

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Volume LXXXIV, NO. 43, Issue 4337

\$ 2.00

The First English Language Armenian Weekly in the United States Since 1932

## Celebrating Survival:

Harvard Pays Tribute to Survivors of Holocaust, as Well as Armenian And Rwandan Genocides

By **Alin K. Gregorian**  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – A program at Harvard University on April 27 commemorated the painful legacies of the Armenian, Rwandan and Jewish people, as it celebrated their survival and resurrection.

The program, organized by the Harvard Foundation and the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy of the Harvard Kennedy School, took place on *Yom HaShoah*, or Holocaust Remembrance Day, at the university's Science Center.

The speakers representing the three communities linked their common histories of pain, but stressed the need for education as the means for preventing such tragedies. The stories were harrowing, but so were the demonstrations of personal strength and integrity.

The program included scholars as well as survivors from each nation.

As there are few Armenian Genocide survivors now, Artyom Geghamyan, a fellow at the Carr Center, read a brief excerpt from Kerop Bedoukian's memoirs, *The Urchin: An Armenian's Escape*. The words wove frightful images of death and cruelty, which caused most of the listeners, as well as the reader, to wince: the images of a child trying to nurse at the breast of his mother already dead from starvation in the desert; the rape of young girls as well as the decision of many to choose certain death rather than indignity.

Carla Garapedian, the director of the Armenian Genocide documentary "Screamers" and several other films, spoke about United Nations Ambassador Samantha Power's book, *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*. "Power's book broke the paradigm in the way we think about genocide – because it talked about all the genocides in the 20th century, as one repeating problem, one repeating crime. Genocides recur because the international community has allowed them to recur," Garapedian said.

She credited the book with inspiring "Screamers," and said the book not only  
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From left, Kim Kardashian, Genocide survivor Yevnige Salibian and her granddaughter, Talin Bahadarian

## Shoah Foundation Gala Honors Obama for Human Rights Work

Genocide Survivor Yevnige Salibian Guest of Honor

LOS ANGELES (Combined Sources) – The Ambassadors for Humanity Gala on May 7 celebrated the University of Southern California (USC) Shoah Foundation's 20th anniversary and honored President Barack Obama for his commitment to human rights.

Celebrity guests and entertainment industry heavyweights were out in support of the foundation, which works to preserve the testimonies of survivors of the Holocaust and other genocides.

Liam Neeson, star of "Schindler's List," began the ceremonies on Wednesday evening by recalling the impact of that Holocaust film and how it led director Steven Spielberg to found the Shoah Foundation. Conan O'Brien was the night's emcee.

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President Obama with Steven Spielberg

## California State Assembly Recognizes Artsakh

SACRAMENTO – The California State Assembly, on May 8, by a vote of 70-1, recognized the independence of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic (Artsakh). Specifically, AJR 32, encourages and supports "the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's continuing efforts to develop as a free and independent nation." The California Assembly Rules

Committee passed AJR 32 on Tuesday by a vote of 9-1, with one abstention, setting the stage for California to become the fifth state to adopt such legislation.

Assembly Member Mike Gatto (D-Burbank) introduced the bill in January, along with co-authors: Assembly Members Katcho Achadjian (R-San Luis Obispo), Raul Bocanegra (D-Pacoima), Cheryl R. Brown (D-San Bernardino), Ian Calderon (D-Whittier), Matt Dababneh (D-Encino), Brian Nestande (R-Palm Springs), Kristin Olsen (R-Modesto), and Jim Patterson (R-Fresno).

"We commend the California Assembly for today's decisive vote affirming the right of Artsakh to develop as a free and independent nation," stated Assembly Western Region Manager Aline Maksoudian, who was on hand to witness the historic vote. "Today's action is particularly significant to Armenian-Americans who welcome this strong expression of American values," Maksoudian added. "We want to extend our appreciation to Assembly Speaker John Perez for his support and recognize the dedicated efforts of State Assembly Members Mike Gatto, Scott Wilk, Adrin Nazarian and Katcho Achadjian."

California has become the fifth US state – after Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine and Louisiana – to recognize the independence of Nagorno-Karabagh.

## Hollande Says Recognition of Genocide Vital

YEREVAN (RFE/RL and Armenpress) – Visiting French President François Hollande reaffirmed in Armenia that recognition of the Armenian Genocide is necessary. "I always try to see positive side in this signs and this the case at the present



President Serge Sargsian and French President François Hollande

moment too. But of course in my opinion the central issue is that the massacres must be called as genocide," he said at a press conference here with President Serge Sargsian, referring to the statement by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan on April 23. "A solution is necessary and that is the recognition of the Genocide."

He reaffirmed his willingness to participate in the commemoration dedicated to the 100th  
see HOLLANDE, page 3

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### One Armenian Killed, Another Injured in Aleppo

ALEPPO, Syria (Armenpress) – An Armenian man, Raffi Hekimian, was killed here on April 29, according to sources here. Additional information about his death has not been made available yet.

The source also informed that on April 30, Armenian Khajak Zhamkochian was injured after his residence sustained damage from rockets. He is a student at Karen Jeppe national college.

### Armenian Flag Set on Fire in Baku on Shushi Liberation Day

BAKU – On May 8, the day Armenia celebrates the liberation of Shushi in Artsakh, the flag of Armenia was set on fire by the participants of the event at the "Alley of Martyrs," Azeri sources reported.

Azerbaijani website Haqqin.az reported that the event was organized by the so-called "Karabagh Liberation Organization," and the flag was burned by one of the women.

On 8-9 May, 1992, the NKR Self-Defense Forces, under the command of Arkady Ter-Tadevosyan liberated Shushi, from whose elevated position the Azerbaijani troops were opening fire at the civilians of the capital, Stepanakert.

### Armenian Genocide Museum Planned in Buenos Aires

BUENOS AIRES (Agencia Prensa Armenia) – The city of Buenos Aires will donate a property to the Armenian community for the construction of an Armenian Genocide Museum, according to Undersecretary for Human Rights and Cultural Pluralism Claudio Avruj.

Avruj in an interview stressed the importance of the project "that joins the efforts of both Buenos Aires and Argentina" to recognize the Armenian Genocide and added that it is an initiative that will benefit both the Armenian community and people in general.

Carolina Karagueuzian, director of the Armenian National Committee of Buenos Aires, said that "this will be a collective project that will show the struggle of the Armenian community in the country to keep the memory of the Armenian Genocide alive", and also "a space for reflection on genocidal practices and the importance of respect for human rights."

Last April 24 a similar project was launched in Uruguay, with the presentation of the Armenian Genocide Museum Foundation coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Culture together with Uruguayan Armenian organizations in the country.

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## President Receives Daniel Barenboim

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – On May 13, President Serge Sargsian received legendary pianist and he current conductor of the Berlin State Opera Daniel Barenboim, who was in Armenia within the framework of Yerevan Perspectives International Music Festival. His orchestra performed later that night.

Sargsian welcomed Barenboim and praised the Yerevan Perspectives festival which brings prominent musicians to the country and in turn exposes both Armenians to the visiting artists as well as giving the artists a chance to learn about Armenia.

## Presidents of Armenia, France Attend Concert

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – This week President Serge Sargsian of Armenia and his French counterpart, Francois Hollande, attended the jubilee 90th anniversary concert of singer Charles Aznavour in the Karen Demirchyan Sport and Concert Complex.

The last concert by the legendary singer took place on March 15 in Tel Aviv's Nokia concert hall.

Charles Aznavour (Shahan Vaghinak Aznavouryan) was born in Paris in 1924 to a family of Armenian migrants Mikayel and Knar Aznavouryans.

During a career that has lasted over 70 years, he has appeared in over 60 films, composed over 1,000 songs and sold over 100 million records worldwide.

## Armenian-Russian Troops Joint Parade

GUMRI (Armenpress) – For the first time in the history of Gumri, on May 9, Armenian and Russian troops held a joint military parade. The military units of the Armenian Armed Forces of Shirak region and the military units of the 102nd military base of the Russian Armed Forces based in Gumri took part in the parade dedicated to the 69th anniversary of the Victory of the Great Patriotic War.

The entry of the victory flag in Gumri's "Vardanats" square heralded the start of the parade. The commander of the parade was the Chief of Staff of Russia's 102nd military base, Col. Aleksey Avdeev, and the parade was received by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the joint Armenian-Russian Armed Forces Col. David Aghajanian

## NKR, Armenia Presidents Partake in Shushi Liberation Anniversary Programs

SHUSHI (Armenpress) – On May 9, Nagorno Karabagh President Bako Sahakyan and Armenian President Serge Sargsian took part in events commemorating in Shushi and Stepanakert Victory Holiday, the Day of the Artsakh Republic Defense Army and the 22nd anniversary of the liberation of Shushi. In the Stepanakert Memorial Complex, the two Presidents of the two Armenian states laid a garland and flowers to the monument paid tribute to martyrs that perished in World War II and the Artsakh liberation war. On the same day, Sahakyan and Sargsian visited Shushi where they lay garlands and flowers to the pedestal of the Tank monument and to the monument of Defense Minister Vazgen Sargsian.

The two presidents next visited an exhibition in the city, during which Sahakyan presented the Grigor Lousavorich order to Sargsian for exemplary services rendered to the Nagorno Karabagh Republic.

Karabagh's second president, Arkady Ghoukasyan, Primate of Artsakh Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church Archbishop Pargev Martirosyan, Armenian National Assembly speaker Galoust Sahakyan, NKR National Assembly speaker Ashot Ghulyan, Premier Ara Haroutunyan and other guests participated in the programs.

## Tekeyan Centre Fund Olympiad Winners Announced

YEREVAN – It is the fourth year that Tekeyan Centre Fund has organized a contest of knowledge – Tekeyan Olympiad – where Tekeyan students from Armenia and Karabagh compete to be the best and get prizes. Year by year the project becomes more and more popular and expands both its reach and disciplines. This time, apart from the Armenian Language, Literature and Mathematics, upon the advice of UK Ambassador to Armenia Kathy Leach, the fund included in the competition one more discipline that is the English Language. 70 Olympiad participants were the 8th and 9th graders from Yerevan, Gumri, Stepanavan, Karbi and Berdzor.

The goal of the project is to contribute to education of Tekeyan students, to encourage them to deepen their knowledge of the native and foreign languages as well as of natural sciences. The Olympiad is also a good opportunity for students to establish strong ties with other schools and to make good friends.

The competition was held at Tekeyan Centre and was followed with a reception and cultural program. This year the fund offered all the participants and the teachers to visit the Theatre of Young



HM Ambassador Kathy Leach, TCF Board member Alan Kutchukian, TCF Director Armen Tsulikyan with the Olympiad winners.

(deputy director of the college "Usmunk"), Arus Margaryan from Yerevan State University, the expert in the English Language, and Anahit Gevorgyan, the expert in Maths (a school teacher) awarded certificates to participants with high marks.

TCF Director A. Tsulikyan awarded the honorable mention prize and the third prize. Among the guests present

### Mathematics

First Prize /tablet/ Isahak Varosyan; Second Prize /camera/ Narek Poghosyan; Third Prize /multifunctional speaker/ - Nelli Margaryan; Honorable Mention Prize /Encyclopedia, 5 volumes/ - Vladimir Hakobyan; Certificates, Elen Sukiasyan, Hasmik Martirosyan and Tigran Gevorgyan

### English Language

First Prize /tablet/ - Gohar Hovhannisyanyan; Second Prize /camera/ Gayane Kurdyan; Third Prize /multifunctional speaker/ Diana Levonyan; Honorable Mention Prize /Encyclopedia, 5 volumes/ - Syuzanna Igityan; Certificates, Milena Sahakyan, Zvart Sedrakyan and Shushanna Atoyanyan



Tekeyan students having a test at the Olympiad

Spectator where they enjoyed "The Artist," a play by Alexander Shirvanzade.

The award ceremony for the Olympiad took place at Tekeyan Centre on the same day. Leach attended the ceremony, among other guests from Armenia and Karabagh.

The ceremony began with a welcome speech from TCF Director Armen Tsulikyan who extended his deepest congratulations to all the participants and particularly to the winners. As he mentioned the Fund succeeded in bridging Armenia and Karabagh and created a strong Tekeyan team that was achieving great success year by year. The Director also thanked all the TCF trustees and benefactors whose support and care enable the fund to realize its projects. Special thanks were addressed to HM Ambassador and the competition jury, for their kind cooperation.

Tsulikyan's speech was followed with the experts' opinion on the results of the competition, and Anahit Avetisyan, the expert in the Armenian Language

was Alan Kutchukian, TCF Board member, who awarded the second prize. In his speech the trustee emphasized the importance of education which is to be got in early age. He was pleased to learn that Tekeyan students were smart and intelligent and strived hard to get new knowledge and to succeed. Kutchukian also praised the hard work done by teachers daily and their devotion to school. Thanks to them students recorded new achievements.

The first prize for awarded by Ambassador Kathy Leach who entirely approved the fund's Olympiad. She was convinced that such kind of activity secures high-quality education which is important for the nation to progress. While speaking about Armenian children, Leach assured those assembled that they were vital to the future and that she is doing her best to deepen Armenian-British relations for the benefits of the young generation.

The principal of Berdzor Tekeyan School, Anahit Kosakyan, on behalf of all five Tekeyan schools thanked the fund for supporting them and implementing such projects which contribute to the education of children.

Tekeyan Olympiad award ceremony concluded with a concert presented by Tekeyan students.

The following students were awarded certificates and prizes in various categories:

### Armenian Language and Literature

First Prize /tablet/ Laura Parsadanyan; Second Prize /camera/ Susanna Tadevosyan ; Third Prize /multifunctional speaker/ Arman Khangeldyan; Honorable Mention /Encyclopedia, 5 volumes/ Irina Chakhoyan; certificates, Diana Levonyan, Aghavni Hakobyan and Yeva Yeshilbashyan



Little acrobats from Stepanavan at the Olympiad award ceremony

## Freedom House Report: Armenia Drops Point in Media Freedom

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – Freedom House human rights organization's latest survey puts Armenia 134th among 197 countries in freedom of the press.

According to Freedom House experts' assessment, Armenia remains in the group of countries with a non-free media. Each year Freedom House human rights defenders evaluate the condition of the press by giving special points to each country, and the more points a country has the more problematic the condition of press in the country is. In this regard in 2012 Armenia was given 65 points. Last year Armenia significantly improved, receiving 61 points. In the 2014 report, however, Armenia stepped back, getting 62 points.

According to the report, among the three South Caucasus countries Armenia holds the middle position – not as "free" as Georgia, but more "free" than Azerbaijan. (With Georgia being the only one to get a ranking of having a free press.)

Head of Yerevan Press Club Boris Navasardyan explains Armenia's one-point regress by the presidential elections in the country, which according to him were problematic, and during 2013 this formed a political monopolistic situation which in its turn affected the limitations of press freedom.

"In this case Armenia's membership to Customs Union must also be considered, we enter such an environment where freedom of speech is not a priority," said Navasardyan.





## INTERNATIONAL

## Silencing Dialogue: Arrests of Azeris in Turkey Causes Concern among Armenian Counterparts

By Gayane Mkrtychyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – The recent arrests of an Azeri journalist and of a couple engaged in social advocacy in Turkey has caused concern among civil society organizations in Armenia whose goal has been to create Armenia-Azerbaijan dialogue.

Rauf Mirkadirof, a reporter for Zerkalo newspaper of Baku was arrested on April 18 in Ankara and deported to Baku. The reporter is accused of providing Armenian special agencies military information of state secrecy from 2008 to 2009.

Azeri investigators claim that Mirkadirof provided sensitive information to Laura Baghdasaryan, chief of Region research center. Since 2005 Region research center has collaborated and realized various programs with “Peace and Democracy” institute in Baku. According to Baghdasaryan,

Mirkadirof is one of the authors of their program, and participated in internet-conferences broadcasted on publicdialogues.info website as well. His arrest was criticized by Human Rights Watch and Freedom House international agencies. Mirkadirof’s arrest was followed by the arrests Leyla Yunus, director of the Peace and Democracy Institute, and her husband, historian and conflict analyst, Arif Yunus, as suspects related to Mirkadirof case.

Leyla Yunus has said that the recent events in Azerbaijan are aimed at silencing the rare remaining advocates in the country. The arrests come as Azerbaijan, this week, takes up European Council presidency, prompting comment from Armenia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Nalbandian during a meeting of the National Assembly of Armenia.

“We are well aware that display of hatred, intolerance and discrimination towards Armenians is usual in

Azerbaijan. I think that not only the presidency of such a country in European Council, but also its membership is not honoring to such an organization,” Nalbandian said.

Against Violation of Law NGO head Larisa Alaverdyan said that events taking place in Azerbaijan are results of anti-Armenian policy led by President Ilham Aliyev which increases hatred toward Armenians. “There are many shortcomings in each country’s policies led by the country governments. And these shortcomings are being spoken about by reporters, NGOs. Azerbaijan is experiencing a political degradation which is created by Aliyev and his political elite,” says Alaverdyan.

President of the Yerevan Press Club Boris Navasardyan said that the arrest of Leyla and Arif Yunus is an evidence of the Azerbaijani government’s intentions to highly restrict legal organizations’ activities in the country. “Azerbaijani’s special agencies’ position isn’t conditioned by the advocates’ collaboration with Armenian partners, but rather by an attempt to endanger legal organizations’ activities in Azerbaijan in general. This means it’s more of an internal issue. The Baku political regime restricts attempts to establish any kind of dialogues. Moreover, such activities are put under the threat of retribution,” Navasardyan said. Referring to the Azerbaijani advocates’ arrests co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group James Warlick in his Twitter mini-blog writes that the US supports programs directed towards establishing an environment of trust and mutual understanding between the peoples of Azerbaijan and Armenia. Since 1997 Internews NGO has realized various projects together with the Azerbaijani side. Its director, Nune Sargsyan, said that throughout the years they have created a space where they both could speak about the conflict, the development of the two countries and possible dialogue. “Whether we want it or not, socially and culturally we are quite close. It’s very dangerous to get completely isolated from each other; the enemy’s character will become stronger, there will be fewer connections and human ties. And this way we will not come to a peaceful resolution, the experience of understanding each other will degrade,” said Sargsyan.

### Recognizing Armenian Genocide Is Moral Imperative for Jews, Knesset Speaker Says

JERUSALEM (*Jerusalem Post*) – Israel must recognize the suffering of the Armenian people, Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein said Tuesday at a discussion of the Armenian Genocide.

In response to a motion to the agenda by MK Zehava Gal-On (Meretz), Edelstein said, “this discussion does not blame any modern country, rather it shows that we identify with the victims of the massacre and its terrible outcome.

Edelstein added, “We cannot deny history and hold back human values out of diplomatic or political caution.”

Gal-On called for the government to recognize the Armenian Genocide before its 100th anniversary next year.

“As a nation that experienced the Holocaust, we cannot continue to ignore the Armenian genocide because of irrelevant considerations,” she stated.

According to MK Reuven Rivlin (Likud Beytenu), the Jewish People were “next in line” after the

Armenians to be killed.

“Whoever thought of the Final Solution got the impression that, when the day comes, the world will be silent, like it was about the Armenians. It is hard for me to forgive other nations for ignoring our tragedy and we cannot ignore another nation’s tragedy. That is our moral obligation as people and Jews,” Rivlin said.

Tourism Minister Uzi Landau responded to the motion in Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman’s place, saying that as Jews and Israelis, there is a moral obligation to recognize human tragedies, including the Armenian Genocide.

When the discussion ended, the motion was moved to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, as opposed to the Knesset Education Committee as Gal-On had proposed.

Gal-On accused Liberman of sending MK Shimon Ohayon (Likud Beytenu) to make sure the motion was moved to the classified committee in order to “bury” it.

## Hollande Says Recognition of Genocide Vital

HOLLANDE, from page 1 anniversary of the Genocide.

Hollande also spoke about the economic issues in the region. He said it would be possible for Armenia to enter into an association agreement with the European Union despite Yerevan’s plans to join a Russian-led Customs Union.

Speaking on May 12 in Yerevan, Hollande said the EU would be able to accept a “specific model for Armenia.”

But he said Brussels and Yerevan must work together, and that it would be “compulsory” to “yield” on issues related to the Russian-led Customs Union, which currently includes Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

“Europe must accept an agreement about an association with Armenia and Armenia can go with a trade-commercial union with Russia,” Hollande told RFE/RL. “It’s not a problem for me. It will be possible to have the two issues [but it is] compulsory to yield about the commercial union. We must work [on]

this scenario.”

Hollande arrived in Yerevan late on May 12 after a visit to Baku and talks there with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

In Baku, he said that his tour of the South Caucasus region is aimed at promoting a settlement to ongoing disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabagh as well as territorial disputes over Georgia’s breakaway regions.

He said that France supports the “territorial integrity of countries and the resolution of conflicts within their territorial integrity.”

“The visit to the Caucasus is not aimed against anyone,” he said. “Our purpose is to contribute to developing relations between Europe and independent partners. We don’t want to prevent someone from cooperating with anyone.”

Sargsian awarded Hollande the Order of Glory medal for his significant personal contribution to the development and strengthening of French-

Armenian relations, expanding and strengthening of cooperation between Armenia and France.

Hollande also paid tribute to Misak Manouchian, the French Resistance leader during World War II. A park in Yerevan was named in his honor during Hollande’s visit. “I thank all of you that you are here on this rainy day to pay tribute to the memory of France’s national hero, poet and active participant in the Resistance Movement, Misak Manouchian,” said Sargsian.

Hollande told the crowd that Manouchian, having narrowly escaped the Genocide, took refuge in France. “But a few years later chaos reached France and he took up arms for the freedom of the country that had given him shelter. Manouchian was a foreigner in France, but he liberated France. We do not forget his sacrifice,” said Hollande.

After completing talks with Armenian officials in Yerevan on May 13, Hollande left for Tbilisi on May 13.

### International News

#### In Baku Hollande Reaffirms France’s Commitment to Resolution of NKR Conflict

BAKU (Armenpress) – France has always taken initiatives aimed at the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, said French President Francois Hollande during a meeting with Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev, as reports APA news agency.

“My visits to Azerbaijan and Armenia are efforts aimed at the settlement of the conflict. With Azerbaijan and Armenia France has friendly relations, we cannot choose one of the two countries. We have proposed a new approach to resolve the conflict: by organizing a meeting of the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia. France has always come up with such initiatives,” said Hollande. He stressed that France, as a co-chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, bears a major responsibility. “We will continue these negotiations in Armenia. In France efforts are being made aimed at the settlement of the conflict by stage, which testifies about the existence of the trust,” noted Hollande.

#### Kurd Politician Apologizes for Kurds’ Role in Genocide

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – A member of the European Democratic and Peace Majlis, as well as the Kurdish liberation movement, Rozhden Valderem, did not see sincerity in the statement of the Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan made on April 23. In the Prime Minister’s speech Rozhden Valderem looked for the word “genocide” but did not find it, he said. This, he noted, made him angry.

“We need to call things by their names and give an answer for the crime carried out a century ago. I did not see a big change in Erdogan’s statement. If he does not utter and say the word “genocide” that they fulfilled, that is not a change for us. In his statement Erdogan said that the Armenians martyred during the First World War, it is not a big change in the position of Turkey,” Valderem said. He added that the ideology is led by the nationalists in Turkey and today’s state policy of Turkey is built on that ideology.

Valderem notes that Europe’s Democratic and Peace Majlis operates on the public basis. 57 organizations are in the list of the structure, Majlis has more than one million members.

The fact of the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman government has been documented, recognized, and affirmed in the form of media and eyewitness reports, laws, resolutions, and statements by many states and international organizations. The complete catalogue of all documents categorizing the 1915 wholesale massacre of the Armenian population in Ottoman Empire as a premeditated and thoroughly executed act of genocide is extensive.

#### Armenia Has Place in European Union, EP Deputy Says

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia could be integrated into the European Union earlier than a series of other countries which realize integration processes now, according to European Parliament Deputy Inaki Irazabalbeitia Fernandez. By his assessment, Armenia has a great place with its civilization and values in the European Union but at this moment several factors hamper its integration into the European Union.

During a meeting with journalists on May 5, Fernandez noted the first obstacle is Armenia’s membership in the Customs Union and its renouncing the Association Agreement.



# Community News

## Khoren Bandazian Receives Medal for Service to Armenia

NEW YORK – It was a farewell ceremony organized by Armenia Fund USA in honor of Khoren Bandazian's close friend, Ambassador Garen Nazarian, the permanent representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations. Yet to the delight of many guests and dignitaries in attendance, the guest of honor turned the tables by taking a few moments to present Bandazian with the Republic of Armenia Presidential Award.

The UN ambassador, who would be leaving his post at the UN and returning to Armenia shortly after the farewell ceremony, opened his presentation by saying, "Khoren, we finally have an opportunity to publically thank you, my friend, for your dedication and compassion and to thank you, in the presence of our reverend clergy, the members and leaders of the Armenian community, and the Nagorno-Karabagh representative who is present here...to present you with 20th Anniversary of Himmadram commemorative Medal, an award from the President Serge Sargsian and to thank you for your service to the nation."

Earlier in his remarks, the beloved Nazarian expressed his appreciation for Armenia Fund USA, of which Khoren Bandazian has been chairman since 2011. "Armenia Fund has touched so many lives and has reached so many families in Armenia and the Republic of Artsakh," stated Nazarian. "When establishing the Fund more than two decades ago, we all came together in defense of our self-determination. Now we can reaffirm that we are united again, under the auspices of Armenia Fund, to ensure and bolster that unalienable right."

After eight years of service as the secretary of the board of directors of Armenia Fund USA,



Khoren Bandazian

Bandazian assumed the chairmanship.

To this position, Bandazian brought a wealth of executive experience gained in his professional life as well as many other Armenian organizations and causes with which has associated himself since his youth.

He had served on various committees organized by the Armenian Diocese and the Armenian Prelacy, such as the 1,700th Anniversary of Christianity in Armenia committee. He also served on the board of St. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church of Ridgefield, NJ. In 2007, he chaired Armenia Fund USA's fifteenth anniversary gala at the United Nations, to raise much needed funds in support of the organization's efforts.

On a parallel track, he has built a successful career as a real estate attorney. He recently rejoined the firm of Winne, Banta, Hetherington, Basralian & Kahn in New Jersey as a principal.

In its public announcement, the firm also mentioned that Bandazian is "active as a leader in the Greater New York Armenian community, donating his time to improving the lives of the people living in Armenia."

April has been an auspicious month for Bandazian as he continues to serve as board chairman of Armenia Fund USA and as chairman of Eastern Region Armenian Genocide Centennial Committee.



102-year-old Dikran Tavitian cuts the cake.

## HMADS Celebrates Friends' Anniversary, Grandparents Day

BAYSIDE, N.Y. – On Saturday, May 3, the school family celebrated 20th Anniversary of the Friends of Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School (HMADS) at the Woodbury Country Club in Long Island.

Hovannes Malikyan, the chairperson of the Friends of HMADS, welcomed the guests, acknowledged the presence of New York State Assembly Woman Nily Rozic, extended special thanks to the members of the Friends, and proceeded to a short program. Friends of HMADS for more than 20 years have secured financial stability and security for the school.

Arek Nisanyan the co-chair of the event along with Maro Jamgotchian, acknowledged the presence of former benefactors of the Annual Gala Booklet. Present were: Edward and Carmen Gulbenkian, Noubar and Ann Mahdessian, Hratch and Negdar Arukian, Nichan and Christine Tchorbajian.



HMADS youngsters perform for grandparents.

Nisanyan invited the principal of the school, Zarmine Boghosian, to introduce the evening's benefactor Virginia Hekimian, the chairperson of the HMADS Annual Gala Booklet 2014, who dedicated her donation in memory of her brother Harold E. Hekimian. Boghosian called the HMADS Class of 2014 to present a bouquet of flowers to Virginia Hekimian.

Hovannes Malikyan was pleasantly surprised when on behalf of the school Nurhan Adarian, the founder of the Friends of HMADS, presented to him a paper  
see HMADS, page 5

## Going FAR In Armenia

[NEW YORK and YEREVAN – Arto Vorperian, FAR's project director, has been leading the FAR Young Professionals Trip (YPT) since its inception 19 years ago. This trip takes a small group of young people just on the verge of their professional careers through Armenia and the surrounding regions. The participants spend an incredibly busy 14 days visiting historic and geographic landmarks, discovering the concrete benefits of some of the FAR programs, and meeting with their Armenian young professional counterparts in the hopes of forging lasting relationships.

In the two decades since the YPT began running, the local and diasporan Armenian communities have undergone monumental changes. The YPT has changed as well to adapt to the shifting dynamics and demographics of its participants and beneficiaries. For instance, this year's FAR-led trip will offer choices for those young professionals on a tight schedule: in addition to one week in Armenia, they can extend their trip with another week in Turkey and Istanbul or Nagorno Karabagh. Yet, YPT's function and directive have remained largely intact. YPT alumna and Ayo! project manager Tatevik Khoja-Eynatyan sat down with Vorperian to find out how the YPT can be so open in some of its details, yet so steadfast in its mission.

**The YPT started in 1995. What are the biggest changes you've seen in the way participants approach the experience of visiting the land of their roots?**

It's interesting, I think we're reaching a tipping point in momentum now. In our first years doing the YPT, it was almost exclusively with American Armenians who were either second or third generation, and had very little personal connection with Armenia. Up until the early '90s, Armenia was in many ways a very closed country, and it was just beginning to open up after Soviet rule and the Karabagh war. To these first participants, Armenia was a bit of a mythical place that they had only heard about at home or in church. More recently, they had heard of the "dark years" in Armenia and the earthquake relief efforts, but generally, there had been relatively little contact between Armenians and the diaspora. Even something as simple as flying there was complicated then, which is why FAR took great initiative to plan everything and really take care of a lot of the arrangements for these first few groups.

Today, of course, things are very different. There is so much information being passed back and forth through the Internet. It's really a huge resource. Thanks to live-streaming, for example, diasporans anywhere can go to a website like CivilNet and actually see what's happening in Armenia as it occurs. So many YPs today have much more of an understanding about what is going on in Armenia. Of course, they still have a strong interest to see the kind of legendary side of Armenia: Noravank, Tatev, these things. But I notice much more in today's groups of YPs the desire to dive in, to interact with the people and the organizations working to improve life for Armenians.

**Are most of the participants still first time visitors to Armenia?**

I would say that it's still the first time visiting Armenia for the majority. Certainly the number of return visitors is growing, though. I think these return visitors choose to join the YPT because they realize it can put them in contact with things they wouldn't otherwise get the chance to find or see. The trip is long enough to be comprehensive and to see many of the famous landmarks, but not too long to require an overly burdensome time commitment, which is important as many of our Young Professionals are just that: professionals who  
see FAR, page 7





## COMMUNITY NEWS



At the ABMDR donor-recruitment drive at the Yerevan State Medical University.

## ABMDR Holds Recruitment Drive at Yerevan State Medical University

LOS ANGELES – On April 25, the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR) took part in a Yerevan commemorative event dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide. Organized by the Yerevan State Medical University, the commemoration, which was held on the university's campus, raised public awareness of the Registry's mission and comprised a donor-recruitment drive. ABMDR participated in the event with the slogan "Help Save a Life."

The program included appearances by several speakers and a presentation about the Registry's work, followed by a large-scale recruitment effort. At the conclusion of the event, 361 attendees, including students and members of the university's faculty and administration, registered as potential bone marrow stem cell donors.

"The response has been absolutely wonderful," said Dr. Frieda Jordan, president of ABMDR. "How moving and beautiful it is to see so many young people honor the memory of Genocide victims by registering as potential bone marrow stem cell donors, for a chance to help save a fellow Armenian's life!"

Also during the program, the audience was familiarized with a recent ABMDR milestone, namely the advances the registry has made in the harvesting and cryopreservation of cord-blood mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs). As it was detailed during the presentation, in 2014 ABMDR has teamed up with Biostem of Greece to establish a cord-blood bank at the registry's Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan. Following the birth of a child, stem cells are harvested from the cord blood and subsequently preserved for the life of the subject, for potential utilization in autotransplantation and other life-saving procedures.

## HMADS Celebrates Friends' Anniversary, Grandparents Day

HMADS, from page 4

weight from Tiffany's in appreciation of his 10 years of service as the chairperson of the Friends of HMADS. Adarian also acknowledged the most generous benefactor of the school Irwin W. Uran, who had enriched the school's Scholarship Endowment Fund with a \$1 million donation back in 1996.

After Fr. Abraham Malkhasyan's opening prayer and blessing, the night continued with enthusiastic entertainment by Elie Berberian and his band.

### Honoring Grandparents

On Tuesday, May 6, the Church hall was packed with the presence of HMADS Grandparents, great-grandparents, community volunteers and special guests. Representing the office of Assembly woman Nily Rozic was Megan

Keane. Class mothers prepared a lavish breakfast.

The entertainment was by the students of HMADS Hye Bardez, Nursery, Kindergarten and Grades 1-6. They all took the stages in groups to the delight of the audience presented poems and songs dedicated to Grandparents.

Students sang happy birthday as the Great-Grandfather of the year, Dikran Tavitian, 102, joined all those born in May along with the youngest audience, 6-month-old Dakota Rose Bekian, daughter of Adam Bekian, HMADS Class of '95.

The grandparents were very impressed and touched by the presentation of their beloved grandchildren; they lovingly supported the school with their generous donations.

At the conclusion of the event grandparents were invited to visit their grandchildren's classrooms.



We love Our Grandparents



Virginia Hekimian, with some members of the HMADS committee



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To be considered for grants up to \$5,000 per academic year, the candidate must be of Armenian descent and possess the appropriate credentials.

For applications and further information, contact Anne Nally, Grants Administrator, at The New York Community Trust, 909 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022, amn@nyct-cfi.org or 212-686-0010.





**OBITUARY**

**Robert H. Nahigian**

WALTHAM, Mass. — Robert H. Nahigian of Waltham, formerly Belmont died on April 25.

Born on August 16, 1941 in Malden, he was the son of the late Robert and Beatrice (Masoian) Nahigian.

He was the husband of Holly (Cox) Nahigian for 50 years. He was the father of Kristan Murphy of Lynnfield, Laurie Nahigian of Watertown and Paul Nahigian of South Boston. He was the grandfather of John Shea, Jr. He was the brother of Gloria Khederian of Waltham.

He was in the food industry for more than 40 years and the owner of Food Service Sales from 1979 to 1995. He retired in 2006 and enjoyed winters in Florida with his wife, Holly.

He was a passionate golfer. He was a member of the Oakley Country Club in Watertown for more than 25 years. He played countless rounds of golf and even had claim to three hole-in-ones.

His family was always his first priority. He provided unwavering love and constant support of his children. He lived for his 2-year-old grandson.

Services were held at St. James Armenian Church, Watertown, on Monday, May 5 Interment was in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in his memory to The Angel Fund, 649 Main Street,



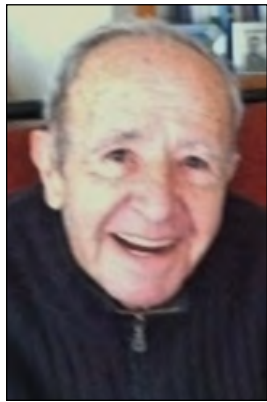
Robert Nahigian

Wakefield, MA 01880 or the Dana-Farber Marathon Challenge, 10 Brookline Place West, 6th Floor, Brookline, MA 02445.

Arrangements were made by the Giragosian Funeral Home.

**Stepan Ayanian**

BRIGHTON, Mass. — Stepan Ayanian, 89, of Brighton, formerly of Watertown and Rochester, NY, died on April 16.



Stepan Ayanian

Born in Kessab, Syria, he was the husband of the late Araxie (Kuftejdjian) Ayanian. He was the father of Sara Helen Ayanian of Brighton and brother of Bedros Ayanian, Zabelle Kalemderian and the late Boghos Ayanian. He also leaves many

nieces, nephews and other relatives.

He was the proprietor of Mrs. Richards Tailoring in Needham and the longtime owner of Steve's Custom Tailoring in Rochester.

Funeral services were held on April 19 at St. James Armenian Church, Watertown. Interment was in Ridgelawn Cemetery, Watertown.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in his memory to Kessab Educational Association of LA, for Kessab Humanitarian Relief Fund, P.O. Box 1507, Reseda, CA 91335 or to the Alzheimer's Assoc., 480 Pleasant St., Watertown, MA 02472.

Kessab Educational Association of LA, for Kessab Humanitarian Relief Fund, P.O. Box 1507, Reseda, CA 91335 or to the Alzheimer's Association, 480 Pleasant St., Watertown, MA 02472.

Arrangements were made by the Giragosian Funeral Home.

**Souren Khatchadourian**

FORT LEE, NJ. — Souren Khatchadourian, 88, of Fort Lee, died on Sunday, April 27, surrounded by his family.

He was born in Aleppo, Syria, on August 15, 1925 to the late Nectar and Manuel Khatchadourian.

He was a graduate of the Armenian Evangelical College in Beirut, Lebanon, and received a bachelor's degree in business administration from the American University of Beirut. On September 26, 1954, he married

Dalita Yegavian, the daughter of the late Hermine and Haroutune Yegavian.

He was an industrialist who successfully built the first zipper and waistband factories in the Middle East. He also was a partner in MKS, an import/export company, managed jointly with his older brother, Hovsep Khatchadourian.

In 1983, he immigrated to the US, where he established residence.

He leaves his wife, Dalita, and two married children, Jacques and Anita Anserian of River Edge, NJ and Mano and Aline Khatchadourian of Manhasset, NY. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Sylvia and her husband Andrew Cooper, Lia and Raffi Khatchadourian; great-grandchildren Adam and Ryan Cooper; brothers Noubar Dorian and Zohrab Khatchadourian; sisters-in-law Sirvart Yegavian, Rosette Kilajian and Lois Khatchadourian and 14 nephews and nieces. He was predeceased by his brother Hovsep and sister Olivia Bakamjian.

A memorial service was held at St. Leon Armenian Church, Fair Lawn, NJ, on April 30. A religious service was held at the church on May 1, followed by a graveside service at the George Washington Memorial Park, Paramus.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made the AGBU Souren Khatchadourian Memorial Fund for humanitarian relief assistance to Syrian Armenians (AGBU, Souren Khatchadourian Memorial Fund, 55 East 59th St., NY, NY 10022.



Souren Khatchadourian

**Elizabeth M. Kefeyan**

BELMONT, Mass. — Elizabeth M. Kefeyan of Belmont died on April 26.

She was the sister of Sgt. John Kefeyan, Boston Police Dept., retired, and Adrienne Kefeyan, both of Belmont and the late H. Michael Kefeyan.

She was the daughter of the late John M. and Nevert Kefeyan. She is survived by many loving cousins, relatives and friends.

She was the staff director for the Committee on Rules for the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Massachusetts State House. She was a member of the Holy Trinity Women's Guild.

Services were held at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge on Wednesday, April 30.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in her memory to Holy Trinity Armenian Church.

Arrangements were made by the Giragosian Funeral Home.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Going FAR in Armenia

FAR, from page 4

have professional responsibilities. One of the best things about the YPT, though, is that we have the flexibility to customize the trip each year to fit the specific interests of the group. We can help to put them in contact with their professional counterparts in Armenia and hopefully foster a new relationship.

## What do you think FAR's YPT offers that other cultural heritage programs do not?

We take a lot of effort to make sure the trip is especially beneficial to young professionals. Of course it's important to show these young people their roots and the deep history in Armenia, but we don't stop just with a tour of landmarks and historical sites. A large part of the trip is seeing firsthand the many projects FAR has implemented around the country. Many of our participants have parents or relatives or friends that have donated to FAR in some capacity, and we feel it's extremely important to show exactly how tangible the benefits of our programs can be. The majority of our YPs tell me at the end that their strongest experiences were visiting our Children's Center or our soup kitchens or construction projects. They really come face to face with the problems that Armenians face, and some of the solutions to those problems. Ultimately, our hope is that these young people who are just entering their careers find a way to integrate their professional energies with the desire for a better Armenia.

## Do you anticipate any major changes in future years of the program?

At the moment, we don't expect to make major changes, but that is only because we can't tell the future! We try to keep the YPT

as flexible as possible so we can adapt it to the needs of the participants each year, and to what's occurring in and around Armenia in any given year. For example, last year we were originally planning for part of the trip to go through Turkey, but this was immediately after some incidents of violence along the Turkish-Syrian border. So we decided to change the plans just a few weeks before the trip to replace the days in Turkey with a trip to Artsakh. The participants loved it, and it actually gave the whole trip a different feeling. Instead of looking to the lands Armenia lost, we visited the land Armenia is building, where some of the most exciting development is happening.

This is just one small example of our flexibility with the trip. Our priority for flexibility is also the reason we ask the participants to arrange and fund their own travel to and from Armenia. This way, they have the choice to come before the trip, or stay longer and explore more of Armenia on their own terms. As long as we make sure the YPT is a kind of catalyst for these young people, we consider it a success. But we don't want to dictate the experience too much.

## What do you want participants to come away with after traveling with FAR?

I think our YPT helps these young people to discover their own Armenia. We do not impose a specific Armenia on them; we help them to discover what is in the country that makes it, or does not make it, their motherland. Of course we want our participants to feel like they have discovered more of their heritage and their roots. But this can be done on trips with any number of other organizations, as well. What we really hope for is that our participants begin to understand some of the problems Armenians still face, and above all that they can be an integral part of the solutions through their professions. Our participants are always fantastic, intelligent, and caring people and it's frequently just a matter of getting them in the same room as someone else who shares their professional passions. We really hope that our participants come away from the trip with new relationships and connections with the Armenian people.

Over the years, the YPT itinerary has added NKR, eastern Turkey and Javakhk, Georgia, to its sites visited. Can you comment on how you think these particular places have enriched the program?

Like I mentioned before, the NKR is a very exciting place right now. Each year we go back, there is so much progress made. In many ways, this is really the frontier of Armenia. Eastern Turkey is a much more sobering place to visit, but no less important. Armenian history has its dark pages, and these must be remembered and honored. It's a defining part of Armenian culture, and any cultural heritage trip would be incomplete without this side of our history.

Visiting Georgia can be powerful as well, because it gives our participants a chance to see how much we share with our neighbors. We have some of the same problems that need to be addressed. All of these regions show our participants that Armenia is not limited to its physical borders. The idea of

something or someone being "Armenian" transcends these borders, and to see this for yourself in these regions is very revealing.

Ideally, how would you like YPT alumni to be involved in the program after they travel?

Obviously, it will be different for every individual. Since we try to make each trip unique to the group of participants, each person gets something different out of their trip. Our sincere hope, though, is that they find and cultivate some new relationship with Armenia, whether it is with someone or some organization in Armenia, or other participants they meet on the trip. It's their generation now that can have the most impact, and their huge enthusiasm can spark very positive change in Armenia. If we can give them at least one point of entry into that potential, we will be happy. Hopefully from there, it grows into a life-long connection.

(To find out more about the FAR Young Professionals Trip, visit [www.farusa.org/ypt/](http://www.farusa.org/ypt/).)

## Armenian Memorial Church Annual Fair to Take Place June 6 and 7

WATERTOWN – The Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown will hold its Annual Fair Friday, June 6 and Saturday, June 7 (rain or shine). On Friday, from 5 to 8 p.m., the church will serve dinners and desserts. The entire fair will be open on Saturday, June 7 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The selection will also include traditional and vegetarian Armenian meals. Visitors may eat at tables under the tent or may purchase take out orders.

The entire fair features an Armenian delicacies table, a silent auction and craft tables. In addition, this year an indoor yard sale will feature an array of items.

The women of the church who are known for their fine cooking have been preparing the Armenian delicacies. They recently held an all day mante making session, producing hundreds of the petite Armenian dumpling-like treats. They will be featured on the baked goods table along with many other baked specialties.

Carol Koundakjian Trio of Marlborough is chairing this year's committee which includes Arpie Ashjian of Waltham, Adrine Beurklian of Watertown, Marilyn Coughlin of Needham, Arpy Haleblan of Belmont, Christine Mekjian and Bette Ohanian of Watertown, Azniv Nigoghosian of Waltham, Gregg Ohanian of Woburn, Vicky Tomasian of Belmont and Roberta Vanderkeyl of Watertown. Angel Parseghian of Belmont, president of the Ladies' Aide, is chairing the delicacies table.

While the fair is the largest fundraiser of the year, the church sets aside 10 percent of the proceeds to benefit a worthy charity. This year's funds will be donated to the Syrian Relief Fund through the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

The Armenian Memorial Church is located at 32 Bigelow Ave. The Church is wheelchair accessible.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School Holds STEM Expo

WATERTOWN – This year St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) expanded its one-day Science Fair to a weeklong STEM Expo (April 7-10) as part of its ongoing STEM program. The STEM program, which was launched at the school in 2011, creates and supports a culture of inquiry-based teaching and learning that excites and inspires SSAES students in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. "The STEM Expo focuses our students on a particular STEM topic and allows for collaborative learning which is key to developing highly desirable 21st century skills such as creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration," said Houry Boyamian, principal at SSAES.

Leading up to the STEM Expo, students worked on group projects grounded in everyday life. These real-life applications of math and the sciences were framed by SSAES teachers such that students had an opportunity to explore and reason about different options rather than look for one right answer.

"Our goal is to inspire students, stimulate their imagination and curiosity, and encourage them to become life-long learners," said Dr. Sevan Ficici, SSAES STEM committee chair since 2011.



Above, students in Grades 4 and 5 Right, students meet some exotic friends.



The SSAES STEM Team, from left, Dr. George Haleblan, Kimberly Kamborian, Dana Cinar, Principal Houry Boyamian, Dr. Sally Vanerian-Gengozian, Margarit Belorian and Dr. Sevan Ficici



their evolution.

Dr. Sally Vanerian-Gengozian, affiliated with Brigham and Women's Hospital and the VA Boston Healthcare System, delivered an interactive presentation on germs and hand washing for Preschool and Kindergarten students.

Dr. Hagop Youssoufian, executive vice president of Progenics Pharmaceuticals, led an

experiment with Grades 4 and 5 that isolated DNA in the context of cancer research.

Students in Grades K-5 presented their Science Fair projects and those in Grades 3-5 were interviewed by the STEM committee on their projects.

To learn more about SSAES, please visit [www.ssaes.org](http://www.ssaes.org).

Many activities and programs were held during the week leading to the STEM Expo.

Yelena Bisharyan, PhD, senior scientist at Tetragenics, led a week-long student experiment on growing bacterial culture with Grades 3, 4 and 5. At the end of the experiment, each class gathered and presented their data, comparing results to their preliminary prediction.

Alissia Apinian Margios, from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, led an interactive presentation for K-5 students allowing students to differentiate and make food choices that promote good health.

Curious Creatures, Inc. delivered an interactive presentation featuring exotic animals from around the globe to encourage respect and appreciation for animals and their habitats.

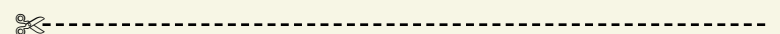
Dr. Ara Nazarian, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at Harvard Medical School delivered a teaching session on joint motion and biomechanics to students in Grades K-5.

Alik Apelian, sales engineer at Keyence Corporation, presented an interactive program, for Grades 3-5, on microscopes, their use and

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# Shoah Foundation Gala Honors Obama for Human Rights Work



Kim Kardashian with Genocide survivor Yevnige Salibian

SHOAH, from page 1

The affair at the Century Plaza Hotel began with cocktails amid displays of Shoah's work. Guests then adjourned to the ballroom for dinner, official ceremonies and a stirring performance by Bruce Springsteen of *The Promised Land* and *Dancing in the Dark*.

There was no shortage of laughs as O'Brien tackled, among other subjects, traffic jams resulting from presidential visits. "I know you left Washington six hours ago, but I left Burbank seven hours ago," he said to the president.

Among the guests was Armenian Genocide survivor Yevnige Aposhian Salibian, who had fled Aintab at age 7 in 1921.

The evening culminated in President Obama's speech.

"The work of this foundation, the testimonies of survivors like those with us tonight, also remind us that the purpose of memory is not simply to preserve the past. It is to protect the future," Obama said. "We only need to look at today's headlines: the devastation of Syria, the murders and kidnappings in Nigeria, sectarian conflict, tribal conflicts, to see that we have not yet extinguished man's darkest impulses. There are some bad stories out there that are being told

to children and they're learning to hate early."

Nearing the end of his talk, he said: "I have this remarkable title right now: president of the United States. And yet every day when I wake up and I think about young girls in Nigeria or



President Barack Obama with Steven Spielberg

children caught up in the conflict in Syria, when there are times in which I want to reach out and save those kids. ... I think, drop by drop, that we can erode and wear down these forces that are so destructive – that we can tell a different story."

"We were greeted warmly at the lobby entrance by Dr. Stephen Smith, executive director of Shoah and were guided through the crowds by their lovely director of development, Sylvia Moskowitz, who welcomed grandma, hugging her and holding back tears while telling her how honored Shoah was to have her attend the event," wrote her granddaughter Talin Bahadarian. "As our names were checked off the list by Secret Service, lo and behold one very famous Kim Kardashian approached. Kim immediately greeted Grandma and gave her phone to the security guard to take a picture of the two of them...a picture now made famous by her post on Instagram with the heading "I'm sitting next to the most inspiring 100-year-old Armenian Genocide survivor," a picture "liked" by over 370,000 people in less than 24 hours."



Conan O'Brien with Yevnige Salibian

Host Conan O'Brien also asked for a picture with Salibian to send to his Armenian assistant. They spoke briefly, she tousled O'Brien's hair and made him laugh.

The event raised a record-breaking \$4.3 million.

(A story from the *Los Angeles Times* as well as one from Talin Bahadarian were combined for this report.)

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(Հրաւիրուած Թորոնթոյէն)

**Concert**  
**Charles AZNAVOUR in ARMENIAN**  
Dedicated to Aznavour's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday  
Translated and performed by  
**BERGE TURABIAN & ARMENIA SARKISSIAN**  
(Guest singer from Toronto)

**Friday, May 30, 2014**  
**Ուրբաթ, Մայիս 30, 2014**  
St. Thomas Armenian Church  
Corner of E. Clinton Ave. & Rt. 9W  
Tenafly, NJ 07670

Wine and appetizers will be served from 8:00pm Գինի եւ խորտիկներ  
Concert starts at 9:00pm Համերգի Ակիզք  
**Tickets \$35**

**Contact** Shoghig Chalian: 201.803.0240 | Vaghenag Tarpinian: 610.823.8611  
Anahit: 646.339.6869 anahitdt@gmail.com

## Vartan Matiossian to Speak on Previously Unreported Operation Nemesis Participant at NAASR Lecture

BELMONT, Mass. – Dr. Vartan Matiossian will give a lecture titled "Code Name Haiko: Discovering the Last Unknown Participant in Talaat Pasha's Liquidation," on Thursday, June 5, at 7:30 p.m., at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Center, 395 Concord Ave.

In 1921 the mastermind of the Armenian Genocide, Talaat Pasha, was killed in a Berlin street by a young avenger, Soghomon Tehlirian. This was the main act of Operation Nemesis, planned and partially carried out between 1919-1922 to redress justice for the Armenian people that had been denied by tribunals. In his memoirs, published in Armenian (1953), Tehlirian unveiled many of the details of his actions. For security reasons, he introduced his immediate on-the-ground collaborators with pseudonyms: Hazor, Vaza and Haiko. Haiko hitherto has remained unidentified.

While waiting for the day that archival material will yield more information about him, a lucky hunch and a painstaking collection of data from the Armenian press and secondary literature has allowed Matiossian to identify by name and to outline the life and activities of "Haiko."

Matiossian was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, and lived in Buenos Aires until 2000, when he

moved to the United States. He graduated from the University of Buenos Aires and has a PhD in history from the Academy of Sciences of Armenia, with the Armenian community in Argentina from its beginnings until 1950 as his subject. He currently lives in New Jersey and is the executive director of the Armenian National Education Committee, at the Armenian Prelacy in New York.

Matiossian is the author of five books in Armenian, including a biography of writer Gostan Zarian (1998), a history of the Armenian communities in Latin America until 1950 (2005), a collection of travelogues about Armenia (2005), a biography of the Oriental dancer Armen Ohanian (coauthored with Artsvi Bakhchinyan, 2007), and a collection of studies, book reviews, and essays on Armenian literature (2009). He has translated and published 15 books from Armenian into Spanish and English.

Admission to the event is free (donations appreciated). The NAASR Bookstore will open at 7:00 p.m. The NAASR Center is located opposite the First Armenian Church and next to the U.S. Post Office. Ample parking is available around the building and in adjacent areas. The lecture will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m.

More information about the lecture is available by e-mailing [hq@naasr.org](mailto:hq@naasr.org)





## COMMUNITY NEWS

## '60 Minutes' Elevates Chertavian to National Prominence

By Tom Vartabedian

BOSTON — He grew up in nearby Lowell, the son of a dentist and dental hygienist, trying to make his own way in the business world.

Today, Gerald Chertavian is riding his own crest as a social entrepreneur, founder and CEO of a nutmeg called "Year Up," an extensive one-year education and training program that serves low-income young adults between the ages of 18-24.

He helps 2,100 young adults every year, including blacks, Hispanics and the downtrodden; visited 63 countries including Armenia; written a best seller, and compiled a resume that reads like a "Who's Who."

As if his fame had not already been great, a recent appearance on CBS's "60 Minutes" has vaulted him over the top.

The segment showed the value of Year Up both to the young adults in the program as well as to corporate partners such as JP Morgan Chase and American Express. Most importantly, the 20-minute segment had impact on changing perceptions of what talent looks like today by showing urban young adults as valuable assets — skilled, motivated, resilient employees.

Year Up's communications firm, Tager & Company, introduced the idea to a story editor at "60 Minutes," who recommended it to a producer after hearing about the program's impact and scalability, as well as Chertavian's best-selling book, *A Year Up: Helping Young Adults Move from Poverty to Professional Careers in a Single Year*.

Chertavian was interviewed by Morley Safer following a year of preparation for the show. They filmed in four different sites: Boston, New York, Bay Area and Miami while interviewing two CEOs and three Year-Up graduates that were impacted by Chertavian. The segment aired January 26 and got immediate results.

"A CEO of a Fortune 500 company saw the segment and immediately called us up to participate in our program," said Chertavian. "His company will sponsor 100 interns a year at \$24,000 an intern."

Who is Gerald Chertavian and what makes him such a hot commodity in the world of business dynamics?

It's the case of a local boy who's made good, attending



Gerald Chertavian

local schools, plying the neighborhood playgrounds and stomping around local ball fields.

His dad, Levon, was the son of Armenian immigrants and became a dentist while his mom, Joyce, was employed as a dental hygienist. The family has been supportive of Armenian charities. A tiny beach cottage at Seabrook, NH, has been a family get-away.

Gerald graduated summa cum laude from Bowdoin College with a degree in Economics, later earning a master's with honors from Harvard Business School. He and his wife Kate (Smallwood) live in Cambridge with their three children.

"My brother Lee and I were schooled early in dad's uncompromising work ethic," he recalls. "Beginning at 12 or 13, we always had summer jobs and the money went straight into a savings account."

Chertavian went on to say how a history teacher at Lowell High inspired him with his lectures on Jacksonian Democracy

and Manifest Destiny while looking to the future of promising students coming to his attention.

"If you were good enough, you simply had to attend his alma mater [Bowdoin] which he considered a Valhalla of enlightened education," he said.

Chertavian began his career on Wall Street as an officer of the Chemical Banking Corporation. He moved on to become head of marketing at Transnational Financial Services in London, then co-founded Conduit Communications in 1993.

In short order, he fostered its growth to \$20 million in annual revenues and some 130 employees in London, Amsterdam, New York and Boston.

Within five years, Conduit ranked as one of England's fastest-growing companies before Chertavian cut the cord and turned his full attention to social entrepreneurship.

In 2000, he founded Year Up, a one-year education and professional job training program for urban young adults. The program combines hands-on skill development, college credits and corporate internships designed to promote such qualities as effective communication, leadership and teamwork.

In the inaugural year, 22 students began classes in downtown Boston. Since then, the organization has served more than 4,000 students and partnered with more than 200 major corporations across the country.

Just last year, three major awards have come his way, including one from the White House for being "a champion of change." Mount Ida College presented him with an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

Looking back on his Armenian side, a grandfather immigrated here in 1917. Following a stint in the wool mills, he became a cobbler, working seven days a week for decades while putting four children through college.

"I learned the value of hard work from my Armenian heritage as well as the constant quest for knowledge," Chertavian proudly admitted.

As to the future, Chertavian is looking ahead with gusto, working to scale up his program through community college partnerships and other channels to be able to serve 100,000 young adults annually over the next decade.

"For me, this is a matter of social justice," he pointed out. "I believe that young adults deserve opportunity and that the country needs to better utilize its human capital. This has been my dream for decades and I feel lucky to help it come true."

## St. Thomas Parishioners Honored for Lifetime of Exemplary Service

By Madlen E. Setian

TENAFLY, N.J. — On Palm Sunday, April 13, the St. Thomas Church celebrated the 49th anniversary of its consecration. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), participated in the Divine Liturgy, delivered the homily and presided over the celebratory dinner.

This year, the Palm Sunday services at St. Thomas had a special significance. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, Gregory and Mary Ann Saraydarian and Richard and Martha Saraydarian received the "St. Nersess Shnorhali" Medal, bestowed on them by Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, for their 40 years of devotion and dedicated service to the Armenian Church.

St. Thomas pastor the Very Rev. Papken Anoushian solemnly read the encyclical from Holy Echiadzin that recognized the honorees. It was followed by the medals presentation ceremony, conducted by Barsamian.

It would be hard to describe the level of dedication and extent of contributions from this remarkable family over the past 40 years. From leadership work on the Parish Council, and as Diocesan delegate, to serving on the Kirikian Armenian School Executive Committee; from chairing and serving in church organizations, to generous financial donations; from creating events and activities to benefit the church, to offering help on any level—including cooking picnic barbecues, helping in the kitchen, and otherwise making themselves available to the service of their fellow parishioners.

The Saraydarian family's dedication extends to Armenia as well. Their numerous benevolent activities in the motherland have included opening the Saraydarian family home to many children who sustained injuries in the catastrophic 1988 earthquake in Armenia.



Mr. and Mrs. Gregory and Mary Ann Saraydarian and Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Martha Saraydarian received the "St. Nersess Shnorhali" Medal.

A Palm Sunday celebratory banquet followed the services. The proceedings began with an invocation by the Primate, followed by a short requiem prayer offered by Anoushian for the soul of Ankin Akelian, in whose memory, Jack and Sylva Torosian had donated the banquet expenses.

Mistress of Ceremonies Mary Cruickshank invited Dr. Levon Capan of the St. Thomas Parish Council to offer the welcoming toast. Capan thanked the Torosian family for their hard work and sponsorship of the dinner, and thanked chef Andy Ouzoonian and his team as well as the ACYOA. He also congratulated this year's St. Thomas Award recipients, Douglas and Andrew Martaian, and the St. Nersess Medal recipients.

The entertainment portion of the program featured a short concert by the children's orchestra ensemble. Musicians Shant and Garo Amerkanian, Victoria and Matthew Bourghol, and Shahe Jebejian performed under the direction of Diana Bourghol. Matthew Bourghol performed a solo piece on the violin, and Cindy Mutafoğlu played classical guitar.

A sweet moment occurred when Aline Arslanian expressed words of love and gratitude to her grandparents, Gregory and Mary Ann Saraydarian, and her great-uncle and great-aunt Richard and Martha Saraydarian.

As Palm Sunday is designated as ACYOA Day in the Eastern Diocese, Arianna Cruickshank and Elsa Kadajyan of the St. Thomas ACYOA chapter presented Anoushian with a \$1,000 donation to the parish.

The presentation of the annual "St. Thomas Award" was another high point of the banquet. Anoushian fondly described the work of recipients Douglas and Andrew Martaian, praising Douglas for his dedication to the Sunday School, and Andrew for serving on the altar as subdeacon.

The pastor also enthusiastically mentioned that both brothers have served as St. Thomas basketball coaches for more than 30 years, and announced with great pride that under their guidance this year all three St. Thomas basketball teams — senior boys, junior boys, and girls — won the ACSA championships.

Anoushian remembered the devotion of Douglas and Andrew Martaian's parents, Celia and the late Ara Martaian, who sang in the choir each week. He said that the sons have followed in their parents' footsteps.

Douglas and Andrew expressed appreciation for the award and thanked the pastor the parish council. Douglas paid tribute to his mother's love and the example of his grandparents, who survived the genocide, read the Bible, and attended church every Sunday. With emotion Douglas remembered his father Ara: "My involvement at St. Thomas would not have been what it is today without the gentle push from my father," he said, "and I accept this honor in his memory."

Andrew Martaian commended his brother as

his role model, and said the parish youth are blessed to have Anoushian as their pastor. He noted that the pastor attends the basketball games and cheers on the teams with enthusiasm. Andrew Martaian also paid tribute to his mother and remembered his father, who he said "is looking down on us and is humbly very proud." The brothers' touching remarks received a standing ovation from the audience.

Anoushian expressed appreciation to Jack and Sylva Torosian; to Arman and Lisa Torosian; to everyone involved in the successful Palm Sunday cake sale; to program M.C. Mary Cruickshank; to chefs Andy Ouzoonian, Milt Palakian, Shahe Jebejian; and to all the volunteers. He also thanked Nazik Sesetyan, a teacher of the parish's Kirikian Armenian School, for giving Aline Arslanian help in preparing her tribute to her grandparents.

Barsamian said he was happy to join the St. Thomas parish on its 49th anniversary, and remarked about all the youth at St. Thomas — a sign that the parish parents and grandparents are bringing up a wonderful new Armenian generation. He conveyed blessings on all the award recipients, noting that each one is a humble, dedicated exemplary member of the Armenian Church.



"St. Thomas Award" recipients, brothers Douglas and Andrew Martaian with Very Rev. Papken Anoushian



# Arts & Living

## Winners of Hamazkayin Eastern USA Minas and Kohar Tölölyan Prize in Contemporary Literature Announced

WATERTOWN – The Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of Eastern United States announced recently the winners of the second Minas and Kohar Tölölyan Prize in Contemporary Literature. Aida Zilelian was chosen for *The Legacy of Lost Things*, and Arto Payaslian (Vaun) was chosen for his collection of poetry, *Isinglass*.

Zilelian is a fiction writer whose stories have appeared in numerous journals and several anthologies. Her first novel, *The Hollowing Moon*, was one of the first runners-up of the Anderbo Novel Award. Her second novel, *The Legacy of Lost Things*, is about an Armenian family who immigrates to Queens, New York, and their struggles to assimilate to the American culture. *The Legacy of Lost Things* was recently accepted for publication (Bleeding Heart Publications) and is slotted for release in July.

Vaun's first book of poems, *Capillarity*, was published in 2009. His new book, *Isinglass*, is forthcoming in 2015. His most recent CD, "The Cynthia Sessions," was released last year. He is the poetry editor at *Glimpse Journal* and recently moved to Yerevan, where he is a professor of English Literature at the American University of Armenia.

The annual Minas and Kohar Tölölyan Prize in Contemporary Literature recognizes the work produced by talented writers working in North America. The prize is intended to encourage new work in all the major genres of literary production, as they are currently understood in North America. Works in Armenian, English, French and Spanish are considered, as long as the authors are of Armenian ancestry and/or the work has an Armenian theme or revolves around an Armenian topic.

The primary purpose of the prize is to encourage and offer recognition through the award and through the ensuing publicity those who wish to write about Armenian themes and topics. There is also a financial award of \$1,500 per winner associated with the prize, donated by Edward and Vergine Misserlian of San Francisco.

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

The winners of the Prize were announced at Hamazkayin's Annual Pan Gathering on May 3 in Chicago.



Aida Zilelian



Arto Payaslian (Vaun)



Marina Abrahamyan (far left) and Susanna Kirakosyan, the two Armenian pianists, with organizer Eduard Aghayan (far right) and Fr. Stepanos Doudoukjian after the concert in Albany, NY.

## Armenian Pianists Mesmerize at Albany Concert

ALBANY, N.Y. – On an April Saturday afternoon in downtown Albany, NY, the mesmerizing sounds of the piano were heard by nearly 250 people who attended a piano concert performed by two Armenian artists.

Marina Abrahamyan and Susanna Kirakosyan, professional pianists and teachers at Komitas Yerevan State Conservatory and Tchaikovsky Music School in Yerevan, Armenia, as well as laureates of the International Contest Festival, flew in for their first appearance in the United States. The concert was held at the Lewis Swyer Theater in The Egg, Center for Performing Arts, in Albany.

"The Armenian community in the Capital District was blessed to have had the opportunity of having two world-class pianists perform in our own backyard. The repertoire was well planned and included many well-known selections," shared Ralph Enokian, a music instructor himself. He continued, "I was impressed with how well the performers were able to play long lyrical lines (*Claire de lune* and *Oblivian*) with such delicacy, but at the same time, played with energy and strength when the music called for it, as in *Masquerade* and *Hungarian Dances*."

The concert, held on April 26, was dedicated to the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide with proceeds benefiting Syrian relief. The organizer of this event, Eduard Aghayan, explained his inspiration to bring this to the Capital district. "I used to sponsor concerts in Armenia and I wanted to organize something nice for the local Albany community after being here for seven years."

"Anyone who may have missed this concert given by these super talented Armenian pianist, Susanna Kirakosyan and Marina Abrahamyan, really missed an amazing tribute to our 1915 martyrs. What an honor it was for our community to be able to enjoy such a wonderful performance," expressed Isabel Kubikian, who came with her husband and nine-month-old daughter.

The pianists performed mostly duets but also some solo pieces by well-known composers, including Armenian composers Babajanian, Harutunian and Artem Khachatur.

"I've heard some of the songs performed several times on a CD or Radio but I've never experienced the music as I did during the concert. Watching the emotion, expression and movement of the pianists was captivating and moving. Several times I found myself experiencing chills going down my spine as I watched them execute their pieces seemingly effortlessly," said Jonathan Dadekian, who also shared the experience with his wife and young daughter. His thoughts were repeated by others of multiple generations who were in attendance.

Alice Semerdjian, a local piano instructor, assisted Aghayan in organizing this event. "They played beautifully," she passionately shared, adding, "It was much overdue for the Armenian community to have authentic Armenian music performed."

Semerdjian praised Aghayan for initiating and bringing this concert idea to fruition. "It was simply a beautiful event." Semerdjian is credited with making arrangements with The Music Studio and the Artist Pianos of Albany to have the two pianists rehearse there leading up to the concert. Additionally, Semerdjian's own students assisted on stage as invaluable page-turners to the pianists.

Beth Geragosian introduced each musical presentation while Rev. Stepanos Doudoukjian, parish priest of St. Peter Armenian Church of Watervliet, provided opening and closing remarks.

Feeling overwhelming pride after attending the concert, Mary Panjarjian shared, "I am not a pianist by any measure, but I did appreciate the two high-caliber pianists who gave us such an inspiring performance. It was a real blessing to see such a live concert in our hometown, by two professional artists who are so accomplished and yet so humble to come to Church on Sunday to worship with us in commemoration of the Armenian Genocide of April 24, 1915."

Contact St. Peter Armenian Church to find out how to host talented Armenian pianists in the community.

## Picture-Perfect Gala for Project SAVE

By Tom Vartabedian

NEWTON, Mass. – What's in a photo? Well, if it was taken in 1946 inside a Watertown building called Kondazian Coat Factory, plenty.

The picture shows Armenian immigrant employees and perhaps children of those refugees sitting around tables filled with libations and what appears like *mezza* plates.

The people are wearing smiles for the most part and the look of Armenia reflected in their eyes. The photograph was supplied by Janet Khozozian Shemligian from Mashpee and served as a centerpiece for a Project SAVE gala May 8 at Karoun Restaurant in Newton.

Supporters gathered at this eatery to exchange conviviality, much like that image taken nearly seven decades prior.

Pictures don't lose their value. They simply punctuate and define our existence as Project SAVE Executive Director Ruth Thomasian explains. They are our link between the past and the future.

The evening was more than a glass of Chablis and hors d'oeuvres, but a prelude to Project SAVE's 40th anniversary next year and a chance to celebrate 39 years of success – all of it under Thomasian's eagle-eyed watch.

In attendance was a cadre of volunteers, including 87-year-old Sophie Tolajian, a poster child for her generation. As she said, "the pleasure is all mine."

On hand were a number of familiar people from the community. Greeting them at the door was Karoun owner John Eurdolian, who opened his landmark restaurant 38 years ago.

Not only did he throw open the doors of his premises for Project SAVE, but he donated the *mezza* plates.

"I don't know how that woman does it," he said, pointing to Thomasian. "All these years, keeping a tradition like this going with limited resources and meager quarters. It's been the ultimate mission – a labor of love!"

Eurdolian also offered a few words of public wisdom when it came to the formalities. Both he and Ruth hung up their shingles around the same time and have shared a friendship ever since. And each of them pursued their own cause – an insatiable appetite to feed the soul through food and photography.

"Alone, no one can save the Armenian heritage," Thomasian pointed out. "Together we can make a difference."

Thomasian has taken her show on the road, appearing in Troy, NY, and Hartford, Conn., for Genocide commemorations and a lecture series. An exhibit is planned next April in Mission Hills, Calif., called "Light before Darkness: Armenians in the Ottoman Empire."

see GALA, page 12

TOM VARTABEDIAN PHOTO



Project SAVE Executive Director Ruth Thomasian shares a microphone with Karoun Restaurant owner John Eurdolian at a Cocktails & Conversation social May 8 in Newton, MA





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Fresno State Armenian Studies Program, College Newspaper Anniversaries Celebrated

By Marine Vardanyan

FRESNO (*Hye Sharzhoom*) – A special moment arises each year for the faculty, students, and supporters of the Armenian Studies Program. It is an occasion that serves as a reunion, a celebration, and a reflection on the successes of the program. The 26th annual Armenian Studies Program Banquet took place on Sunday, March 2, at the Fort Washington Golf & Country Club.

The Armenian Studies Program has much to be proud of. It has succeeded in not only offering students a minor in Armenian Studies, but has an array of achievements that includes the establishment of the only university-published Armenian student newspaper in the United States. "*Hye Sharzhoom* is a unique publication that represents our program and the students, to the campus and to the community," said Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian. *Hye Sharzhoom's* 35th anniversary was a focal part of the evening's celebration.

## Picture Perfect Gala For Project SAVE

GALA, from page 11

In recent weeks, she joined the Armenian Genocide Education Committee of Merrimack Valley at Wilmington High School and Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill, educating those students through her visual displays. Prior to that, she was in Newton at the Photographic Historical Society of New England with a program titled, "Historical Memory through Photographs."

Office assistant Suzanne Adams has been on site for several years as a self-proclaimed "adopted Armenian." Like Thomasian, she is a Simmons College graduate and complements the organization quite nicely.

"Ruth has turned ordinary history into something extraordinary," Adams noted. "Her appreciation toward ordinary Armenians is just as provocative."

With previous editors and staff members in attendance, the audience enjoyed listening to their recollections, and viewing "*Hye Sharzhoom*, a Retrospective," a presentation of the newspaper's cover pages throughout the years.

Editor Vahe Messerlian (1984-1985) stated that *Hye Sharzhoom* had "done an outstanding job of showcasing the successes of the Armenian Studies Program and the Armenian Students Organization, keeping up with current events, and presenting the richness of our culture and heritage." Former editors Arakel Arisian (1997-1998) and Tamar Karkazian (2010-2013) also recounted the high points of their tenure as *Hye Sharzhoom* editors.

The Armenian Studies Program recognized the contribution of nine *Hye Sharzhoom* editors who were present at the banquet, presenting them each with a plaque and a book, published by the Armenian Series of The Press at Fresno State.

The Armenian Studies Program was honored to have Fresno State President Dr. Joseph Castro and his wife, Mary Castro, in attendance. Joseph Castro is a first-generation college graduate and a Valley native, and his position as the head of the university "gives a fresh look upon what a university is," said Dr. Sergio La Porta in his introduction. "It's not an institution...it's an organic, dynamic place where people come alive in ways they never thought."

Although he is in only his first year as Fresno State president, Castro is already familiar with and impressed by the Armenian Studies Program and its contribution to Fresno State and the community at large. "I sense how important the Armenian Studies Program is for the campus, for the community, and for the nation. I would like to compliment everyone who has helped to build this incredible Program."

Castro also voiced his support for the Armenian Studies Program and the community for the initiative to construct an Armenian Genocide Memorial on campus, which would make Fresno State the first university to have such a memorial.

"Where else should that be but here at Fresno State," stated Castro. The audience was filled with excitement and anticipation as the



From left, Dean Charles Boyer of the Jordan College of Agriculture, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Fresno State President Dr. Joseph Castro and Mary Castro, Dr. Sergio La Porta, and Dean Vida Samiian of the College of Arts & Humanities

President outlined his ideas and his vision of the bright future that awaits Fresno State. "In short, I want to work with all of you to make Fresno State the very best university of its kind that it can be here in the nation," said Castro.

The Armenian Studies Program also welcomed Dr. Vida Samiian, dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, who addressed the audience.

She said, "The Armenian Studies Program does so much with two faculty members, Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Sergio La Porta, who are amazing, and do the work of 10 faculty. Many of you in the audience are the product of our Program. We could not have accomplished what we have with the Program without you. Through your presence and your support, together we have the best undergraduate Armenian Studies Program in the United States...I also would like to congratulate the students who make all of us so proud with their achievements."

The banquet continued with recognition of graduating seniors, students with minors, and students who were recipients of Armenian

Studies scholarships. Graduating senior Andrew Esguerra spoke of his outstanding memories while a student at Fresno State. Special recognition was also given to the executive officers of the Armenian Students Organization. Each student felt a sense of pride and achievement as they were recognized and received certificates of recognition from the Armenian Studies Program.

The evening ended with those in attendance showing their appreciation for the Armenian Studies Program and all that it has achieved. Guests left the banquet with a gift of books from the Armenian Series of The Press at Fresno State, along with photos taken in the photo booth during the reception.

With more than 10 Armenian Studies Programs and endowed chairs in the United States, Fresno State's Armenian Studies Program is the top undergraduate Program in the country.

"It is only through the support of the community, and those of you in attendance this evening, that this success is possible," said Der Mugrdechian.

TCA MHER MEGERDCHIAN THEATRICAL GROUP  
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Boston Pops Orchestra  
Keith Lockhart  
Conductor

FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:  
WWW.FACSBOSTON.ORG





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## Chefs Party for Our Park!

Benefit for the Ongoing Care of the  
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Boston Chefs present signature  
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grandparents for you to enjoy!

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**Andrew Hebert**, Trade

**Andrew Yeo**, Nathan Kibarian  
The Ritz-Carlton

**Brian Dandro**, ArtBar, Royal Sonesta

**Brian Poe**, Poe's Kitchen, Tip Tap  
Room, Estelle's

**Dante de Magistris**, Dante  
il Casale

**Gerard Tice**, Parker's, Omni Parker

**Jeffrey P. Fournier**, 51 Lincoln  
Waban Kitchen

**Jody Adams**, Rialto, Trade

**Julia Brant**, North 26, Millennium  
Bostonian

**Seta Dakessian**, Seta's

**Vicki Lee Boyajian**, Jason Reed  
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WITH **Mark E. Mooradian**

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**Bob Lobel**, Master of Ceremonies

Wednesday, May 21, 2014

Royal Sonesta Hotel Boston

Michael Medeiros, General Manager

Jim Anello, Director of Catering

RSVP

Advance Reservations required.

Online: [ArmenianHeritagePark.org](http://ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

By mail: For Sponsor Form, email

[Info@armenianheritagepark.org](mailto:Info@armenianheritagepark.org)

or call 617 803.8785

Grateful appreciation to the Royal Sonesta  
Hotel and the Chefs for hosting the Benefit



Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway  
Boston, Massachusetts

# CALENDAR

## MASSACHUSETTS

**MAY 21 — Chefs Party for Our Park!** Benefit for the Armenian Heritage Park's Ongoing Care., Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Royal Sonesta Hotel Boston, Cambridge. Celebrate with Boston's Top Chefs presenting signature dishes inspired by parents, grandparents or mentors for you to taste while you mix, mingle and enjoy. Advanced Reservations required. To receive the invite, email [info@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:info@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

**MAY 24 — 96th anniversary celebration of Armenian Independence** sponsored by Lowell "Aharonian" ARF, 6 p.m., St. Gregory Church, 158 Main St., North Andover; dinner, entertainment and speaker, Baku pogrom survivor Anna Turcotte, author, *Nowhere, a Story of Exile*. \$20 adults, \$10 students.

**MAY 29 — Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club Spring Dinner and Drawing**, 6:30 p.m., Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Everyone is invited to a losh kebab and pilaf dinner followed by the monthly drawing at 8 p.m., plus five additional cash prizes. "One-time" numbers will be sold the night of the dinner. Special offer: purchase five "One-time" numbers for \$20 and save \$5. Chance to win a One-Year 1000 Club Membership for those attending dinner. Dinner tickets on sale at the door; donation, \$7.99. For further information, contact the Church Office at 617.354.0632, or email [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org).

**JUNE 5, 2014 — Avak luncheon**, noon, St. Gregory Armenian Church, 158 Main St., North Andover, MA; speaker, US Army Major Felix Gregorian, "To America With Love," on his pending fifth deployment to the Middle East.

**JUNE 6, 7 — Armenian Memorial Church Annual Fair**, open Friday from 5 to 8 p.m., serving kebab meals, entire fair open Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Armenian meals served all day. Armenian delicacies bake sale, silent auction, craft fair, indoor yard sale. Armenian Memorial Church, 32 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, wheelchair accessible. Admission free. For information, call 617-923-0498.

**JUNE 12 — "Finding Zabel Yessayan,"** the documentary that inspired the translation of two books by groundbreaking Ottoman Armenian author, Zabel Yessayan, will be shown at the Watertown Public Library, 123 Main St., 7 p.m. For more information, contact [info@aiwainternational.org](mailto:info@aiwainternational.org) or call 617-926-0171.

**JUNE 16 — The Gregory Hintlian Memorial Golf Tournament** sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church at Marlborough Country Club, Marlborough; 9:30 a.m., registration; 11 a.m., "Shot Gun." Join us for a day of golf - player's fee: \$175 (includes hospitality, lunch, dinner, green & cart fees, prizes and gifts) or just dinner and a social evening (\$50 per person). Limited to 128 players. Tournament and tee sponsorships available. RSVP deadline, June 9. To register or for further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org)

**SEPTEMBER 26, 27 — Armenians and Progressive Politics Conference** returns to Boston. Keynote speaker will be Noam Chomsky. Details to follow.

**NOVEMBER 8 — Armenia Tree Project's 20th Anniversary Celebration.** Reception and dinner at the Grand Atrium of the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse overlooking the



The documentary "Finding Zabel Yessayan" will be shown at the Watertown Public Library, 123 Main St., at 7 p.m. on June 12. The film inspired the translation of two books by the groundbreaking author, the only woman who was rounded up on April 24, 1915, along with fellow intellectuals. For more information, call the Armenian International Women's Association at 617-926-0171 or contact them at their email address, [info@aiwainternational.org](mailto:info@aiwainternational.org)

Boston Harbor. Reserve the date, additional details to follow. For information about ATP's programs, visit [www.ArmeniaTree.org](http://www.ArmeniaTree.org)

## RHODE ISLAND

**JUNE 13 — 100 Anniversary of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church**, under the auspices of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), 7 p.m. Concert in celebration of a century of faith, hope and faith, featuring soloists from Armenia, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, the Amrenian Chorale and Orchestra of Rhode Island, under the direction of Maestro Konstantin Petrossian at the new Saint Mary and Saint Mena Coptic Orthodox Cathedral, 2433 Scituate Ave., Cranston. Spiritual and traditional Armenian music, also, premier of songs composed especially for this event. Free and open to the public.

## ACF Releases Genocide Memoir

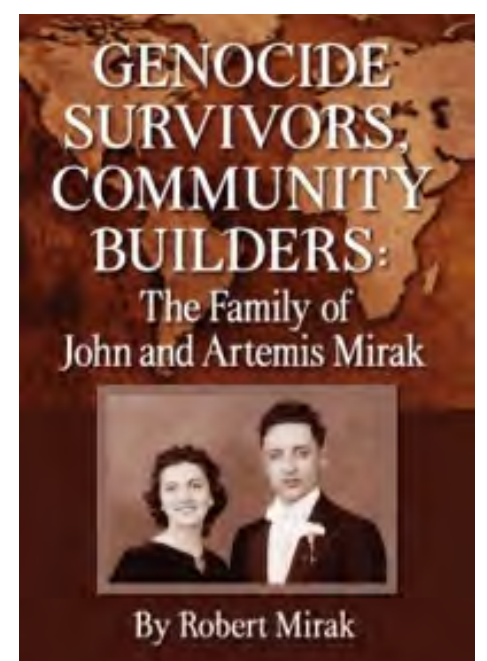
ARLINGTON, Mass. — *Genocide Survivors, Community Builders: The Family of John and Artemis Mirak* is the story of two Armenian orphans uprooted from the homes in the old Ottoman Empire by the Genocide of World War One who began a family in the New World, acquitted themselves with distinction in a foreign land, and set an example of courage and achievement in their Armenian and non Armenian communities.

The family history was written by their oldest son, Dr. Robert Mirak, author of *Torn Between Two Lands: Armenians in America, 1890 to World War I* (Harvard University Press, 1983). At its center is Zaven Mirakian (who became John Mirak) a restless, ambitious and talented business person who from a humble start built an impressive and innovative automobile enterprise (Mirak Chevrolet and affiliates) for which he was recognized locally and nationally. He also succeeded in major real estate developments in Greater Boston. At the same time he donated both his time and resources to an endless list of charities

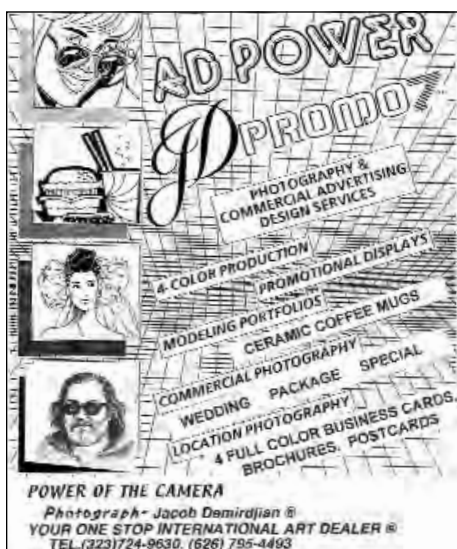
from his hometown of Arlington, to national Armenian organizations as well as hospitals and sanitarium overseas. His wife, Artemis (née Aramian), not only assisted her husband's efforts but while he was away during World War II, raised their four children and inspired them to seek higher education and achievement.

The history is also a study in acculturation, tracing the evolution of the family from its immigrant origins to heights of financial success in the US. It also highlights the tensions of the second generation caught between the Old World on the one hand, and the New World on the other. It also shows how the children and grandchildren of the founders carried on the family traditions of service especially to the Armenian community in the United States and in Armenia.

Published by the Armenian Cultural Foundation, the study with illustrations is available at the ACF, 441 Mystic Street, Arlington, MA 02474 and at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA 02478.



Cover of *Genocide Survivors, Community Builders: The Family of John and Artemis Mirak*







## COMMENTARY

# Mirror Spectator



Established 1932  
An ADL Publication

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The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July and the first week of the year, by:

**Baikar Association, Inc.**

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509

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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:**

U.S.A.	\$80 a year
Canada	\$125 a year
Other Countries	\$190 a year

© 2014 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator  
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA  
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472

Other than the editorial, views and opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the policies of the publisher.

## COMMENTARY

## Soviet-Era Ghosts Revisit Armenia

By Edmond Y. Azadian

As if there was a shortage of problems in Armenia, recently a new topic was introduced into the national discourse. On April 30, the Yerevan Council of Elders approved the initiative to erect a monument dedicated to Anastas Mikoyan, spearheaded by the ruling Republican Party (with council member Hayk Demoyan, director of the Genocide Institute Museum dissenting), followed by Prosperous Armenian party.

The opposition Barev Yerevan Party voted against the measure.

The initiative seems to be the consequence of the resurgence of Soviet era values in Russia, with its fallout in Armenia.

President Vladimir Putin's domestic and foreign policy initiatives require a psychological environment where Russia's glorious past is revived and emulated.

In a recent TV interview, while comparing value systems in Russia and the West, Mr. Putin referred to the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and commented that had the Soviet Union acquired the atomic bomb before the end of World War II, most probably Stalin would not have used it against Japan, which by then was already defeated.

This Soviet-era hero worship has also permeated Armenia's political culture, where some politicians are trying to restore luster to Stalin's associates, this time around Anastas Mikoyan, certainly, a great statesman who was instrumental in the development of the Soviet Empire, yet whose contributions to Armenia and Armenians remains questionable. That is why the decision has triggered an intense debate in the media.

A young and talented journalist, Hovik Afyan, commenting in *Azg* weekly, wrote sarcastically that we have yet to see a monument dedicated to the soldiers who delivered Karabagh to us while we are proposing to erect a monument to a statesman who delivered Karabagh to the Azeris. This treasonous charge has been corroborated by scholarly research, unfortunately.

Mikoyan stands accused in history as Stalin's henchman and executioner, even to his people, upholding the interests of the Soviet regime above those of his people.

Anthropologist Hranoush Kharatian has unearthed documents which reveal the role played by Mikoyan during the critical years of the First Republic of 1918-1920, in advocating the annexation of the Armenian regions of Karabagh and Zangezour to Azerbaijan.

Indeed, during those years, the Karabagh Assembly had held seven convocations voting for independence. With the intervention of the British government, the Assembly had consented to accept temporarily Azerbaijan's tutelage, waiting for the Treaty of Sevres (August 10, 1920) which would determine the destiny of that territory. Documents have proven that at that period, Mikoyan intervened with the Central Committee in Moscow and said that Armenians voluntarily choose to join Azerbaijan.

Another scathing document refers to the 1937 purges throughout the Soviet Union. In a Kafkaesque perversion, Stalin and his henchman would assign quotas for each constituent republic for potential "enemies of the people."

First the punishment was determined, then the number of the punishable individuals was decided and after that, the "guilty" parties were arbitrarily discovered and executed.

In the fall of 1937, Stalin had commissioned Mikoyan, Malenkov and Beria to travel to Armenia to find the "enemies of the people" and execute them. To ingratiate himself to Stalin, Mikoyan proposed to increase the assigned quota in Armenia by 700 people. A document signed by Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovitch, Chubar and Loginov states that 2,000 people in Armenia had been executed, among them prominent writer Axel Bakunts.

Despite the revelation of those documents, there are still people who believe that it would be appropriate to dedicate a monument to Mikoyan. Among them is the information security expert and prolific blogger Tigran Kocharyan, who says that he does not understand why some people are "opposed to the project."

"One should not be afraid of a monument," Kocharyan told ArmeniaNow. "The best solution would be erecting a monument to both Mikoyan brothers." (Anastas Mikoyan's brother, Artem, was a prominent warplane designer responsible for many of the famous MIG military aircraft.)

He continued, "Mikoyan was a controversial character, but he was a statesman of global significance. He was the president of the USSR Supreme Council, the founder of light industry and he stopped the third world war from taking place during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962."

His contributions were very significant to the Soviet Union, but one would be hard-pressed to find any contributions to Armenia.

Many commentators argue that it would have been futile to stand up against Stalin's policies; anyone could dare oppose Stalin did so at his own risk, meeting certain death.

But Afyan asked caustically, "Then where was [Mikoyan's] world-saving diplomatic skills which had averted the third world war?"

One can compare Heydar Aliyev, who was a Politbureau member during the Soviet era and how he was able to depopulate the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic, which was 60-percent Armenian in the 1920s. He was able to devise repressive measures to make life unbearable in Nakhichevan and any outburst of discontent was discounted as an expression of Armenian nationalism, punishable under Soviet law. The same policy was applied also to people in Karabagh, but Aliyev could not achieve his dream in that territory before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The majority of the Armenian population lives below the subsistence level, and would not like to see any public funds diverted toward monuments, regardless of pro or con sentiments in this case.

When Lenin's monument was removed from the central square in Yerevan, historians and writers believed that only General Andranik's monument deserved to replace it on that ornate marble pedestal. But the beautiful pedestal was dynamited imprudently when Hampartzoum Galstyan was mayor. Today, a huge screen has replaced the monument, where news and commercials flash by 24 hours a day. Perhaps that appropriately defines the current national ideology of the regime more than any other monument.

Shahan Shahnour has stated that four symbols mark the four peaks of the veneration of the Armenians: the Church, Ararat, Komitas and Andranik.

Andranik's ashes were transferred with great fanfare from Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris to Yerablur in Yerevan, to rest for eternity with the heroes of Karabagh. A respectable move, yet still an indignity in Shahnour's estimation, a move he did not live to witness.

Andranik is a pan-Armenian hero. His birth in Western Armenia, however, has denied him that status in Armenia. And the Soviet system entrapped Armenia's population in its parochial values. Therefore, it is not surprising when the debate rages about Mikoyan's memory and statue, while Andranik does not inspire any such spirited debate.

Incidentally, history has also recorded cases of Byzantine emperors of Armenian extraction, who, if anything helped bring down the kingdoms of Armenia, the last one to fall being the Cilician Kingdom to Mamelukes, after being undermined by Byzantine policies.

When the ghosts of Soviet era disappear from the horizon, we can see the future clearer. Great symbols define great national ideologies. When we are emancipated from our parochialism, perhaps we can find the genuine truth and install Andranik's memory and statue on its rightful pedestal.

## LETTERS

## The Christian Spirit

To the Editor:

Confession is an essential sacrament of the Christian faith. It cleanses the soul of the guilty of past sins, and restores one to God's grace. This has made Christianity a religion not just of blind devotion, but one of hope. It is apparent that Turks don't accept this process of cleansing one's soul. They would rather carry the stigma of their ancestor's guilt through perpetuity rather than say a mea culpa on behalf of those ancestors, thus providing salvation for all Turks, past and present, and closure for those who mourn the dead victims.

—Berge Tatian  
Stoneham, Mass.

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## COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Obama Listens to Repeated References To Armenian Genocide at Shoah Gala

On May 7, I attended a very impressive benefit gala at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza hotel in Los Angeles, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the USC Shoah Foundation, which archives the testimonies of survivors and witnesses of the Jewish Holocaust, the Armenian, Cambodian and Rwandan genocides, and the 1937 Nanjing Massacre.

Internationally acclaimed Oscar-winning director Steven Spielberg, after filming *Schindler's List*, established the Shoah Foundation to collect and preserve the personal accounts of survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. In 2006, the Shoah Foundation became part of the University of Southern California and currently holds 52,000 video testimonies in 34 languages, representing 58 countries. It is the largest archive of its kind in the world.

The gala was attended by President Obama who received the Ambassador for Humanity award. Also in attendance were Samuel Jackson, Octavia Spencer, Barbra Streisand, Liam Neeson and Bruce Springsteen who performed two of his poignant songs, *Promised Land* and *Dancing in the Dark*.

In 2010, the Armenian Film Foundation and J. Michael Hagopian signed a historic agreement with the Shoah Foundation to digitize, preserve, and disseminate filmed interviews with survivors and witnesses of the Armenian Genocide. Last month, 400 digitized copies of the Armenian testimonies were delivered to USC Shoah Foundation's Institute for Visual History and Education. By the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2015, the Armenian testimonies, after they are translated, subtitled, and indexed, will be made available along with eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust and other genocides to 50 institutions (including the US Holocaust Museum) in 30 countries.

Nearly 100 Armenian-Americans attended the May 7 gala, raising more than \$100,000 for the Armenian collection at Shoah. During the evening's program, several speakers made references to the Armenian Genocide. Spielberg was the first to announce that the Armenian Genocide testimonies were to be included in the Shoah archives. A video shown to the attendees featured several photographs of J. Michael Hagopian, genocide survivor Paul Andonian, and Armenian deportees on a death march. Shoah Foundation Executive Director Stephen Smith also spoke about the Armenian Genocide, acknowledging the presence of Yevnige Salibian, a 104-year-old Genocide survivor from Aintab. Banquet host comedian Conan O'Brien, after acknowledging Mrs. Salibian's presence from the podium, walked over to her table when the gala ended and had a picture taken with her.

As an honored guest, Salibian was seated next to TV celebrity Kim Kardashian. The following day, Kardashian posted on social media her photograph with Salibian, adding the following message: "Honored to be at the USC Shoah Foundation event to support Armenian Genocide testimonies. I'm sitting next to the most inspiring 100-year-

old Armenian Genocide survivor." Within few days, her posting received close to 400,000 "likes" and almost 5,000 comments on Instagram, and 110,000 "likes" on her Facebook page.

Despite repeated references to the Armenian Genocide from the podium, President Obama did not make any direct references to Armenians or the Armenian Genocide in his 18-minute speech – nor was he expected to do so! However, the President made indirect references to genocides other than the Holocaust, without specifying them:

- "I want to say a special word to the survivors who are with us this evening, not just of the Holocaust, but as Steven [Spielberg] noted, survivors of other unimaginable crimes."

- "If the memories of the Shoah survivors teach us anything, it is that silence is evil's greatest co-conspirator. And it's up to us – each of us, every one of us – to forcefully condemn any denial of the Holocaust."

- "You [Spielberg] ...documented the experience not only of the Holocaust, but of atrocities before and since.... To you and everybody at the Shoah Foundation, and for all that you've done, for setting a light, an eternal flame of testimony, that can't be extinguished and cannot be denied, we express our deepest gratitude."

Armenians do not need to press President Obama to explicitly refer to the Armenian Genocide. Another US President, Ronald Reagan, has already acknowledged it in his Presidential Proclamation of April 22, 1981. It is unnecessary to insist that every US President make the same acknowledgment year after year. President Obama may consider using the term Armenian Genocide not for the sake of Armenians, but to uphold his own integrity by keeping the solemn pledge he made as a presidential candidate. Only then could he fully qualify as an Ambassador for Humanity.

# Forgotten Ottoman Legacy: Armenian Intellectuals

By Nesim Ovadya Izrail

ISTANBUL (*Today's Zaman*) – The Young Turks and the Young Ottomans are the most popular Ottoman intellectuals. Namik Kemal, Ibrahim Sinasi, Ziya Pasa and Abdullah Cevdet are renowned intellectuals who are considered Young Turks. These are names we are familiar with; however, there are also some leading figures most of us do not remember: Ottoman-Armenian intellectuals. One of these intellectuals attempted to translate the *Quran* and the *Seerah* (biographical texts on the Prophet Muhammad) into the Armenian language; another tried to launch a Western-style music school. Some of them were deputies in Parliament, whereas others were members of the Committee of Union and Progress. But all were Ottomans. And, sadly, they were taken to either Çankiri or Ayas after massive arrests on April 24, shortly before the mass deportation. Here are the stories of these Armenian intellectuals.

The Deportation Law was adopted on May 27, 1915. The bill, which formally entered into force on June 1, was specifically designed to facilitate the deportation of the Armenian communities of the Ottoman state; thousands of Armenians were relocated under the provisions of the law. Even though the bill was adopted on May 27, April 24 is marked as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day by Armenians around the world. Interior Minister Talat Pasha ordered the arrest of leading Armenian figures on that day. Armenian intellectuals, writers, artists, teachers, lawyers, doctors and deputies were arrested in their homes early on April 24 and taken to detention centers. The arrests spread to other provinces within a few days. Nesim Ovadya Izrail, author of the book *24 April 1915 Istanbul, Çankiri, Ayas, Ankara*, recalls that initially, 197 intellectuals were put under arrest. Then an additional 53 were taken into custody. Ninety-two people considered major criminals were imprisoned in Ayas; the remaining 158 were taken to Çankiri and released, but they were not allowed to leave the town. Armenians who were forced to live in the town rented apartments there. There were doctors, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers, architects, engineers, scientists, clerics, actors and teachers among

them. Nesim Ovadya Izrail notes that well-educated Armenian intellectuals were mostly engaged in writing and journalism in Çankiri. Overall, this group of Armenians could be properly called intellectuals. The people who were placed under arrest included high-level bureaucrats and bankers as well as politicians, local administrators and mayors.

Izrail further argues that 174 Armenian intellectuals were executed without a trial after four months of detention. The remaining 76 were released on the orders of the central government.

Here are some of these intellectuals:

Krikor Zohrab: journalist, parliamentarian, university professor. Zohrab was elected after the pronouncement of the second constitutional monarchy as an Istanbul deputy; he was one of the Armenian representatives of the Committee for Union and Progress in Parliament. Zohrab, one of the most active members of Parliament, was famous for his eloquent speeches. He addressed a large audience in Turkish on July 31, 1908 in the Taksim Municipal Garden. He ended his speech saying: "We have different religions; but we do have the same path. And that path is the road to freedom." These remarks suggest that Zohrab was an Ottoman. He was not a nationalist; he was a pro-Ottoman intellectual. He supported the idea of promoting different identities on the basis of a common Ottoman identity. He worked to foster brotherhood between Armenians and Turks. For this reason, he defined himself as both a Turk and an Armenian. He had a lot of friends, including Talat Pasa, the most powerful man of the time. According to Izrail, both were Freemasons. During the massive wave of arrests on April 24, Zohrab, like Erzurum deputy Vartkes Serengülyan, was comfortable, feeling no pressure at all. But this did not last long; while having dinner and playing cards on June 2 at the Cercle d'Orient, a social club and restaurant, Zohrab got up to leave, and Talat also stood up and kissed him on the cheek. Surprised, Zohrab asked why; Talat said he had wanted to do so. This is known as a kiss of death, because that same day, Talat signed the papers for the arrest of Zohrab and his deportation to Diyarbakir. Talat was aware that this simply meant death. Despite their friendship, Talat did not hesitate to make this move. Zohrab was killed in Urfa; his head was smashed with

a stone.

Zabel Yesayan: She was an Ottoman-Armenian intellectual who lived in Üsküdar,

Istanbul. She was born in the Silahdarbağçe neighborhood of Üsküdar in 1878. In her autobiography, *Silhdari Bardezneri* (The Gardens of Silhdari), where she narrates her childhood memories, it is possible to get a good description and depiction of the Üsküdar of that time and to experience the mindset of Istanbul in the 1880s. She was the first Armenian woman to study literature and philosophy at the Sorbonne. She witnessed the Adana massacre in 1909. Yesayan compiled her observations in another book, *Averagnerun Meç* (Amid the Ruins) which was translated into Turkish. Most of her essays addressed to women are collected in a compilation, "İsbasman Sirahin Meç" (Waiting Room). Her novel "Ge dz Hancarner" (Phony Geniuses), in which she sarcastically criticizes Armenian intellectuals, was never completed because of pressure from male intellectuals. She was a socialist and an anti-militarist. She invited the Ottoman people to live in peace. She was never complicit in nationalist propaganda and asked her readers to forget about her nationality and religion. However, despite this, she was listed among those who would be arrested on April 24. Yesayan was the only woman on the list; she fled to Bulgaria. However, in 1937, she was placed under arrest for publishing anti-Soviet propaganda during Stalin's rule and exiled to Siberia. There is no precise information on when and how she died.

Gomidas Vartabed: Born in Kütahya, Vartabed is one of the most important musical artists in this country. He was the first non-European musician to be admitted into the International Music Association. At an early age, he compiled folk songs that he heard from his classmates from different parts of Anatolia. In 1896, he moved to Berlin to study music. After his return, he continued his work compiling folk music in different cities in Anatolia. He performed in concerts in Istanbul, trained musicians and recorded compilations. He occupied a special place among the Ottoman intellectuals of the time because of his talent in music. He started preparations to found a Western-style music academy. However, he was sent into exile before he could realize his dream. It is reported that Ottoman intellectuals, particularly Halide Edip, tried to secure

Gomidas' release. Izrail says that there is evidence suggesting that Edip worked hard to ensure that he would be released, concluding that she worked all her connections to this end. He returned to Istanbul after a while, but most of his friends were dead. Izrail says: "Germans are proud of Beethoven; and Turkey would have been associated with Gomidas. But unfortunately, Turkey is remembered with a Gomidas who lost his mind because of what he had to deal with in his country."

Levon Larents: Born in Samatya in 1875, Larents graduated from Robert College, a private high school in Istanbul. He had a short life; Larents was a journalist, writer and interpreter. A supporter of the pro-Armenian Hunchak Party in his youth, Larents became a skilled journalist and interpreter; he was fluent in French and English. In 1911, he translated the *Quran* and the biography of Prophet Muhammad into the Armenian language. He was placed under arrest while he was translating Rumi's seminal work, "Mesnevi." He was only 33 when he was taken from Ayas to a rural area in Ankara, where he was killed.

Dr. Dikran Allahverdi: He studied medicine in Berlin and Vienna; his work on typhoid fever was remarkable. Allahverdi, who was charged with containing a cholera epidemic in Bandirma and Edincik, brought it under control in a very short time. He was an ardent supporter of the Committee for Union and Progress and served as chairman of the Pangalti Branch of the Association of National Defense created by the committee. Pangalti was a predominantly Armenian neighborhood in Istanbul. Armenians were generally cool to this association; however, he made a generous donation to the association, which attracted the attention and appreciation of the Turkish press. But this leading committee member was arrested on April 24, 1915 and sent to Ayas as a criminal. He was later released, but things were never the same for him. He died in 1930 in Istanbul.

Born in Adana, Arisdekes Kasparyan was a lawyer who practiced law in Galata, Istanbul. He is also known for his works on law. Kasparyan, who wrote *Kavanin* (Sources of Law), *Cüzdani Kavanin-i Osmaniye* (A Treatise on Ottoman Laws) and *Hukuk Müsaviri* (Legal Adviser) is also known for his opposition to nationalistic movements and

see LEGACY, page 16





# Harvard Pays Tribute to Survivors of Holocaust, Armenian and Rwandan Genocides

HARVARD, from page 1

sought out what happened in so many countries in the 20th century, but “what didn’t happen. No one stopped those genocides. No one stopped the mass murder.”

The Ottoman process of finding just the right pretext for ordering the extermination of the Armenians under the cover of World War I, Garapedian said, set the tone for the Nazi government in Germany doing the very same to its Jewish population during World War II.

The organized killings were done fairly openly, to the point that the *New York Times* frequently covered the stories of the deaths or the tales of the survivors of the desert crossings. President Woodrow Wilson, she noted, spearheaded raising \$117 million in the US and around the world to help the survivors, in the process funding Near East Relief.

The crimes were recognized at the time and as punishment Turkey was to give up part of its land.

“The intention of the United States and the international community was clear. We would not stand idly by. We would punish a nation – Turkey – for its crimes against humanity. The fact that this resolve slowly melted away – that, too, is the story of the 20th century,” Garapedian said.

She also explained why many Armenians were disappointed with President Obama for not using the word “genocide” in his April 24 message, instead opting for “one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century.” “Both descriptions are true. But one takes us down the road towards justice and retribution. One of those words leads us towards international law, the Genocide Convention, reparations and the true path towards healing and forgiveness. The crime with no name. We know what to call it now. You know what that word is. Turkey knows. And the president knows, too.”

Speaking as a survivor of the Holocaust was Dr. Anna Ornstein, the author of *My Mother’s Eyes: Holocaust Memories of a Young Girl*. The 87-year-old renowned psychiatrist was born in Hungary and eventually was deported to Auschwitz along with her mother.

“Young Jewish men were taken to labor camps to help the German war effort,” she said. That was the fate of her two brothers, who at ages 20 and 22 were sent to such camps and never seen again.

Ornstein spoke about living in a small village, in a house filled with books and music. With the rise of the Nazis, the Jews were soon gathered in temporary ghettos. “My mom, dad, 96-year-old grandmother and members of my extended family were sent to Auschwitz. My mother held my hand for a year practically at the camp,” she said.

She spoke about losing her father, “a very gentle, kind and sweet man who died in a shower that poured poison gas on him instead of water.”

She and her mother were rescued by Russian troops in May 1945. Anna’s boyfriend

– and future husband – had also survived though he had lost his entire family, and the two married after she finished high school in Hungary. Eventually she and her husband made their way to the US, where they had three children and thriving careers.

She concluded her talk by speaking about the need for *Tikkun Olam*, a Hebrew phrase which means healing the world.

Aliza Loft, a PhD candidate in sociology, next spoke about her grandparents, all four of whom were Holocaust survivors. She spoke of how strongly it affected her to see pictures of people “with faces that look like mine,” endure such tragedies. “I feel a personal responsibility for keeping their stories alive. I try to learn from the past to make the future as humane as possible,” she said.

Tying into the theme of the evening linking the commonalities of the horrors endured by the Jews, Rwandans and Armenians in different parts of the world with very similar experiences, she recited Hitler’s famous quote, in which he justified starting the Holocaust by saying, “Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?”

Chantel Kayiesi, a Rwandan genocide survivor, spoke about her horrific experiences, but one single statistic sent a chill through the hall: “It is still a shock to know that more than 1 million died in 100 days.”

Her husband was “killed by someone he considered a friend,” and her mother’s arms and legs were bound before a grenade was thrown into her house. Her father experienced a more merciful death by paying for a bullet. “At least he had a clean shot,” she said.

“We lost faith in humanity and in our fellow Rwandans. We gained fear,” she said. “The same people who killed our families were released from jail and became our neighbors again,” she said, highlighting the incredible logistics in the aftermath of the Hutu majority’s attempted extermination of the Tutsi minority. “We smiled and said things were OK,” she expressed. “It is the price for peace and harmony.”

She added, “Sometimes you want to put down the burden that is in our hearts. We get tired of being stoic.”

On a more positive note, she concluded, “To you all, to our friends, let us continue to advocate for our survivors. Let us pledge never again and mean it.”

Francis K. Gatere, a master’s student at the Harvard Kennedy School, spoke about family members who were killed in Rwanda and suggested that the plan by the Hutu majority to exterminate the Tutsi minority did not come about without warning after the death of President Juvénal Habyarimana, as many have suggested. The process, he said, had taken time. For example, there had been government-issued identity cards that showed the ethnicity of the cardholder or markings on the homes of minorities. In the wake of his death, the

process was hastened, with certain radio stations inciting violence by broadcasting the names of Tutsis and some suggesting that the Tutsis had tails or were cannibals.

He did end on an upbeat note, suggesting, “Rwanda is on a course to normalcy. Its biggest asset: our traditional values.” The country, he noted, is “playing its rightful part in the society of nations.”

An abridged version of the documentary, “Two Who Dared: The Sharps’ War,” was shown. Dr. Charlie Clements, co-executive producer of the film, as well as the executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, presented an overview. The film documents the lives of the young Unitarian minister, Waitstill Sharp, and his wife, Martha, who undertook the mission of helping refugees in Prague starting in 1939, at the outset of World War II. The two young Wellesley residents eventually performed deeds of incredible daring and courage, rescuing Jewish children from France, Germany and Czechoslovakia, eventually receiving the title of Righteous among the Nations at Yad Vashem. The film captured the integrity of these young parents as they left their children behind in the safety of the US to help save children facing certain death in Europe. The pictures of the young rescued children were contrasted with their present selves and their feelings were still as raw as when they were children.

The director of the film – the Sharps’ grandson – Artemis Joukowsky, was present, as was (through Skype) documentarian Ken Burns, who served as the film’s executive producer.

Burns said, “The film is a wonderful example of how one person can make a difference. We cannot wait around for others to take charge.”

He added, “I am always amazed at the

human condition. I don’t know what makes a Waitstill Sharp or a Martha Sharp rearrange their molecules.”

Joukowsky said, “They were humanists. They viewed all of humanity as their friends. It comes from their Unitarian background.”

The film, available on the website of Facing History and Ourselves, is used for educational purposes.

The final speaker, Dr. Zachary D. Kaufman, a lecturer at Yale’s Department of Political Science, said Hitler was “one of the first comparative genocide commentators drawing lessons from the past.”

He had encouraging words about the future of Rwanda, from where he said he had recently returned. Among the positive changes are its high GDP growth rate of 8 percent, reduction in infant mortality and having the highest percentage of women parliamentarians. In addition, he said that the Rwanda tribunals were the first to get guilty pleas with regard to genocide and that it was the first time that a head of state had been found guilty of rape and murder.

“We often neglect to pay sufficient attention to ‘upstanders,’ as Samantha Power calls them,” Kaufman said. “Each of us can play a role in raising awareness. We should demand more from our media and religious institutions. We should be upstanders. Today we are all Armenians, Jews and Tutsis.”

Dr. S. Allen Counter, the director of the Harvard Foundation and a professor of neurology at the Harvard Medical School at the outset of the program expressed his delight in being able to organize the program with Clements.

To view “Two Who Dared,” visit [www.twowhodared.com](http://www.twowhodared.com) or <https://www.facinghistory.org/>

## Forgotten Ottoman Legacy: Armenian Intellectuals

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sentiments among Armenians. But he was also one of those who were sent to Ayas. Kasparyan was one of the 54 Armenian intellectuals who were killed in Ankara.

### Armenian intellectuals in Turkish nation-building

Ottoman Armenian intellectuals were supportive of nation-building efforts in Turkey. Izrail says: “Given that we are aware of Armenian intellectuals who defended Turkish nationalism, without the Armenian massacres in 1915, there would have been many Armenian intellectuals promoting Turkish nationalism and nation-building.” Such intellectuals include Gomidas Vartabed and Diran Kelekyan. Gomidas performed a concert at the Military Academy in Istanbul in 1912 for the veterans who were injured in the Battle of Tripoli. He was praised in the Turkish press. Gomidas, at an event organized by the nationalist Turkish Association, delivered a famous speech where he emphasized strong ties of friendship and brotherhood between different peoples and nations sharing a common culture under the

same roof. The audience included famous Turkish nationalists Hamdullah Suphi Tanriöver, Mehmet Emin Yurdakul and Halide Edip Adivar. Papers of the day described the speech as touching and influential, and reported that it brought the audience to tears. Turkish intellectuals frequently visited Gomidas at his home in Pangalti.

Another example is Kelekyan, chief columnist of *Sabah* daily of the time, who delivered a speech at a political rally organized by Committee of Union and Progress members in Sultanahmet Square on the eve of the Balkan War. Izrail says: “It was Diran Kelekyan who delivered one of the most enthusiastic and nationalistic speeches to encourage the Ottoman state to enter the war and defended the reacquisition of the lands that were previously lost in the Balkans in his columns. If history had been written differently, he would have been remembered as a nationalist intellectual who would promote Turkish nation-building.” Kelekyan, who also taught political history at Istanbul University, was one of the people who were arrested on April 24; he was murdered in Sivas.

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