gems – diamonds in particular – and has such natural style that her



Upside-down gold and diamond hoop earrings by Lana Jewelry



Floating quartz necklace by Suzanne Kalan

customers often rely on her to steer them toward a redesign.

Among diamonds, she said, white ones are still the most popular, while yellow and pink varieties are gaining popularity.

Among semiprecious gems, she said green quartz is very popular now. "It has a light, pale green color. Since emerald is the big color this year, the Pantone color, green jade and agate and also popular."

When they were looking for a space for Impulse, the duo decided they need to explore other suburbs and an opportunity presented itself in Wellesley.

"We picked Wellesley because we liked the shopping area they created in Linden Square. People from Natick, Weston, Framingham, they all come through here. They come to Linden Square if they don't want to go to the mall," Sagherian said.

In Sagherian's line of work, customers often shop based on their emotions. She recalled how a customer lost her teen son and asked Adamas to make custom jewelry for each of her remaining children as a tribute to their late brother. "It makes us feel good to help this family during such a difficult time," Sagherian said.

Many celebrity clients have shopped at Adamas. In addition, the shop often provided the jewelry won by the actors on the set of ABC's "Desperate Housewives." This summer the siblings received a lot of attention when gymnast Aly Raisman, who was on the US Olympic

she noted, "because of the huge downturn in the economy, semiprecious stones and metals like sterling silver have become bigger than ever."

Thus, Impulse was born.

"There are changes in buying trends. Fewer people buy expensive jewelry and more people want to buy fun and trendy fashion jewelry, hence Impulse. It's a little more fun and the purchases are not necessarily investments," Sagherian said.

"We wanted to offer women a place where they could mix fashion and fine jewelry in a way that makes complete sense. It is all about fashion and making fashion statement," she added.

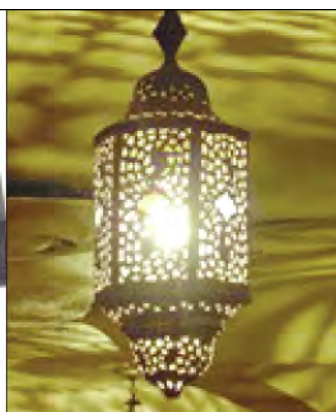
The two stores have a lot of overlap in terms of customers. "We have some of the same clientele. A lot of them enjoy shopping here as a feel-good place."

With the gleaming surfaces and pretty baubles in the high-end looking space, Sagherian said, they "want to make it impossible for people to walk in and leave without finding a gift," even if they gift is to themselves.

Among the fashion jewelry lines at Impulse is the one by Heather B. Moore or Dominique Denaive.



The restaurant's namesake is inspired by the 18th century troubadour, Sayat Nova. His poems are sung and recited by Armenians all over the world.



Located just steps from Michigan Avenue in the heart of Chicago's thriving Streeterville neighborhood, Sayat Nova is a cozy, romantic enclave tucked back from the city's urban sprawl. Since 1970, we have offered Armenian cuisine that presents a slightly earthier variation on typical Mediterranean fare.

**An intimate neighborhood restaurant with a 40 year tradition of serving authentic Armenian/Middle Eastern Cuisine.**



**SAYAT NOVA ARMENIAN RESTAURANT**

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From left, Veronica Sagherian, and her brother, Anto Aboyan, pose with customers as well as Aboyan's wife, Lisa, far right, at the grand opening of Impulse.

"We do extensive research. We look around for designers who have talent and the potential to be great. Another find by Sagherian and Aboyan is Suzanne Kalan, an Armenian designer from Los Angeles.

"The first time I saw her, I got a pair of pretty earrings for myself. The next thing I know, I'm buying all kinds of things from her." Now, she said, Kalan's line can be found in several high-end stores.

Team, wore the earrings that Aboyan had made for her, a sapphire, ruby and diamond pair of earrings, wishing her luck. The Raisman family, who are from Needham, had been longtime customers of Adamas and the siblings wanted to convey their best wishes to the young Olympian.

To check out Impulse, visit [trustyourimpulse.com](http://trustyourimpulse.com); to see more from Adamas, visit [adamasfinejewelry.com](http://adamasfinejewelry.com).





ARTS & LIVING

# Sayat Nova Presents ‘Journey through Time’ at Arsenal Center for the Arts

WATERTOWN – Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston returns to the Charles Mosesian Theatre, Arsenal Center for the Arts, with a new production on February 23 and 24. “Journey through Time” tells the story of Armenia from pagan times to the adoption of Christianity, from struggles to preserve its culture to celebration of the nation’s independence.

With fiery dance, pounding drums and oral recitations of ancient stories, this company is known for its powerful, yet poignant presentations. Women dance in colorful costumes, their bodies gracefully swaying in unison, reaching out to the audience, whispering “remember,” recalling the horrors of the Genocide. The Battle of Vartanantz is evoked with vibrancy and heart-pounding rhythms. The traditional woodwind instrument, the duduk, creates an ethereal tone as do the shadows giving way to light. These dances – fluid, energetic and ultimately triumphant – speak of a nation that has persevered and thrives, and a people which loves its culture.

An independent, non-profit organization, now in its 27th year, Sayat Nova has traveled the world, performing throughout the United States, in Canada and Armenia, to great popular acclaim.

“Journey Through Time” will be presented on Saturday, February 23, at 5 p.m. and Sunday, February 24, at 4 p.m. To purchase tickets, visit [www.arsenalarts.org](http://www.arsenalarts.org) or call the box office, Sayat Nova Dance Company Director Apo Ashjian or General Manager Garen Avetissyan. For more information about SNDC, visit [www.sayatnova.com](http://www.sayatnova.com).



Sayat Nova dance company opens the program with a fiery pagan dance

## CALENDAR

### Sorority Fashion Show to Help Armenian Orphans

SORORITY, from page 10  
CSUN fashion major, Kadejah Henderson, dedicated months to help style the show. She put together a total of 32 looks with donations from local boutiques and designers.

The show displayed a variety of casual and formal looks.

One of the biggest trends that hit the runway that night were body chains and bows. They were incorporated in several outfits and served as unique statement pieces.

Mika Couture provided a majority of the jewelry. From beautiful headpieces to dazzling arm adornments, the body chains were accessories every girl in the audience wanted to walk out with.

Trendy bows in different colors and patterns were donated by The Social Bow, which Henderson creatively styled as headpieces and necklaces for a few of the looks.

The show overall hit right on this years trend by featuring a variety of sheer and leather tops, peplum skirts, bold graphic prints and the popular thigh-high slit skirts.

The audience was entertained and pampered with a few musical guests and hand served refreshments during intermission.

The entire event was a community effort and the audience could see that.

“It was a great show. It’s so inspiring to see all these organizations come together for a cause,” audience member Rafayel Mgdesyan said.

Couture employee Arpy Gezalyan, one of the sponsoring fashion companies, enjoyed the show and expressed how well it was put together.

“The whole community really worked together. It was fun and everyone got to have fun. We got to advertise, and the girls get experience running the show and raise money,” Gezalyan said.

Kohar Mardirossian Pelter, co-president of SOAR, commended the tremendous effort of the Alpha Gamma Alpha members.

“I’m very impressed with their work. I’m so proud that they would dedicate their Saturday night into an effort for the needy and the abandoned children who have nobody else except people like us.”



**ArsenalARTS and Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston present SNDC’s production of “Journey Through Time” at the Charles Mosesian Theater, in the Arsenal Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal St. Two performances: February 23, 5 p.m. and February 24, 4 p.m. For tickets, call Garen: 617-930-2921, Arsenal Box Office: 617-923-8487 or visit [www.sayatnova.com](http://www.sayatnova.com) to buy online. Tickets: \$30 (assigned seating).**

## Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2013



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

✂-----

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

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## COMMENTARY

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## COMMENTARY

## Marjorie Housepian Dobkin: A Portrait in Historic Perspective

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The loss of Marjorie Housepian Dobkin is not only the demise of an individual writer, but also the loss of a leading member of a pioneering generation and the close of an era, whose values, dreams, motivations and collective goals had very different nature.

Dobkin was raised in a “houseful of love,” which eventually became most appropriately the title of her best-selling novel. The foundations of that house were laid by Dr. Movses and Makrouhi Housepian, both of whom not only believed in the preservation of Armenian family values, but also played leadership roles in the formative years of the nascent Armenian-American community. During that period, Armenians were not yet alienated from their roots and the Armenian collective dreams still had genuine resonance.

Marjorie came of age during that bustling period of the community, whose ideals were very much alive.

Her mother, Makruhi Housepian, was a longtime prominent member of the AGBU Central Board. She was the conscience of that board, while Alex Manoogian served as its mind and muscle.

World War II eventually concluded with the victory of the Allies, where Armenia and Armenians made their true mark, especially through the valiant war efforts of the Soviet Union. It looked like Armenian dreams were about to materialize. The global Armenian community was mobilized and the American-Armenian community was leading the global drive for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and reparation of historic territorial rights, the recovery of Wilsonian Armenia. Those endeavors and dreams can only bring a cynical smile to the faces of many Armenians today.

When the UN Charter was being adopted in 1945, in San Francisco, with the participation of 50 nations, Armenians sent abdelegation to lay their claims in their memoranda. The Armenian National Council was demanding the return of historic Armenia to be attached to the Soviet Armenian Republic. Marjorie Housepian’s father was one of the leading figures who drafted the memorandum of Armenian demands. One can only imagine, the hope, anticipation and fervor that enlivened the families of those leaders.

Soon thereafter, the stern face of the Soviet Union seemed to offer a benevolent smile for the Armenians, further fueling the imagination of the Armenians around the world; indeed, Grigor Harutyunyan, the top political figure in the Soviet Armenian government, would raise the issue of Armenian territorial claims

from Turkey in 1946 to accommodate half a million survivors of the Genocide willing to repatriate and settle in Soviet Armenia.

All those dreams were dampened and the drive came to a screeching halt, when Winston Churchill drew an iron curtain around the Soviet Union, in a speech in Fulton, Missouri, in 1947.

This was the atmosphere in which young Marjorie Housepian was brought up, absorbing the ideas and emotions reigning in Armenian households.

Whatever was internalized in her youth had to be expressed through two distinct venues – creative literature and academic research.

Through her literary creations, such as *Houseful of Love* and many short stories and essays, she became one of the pioneering figures, who brought the Armenian family life into the mainstream of American literature. The other figures were William Saroyan, Leon Surmelian, Leon Herald Serabian, Richard Hagopian and Archie Minassian, just to name a few.

She was also one of the active proponents of the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Her article published in 1966, “The Unremembered Genocide,” brought a vivid awareness in the academic circles to the Armenian Genocide. The monumental crime that the Kemalist Turks had committed in 1922 by burning an entire city and drowning its population into the sea concerned not only the Armenians but also the Greeks. Documents, facts and eyewitness accounts were abundant; they needed a keen scholar to give a worthy, academic treatment to the subject. The person who took up the challenge was Dobkin, who gave a historic, graphic treatment to the subject, in a book titled *Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of a City*, without betraying her previous belle-lettres style, which had graced her novels and short stories.

Marjorie remains as a trailblazer both in literature and scholarship. Today many young writers follow her footsteps and they owe a great debt to her for her courage, talent and pioneering spirit.

The young historians and academics have also caught up with her through a profusion of scholarly volumes to counter Turkish denialist policies.

Dr. Movses Housepian, being one of the prominent leaders of the ADL, was an avid reader of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, which became a favorite publication of Marjorie’s. She has taken part in many celebrations of Mirror-Spectator anniversaries, always giving in-depth assessments of its content.

As Marjorie joins her father and mother in eternity, they certainly look down with pride upon the surviving members of their family, Dr. Edgar Housepian and others, who continue their legacy in this world, with the same idealism and fervor which have characterized their legacy.

## Turkey and the Kurds: Progress on the Horizon

Optimism has broken out prematurely several times in the past 30 years of conflict between the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and Turkey. An embryonic deal in 2009 on the return of 34 PKK fighters from Iraq ended in chaos. A popular demonstration proclaiming victory prompted government anger, a further wave of arrests, court charges and some of the fighters fleeing. Neither side had prepared. The same cannot be said this time.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has publicly ordered the head of his national intelligence organization (MIT) to direct talks with the man who has been locked up on a prison island for the last 14 years, Abdullah Öcalan. Erdogan has both a parliamentary consensus and the majority of public opinion behind him. After one of the bloodiest periods of the conflict, both at home and abroad (three Kurdish women affiliated with the PKK were killed in Paris in what is increasingly seen as an attempt to sabotage the talks), this is some

achievement.

A number of factors have led to this. Four years ago Ankara felt on uncertain ground, not just with the Kurds, but with the stirring of its own deep state. With the convictions of army officers plotting a coup in the “sledgehammer” trial behind him, Erdogan has had a change of heart about negotiating directly with the PKK leader. He was helped on his way by Öcalan’s call to end a hunger strike conceived by PKK commanders in the Qandil mountains. Overnight, hundreds of Kurdish prisoners ended their action, reinforcing the imprisoned leader’s authority.

There is still some way to go before a PKK ceasefire declaration. Just the logistics of extracting 2,000 PKK fighters from Turkish soil, and getting a further 6-7,000 down from the mountains in northern Iraq, to lay down their arms to Massoud Barzani in Irbil, makes the decommissioning of IRA and loyalist paramilitary arms in Northern Ireland seem like a

walk in the park. But if a Kurdish spring happens, the rewards for both sides are significant – not just the end of a conflict that has claimed 40,000 lives.

For Öcalan, it is the prospect of ending his sentence under house arrest and, ultimately, freedom. For the Kurds, it is a new constitution, rewritten anti-terror laws, the end of indefinite pre-trial detention and the persecution of thousands of peaceful activists, education in Kurdish, and devolution. For Erdogan, an even more glittering and controversial prize looms – the presidency, which he wants with full executive powers. With the backing of the Kurdish BDP, with its 36 seats in parliament, he could secure a majority to hold a referendum. Many hurdles lie ahead. For the moment, the fact that talks are on must, after the mayhem of recent times, be good enough.

(This editorial originally appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper’s February 6 edition.)

### Notice to Contributors

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* welcomes articles, commentaries and community news from our readers. In order to assure the accurate and timely publication of articles submitted, please note the following policies:

- All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10 point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.
- Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are encouraged.
- All submissions should include the name of a contact person and a daytime

telephone number.

– Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is 12 noon on Monday of the week of publication.

– Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director. Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.

– The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.

– Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Azerbaijan’s Shocking Discovery:  
Money Can’t Buy Everyone

Money may help solve some problems, but does not solve them all. And sometimes it backfires.

Azerbaijan is the perfect example of a filthy rich country using its billions of petrodollars to win over foreign politicians and individuals in all walks of life in an attempt to improve its shoddy image around the world. In fact, the term “caviar diplomacy” was specially coined to describe the “goodies” that Azeri officials regularly and generously distribute to achieve their sinister purposes.

For example, Baku paid \$5 million to Mexico City to renovate a park on condition that the statue of former President Heydar Aliyev be displayed in that prominent location. After Mexican activists became aware of this unseemly deal, the dictator’s statue was dismantled and unceremoniously dumped in storage.

Azeri officials are finding out that not everyone can be bought and there still are some honorable people in this world who cannot be bribed! One such person with impeccable integrity is Peter Savodnik of the New York Times. Earlier this month, the American journalist was invited to Baku by Ibrahim Ibrahimov, an Azeri multi-billionaire, in

order to get the New York Times to write a puff piece on his gargantuan construction project.

Unimpressed by the excesses of the nouveau riche Azeri oligarch, Savodnik wrote a scathing article ridiculing Ibrahimov’s grotesque vision. Here are brief excerpts from the reporter’s lengthy article:

Ibrahimov is planning to build “a sprawling, lobster-shaped development called Khazar Islands – an archipelago of 55 artificial islands in the Caspian Sea with thousands of apartments, at least eight hotels, a Formula One racetrack, a yacht club, an airport and the tallest building on earth, Azerbaijan Tower, which will rise 3,445 feet. When the whole project is complete... 800,000 people will live at Khazar Islands, and there will be hotel rooms for another 200,000. ...It will cost about \$100 billion.”

Savodnik reports that the day before he arrived in Azerbaijan, Ibrahimov’s representative flew to Moscow to hand-deliver a book and DVD on the Khazar Islands project. Once in Baku, the journalist was struck by the oligarch’s lavish lifestyle – “sitting in the back seat of a black Rolls-Royce as it tore across island No. 1 of his soon-to-be built archipelago. Nigar Huseynli, his 23-year-old assistant, was sitting up front in a black and white floral-print skirt, black tights and rectangular black sunglasses. She seemed to be vaguely worried, always. She wore a great deal of perfume that, she said, came from Italy. ‘When he’s in Azerbaijan,’ Huseynli said, ‘Mr. Ibrahimov always drives in his black Rolls-Royce. In Dubai, he has a red one.’”

Sporting “blue Stefano Ricci crocodile-skin shoes that matched his blue Stefano Ricci jeans, blue Zilli jacket and blue Zilli button-down shirt,” Ibrahimov told Savodnik that the Azerbaijan Tower would definitely be in Guinness World Records. If the Saudis or Emiratis or anyone any-

where tried to build a bigger building, Ibrahimov said he would then build an even bigger one.

Savodnik writes that the Azeri oligarch described Aliyev, the Boss of All Bosses, as “a great supporter, an ally, the son of the savior of the people of Azerbaijan.” When the NY Times reporter asked Ibrahimov “about other features of his regime: the lack of transparency, the lack of civil liberties, the detention of opposition activists,” his response was typical of all oligarchs: “I don’t know anything about politics.”

The American journalist boldly slammed both Ibrahimov and his country: Azerbaijan “builds nothing that the rest of the world wants and has no internationally recognized universities. It does, however, have oil.” In a follow up article, Savodnik concluded: “Underneath all the glass and steel and neon lights, it [Azerbaijan] is still an authoritarian state.”

This is not the first time The New York Times has published an exposé of Azerbaijan. In an October 27, 2003 editorial, the newspaper wrote: “Ilham Aliyev, businessman, playboy and novice politician, received a nice gift from his father – the country of Azerbaijan. Heydar Aliyev had ruled Azerbaijan almost continuously for 34 years, first as an agent of the Soviet Politburo and then as an autocrat in his own right. When he became too ill to continue, he anointed his son to run for president in his place. Ilham Aliyev ran a rigged campaign, using all the powers of the state, and then celebrated his victory by arresting most of the opposition.”

The New York Times concluded its scathing editorial by urging the United States to keep Aliyev “at arm’s length and avoid repeating the unfortunate history of supporting autocrats who sit atop oil riches.” Regrettably, this warning went unheeded by successive US administrations.

Verdi by the Numbers

By John Mauceri

A small blip in the history of opera occurred this week in Bilbao, Spain. It occurred a few seconds after the curtain came down on the dress rehearsal of Verdi’s 1855 French opera, “les Vêpres siciliennes.” The invited audience was cheering the singers, the orchestra and the chorus. As I climbed the steps from the podium in the orchestra pit to await my call to walk onstage, I realized that not only was this the first time this grand opera had ever been performed in Spain, it probably was also the first time the opera had been heard anywhere with its complete text observed since 1855.

There are those who just read that and are jumping to correct me – but here is the point of that statement. Everyone in the cast and in the production accepted as sacrosanct that Verdi knew what he was doing and that every aspect of his score be observed. This means the tempos and the surprisingly controversial use of observing its metronome indications.

All of us musicians are brought up to view the written notes (the actual pitches) and the marking on those notes (loud, soft, accents, separations, etc.) as essential to replicating the intent of the composer. But, when it comes to the pulse of the music – the various tempo markings found in the musical score – this fundamental aspect of the text is viewed as a matter of personal taste and artistic judgment. Indeed, the very idea of using a metronome when a composer gives that indication is generally looked on as being academic or rigid. Even Pierre Boulez, who is incorrectly viewed as a literalist, cannot (or does not wish to) follow Debussy’s metronome markings in his own edition of Debussy’s ballet, “Jeux,” when he came to record it with the Cleveland Orchestra.

Verdi was particularly cognizant of the way the pulse of an accompaniment changes its meaning. What might seem perfunctory becomes heartbreaking when

slowed down. What might be flaccid becomes terrifying when brought up into a fast pulse. In his letters, Verdi, frequently asked about the tempi of performances that he did not attend. He actually built his operas on tempo relationships, using the metronome numbers as his building blocks. Not only are they structural (and you may have read that Elliot Carter invented rhythmic modulation, but he was a hundred years late on that), they represent the emotional state of the characters onstage.

This is without question true, and yet performers and critics seem unwilling to embrace speed and relative speeds in the interpretation of music when the composer gives those indications in the musical text. Significantly, in this year celebrating the 200th birthday of the two greatest opera composers of the 19th century, Verdi and Wagner, it was Wagner who stopped using metronome markings early in his career, while Verdi used them right to his last opera, Falstaff.

Who, then, was more “German,” Verdi or Wagner? It was, after all, Wagner who implored German composers to learn how to sing as a result of his conducting the operas of Bellini. And Verdi absolutely knew Wagner’s *der Fliegende Holländer* and *Tannhäuser* when he composed *Vepres*, since they are referenced within the score.

I am particularly grateful to Francesco Izzo and the American Institute for Verdi Studies at NYU for allowing me access to primary source material in preparing the score for Bilbao.

For those who are unaware of how a metronome marking works, it is based on a mechanical devise developed in the 19th century that operates on a pendulum that can be lengthened or shortened to change its speed. The calibration of the “tick tock,” is marked on the pendulum and the speed of the clicks tells you how many will be heard in a minute. A marking of 60, means that there will be 60 pulses in a minute, or one a second. A marking of 120, means two pulses a second.

The standard criticism about using a metronome is that it turns a performance into something mechanical. This is a total

misunderstanding of how it was used and the intentions of composers like Verdi. The pulse sets the speed of the music and within that speed there is all kinds of expected flexibility, involving singers’ breaths, the preparation of high notes, etc. But, since Verdi’s operas usually support a vocal line with a repeated rhythmic figure, that pulse sets the center point of all flexibility. And, while Verdi will use words like *allegro agitato*, *allegro moderato*, or a simple *allegro*, he always follows it with just how that phrase is to be objectively achieved – and thus the metronome marking. All *allegros* are not the same speed.

Composers in 20th century classical music, especially the 12-tone and serial composers, are generally praised for their complex use of mathematical formulas in creating music, including, it should be noted, tempo indications. This same criterion is turned on its head when it comes to 19th century music, where observing the numbers is seen as anti-musical. The romantic composers were “feeling” composers and the modern ones were “thinking” composers. All of this is nonsense, of course. Composers exist in the worlds of both Dionysius and Apollo and always have.

Ironically, I have just read the galleys of a new book on the great Armenian-American stage and film director, Rouben Mamoulian, by Joseph Horowitz, called *On My Way* to be published by W.W. Norton & Company. The story of Mamoulian, who used a metronome and a baton to direct straight plays, is astonishing. He felt (rightly so) that each character in a play has his/her own tempo in expressing the words given by the playwright. Verdi, too, knew that the tempo of a character was one of the ways he could express the emotional state of that character. In “Aida,” for example, the exchange between Amneris and Rhadames, in Act Four, switches between to tempos (144 and 120) as each one sings to – or, better, at – each other.

Mamoulian is the forgotten genius who brought his sense of timing to the 1927 world premiere of Dorothy and DuBose Heyward’s play, “Porgy.” Then in 1934, Mamoulian, metronome in hand, directed

the world premiere of Gershwin’s opera, “Porgy & Bess.” He subsequently went on to direct Rodgers & Hammerstein’s first and second musicals (“Oklahoma!” [1943] and “Carousel!” [1945]). That these three masterpieces of music theater were shaped by a director with a metronome, should at least encourage a more nuanced look at the use of the device. (It should also be pointed out the Gershwin carefully crafted his metronome requirements for “Porgy & Bess.” For a further discussion on this, check out the Nashville Symphony’s recording [deleted] on Decca.)

And this brings us back to “Les Vêpres siciliennes.” That the opening chorus of Act One begins at a startlingly fast tempo of half note at 100 – usually performed much slower – is supported by the tempo of the last chorus which brings down the curtain at the end of Act Five, in which the pulse is also 100. A duet can begin at a moderate pulse of 84, and as the heat builds, so do the speeds: 126, 132, 184. Never have I seen so many metronome markings in any score, as I have found in this opera by Verdi. This is especially true in the recitatives, which go from what I call “ritual speed,” to the speed of spoken French. A study of the recitatives alone is worth a PhD from someone if it has not already been done.

When I was a boy and was devouring everything I could find about opera and musical theater, the received wisdom was that “Vêpres,” and its Italian version, “i Vespri Siciliani,” was Verdi’s only misstep – after the amazing trifecta of “il Trovatore,” “Rigoletto” and “la Traviata.” After “Vepres” came the great later works that include “un Ballo in Maschera,” “la Forza del Destino,” “Don Carlos,” “Aida,” “Otello” and “Falstaff.” But after having conducted it from start to finish, and with an audience present, I think we should reconsider Verdi’s 1855 achievement.

“Les Vepres siciliennes” is the work of genius. It is a politically active opera that demands freedom and insists on the power – and responsibility – of citizens to take charge. Indeed, as the saying goes, “we are the ones we have been waiting for.” Les Vêpres siciliennes is also an extraordinary pre-Freudian, pre-“Star Wars” investigation into the relationship of a young hero to a dreadful tyrant, who, unknowingly, also happens to be his father. That the father, a leader of an invading army, had raped a

*continued on next page*





## COMMENTARY

# Last Words Of a Priest

By Deacon Jimmie Magarian

A priest's life provides countless formal and informal opportunities to present the teachings of the church. From chatting over coffee and speaking at banquets, to sacramental exhortations and sermons during liturgy, the words of a priest can be a powerful stream of teaching moments.

Some priests take such opportunities seriously and prepare themselves accordingly. Some only speak (teach) when asked or required. Still some others drone on with little substance or content only because they feel obliged to say something. Then there was the Very Rev. Ghevont Samoorian.

Father Ghevont's recent falling asleep in Christ caused many to pause and reflect on what many would say was a unique and unmistakable style and character for an orthodox priest.

First and foremost he was a teacher, and in pursuit of this he made bringing people together a focal point. Like any audience, his students might be drawn in, or put off. They might hear the intellectual and theologian, or the rebel and contrarian. His fountains of words were a mixture of scholarly thought and practical street application. Beyond that of a priestly calling or his rank of "Supreme Doctor" (Dzarakouyn Vartabed), his first instinct was to teach and provide something to learn. His means were varied and sometimes questioned, but his goals were clear and more often than not, pointed to the Divine.

A glimpse of his character was revealed during the after-funeral "meal for the soul" (hokejash). Here his nephew read a letter sent to him by his Uncle Diran, then the newly renamed Fr. Ghevont, shortly after ordination in 1965 in Jerusalem. The letter was not merely informational or a 'hello' from the far away Holy Land, but filled with teaching – from liturgical practices to church vocabulary. This would become a hallmark. At the time, Fr. Ghevont's nephew was only 10-years-old.

While sometimes unprepared, Fr. Ghevont seized each opportunity to teach about the Gospel and Church Orthodoxy, of culture and of history. During meetings and car rides, over coffee or dinner, there seemed an endless flow of information, thoughts, interpretations, and explanations. Details were at the ready and reflected his own desire to learn, as well as the hundreds and hundreds of theological and historical books in his library. Sometimes the presentation would be concise and cohesive. Other times tangents would rule the day. Still others might fail in illuminating the audience, while contrasted with times when students would "get it." Alas, there were also times where less, or nothing, or a better choice of words, was better judgment. But the desire, if not zeal, to convey a meaningful message to the one, or the many, energized Fr. Ghevont.

Equally important was the bringing together of his parish flock as distinguished early in personally cleaning, painting and remodeling to offer a welcoming atmosphere. Communications and the "bringing the Church into the home" via voluminous amounts of mail and newsletters were a serious focus and another means of teaching. Later in relocating the parish church and expanding facilities, all this took on exponential proportions.

Such work was not merely public relations or to provide a nice place of worship, but rather to create community and make the Church a desirable place to be – this was rooted in his sense of purpose. Indeed, it may have been Fr. Ghevont's gift to the faithful and his attempt to glorify God.

Death is one of those singular events that often promote speculation, links and parallels.

And so it was, on the Sunday of "Good Living before the Fast of Catechumens" (January 20, Baregentan

Arachavornehroo Bahkin) that the Very Rev. Ghevont Samoorian fell asleep in Christ.

For the next five days the church liturgical calendar prescribed a severe fast (dzom bahk) during which there are no liturgies offered and no lections (scriptural readings) assigned. Fr. Ghevont would make his last trips and visits during this week of fasting.

Fr. Ghevont often spoke about the church liturgical calendar, origins of customs and practices, and many times about the rites involving 'catechumens' – those receiving instruction in preparation for Christian baptism. Such periods of fasting, he would explain, prepared the catechumen spiritually through prayer, intellectually through instruction, and physically through fasting.

Fr. Ghevont's emphasis on teaching and instruction was not confined to the classroom, or a sermon from the bema, but in many of his varied endeavors: church architecture and landscaping, layouts of newspapers and books, application of art and music, liturgical texts on form and practice – each was to convey meaning and couched in the message of the Holy Gospel, in Holy Tradition, and ethnic heritage and custom.

Now, in preparation for his receiving the Holy Sacrament of Final Anointing, embedded in the custom and rites of "sending one on their way" for priests, Fr. Ghevont's final week begins in Watertown, where his funeral home was found. Here his youth had many adventurous days and nights. His outstanding voice was heard in the choir of St. James, and together with his oud, could be also heard at dances and parties. ACYOA and AYF events and revelries introduced him to moments to remember and some to forget. The elderly often shook their heads, while peers gathered around for fun, good times and camaraderie.

On Thursday of his final week, Fr. Ghevont traveled up to the small town of Chelmsford, to the parish of Saints Vartanantz where he served as pastor for more than 25 years. He would go up the familiar Rt. 3 corridor, through the town of Billerica where he lived for many years, and also through the city of Lowell.

The Saints Vartanantz Church parish was originally located in downtown Lowell and became Fr. Ghevont's first full-time pastorate in 1968. He saw the need to bring together a dispersed flock as paramount, and in a very short time formed a vision of a very different place of worship and culture. By 1978, after what has been termed a period of discussion, debate, argument, battle, and a little luck, "Little Ani" was consecrated in Chelmsford. Fr. Ghevont dubbed it that nickname due to the building's vague resemblance to the great Cathedral of Ani.

It was in Chelmsford that Fr. Ghevont's vision would unfold in full color. Through his innovation and creativity the location of a former elementary school on 16 acres of land now provided a wonderful sanctuary. The once downtown neighborhood parish was transformed into a regional church with worshippers coming from all over, including a growing number from New Hampshire.

In a few years, Fr. Ghevont initiated research and work to properly adorn the sanctuary with murals containing icons of the saints and scenes from the Gospels. It had been centuries since an Armenian Orthodox Church was so adorned with over 75 ecclesiastical and historic figures to inspire the faithful and enhance the spiritual experience of worship. Fr. Ghevont joked that the many icons of the saints peering into the sanctuary would always provide "people" at worship services.

The expansive grounds themselves were improved for picnics and outings. Fr. Ghevont's vision included tennis courts and a swimming pool, along with buildings for assisted living and nursing care facilities for the elderly, including retired priests. But alas, these dreams were not to be realized in his lifetime.

And so Fr. Ghevont now arrived at his "Little Ani" one last time for his wake. In full liturgical vestments with doctoral staff and holding the Holy Gospel, he would lie silent in the chancel. The open coffin would sit on the very spot where for decades he would often enthusiastically preach and teach about God and the Church. Where once congregants might find inspirational words, or worry about long tangential sermons and off-hand remarks, there was only silence, save for

soft penitential music piped in through a music system he insisted be installed. Numerous priests and deacons came together. Prayers were offered, hymns were sung, incense was burned – the last visit was over.

The next day, Friday, on the day of Remembrance of the Holy Prophet Jonah, Fr. Ghevont would be in the sanctuary of Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge. He was born there and baptized in that parish.

The Prophet Jonah is best known for his spending three days and nights in the belly of the great fish (whale), which is viewed as a foretelling of the great Resurrection of Christ. But Jonah was also the reluctant prophet with extreme views. He knew of the wickedness of the residents of Nineveh and their need for repentance. Collectively, upon finally believing the teachings of Jonah, the Ninevites repented. It is an interesting coincidence to remember Jonah on Fr. Ghevont's funeral day.

As is custom, priests and deacons gathered for the Holy Sacrament of Final Anointment embedded in Divine Liturgy for a member of the clergy. Ironically, absent are any of his fellow members of the Brotherhood of Sts. James of Jerusalem who were in conclave there to elect a new patriarch. Fr. Ghevont was a life-long champion of the orthodoxy of the Apostolic See of St. James of Jerusalem and of the Brotherhood that comprises its monastery there.

Now in the nave of the Church, again in full vestments and holding the Holy Gospel, Fr. Ghevont lies facing the Holy Altar flanked by his local clergy brothers. During this Liturgy there is a pause for the Final Anointment and its prescribed rites. Just before the "Kiss of Peace" of the Liturgy, the presiding bishop offers the prayer of anointing for the deceased: Like a bountiful stream, pour the grace of your Holy Spirit upon this precious treasure, who is a temple of your Holy Will. At this point, carried by his fellow priests, Fr. Ghevont makes his last ascent to the bema and before the Holy Altar. Here the bishop anoints his forehead and right hand with Holy Oil (Muron). As the deacons chant the litany of the "Kiss of Peace," first the bishop, then in turn the priests and deacons, kneel at the coffin and kiss Fr. Ghevont's forehead and right hand and Gospel, receiving the Holy Kiss greeting from the anointed.

Fr. Ghevont is then returned to his place in the nave, and brings with him the "Kiss of Peace." The faithful, one by one, approach and receive the greeting from Fr. Ghevont – his last words – "Christ is revealed among us."

The liturgy concludes and Fr. Ghevont's liturgical vestments are replaced with black robes. Soon, he is traveling again through the town of Lexington where he lived with his parents for many years and on to his final resting place with them in the northern part of town.

At the grave on a cold winter's day, final prayers and hymns are offered. Local soil is fittingly mixed with some from the Holy City of Jerusalem, and blessed. Each priest takes their turn pouring a little over the coffin as blessings are chanted. Finally, the great hymn of "Glory to God in the Highest" (Park ee Partzoons Asdoodzo) signals the coffin to lower into the earth. It is here that ends the rite of the "sending one on their way" (oughagavorootiun).

Fr. Ghevont's life-time endeavor to create and realize a vision to bring people together in the hope of them understanding their orthodox faith and heritage, was rooted in his believing in the importance of their relationship with God. How to convey the importance of that relationship? Bring them together and try to teach them through any and all means at hand.

"Christ is revealed among us" – his last words and final lesson – contain affirmation of both one's love and reconciliation with others and with God. It is a declaration of relationship and not an observation. It can be actualized by the faithful through their coming together and learning about the transcendence of God's everlasting love for all creation.

When we declare Christ among us, we have learned how to love.

(Deacon Jimmie Magarian is a resident of Tyngsborough, Mass. He notes that as directed by the Diocesan Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, all parishes of the Diocese will offer a 40-Day Requiem Service (Karasonk Hokehankist Bashdon) on Sunday, March 3 for the Very Rev. Ghevont Samoorian. The Primate will preside and participate at the Services at Saints Vartanantz Church in Chelmsford.)

## Verdi by the Numbers

from previous page

local woman, now deceased, who raised the child, is an unbelievably courageous thing to put on the stage in 1855. (The librettist, Eugène Scribe, must also be given credit here.)

Consider the news we read every day about invading armies and the use of rape as part of the spoils of war and understand why this opera could be set today in any number of locations. (The Bilbao produc-

tion, under the direction of the Italian Davide Livermore, is brilliantly set in Sicily in the 1990s, when the terrorist actions of the mafia stunned the world. The half-hour "Four Seasons" ballet in Act Three is not danced. Instead contemporary video images of violence and corruption are projected behind the chorus, who, facing the audience in masks, sit motionless in a replica of the Italian Parliament chamber.)

Verdi was living in Paris in 1855 (the same year that *Les Misérables* takes place). The aftermath of France's various revolutions and its attempts to find a stable, representational government is as much at the heart of *Vepres* as is Italy's simultaneous movement toward unification. Partially

because Verdi "belongs" to Italy where he is a national hero, the composer's larger political achievements are rarely credited or understood. He truly was the Beethoven of the middle and late 19th century.

And yes, "Vepres" is monumental in size – five acts and almost an hour longer than *Aida*. But it does not seem long, if one respects Verdi as if he were Elliott Carter. If the opera is performed complete, and with two intermissions, each element lasts slightly longer than one hour. (Act 1 (after the overture) = 0:00; Act 2 =35:00; Act 3: 1:04; Act 4 = 34:00; Act 5 = 30:00 ) It is classically structured, temporally symmetrical (with its requisite Act 3 ballet as the apex of the arch) and wildly passionate within that

structure. Actors and stage directors will understand what I mean when I say that the opera and each of its scenes and characters have a spine. That spine can be found in the numbers – the curiously controversial metronome numbers. The audience last night in Bilbao had no idea why this opera seemed so fresh, beautiful, and dramatically persuasive. The applause and the cheers were really for Maestro Verdi. To understand what he meant, we must simply do what he asks of us.

(John Mauceri is Chancellor of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (Winston-Salem), and Founding Director of the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra.)



# In Memoriam: Marjorie Housepian Dobkin

NEW YORK — The Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America was saddened by the death of Marjorie Anais Housepian Dobkin on February 8. What follows is the text of the eulogy delivered by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, the Diocesan Primate, during the funeral service at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral, in New York City, on Wednesday, February 13. It has been edited slightly for space.

On an occasion like this, one feels the weight of history. And the voices of the past—both recent and remote—seem to speak with a new clarity. I would like to begin by sharing with you some words from the very distant past, recorded in the book of Psalms:

Vindicate me, O Lord: for I have walked in my integrity,  
trusting in you without wavering....  
I do not sit with the false of heart,  
nor do I gather with those who deceive; ...  
I wash my hands in innocence,  
and go about thy altar,  
Singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,  
and telling of wondrous deeds.  
O Lord, I love the habitation of your house,  
and the place where your glory dwells....  
So as for me, I shall walk in my integrity.  
Redeem me, and be gracious to me.  
(Psalm 26)

These words were written 3,000 years ago. But this week, they spoke to me with new clarity,

as I reflected on the death — and the life — of Marjorie Anais Housepian Dobkin. For in these words I recognized Marjorie herself: her character, her life's vocation, and her beautiful, noble spirit.

She was a woman who could say, with absolute truth and conviction: "Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity." It was integrity, I think, that defined her character: it was the pillar which supported all her other talents and virtues.

A spirit of integrity must have been the common currency of the Housepian household during Marjorie's formative years. Her father was Dr. Movses Housepian — a greatly respected community leader and a genuine hero as both a physician and an Armenian patriot. Her mother, Makrouhi, was in many ways the guiding star of Marjorie's life: a woman of great compassion, intelligence and sensitivity; a pillar of the church and AGBU. As Genocide survivors, the home that Movses and Makrouhi built was

both cosmopolitan and lovingly Armenian. It was located just a few blocks south of here, in Manhattan's little Armenian colony of the 1920s and '30s, which provided the setting for Marjorie's wonderful first novel, *A Houseful of Love*.

The children of Movses and Makrouhi fully lived up to the noble spirit of their parents. Edgar became a brilliant neurosurgeon at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Like his father before him, Edgar answered the call of his homeland in its hour of need, devoting his skills to the cause of humanitarian relief in Armenia.

Marjorie, of course, became a pioneering and beloved figure in the New York and Armenian literati, and one of the most prominent Armenian-American writers of her generation.

Americans had previously been introduced to Armenian characters and themes in the works of the great William Saroyan. But in Marjorie's debut novel, *A Houseful of Love*, an entire

world of Armenian-American life burst into the open, carrying with it the distinctive lingo of our cuisine and proverbs, and a stream of vivid Armenian characters with names like Uncle Pousant, Hadji, Marta-Mama, Levon and Setrag.

The legendary publisher Benet Cerf edited the novel and became a great advocate of Marjorie's work after its debut in 1957.

As an author, educator, and associate dean at Barnard College, Marjorie was a New Yorker through-and-through, who lived in this city all her life, with few interruptions. It was here that she raised her three sons, to whom she was deeply devoted: Stephen, and Daniel and Jonathan. It was here that she enjoyed a long and tender marriage to Machbi "Mack" Dobkin, who was in every way a perfect match for Marjorie's grand, outgoing personality.

Her books won her great acclaim, and Marjorie was invited to speaking engagements around the world. She was a guest at nearly every Armenian Church in this country, and she developed a devoted following within the Greek community. Every audience would be captivated by her passion, and her lively, quick-witted personality. But more than that, everyone who heard her — or read her books, or simply engaged Marjorie in casual conversation — came away with the conviction that they had been in the presence of a person of rare character: fearless, in-corruptible; a woman of genuine integrity.

That spirit of integrity was the foundation of her character. It is most evident in her 1971 book, *The Smyrna Affair*. That volume is still considered the classic account of the burning of Smyrna in 1922.

But documenting the forgotten tragedy of Smyrna was only one part of Marjorie's intention. What she found equally reprehensible was the conspiracy of silence, the policies of misdirection and outright deceit, which had been used by the powerful to bury the memory of Smyrna, and exonerate its perpetrators.

The same spirit can be seen in *A Houseful of Love* — the book that introduced Marjorie to the world, and in many ways remained her most personal work. It begins with a young girl — Marjorie's alter ego — reviving her elderly relative, Marta-Mama: nearly 100 years old, and seemingly immortal. The girl pulls Marta-Mama back from the edge of death. And in so doing, she brings the story of the Armenians "back to life," as it were.

In the deepest sense, this is what Marjorie Housepian Dobkin accomplished with her life. This was her life's vocation: to make voices live again. She did it brilliantly, and beautifully, with vitality and faith.

To her dear sons, Stephen, Daniel, and Jonathan; to her proud brother and sister-in-law Edgar and Marion; to all of her loved ones, colleagues, friends and students, I convey my deepest sympathies. In the words of the Psalms, surely the Lord will receive Marjorie into "the habitation of his house, the place where his glory dwells." It is the true and original "houseful of love" — where Marjorie Housepian Dobkin will always be at home. Amen.

## Ninth Anniversary of Guren Margaryan's Murder Commemorated

MARGARYAN, from page 1  
Yerevan reacted by suspending diplomatic ties with Hungary. Hungary, however, stated that it had sent Safarov back to Azerbaijan after receiving assurances from the Azerbaijani Justice Ministry that Safarov's sentence would be enforced.

According to some reports, Safarov was extradited to Azerbaijan in exchange for the Azeri purchase of Hungarian securities worth Euro 2-3 billion, an information official Budapest denies.

"The Hungarian prime minister [Viktor Orban] is 'morally bankrupt' and should resign after admitting that he personally approved the transfer of the Azeri axe murderer while knowing the likely consequences," the leader of the opposition Socialists said earlier in Budapest.

Attila Mesterhazy said it was clear from Orban's comments at a news conference on September 11 that he had been aware that Azerbaijan would release the life-sentenced Ramil Safarov after his repatriation.



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