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Syrian Forces Retake Kessab

By Nabih Bulos

DAMASCUS (*Los Angeles Times*) – Forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar Assad overran rebel positions in an Armenian border town in northern Syria on Sunday after months of fighting, according to activists and the government.

The Syrian Observatory for Human



Syrian fighters raise their hands after seizing the predominantly Armenian Christian town of Kessab, Syria. (Associated Press)

Rights, a pro-opposition, Britain-based watchdog with a network of activists on the ground, reported that fighters from the Lebanese Shiite militant group Hezbollah as well as special forces units from the Syrian army were able to seize control of the town of Kessab on the Syrian-Turkish border after clashes with Islamist brigades that included the Al Qaeda-affiliated Nusra Front.

Syrian state media confirmed the report, saying pro-government forces “restored security and stability to Kessab,” adding that large numbers of armed opponents were killed and their weaponry destroyed. The report said the area was being cleared of land mines.

Pro-government forces and rebel factions have been fighting for control of the country for over three years, plunging Syria into a vicious civil war that has killed more than 160,000 people and destroyed large swaths of the country.

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Armenian Matteo Darmian Plays For Italy’s World Cup Team

SAO PAOLO, Brazil – Italian defender Matteo Darmian, of Armenian descent, is one of the breakout stars of the Italian World Cup team.

Darmian was born in the northern Italian town of Legnano. He plays for Turin now. He caught the eye of Italy coach Cesare Prandelli during a great season with the Turin club and was invited to a national team training camp in March 2014, the prelude to his appearance in the coach’s 23-man list for Brazil 2014.

He has thus far won raves for his appearance in the game against England. Italy is to face Costa Rica on June 20 and Uruguay on June 24.



Islamic Terrorist Group Attacks Holy Echmiadzin Church in Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq (*Asbarez*) – The jihadist group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which has been systematically attacking – and invading – key cities in Iraq, attacked the Holy Echmiadzin Armenian Church in Iraq’s second largest city, Mosul, according to the religious leader of the Armenian community of nearby Dohuk, Rev. Massis Shahinyan.

On Tuesday, 65 Armenian families and a priest in Mosul were forced out of the city after ISIS militants raided and took control of Iraq’s second largest city.

ISIS has pounded cities and towns in Iraq and has announced plans to invade Baghdad, in what is becoming a serious threat by the Al Qaeda-backed militant group.

The Archbishop of the Armenian Prelacy reported that 15,000 to 16,000 Armenian Christians remained in the country, primarily in the cities of Baghdad, Basrah, Kirkuk and Mosul. Evangelical Christians reportedly number between 5,000 and 6,000. They can be found in the northern part of the country, as well as in Baghdad, with a very small number residing in Basrah.

Christian leaders have estimated that as much as 50 percent of the country’s Christian population lives in Baghdad, and 30 to 40 percent live in the north, with the largest Christian communities located in and



Holy Echmiadzin Church in Mosul

around Mosul, Erbil, Dohuk, and Kirkuk.

Leaders of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), who are based in the Qandil Mountains in Northern Iraq, have issued a statement saying that its armed units were prepared to resist attacks by the ISIS forces and will guarantee safe passage to Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, and Armenians who live in Northern Iraq and are fleeing their homes.

The leadership of the autonomous Kurdistan region of Northern Iraq is deploying a large number of Peshmerga military units – which form the country’s armed forces – ahead of the ISIS militants. The PKK militants are coordinating efforts with Peshmergas.

New UN Ambassador Feted by TCA Group

NEW YORK – Members of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Greater New York Chapter Executive Committee met on Tuesday, June 17, with the new representative of Armenia at the United Nations, Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, at the Armenian Permanent Mission offices. The chairman of the TCA New York chapter, Hagop Vartivarian, at a reception which followed at the Morgan Library, offered the support of the TCA to the ambassador. Pictured below, from left, are Dr. Vaghenag Tarpinian, Shoghig Chalian, Vartivarian, Mnatsakanyan, Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian and Sirvart Demirjian.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Armenian Mirror-Spectator Annual Summer Break

WATERTOWN – The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* will close for two weeks in July as part of its annual summer break.

The last issue published before the vacation will be the June 28 issue, and the first edition back would be that of July 19.

Armenian Church, Cemetery Desecrated in Van

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Many Armenian historical monuments in Turkey continue to be desecrated by treasure hunters who are looking for gold left by the Armenians near each Armenian monument. The Turkish bestanuce1.com site reported that the old Armenian church and cemetery in the Edremit district (Artamet) of Van have become regular targets of treasure seekers.

As a result of digging in the cemetery, the bones of the Armenians are now spread around. Stray dogs carry the bones to residential areas. Resident Yusuf Cicek said that since the church and cemetery are not protected by any institution, day by day they are getting closer to final destruction.

The representative of the Regional Council of Protection of Cultural Property in Van refused to comment on the issue.

Two More Armenians Die, Many Injured in Aleppo

ALEPPO, Syria (Armenpress) – On June 16, in the Sebil neighborhood of Aleppo, an Armenian woman died from mortar shrapnel. According to Aleppo’s news office, she was Seda Basmajyan, 72. She was laid to rest the following day.

On June 17, Vrej Chapaghjurian was killed when the New Village district of the city became the target of missiles. Several others were wounded.

During the last two months, dozens of Armenians have been injured or killed in Aleppo. The situation has rapidly deteriorated, in particular, in the Armenian New Village district, since the first days of June. The terrorist groups, many of which are based in Turkey, have showered the city with rockets and bombs. The rockets fallen in the Armenian New Village district, besides the human damage, have caused terrible material damage. The New Village district is today an area of disaster and ruins.

During the three-year conflict in Syria, the number of the killed Armenians is over 100.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Three Charged with Smuggling Armenian Nationals Into US

LOS ANGELES (Hetq) – A Los Angeles man was arraigned in a San Diego federal court on Monday for allegedly masterminding a scheme through which Armenian nationals were smuggled to the United States via Russia and Mexico.

Grigor Chatalyan, 44, along with two Armenians from Glendale, are said to have charged up to \$18,000 per person according to the indictment unsealed this morning.

Chatalyan's group allegedly arranged for the Armenian nationals to fly to Moscow, where they were given fraudulent Russian passports to travel to Cancun, Mexico. Once there, they would be taken to Tijuana, court documents state.

Chatalyan and his co-conspirators would procure valid US permanent-resident cards or passports from within the United States and try to use those documents to pass Armenian nationals into the United States at the San Ysidro port of entry.

Rape Victim Supporters Demonstrate Outside Presidential Office in Yerevan

YEREVAN (Hetq) – Members of the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women assembled outside the office of the Armenian president this week, demanding a free and fair trial for a 28-year-old woman beaten and raped in the Valencia Hotel in Yerevan.

The case had been dropped several times due to the fact that the man accused of the crime was a friend of the investigator examining the case.

Holding signs reading "We demand an impartial trial" and "Police inaction grows regarding instances of sexual violence," the crowd of local and foreign citizens directed their ire at the presidential office across the street.

A letter of complaint was handed to an official from the president's office who promised to pass it on to President Serge Sargsian.

The demonstrators then marched to the Prosecutor General's Office and demanded to see Prosecutor General Gevorg Kostanyan. Employees there promised to arrange a meeting in a few days.

The attorney for the rape victim lodged a legal complaint with Armenia's Court of Cassation.

Truck Driver Arrested in Armenia's Largest Drug Bust Pleads Not Guilty

YEREVAN (Hetq) – Georgian citizen Avtandil Martiashvili, arrested in the largest drug bust ever in Armenia, has pleaded not guilty to the charge of transporting contraband.

Martiashvili was arrested on January 17 of this year when Armenian customs officials at Meghri found 927.5 kilograms of heroin in a truck he was driving. Examiners later stated that the actual quantity was found to be 850 kilos.

The truck was on a scheduled run from Iran to Georgia.

Martiashvili's lawyer, Gourgen Madoyan, told Hetq that his client had nothing to do with the drugs and that the man was basically "in the wrong spot at the wrong time."

A Turkish citizen, Osman Ogurlu, was arrested several days later in Yerevan as an accomplice. Ogurlu heads Hovo Logistica, a company that had leased the truck in question.

The truck in which the drugs were hidden was registered to a cargo company.

Madoyan said his client was shocked and surprised when the heroin was found in a secret compartment in the truck. The lawyer added that if the case goes to trial he is certain that no evidence will be brought to contradict his client's testimony.

The police rejected the lawyer's motion to have his client freed from pre-trial detention.

From Denmark with Love: Meet Line (and Tatevik)

YEREVAN, Armenia – Line Knudsen doesn't have a single drop of Armenia blood. So what could possibly make her want to volunteer in Armenia – not once, but twice? Her childhood friend, Tatevik Revazian.

Knudsen, 24, and Revazian grew up in the same neighborhood of Kastrup, just outside Copenhagen, and became best friends. Through Revazian, Knudsen discovered more than all things Armenian; she discovered a



Line Knudsen and Tatevik Revazian grew up together in the same neighborhood of Kastrup and have been friends ever since

burning interest in learning more; she dreamed of visiting Armenia, a country most Danes had never even heard of until this year's Eurovision contest; she even dreamed of learning the language.

In 2008, Knudsen's dream came true. She came to Armenia with Revazian and her family and had a very personally rewarding experience that included lots of sightseeing, but also lots of time spent with Revazian's extended family; she delighted in exploring beautiful natural and historic



Line Knudsen at one of her AVC volunteer placements at Ghoghhanj Children's Center

sites and savoring the wonderful hospitality and foods. At the end of that trip Knudsen promised herself that she would definitely return, but for longer the next time. Knudsen did just that in 2011. She came to Armenia for three months as a volunteer with the Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC). She was just starting her social work studies at the time and she said the different experiences she had as a volunteer in Armenia inspired her, enabling her to decide on the specifics of her studies. They also helped her discover her self-reliance and determination, and hone her openness and flexibility. And she got to study Armenian together with other AVC and Birthright Armenia volunteers.

Back in Denmark, Revazian, a business school graduate, had a vision of connecting Armenia to Scandinavia. She founded a new organization,

AmStream.net, whose mission is to create an innovative pipeline for streaming opportunities and principles between Armenia and Scandinavia in the fields of business, education, science and culture. And of course Knudsen has been an active member of that organization from the outset.

Flash forward to 2014. Knudsen is nearing the end of her studies and can now do an internship abroad – and she has chosen to return to Armenia with AVC. Her next "big Armenia experience", as she calls it, will center on her professional internship as a social worker working with special needs children; it will be an opportunity for her to gain some valuable real experience in her field.

But knowing Knudsen, it will most certainly be so much more.

[For more information, visit www.armenianvolunteer.org]

Ashot Chilingarian's Accomplishments Celebrated

NOR AMBERT RESEARCH STATION, Mt. Aragats, Armenia – Within the international physics community significant accomplishments of famous scientists are often recognized in symposiums honoring them. On Tuesday, May 20, a symposium at the Nor Ambert research station on Mt. Aragats commemorated Prof. Ashot Chilingarian's decades of achievement. Chilingarian is the director of the Yerevan Physics Institute (YerPhi) and head of its Cosmic Ray Division (CRD).

Dr. Razmik Mirzoyan of the Max Planck Institute in Germany opened the symposium and introduced Dr. Johannes Knapp, astrophysicist from the University of Leeds in England and DESY in Germany. Dr. Knapp chroni-

of physics, mathematics, and neural networks, but he stressed Chilingarian's organizational ability and his support of bright young Armenian students, some of whom were in the audience.

The next speaker, Dr. Hartmut Gemmeke, who recently retired from the Forshchum Centrum physics institute in Karlsruhe, Germany, related early collaborations with Chilingarian when he (Gemmeke) was a post-doctoral scholar. He cited Chilingarian's contributions to space weather research. He concluded with a couple of poems he authored about Chilingarian's career.

Mirzoyan concluded the talks with a description of the development of Cherenkov Radiation telescopes and the contributions Chilingarian has made to

such as the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), the International Technology and Science foundation (INTAS) and other sources.

He is the author of the ANI (Analysis and Nonparametric Inference) computer code library, which has been extensively used by the international cosmic ray physics community during the last few decades for multidimensional analysis of data from modern cosmic ray detectors. He also introduced the "multidimensional nonlinear cuts" method for analyzing data from the Atmospheric Cherenkov Telescopes (ACT) and event-by-event analysis for Extensive Air Shower experiments. The Data Visualization Interactive Network (DVIN) was developed under his supervision. This project won a UN World Summit on Information Society award in Geneva in 2003.

He is the founder of the Aragats Space Environmental Center (ASEC) and the Space Environmental Viewing and Analysis Network (SEVAN), multinational scientific collaborations led by Armenia. In turn Prof. Chilingarian is Armenia's representative in other international collaborations such as the world wide neutron detector network led by Japan, The Space Weather Initiative led by NASA, the International Commission on Space Research (COSPAR) and many others.

Other guests at the symposium and the subsequent dinner honoring Chilingarian included Dr. Bruce Boghosian, a physicist from Tufts University who is concluding his fourth year as president of the American University of Armenia, Dr. Michel Davudian from France and the president and CEO of OZONE internet service company in the Shirak Marz, and founders of the Support Committee for Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division Anahid Yeremian and Joseph Dagdigian. Besides YerPhi staff members, also in attendance were graduate students studying at CRD.



From left, Dr. Razmik Mirzoyan from the Max-Planck-Institute for Physics in Munich, Germany; Dr. Hartmut Gemmeke from the Forshchum Centrum Physics Institute in Karlsruhe, Germany; Prof. Ashot Chilingarian, director of the Yerevan Physics Institute; and Dr. Johannes Knapp, astrophysicist from the University of Leeds in England and DESY in Germany

cluded Prof. Chilingarian's career from his first published paper in 1975 to his appointment as head of the CRD in 1993 and, 11 years later, to the directorship of the entire physics institute. Not only did Dr. Knapp iterate many of Chilingarian's contributions in the fields

this technology. Mirzoyan is the chairman of the MAGIC collaboration for a large telescope in the Canary Islands.

Chilingarian has more than 380 scientific publications and has won more than 20 research grants totaling more than \$2.5 million from foundations



INTERNATIONAL

Turkey's Interior Minister Fails to Impress in Washington Address

WASHINGTON (*Today's Zaman*) – Turkey's Interior Minister Efkân Ala, a bureaucrat believed to be the leading figure in containing a recent corruption scandal and in implementing a number of the government's anti-democratic practices, delivered a speech on Turkish domestic politics in Washington, D.C., on Monday, eliciting laughter among the largely American audience.

In what was believed to be a move to polish the government's sinking image in Washington, a claim raised by numerous Turkey-watchers during a day-long conference organized by the Middle East Institute, Ala stood before academics, the policy community and journalists in Washington to convince them that the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) is on the right course toward what he said is an "open society."

"It sounded like an election campaign," an analyst at a Washington-based think tank remarked on the minister's speech about Turkey's current dynamics. The interior minister, who was earlier caught on tape demanding a prosecutor arrest a prominent critical journalist without a court order having been issued, presented the ruling AK Party as a political force that has been under constant fire by "status quo forces." He even acknowledged several coup plots by army officers against his government in the past, which stood in stark contrast to a government narrative that there have been conspiracies against the army.

He argued that the ruling party has a good record of democratization and pro-freedom reforms, adding that it is determined to move forward to build a "consolidated democracy." He spoke at length on how the support base of his government increased during the course of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's tenure, in a show of approval of Turkish authorities' popular social policies. Ala left criticisms that the government is rapidly moving away from democracy unanswered.

Previously the undersecretary at the Prime Ministry, Ala is known by the public as the bureaucrat who organized most of the anti-democratic practices of the government to contain the corruption scandal – from removing members of the police and judiciary to demanding a prosecutor "break down the door of journalist Mehmet Baransu and arrest him" without a court order. As photos of Ala speaking in Washington surfaced on Twitter, social media lit up across Turkey, with many mocking the government decision to send Washington "the worst minister" in its image-making move. Ala, who has difficulty speaking coherently even in

Turkish, is often a subject of social media jokes.

"I hope there is someone who is translating Ala's remarks into Turkish," a US-based Turkish journalist tweeted while another user said: "Efkân Ala is said to be haranguing American democracy, transparency, etc., in Washington. I missed the fun party."

"I don't believe in a single word he is saying," an American participant said following the minister's speech, while another audience member described the whole event as a "sham." Many who spoke to *Today's Zaman* agreed that if the minister's speech had been designed as a "PR campaign" then it was a "total failure."

Ala is in Washington to hold high-level talks with US officials on security cooperation. Agenda items that officials from both countries will discuss have not yet been made public, but a whistleblower said on Twitter that Ala flew to the American capital to complain about sympathizers of the Gülen movement living in the US.

The Gülen movement and the government of Erdoğan are at odds after the prime minister targeted the faith-based movement during his election campaigns, accusing it of masterminding a conspiracy against his authority "with global links." Erdoğan earlier said in a televised interview that US President Barack Obama told him the "message is delivered" when he asked that the US extradite Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen, who inspired the movement and who has been living in a rural Pennsylvania town since 1999. The White House denied Erdoğan's remarks attributed to Obama and the US president, who earlier called the prime minister a "good friend of mine," was reported to be forwarding Erdoğan's phone calls to Vice President Joe Biden. It was not clear if the interior minister would talk about the possibility of extraditing Gülen to Turkey. Extradition processes from the US are usually painful and long and there must be an ongoing case against suspects in question. The accusations against the suspect must also be considered a crime under US law.

Although Ala didn't talk about his government's unease over Gülen's residency in the US, he did complain about the "parallel structure," a euphemism constructed by Erdoğan in December last year to describe the Gülen movement. Government officials who acknowledge a setback in freedoms often justify most of the government's recent anti-democratic actions, including thousands of public reassignments, by blaming the Gülen movement. Some observers accuse Ankara of using the

Gülen movement as a scapegoat for its wrongdoings. The Turkish government has adopted a series of laws this year, such as an education law that restricts the freedom of entrepreneurship, a law that puts the judiciary under government's tight control and a law that grants wide powers to Turkey's spy agency. Erdoğan's government also recently blocked access to YouTube, Twitter and Google+ as part of a wider crackdown on the media, a restriction that was later lifted by courts.

On media freedom, Ala said the reported number of journalists who are incarcerated is an exaggeration, and he defended media freedom in the country. Freedom House recently listed Turkey as a "Not Free" country in its annual press freedom ranking, prompting a smear campaign from pro-government newspapers about the Washington-based think tank and its president. Ala said that press freedom might not be perfect in Turkey, but he put the blame on what he called "status quo forces," referring to the Gülen movement.

Many Turkish journalists filled the room so they could ask the minister questions, but the question-and-answer session was strictly moderated. President of the Middle East Institute, Ambassador Wendy Chamberlain, who was moderating the minister's speech, said "we're out of time" and took only two questions. Though dozens of hands were raised, she made a quick survey or the audience members before selecting those who could ask questions. One of the participants even asked a question about Turkish foreign policy. It was not immediately clear if the participants who had been given a chance to ask questions were selected before the speech. The moderator refused to hear questions from other audience members and journalists.

Monaco's Prince Albert Is Fan of Soprano Papian, Armenian Culture

MONTE CARLO, Monaco (Armenpress) – Armenian soprano Hasmik Papian wrote on her Facebook page this week that after the premiere of the opera "Norma" in this city, Monaco's Prince Albert talked with admiration about the history and culture of Armenia the whole evening.

"During the whole evening he was talking about Armenia's history, culture and his Armenian friends. He knew so much about our country... it was extremely impressive..." she wrote on Facebook. The two were dining at a reception after the opera.

Papian, who was born in Armenia, is based in Vienna, Austria. Her husband is Konrad Kuhn, a dramaturge working for various European theaters.



Soprano Hasmik Papian with Prince Albert of Monaco in Monte Carlo

Syrian Forces Retake Kessab

KESSAB, from page 1

Kessab, a once-tranquil hamlet of 2,500 people, mostly Armenians, was the target last March of a large-scale strike by Syrian guerrillas who surged across the Turkish border to seize the town and establish a presence in the mountainous region of Latakia province, a government stronghold and home to President Assad and his ultra-loyalist Alawite minority sect.

Many Alawite commanders hold key roles in Assad's military and security apparatus. Their disproportionate control of the country's resources fueled much of the resentment in the coun-

try's Sunni majority.

The rebel campaign to control Kessab was at the center of the furor, as pro-government media warned of an impending genocide perpetrated by Islamist fighters against the town's Armenian population, while opposition leaders worked hard to dispel rumors of mistreatment. It became a cause célèbre with figures including Kim Kardashian, the Armenian American reality-show star, who exhorted her followers on Twitter to "get this trending" and join the #SaveKessab hashtag campaign.

(Bulos is a special correspondent.)

International News

Russian FM in Azerbaijan to Discuss Regional, International Agenda

BAKU (Voice of Russia) – Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov arrived here on Tuesday, for talks that will address bilateral relations, Caspian issues and the prospects for settling the conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh.

"The foreign ministers of Russia and Azerbaijan intend to discuss key aspects of the regional and international agenda. Attention will also be paid to the Caspian issue in light of laying the groundwork for the 4th Caspian summit in Astrakhan. The agenda for the negotiations includes problems surrounding the Nagorno-Karabagh settlement process with a focus on the need to unblock the current situation and reach specific agreements," the Russian Foreign Ministry reported.

Azerbaijan is Russia's important strategic partner in Transcaucasia and the Caspian region, the ministry said, praising the Azeri leadership's "consistent policies" aimed at further promoting mutually beneficial cooperation with Moscow.

"The working visit by the Russia's President Vladimir Putin to the Republic of Azerbaijan on August 13, 2013 gave a powerful impetus to Russian-Azeri relations," it said.

Matthew Bryza 'Attacked' in Baku

BAKU (Armenpress) – Matthew Bryza's speech on the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly seminar in Baku has angered his Azeri hosts. Although in his speech, the former co-chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group and the former acting US Ambassador to Azerbaijan gave a neutral assessments of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict and its current state. The Azerbaijani government, through the APA Agency, has expressed its objections.

Bryza said in his speech that the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan must establish the necessary level of mutual trust in order to achieve settlement and compromise in the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict.

Noting that after many years of the Minsk Group's activities the conflict still remains unresolved, Bryza said: "We must continue to work to reduce the likelihood of a military solution to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh."

Liverpool Is Interested In Yura Movsisyan

MOSCOW (Armenpress) – The Liverpool football (soccer) club is in talks for the transfer of Armenia's national football team striker Yura Movsisyan. Liverpool boss Brendan Rodgers is said to be entering talks with the agent of Spartak Moscow striker this weekend.

Rodgers has been keeping an eye on the 26-year-old over the course of the season and has been impressed with his form after bagging 20 goals in 35 matches for Spartak over the last 18 months.

Movsisyan has also been impressing on the international stage with Armenia, too, and it is there that Rodgers first noticed him while scouting Henrikh Mkhitaryan last summer.

However, Rodgers will have to act fast as he is not the only one showing an interest in landing Movsisyan. The striker was expected to lead the line for his country on Friday in a friendly against German side Mainz, and there will be a significant number of scouts in attendance.

Movsisyan himself knows that he is in high demand by saying: "I've heard there may be some interested teams in England and Germany, let's see if that is serious or not."

"I've proven I can score goals wherever I have played and I have been lucky to do so again this year with Spartak. "If an offer is made for me, I can't control the outcome. Spartak know my ambition and all parties need to be satisfied. Either way, I want success on the field."



The Corleones of the Caspian:

How Azerbaijan's dictator woos the United States and Europe

BAKU (*Washington Business Journal*) – On October 9, 2012, the American subsidiary of the State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) purchased a five-story, 23,232-square-foot mansion in the heart of Washington, DC, for the purposes of “expand[ing] its operations in the United States.” Oil is the one thing Azerbaijan has plenty of, and it’s the one thing the United States is most interested in, so SOCAR’s “operations” are bound to be extensive.

Given the money at stake, the mansion’s sale price was a pittance: \$12 million. The exact address is 1319 18th St. NW, which ought to be familiar to many an old Cold War hand as the former office of Jeane Kirkpatrick, a onetime US ambassador to the United Nations and one of the most influential officials in Ronald Reagan’s administration. This mansion is where *Demokratizatsiya*, the journal of post-Soviet democratization, founded in 1992, used to be published. And, for a time, its most famous lessee was Freedom House, the respected human rights monitor, which today counts Azerbaijan among the “not free” countries.

“I’m speechless,” said Jennifer Windsor, the executive director of Freedom House when it was based at the Kirkpatrick address and now the associate dean for programs and outreach at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service. “I find it the highest form of irony that one of the world’s least free countries is now occupying what was the house of freedom.”

It’s as much a sign of the times as it is an irony. Barack Obama’s administration has cut the US budget for democracy promotion and has struck all manner of cynical bargains with kleptocratic authoritarian regimes. Realpolitik and isolationism are

trading at high premiums again, as whole swaths of Congress, beholden to a libertarian or Tea Party ideology, view human rights as, at best, an afterthought of the national interest or, at worst, as an inconvenience that America can ill afford in the 21st century.

But SOCAR USA’s tony new address also underscores the quiet success of one of the most energetic and free-spending foreign lobbies in American and European politics – that of the regime headed by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. Over the past decade, a South Caucasian country the size of Ireland but with possibly twice the oil reserves of Texas has managed to win friends and influence people who include past and present members of the US Congress, British Parliament, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which was once known for pressuring dictatorships, not embracing them. Where it hasn’t resorted to all-expenses-paid vacations to Azerbaijan’s capital, Baku – a form of what one European think tank wittingly describes as “caviar diplomacy” – it has poured millions of dollars into top-drawer US lobbying, consultancy, and PR firms to whitewash its image in the American media.

But it’s a bit more subtle than that: The Aliyev regime has quietly made inroads into transatlantic establishments by recapitulating a hat trick of persuasive arguments.

The first is that Azerbaijan is the only secular Muslim-majority state that is an ally of the United States and NATO in the war on terror as well as a happy commercial and diplomatic ally of Israel, which imports around a third of its energy from the Caucasian state. Azerbaijani infrastructure is set to help facilitate NATO and US troop

withdrawal from Afghanistan later this year.

The second is that its oil boom, which caused Azerbaijan’s GDP to grow tenfold from 2001 to 2011, is a necessary counterweight for diversifying Europe’s energy consumption and putting an end to Russia’s monopolistic and bullying tactics, the nadir of which were its “gas wars” with Ukraine and Belarus. Almost all of Azerbaijan’s exports in 2011 were in oil and petroleum products. The so-called Southern Gas Corridor, a pipeline rival to Russia’s Nord Stream, advanced dramatically last December when a BP-led consortium began laying the groundwork for Shah Deniz 2, a \$28 billion natural gas exploration project in the Azerbaijani-controlled part of the Caspian Sea. British Foreign Secretary William Hague and EU Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger were both in Baku for the signing of this landmark deal, which will ship gas through two pipelines: the Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline, running through Turkey, and the Trans Adriatic Pipeline, running through Greece and Italy. Even though Azerbaijani gas going to the European Union represents just 2 percent of the 500 billion cubic meters per year that the continent imports, Europe wants to lower its energy dependence on Russia. Moscow’s state-owned gas giant, Gazprom, is now under antitrust investigation by the European Commission. And the continuing Western standoff with the Kremlin over Russia’s invasion and destabilization of Ukraine will mean that Azerbaijani gas becomes more important to Brussels in the coming months and years.

Finally, situated at the gateway between Asia and Europe, Azerbaijan is a strategic partner for the West in resisting Iran’s nuclear threat as well as Russian President

Vladimir Putin’s attempts to “re-Sovietize the region,” as then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton memorably characterized the Russian-conceived customs union, entry into which has sparked a political crisis in Ukraine. So as the United States goes looking for as many friends as it can find in the post-Soviet world – especially those with energy resources – Baku’s influence in Washington is only poised to grow.

And if the West is ever ungrateful or unresponsive to these overtures, the Azerbaijani lobby passive-aggressively intimates, then the Aliyev regime always has the option of turning toward Moscow or Tehran, both of which are eagerly knocking at its door.

The immediate aim of this three-tiered charm offensive is to “Johnny Mercerize” an otherwise ugly domestic political reality, as one veteran Azerbaijan specialist, who spoke to Foreign Policy on the condition of anonymity, termed it. That is, accentuate the positive and ignore, downplay, or just plain lie about the negative. But there’s another encoded agenda. “The Aliyev lobby’s true purpose is to send a message back home that there is nothing that can be done to remove this family from power,” said Elmar Chakhtakhtinski, chair of Azerbaijani-Americans for Democracy (AZAD), an opposition-linked diaspora group. “When a US congressman or former congressman congratulates Aliyev on victory, it doesn’t necessarily give the regime any better position in the West, but to the regime’s own domestic population, it sends a powerful signal that even the West is behind it, that the world outside of Azerbaijan isn’t that much different.” The demoralizing effect such signaling can have on embattled dissidents or civil society groups in Azerbaijan is profound.

Communiqué Issued after Syria Meeting at Echmiadzin

ECHMIADZIN – On June 11 and 12, following the conclusion of the International Consultation on “Crisis in Syria: Challenges for Faith Communities” convened in the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin at the invitation of Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, a communiqué was issued, stating the following:

“Church leaders and representatives from Syria, the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin and the Holy See gathered in Echmiadzin June 11-12 at the invitation of His Holiness Karekin II Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians for a consultation in cooperation with the WCC to address the challenges for faith communities in the ongoing crisis in Syria.

We gathered on the eve of the Centenary of the Armenian and Syriac Genocide and prayed for justice and peace. We visited the Armenian genocide memorial, and remembered all those who lost their lives for their faith or ethnicity.

This gathering also occurs at the time of the celebration of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended to give common voice to the believers in every tongue. The Holy Spirit guides us to believe that peace and justice for all people cannot be achieved by the initiatives of humanity alone.

Through diakonia and humanitarian assistance, the churches continue to witness to the unconditional love of Christ to all people in Syria. It is of high significance that churches continue to accompany those who have found refuge in neighbouring countries. Therefore, we encourage further cooperation among the different churches and church agencies within Syria and internationally. We call upon the churches who have embarked on the path of reconciliation to continue being bridge builders,

deepening dialogue with their Muslim sisters and brothers.

We acknowledge with gratitude the hospitality of the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Government of Armenia for hosting more than 12000 Syrian refugees in their country.

At the ecumenical and international consultation on Syria held by the WCC in January 2014, we expressed our concern for all people affected by the extreme violence and humanitarian calamity in Syria and clearly stated our deep conviction that there will be no military solution to the crisis in the country.

Almost four months have passed since the failure of the Geneva II peace process. With great sadness we continue to witness a dramatic deterioration of the situation. We abhor the massive and indiscriminate destruction of homes, schools, hospitals and places of worship. We are witnessing an alarming and dangerous development as the war has spilled over into neighboring Iraq. Therefore we reiterate our urgent call upon all parties to the conflict to pursue an immediate cessation of armed



Members of the Crisis in Syria International Consultation

confrontation and hostility within Syria and Iraq.

We call for the restrictions on money transfer to Syria for humanitarian purposes as well as the blocking to humanitarian assistance to be lifted, the flow of arms and funding to all parties to the conflict to stop, and all foreign armed fighters to be withdrawn.

We demand the immediate release of the two Archbishops from Aleppo, His Eminence

Boulos (Yazigi) Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo and Alexandretta and His Eminence Mor Youhanna Gregorios (Ibrahim) Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan of Aleppo, as well as Father Paolo Dall'Oglio, and all captives and those unjustly imprisoned.

These contexts shape our intentions and hopes in the journey of the fellowship of churches in the wide ecumenical family toward peace and justice among all people of faith.”

Community News

Knights and Daughters of Vartan to Honor Man and Woman of the Year at National Convocation

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – The Knights and Daughters of Vartan announced recently the 2014 recipients of the Man of the Year and the newly-established Woman of the Year Awards. The Awards will be presented at the Knights and Daughters of Vartan Grand Banquet on Saturday, July 5, 7:30 p.m., as part of their national convocation being held at the Grand Hyatt. Both honorees will be in attendance.

The national leadership of the Knights of Vartan has selected Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) as the 2014 Man of the Year. Schiff is one of the most influential and Armenian-friendly members of Congress. The Grand Commander of the Knights of Vartan, Nigoghos Atinizian, cited the following accomplishments of Schiff: "His track record on Armenian issues, including assistance to Armenia and Karabagh; his honoring the victims of the Armenia Genocide and sponsoring resolution for the recognition of the Genocide; and his calling on the Republic of Turkey to end all religious persecution and return of stolen Christian Church properties, were the reasons that the Knights of Vartan Brotherhood voted to make Congressman Schiff the winner of the 2014 Man of The Year humanitarian award."

Schiff was born in 1960 in Framingham, Mass. to a traditional Jewish family. He received a political science degree from Stanford University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School. He went on to distinguish himself in the US



Knights of Vartan Man of the Year 2014
Congressman Adam B. Schiff

Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, before winning election to the California State Senate where he served a four-year term. While a state senator, he chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Joint Committee on the Arts and the Senate Select Committee on Juvenile Justice.

He represents California's 28th Congressional District and served in Congress since 2001. He is a member of the Democratic Party. In 2007, he became a member of the House Appropriations Committee. He also served on the House International Relations Committee for six years. Congressman Schiff is long-time member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues.

The Knights of Vartan applaud Schiff for his strength of character, his convictions and his actions in support of Armenian people throughout the world.

The national leadership of the Daughters of Vartan has selected legendary soprano Lucine Amara as the inaugural recipient of the Daughters of Vartan Woman of the Year Award.

Widely considered one of the greatest sopranos of the 20th Century, Amara is an American success story. Her name has become synonymous with the Metropolitan Opera.

She was born Lucine Armaganian in Hartford, Conn., before moving to San Francisco, where she grew up and trained as a vocalist. After only one year of voice training,
see KNIGHTS, page 7



Ambassador John Evans at the helm

Ambassador Evans Completes Adventurous Sail across the Atlantic in Support of COAF Kids

NEW YORK – Former US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans arrived in Portugal on June 14 after an adventurous sailing expedition on a 43-foot yacht, "Happy Destiny." This represented the very first trans-Atlantic crossing on a sailboat for Evans, as well as his fellow crewmembers Ray Smith, Randal Wright and Don Kneedler.

"Happy Destiny" departed from Portsmouth, Va., on May 3 making port in Bermuda and the Azores, and finally landing in southern Portugal, having successfully completed a 3,260-mile journey.

The journey was a fundraiser for the Children of Armenia Fund (COAF).

"It is necessary to take risks, but important to prepare for coping with any situation. A good team can deal with any problem if there is trust and loyalty between members. Never give up in pursuing your goal, but be flexible in how you get there; appreciate small pleasures in life such as sleeping in a warm place and having dry clothes, help others and they will help you," said Evans. "COAF symbolizes this philosophy, hence my dedication of this symbolic journey for the children



Above, "Happy Destiny." Left, the crew of "Happy Destiny," with Ambassador John Evans, right

who have lived a life of hardship and now they appreciate the good deeds of COAF sponsors."

Garo Armen, COAF's founder and chairman, stated, "We are deeply thankful to Ambassador John Evans for having dedicated this remarkable undertaking to COAF. We are also deeply thankful to all his COAF supporters for having contributed to this fundraising campaign in recognition of Ambassador Evans and will keep the campaign open through the end of June in his honor."

In the mid-Atlantic leg of the trip, the rally braved bad weather with gale-force winds. Several boats returned to shore. A boat sailing nearby the rally, the Cheeki Rafiki, made a distress call and then disappeared. Sadly, the young crew was lost at sea. The sailors in the World Cruising Club held a moment of silence in memory of the four crewmembers on the Cheeki Rafiki.

SARF Delivers Another \$100K for Syrian Armenians

GLENDALE, Calif. –As the war rages on in Syria, the calls for help are reaching donors, whose contributions raised another \$100,000 for the Syrian Armenian Relief Fund (SARF). With the latest transfer, the total SARF contributions for Syrian Armenians reached \$1 million.

"Thanks to the caring, compassionate and highly responsible spirit of our donor public, we have reached this milestone," said Zaven Khanjian, SARF Executive Committee Chairperson. He added, "As we cannot reach each individual donor personally, we take this opportunity to salute every one of them around the nation who contributed from \$5 to \$25,000."

The latest donations included two \$10,000 donations. One was from the European-based family of the late Dr. Iskandar Kassis of Aleppo; the other was from Dr. Noubar Ouzounian, and ENT-otolaryngologist in Anaheim, Calif.

Send checks to SARF: P.O. Box 1948, Glendale, CA 91209-1948; or donate on-line at www.SyrianArmenianReliefFund.org.

The following churches, charities and organizations came together to form the Syrian Armenian Relief Fund in August 2012: Armenian Catholic Eparchy in North America; Armenian Evangelical Union of North America; Western Diocese of the Armenian Church; Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America; Armenian General Benevolent Union; Armenian Missionary Association of America; Armenian Relief Society of Western U.S.A.; Armenian Democratic Liberal Party; Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Western U.S.A.; and Social Democrat Hunchakian Party-Western U.S.A.

South Florida Armenian Students Participate in Summer Internships

BOCA RATON, Fla. – Instead of taking the summer off, five South Florida Armenian students are working in a variety of industries to advance their careers. From finance to international relations to law, Florida's Armenian American youth are growing fast and branching out across America.

Mariam Grigoryan, a Boca Raton native and senior at the University of Florida (UF), is currently a legal intern in the Broward County Public Defender office in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Under the director of Public Defender Howard Finkelstein Grigoryan's work will focus on indigent defense. Grigoryan looks to graduate with a double major in Political Science and Criminology, as well as a minor in Business Administration. She plans to attend law school in the fall of 2015.

Boca Raton resident and Queens, NY native Gevork Sarkisian is also pursuing his career in the legal field. A second year law student at Nova Southeastern University (NSU), Sarkisian is currently interning with the law firm Kanner and Pinaluga, P.A. in Delray Beach, Florida. Sarkisian received his B.A. in Criminal Justice from Florida Atlantic University (FAU). Following his internship, Sarkisian plans to visit Washington, DC to "explore new opportunities in the legal field," he said.

Palm Beach County native Carine Kazandjian, a communications major and commercial music minor at FAU, is spending her summer interning with Clear Channel Media
see INTERNS, page 7



OBITUARY

Krikor Yeprad Bedrosian

Co-founder of National Raisin Co. in Fowler

FOWLER, Calif. — Krikor Yeprad Bedrosian, co-founder of National Raisin Company, died on June 9, 2014. He was 78 years old.

Krikor, also known as “Kay,” was born in Fresno, on September 10, 1935, to Mourad and Elizabeth Bedrosian. Mourad was from Mush, Armenia and Elizabeth was from Kharpert, Armenia; both were survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

Krikor was the third of four children; sister Clara Bousian, was the oldest, followed by brother Ernest Bedrosian (Deceased 1/1/14), and younger brother Kenneth Bedrosian.

In the early years the family lived in Parlier, and later moved to Fowler.

Krikor attended Fowler schools and as a senior at Fowler High School was elected Student Body Vice President running a campaign which featured a photograph of him standing on a ball with the slogan “Vote for the man on the ball” Throughout his life he tried to keep all his interaction concise, yet memorable.

During his high school years, Krikor developed the passion for sports, serving as Litoria sports editor, earning athletic awards in Track and Field. He also developed an interest in finance and was appointed the Business Manager of the *Redcat Review*.

He committed himself at an early age to Christ and was an active member of Christian Endeavor and the First Armenian Presbyterian Church in Fresno.

Bedrosian attended California State University, Fresno and graduated with honors, receiving a Bachelor of Science Degree in business with a minor in finance.

It was during his years in college that he was introduced to the world of investing, and from that grew one of his lifelong passions. Up until a few months before his passing, Krikor was investing, trading and watching the latest trades in the stock market. In college, he along with a close group of Armenian friends, formed the Hye Ten Investment Club. Members met monthly to analyze business reports, share stock tips and investigate investment opportunities, with the primary purpose to never lose touch with one another. This group of lifelong friends enjoyed a weekend of fishing, cooking, playing cards and backgammon with endless inside jokes and pranks. To this day, the group meets monthly with those members who are able to attend.

He was a proud alumnus of California State University, Fresno, and in 2007, along with his brothers, Ernest and Kenneth, was awarded the “Top Dog” award in the field of Agriculture. Krikor grew up on the family farm and together with his brothers, ran a successful table and wine grape operation. In the early years, the brothers were learning to farm and developed their reputation in the valley as honest, hard-working, individuals. Krikor ran the ranching operations, accounting, and investing divisions. Always looking for the next property to buy or the next opportunity to invest the profits earned, Krikor loved the challenge and excelled in growing the business with a successful planned approach. It was at an Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Valentine’s Day dance held at the famous Bruce’s Lodge restaurant in Fowler that he met the love of his life, Katherine Basmajian. The two were introduced that evening and Krikor began a two year courtship.

When Katherine graduated from high school, he presented her with a watch and proposed. The couple was married on October 24, 1959, at the Fowler Presbyterian Church with the reception held at the Hotel California in Fresno. Krikor often said it was the best move he made in his life. Together they had three children, daughter Linda Kay, followed by their son Michael Krikor, and daughter Jane Elizabeth. Eventually the brothers expanded their farming operation to include raisins and it was in 1969 when Krikor with brother Ernie and then partner Harry Rustigian opened National Raisin Company in Fowler, home of the “Champion” brand. A few years later Rustigian decided to return to farming and brother Kenny joined the family business. Those early years were challenging. Krikor was in charge of the production, daily accounting and overall investing policies for both the plant

and farms. Under his direction, National Raisin earned the DFA 1800 club award year after year. Krikor genuinely cared for each and every National Raisin associate, and up until a few years ago, knew everyone by name. He worked with all those who asked for his advisement and investment help, and was seen as a father figure, mentor, and counselor to many. Krikor valued his work at National Raisin knowing it supported not only his entire family but also the many families of our associates. Throughout the years he served in several capacities such as National Raisin’s Corporate Secretary, Chief Financial Officer and Co-Chairman of the Board. From those humble early years to present, National Raisin has grown into the largest independent raisin processor in the world, packing dried fruit and snack products under the “Champion” brand and various independent labels. National Raisin Company employs over 500 people, with four plant site locations and ships products throughout the world. Bedrosian was actively involved in the Raisin Industry serving on the Raisin Administrative Committee and California Raisin Advisory Board.

A long standing and active member of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church, Bedrosian made family, church and work the foundation of his life on earth. He always praised God for his successes and rich blessings in life; therefore, he gladly gave his time in serving the church. He held many positions such as trustee, an elected Elder of the Session and served as Treasurer. He spearheaded and served on several fundraising campaigns including the “Building Fund Project” which built the current church sanctuary. He was an active member of the Fowler Lions Club and the Knights of Vartan.

He was a 30-plus-year member of the Fowler Lions Club, served as Lions Club President, and participated in several Lions Club projects and fundraising activities. For more than 25 years, he enjoyed building and setting up the Judge’s Stand for the Fowler Fall Festival and Band Review Parades.

In 2009, he was recognized as Fowler’s Honored Pioneer.

In addition, he was a 20-year member of the Knights of Vartan in Fresno and enjoyed the fellowship of the Lodge. Krikor was a loving father to Linda Kay, Michael, and Jane.

Although he achieved many professional successes in his life, his friends and associates know that he was the most proud of his family. Each one of his kids recalls how their father was always there when they needed him. Each looked up to his strong convictions, candor and honesty. “Dad was not a man of many words. He spoke most with his actions,” one of his children recently recalled. In addition to leading by example, he was also quick witted and was well known for his ‘one-liners’. “In short,” said one of his children, “Dad had a knack of saying a lot in a few words.”



Krikor Yeprad Bedrosian

He and his wife, Katherine, would have celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary this year.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Mourad and Elizabeth Bedrosian; his brother, Ernest Bedrosian and his granddaughter, Caitlyn Bedrosian.

He is survived by his wife, Katherine; daughter, Linda Kay Abdulian and her husband Dr. John Abdulian; son, Michael Bedrosian and his wife Stephanie; daughter, Jane Asmar and her husband Dr. Scott Asmar; grandchildren, Alexis and Daniel Abdulian, Ryan, Michael and Matthew Bedrosian, and Alexander and Alexa Asmar.

He is also survived by his sister, Clara

Bousian; sister-in-law, Carlotta Bedrosian; brother, Kenny Bedrosian and his wife Jane; sister-in-law, Helen Caprelian and her husband, Marvin; sister-in-law, Roxie Haritiunian and her husband, Levon; and brother-in-law, Richard Basmajian and wife Pamela. He is also survived by his nephew, Bryan Bedrosian and his wife Rosie, their son Armen, his wife Stephanie, and their daughter, Lillian; niece, Tammy Shegerian and her husband John, and their children, Courtney and Tyler; nephew, Paul David Bedrosian and his wife Terry, and their child Isabella; nephew, Ara Bedrosian; niece, Kimberly Bedrosian; niece, Christine Caprelian and her children, Christopher, Saro and Seraphina; niece, Janice Caprelian; niece, Jonna Keledjian and her husband

Armen and their children, Ashlyn, Lauren, Kaylyn, and Brooklyn; nephew, Thomas Caprelian and his

wife Nora and their children Christian and Kayla; niece, Stacy Mauro and her husband Tony and their children, Dominick, McKay, and Alexandra; nephew, Brad Basmajian and his wife Kara.

A Knights of Vartan Service was held on June 13 at Yost & Webb Funeral Home. A Funeral Service followed on Saturday, June 14, at First Armenian Presbyterian Church, 430 S. First Street, Fresno.

A Memorial Luncheon immediately followed.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to (FAPC) First Armenian Presbyterian Church, 430 S. First Street, Fresno, CA 93702. Yost & Webb Funeral Home, 1002 T Street, Fresno, Calif.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Sisters' Academy Lexington Announces New Administration and Board

LEXINGTON, Mass. – The Board of the Armenian Sisters' Academy (ASA) announced this week that after many years of service, Sister Cecile Keghiayan will retire from her position as principal at the end of the current school year. Further, the board announced that Sr. Nelly Isin will assume the role of principal beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year.

Sister Nelly is no stranger to ASA Lexington, having held various positions during her prior two tenures, most recently in 2009. A native of Istanbul, she has served her Order in France, Iran, Syria, Italy, and both

the Lexington and Radnor, Penn. schools in the United States. "When you have determination, you succeed," she said. And it was that tenacity that allowed Sister Nelly to add English to the list of five other languages she

had mastered – Armenian, Arabic, Turkish, Italian and French.

Her time as a sister has been one of selfless giving in many forms. At one time, she taught at the Institute Mariam, an Armenian high school in Tehran with 3,000 students. She herself instructed kindergartners – all 400 of them – along with a staff of 35. She spent time in France, caring for another sister and housing high school and college students. She taught at ASA's sister school in Radnor and has also run the Sisters' bed and breakfast in Rome. Managing guests from around the world in this 10-room inn was not easy, but as testimony to her hard work, they would often have repeat guests including ambassadors and celebrities from Holland and Ireland. She was there in 2000, a Jubilee year when tens of thousands of Christians visited Rome.

Sister Nelly will work closely with Vice Principal Mayda Melkonian and a new Board of Advisors. As a collaborative team, this administration is committed to building on the success and history of the ASA in the Boston community. Sister Nelly is also very excited in working closely with all ASA parents. While some may remember Sister Nelly from her prior tenure, she is looking forward to meeting all the new students and parents whom she hasn't meet.

Potential parents interested in learning more about ASA Lexington should visit www.asalexington.org to make an appointment with either Sister Nelly or Melkonian.

South Florida Armenian Students Participate in Summer Internships

INTERNS, from page 5

and Entertainment Company in West Palm Beach, Florida. The FAU junior has a passion for music and has even released a few songs of her own, available on iTunes. "I am gaining so much knowledge working with the different departments whether it is radio or promotions. The music industry is mainly what I want my future in and this internship is giving me the opportunity to learn more and more each day," Kazandjian said.

Meanwhile, her twin sister, Sarine Kazandjian, is currently interning at Morgan Stanley's Palm Beach Gardens office. A finance major with a minor focus in entrepreneurship, Kazandjian is a junior at the University of Florida.

Florida International University (FIU) junior Gevorg Shahbazyan is currently an intern in the office of the Nagorno Karabakh Representative in Washington, DC as a participant in the Armenian Assembly of America's Terjenian-Thomas Summer Internship Program, the first student internship program offered by an Armenian organization in America. Recently, Shahbazyan worked with his fellow students and FIU faculty to have the flags of Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh raised in the school's atrium. Hailing from Yerevan, Armenia, Shahbazyan studies international relations and hopes to continue his studies in graduate school and someday be a diplomat.

(Taniel Koushadjian is the *FLArmenians* managing editor.)



The ASA Board with Sr. Nelly on her recent visit, from left, Katrina Glorikian, Ara Deirmendjian, Sr. Nelly Isin, Shant Parseghian, Mayda Melkonian, Nageeb Diarbakerly and Armen Arakelian

Knights and Daughters of Vartan to Honor Man and Woman of the Year

KNIGHTS, from page 5

she was accepted in the San Francisco Opera Chorus as a contralto. Three years later, she became a dramatic soprano, singing the title role of "Ariadne auf Naxos" and Lady Billows in the opera "Albert Herring."

Shortly thereafter, Amara joined the Metropolitan Opera in New York City – singing 882 onstage performances, five opening nights, nine new productions, 57 radio broadcasts and, incredibly, 56 roles.

She made her Metropolitan Opera debut as

the "Voice from Heaven" in Verdi's "Don Carlos" and appeared regularly as Micaëla in "Carmen," Cio-Cio-San in "Madame Butterfly" and Tatiana in "Eugene Onegin," Antonia in "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," Donna Elvira in "Don Giovanni," Nedda in "Pagliacci" and Mimi in "La bohème." Her repertoire also included Leonora in "Il trovatore," as well as "Aida."

Amara appeared in the 1951 MGM film, "The Great Caruso" with Mario Lanza and has made various recordings, including "Pagliacci" with Franco Corelli and Richard Tucker. She has per-



Daughters of Vartan Woman of the Year 2014, Lucine Amara

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formed in 33 opera houses and with 25 symphony orchestras throughout the United States.

The national chair (Grand Matron) of the Daughters of Vartan, Lisa Kradjian, said the feeling was unanimous among the national officers. "There are, of course, many remarkable Armenian women serving our community today, but we felt that for the first recipient of this award, no other Armenian woman has graced this world with more accomplishment, artistry, spirit and service for her people than Lucine Amara."

Starting in 2014, the Daughters of Vartan Woman of the Year Award will be given annually to a woman who has served Armenian people and heritage with excellence, just as the Knights of Vartan have similarly honored a Man of the Year.

For more information about the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, visit their website, <http://www.knightsofvartan.org>, or their pages on Facebook and Twitter.

The Grand Banquet and Man and Woman of the Year Awards are part of the Grand Convocation of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, which occurs in a different city each year and welcomes hundreds of members and patrons from across the country.

This year's convocation is being presented by the San Diego chapters of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan at the Manchester Grand Hyatt, One Market Place, San Diego, CA 92101. The banquet is open to the public. For banquet tickets and more information, write to sdconvocation2014@gmail.com.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Bike for Hope for Armenia Cyclists Ride for CRD in Armenia

YEREVAN and PALO ALTO, Calif. — The Bike for Hope for Armenia group of cyclists rode in a Bike-a-thon called the Spectacular Armenia Ride from May 24-30 to support the scientists of the Cosmic Ray Division (CRD) of the Yerevan Physics Institute (YerPhI). Riders from the United States included Jamie Kolar, a Los Angeles firefighter medic and Birthright participant, who founded Aid to Armenia and spent a year on sabbatical in Armenia teaching

tents, making soup on camp stoves, singing by the bonfire and dancing shurch-bar whenever possible was all part of the activity bonding the group together.

The Armenian Roadway Police skillfully escorted the riders through the congested streets of Yerevan on the first day and back to Republic Square on the last day, delivering the tired riders safely to the finish line. Among those welcoming back the cyclists were the scientists, staff, and the head of the CRD and director of the Yerevan Physics Institute, Prof. Ashot Chilingarian, together with friends and reporters from the local news media.

At the conclusion of the Spectacular Armenia Ride, the cyclists joined the CRD staff and supporters, at CRD's Nor Amberd Research Station on Mt. Aragats for a celebration dinner and a tour of the facility. Some youth in the cycling team said they

were inspired to do well in the science classes and maybe one day become scientists themselves. For their turn the scientists were inspired to exercise more and thought more of



Junior Armenian cycling team members supporting the CRD as they ride

the latest first aid techniques to medics, schools and village residents in Armenia; Roffi Petrossian from Seattle who is also on a year of discovery in Armenia volunteering on many environmental projects such as planting trees for ATP, video graphing for Civilinet, applying to the AUA program on Armenia's Birds of Prey; and Anahid Yeremian, a particle accelerator physicist at Stanford and co-founder of the Support Committee for Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division. The riders from the US were joined by Rafael Paremuzyan, a physicist at YerPhI and by the junior riders from the Armenian cycling team, including the two-time world junior silver medalist, Mher Mkrtchyan. Coordinating the 15-plus riders and four support personnel was the ride leader and renowned master cycling trainer Albert Soloyan.

For seven days the riders braved rain, wind and hills of the majestic Armenian landscape from Yerevan to Aparan to Ijevan and Dilijan and Sevan. Camping by rivers and groves of trees, each morning checking for water in the



Cycling team members learning about cosmic ray physics at the Nor Amberd research center.



Some of the riders at the conclusion of the Bike a Thon. In the middle in blue is the two-time world silver medalist, Mher Mkrtchyan.

them might join the ride next year. Chilingarian said that he has added bicycle parking stalls at the Yerevan Physics Institute to encourage the scientists to come to work on their bicycles.

The celebration dinner included a recognition of decades of service of two of Armenia's talented and inspiring leaders in their field: Albert Soloyan who has trained many cycling

world champions in Armenia and abroad and breathed a breath of fresh air into Armenia's cycling tradition after the independence and Chilingarian who has brought life back to the Yerevan Physics Institute and its Cosmic Ray Division by encouraging and supporting Armenian youth to satisfy their scientific passion in Armenia.



World-renowned cycling coach, Albert Soloyan, proudly displaying the cake his athletes surprised him with.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Olga Sarkisian: 60 Years of Dedication

By Tom Vartabedian

ANDOVER, Mass. – The year was 1954 Roger Banister broke the four-minute mile barrier. Philly-born pool player Willie Mosconi sunk 526 pool balls without missing.

Marilyn Monroe, Sophia Loren and Lana Turner were sizzling Hollywood stars. Doris Day topped the song charts with *Secret Love*.

A young 16-year-old walked into The Andover Companies to fill a job slot recommended by her school – and never left.

Same job description. Same company. After 60 years, Olga Sarkisian will finally call it a day July 1 when she begins retirement. And it won't be with a dry eye.



Olga Sarkisian during the early years



Olga Sarkisian

You might say she has been a creature of habit all these years, living in the same home where she was raised, surrounded by her brother and other family members. She lived and cared for her mom, Satenig, until she died in 2008.

The myth around the company was that Sarkisian would retire after her mother died. She worked another

year ... yet another ... and several more after that.

"If you love your work, why leave?" she told 350 guests at a farewell party. "Overall, it has been a wonderful career with a wonderful company."

All of it was spent in the accounting department, where Sarkisian outworked everyone else, seldom missed a day and was known for her extreme loyalty. There were various changes along the way with personnel and buildings, processes and equipment.

She learned it all, including the current process of on-line payments.

She preferred the rolodex for looking up mortgage information rather than the Internet. No such thing as voice mail or e-mail when she started. Policies were in paper form and letters were done with carbon paper in between. Making a mistake meant changing three copies.

The swatter she kept handy was not for chasing flies, but used to tap a careless employee's shoulder when an error could have been avoided.

She has seen her staff grow from young adults to having children of their own and then retirement age. Rarely did she take a sick day; in fact, she has accrued 400 of them.

What's more, Sarkisian drove the same car to work for 20 years. Her 1991 Honda Accord had fewer miles on the odometer than some of the newer models, thanks to a five-minute commute. We should mention that she also owns a Mercedes but prefers the Honda for the day-to-day commute to work.

Off the job, Sarkisian is dedicated to her faith. She was a founding member of St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church in North Andover, where she has maintained the books ever since 1970.

As her co-workers aptly put it, "One thing Olga will miss is the holidays. In retirement, there are no days off. You will be officially retired every day!"

AMAA's Avedisian School Will Be First Certified 'Green' Building in Armenia

YEREVAN and PARAMUS, N.J. – The Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School and Community Center in Yerevan's Malatia-Sebastia district will be a landmark "green" building and the first international LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building in Armenia.

The Avedisian School is a joint project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) and Edward Avedisian, a trustee at the American University of Armenia and a member of the AMAA Board of Directors. The state of the art school, when it opens in September 2014, will provide a quality education to 570 Armenian students, who will be able to see, feel and move around in a sustainable design and a low-carbon footprint building.

cient solutions applied in the building.

"For UNDP, applying energy efficiency in buildings is critical for Armenia to meet its climate change commitments and to achieve a low-carbon development path. This is an ambitious but achievable goal, which is becoming increasingly affordable with the rapid advance of innovative technologies. We have supported the school as a strategically important project for Armenia, since the country has an immense potential for development of energy efficient technologies and alternative energy sources in the various sectors of economy," said Busetto, UN RC/UNDP RR in Armenia.

UNDP provided a grant for thermal insulation and by providing technical expertise including bringing in ideas from the new "green" UN City Building in Copenhagen,



Edward Avedisian receives the LEED certification.

Earlier this month, UNDP organized an event showcasing the application of cutting-edge energy saving technologies and environmental standards in the school. Bradley Busetto, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Armenia, Narek Sargsyan, Minister of Urban Development, and Edward Avedisian were joined by ambassadors, representatives of the diplomatic community, government and the private sector to visit the construction site and to get familiarized and get first-hand information about the environmental benefits of clean technologies and energy effi-

Denmark to learn from the experience of its design and construction.

As a result of the application of energy saving and environmentally clean technologies, which ensure low emissions and low running costs, UNDP estimates that energy consumption in the building will be reduced by 30 percent, which is even a stricter criteria than required in the EU and the US. The green roof of the school will provide insulation, lowering heating and cooling costs. Rainwater will be filtered and stored to water plants, shrubs, and provide water for the grass on the soccer field.

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Arts & Living

Prof. Peter Cowe Honored at Los Angeles Banquet

LOS ANGELES – On the evening of June 1, a banquet honoring the 30th anniversary of Prof. S. Peter Cowe's scholarly career and the 45th anniversary of the Narekatsi Chair in Armenian Studies at UCLA was held in Los Angeles. The jubilant event, which took place at The London, West Hollywood, was organized jointly by the 30th Anniversary Committee and the Friends of UCLA Armenian Language and Culture Studies, in support of the expansion of the Armenian Studies program and particularly Western-Armenian instruction at UCLA.

The more than 200 guests included community leaders, scholars and Armenology students. Present were a number of academics from Armenia, Europe, and the Americas who were participating in a UCLA conference organized by Dr. Grigor Areshian on "Current Practices in Armenian Studies: the Creation and Visibility of New Knowledge." Most of the evening's speakers were UCLA alumni of Armenian Studies.

Two elements were particularly noteworthy about the evening: one was the warm atmosphere between students and teacher; and the second, the impressive growth of Armenian Studies as a highly sought-after field among the present generation – marked by the large number of local scholars in the field, as befits the largest Armenian diasporan community, and reinforced by visiting colleagues from different parts of the world.

Following a cocktail reception and book exhibit at The London's Marble Terrace, the banquet started inside the Kensington Ballroom. Welcome remarks were delivered by Shahane Martirosyan and Gayane Khechoomian, and grace was said by the Very Rev. Dajad Yardemian of the Western Diocese.

In his opening address, Ben Charchian said, "At UCLA, walking around the campus, learning that the language you speak is thousands of years old and your alphabet is over 1,600 years old, you hold your head up high. Professor Cowe was instrumental in instilling in me, and hundreds of other students, that sense of pride."

An early highlight of the banquet was the ritual presentation of haggis, a traditional Scottish dish, as a surprise tribute to Cowe's Scottish heritage. The colorful presentation, complete with bagpipe music, included a procession around the hall led by the piper and a thunderous haggis oration delivered by Dr. Neil McLeod, followed by a performance of the Scottish sword dance. Subsequently haggis was served to the guests.

Next, an encyclical from Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Aram I, congratulating Cowe on his achievements as an outstanding Armenologist, was read by Right Rev. Boghos Tinkjian. Among other things, the catholicos wrote, "We have known Dr. Cowe closely over the last 30 years, both personally and through his serious investigations and critical studies, which have contributed to the advance of Armenian Studies. Therefore, this initiative to celebrate Dr. Cowe's 30 years of academic activity is to be warmly welcomed."

Presenting the 45th anniversary of the Narekatsi Chair was Shushan Karapetian, the most recent PhD recipient in the Armenian Studies program at UCLA, who in turn was introduced by Ani Shirinian.

As she reminisced about her experiences as a student of Cowe, Karapetian said, "A few years into my graduate program, as I had just completed Intermediate Classical Armenian, I walked into Professor Cowe's office and told him, 'I wish there were more; I wish we could pursue studies in Classical Armenian as well.' And he said, 'The advanced level has never been offered.' So I shrugged, disappointed. But he said, 'I don't see why it shouldn't be.' So, without further ado, he inaugurated an advanced

see COWE, page 12



The members of the Aram Khachaturian Trio (also known as K. Trio), from left, Karen Kocharyan, Karen Shahgaldian and Armine Grigoryan

Concert in London Dedicated To 110th Anniversary of Khachaturian's Birth

LONDON – Organized by the London Chapter of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and under the auspices of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in the UK and Ireland, the embassy of the Republic of Armenia in the United Kingdom and the Armenian Community Council of Great Britain the Aram Khachaturian Trio gave an outstanding concert on May 28 dedicated to the 110th anniversary of

By Assadour Guzelian

Aram Khachaturian's birth, at the concert hall of St. Yeghishe Church.

The program was scheduled to include the talented soprano Anush Hovhannissian, the Royal Opera House artist, who unfortunately could not participate due to illness.

This writer opened the evening and after introducing the great Armenian composer in a few sentences, narrated an episode from his memoirs, which depicted the profound love Khachaturian had for Armenia, the Armenian nation and the Armenian Church.

"At the end of 1976 Khachaturian was invited to London to give two concerts in January 1977. His first press conference, which took place early 1977 at the Dorchester Hotel, was attended by more than 50 press, radio and television journalists. I was also present at the event when the great composer addressed the audience with the following words."

'You may print, broadcast or televise everything I say if you respect my following three wishes.

'You always refer to me as a Russian composer. I am not Russian, I am Armenian. Please don't misunderstand me, I like the Russian people, but what can I do if both my mother and father are Armenians? In future you must refer to me as an Armenian or Soviet composer. You must definitely say that my country, Armenia was the first to adopt Christianity as a state religion in 301 AD. You must also state that the first official Christian church, Holy Echmiadzin, was built in Armenia in 301-303 AD.'

"On the following day the London newspapers respected Khachaturian's wishes and on their front pages published his three conditions," said Guzelian.

Guzelian briefly introduced the Khachaturian Trio, arguably one of the greatest in the world, and spoke about their success in numerous countries, including Russia, former soviet republics, Australia, China, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Germany, Austria and many more.

Guzelian also referred to the Classical Music Development Foundation of Armenia, which was established by the K. Trio in 2010. Not only does the Foundation organize events to promote classical music, it also searches for talented children in different regions of Armenia from poor families to develop their musical talents.

The program consisted of works by Khachaturian, Komitas, Sayat Nova, Arno Babajanian, Alexander Harutiunian and Edward Mirzoyan.

During the concert, violinist Karen Shahgaldian, a member of the trio, announced that they would play an additional piece, Rachmaninov's *Vocalise* dedicated to Vivienne Guzelian as an expression of gratitude for her support for the Classical Music Development Foundation of Armenia. "This happens to be one of Mrs. Guzelian's favorite pieces," said Shahgaldian.

see KHACHATOURIAN, page 11

LACMA Exhibit On John Altoon Shows His Jazzy, Seductive Touch

By Christopher Knight

LOS ANGELES (*Los Angeles Times*) – For a brief, shining moment in the 1960s, John Altoon was the great American painter of the great American sexual revolution.

Review

Voluptuous color and luxurious interpenetrations of sensuous forms conspired to make messy, elegant, often witty abstract pictures. Their hedonistic punch is a delicious indulgence.

Altoon's sudden death in 1969 from a heart attack at the age of 43 cut short a promising career. Where he would have gone is of course impossible to know, but many of his best paintings, made over the previous seven years, landed in museum collections up and down California. Today they look as fresh and fine as any from the period.

Many are included among the 18 works on canvas and 50 on paper or cardboard assembled by curator Carol S. Eliel for the much-anticipated survey newly opened at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. A prolific draftsman, Altoon destroyed a considerable number of his paintings, so the show is a concise overview.

Altoon's interest in the cool, seductive rhythms of West Coast jazz informed his work. Altoon was born in Los Angeles in 1925 of Armenian-immigrant parents (the family name was Altoonian). Thanks to military service during World War II and the subsequent GI Bill, he studied commercial illustration and painting at three area art schools – Otis, Art Center and Chouinard. At 26 he moved to New York City and, three years later, to Europe.

Suffering a psychological breakdown abroad – Altoon is believed to have wrestled with schizophrenia or manic depression, which landed him in the hospital several times – he returned permanently to Los Angeles in 1956. Twice married (his first, to Fay Spain, an actress who mostly worked in television, ended in divorce in 1962), he made his living teaching and doing commercial work.

The LACMA show opens with a certainly skillful if uninspired painting of a pair of jazz saxophonists made around 1950. The figures are rendered in a self-consciously arty style – call it "mass-market modern" – that is a kind of Cubist faceting squashed flat.

Like artists as diverse as David Park in the Bay Area and Wallace Berman and William Claxton in L.A., however, Altoon's interest in the cool, seductive rhythms of West Coast jazz informed his work. He designed album covers for Pacific Jazz Records and other companies, but the music's reliance on sensual improvisation is what infiltrated his paintings.

The 1956-57 oil "Ode to Thelonious" (as in jazz pianist and composer Thelonious Monk) applies Cubist structure to nothing but vaporous, colored space. Shifting, angular patches of blue

see ALTOON, page 12



New Classrooms for St. Vartan Armenian School

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – Newly refurbished classrooms for the St. Vartan Armenian School were blessed by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), during an official opening ceremony on Saturday, April 12. The school meets every Saturday morning at the Diocesan Center.

Also present for the ceremony were the Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian, dean of St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral; the Rev. Bedros Kadehjian; school principal Diramayr Shakeh Kadehjian; members of the school board; teachers, parents and students.

Removing a purple drape from the dedication plaque, the Primate blessed benefactors Alvina and Dr. Kevork Niksarli, as those present sang the hymns *Oorakh Ler* and *Hayr Mer*. All then surveyed the classrooms equipped with new desks, chairs, bookcases, computers, blackboards and closets.

On the walls hung paintings by youngsters of the Fund for Armenian Relief Yerevan Children's Center – made especially for this school.

Following the opening of the classrooms, a special program and reception were held in an adjacent hall. School treasurer Arto Vorperian related: "Today we are here to celebrate our renovated school through the motivation and hard work of Archbishop Barsamian and Fr. Kiledjian, and the generosity of Alvina and Kevork Niksarli, as well as all our parents who have stood like strong columns to help us."

The St. Vartan Armenian School was founded 81 years ago. The teachers and principals who worked there in the early days, either without or with minimal pay, included Ashken Avakian (more than 30 years), Nubar and

Anahid Kupelian (more than 10 years); Zarmine Boghosian, George Haroutunian, Seta Kantarjian, Alice Khachmanian and Theresa Venedikian, among others.

Kadehjian – the dedicated school principal since 1982 – expressed appreciation to those who in 81 years "were responsible for keeping our ancient language, history, and culture alive, including the teachers and parents. We are grateful to the Niksarlis that we can continue this glorious tradition." She also thanked Kiledjian, Vorperian and "especially Archbishop Khajag" for their dedication.

A bouquet of flowers was presented to Alvina Niksarli by seventh-grader Ariana Pamoukian.

Two students, Sarine Zeitlian and Ani Aslanian, recited poems of welcome to the Primate and to the benefactors. A special song written for the St. Vartan School, with words

composed by longtime head of the Armenian Language Lab and Resource Center, Sylva der Stepanian, was sung by the pre-school students conducted by Anahid Boghosian, and accompanied on the piano by Jeannette Chirikdjian.

Thanking Barsamian for blessing the classrooms, Dr. Kevork Niksarli called the event "a very happy occasion" and recounted that the renovation project had started a year earlier when Kiledjian, Vorperian and Michael Halajian had asked him for his assistance.

"Our children have been happily coming and learning in this school for four years," he said. "All the students needed clean and efficient classrooms, and Alvina and I were very happy to bring it to reality."

Kiledjian, in thanking the benefactors and teachers, praised the dedication of the teachers "who come every week and give their lives and



Dr. Kevork and Alvina Niksarli at the classroom dedication ceremony.



Archbishop Barsamian blesses one of the new classrooms.

hearts for our children. They treat them like their own family. Today is also your day," he said, addressing the teaching staff composed of Fr. Bedros Kadehjian, Sirvart Arakelian, Lucia Vorperian, Ani Essayan, Heggine Mirzoyan, Anahid Boghosian, Arax Shamamian, Jeannette Chirikdjian, Sona Simonyan and Krikor Torosian.

In his address, the Primate reminded those present: "As spring is a new beginning, this also marks a new beginning for our school."

Offering words of tribute to Kadehjian, Kiledjian, the Niksarlis and the teachers, parents and students, the Primate said that "we must approach with a new relationship to inspire our young generation about their Armenian religion, history, culture and language. And we must continue to work for our future."

Concert Dedicated to Anniversary of Khachaturian's Birth

KHACHATOURIAN, from page 10

Exactly four years ago, on 22 May 2010, the Khachaturian Trio gave its debut concert in this very hall again organized by the AGBU and dedicated to the 95th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Members of the Aram Khachaturian Trio

Armine Grigoryan graduated from the Tchaikovsky School of Music and the State Conservatory of Armenia in Yerevan. After completing her postgraduate studies under the guidance of Professors Georgy and Sergey Saradjian, Grigoryan appeared with the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, performing piano concertos by Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. As an accompanist, she has won special prizes at the Aram Khachaturian (1997) and Levon Chilingirian (2002) Competitions. She has also collaborated with the renowned violinist Nikolay Madoyan, performing versatile programs, including Beethoven's 10 Sonatas. She has toured Russia, Italy, UAE, Germany, Lithuania, Lebanon, Cyprus and the US.

Grigoryan is a laureate of the Roma-2003 Piano Competition, where she also received a special prize and medal from the Chamber of Deputies of Rome. As a collaborative pianist, she has won special prizes at several International competitions. She has released a number of CDs, including the "Unknown Khachaturian" dedicated to the unknown works of the great composer. In 2005 for the first time in Armenia, she organized a festival of the Art of Accompaniment. As a jury member she has participated in a number of local and international competitions. Since 2012 she has been the honorary president of the Pianist-Teachers Association of Armenia. In 2013 she was awarded the Medal of the Ministry of Culture of Poland. She is a professor at Yerevan State Conservatory and, since 2004, has been director of the Aram Khachaturian Museum.

A graduate of Moscow Conservatory (class of Viktor Tretyakov), violinist Karen Shahgaldian

completed his postgraduate studies with Prof. Maya Glezarova. He has participated in master classes given by Menuhin, Spivakov, Zhislin and Chugavaeva. From 1998 to 2002 he performed with members of the famous Moscow Virtuosi, under Vladimir Spivakov in 2003 and 2004. During the 2004-2005 season, he appeared as a soloist with various orchestras, playing a Stradivarius violin given to him on loan by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. He has played as a soloist in world famous halls, such as Weil Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, New York, Royal Festival Hall, London, Bolshoy Hall, Moscow etc. He is a laureate of the International Pablo Sarasate Competition (Spain). He has won scholarships with the David Oistrach and Yuri Yankelevich Foundations, as well as the Mstislav Rostropovich International Foundation. He has toured widely throughout the USA, England, Sweden, South Korea, Armenia and Russia. (To find out more about him, visit www.shakhmusic.com)

A graduate of the Yerevan Tchaikovsky School of Music (Class of Prof. Alexander Chaushyan) and Yerevan State Conservatory (class of Prof. Geronty Talalyan), Karen Kocharyan is one of the founding members of the Khachaturian Trio, the first solo cellist of the Armenian Chamber Players (ACP) and Associate Concertmaster of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra. As a soloist he has toured with the Armenian Chamber Players and Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra throughout Europe. In 2005 Kocharyan, under the baton of conductor Alexander Ivashkin (UK), appeared as soloist with the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2006 with Eduard Topchjan and the Pasadena LAC Symphony Orchestra he took part in Beethoven's Triple Concerto.

Kocharyan is an acclaimed chamber musician and as such collaborates with such renowned musicians as Yuri Zhislin, Boris Andrianov, Alexander Ghindin, Tamaki Kawakubo, Wolfgang Meyer, Zandra McMaster, Alessio Bax, Anton Sorokow, Diemut Poppen and Daishin Kashimoto.

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ALL RISE,
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IS NOW
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JUSTICE WILL BE SERVED

OCTOBER 2014



ARTS & LIVING

Prof. Peter Cowe Honored at Los Angeles Banquet

COWE, from page 10

series of Classical Armenian at my simple little request, after which my fellow students and I had the most amazing year of our lives studying the subject. We also created a team name, Team Grabar, whose leader was Professor Cowe — labeled ‘The Michael Jordan of Grabar’ by fellow student Ara Soghomonian. We were all aspiring players who knew we would never be as good as our teacher but we were going to die trying!”

Karapetian’s address was followed by the screening of a short documentary, “Inside the Academic Studio,” directed and produced by Armenian Studies doctoral student Ara Soghomonian. The film featured humorous, engaging conversations between Cowe and a number of his students, shedding fresh light on his life and career as a beloved Armenologist.

Subsequently, Dr. Talar Chahinian introduced the event’s keynote speaker, Theo van Lint, who is a Calouste Gulbenkian Professor of

for the subject at hand, can lead to a feast of conversation.”

“Many of us familiar with Peter’s scholarly work, and particularly his style, are used to long sentences in which the various aspects of a position are carefully considered while the reader longs for a period,” van Lint continued jokingly. “Fifteen subordinate clauses are no exception to Peter. And it’s all one sentence, one big thought, which he will bring to a brilliant end and it will be like a fugue. That is what he does: he thinks in terms of music. That’s quite rare in Armenian Studies. It’s quite rare among scholars. It’s quite rare among human beings.”

After a musical interlude featuring a performance on traditional Armenian instruments, Ardashes Kassakhian, Glendale City Clerk and a former student of Cowe, took the podium. As he drew parallels between the great Armenian translators of the Middle Ages and present-day

to the stage.

“When I started out as an Armenologist, I couldn’t imagine my journey would be so enriching and rewarding,” Prof. Cowe began. “It has proved beyond my expectations. Yet I had an inkling then that Armenology was an idea whose time would come, and the subsequent

served’ in an oxygen tent; rather, it is one that is actual and vital, seeking new modes of expression to be authentic to its reality. You have not only a legacy, but a potential, one you must claim and make your own.”

The banquet concluded with a benediction, followed by a Scottish-Armenian musical composition arranged by Artashes Kartalian and combining the bagpipe and zurna.

Accompanying the event was a booklet fea-



Prof. Peter Cowe and his students in a scene from Ara Soghomonian’s documentary, which was shown at the banquet. Front row: Ara Soghomonian. Second row, from left: Ani Honarchiansaky, Ceyda Tinmaz, Danny Fittante, Narine Aykazyan, Rosie Aroush and Shushan Karapetian.

Armenian Studies at Oxford and a Fellow of Pembroke College. As he presented the honoree’s career and accomplishments, van Lint said, “When Peter sets out a scholarly position, his work is always carefully contextualized, with all caveats and nuances required to tackle all facets of a problem. This innate fairness, coupled with a sharp mind and an absolute passion

Armenologists, Kassakhian said, “Today, as the Armenian nation is dispersed around the world, it is thanks to scholars and translators like Prof. Cowe that Armenian history and the masterpieces of the Armenian intellectual legacy are being brought forth for the enjoyment of the world and diaspora Armenians such as myself.” Kassakhian then invited the evening’s honoree



Prof. Peter Cowe is flanked by a group of present and former Armenology students. From left: Narine Jallatyan, Ceyda Tinmaz, Shushan Karapetian, Rosie Aroush, Talar Chahinian, Lilit Keshishian, Myrna Douzjian, and Sona Tajiryan.

proliferation of the field, as testified by so many in our midst tonight, has confirmed my impression.”

“I also appreciate the tribute to my Scottish background tonight,” Cowe continued. “In this respect, it gives me great pleasure to know that one of my longstanding goals has been met, that Armenian is now being taught in Scotland, in our oldest university, at St. Andrews.”

Cowe closed his remarks by stating: “My wish is that all of you, and Armenians as a whole, would step back from the immediate pressures of your surroundings to re-center, to reintegrate with your core, and reenergize your cultural capacity to creatively engage with the current environment. Yours is not a culture that is on its last legs, that needs to be artificially ‘pre-

turing the honoree’s biography, publications, awards and list of PhD students he supervised, as well as congratulatory letters and notes from colleagues around the world, including the following commendation from his senior colleague at UCLA Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian: “S. Peter Cowe has given strong impetus to Armenian Studies in the United States and abroad. His erudition and broad horizons allow for a useful comparative approach that helps to integrate Armenian Studies into World History and Culture. I welcome the opportunity to congratulate him on his 30th anniversary in the field and to wish him many productive years of research, publication, teaching, and community participation as the Holder of the Narekatsi Chair at UCLA.”

LACMA Exhibit on John Altoon Shows His Jazzy, Seductive Touch

ALTOON, from page 10

and green shot through with bursts of violet and darting red-orange lines open deep vistas — then suddenly close them down, snapping attention back to the painted surface. Unlike the earlier “Jazz Players,” this poetic visual song is fully non-figurative.

older artist’s stature was exploding at precisely the moment the Angeleno was living in New York. De Kooning also dropped the figure for pure abstraction not long before Altoon painted his “Ode.”

It’s also tempting to tie Altoon’s interest to De Kooning’s own passionate admiration for the work of another troubled young Armenian American painter — De Kooning’s friend Arshile Gorky, who committed suicide in 1948 at 44.

Altoon’s large “Mother and Child” (1954), painted with great technical finesse, is a marvelous dance between color and line. A neo-Cubist abstraction, it is aptly likened in the show’s catalog to De Kooning’s celebrated paintings of women from the late 1940s and early 1950s. Yet it contains none of the New York painter’s fierce and violent aggression.

Instead, Altoon’s monumental woman, seated with a child in her lap, is a virtual Madonna enthroned. Executed in a lively if serene palette of warm browns and pale, cool greens, the painting is closer in tone and subject to

Gorky’s heartfelt figurative paintings of “The Artist and His Mother.” (Those were seen in the great 2010 Gorky retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art.) Conflicting childhood memories of security and anxiety within a context of feminine nurturing loom large.

Several years on, as Altoon matured into his mid-30s, those impulses would be caressed in

lyrical — and inescapably erotic — reveries.

The canvas becomes a field for the colorful interplay of suggestive, fragmentary signs for buttocks, breasts, phalluses, vulvas, limbs and visceral, sentient animals. Lush, sometimes messy shapes, brush strokes, splatters and forms evoke a feral sexuality engaged in a struggle with cultivation and, often, whimsy.

Lush, sometimes messy shapes, brush strokes, splatters and forms evoke a feral sexuality engaged in a struggle with cultivation and, often, whimsy.

The tussle is most explicit in his ink drawings, with their thin, quivering, agitated lines often describing body parts and frank sexual activity. The precedent of Picasso’s eroticism is evident, especially in an untitled 1959 graphite and ink-wash drawing of a shadowy feminine figure serenaded by a flute-playing satyr or Minotaur.

Sex is also an obvious tool of mass-media commercial art, flooding late-20th century America, with which Altoon was well-versed. Several satirical works play with advertising motifs.

One shows a dapper young couple in a White

Owl cigar ad: He smokes, she pouts. Rather than focus on a close-up as a conventional ad would, Altoon pulls back (like a reverse camera-zoom) to show the fashionable pair full-length: Both are stark naked below the waist. The cigar scene turns into an ad for post-coital relaxation.

The ‘60s sexual revolution was propelled by many things, including a postwar generational shift, scientific developments like the birth control pill, a growing and newly prosperous middle class and other deep transformations in American society. As it unfolded, artists in Altoon’s orbit — Kenneth Price, Judy Gerowitz (later Chicago), Craig Kauffman and more — moved sexuality to the forefront of their imagery, often in abstract forms. (A 1964 group exhibition at Ferus Gallery, where Altoon also showed, was notoriously titled “The Studs.”) Few addressed the experience in as riveting, seductive and playfully generous a manner as Altoon.

One interesting feature of the LACMA show is the invitation offered to five artists to contribute short essays to the catalog. They make for interesting reading.

None is more incisive than Monica Majoli, who writes on “the omnipotence of flesh” in both human experience and Altoon’s work. “Promiscuous abstraction” is the phrase she uses to describe his art in the 1960s, and it is hard to think of a better one.

Where: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

When: Through Sept. 14. Closed Wednesdays.



“Ocean Park Series #8,” 1962, oil on canvas, by John Altoon. (LACMA)



ARTS & LIVING

TCG Releases Eric Bogosian's *100* (monologues)

NEW YORK (*Broadway World*) – Theatre Communications Group (TCG) just announced the publication of *100 (monologues)* by Eric Bogosian. The book is a collection of Bogosian's acclaimed monologues, which were originally performed as part of his six Off-Broadway solo shows that premiered between 1980 and 2000.

"Mr. Bogosian has crossed the line that separates an exciting artist from a cultural hero. What Lenny Bruce was to the 1950s, Bob Dylan to the 1960s, Woody Allen to the 1970s—that's what Eric Bogosian is to this frightening moment of drift...I know of no one else like him in pop culture right now," wrote Frank Rich of the *New York Times*.

100 (monologues) collects all of Eric Bogosian's monologues, originally performed as part of his acclaimed solo shows, including *Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll; Pounding Nails in the Floor with my Forehead; Wake Up and Smell the Coffee; Drinking in America; funHouse; Men Inside* and selections from his play, "Talk Radio." For these shows, Bogosian was awarded three Obie Awards and a Drama Desk Award-earning him living-icon status in the downtown theatre scene. The book's release coincides with the launch of www.100monologues.com, a website that features videos of all of the book's monologues, each performed by a different renowned actor.

One of America's premier performers and most innovative and provocative artists, Bogosian's other plays and solo work include "subUrbia" (Lincoln Center Theater, 1994; adapted to film by director Richard Linklater, 1996); *Griller; Humpty Dumpty; 1+1* and *Skunkweed* (published as *Sex Plays*, TCG, 2013); "Talk Radio" (The New York Shakespeare Festival, 1987; adapted to film by director Oliver Stone, 1988; Broadway premiere, 2007; Pulitzer Prize finalist). Bogosian has starred in a wide variety of film, TV and stage roles and is the author of three novels.

For the past 50 years, TCG, the national organization for the American theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature.

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

JUNE 21 – Armenian food fair sponsored by St. Gregory Church Ladies Guild, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., 158 Main St., North Andover menu: losh, shish and chicken kebab, pilaf, salads, kheyma and veggie plates, desserts and choreg; further details, Ann Apovian (978) 521-2245 or Sossy Jeknavorian (978) 256-2538.

JUNE 21 – Annual Meeting and Luncheon, Armenian International Women's Association, Luncheon speaker **Dr. Kerry Healey, president, Babson College**. Meeting, 10 a.m., luncheon, 12 noon. Luncheon reservations: \$35 AIWA members, \$40 guests. Open to the public. Wellesley College, Wang Center. Info and reservations, 617-926-0171 or info@aivainternational.org

JUNE 22 – An Evening of Armenian Chamber Music, Sunday, 2 p.m., Contemporary Art Gallery of Armenian Museum of America, presented by the Armenian Museum and Armenian Composers Union, Yerevan. Featuring violinist Sargis Karapetyan, soprano Nune Karapetyan and pianist Nune Karapetyan. Program includes works of Armenian contemporary composers Alexanyan, Babayan, Garsoyan, Hakopjanyan, Karapetyan, Kostanyan, Mavisakalyan, Makaryan, Mikaelyan, Sadoyan, Satian, Souikiasyan, Sharimanyan and Zariyan. Opening remarks by composer/conductor Konstantin Petrossian. Admission free, donations accepted. 65 Main St., Watertown.

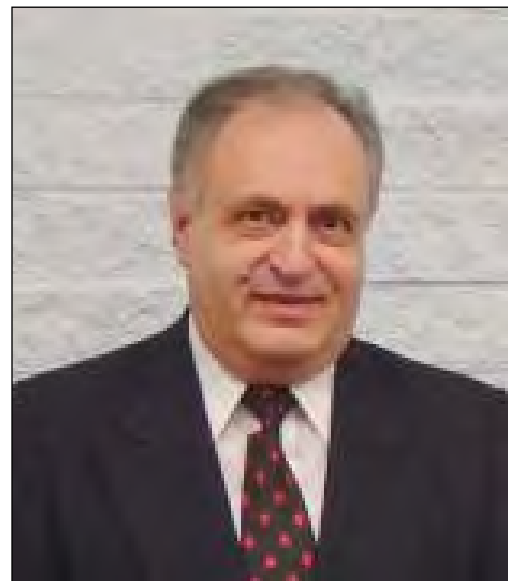
AUGUST 10 – Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Road, Chelmsford, will hold its annual picnic from noon to 6 p.m., with Jason Naroian and his ensemble. Admission, \$1 per person. For more information, visit www.stsvartanantz.com or call the church office at 978-256-7234.

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 Boston Harbor. Reserve the date, additional details to follow. For information about ATP's programs, visit www.ArmeniaTree.org

RHODE ISLAND

JULY 19 – SAVE THE DATE. 7 p.m. – 12 a.m. The Providence ARS "Ani" Chapter and the Ladies' Guild of Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church will hold its – "A HYE SUMMER NIGHT # 9" dinner dance at the beautiful Alpine Country Club, Pippen



On June 22 at 2 p.m., the Armenian Museum of America's Contemporary Art Gallery will be the venue for a concert featuring Armenian Chamber Music. Performers will be violinist Sargis Karapetyan, soprano Nune Karapetyan and pianist Nune Karapetyan. Opening remarks will be given by composer/conductor Konstantin Petrossian. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted. The museum is located at 65 Main St., Watertown.

Orchard Road, Cranston, RI featuring the sensational music of Hachig Kazarian- clarinet, John Berberian – oud, Ken Kalajian – guitar and Jason Naroian vocals and dumbeg, The dinner-dance is \$50. Dance only after 8:30 p.m. is \$35. Students dance only \$25. ID required. RSVP by June 30. Call Joyce Yeremian at 401- 354-8770, joycey41@cox.net or Joyce Bagdasarian at 401- 434-4467, sweetano6@aol.com. Cash raffle will be held.

Armenian Museum Fights for its Paris Home

PARIS (theartnewspaper.com) – The Musée Arménien de France has been locked out of the Hôtel d'Ennery, a state-owned building in Paris that it has shared with the Musée d'Ennery since 1953.

The Armenian museum's director, Frédéric Fringhian, has been fighting with the leader-

ship of the Musée Guimet in Paris, the national museum of Asian art, which controls the building. In 2011, the Armenian museum was asked to temporarily move its collection of over 1,000 objects during renovations on the Musée d'Ennery. Although part of the collection was moved back in 2012, the Armenian museum's

space remains in poor condition and is unsafe for visitors, according to the Musée Guimet's leadership.

Fringhian has now gone to civil court to regain full access to the building, which changed its locks in April. The Musée Guimet says the Armenian museum was given the

option of showing its collection at the Musée des civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée in Marseilles. But Fringhian, whose complaint has already been rejected by one French court, maintains that the Paris building is the struggling museum's "only life raft."



The interior of the museum before and after





COMMENTARY

Mirror Spectator



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COMMENTARY

Diaspora Adrift

By Edmond Y. Azadian

We live in a world of instant gratification. Life, death, calamities and pleasures happen instantly before our eyes, leading us on a course of fatalism.

The Middle Eastern Armenian communities are quickly depopulated by political and military upheavals. Armenia is being depopulated after the six-century dream of an independent homeland has fallen short of providing all the answers. On the other hand, new communities are formed in the West and especially in North America, with a different complexion.

In short, a lopsided existence has been created with more Armenians living outside than inside Armenia. As such, values also have undergone an intense process of transformation.

Drifting apart from our home bases in Armenia and the Middle East, we have come together in other parts of the world as a consequence of globalization. We are apart yet we are bound together in a nebulous existence.

Following the Genocide, as the survivors settled down in the New World, the common prophecy was that within 50 years, there would be no Armenians left in the diaspora. One hundred years after that prediction, today, the prophesy remains the same, leading us to believe that the momentum will carry us still for some time in the future.

But as time passes, the global Armenian community will be reduced to an amorphous state, where the anchor of our existence, Armenia, will have less and less relevance.

The process has already begun; indifference, hatred and animosity have been plaguing Diaspora Armenians every time Armenia becomes a subject of discussion.

Incidentally, now there are two strains in the diaspora. The traditional one, which has existed for at least a century, if not more, some even dating back to the fall of Ani, comes with a built-in resistance to assimilation, and a new one, formed by the waves of economic immigrants from Armenia who carry no immunity to alienation and assimilation.

These new immigrants are forming self-contained communities in communion and osmosis more with the outside world than the existing Armenian communities in North America and Europe. For example, the new 25,000-30,000-strong Armenian community in Greece has almost no interaction with the 10,000-strong older Armenian community there, which has struggled for a century to preserve its damaged identity and create mechanisms for self-preservation.

The same confusing picture emerges in California, where new immigrants have created a world of their own, their Soviet values incompatible with the host environment: where former academicians have become taxi drivers, others freshly arrived who believe they are entitled to welfare, where the youth culture prides itself on its jailbirds and where former opera singers and ballet dancers

entertain the nouveaux riches at obnoxiously opulent weddings while intellectuals form a separate caste, seldom contributing to the overall Armenian culture. Most of them exhibit a dangerous anti-Armenia streak, perhaps derived from pangs of guilt at having abandoned the homeland.

The traditional diaspora, in its turn, continues its degradation, with its institutions becoming mere shells of their former selves.

The churches have assumed a new social role, shedding their traditional missions. Throughout history, wherever the belfry of a church arose, a school was built adjacent to it. On the East Coast, the church has completely shirked that responsibility and our clergy members do not opt for a change. On the West Coast, the picture is not very different; the Diocese only has a single school, while the Prelacy sponsors a network of schools mostly on a utilitarian agenda, to indoctrinate a new generation with political dogmas.

The diaspora survived for centuries because of its institutions and charismatic leaders. Today, it is hard to pinpoint leaders who can command the overall respect of the diaspora and mobilize communities for a noble cause.

We have not yet succeeded in galvanizing the million-plus-member diaspora into a political force. While politics – domestic or foreign – determine our existence and destiny, we have a tendency to resist the issues, instead depoliticizing the community with an atavistic fear inherited from the Ottoman times. Many local and community agendas could be achieved by engaging in the democratic process of this country.

There is an indifference, a sense of ennui, with regard to the loss of some values and institutions. No one is alarmed by the loss of the language. It is true that the spirit can carry us some distance, but language has an important traditional value; it is the key to our heritage, to the sources of our history. Responsible people rationalize that language is doomed to be lost, sooner or later, so why struggle, why worry – let it happen sooner rather than later.

The centennial of the Genocide is around the corner. The US Armenian community has yet to chart a course. No one is outraged that the Genocide Museum project failed because of our general apathy and perhaps also because of a political conspiracy. The Russian-Armenian community has become the largest Armenian Diaspora, though it is still in its infancy, with almost no schools, just taking pride in putting up new churches.

Ironically, there are more Armenians in Russia than Armenia, but the community is still in a flux to define and to determine its identity, to be useful to itself, to the world Armenian community and especially to our ancestral homeland.

Facing disaster, we live in a Panglossian world. The French philosopher Voltaire published an epoch-making classic satire of the Age of Enlightenment, *Candide*. In the book, the protagonist, *Candide*, is the disciple of Dr. Pangloss, whose optimism won't be dampened by any disaster. Armenians around the world live in that Panglossian world, the motto of which is: "All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds."

Turkish 'False Flags' and the Invasion That Almost Was

By David Boyajian

Turkey seems fond of so-called "false flag" operations. In 1955, for example, the Turkish government covertly bombed its own consulate in Thessaloniki, Greece and blamed it on Greeks. The following day, Turkey stage-managed massive anti-Greek riots in Istanbul that killed over a dozen Christians and caused hundreds of millions in damage.

Fast forward to March 2014. A leaked audiotape caught Turkish officials plotting to stage "false flag" military attacks on their own territory and blame them on Syrians. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, General Ya ar Gürel, and Intelligence chief Hakan Fidan planned to use the attacks as an excuse to invade Syria. The title of this article could easily apply to that plot.

To close observers of the Caucasus, however, it could also describe a failed covert Turkish plan to attack Armenia two decades ago and turn the geopolitics of the region upside down.

In October 1993, two years after the USSR had splintered, an ethnic Chechen Muslim named Ruslan Khasbulatov – the Speaker, believe it or not, of the Russian Parliament – led a coup against beleaguered Russian President Boris Yeltsin. According to American, French, and Greek officials, Khasbulatov and Muslim Turkey had a secret

agreement.

If his coup succeeded, Khasbulatov would order Russian troops to withdraw from Armenia, where they helped guard the latter's border with Turkey. That would pave the way for Turkey to invade the landlocked Christian nation of just three million inhabitants.

History tells us that Turkey has always wanted to overrun Armenia. Doing so would create a path to Turkic-speaking Muslim Azerbaijan, the Caspian Sea, and, eventually, Central Asia. It's called pan-Turkism.

In 1993, of course, Azerbaijan was losing its war with Armenians over the ancient, majority-Armenian province of Karabagh. Azerbaijan was, therefore, eager for Turkey to attack Armenia, and Turkey was ready to help Azerbaijan turn the tide.

The Plot Fails

Harkening back to the Armenian genocide, Turkish President Turgut Özal had threatened to teach Armenia "the lessons of 1915." Tansu Çiller, Turkey's prime minister, warned Armenia that she wouldn't "sit back and do nothing." Turkey was massing forces on Armenia's western border and supplying Azerbaijan with weapons, military advisors, and paramilitary forces. Chechen militants and Afghan Mujahideen were already fighting alongside Azeris.

A successful Turkish attack on Armenia – Russia's only military partner in the Caucasus

– would have all but destroyed Russian influence in the region. That, in turn, would have increased the likelihood that Chechnya, and much of the Muslim North Caucasus, would eventually escape the Russian Bear's grip. For a native-born Chechen like Khasbulatov, it would all be a dream-come-true.

But bombarded by Russian tanks, Speaker Khasbulatov, V.P. Alexander Rutskoi, and hundreds of rebel parliamentarians and supporters surrendered the Parliament building on October 4, 1993. The coup and the plot to invade Armenia had failed.

The Secret Pact

The Khasbulatov-Turkish pact was first revealed by Leonidas T. Chrysanthopoulos in his book *Caucasus Chronicles* (London: Gomidas, 2002). He was Greece's ambassador to Armenia from July 1993 to February 1994. Chrysanthopoulos, now 68, has served as ambassador to Canada and Poland, and was recently secretary general of the 12-country, Istanbul-based Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization.

France's ambassador to Armenia, Mme. France de Harthing, told him that "French intelligence sources" confirmed that "the Turkish incursion into Armenia would take place immediately after Khasbulatov would have withdrawn the Russian troops from Armenia." "This information," wrote

continued on next page



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.

Turkish 'False Flags'

from previous page

Chrysanthopoulos, "was later confirmed to me by my United States colleague," Ambassador Harry J. Gilmore.

As a "pretext," Turkey would claim to be targeting Kurdish PKK militant bases, which in fact have never existed, in Armenia. Such a "pretext" is similar, though not identical, to a 'false flag.'

The Turkish strike would be "incursions of a limited nature," though it's unclear what "limited" meant. More likely, as Turkey wouldn't find any PKK, the aim was to forge a permanent corridor across Armenia, link up with Azeri forces, and cleanse Karabagh of Armenians.

The US and France have never, as far as is known, publicly denied the existence of the Khasbulatov-Turkish plot. Moreover, Chrysanthopoulos gives no indication that any country tried to talk Turkey out of its deal with Khasbulatov.

Is any of This Relevant Today?

NATO Ambitions

Yes, because current Turkish, American, and NATO policies in the Caucasus strongly echo the 1993 Khasbulatov-Turkish plot. For two decades, the West has been trying to penetrate and dominate the Caucasus – Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia – and eventually cross the Caspian Sea into energy-rich Central Asia.

One piece of the plan has already been partially implemented: constructing oil and gas pipelines from Azerbaijan through Georgia and Turkey.

NATO's remaining goal: absorb the entire Caucasus. NATO would thereby threaten Russia from the south, just as it now pressures Russia from the west with its absorption of much of Eastern Europe (and, NATO hopes, Ukraine).

Georgia and Azerbaijan are inclined to eventually join NATO. Armenia, however, is not, though it has excellent relations with NATO and the West. Armenia has little choice but to ally itself with Russia because the former faces an ongoing existential threat from NATO member Turkey, the 1993 plot being one example.

Armenia is the Caucasus's linchpin. Had the Khasbulatov-Turkish quasi-"false flag" operation against Armenia succeeded, Russia would probably have lost, and NATO would have gained, the entire Caucasus. New provocations, including "false flags," by Turkey and NATO cannot, therefore, be ruled out.

Turkish, American and NATO leaders must also be interrogated as to whether their policies in the Caucasus are leading to peace or war.

(The author is a freelance journalist. Many of his articles are archived at Armeniapedia.org.)

War and Genocide: The Gallipoli/Dardanelles Campaign and the Armenian Genocide

By Alan Whitehorn

The Entente naval bombardments of the Dardanelles Straits in February and March and later the amphibious landings at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915, were two interrelated military deployments that gravely threatened the survival of the Ottoman empire. These military battles, in turn, are linked to the Young Turk regime's draconian decision to arrest several hundred Armenian community and political leaders in Constantinople on April 24, an act that was an opening phase of the Armenian Genocide.

In WWI there were several major battle fronts: Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the Near (Middle) East and the Caucasus Mountains. In the East, Russia, as the major ally of Britain and France, was battling Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Russia's troops were engaged in combat from the Baltic Sea in the North, through Eastern Europe, to the Black Sea and Caucasus Mountains in the South. The Ottoman-held strategically key Bosphorus Straits, linking the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea, were crucial for supplying Russia with munitions and supplies. However, from the outset of the war, the Straits had been closed. The British and French fleets blocked the Dardanelles Straits at the Western end, while the Ottoman empire mined and controlled the Straits elsewhere.

For a number of British and other Entente strategists, the Ottoman Empire was perceived to be the weak link in the German-centered military alliance. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the British Admiralty, was a forceful advocate of attempting a bold naval maneuver to break through the lines of Ottoman naval mines, destroy the shoreline fortresses along the Dardanelles and sail up the Straits swiftly and decisively to capture the Ottoman capital of Constantinople. In so doing, the strategists expected to be able to knock the Ottoman empire out of the war and strike a key blow against Germany. Drawing upon an unrivaled history of centuries of dominating the oceans of the world, the British fleet seemed more than capable of achieving such a bold and daring naval task.

From February onwards, the British and French fleets commenced their naval bombardments and later sought to penetrate the lines of floating mines. As a result, a state of great apprehension existed in Constantinople amongst the Young Turk leadership. Plans were made to abandon the capital city, if need be. However, after several Entente warships were sunk by mines, the British naval commanders paused, as they were unwilling to suffer the loss of more major warships. They opted not to proceed with the operation by sea alone. Instead, they chose to await for the mounting of a complex amphibious landing at the rugged shores of Gallipoli. Preparations to assemble the troops, equipment and supplies were substantial and had been underway for considerable time. Troops had been gath-

ered in various locations on the Mediterranean Sea and eventually were forwarded onto islands near the Dardanelles. Increasingly, it was clear to Ottoman and German military officials that a large landing was imminent, although they did not know the exact location. Two hundred Entente ships and about 75,000 troops finally left the port of Mudros on April 23. It was the date they were initially scheduled to land, but were, in fact, delayed due to poor weather conditions. Two days later on April 25, British, French, Australian, and New Zealand troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula that guarded the entrance to the Dardanelles. An epic new land front was now opened.

In between the night that the Entente fleet had left Mudros and the day prior to their military landings in Gallipoli took place, the Young Turk regime rapidly implemented one of the opening phases of the Armenian Genocide. Working with already-drawn-up lists of the names of prominent Armenians, the police and military arrested several hundred Armenian community and political leaders in Constantinople throughout the night of April 24. It was one day before the British and allied landings at Gallipoli.

War and genocide are often intertwined and this was particularly evident during the hours between April 24 and April 25. Would the Armenian community leaders have been arrested at that time if the Entente ships and troops had not been about to invade? Certainly, the Armenian community was already being targeted by the Young Turk nationalist regime. But the secrecy, violence, and sense of urgency of major wartime threats made committing such genocidal deeds more feasible.

Many books and articles written about the military battles at Gallipoli note the substantial number of military casualties on both sides. For Australians and New Zealanders these days of battle are heroically identified with ANZAC Day, a day of national mourning and pride. For Turkish citizens, it is a battle that saw a rare military victory in WWI and the emergence of a charismatic Turkish officer Mustafa Kemal who rallied his troops in defense of the empire and who would go on to become Ataturk, the founding president of the Republic of Turkey.

Military histories often focus on brilliant commanding officers and brave, often suffering, soldiers, but usually offer less on the societal context of the war. However, in the era of modern "total war," where civilian targets were seen as a key part of a strategy for victory, incomplete accounts of the totality of war are insufficient. In most of the writings about Gallipoli, civilian deportations and casualties are rarely mentioned. Even more disappointing is the failure to make the important link that the Gallipoli/Dardanelles campaigns had to one of the key phases of the Armenian Genocide which eventually would lead to the death of approximately 1,500,000 Armenians.

The stark fact is that the number of naval and army personnel who were wounded and died in the Dardanelles and Gallipoli campaigns pales in comparison to the number of
see GALLIPOLI, page 16



The Rug Of Hope

By Harry N. Mazadoorian

Sometimes a meaningful symbol can bring about results not achievable by millions of articulate and well-reasoned words. We have all seen examples where large populations have been moved from lethargy into action by a symbol such as flag, a gesture or a picture.

One such symbol is a rug woven by orphan survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915, many years ago.

The year 2014 marks the 99th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. More than one and one half million Armenian men, women and children perished from deportations, death marches, starvation and outright murder at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

So great was the sympathy and outrage that a relief effort of unparalleled proportions was undertaken in the United States. The Americans providing humanitarian relief and support for the victims were a virtual who's who of American politics, arts, academia and philanthropy as well as ordinary citizens, all outraged by the atrocities.

The Near East Foundation raised millions of dollars, the equivalent of several billion today, for humanitarian relief. At the same time, Danish relief workers, Swiss missionaries and people of goodwill from all over the world rushed to create

orphanages in Syria, Lebanon, Greece and elsewhere, providing lifesaving support to the young orphans who survived, such as my mother and father.

Regrettably, the American outrage which followed the horrific Genocide, waned in the ensuing decades. Passage of time, shifting policies in the Middle East and a growing reliance on the perceived strategic role of the government of Turkey, successor to the Ottoman Empire, caused indignation to melt into indifference. Even efforts to have the United States Congress pass a symbolic resolution recognizing and denouncing the Genocide encountered insurmountable resistance. Turkish opposition to Congressional action was strong.

Presidents, including President Obama, who pledged to recognize the atrocities as genocide while on the campaign trail, abandoned the pledge once elected for fear of offending a key ally in the Middle East. Euphemisms and cleverly selected words replaced a forthright recognition: The Genocide was deftly sidestepped. Some asked, did recognition of this genocide of so long ago, so far away, of a people so little known really make a difference?

Meanwhile genocide, brutality and killing continue throughout the world.

The "orphan rug" was painstakingly woven by Armenian orphans of the Ghazir Orphanage in what is now Lebanon in gratitude for the lifesaving humanitarian efforts of the United States during the bleakest hours of the Genocide. The rug was presented to President Calvin Coolidge in 1925 and resides in the White House today. Interestingly, the rug resided in Northampton Massachusetts for some time after the Coolidge's left Washington. Awareness of the rug heightened after the publication of a marvelous book about the rug by Dr. Hagop Martin Deranian who practices in Worcester.

When the rug was requested for commemorative programs by Armenian advocacy groups and by the Smithsonian Institute itself, the White House declined the request, citing what appeared to be hollow logistical and procedural reasons. Speculation was that sensitivity to Turkish denial of the

Genocide was the real reason.

Organizations such as the Armenian Assembly, a Washington based entity promoting awareness of Armenian issues, and supportive members of Congress, including Senator Markey, persisted in seeking release of the rug.

Finally, at the end of April, the White House agreed to release the rug for public display at some time in the future. This is encouraging news and further details about when and where it will be displayed are eagerly awaited.

Why has this single rug, this 90-year-old inanimate object, generated such a passionate interest? What difference could its production or non-production possibly make?

Clearly, the rug is only a symbol but an extremely visible and powerful one. It represents the spirit of those fragile orphans whose resilience, faith and gratitude kept them going and which brought many of them to this country – many to the Worcester area – to become proud and productive Americans.

It serves as a precious and powerful emblem of respect and gratitude to this country. Something which hapless survivors and waifs created with their own hands: more than four million knots of appreciation.

It also symbolizes the potential for a long overdue and much needed transformative healing following one of history's darkest and most tragic chapters.

The rug is part of American history representing this country's pivotal role, throughout its history, in supporting the persecuted and oppressed all over the world. It belongs to all Americans.

Perhaps, after nearly one hundred years, the display of this modest symbol will play a role in curbing the brutality and killing which continues throughout the world.

(Harry N. Mazadoorian of Kensington CT is the son of survivors of the Armenian Genocide, both of whom were relocated to orphanages in the Near East, before coming to America where they initially lived in Whitinsville. He is an attorney and a mediator and is the Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Quinnipiac University Law School Center on Dispute Resolution.)

COMMENTARY

Armenian-Dutch Business Forum to Be Held in Yerevan

YEREVAN (Panorama) – The Armenian-Dutch Business Forum organized by the Union of Information Technology Enterprises (UITE) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Armenia and Georgia will be held on June 21 at the Armenia Marriott hotel.

The event will be part of the annual DigiTec International Business Forum held on June 20-21, the press service of UITE reports.

The key topic of the Armenian-Dutch Business Forum is the introduction of the Dutch ICT sector, and, particularly, the "serious" game technologies industry. Serious or applied games are simulations of real-world events or processes which can be used as experimental or educational technologies in such industries as engineering, defense, healthcare, education, science, business management and others are.

The forum will have a discussion session with the main focus on the cooperation opportunities between Armenian and Dutch ICT sectors in the following main directions: market expansion, attraction of foreign capital, and initiatives in education sector.

Sebouh Tavitian of Cyprus Receives Boghos Nubar Medal

YEREVAN – On May 29, Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakobyan granted the Boghos Nubar Medal of the Ministry of Diaspora to Chairman of the Cyprus Committee of Hayastan All-Armenian Fund Sebouh Tavitian.

Introducing Tavitian, she said, "Sebouh Tavitian has spent his entire life in Cyprus and has made great contributions to the organizing, development, reinforcement and advancement of community life. Sebouh Tavitian has made great contributions to the Armenian upbringing of Armenian youth in Cyprus, both at AGBU Melkonian Educational Institute and at Nareg Day School. For the past six years, he has been a member of the board of trustees of

Nareg Armenian School in Cyprus."

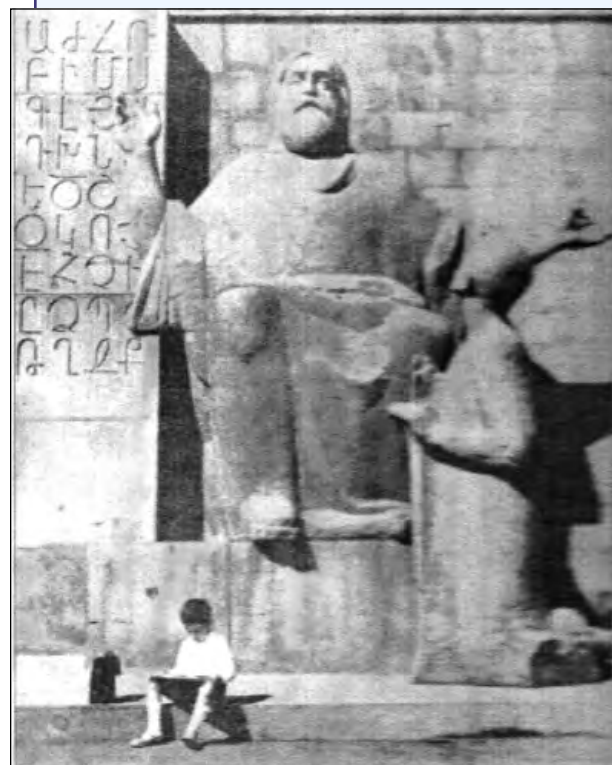
Expressing his gratitude for the award, Tavitian said the award came as a surprise. "I have always believed that awards are granted to heroes. I have not achieved any endeavor, but I have always helped and served my nation all my life, and I will continue to serve my Homeland as long as I have the strength and ability to do so," he said.

Hakobyan replied, "You are the heroes of the struggle for the Armenian Cause and the restoration of our rights in our days. It is our duty to appreciate your efforts. Our issues must be the same, and we must solve our issues together."



Sebouh Tavitian and Minister Hakobyan

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War and Genocide

GALLIPOLI, from page 15

civilians who were arrested, starved, tortured and died in the Armenian Genocide – a genocide that gained significant momentum coinciding with the Entente landings at Gallipoli. For the Young Turk dictatorship the two events were linked in key ways. Amidst foreign military peril and possible Entente military occupation of Constantinople, there was swift and deadly action to target the Armenian Christian ethnic minority for genocide.

(Alan Whitehorn is an emeritus professor of political science at the Royal Military College of Canada and author of Return to Armenia: Verardarzi depi Hayastan.)