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## Sargisian Criticized for Delayed Response to Kazakh Leader's Comments against Karabagh

By Naira Hayrumyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – It took Armenian President Serge Sargisian two days to react to the controversial statement made by President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at a Eurasian Union summit in Astana last week.

On May 29, Nazarbayev, the host of the meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, read out a letter from Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, in which the latter demanded that Armenia be admitted into the Eurasian Union only within its borders recognized by the United Nations, i.e. without Nagorno-Karabagh, which is known to be part of Armenian economic space.

Despite the fact that Nazarbayev made that statement as a favor to Aliyev, it was a



President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev with Armenia's President Serge Sargisian

clear message to Yerevan that no open border is possible between Armenia and

Karabagh in the event of Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Union. Earlier, Armenian officials, including Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan, had said that Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabagh Republic form a single economic zone and that there can be no customs or other borders between them.

"As for what was voiced by Nazarbayev, first, from the outset it is wrong to talk about borders. What borders are we talking about? The Karabagh problem is not being solved in the Customs Union," said Sargisian. "And who said that we are joining the Customs Union together with Karabagh? There has been no such thing and could not be, because at least under our laws and in accordance with our ideas, Karabagh today is not part of Armenia. And the fact that membership in the Customs Union will contribute to the solution of the

see RESPONSE, page 3

## Armenian Embassy Hosts Book Launch in Berlin

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach  
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN – Armenians are famous for their books, from the illustrated manuscripts of the *Bible* and other religious works, to printed works in all areas of learning. A new little book written by an Armenian and about Armenians has been attracting public attention in the United States. This is the volume by Dr. Hagop Martin Deranian, which tells the story of an oriental rug, woven by Armenian orphan girls in Ghazir, Lebanon and sent in 1925 to Calvin Coolidge, then president of the United States, as a token of gratitude to the

American people for their support for survivors of the Genocide. On May 28, the German edition of Deranian's book, *Präsident Calvin Coolidge und der Armenische Waisenteppich*, was officially presented at an event hosted by the Armenian Ambassador to Germany, Dr. Vahan Hovhannisyán. Complimentary copies of the book were made available to participants. It is sure to send ripples through the intellectual and political world here as well.

Speaking to a gathering of invited guests, among them members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of the Armenian community, both from the church and cultural circles, and prominent figures in

see RECEPTION, page 12

## Vartan Gregorian Receives Dean's Medal at Tufts

By Alin K. Gregorian  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

MEDFORD, Mass. – Dr. Vartan Gregorian brought the dichotomy that defines him – stellar academic and intellectual achievements and supreme low-key and humorous attitude – to a formal luncheon at Tufts University on May 22, when he received the Fletcher School Dean's Medal, from Tufts University President Anthony P. Monaco. The award is given by the dean to honor those who have demonstrated distinguished service to education and to the school's greater mission of promoting peace, prosperity and justice in the world.

Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy Dean Admiral James Stavridis introduced Gregorian and enumerated his achievements.

"He has received 70 honorary degrees" during the course of "a life that is original in every sense and American in every sense," Stavridis said. "He is a scholar, historian and great friend of this community."

Gregorian is the president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, a grant-making institution founded by Andrew Carnegie

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(NICHOLAS PFOSI FOR TUFTS UNIVERSITY)



Dr. Vartan Gregorian, recipient of the Dean's Medal Award speaks on philanthropy during the Dean's Medal Presentation in the Coolidge Room in Ballou Hall on May 22nd, 2014.



## Hagop Vartivarian Receives Movses Khorenatsi Medal

YEREVAN – On May 28, the day commemorating the independence anniversary of the First Armenian Republic, President Serge Sargisian handed out medals to many high achievers in Armenia and the diaspora for their contributions to Armenia and Armenian heritage. Among those was Hagop Vartivarian, member of the Tekeyan Cultural Association Central Board, as well as the chair of the group's New York/New Jersey Chapter, and a member of the Press Committee of the TCA. He received the Movses Khorenatsi Medal, given for highest cultural achievements.

The president also awarded the Mkhitar Gosh, Mkhitar Heratsu and Anania Shirakatsi medals to several Armenians for achievements in other fields.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Group Calls for Release Of Nishanyan in Turkey

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – The members of the International Committee Liberty and Justice for Sevan Nishanyan called on human rights organizations for immediate action to release the imprisoned linguist in Turkey. The members of the organization sent out a press release detailing the unbearable prison conditions.

The committee members called the decision made by the court in Nishanyan's case a mockery of justice. "The committee qualifies Nishanyan's imprisonment as an overt manifestation of hatred and discrimination. Nishanyan being an intellectual, who does not reckon with the thesis of the so-called state brains, is exposed to such violence," the press release stated.

The committee members also expressed their concern about his health.

### Louisiana Condemns Azeri Aggression

BATON ROUGE, La. – On May 28 the Louisiana state Senate passed Senate Resolution 166 expressing sympathy in support of the families of victims of massacres and atrocities perpetrated against the Armenian people in Azerbaijan.

The resolution also condemns the Azerbaijani government for falsifying historical facts to distort international opinion and avoid responsibility for the violence and atrocities and requests that the president and the Congress exert influence on the government of Azerbaijan to cease the falsification of the historical facts and bring those responsible for the massacres in Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad, Maragha, Nagorno-Karabagh, and of the citizens of Khojaly to justice.

SR 166 was spearheaded by state Sen. Edwin R. Murray (D-New Orleans), who worked with the Armenian Council of America (ACA) of Louisiana. "The Armenian community of Louisiana is grateful to have a legislature that does not bow to outside pressure when it comes to historical truths," said Louisiana ACA chairman, Vasken Kaltakdjian. "I thank Senator Murray along with the other Legislatures for the passage of this Resolution."

"We are grateful for the Louisiana State Senate's continued support of truth and justice. Adoption of the SR 166 reiterates that Azerbaijan's aggression and crimes against Armenians have no expiration date," said representative of Nagorno Karabagh to the US, Robert Avetisyan. "Tens of thousands of current Armenians have suffered from Azerbaijan's anti-Armenian xenophobia. All of them, as well as those in Artsakh who continue facing everyday threats from Baku, hope that the crimes, anti-Armenian hatred and threats of renewed aggression will receive the adequate condemnation by the international community."

The Louisiana state senate is the first state legislative body to address the atrocities perpetrated against the Armenian people in Azerbaijan.

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## News From Armenia

### Foreign Minister Receives Royal College of Defence Studies Students

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, on June 3, received a delegation from the British Royal College of Defence Studies, who represented different countries.

Nalbandian introduced the main thrust of Armenia's foreign policy, efforts of Armenia and OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs for the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, Armenia's approach to regional problems and their settlement, Armenia's integration process in the Eurasian Union and cooperation with the European Union.

### Streets around Sardarapat Renamed for Military Heroes

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The heroism of Armenian generals are receiving their due respect and appreciation 96 years after their heroic battle. On May 27, a ceremony was held to give new names to the streets of Araks village in the Armavir province.

Commanders Movses Silikyan and Daniel Bek-Pirumyan were honored, at the initiative of the Sardarapat State Museum of Ethnography and History of the National Liberation Struggle of Armenia and the administration of Araks village. The highway leading to the memorial was named after Silikyan, and the road leading to the museum after Bek-Pirumyan.

The ceremony was attended by the First Deputy Minister of Defense Ara Nazaryan, the head of Araks village Ruben Karapetyan and others. "The 1918 heroic battles of May were the key guidelines of the Armenian liberation struggle that had a vital significance for the process of the formation of the Armenian State. Let these guidelines always lead us in our lives," noted Ruben Karapetyan, the head of the village.

### Air France on 80th Anniversary Increases Yerevan-Paris Flights

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Air France marks the 80th anniversary of its founding, and for the occasion, in the months of July and August, will have daily flights between Yerevan and Paris, announced the Commercial Director Air France and KLM in Russia and CIS Simon Scholte during a press conference this week.

He noted that thrice-weekly Yerevan-Paris flights have been taking place for the past eight years. "Generally, it is considered that the first international flight from Yerevan was held to France. Air France connects Yerevan and Paris, and at the same time connects Yerevan with other cities. Last year the Yerevan-Paris flight served more than 45 million passengers and nine thousand tickets were sold in Yerevan," said Scholte. An exhibition will be displayed at Zvartnots airport for two weeks, and will be taken to Yerevan museum. Representative of French Embassy in Yerevan, for her part, noted that the Embassy supported increase in flights.

"The Armenia-France business forum was held during the latest visit of Francois Hollande to Yerevan. By holding this forum, Armenia and France wanted to underscore the economic element of their relations. Air France supported the call, and this means not only frequent, but high quality flights for the passengers," Isabelle Guisnel said.

The press conference was followed by the opening of a photo exhibition and landing of a Yerevan-Paris flight that could be seen by the guests on a big screen.

The uniforms for Air France crew and flight attendants were designed by world famous couturiers such as Christian Dior, Nina Ricci, Christian Lacroix. During the event, Armenian models presented more than a dozen of costumes created for Air France in different years.



### President Attends Consecration Ceremony of Saint Grigor Narekatsi Church

YEREVAN – President Serge Sargisian this week attended the consecration ceremony of Saint Grigor Narekatsi Church in Armavir. The groundbreaking ceremony of the only basilica in the regional capital took place in 2012 with the presence of the leader of Armavir's Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church Bishop Sion Adamyan. It was designed by the architect Mikayel Mkrtchyan under the patronage of the benefactor Karen Mkrtchyan. Above, Sargisian and other dignitaries attend the program.

## Presidential Awards Handed out on May 28

YEREVAN – On May 28, the Presidential awards giving ceremony for 2013 took place at the Presidential Palace. The awards – certificates with the inscriptions and prize money – for a significant contribution to a number of areas were handed to the award winners by President Serge Sargisian and the President of the Robert Poghossian and Sons foundation, diasporan benefactor Jean Poghossian.

Sargisian congratulated the award winners and wished them success. He noted that it has been a long time since they, together with the Poghossian family, have made an attempt to bring out the best achievements of Armenia's scientific, educational and cultural life under the patronage of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. In that context, Sargisian stressed that special attention is paid to international research works conducted on the Armenian Genocide topic, as well as to Armenian young men's creative aspirations.

"Each award has an important mission. These, as well as other awards provide a good way of public acknowledgment. This is crucial because creators are given a chance to be sure that their works have been publicly appraised and have reached the audience.

Every creator tries to address his work to eternity. Work is an important way to transcend a man's short lifetime and to pass his ideas to coming generations. However, it is not less important to conduct a dialogue with contemporaries. In this regard, I sincerely wish all the award winners to keep on achieving new successes.

I cordially wish you to be effective and conquer new creative heights in your work. I hope you to never lose your inspiration and your persistent and devoted works to bring new scientific, educational and cultural successes to the Armenian world.

Dear friends,

I attach special importance to the fact that with the Armenian Genocide Centenary ahead we are acknowledging the Israeli scientist and historian Yair Auron's merit in the area of "Considerable Contribution to the Process of Recognition of the Armenian

Genocide."

Many of the greatest representatives of the Jewish people have always shared the Armenians' pain and tragedy. It is impossible to enumerate all the eminent intellectuals who have touched upon the Armenian Genocide. However, two names are worth mentioning.

The first one is the Austrian-Jewish writer Franz Werfel, whose novel, the Forty Days of Musa Dagh, warned us against the calamity brought on the European Jews. Sometimes, people having artistic thinking get ahead of scientists.

The second one is the Polish-Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin. Being a lawyer and a scientist, he coined the term "genocide" and became the founding father of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted in 1948. It is no accident Lemkin said that while he was doing that work he had in mind the

calamities the Armenians and Jews had outlived during the two world wars.

Honorable Mr. Auron, with your work you follow in the footsteps of the two people who were so devoted to Armenia and the Armenian people. Your whole scientific efforts are directed to the fight against the denial of the Armenian Genocide. I am very glad that the representatives of Israel and the Jewish diaspora fight for the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide. I appreciate that despite all the hardships you do not repudiate your ancestors' noble ideas.

Dear friends,

I congratulate you all once more. I wish you good health and new achievements during your subsequent activities. I wish you, your families and relatives peace, as well as significant works in the name of Armenia, the Armenian people and the entire humanity," said Sargisian in his address to the award winners.

## President Meets Top Diplomats

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Armenian President Serge Sargisian had a meeting this week with the leadership of the central apparatus of the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the heads of Armenian diplomatic representations abroad. The president spoke about the most urgent issues on Armenia's domestic and foreign policy agenda.

He presented the current level of Armenia's relations with partner countries and spoke about the perspectives. He referred to the process of settlement of the Karabagh issue in the format of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship and the situation 20 years after the establishment of ceasefire. The President emphasized the role of diplomacy in the process and attached importance to the everyday work of every diplomat present at the meeting.

Sargisian spoke about the need to unite the efforts of all Armenians to organize the events dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian

Genocide properly.

The President touched upon regional issues, Armenia-Turkey relations, the process of Armenia's accession to the Customs Union and the economic relations in this context.

Sargisian stressed the importance of support for Syrian Armenians and hailed the activity of the Armenian Embassy and the Consulate General in Syria.

Sargisian also stressed the importance of Armenia's cooperation with the European Union and the continuous development and reinforcement of bilateral relations with EU member states.



Some of Armenia's top diplomats listen to President Serge Sargisian.





## INTERNATIONAL

# Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan Sign 'Epoch-Making' Eurasian Economic Union

ASTANA (*Russia Times*) – Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan signed the historic Eurasian Economic Union which will come into effect in January 2015. Cutting down trade barriers and encompassing more than 170 million people, it will be the largest common market in the ex-Soviet sphere.

"The just-signed treaty is of epoch-making, historic importance," Russian President Vladimir Putin said.

The troika of countries will cooperate in energy, industry, agriculture and transport.

"In fact, we are shaping the largest common market in the CIS, with huge production, scientific and technological potential and enormous natural resources," the President added.

Citizens of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan will have the right to work freely throughout the member states, Putin said.

Over the last three years, trade within the Customs Union has increased by \$23 billion, or nearly 50 percent.

Belarus and Kazakhstan are in third place in foreign trade with the Russian Federation, after the EU and China, Putin said.

The Russian leader said that the document brings Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus to a new level of integration yet lets each individual state fully retain its sovereignty.

"A new geopolitical reality of the 21st century is born," Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said after the treaty was signed by the three leaders.

"We see this as an open space and a new bridge between the growing economies of Europe and Asia," Nazarbayev added.

David Gray, head of PricewaterhouseCoopers, Russia, said he hoped improving trade will help boost investment, as in the EU.

"If you look at the EU, for example, the reduction of trade barriers within the EU had a significant impact in terms of doing business, which does encourage investment. And I'm looking forward to similar results in terms of the Eurasia deal," Gray said while speaking to RT at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum on May 24.

However, Nazarbayev warned members to try and avoid repeating the mistakes of the European Union, which is still facing grave economic consequences from a recession.

Belarusian President Lukashenko hailed the signing, but said there was still major work to be done in areas of bilateral trade.

"We believe the Economic Union will be the foundation for the future of political, military, and humanitarian unity," he said.

The Customs Union is a project to

gather ex-Soviet states into a free trade zone to rival the European Union. Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan only comprise 2.5 percent of the world population, but account for 15 percent of the total land.

"The geographical position permits us to create transport, logistic routes of not only regional, but also global importance that permits attracting massive trade flows in Europe and Asia," Putin said on Thursday.

Russia is financing the lion's share of the administration, but each state will have a one-third voting status.

"The Eurasian Economic Union will operate on universal transparent principles understood by all, including standards and principles of the WTO," Putin said.

Kyrgyzstan plans to join the Customs Union by the end of 2014, President Almazbek Atambayev said.

A decision on Armenia's membership will have to be made by July, Nazabayev said.

Commenting on the fact Ukraine once wanted to join, Lukashenko said sooner or later, the country's leadership will realize "where their happiness lies", and what is "right for the Ukrainian people."

Azerbaijan hasn't made a decisive move towards either the Customs Union or European Union integration.

## Conference on Gender-Based Violence at Haigazian University

BEIRUT – As part of a series of university debates, the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon, in cooperation with Haigazian University, organized a conference titled "Gender-Based Violence" on May 23, in the main auditorium on campus.

The debate tackled several aspects of this problem, from a human rights point of view, as well as women's rights perspective.

Students, faculty, staff and the members of the public engaged in discussions with Lebanese officials, public institutions representatives, ambassadors of EU member states, academics, as well as NGO and civil society members.

In his welcoming address, Haigazian University President, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian said the topic is one that

basically affects every individual. He also thanked the EU Delegation in Lebanon for reaching out.

Angelina Eichhorst, head of the EU Delegation to Lebanon, stated that it is important to hear everybody and that is what EU stands for, inviting the Lebanese youth to engage in discussion and dialogue. She also expressed her gratitude for the good cooperation between Haigazian University and the EU, declaring that she looks forward to strengthening it.

The moderator of the conference, Shaghig Hudavertian, an instructor in psychology at Haigazian University, briefly defined gender-based violence and stated the importance of equality, which is a major issue today leading to various forms of physical and sexual violence, taking place in Europe,

Lebanon and elsewhere.

The first panelist of the conference Renaud Detalle, deputy regional representative of the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, stated that the conventional elimination of all forms of discrimination against women is necessary, and the United Nations considers the latest law of domestic violence adopted by the male-dominated Lebanese Parliament as a very positive legal development. He congratulated all, and stated that the UN will remain involved in the process of implementing gender-based equality.

Zoya Rouhana, director of Kafa (Enough of Violence and Exploitation), affirmed that countering the exploitation of women and children and all kinds of violence based on gender is necessary. Being a vehement supporter of women's and children's rights, Rouhana said that there is a great need to enact new laws, amend and implement new policies to expand the protection of women.

Judge Ghaleb Ghanem, former president of the Supreme Court in Lebanon, further discussed the topic of gender-based violence, stating that he has devoted much effort in the drafting and editing of the domestic violence law passed by the Lebanese parliament. Ghanem considered this law as a big step forward in protecting women, and advancing their rights and safety.

Member of Parliament Ghassan Moukhaiber, expressed how he has always been keen about the topic of equality between the two genders. Moukhaiber added that passing the new law on domestic violence was a challenge, but the bigger challenge is implementing it. He believes that it is important to explain and elaborate the different elements of the law in order to have effective protection of women.

Netherlands Ambassador Hester Somsen concluded the discussions by highlighting the low representation of women in Lebanese politics and the labor market (2 and 22 percent, respectively).

## Sargisian Criticized for Delayed Response to Kazakh Leader's Comments against Karabagh

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Nagorno-Karabagh problem is unequivocal. Of course, what Nazarbayev said was unpleasant, but it cannot harm us in any way."

Sargisian's statement caused no less stormy reaction in Armenia. The president was accused of his readiness to "give up" Karabagh, of showing a sign of weakness and even willingness to take offense. Film director Vahram Martirosyan, for example, thinks that Sargisian should have said immediately in Astana that in that case all countries must enter the Eurasian Union within their borders recognized by the United Nations. For example, Russia, which recently annexed the Crimea in a move condemned by the UN General Assembly.

However, the more urgent question is what will change during these weeks given to Armenia for solving all issues connected with its accession to the Eurasian Union. The media and social networks suggest various options up until the recognition of the indepen-

dence of Karabagh with its subsequent reunification with Armenia. The Karabagh Central Committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun) issued a statement proposing a strategic agreement between Armenia and the NKR under which Armenia becomes the guarantor of the security and welfare of the Nagorno-Karabagh people.

There is also an option of Nagorno-Karabagh's making a bid to join the Eurasian Union. It looks particularly realistic against the backdrop of events taking place in another unrecognized post-Soviet autonomous republic, Abkhazia. A change of power took place in this Russia-backed breakaway republic in Georgia. The first statement of the opposition that came to power in Sukhumi was about the need to join the Eurasian Union. Remarkably, no major political party in Armenia has called on the Armenian leadership to give up the idea or at least suspend the process of joining the Eurasian Union.

## International News

### CIS Prime Ministers Meet In Minsk

MINSK, Belarus (RFE/RL) – A session of the Council of Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) took place in the Belarusian capital, Minsk.

Some 20 documents related to the interaction between CIS member states in culture, health care, education, technical innovations, and sports were discussed on May 30.

The governmental delegations of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are led either by prime ministers or deputy prime ministers.

Ukraine is represented by a delegation led by Ukraine's ambassador to Belarus, Mykhaylo Yezhel.

On March 14, a bill was introduced in Ukraine's parliament proposing to withdraw from the CIS following the annexation of Crimea by Russia.

### Armenians Killed again In Aleppo Raids

ALEPPO (Armenpress) – On May 31, following the shelling in the Armenian New Village neighborhood of Aleppo Rahel Davityan and Misak Pargev Poshkezenyan died.

Starting the night of June 1 to June 2 early in the morning, in the New Village Armenian neighborhood of Aleppo, missiles made from gas barrels thrown by terrorist groups inflicted great losses in the district, residents reported.

Following the hail of rockets, two Armenians sustained non-life-threatening injuries, Stepan Arushyan and Zareh Ghazarian. They received appropriate treatment.

In addition to the human losses, the Armenian churches and schools of the district, clubs and apartments, offices and shops are also damaged. In particular, Karen Jeppe Armenian College, Zavaryan Armenian college, Sahakyan Armenian college, St. Gregory the Illuminator Church, National Sis, Cilicia, Artsakh, Nairi, Oshakan buildings and Arevelk Publishing House sustained significant damage.

Earlier, information was received that in the result of the falling of missiles on New Village neighborhood of Aleppo Zareh Kahkejyan was injured. There is still a terrible war situation in Aleppo. On the previous day, from morning till evening, in various districts of Aleppo, especially in the New Village neighborhood, a great number of missiles and mortars made from gas barrels fell.

During the three-year conflict in Syria, according to the UN, the death toll has exceeded 150,000. The number of the killed Armenians is as many as 100.

### Aznavour Dazzles London at Age 90

LONDON (Armenpress) – Legendary French-Armenian singer Charles Aznavour, who celebrated his 90th birthday on stage in Berlin last month, defied the years to charm 5,500 spectators at London's Royal Albert Hall on Sunday.

He promised the audience: "I'll sing half in English, half in French...tonight is about Entente cordiale."

Surrounded by seven musicians and two singers, the giant of French song began his set with Les emigrants, in tribute to the world's migrants.

Looking relaxed in a dark suit, blue shirt with Mao collar and red braces, Aznavour made light of his 90 years – an age when "one sees badly and hears badly" – but warned the audience he needed a teleprompter in case of memory lapse.

Despite frequently resting on a high chair, the chanteur's well-honed showmanship commanded the stage, with the audience reacting to every clenched fist and pained lament.

Aznavour recently said he still "writes every day, often a song a day," and revealed the secrets of his success. "I try to be free with respect to music, and to find a good melody that is easy to remember," he explained.

Aznavour will play Barcelona on June 26, Rome on July 1, Los Angeles on September 13, Geneva on October 10 and Antwerp on November 22.

# Community News

## Richard Hovannisian Delivers Keynote at Haigazian Conference in Beirut

LOS ANGELES – Prof. Richard Hovannisian was invited to give keynote address at an international conference on the Armenian community of Lebanon. The conference, organized by the Armenian Diaspora Research Center under the direction of Dr. Antranik Dakessian, took place on the Haigazian campus in Beirut from June 14-16.

The conference was opened by Haigazian President Rev. Paul Haidostian, who remained in attendance and participated throughout the proceedings. In his address, Hovannisian combined academic and personal elements, first by emphasizing the long history of the Lebanese-Armenian community and its essential role in preserving and propagating Armenian language and culture throughout the entire diasporan world. The Lebanese community, together with the Syrian-Armenian community, infused in young generations the concept of an imagined Armenia, without the normal detractive aspects that may be found in any actual state. That dedication and commitment to the ideal inspired and still continues to inspire the generations.

Hovannisian then reflected upon the Lebanon that he discovered and which became his home for a year in the mid-1950s, with its Armenian-speaking population of all ages and its vibrant schools and institutions. There, he experienced for the first time Armenian as a living language, not just that of a generation of aging genocide survivors. Through a power point presentation, he captivated the audience by taking them back to the familiar sites of Lebanon before the tragic civil war in the 1970s and its regrettable massive exodus.

Papers during the three-day conference were given by scholars from Lebanon, Syria, Armenia, Belorussia, France, and the United States. Hovannisian had the pleasure in the final session of moderating and commenting on a panel of talented, promising young Armenian scholars, whose research, data, organization and delivery were most impressive.

Prior to the Haigazian conference, Richard and Vartiter Hovannisian were in Belgium and the Netherlands for a series of talks. On May 9, an evening presentation was organized in the newly refurbished Hay Dun/La Maison arménienne in Brussels in a dinner program organized by a committee headed by Andre Gumuchdjian. On May 10, Hovannisian spoke in Amsterdam on the final stages of the Armenian Genocide up to the destruction of Christian Smyrna. The event was held under the auspices of the Abovian Society of Holland in the newly renovated historic Armenian Church of the Holy Spirit. Mato Hakhverdian and Inge Drost served as the coordinators. The following day, May 11, Richard and Vartiter Hovannisian were in the Dutch town of Almelo, near the German border for a lecture following services in the Saint Gregory the Illuminator Church of the city, which has seen a large influx of Armenians from southeastern Turkey, Iraq and Armenia. The community recently dedicated a large Armenian Genocide memorial on the large wooded property. Harout Palanjian of the Holland AGBU introduced the speaker, who was also welcomed by Armenia's Ambassador to the Netherlands, Dziunik Aghajanyan.

Flying from Beirut to Chicago on May 17, Richard and Vartiter Hovannisian went directly to a dinner reception at the spacious home of Arpy Seferian as part of the Hairenik Association's launch of its e-book series, starting with *Voices from the Past*. Introduced by Antranig Kasparian, Hovannisian reflected upon some of the titans whom he had come to know in his younger years, including Simon Vratzian, Dro Kanayan, Goms (Vahan Papazian), Garo Sassouni, Reuben Darbinian, see HOVANNISIAN, page 5



Archbishop Barsamian with athletes during a Sports Weekend basketball game.

## ACYOA Members Gather For General Assembly and Sports Weekend

NEW YORK – Youth and clergy from across the Eastern Diocese gathered in New York City last weekend for the 68th annual ACYOA General Assembly. The two-day meeting, held May 22-23 at the Diocesan Center in Manhattan, and the annual Sports Weekend activities that followed, were hosted by the ACYOA chapter of Holy Martyrs Church of Bayside, NY.

On Thursday evening, more than 80 ACYOA delegates and clergy opened the General Assembly at the Diocese's Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), presided.

The assembly was chaired by Greg Torosian of Holy Trinity Church of Cambridge, Mass. Caiti Zeytoonian of St. James Church of Watertown, Mass., served as vice chair.

Delegates heard a presentation on the Fund for Armenian Relief's crowdfunding platform "Ayo!" from FAR's Andre Berg and Alisha Sharaballi. "Ayo!" recently completed its second campaign by raising funds to purchase and install an elevator in the Gavar Special School in Gavar, Armenia. ACYOA members learned about upcoming "Ayo!" projects, and ways they can become more involved in supporting FAR initiatives in Armenia.

The Rev. Mardiros Chevia, dean of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, made a presentation on the seminary's programs. He spoke about the upcoming Summer Conferences and gave an overview of the seminary's new campus, which is under construction in Armonk, NY.

ACYOA members also learned about the Diocese's Kirkor and Clara Zohrab Information Center from its director, the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan. Findikyan said that the center is an important resource for students and scholars researching Armenian history, and highlighted some of its recent lectures and programs.

The evening concluded with a reception for delegates and clergy in Guild Hall of the Diocesan Center.

On Friday morning, delegates gathered for worship at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral. Following a prayer service, Barsamian delivered a message focusing on the Diocese's theme for the year, "Living the Gospel of Christ," and encouraged the young people to advance the theme in their local communities.

"The parish ACYOA chapter can play an absolutely critical role in leading others to 'Live the Gospel,'" Barsamian said. "As the young, intelligent, and inspired generation of our church, it is up to you to set the tone for others. I want you to know that the Diocesan Youth Ministry department, the ACYOA Central Council, and I myself are all eager to provide the resources, guidance, and support you need to take on this task back home: to strengthen your power to inspire people."

see ACYOA, page 5

## St. Nersess Seminary Holds Commencement Exercises

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. – On May 30, St. Nersess Armenian Seminary held commencement ceremonies for Sub-Deacon Saro Kalayjian, who completed all the required course work in the seminary's Armenian Christian Studies program. Kalayjian received a Master of Divinity degree the following day from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, NY. St. Nersess and St. Vladimir's have had a long relationship for decades, providing the necessary education and formation for clergy, youth advisers, educators and other vocations in the ministry of the Armenian Church.

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), was represented by Diocesan Vicar, Fr. Simeon Odabashian. The St. Nersess graduation ceremony was presided over by Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian and Archbishop Avak Assadourian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Iraq, himself a St. Nersess graduate. Fr. Mardiros Chevia, dean of St. Nersess Seminary served as Master of Ceremonies.

Several members of the clergy from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, members of the St. Nersess Board of Directors, a member of the Diocesan Council and Diocesan delegates were also in attendance. Gizirian and the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, former dean of the seminary and professor of liturgical theology, delivered remarks and congratulatory words to the graduate. Two St. Nersess seminarians, Arpi Nakashian and Kathryn Ashbaian, who are pursuing a vocation in Christian youth ministry and Christian education served as salutorians. Kalayjian also addressed the attendees, thanked each of his teachers and professors, and noted that it is "through partnership that the work of the Church is realized," and that he is looking forward to a vocation of service to the Lord as a priest of the Armenian Church.

Kalayjian is the son of Fr. Vertanes and Anahid Kalayjian of Gaithersburg, Md. The older Kalayjian is pastor emeritus of St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church in Washington, DC, where he and Yeretgin served for more than 30 years. During the last 10 years of his tenure as pastor, he shepherded five men to pursue studies at St. Nersess Seminary. Of the five, each graduated from St. Nersess and one was ordained to the priesthood. In his remarks, delivered by Fr. Simeon Odabashian, Barsamian recognized Fr. Vertanes and Yn. Anahid as "true partners in a ministry that has inspired countless lives in our Diocese." Barsamian offered congratulatory remarks to the graduate and offered his prayers and blessings. The Primate also highlighted the seminary's on-going efforts to improve and expand its programs and facilities, as such he expressed his appreciation for those who are supporting the construction efforts of St. Nersess' new expanded campus in Armonk, NY.

The commencement ceremony was followed by a reception, hosted by the seminary, attended by clergy, faculty, staff, supporters of St. Nersess, as well as friends and family of the graduate.

The dean of St. Nersess, accompanied by students and faculty, attended the commencement exercises at St. Vladimir's the following day on May 31.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

## ACYOA General Assembly And Sports Weekend

ACYOA, from page 4

The ACYOA Central Council led a Bible study session. In small groups, delegates thought about what it means to "Live the Gospel of Christ" and brainstormed ways to bring that message to their home parishes.

The day continued with reports from the "Nancy Basmajian Armenia Service Program Scholarship Fund" and the Auditing Committee, as well as a discussion of the organization's financial report.

Elections were held for three vacancies on the ACYOA Central Council. Sarine Atamian of Holy Martyrs Church of Bayside, N.Y., was elected to the council. Re-elected for another term were Jonathan Pelaez of St. Mary Church of Livingston, N.J., and Ani Grigorian of St. Mesrob Church of Racine, Wis. The assembly expressed its appreciation to outgoing Central Council member Armen Terjimanian of St. Mary Church of Washington, D.C., for his three years of service.

During the Primate's Luncheon on Friday afternoon, the Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian, pastor of St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Chicago, was presented with the "Fr. Haigazoun Melkonian Award," in honor of his dedication to leading the youth of the Armenian Church.

Daniel Mantis of St. Mesrob Church of



Delegates pose for a group photo with clergy.

Racine, Wis., received the "Gregory Arpajian Award" for his leadership and service to his community.

Greg Torosian of Holy Trinity Church of Cambridge, Mass., received the "Sam Nersesian Award," which is given to individuals who display Christian values of love, patience, humility, and understanding.

Maria Derderian, youth minister at St. James Church in Watertown, Mass., received the "Fr. Haroutian and Yn. Patricia Dagley Award" for her service to the Armenian Church and community.

The Chapter "A" Award, given to the chapter that best fulfills the requirements of an ACYOA chapter and abides by the organization's "Circles of the Cross," went to Holy Trinity Church of Cambridge, Mass.

Before adjourning, delegates expressed their gratitude to the Holy Martyrs ACYOA Seniors for organizing and hosting this year's General Assembly and Sports Weekend. The activities were planned under the leadership of the Rev. Abraham Malkhasyan, parish pastor; Garek Karamyan, parish youth director; and Sarine Atamian, Holy Martyrs ACYOA chair.

Following the General Assembly, the weekend continued with more than 500 participants taking part in the annual Sports Weekend

events. In addition to young adults from the Eastern Diocese, a group from our sister diocese in California traveled to New York for the weekend program. Sporting competitions took place at Baruch College in Manhattan.

On Saturday evening, participants enjoyed a cruise along the Hudson River, and took in views of New York landmarks, including the Statue of Liberty and the Brooklyn Bridge.

On Sunday morning, the Rev. Fr. Abraham Malkhasyan celebrated the Divine Liturgy at Holy Martyrs Church in Bayside, NY. Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian delivered the sermon.

Archbishop Gizirian blessed the new ACYOA Central Council during an installation service following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

The ACYOA Central Council for the coming year will include: chair Ani Grigorian (St. Mesrob Church, Racine, Wis.); vice chair Jonathan Pelaez (St. Mary Church, Livingston, N.J.); treasurer Shant Paklaian (St. Gregory the Illuminator Church, Chicago, Ill.); secretary Chelsea Kress (St. Leon Church, Fair Lawn); chapter relations coordinator Daniel Zalinov (St. Sarkis Church, Charlotte, NC); programming coordinator Adrienne Ashbahian (St. Leon Church, Fair Lawn, NJ); and public relations coordinator Sarine Atamian (Holy Martyrs

Church, Bayside, NY).

On Sunday evening a banquet was held at the Broad Street Ballroom in Manhattan to honor the winners of the various athletic competitions (see below). The weekend concluded on Monday morning with a farewell brunch hosted by the Children of Armenia Fund.

Next year's general assembly and sports weekend will be hosted by the ACYOA Seniors of St. John Church of Southfield, Mich.

The new ACYOA Central Council chair, Ani Grigorian, noted: "It's great to see the strength and passion our young adults have for the Armenian faith and heritage. Their desire to strengthen the church was shown this past weekend through their tremendous support of our youth at the General Assembly and Sports Weekend. We are excited to move forward in the coming year with innovative programming while reaching out to ACYOA chapters across the Diocese."

Here are the results:

• 3-Point Shootout, Ara Vartanian, Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church, Providence, RI.

• Co-ed Volleyball, 1st place: St. Leon Church, Fair Lawn, NJ, 2nd place: Holy Translators Church, Framingham, Mass.

• Boys Basketball, 1st place: Western Diocese Regional Team, 2nd place: St. James Church, Watertown, Mass., and Sts Sahag and Mesrob Church, Providence, RI.

## Richard Hovannisian Delivers Keynote at Haigazian Conference

HOVANNISIAN, from page 4

the Patriarchs of Constantinople Karekin and Shnork, Locum Tenens of the Cilician Catholicosate Khat Achabayan, a young *vartabed* named Karekin, who would go on to become Catholicos, and Vazken, Zareh and Khoren. In Chicago, too, Hovannisian showed power point images of Lebanon, when much of the intellectual and cultural life was still centered in West Beirut, and he offered a visual tour from the blue Mediterranean and the American University of Beirut through the bourg and souks, the shanty town of Karantina, Nor Hajin, Bourdj-Hamoud, Antelias, Bikfaya, and Anjar, which then was still dependent on kerosene lamps for lighting.

Hovannisian will be in Watertown on Saturday, June 14, under the auspices of the Armenian Museum of Armenia, to present his latest publication, *Armenian Kesaria/Kayseri and Cappadocia*.

In Burbank, Calif. on June 24, he will lead off a two-day Facing History and Ourselves teacher seminar on the Armenian Genocide, and on June 25 he will offer his Kesaria presentation at the Glendale Public Library with the joint sponsorship of the Nor Serount, Tekeyan and Hamazkayin cultural associations and arrangements by Armenian Outreach Coordinator Elizabeth Grigorian.



ACYOA Central Council members with Archbishop Barsamian during the General Assembly.

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## OBITUARY

# Julie Ashekian, Helped Orphans in Armenia

KENSINGTON, Conn. — Julie G. Ashekian, 79, of Kensington, died at home on Thursday, May 15, surrounded by her family.

She was the wife of Clement Ashekian.

Born in New Britain, she was the daughter of the late Ohannes and Satenig (Krikorian) Garabedian. She was a former New Britain resident before moving to Berlin in 1960.

She devoted much of her life to her church and to the Armenian people, with special attention given to the children of Armenia.

At St. George Armenian Church in Hartford, she served as organist for 55 years, and also as the chairman of the Woman's Guild. She would then go on to represent the Woman's Guild nationally, as a member of the Guild's

Central Council and a member of the National Council of Churches, among other titles. For her efforts helping Armenia, she and her husband received the St. Nersess Shnorhali Medal in 1996.

She and her husband established Children of Armenia Sponsorship Program (CASP). With the help of individual donations, CASP aided seven orphanages in Armenia, which went on to care for several thousand children.

She quickly realized that upon leaving the orphanages, these young adults would be at risk. Therefore, building on the success of CASP, she co-founded Mer Doon (Our Home). Mer Doon serves as a home for young girls who have outgrown the orphanages. There, in

a family setting, they receive care and an education so that they may lead productive, successful lives. Mer Doon continues to thrive and show tremendous growth with each passing year. For her work, and for positively changing the lives of many thousands of Armenian children, she was chosen in 2001 by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America as its member of the year and was honored with the Haig Garabed Sarafian Award by the Armenian Students Association of America, in 2004.

She leaves her husband, Clement Ashekian; a son, Stephen J. Ashekian and his wife, Noel; a daughter, Caryn LaPointe, and her husband, Michael; a brother, Haige Garabedian; a sister, Hayastan Garoyan; and three grandchildren,

Nicole, Alexander and Andrew.

Funeral services were held at George Armenian Church and burial was in Fairview Cemetery, New Britain.

Donations in her memory may be made to St. George Armenian Church, 22 White St., Hartford, CT 06114 or to Our Home - Mer Doon Inc., 84 Ellsworth Blvd, Berlin, CT 06037



Julie Ashekian

# Alice Aroian Roat

LINCOLN, Mass. — Alice Aroian Roat died, surrounded by loved ones, on May 5, at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston after struggling with complex health issues.

She leaves her four children, Bruce Roat of Los Angeles, Gregory Roat of Lexington, Lucine Roat Melton and



Alice Aroian Roat

her husband Christopher of Amherst, NH, and Armine Roat of Wayland. She also leaves a brother, Van Aroian and wife Mary of Worcester, a sister, Myra Ellis of Lincoln, and grandson, Hayden Christopher Melton of

Medford. She is also survived by three nephews, Mihran Aroian of Austin, Texas, Raffi Aroian of

San Diego and Timothy Bailey of Kula, Hawaii.

She was born in Boston, on August 10, 1924 to parents Mihran and Satenig (Tashjian) Aroian. Her father was born in Kharpert and her mother in Hussenig, Historic Armenia. They married in Boston and raised three children, Alice being the eldest.

She graduated from Jamaica Plain High School in 1942 and would have pursued a college education had the opportunity been available. She completed the Secretarial Course at the Boston Clerical School and continued her education by taking courses through the Harvard and Boston University extension programs and at MIT.

She worked initially as assistant to the Alumni Placement Officer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While at MIT, she co-founded the Armenian Students Club, an important gathering for Armenian-American intellectuals for many years, which remains active to this day. Alice went on to an accomplished career as an Executive Assistant to senior managers at several organizations, including Newton College, The Harvard Cooperative Society, The Catamount Corp., and Lincoln Town Hall.

At a young age, Alice developed a passion for the arts, singing in her church choir, studying violin and playing in a community orchestra. She sang the lead role in a production of the operetta "Chinita" by the West Roxbury Players. She also studied oil painting with Robert Douglas Hunter.

In 1950 she married William F. Roat, raising four children until they divorced. She assumed full responsibility for the family while working full-time. Devoted above all to family and community, she generously shared with her children her passion for education, the arts, Armenian heritage, and enjoying time with a large extended family and many friends.

She began her active, lifelong membership at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, with her early dedication to the church choir as a teenager. She served three separate terms as secretary of the Women's Guild of the Church.

A native Bostonian, she never tired of explor-

ing and learning from the great cultural resources of the city and surrounding region. She grew up within walking distance of the Boston Public Library, which became her home away from home where she devoured books. Over the years, she could often be found enjoying time with family and friends at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Symphony, Boston Public Garden, Arnold Arboretum or Old North Bridge in Concord.

Services were private. A 40th Day Requiem will be held June 22, at 11:45 a.m. at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be directed to Holy Trinity Armenian Church or to The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), 395 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA 02478.

Arrangements were under the direction of the Giragosian Funeral Home.

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# Lucy Ishkanian

NEW YORK (*New York Times*) — Lucy Ishkanian, an internationally recognized pianist who performed in the major concert halls around the world to great acclaim, died in a hospital in New York City on April 20. She was 80.

Her nine tours from 1962 to 1979 throughout the former Soviet Union was part of the "Special Prize" award she received from the jury of the Second International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. She also was sent on tour by the US Department of State Cultural Program and performed throughout the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Western Europe, Argentina and the United States under the management of impresario Sol Hurok. In 1971, she was presented by Hurok at her debut at Philharmonic Hall (now Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center.)

A native New Yorker of Armenian descent, she gave her first recital at age 7, two years

after becoming the youngest student ever accepted to the Juilliard School Preparatory Division. She continued her education there as a scholarship winner for 15 years, and graduated with both Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees. She also completed requirements for a PhD degree at Columbia University. Among her teachers were Beveridge Webster and Rosina Lhevinne. She also coached with some of the greatest musicians, including pianists Mieczeslaw Horszowski, Yakov Fliere, Emil Gilels and composer Aram Khachaturian who entrusted her with the American premiere of his Piano Sonata.

Among her greatest achievements was the foundation of the Juilliard-Komitas friendship program in 1992, enabling gifted students from the Komitas Conservatory in Yerevan, Armenia to be admitted to the Juilliard School in New York to continue their musical education. Ishkanian was an honorary professor at the Komitas Conservatory, and served as president of the jury for the graduation examinations.

Ishkanian also was a distinguished member of international piano competition juries around the world, including the First International Aram Khachaturian Piano Competition in Yerevan in 1997, the First International Rachmaninoff Piano Competition in Los Angeles, in 2002, as well as the Dorothy MacKenzie Artist Recognition Awards at the International Keyboard Institute and Festival in New York City.

Ishkanian is survived by her husband, Hagop Tankian. A brother, Vahe, predeceased her. There was a 40th-day requiem service on Sunday, June 1 at the St. Illuminator's Armenian Apostolic Cathedral, 221 East 27th Street. Donations in her memory may be made to the Armenian Scholarship Fund at The Juilliard School.

(A less detailed version of this notice had appeared in the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* in April.)

## Bessie (Chooljian) Michigan

WATERTOWN — Bessie (Chooljian) Michigan of Watertown died on May 28. She was 105.

She was the wife of the late Mark Markar Michigan; daughter of the late Hovannes John and Sarah (Nahigian) Chooljian and sister of the late Anna Mugar, Victoria Margosian, Marvin Julian and Peter Charleson. She leaves her niece, Beatrice Mugar Fye, great-nieces and great-nephews and great-great-nieces and nephews.

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## OBITUARY

# Albert S. Movsesian Personified the Armenian Spirit

By Tom Vartabedian

HAVERHILL, Mass. — Albert (Shavarsh) Movsesian, a crusader for Armenian Genocide education and human rights, died on May 25 at Merrimack Valley Hospice House surrounded by his family.

The day coincided with his late wife's birthday and occurred on the eve of Memorial Day, which he always observed as a proud veteran.

Long active in Armenian Genocide issues, Movsesian left no stone unturned when it came time to educate the public.

As a member of the Armenian Genocide Education Committee of Merrimack Valley, he

traveled to schools along the North Shore and Greater Boston with stories drawn from his own family history and the murder of 1.5 million Armenians in 1915 at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Empire.

Much of his presentation centered around the Near East Relief and the Armenian Orphan Rug, which was woven by his mother-in-law and other fellow orphans during that time in Lebanon. Movsesian lobbied for its recognition, even traveling to the White House at First Lady Hillary Clinton's invitation.

A month before his death, Movsesian attended a 99th anniversary commemoration at North Andover High School, where he received a gift from the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee for his three decades of service.

As a respected member and former commander of the Arakadz Lodge, Merrimack Valley Knights of Vartan, he helped bring medical supplies to Armenia through the International Medical Equipment Collaborative (IMEC) in North Andover.

He was a board member of the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) and belonged to the National Association of Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

Movsesian was active with the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe where he taught Sunday School. He served as a Diocesan delegate and Parish Council member for more than 55 years.

His church service earned him the St. Nerses Shnorhali Medal for distinguished service from the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America.

A World War II veteran with the Army Air Corps, Movsesian served as a radar technician before graduating from Boston University on the GI Bill. He worked at Liberty Mutual for 38 years, winning several awards for salesmanship.

For 22 years, Movsesian was a volunteer and chapter president with Northern Essex Elder Transport (NEET), reaching out to 14 communities throughout the North Shore in furnishing rides to the incapacitated. For many, it became a transportation of last resort.

He was a board member for 15 years of the North Andover Council on Aging where he served as a program coordinator, often speaking to listeners about his ethnic history.

As an active member of the Boston Rotary Club, he served meals to the needy and catered to their basic needs. He was also a Big Brother for 44 years and a member of Saggahew Lodge, AF and AM, of Haverhill more than five decades.

He often reminisced about his days as a competitive tennis player and his passion for bee-

keeping, along with the venture called "Movses Apiary," sharing jars of honey as gifts. He was also an avid photographer.

Movsesian was born in Haverhill, son of the late Movses and Koharig (Mesrobian) Movsesian, and was graduated from Haverhill High School.

He was a longtime resident of Bradford and North Andover before spending his final



Albert S. Movsesian enjoyed being in the driver's seat.

## Dr. Vahagn Agbabian

DETROIT — Dr. Vahagn Agbabian was born in Detroit on December 23, 1927, to Vaghash and Noemi Agbabian. Vagharsh was from Van and Noemi from Bardizag.

He graduated from Redford High School in 1946 and his bachelor's degree in pharmacy from Wayne State University in 1950. He worked as a pharmacist for two years before attending the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, from where he graduated in 1956. He interned at the Detroit Osteopathic Hospital in Highland Park, Mich., for one year. He then continued his education in Dayton, Ohio, interning at Grandview Hospital.

He became a doctor specializing in internal medicine in 1960.

He married Mary Jo Wonacott in 1961. Their four children are Vahan (Julie), Vartan, Joanne Anahid (Glenn) and Aram. Their grandchildren are Ani Elizabeth, Alexander Vahagn, Lauren Anahid and Alexandra Tamar.

They had been members of the St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church for more than 50 years.

He was a lifetime member of the American Osteopathic Association and a longtime member of the American College of Advanced

Medicine. He was on staff as an internist at the Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital in Pontiac for more than 50 years. He practiced internal medicine, integrative and holistic medicine and clinical nutrition in his private practice in conjunction with his staff position at the Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital.

He had lifelong continuing education in his field, allowing him to practice progressively and effectively for his patients.

He loved reading and had one of the largest personal collections of Armenian books.

He was an Armenian who supported any positive project in the community, regardless of what group had sponsored it. He did not make a secret his affiliations and sympathies, but he did not miss any worthwhile lecture, art show or connect and in his humble demeanor, he expressed his appreciation and support. The Detroit community lost a father figure. His loss diminishes the community.



Dr. Vahagn Agbabian

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# Benefit Evening Raises Funds for Dikranagerd's St. Giragos Church

NEW MILFORD, N.J. – A fundraiser earmarked for the continued restoration of the St. Giragos Church in Dikranagerd took place on Saturday, May 17 at Hovnanian School's Banquet Hall.

The occasion provided the opportunity to honor two individuals who have been critical in the renovation of the church, including Vartkes Ergun Ayik, chairman of the St. Giragos Church of Dikranagerd who received The Lifetime Achievement Award as well as Osman Baydemir, mayor of Dikranagerd, who was given the Friends of the Armenians Award.

In his welcoming remarks, Hirant Gulian, who has spearheaded fundraising efforts in the diaspora, recognized Baydemir and Ayik and their families who traveled from Dikranagerd to attend the Benefit Evening. He presented both with their respective awards and expressed gratitude for their commitment to the St. Giragos Restoration Project.

Accepting his award, Baydemir said the pain of the past is still being felt by the generations that have followed.

"Despite all the suffering we have to move ahead and make things right," said Baydemir. "Armenian brothers should feel ownership of this church because Armenians are a part of



From left, Dr. Raffy and Vicki Hovanessian, Hirant Gulian, Mayor Osman Baydemir, Reyhan Baydemir and Dr. Ohan Karatoprak at the St. Giragos Benefit Evening held in New Milford, New Jersey on May 17.

Dikranagerd."

Noting that St. Giragos is the biggest Armenian Church in the Middle East, Ayik

stressed the importance of the Istanbul and Diasporan Armenians who worked together to collect money for the renovation as well as the

moral support of Beyman since the project's inception.

"This project is an important sign of apology," said Ayik, who said that St. Giragos is the most visited church in Turkey and now holds social activities such as classical music concerts for the public.

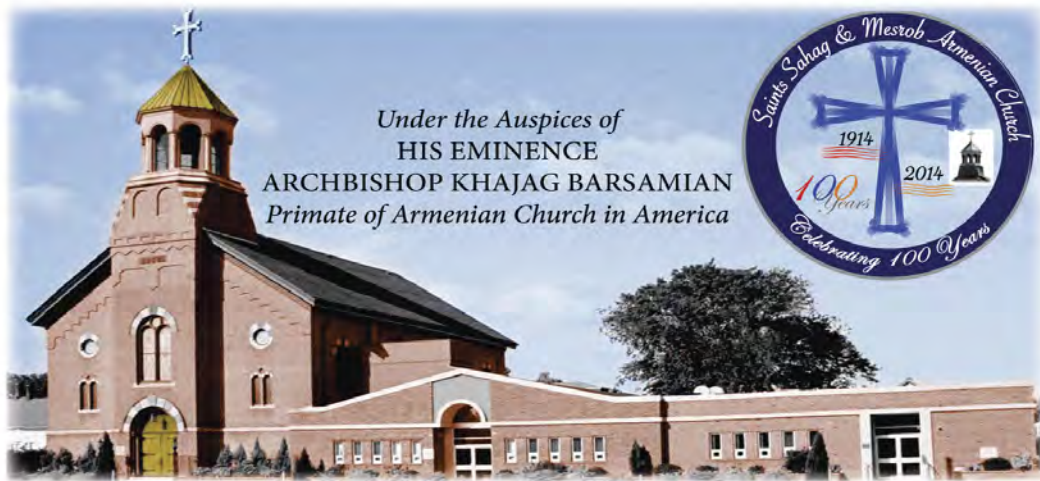
Ayik's daughter, Pelin, presented a historical slideshow of the city of Dikranagerd and the St. Giragos Church, which is visited by increasing numbers of Armenians during church service. She stressed that the Turkish government did not contribute to the project because if they did, it would have turned into a museum instead of an active church.

Prof. Vartan Abdo, director of the Armenian Radio Hour of New Jersey, served as master of ceremonies. Akh'Tamar Dance Ensemble of Hye Doon performed and oud players Udi Yervant from Dikranagerd and Mike Uzatmajian as well as Vicken Makoushian and DJ Berj provided the musical entertainment.

St. Giragos was originally constructed in the 15th century and was rebuilt in the 19th century after a fire damaged the sanctuary. The church has seven bell towers, the first of which was built in 1884 and was cast by the Zildjian Company, making it the tallest structure in Dikranagerd. The church is known for its seven altars, signifying "eternity" in the Armenian alphabet and the church can accommodate more than 2,500 faithful during services.

The restoration project of St. Giragos, which remains in possession of the Armenian community under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Istanbul, began six years ago under the leadership of Ayik. Through fundraising efforts by the church and worldwide Dikranagerdtsis, two and a half million dollars has been raised so far.

To make tax-deductible donations, make checks for the St. Giragos Church Restoration Project and send to The Diocese of the Armenian Church, 630 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10016 with the memo: Dikranagerd Fund.



## A Concert in Celebration of A CENTURY OF LIGHT, HOPE AND FAITH

Featuring Soloists from Armenia, NY, MA, RI, Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island and Orchestra Under the Direction of MAESTRO KONSTANTIN PETROSSIAN

Friday, June 13, 2014 • 7pm  
• You are cordially invited to attend •



David Ayriyan



Janette Khalarian



Vago Ohanyan



Margar Yegiazaryan



Joanne Mouradjian



Gohar Manjelijian



Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island



Debra Takian Pjojian



David Alexander



Elizabeth Souin



David Griego



David Gevorkian



Kate Norigian



Mari Panosian



Sargis Karapetyan

At the new SAINT MARY AND SAINT MENA COPTIC ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  
2433 Scituate Avenue, Cranston, Rhode Island

Spiritual and traditional Armenian music, as well as premier songs composed especially for this event by Armenian composers. This performance is not to be missed.

## Armenian Float at Tournament of Roses

PASADENA, Calif. – Thursday January 1, 2015 will mark the 126th Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. The theme of the 126th Rose Parade is "Inspiring Stories." It pays tribute to those who have loved unconditionally, preserved courageously, endured patiently and accomplished much on behalf of others.

The Tournament of Roses Parade covers a 5.5-mile route and is watched by millions of people in over 90 countries. The 126th Tournament of Roses Parade will be composed of 20 marching bands from the United States, Denmark, Japan and Mexico. It will also have many equestrian groups and more than 40 floats.

For the first time in the history of the Tournament of Roses Parade, there will be an Armenian float, spearheaded by the American Armenian Rose Float Association. It will be designed by the renowned Phoenix Decorating Company and the estimated cost of preparing this float is about \$300,000.

Judge Samuel Der-Yeghiayan, a prominent Armenian, will be riding on the Armenian float in the Rose Parade. He modifies perfectly the theme of the parade, as an immigrant from Syria with an inspiring story. There will be other prominent Armenians riding on the Armenian float.

In 2000, Der-Yeghiayan was appointed, under the Clinton administration, a judge in the Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review. He was nominated by President George W. Bush on March 5, 2003 for the district court seat vacated by Marvin E. Aspen, and was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on July 14, 2003. He received his judicial commission on July 15, 2003. We are very pleased that he accepted our invitation to ride on the Armenian float.

For more information, visit: [www.aarfa.org](http://www.aarfa.org)





## COMMUNITY NEWS

# A Celebration of Service at St. John Armenian Church

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. – Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese, celebrated Divine Liturgy at St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit, on Sunday, May 18, and presided over the ordination of George Boyagian to the rank of sub-deacon. St. John's pastor, Fr. Garabed Kochakian, was instrumental in training the newly ordained Sub-deacon.

of Service gave their own parish, St. John's, the opportunity to extend its love to this special couple.

In addition to honoring the newly-ordained sub-deacon, the "Celebration of Service" honored with awards and words of praise, 12 St. John parishioners for their love, dedication, and long years of service in the life and activity of

given by the archbishop, who congratulated all of the recipients once again.

This second occasion of the "Celebration of Service" has become a tradition for St. John Armenian Church and is intended to be held biennially thus recognizing worthy servants of the parish for their love, devotion, dedication and continued service in the community. Hereafter the Parish will celebrate the service of many more worthy parishioners as well, in Living the Gospel of Christ, honoring their dedicated service to the parish.

On Saturday evening, Barsamian ordained altar servers and met with young people and

their families.

George Anusbigian, Armen Arslanian, George Boyagian, Remi Bruck, Zaven Dadian, Steven Hagopian, Kyle Johnson, Kyle Kalajian, Harry Kezelian III, Michael Ohanesian, Vartan Ohanesian, Harrison Poeszat, Nicolas Sarafian, Martin Shoushanian and Tigran Terterian were ordained to the rank of acolyte.

The Primate also blessed candle bearers and lectors Gabrielle Anusbigian, Elizabeth B. Aprahamian, Sevana Mailian, Kennedy Poeszat, and Melanie Sarafian.

A reception, hosted by the parish council and the Celebration of Service committee, followed.



Archbishop Barsamian ordains acolytes at St. John Church.



3Altar servers pose for a group photo with clergy.

Attending this celebration with the Primate was Fr. Garabed Kochakian, Fr. Abraham Ohanesian and Fr. Diran Papazian, pastor emeritus of St. John's.

Following Divine Liturgy, a banquet and program were held in the St. John Cultural Hall attended by over 250 parishioners and friends where Karmen Santourian, St. John Parish Council chair, served as mistress of ceremonies.

The program began with St. John Komitas Choir Director Deacon Rubik Mailian singing both the American and the Armenian National Anthems accompanied on the piano by Margaret Lafian followed by a video presentation, "A Spirit of Giving," honoring Edward and Janet Mardigian and their support of the Armenian Church. They were named Armenians of the Year at the 2013 Diocesan Assembly. This year's Celebration

St. John.

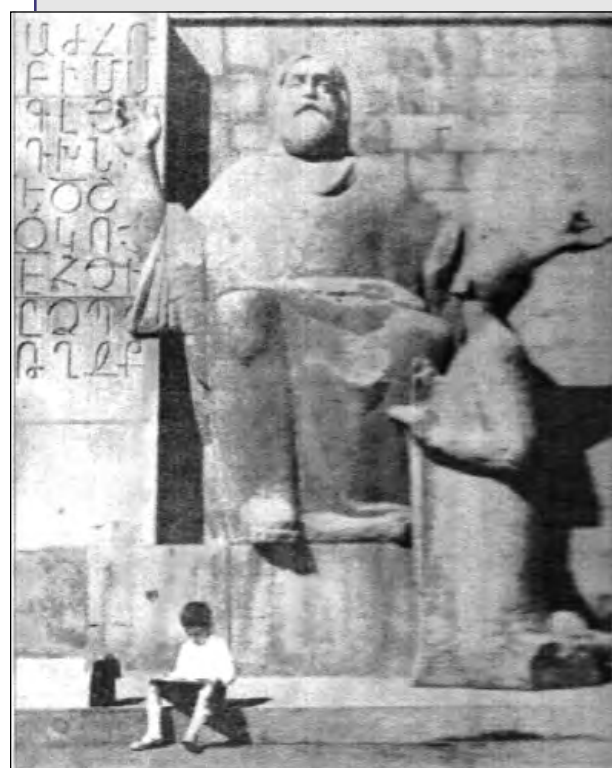
The parish's St. John the Forerunner Award was presented to Elizabeth Aprahamian, Nevart Godoshian, Jane Hovsepian, Helen Mekjian, Diramayr Virginia Melkonian, Rose Shahinian and Sema Tafraian for their dedicated service, support and stewardship to St. John Armenian Church. The St. Vartan Award on behalf of the Armenian Diocese was bestowed upon Roseann Manoogian Attar, Jacqueline Melkonian ElChemmas, Barbara Zamanigian Haroutunian, Dolly Baltayan

Matoian and Katherine Sirapie Mekjian for exemplary service within the life of their parish and for service rendered to the Diocese at large.

The program concluded with remarks and words of congratulations and the Benediction



Newly ordained sub-deacon George Boyagian



## Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2014

Since its inception in 2001, TCA's 'Sponsor a Teacher' program has raised over \$596,000 and reached out to 4,864 teachers and school workers in Armenia and Karabagh.



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

\$160    \$320    \$480    other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association - Memo: Sponsor a Teacher 2014  
Mail your check with this form to:

**TCA Sponsor a Teacher**  
**5326 Valverde, Houston, TX 77056**

Your donation is Tax Deductible.

Cocktails at 6:30pm  
Dinner at 7:30pm

Donation: \$125.00 per person  
Formal Attire

*Tekeyan Cultural Association*

*Requests the honor of your presence*

*at a*

*Tribute Dinner*

*Honoring*

*Hagop Vartivarian*

*on his 45th Anniversary*

*of Service to the Armenian Culture & Heritage*

*Under the Auspices of*

*H.E. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian*

*Primate of the Armenian Church Eastern Diocese*

*Saturday, the Twenty First of June*

*Two Thousand and Fourteen*

*The Clinton Inn*

*145 Dean Drive, Tenafly, New Jersey*

*RSVP by June 10, 2014*

*Helen Misk (917) 589-4749 hmisk@nyc.rr.com*



# Arts & Living

## Zabel Yesayan Documentary to Be Screened at Watertown Public Library

WATERTOWN – “Finding Zabel Yesayan,” a 40-minute documentary tracing the life of an outstanding Armenian writer, will be shown at the Watertown Public Library on Thursday, June 12, at 7 p.m.

Back by popular demand, the film was originally shown in the Boston area in 2011 and inspired members of the Armenian International Women’s Association (AIWA) to translate into English and publish two of Yesayan’s books: *The Gardens of Silihdar*, a memoir, and *My Soul in Exile*, a novel.

The two books have just been released, to great popular acclaim and numerous requests have been made for a re-screening of the film.

Writer, activist and feminist Yesayan (1878-1943) was one of the most prominent Armenian intellectuals of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Her prolific writing in a variety of genres (short stories, essays, novels, travelogues) reflects the cataclysmic events of her times and enjoyed great popularity when they were published. Yet today they are almost forgotten.

The documentary, a first step in reviving Yesayan’s memory, was filmed in Armenia and prepared by Lara Aharonian, a native of Lebanon who heads the Women’s Resource Center in Yerevan, and Dr. Talen Suciyan, a native of Istanbul now teaching at Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich, Germany.

A native of Istanbul, Yesayan (born Zabel Hovhannisian) graduated from the Armenian Holy Cross secondary school there and became one of the first Ottoman Armenian women to study abroad when she went to Paris and enrolled in the Sorbonne.

In Paris she married the painter Dickran Yesayan, with whom she had two children, Sophie and Hrant. Her first novel, *The Waiting Room*, published in 1903, takes place in Paris and explores themes that were to become central to her work – exile and alienation.



Author Zabel Yesayan

Back in Istanbul, she was appointed in 1909 as a member of an Armenian fact-finding delegation to Adana, where she witnessed the aftermath of the bloody massacres that had just taken place. Her classic account of

this experience, published as *Among the Ruins*, is widely regarded as one of her best works.

The only woman on the “black list” of the Armenian intellectuals arrested on the night of April 24, 1915, Yesayan managed to elude the police and escape to Bulgaria. The end of the war found her working in the Near East, organizing the relocation of refugees and orphans. In the 1920s Yesayan visited Soviet Armenia and decided to move there in 1933, becoming a teacher of literature at Yerevan State University and continuing her writing with the novella, *Shirt of Fire*, and the memoir, *The Gardens of Silihdar*.

A victim of Stalin’s purges, she was exiled in 1937 and died, in unknown circumstances, probably in 1943.

The public is invited to attend the screening of the documentary, free of charge, sponsored by the Watertown Free Public Library, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and AIWA. Following the film, there will be a reading from the books, which will be available for purchase.

Further information about the screening or about Zabel Yesayan is available by contacting AIWA, 65 Main St., #3A, Watertown, Mass., or email: [info@aivainternational.org](mailto:info@aivainternational.org).



“When I do ‘Swan Lake,’ I feel like I’m in another world,” says Yerevan-bred dancer Avetik Karapetyan.

## Karapetyan Leaps Into Stardom with Boston Ballet

BOSTON – As a young lad of 8 pursuing ballet, the girls laugh and giggled when they saw Avetik Karapetyan in leotards. Today, he has the last laugh. This is his second year as a soloist with the Boston Ballet, appearing in productions such as

“Swan Lake” and “Sleeping Beauty.”

The virtuoso performer is wrapping up an appearance in a show called “Etudes” through May 18 before enjoying a respite through the summer months. He looks back on those formative years and smiles at the irony. If anything, the growing pains were much like a “Billy Elliott” scenario where young boys are thought to be more suited for boxing and soccer than the pas de deux.

“They told me to undress into my underwear,” he recalls. “I was a little embarrassed by it. Over time, you grew accustomed to it.”

Swimming was his destiny in Armenia. At 8 months, he was already churning water as people watched incredulously. By 5, he was winning competitions throughout Yerevan. Of course, having a father as a champion swimmer in the Soviet Union didn’t hurt matters.

Then came boxing and karate, much to dad’s displeasure. Through friends, Karapetyan turned to the world of the arts. He qualified for an artistic school and slowly made his way to auditions. One step led to another.

All it really took was one performance of Aram Khachaturian’s “Spartacus” and he was hooked for life.

“In Armenia, there were very few opportunities for male dancers,” he noted. “Whatever talent there is becomes dispersed. If they all stayed in their country, it would be one of the best companies in the world. The opportunities have led to a wonderful career with a great ensemble in Boston,” he said.

After graduating from the Yerevan National Ballet Company in 2003 under the direction of Hovhannes Divanyan, he was invited to study at the Heinz-Bosl Ballet Company of Munich where he trained with Alexander Prokofiev.

Upon graduating in 2005, he worked in Vienna for a year before dancing with the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm.

Among his many awards were first place medals in the 2012 International Istanbul Ballet Competition and the 2009 Rome Primo Ballet Competition. Other notable credits include “Romeo and Juliet” and “Don Quixote.”

Two years ago, he was offered a contract by The Boston Ballet after an audition. There just happened to be an opening for a soloist and he landed the role. Sharing the joy were his parents and two siblings in Yerevan. They keep in touch constantly through social media.

Armenians like Sossy Jeknavorian and daughter Ani, a former dancer, were taken aback after attending a performance of the Boston Ballet. They noticed

see BALLEET, page 13

## Providence Community Celebrates Centennial

PROVIDENCE – The Armenian community in Providence got its start in the late 1800s following the Hamidian massacres of 1895-1896, with Armenians seeking freedom and safety with the hope of rebuilding their lives in America. By 1913, the Armenian community began to seek a way to secure a home for their spiritual and cultural needs and the first Armenian Church *Badarak* was held on January 18, 1914. On June 7, 1914, Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church was consecrated followed by a tremendous population growth following the 1915 Armenian Genocide.

On June 14, 1960, Vasken I, Catholicos of All Armenians, blessed the cornerstone of the newly built Egavian Auditorium, becoming the first time in history that the Supreme Head of the Armenian Church had ever visited the United States.

The church building has been renovated over the years and adjacent properties have been purchased. In 1990 a new Armenian-style cupola and a new cross were placed, making Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church a beacon and landmark for all those traveling through Providence.

Many events have been organized to mark the centennial. On Sunday, May 4, the mayor of Providence, Angel Tavares, visited Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church and officially proclaimed and renamed Jefferson Street Mesrob Mashdots Boulevard in honor of the centennial.

As a climax to the centennial celebrations, the weekend of June 13-15 will highlight the milestone, under the auspices of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church in America.

On Friday, June 13, at the new Saints Mary and Mena Coptic Orthodox Church in



From left: Rev. Shnorh Souin, Angel Tavares, Mayor of Providence and Michael Soloman, president of Providence City Council

Cranston, a concert, titled “A Century of Light, Hope and Faith,” will be put on by the Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island with soloists from Armenia, New York, Boston as well as from the local community with a full orchestra under the direction of Konstantin Petrossian. The concert is free and open to the public, with ecumenical guests and dignitaries expected in attendance. The church is located is 2433 Scituate Ave., Hope, RI.

On Saturday, June 14, a gala banquet will take place at the Marriott Hotel in Providence. Tickets for the banquet can be purchased by calling the office. The Divine Liturgy on Sunday, June 15, will be celebrated by Archbishop Barsamian, who will consecrate a hand-crafted Khatchkar from Armenia, specially made for the 100th anniversary of the church.

According to Fr. Shnorh Souin, the pastor of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church, there are plans to upgrade and modernize the Sunday School and educational wing of the church and repair

see CENTENNIAL, page 12





# Armenian Embassy Hosts Book Launch in Berlin

RECEPTION, from page 1

German-Armenian relations, like Dr. Rolf Hoffeld, director of the Lepsius House in Potsdam, and Armenologist Prof. Armenuhi Drost-Abarjan, as well as press, Hovhannisyán pointed to the significance of the date: May 28 marks the anniversary of the founding of the first Armenian Republic. He noted that earlier in the day he had attended the official opening of an exhibition at the German Historical Museum on the First World War. The fact that German Chancellor Angela Merkel had spoken there testified to the importance attributed here to commemoration of that horrendous conflict which marked a watershed in modern history. It was, as the Armenian ambassador

event, the news broke that it had finally agreed to allow public display of the beautiful rug next Autumn.

In my remarks, I stressed the particular poetical power of this book to raise questions about the 1915 Genocide, without engaging in political arguments or polemics. Simply put, if those Armenian orphan girls wove that rug in Ghazir and sent it to Coolidge as a gesture of gratitude, then that raises questions: gratitude for what? What did he as president, or what did the Americans as a people, do for these orphans? And why? Why, indeed, were they orphans? Who or what killed their parents and their families? And why? Just as the book has detonated a minor political earthquake in the

US, so, it is hoped, the same may occur in Germany. In this country, with its large Turkish community, many groups have begun preparations for commemorations of the centennial of the Genocide next year, and Deranian's book offers a precious contribution to that process.

Bea-Ehlers Kerbekian, an Armenian-German actress in Berlin, delivered a dramatic reading of selections from the book, which traced for the participants the story of the rug. Before and after her moving rendition of the account, music was provided by Lusine Arakelyan, a talented young Armenian singer who is visiting Germany. Arakelyan, born in Gumri, has completed studies in piano and singing, including a master's degree at the Yerevan Conservatory, and has won numerous competitions. Currently in Germany for a series of auditions and competitions (including at the Komitas Festival in early June), she gave a solo concert on June 1 at church in Berlin. Organized by a relatively new cultural initiative, the Association of European and Armenian Experts (AEAE), the concert introduced Arakelyan's vast repertoire, from songs by Komitas to opera arias from Verdi and vocal works by German, Russian and Armenian composers. Artak Kirakosyan, who welcomed guests to the concert, is cultural director of the AEAE, himself a renowned tenor who has sung also at Armenian commemorative events.

Just a day after the embassy reception, Dr. Deranian's book again became the focus of discussion at another gathering in the German capital. This was one of a series of meetings organized by Armenian artist Archi Galentz of the Interior DaSein atelier, together with a "think-tank" called Sprechsaal. For over a month, the two cultural circles have organized lectures, book presentations, film showings and art exhibits, all on the theme, "Armenia, Armenia." On May 29, in the context of a book presentation on an Armenian theme, the orphan rug book was introduced. One woman from the Armenian cultural community burst out with her rave review of the book, which, she said, she had received at the embassy reception and, once having begun, could not put it down. Plans are afoot for further presentations of the book in Germany, including at the Lepsius House in Potsdam.



Dr. Armen Hovhannisyán, Armenia's ambassador to Germany

stressed, in the context of that upheaval that the Genocide was planned and executed. Not only Armenians of the Diaspora have a special relationship to that tragedy, but also citizens in the modern Republic of Armenia, among them members of his wife's family who were survivors. Turning to the book, Hovhannisyán summarized the moving story of the rug woven by the orphan girls and thanked all those including the publisher Schiler-Verlag (represented at the event by editor Tim Mücke) for making the German version possible.

As the author was not able to be there in person, I had the honor of introducing his book. The presentation drew largely on the afterword written especially for the German translation by Dr. Ara Ghazarians, editor and curator of the Armenian Cultural Foundation, which published the English version. In it, Ghazarians chronicled the political debate unleashed by the Smithsonian Institution's request to the White House to have the rug on loan for an exhibition last December. As readers of the *Mirror-Spectator* know, that event was cancelled after the White House reversed its decision to make the rug available for public display. On the heels of a *Washington Post* article on the issue, a barrage of critical articles, discussions, essays, reports, press conferences and media coverage of the issue followed. It was mooted that behind the White House's curious behavior political pressure had been exerted, in order to protect Turkish-American relations which might be affected by display of the rug. Political figures sympathetic to the Armenian cause along with Armenian advocacy groups mobilized to exert further pressure on the White House until, just prior to the Berlin

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JUSTICE WILL BE SERVED

OCTOBER 2014

## Providence Community Celebrates Centennial

CENTENNIAL, from page 11

its facilities. Along with the interior, the bell tower will be restored and a new roof and modernized rooftop heating units will be placed. "Throughout the first one hundred years, many challenges were faced and overcome. Other challenges remain and new ones will arise as we proceed from the Centennial Anniversary celebration of our parish. We are confident that our Lord will continue to guide and help us to successfully meet new challenges as we commit ourselves to the same spirit of our predecessors hoping to make the same sacrifice that they made for us for the building of the parish and to the Glory of God," he said.





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Karapetyan Leaps into Stardom with Boston Ballet

BALLET, from page 11

Karapetyan's name in the program and decided to introduce themselves. The family has endeared itself to the dancer, even taking him snowmobiling.

"I meet Armenians at the stage door and they tell me how proud they are to see me perform," he says. "People are e-mailing me all the time. They want to know the person behind the Armenian name dancing with one of the world's leading companies," he noted.

He added that he has made contact with Apo Ashjian and attended a rehearsal of the Sayat Nova Dance Company of Greater Boston.

"It's just amazing to see what Apo does for



Yerevan-born Avetik Karapetyan brings a fresh approach as a solo dancer in his second year with the Boston Ballet.

these dancers in promoting our heritage," Karapetyan points out.

A typical day in Boston runs eight hours with classes and rehearsals. Spare time is spent inside a gym to relax and keep fit.

With no car, Karapetyan meanders around the city aboard his bike, weaving in and out of traffic.

At 5-9, 145 pounds, an extra pound or two could throw the body off kilter for the 38-year-old. Punishing. Grueling. Yet, incredibly rewarding. It's been a life that knows no boundaries, simply a leap of faith.

"When I do 'Swan Lake', I feel like I'm in another world," he admits. "Hard work and determination ultimately pays off. When I'm on that stage, I feel like I'm representing not only myself but Armenia as well."

He concluded, "I look forward to the day when I'll return to Armenia and dance."

## Armenian Night at Pops to Pay Tribute to Aram Gharabekian

BOSTON – The Friends of Armenian Culture Society (FACS) will present the 63rd annual Armenian Night at the Pops on Friday, June 13, at 8 p.m. at Symphony Hall, featuring saxophonist Hayrapet Arakelyan. Conductor Keith Lockhart will lead the Boston Pops Orchestra in performance selections from the *Tango Suite* by Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla, along with other selections and Pops favorites.

Additionally, the evening will pay tribute to the late Aram Gharabekian, formerly of Boston, who passed away earlier this year. A visionary musician and conductor, Gharabekian led the National Chamber

Orchestra of Armenia for more than a decade. He was also the founder and music director of the SinoNova Chamber Orchestra of Boston from 1983 until 1991. Gharabekian encouraged contemporary composers both in the United States and Armenia to compose an impressive number of new works for his orchestras, for which he was recognized by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, and received the Presidential Medal from the president of Armenia.

In remembrance and recognition of Gharabekian's contributions to contemporary music both in Boston and in Armenia, Lockhart and the Boston Pops will perform Khachatourian's *Lullaby* from his ballet, "Gayane."

For more information, visit [www.FACSBoston.org](http://www.FACSBoston.org)



The late Aram Gharabekian

# CALENDAR

## MASSACHUSETTS

**JUNE 8 – St. James Armenian Festival – Annual Picnic**, noon to 6 p.m., Live Armenian Music by Jay Baronian, Leon Janikian, Ken Kalajian and Bob Raphaelian; shish, losh and chicken kebab, kheyma and more! Children's Activities, Raffle, Armenian Vendor – rain or shine! St. James Grounds – 465 Mt. Auburn St – Watertown.

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

**JUNE 14 – The Armenian Museum of America presents "The Armenians of Gesaria: From Evkere and Talas to Mount Arkeos, Chomakhlu and Evereg"** by Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian, UCLA Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History and Distinguished Chancellor's Fellow at Chapman University, Orange County, California. He will give a Power Point presentation and selected film shorts of the region's Armenian history and the significant roles played by Armenians, both in urban and rural Gesaria. The Armenian presence in Cappadocia and Gesaria/Kesaria dates back to the times of Tigran the Great and Gregory the Illuminator. 65 Main St., 7 p.m. Free and open to the public

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

**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 of America and Armenian Composers Union, Yerevan. Featuring violinist Sargis Karapetyan, soprano Nouné Karapetyan and pianist Nune Karapetyan. Program includes works of Armenian contemporary composers Alexanyan, Babayan, Garsoyan, Hakopjanyan, Karapetyan, Kostanyan, Mavisakalyan, Makaryan, Mikaelyan, Sadoyan, Satian, Soukiasyan, Sharimanyan and Zariyan. Opening remarks by composer/conductor Konstantin Petrossian. Admission free, donations accepted. 65 Main St., Watertown.

**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](http://www.ArmeniaTree.org)

## NEW YORK

**JUNE 7 and 8 – The annual Armenian Festival on the scenic grounds of St. Peter Armenian Church**, 100 Troy-Schenectady Road, Watervliet. Admission and parking are free. Kebab meals, the John Berberian Ensemble, cooking demonstrations, church tours, carnival games for children, and more during this week-end-long event. Visit <http://bit.ly/armenianfest> for more info or call the church office at 518-274-3673.

## RHODE ISLAND

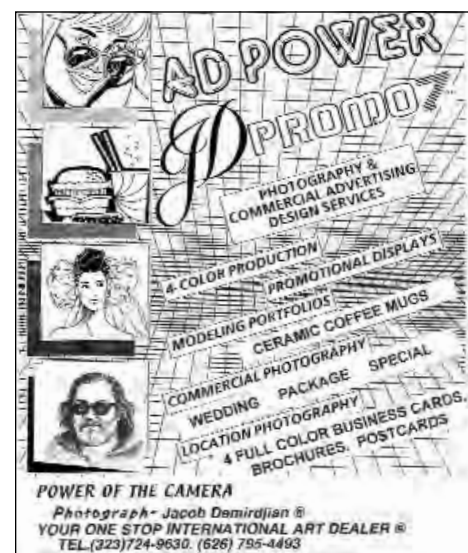
**JUNE 13 – 100 Anniversary of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church**, under the auspices of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), 7 p.m. Concert in celebration of a century of faith, hope and faith, featuring soloists from Armenia, New York, Massachusetts,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

## WASHINGTON D.C.

**JUNE 7 – Knights and Daughters of Vartan present a musical performance with pianist-composer Hayk Arsenyan of New York**, under the auspices of the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia, at the cultural hall of the embassy, 2225 R Street, NW, Washington DC, at 4:00 PM. By reservation only. Please call Takuhi Hallajian (301) 219-4041 or Doris George (301) 951-0955.



**On June 8, St. James Armenian Church will hosts its Festival and Annual Picnic, noon to 6 p.m. The day will feature live Armenian music by Jay Baronian, Leon Janikian, Ken Kalajian and Bob Raphaelian and traditional Armenian foods of shish, losh and chicken kebab, kheyma and more. There will be children's activities, a raffle, and more. It will take place rain or shine! St. James Grounds, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.**







## COMMENTARY

# Mirror Spectator



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## COMMENTARY

## Eurasian Union Starts off on the Wrong Foot

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Once again, Armenia is trapped in the web of world political intrigues, primarily as a result of its isolation and dangerous depopulation. This trend does not augur well for the country.

After years of negotiations with the European Union, last September Yerevan made a U-turn, to join the Russian-led Customs Union, which today has grown to become the Eurasian Union.

Time and again, Russian President Vladimir Putin has denied that his intention is to recreate the former Soviet Union, but all the developments indicate otherwise.

In the face of an intensifying new cold war, major powers are repositioning themselves in the so-called new world order. The west always denies that NATO is a threat to Russia, all the while encircling Russia to contain its growing power.

Moscow is trying to break the stranglehold in its own way. Ukraine was the last link in that encirclement process, which Russia lost but not without drawing blood, thus not enabling the west to claim victory in that tug-of-war, yet.

The annexation of Crimea by Moscow and its "misbehavior" in Eastern Ukraine has in turn created excuses for the west to strike Russia with economic sanctions.

As a reaction to those threats, Russia was able to achieve two major projects of global significance. One was the \$400-billion energy deal with China and the other was the creation of the Eurasian Union, which, according to President Putin, is "a treaty of epoch-making historic importance."

Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev similarly crowed, "A new geopolitical reality of the 21st century is born."

The west certainly does not perceive these developments in that perspective, in view of the member states' divergent interests. For example, in 1995, 47 percent of Kazakhstan's trade activity was with Russia, but by 2011, 40 percent of its exports went to Europe and only 9 percent to Russia.

An article in the *New York Times* on May 30 presents all these activities in their political context: "Like the huge gas agreement Russia signed with China this month, the Eurasian Economic Union is a way for Moscow to show that it is pivoting to Asia and that it can withstand western sanctions and other pressures as it pursues its national interests, as in its annexation of Crimea from Ukraine."

While Russia is well within its rights to pursue its national interests, Armenia has to struggle for its survival. And it seems that Armenia's plight is one of the lower prerogatives of the Russian regional politics.

While Moscow continually arms Azerbaijan, its claims that it intends to solve the Karabagh impasse peacefully sounds very disingenuous. The action makes clear that it is not in Moscow's interest to resolve the issue in order to be able to keep both Baku and Yerevan on a short leash.

To undermine those Russian intentions, the US made an extraordinary proposal about Karabagh through its ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group, James Warlick. The ambassador ordinarily would act in unison with the other co-chairs of the Minsk Group, but at a speech at the Carnegie Foundation, he took the extraordinary step of enunciating the US position on the Karabagh problem.

All the above developments constitute the background of what happened in Astana as the leaders of the Eurasian Union gathered to sign the charter of that organization.

While President George Bush was putting together "A coalition of the willing" during the first Gulf War, the Eurasian Union seems to present a coalition of the unwilling. In fact, Russia had to bribe Belarus with a \$2-billion loan to bring it to submission. Armenia's share was \$300 million to repair the Metsamor nuclear power plant.

Incidentally, after the initial fanfare to build a new nuclear power plant in Armenia, Russia has opted for the same to be built in Turkey.

Another aspect of the Eurasian Union is political discord among its participants. While Belarusian President Lukashenko was predicting that the union would eventually lead to a political union, Kazakhstan's government begged to differ, limiting the agreement only to economic activities among the partners. If the Eurasian Union is to imitate the European Union, its political dimension will be missing, since all the new members of the EU are gradually being integrated within the NATO structure.

It looks like Nazarbayev calls the shots in this new union, under President Putin's tolerant gaze. Indeed, as he hosted the summit in Astana last week, Nazarbayev threw a bombshell while Armenia and Kyrgyzstan were waiting at the door for the founding members of the union, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, to sign the charter of the union. That bombshell was a letter by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, who demanded that Armenia be admitted to the Eurasian Union only within its borders recognized by the United Nations, meaning without Nagorno Karabagh.

That was a clear message to Yerevan that no open border is possible between Armenia and Karabagh after Armenia joins the Eurasian Union.

Armenia's reaction was confused and confusing; before the agreement was signed, Armenian Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan had stated that Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh Republic are a single economic zone and that there can be no customs or other borders between them.

After Nazarbayev's unpleasant letter, President Serge Sargsisyan of Armenia contradicted his prime minister's earlier statement: "As for what was voiced by Nazarbayev, first, from the outset, it is wrong to talk about borders. What borders are we talking about? Karabagh problem is not being solved in the Customs Union." He added, "And who said that we are joining the Customs Union together with Nagorno Karabagh? There has been no such thing and could not be, because at least, under our laws, and in accordance with our ideas, Karabagh today is not part of Armenia. And the fact that the membership in the Customs Union will contribute to the solution of the Nagorno Karabagh problem is unequivocal. Of course, what Nazarbayev said was unpleasant, but it cannot harm us."

Nazarbayev's intervention was not only "unpleasant," but it was even disgusting as he also commented that "we should not hurt the feelings of our friend, Aliyev."

In addition to doing a favor for his friend, Mr. Nazarbayev entertains the idea of inviting Turkey to join the Eurasian Union, down the road, in total disregard of the thorny issues still extent between Armenia and Turkey.

Russia has remained silent on the incident. Mr. Putin's silence seems ominous. Adding insult to injury, one of the Russian commentators blamed Armenia for that "unpleasant" letter. Indeed, a senior advisor to the Russian Federation and the editor of the news agency, Rex, Modest Kolerov, commented that Aliyev's letter was a response to the comments made by the Armenian prime minister.

Azerbaijan is not even a member of the Eurasian Union, nor does it intend to join that entity, but it is still blackmailing Armenia by flexing its petro muscles.

Nazarbayev, through his insensitivity toward one of the members of the union, on behalf of an outsider, demonstrates that he is fulfilling the wishes of his pan-Turanist friends. Many in Armenia blame him to be the pillar of Pan-Turanist dreams of Azerbaijan and Turkey in Central Asia. Although pan-Turanism and Ottomanism have been Russia's perennial enemies, at this time, Mr. Putin does not consider them as posing existential threats to Russia, as he has other fish to fry, potentially threatening to singe Armenia.

With all the grandiose rhetoric, the Eurasian Union seems to have started off on the wrong foot, at least, from Armenia's perspective.

### Notice to Contributors

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

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

daytime telephone number.

- Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is 12 noon on Monday of the week of publication.
- Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director. Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.
- The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.
- Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.





## COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Armenia Helps Coordinate Worldwide Genocide Centennial Activities

Two important conferences took place in Yerevan last week in preparation for next year's Armenian Genocide Centennial.

Participating in the first meeting, held on May 26, were representatives of Centennial Committees from 40 countries who reported on their plans for April 24, 2015. On this occasion, the emblem and motto for the Centennial were unveiled – “I remember and demand...” The conference was a unique opportunity for the attendees to exchange contact information and discuss collaborative joint efforts.

The second meeting, held on May 27, brought together State Centennial Committee members, with representatives of the regional committees, and dozens of Armenian diplomats and high-ranking clergy from around the world. The State Committee consists of the leadership of Armenia and Artsakh (Karabagh), and heads of major Armenian organizations worldwide.

In a daring move, President Serge Sargisian announced that he had invited the President of Turkey to visit Yerevan on April 24, 2015, in order to face the truth of the

Armenian Genocide. Caught by surprise, Turkish officials have yet to respond to this challenging invitation. The Armenian President also informed the conference participants that he had invited several other heads of state to Yerevan on that date. French President Francois Hollande has already confirmed that he plans to be in Yerevan on the Genocide's Centennial.

After presentations by State Committee members, representatives from Argentina, France, Lebanon, Russia and the United States were given the opportunity to address the conference. I was also asked to speak in my capacity as co-chair of the Armenian Genocide Centennial Committee of the Western United States.

I began by explaining that Armenians around the world should not be obsessed with the expectation that President Obama would include the word genocide in his “memorial” statement of April 24, 2015. Contrary to popular misconception, the United States government has repeatedly recognized the Armenian Genocide, starting in 1951 with an official document submitted to the World Court; House of Representatives resolutions in 1975 and 1984; and President Ronald Reagan's Presidential Proclamation of April 22, 1981. Consequently, there is no crucial need to insist that Pres. Obama also acknowledge the Armenian Genocide, save for the purpose of fulfilling his promise and sustaining his integrity.

In my talk I also suggested that since the Armenian Genocide lasted from 1915 to 1923, the planned centennial activities should extend from 2015 to 2023. This would be a true nightmare for the Turkish government, having to confront not one, but eight years of centennial events.

Since the centennial is a historic milestone, I urged Armenian communities around the world to organize unique events which have a mass appeal and the potential of generating nationwide or worldwide publicity for Armenians' just demands from Turkey. The same old annu-

al events should not be repeated on the occasion of the Centennial. However, before initiating any project, it is incumbent on all Armenian communities to first agree on the objectives to be accomplished and decide whether the planned activities meet those goals.

I proceeded to read to the conference participants the mission statement of the Armenian Genocide Centennial Committee of Western United States:

“The 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide signifies a global demand for justice by Armenians worldwide and all people of good will.

The Centennial marks one of the 20th century's greatest crimes against humanity. In 1915, the Turkish Government began a premeditated and systematic campaign to uproot the Armenian population from its ancestral homeland and slaughter 1.5 million defenseless men, women and children.

Turkey must finally acknowledge its responsibility for the Genocide and make appropriate moral, financial, and territorial restitution, as mandated by the fundamental norms of international law and civilized society.”

I concluded my remarks by suggesting that Armenians worldwide coordinate their Centennial activities so that the same message is delivered to friend and foe alike. I also proposed that the motto chosen by the State Committee be modified from “I remember and demand” to “We remember and demand justice!”

While this gathering should have been held much earlier, it was most useful in terms of coordinating the planned Centennial activities. Not surprisingly, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu announced last week that his government was closely monitoring the Centennial Committee's Yerevan meetings. Fortunately, the organizers in Armenia were cautious not to make public the Centennial plans to keep Turkish officials in the dark, giving them as little time as possible to counter the Armenian initiatives!

# Aspiring to Secure a Successful Future for your Kid? Opt for Bilingualism!

By Arda Jebejian

What if you were told there was a way to bolster your cognitive skills, increase your intelligence, and avoid Alzheimer's, all you had to do was learn another language?

### Bilingualism: the Villain?

But bilingualism is often associated with a number of negative phenomena. From the early 19th century to about the 1960s, there was a widespread belief that the weak, oppressed linguistic minorities and the powerless in society are bilingual, and that bilinguals are lazy, stupid, left-handed, unreliable, and morally inferior.

Researchers report that bilingualism used to be and is still often associated with poverty, powerlessness, immigrants, minorities, and subordinate social positions. Individuals with a double linguistic and cultural identity are still often thought of as deviant, somewhat suspect, dangerous, impure, slightly abnormal, and linguistically and mentally confused. Bilingualism, then, is something a person must get away from if they wish to succeed in climbing the social ladder.

There are many stories of children who spoke their native language in school having their mouths washed with soap and water or being beaten with a cane. Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o recalls from his school days

One of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment and was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as “I am stupid” or “I am a donkey.”

In the US and Australia indigenous children were stolen from families and forced into boarding schools where they were beaten if they spoke their mother language. African slaves who spoke the same indigenous languages were separated upon sale to ensure that they could not communicate to conspire for freedom. Those who were found speaking their indigenous language were savagely beaten.

Today, the English-Only movement's agenda in the US, for example, is to ratify a constitutional amendment which would outlaw all bilingual programs and services provided by federal, state, and local governments; convince

Congress to repeal bilingual ballot requirements under the Voting Rights Act; and sharply reduce federal programs for bilingual education. In the history of the US, English-Only campaigns have targeted almost every non-English-speaking group of immigrants, but the current anger is largely targeted at Spanish-speaking Latino immigrants. Spanish is often described as a “dirty language, one spoken by those who are lesser-than, who are other, who are not American.”

This is illustrated in Rodriguez's autobiography *Hunger for Memory*, in which he describes the turning point in his language background when his teachers visited his parents and encouraged them to speak English with their children. Rodriguez describes the effect of this language switch on the family's interaction at home thus:

The family's quiet was partly due to the fact that, as we children learned more and more English, we shared fewer and fewer words with our parents. Sentences needed to be spoken slowly when a child addressed his mother or father. (Often the parent wouldn't understand.) The child would need to repeat himself. (Still the parent misunderstood.) The young voice, frustrated, would end up saying, “Never mind” – the subject was closed. Dinners would be noisy with the clinking of knives and forks against the dishes.

### Thinking in two languages

Interestingly, research has consistently found that bilingualism is a cognitive, social and educational advantage and that, consequently, bilingual students tend to outperform their monolingual peers in key cognitive tasks.

Bilinguals can focus on the key parts of a problem and select the crucial parts of a solution. They apply this analytical skill in language, communication, thinking, and visual perception. This gives bilingual learners advantages in divergent and creative thinking and in analysis.

Because bilingual children are able to switch between languages, they develop more flexible approaches to thinking through problems. Their ability to read and think in two different languages promotes higher levels of abstract thought, which is critically important in learning.

Children who learn to read in their home language have a strong foundation to build upon when they learn a second language. They

can easily transfer their knowledge about reading to their second language. Endorsing the latter view, McLaughlin states: “The child who has mastered two languages has a linguistic advantage over the monolingual child. Bilingual children become aware that there are two ways of saying the same thing.”

Bilingualism supports children to maintain strong ties with their entire family, culture and community. All of these are key parts of children's developing identity. Bilingual children are also able to make new friends and create strong relationships in their second language. Thinking in a second language frees people from biases and limited thinking. Recent research has also found that children raised in bilingual households show better self-control which is a key indicator of school success. Researchers agree that school readiness and success for children who are dual language learners is tied directly to mastery of their home language.

### Bilingualism can improve the brain

Various studies are cited as evidence that bilingualism improves the functioning of the brain in many ways. Bilingualism gives the brain a “workout that strengthens its cognitive muscles.”

Knowing more than one language makes the brain operate in more complicated ways, thus challenging it to grow, change, and adapt. For bilingual people, both languages are “always on,” always active in their brains, no matter which language they are speaking at the moment. Therefore, for a bilingual, the executive control system is used in every sentence they utter. That's what makes it strong.

There is evidence that being bilingual can improve the brain by causing changes in brain structure. There is detectable growth in the hippocampus, which helps govern memory and mastery of new material, and in three areas of the cerebral cortex, where higher-order reasoning is processed. Recent research indicates that dementia and Alzheimer's disease occurred four or five years later among people who spent their lives speaking two languages compared to those who spoke only one.

### Conclusion

In summary, the arguments against bilingualism are inaccurate. And as Armenians, we are lucky. We already have a native language, Armenian. Other than the benefits an extra

language offers, using Armenian at home will retard its extinction and help revitalize it. In February 2012, western Armenian joined UNESCO's online Atlas of World Languages in Danger, earning the “definitely endangered” status, meaning it will become extinct by 2100.

The mother tongue, in Armenians' case, the Armenian language, is

a positive symbol of cultural pride  
a means of maintaining practical and emotional contact with the homeland and with oneself

a tool that strengthens family cohesion, confidence, self-esteem and pride

a means of socialization into one's culture  
a vehicle for transmitting the cultural heritage of the past, reshaping it, and passing it on to the next generations.

Optimally parents' efforts must be exerted to instill pride in the Armenian language and identity and create a linkage system, whereby children and adolescents utilize the Armenian language or relearn it, transmit it intergenerationally and use it to be “smart.”

Paul Lewis, Ethnologue editor, says, “Languages are not simply a collection of words. They are living, breathing organisms holding the connections and associations that define a culture. When a language becomes extinct, the culture in which it lived is lost, too. When language transmission breaks down, a part of human culture, history, and inherited knowledge is lost forever.

Today certain Greek, Korean, Italian and Chinese communities in the US and Canada are mobilizing to maintain the languages of their forefathers in the diaspora, because they feel proud once more of their heritage. They have begun to develop a positive attitude toward their language, have resolved to benefit from the values offered by their language, have begun to become conscious of the importance of national unity, have grasped the importance of their connectedness to their homeland and have decided to cling to their unique religious beliefs and rites.”

### What Can WE Do?

We can do exactly what the Greeks, Koreans, Italians and Chinese are doing to maintain and revitalize their mother languages. It is as simple as that.

(Arda Jebejian is a sociolinguist in Nicosia, Cyprus.)





# Vartan Gregorian Receives Dean's Medal at Tufts

GREGORIAN, from page 1

in 1911. Prior to his current position, which he assumed in June 1997, Gregorian served for nine years as the president of Brown University.

Born in Tabriz, Iran, to Armenian parents, he

Gregorian is the author of *The Road to Home: My Life And Times*, *Islam: A Mosaic, Not A Monolith*, and *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, 1880-1946*.

He serves on several boards including the

the Institute of Arts and Letters' Gold Medal for Service to the Arts. In 1998, President Clinton awarded him the National Humanities Medal. In 2004, President Bush awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's

by Aso Tavitian. The program sponsors mid-career professionals from Armenia to get a six-month training course at Fletcher. There are currently about 200 graduates of the program in Armenia.

Tavitian expressed his pleasure at hosting Gregorian. "He is an individual that I really and truly admire," he said. He also spoke about the 15 students from Armenia at the Fletcher School. "They are the future of Armenia," he said.

Gregorian spoke at length about the history of philanthropy and the difference between philanthropy and charity. "They are really different sides of the same coin," he said, with charity having a religious origin and philanthropy a secular one.

He traced the history of civil society and philanthropy to the 17th century, when groups formed to fight fires and to light street lamps. Universities, he said, were early recipients of philanthropy. Close to home, he said, John Harvard donated his immense library and land in



Fletcher School's Tavitian Scholars with former Ambassador of Armenia to the US Rouben Shougarian, Dr. Vartan Gregorian and Dr. Joyce Barsam as well as other Tufts faculty members

got his PhD from Stanford. He was the founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania in 1974 and four years later became its provost until 1981. Gregorian served as a president of the New York Public Library, saving it from certain disaster.

National September 11 Memorial and Museum, and the American Academy in Berlin. He has been decorated by the French, Italian, Austrian and Portuguese governments. In 1986, Gregorian was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and in 1989 the American Academy and

highest civil award. In 2009, President Obama appointed him to the White House Fellowships Commission.

The luncheon was sponsored by the Tavitian Scholarship Program at the Fletcher School, which has been funded for the past dozen years



Dr. Vartan Gregorian (left), president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, pictured with Tufts President Anthony Monaco (right) following the presentation of the Fletcher Dean's Medal for achievement in global leadership in the Coolidge Room in Ballou Hall.

Cambridge toward the formation of a university that would later bear his name. Benjamin Franklin, Gregorian said, was also a pioneer in the field, founding in Philadelphia, among many other things, the first public lending library in the world.

Gregorian said that the most famous proponent of free trade and small government, Adam Smith, was a dedicated and early advocate of charitable giving as an obligation for the wealthy.

Gregorian compared and contrasted the most famous modern American names in charitable giving, John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie. The former, he said, approached giving from a religious point of view, as a Baptist. The latter, he explained, did so from a secular approach to create a better society. The list of donations by Carnegie is awe inspiring, ranging from founding 5,400 public libraries in the US, to Carnegie Mellon University, building the Palace of Justice at The Hague, and even giving 7,200 organs to churches throughout the country.

He also paid tribute to two donors in the audience, Carolyn Mugar and Tavitian.

"They have ideas, they invest and they see the results," he said.

He added, "I hope that those Armenians that are here will start that tradition of community organizing in Armenia."

The program ended with a toast to Gregorian by Artur Hovsepyan, one of the Tavitian scholars, and questions from the audience.

The Tavitian scholars are: Armen Aslikyan, Artashes Avagyan, Alina Aznauryan, Sargis Deghoyan, Azat Gabrielyan, Artur Hovsepyan, Anna Kartshikyan, Hayk Malkhasyan, Karen Mukhsyan, Hovhannes Nikoghosyan, Lilit Petrosyan, Zaruhi Postanjyan, Hayk Tutunjian, Artak Yergenyanyan and Hayk Zayimtsyan.

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