

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### FM Congratulates New Swiss Ambassador

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Newly appointed Swiss Ambassador to Armenia Lucas Gaser delivered copies of his credentials to the deputy foreign affairs minister of Armenia, Ashot Hovakimyan.

Hovakimyan congratulated Gaser and said he hoped the new ambassador would contribute to the development of Armenian-Swiss cooperation in various spheres.

During the meeting the officials discussed issues relating to Armenian-Swiss bilateral cooperation. They stressed the importance of further strengthening the political dialogue between the two nations.

### UEFA Suspends Two Armenian Referees

NYON, Switzerland (AP) – The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) says it has suspended two football referees from Armenia while it prosecutes them for match-fixing.

UEFA said referee Andranik Arsenyan and assistant Hovhannes Avagyan, who admitted to compromising a Europa League match for a betting scam, have been suspended until their cases are heard on August 22.

Both officials, who were banned by the Armenian football association on Tuesday, have been approved by FIFA for international matches since January 2012.

UEFA says it “detected suspicious betting patterns” around Vikingur’s 1-0 win at Inter Turku in Finland on July 11. Arsenyan awarded two penalties late in the scoreless match, reportedly to help ensure both teams scored.

### Assembly Comments On OSCE Appointment

WASHINGTON – Upon the appointment of Ambassador James Warlick to serve as the next US co-chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group for the Nagorno-Karabagh peace process, the Armenian Assembly of America reiterated its concerns regarding Azerbaijan’s increased war-rhetoric, ongoing militarization and continued cease-fire violations.

“The Armenian Assembly hopes Ambassador Warlick and his OSCE co-chair counterparts will reintegrate the democratically-elected government of Nagorno-Karabagh into the peace negotiations. Only with their participation and the support of the citizens of Karabagh, who valiantly defended their homeland, can a lasting peace be achieved,” said Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny.

Warlick recently served as deputy special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan and as lead negotiator for the Bilateral Security Agreement with Afghanistan.

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### Groom, Anyone?

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Norman Pashoian outside the Taj Hotel

### Famed Newbury Street Doorman Norman Pashoian Retires after 66 Years

BOSTON (*Boston Globe*) – In his 66 years welcoming guests to Boston’s Taj Hotel, formerly the Ritz Carlton, doorman Norman Pashoian, 85, has greeted heads of state, famous actors and prominent politicians. But the most important person he ever greeted was a young, blond woman he met in summer 1950. He was working the hotel’s Newbury Street entrance; she was at

By Nikita Lalwani

Joseph Antell, the ladies’ shoe shop just across the way.

He waved to her, and she smiled back. Later, she came to say hello in person, staying to chat as he hoisted luggage and held the door. It continued that way for months. She would stop by after work and, sometimes, leave him love notes on the dashboard of his new Ford convertible. Four years later, she was Claire Pashoian, his wife, and, soon, mother to his four children.

“If I hadn’t worked at the Ritz, I never would have met her,” he said. “I courted her for four years, and you don’t do that for just any girl.”

see DOORMAN, page 16

### Armenian Assembly Of America Welcomes Senator Markey

WASHINGTON – Last month, the Armenian Assembly of America board member Annie Totah was invited to the Senatorial inauguration on Capitol Hill and reception for Sen. Edward Markey (D-Mass.).

A long-time proponent of Armenian-American issues, Markey won a special election in June to fill the senate seat vacated by John F. Kerry, who was nominated by President Obama and confirmed as the 68th secretary of state in February of this year. Markey was first elected to the Massachusetts State House in 1973, followed by a nearly 40-year tenure in the US House of Representatives.

“The Armenian Assembly thanks Senator Markey for his decades-long record advancing Armenian-American issues in Congress and looks forward to working with him and his new colleagues to further strengthen the US-Armenia and US-Artsakh relationships, as well as secure unequivocal US reaffirmation of the

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From left, Susan Blumenthal, Sen. Edward Markey and Annie Totah

### Koutoujian Kicks off Grassroots Campaign for Congress Discussing Progressive Values

WALTHAM, Mass. – Surrounded by friends, family, community leaders and supporters, Peter Koutoujian this week launched his grassroots campaign for Congress in front of the building where he attended middle school.

“I’m a kid from Waltham,” said Koutoujian. “My dad was a city clerk here

for 30 years. My mom dedicated her life to teaching. They showed me the value of public service. As a prosecutor, legislator and sheriff, I’m proud to have fought for better nutritional standards in our schools

of supporters in attendance and plans to expand to seven other communities tomorrow, Koutoujian’s grassroots campaign hit the ground running.

Longtime State Representative and for-

### ADL Endorses Peter Koutoujian for Congress

The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party is announcing its endorsement of Peter Koutoujian in his bid to become the newest member of the Massachusetts delegation to the US House of Representatives. He seeks the 5th Middlesex District seat vacated by Edward Markey, who has now become a US senator, replacing John Kerry, who in turn has become Secretary of State.

Koutoujian is currently the sheriff of Middlesex County, the latest in the string of public positions he has held, to great acclaim, including prosecutor at the Middlesex Country District Attorney’s office.

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Peter Koutoujian

and healthier environments in our workplaces. And I’m just as proud to have fought for Cheryl Darisse, whose sister was a victim of stalking that our justice system failed. These are the faces and stories that I’ll bring with me to Congress; they’re why public service is my life’s work.”

Immediately following the rally, Koutoujian and grassroots volunteers knocked on doors throughout Waltham, taking his strong, progressive message to residents of the 5th district. With dozens

mer colleague Tom Stanley introduced Koutoujian, praising his leadership as chairman of the Financial Services and Public Health committees. “There’s no one more capable, more qualified, or more dedicated to fighting for the 5th District than Peter Koutoujian. With more than 20 years of experience in public service, I’m confident he’ll bring an unmatched dedication to the public interest with him to Congress.”

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



## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Protestors Demand Roll-Back of Tuition Hikes

YEREVAN (Hetq) – Opposing tuition hikes that will come into effect this fall in some of Armenia's public colleges, students and others staged a protest in front of the Government Building.

The protestors are demanding that the proposed 30 percent tuition hikes be suspended.

The students wanted to hand a letter containing their demands personally to Prime Minister Tigran Sargsisian, but were instead met by Alexander Ghazaryan who heads the Department of Reception and Petitions.

The protestors vowed to continue their demonstration until they met with Sargsisian.

## Armenia Hires Bankers To Supervise Bond Issue

LONDON (Hetq) – Armenia, rated Baa2 by Moodys and BB by Fitch, has hired Deutsche Bank, HSBC and JP Morgan to lead the issue of its debut US dollar-denominated Eurobond, according to the country's finance ministry.

Armenia plans to use the proceeds to repay the country's \$500 million debt to Russia, which it received in 2009 to help it through the financial crisis.

"The government approved the finance minister's proposal about an agreement with lead-managers to issue Eurobonds. Three companies – Deutsche Bank, HSBC and JP Morgan – have been selected as lead-managers of the issue," the Finance Ministry said in a statement on its website.

## Yerevan International Music Fest in September

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – The Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra presents the seventh International Music Festival dedicated to Aram Khachaturian's 110th birthday. The festival will kick off on September 11, the press service of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra reported.

The festival's opening concert will feature the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra and German violinist Isabelle Faust.

The festival's artistic directors are Alexander Chaushian and Eduard Topchjan.

The festival will run until October 25.

## Premier Announces New Air Transport Policy

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Armenian government will begin implementation of a new air transportation policy in September with the aim of developing tourism, making flights cheaper.

"Tourism is one of our priority directions. Our aim is to increase the number of tourists to three million instead of the current 800,000. For this, we should also develop infrastructures. Two to three star hotels must also be built. It means that we should make tourism cheaper," said Prime Minister Tigran Sargsisian. The concept was scheduled to be discussed with the president on August 13.

## PM Supports Gender Equality Bill

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The aim of a gender equality bill in Parliament is the promotion of women's role in social life, said Prime Minister Tigran Sargsisian this week.

"We see that women are not represented properly today in social life and the main issue is to increase their role. The law regulates such issues. In self-organization of social-life [there are] variations, women are not represented properly in different bodies and the law will regulate the existing gap," he said. Sargsisian explained that there were similar rules in the legislation to ensure that parties give a fifth of their proportional election lists to women.

According to Sargsisian, the number of women in the National Assembly has increased due to these measures.

# Under the Rock: A visit to Karabagh's Qarin Tak Village

By Gayane Mkrtychyan

SHUSHI, Nagorno Karabagh (ArmenianNow) – The Soviet-production Volga-24 car moves with great difficulty against the almost impassable ascent. After a while, the car pulls over and our driver says if he continues a little farther he would be unable to return. We pay him for the ride and cross the rest of the way on foot. After walking down two winding turns, the village comes into our sight, hidden under a massive cliff.

Above shines the diamond of Artsakh (historic name for Nagorno Karabagh) – Shushi, beneath is Qarin Tak. A mighty waterfall streamed down from Shushi and formed Qarin Tak beneath a giant rock (the name literally means 'under the rock'). It is due to the heroic resistance of this settlement nested in the armpit of a magnificent huge rock – Artsvabuyun (Eagle Nest), that Shushi was liberated at the time, giving a major strategic advantage to the Armenian side, crucial for the entire further course of the war (1992-1994) against the Azeris.

"Dear one, our village is a hero. If we had not defended this village, the 'Turks' [people of Karabagh commonly refer to the Azeris as 'Turks'] would have taken all of Karabagh. No way you have not heard about us, this hero-village," said 85-year-old Nora Arushanyan.

Women are all gathered at the village store. Men stand in a group a little farther away. They notice us, strangers, as soon as we enter the village. Seconds later they recognize that they are dealing with reporters and invite us to their places. The war has divided life in Qarin Tak into 'old' and 'new.' The 'old' held almost no social issues, but they lived on the verge of losing their identity, deprived of the right to have ethnic values, the 'new' has plenty of social issues and hardship, but they live on their own land with ownership rights.

"We live with constant fear in our hearts, we visit Shushi, but again with fear. They used to tell us 'you are haram' [illicit, ill-gotten in Turkish], 'Armenians are haram.' Before they would not let us say 'Qarin Tak,' we had to use the Turkish name Dashalti," said the village head's secretary Stella Babayan.

The slogan of Qarin Tak is: "We have liberated ourselves from the 'Turks,' so thank God, let it be a mouthful less, it's ok, we can live with it. What matters most – no more war."

In Qarin Tak every resident is a hero and a chronicler.

Lena Sargsyan, 74, said, "We are Karabagh's gate. If we failed to keep our village at the time, they would have seized all the surrounding villages as well. Long live our village guys, they are good, good men."

The huge rock is locally referred to as "kerts" and every other word is related to "kerts" one way or another. "Darling, right next to the 'kerts,' under the 'kerts,' or 'our kerts.'"

"Right from the top of 'kerts' they rolled down burning wheels and barrels



Lena and Major Sargsyan

onto the village, like rain shells would fall on our heads. On January 26, 1992, the Azeri carried out a large-scale attack with a few hundred soldiers [and] experienced officer personnel. They blocked all roads to the village and tried to suffocate us inside. Nobody left the village, we stayed and fought, young and old, to survive. Eight hours later the Azeri left having incurred heavy losses (150 dead)," said Shurik Gharakhanyan, who knows firsthand what it means to be at war.

Past is where the village's present

would ease the villagers' burden greatly," said Edward Abaghyan, accountant at the village administration.

The two main issues of Qarin Tak are drinking water and improvements needed for the road to the village.

This year the All-Armenia Hayastan Fund completed the first stage of repairs of the village's water supply system in order to create a regular drinking water supply. However, the village still needs a road.

Major Sargsyan, 77, and Lena Sargsyan, 74, have their days filled with memories of bygone and thoughts about their children living abroad. The photographs of their three sons and grandchildren are placed in a corner of a big mirror. Their sons left the village long before the war. One of them settled in Khabarovsk, the

other two in Ashkhabad.

"When my son was in the army in Germany, one of his best buddies turned out to be Azeri. He told his father that his best friend's parents lived in Qarin Tak, 'go see them,' he said. It was during the blockade. One day we saw the 'Turk' pulling over his car loaded with food, fruits and goods, but the 'cup of patience was full' and there was no other way," recalled Lena Sargsyan.

"As soon as the night fell I would put a sack of potatoes over my shoulder



Qarin Tak village

should be, memories of it holding the hopes for the future. What matters, they say, is that the village does not have locked doors, people are not leaving, despite the hardship. Men are engaged in construction in Shushi and Stepanakert, also agriculture and animal breeding. There are 667 people living in Qarin Tak, the school has 110 students, 23 minors attend kindergarten. The village has a natural gas supply.

"There was a silk factory in the village during the Soviet times, people were employed at Shushi's manufacturing entities, villagers did little livestock breeding or farming, because the economic issues could not be solved through those. Hence they are only now trying to develop agriculture there. If an economic entity opened locally it

and go to sow in rows. They stood on the top of the rock, watching to shoot. In the morning I would see I had sowed the rows crooked. It was some life we had, dear, but we had to survive, to continue living," said Major Sargsyan.

He responded to Azeri President Ilham Aliyev's recent war rhetoric this way and said, "Once they ask a barking dog why it keeps barking. The dog says 'I want to bite.' They ask the dog why it is wagging its tail then. The dog says 'I am afraid, to.' They failed to break this small village with hundreds of soldiers."

Major Sargsyan offered a definitive answer to the question of the NKR's international recognition, "One day the international community will recognize [us], because there is a people in this world which fought for its land, for life, for freedom, for independence."



## ARMENIA

# Divers Discover Unexplored World at Bottom of Lake Sevan

By Narek Aleksanyan

YEREVAN (Hetq) – A research team has returned to Sevan this summer to study the basin of the huge mountain lake, called the blue jewel of Armenia.

It's an initiative spearheaded by French-Armenians Claude Tuloumjian and Stepan Kojoyan, who are ably assisted by local emergency services rescuer Vahe Melkonyan and diver Mamikon Hakobyan.

This year, they have been joined by Anna Tutunjan, a specialist in ecological chemistry and hydrology.

"We wanted to do some diving in Armenia, not only for pleasure but do something of benefit," said Kojoyan.

On their first trip to Armenia, they found out that researchers interested in Sevan didn't have diving capabilities.



Diver at Lake Sevan

Kojoyan says they removed silt and mud from the lake bottom, an operation that might not seem all that important to the casual observer, but valuable nevertheless given the hundreds of chemical elements contained in the lake mud. It's great research material for scientists.



The bottom of lake Sevan

The expeditions are organized by the recently-established Armenian Center for Underwater Research and Dives, whose chair is Tuloumjian.

The goal of the team is to collect as many samples of the lake's flora and fauna for eventual study by scientists interested in the lake's geology and eco-system.

The team has also brought various objects to the surface of interest to archaeologists.

"The first time we collected artifacts from the bottom

of the lake, taking photos and videos, it was of great interest to scientists. They had never seen such things," said Kojoyan.

The French-Armenians divers say they also want to develop the sport in Armenia.

Anna, the new scientist on the team, has already become a proficient diver. She plumbs the murky depths with a trained eye, spotting new and interesting things the regular divers miss.

## Sex Education Needed as Sexual Activity Increases among Armenian Teens

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) – The rate of abortion among teenagers ages 15 to 19 in Armenia keeps growing, medical professionals say, citing the change of sexual behavior and lack of sexual education as the main reasons.

By official data, out of the 12,000 abortions in 2011 600 were by teenagers, which makes five percent of the teenage population (per 1,000 women ratio), while in 2009 it was 4.6 percent. Doctors say that in traditional Armenia adolescents now start having sexual intercourse at the age of 14-15, meaning that sexual life starts three years earlier than before, amid lack of respective sexual education and no steps to raise awareness. "In this era of freedom of information the risks connected to not getting proper sexual education are much higher, because it leads to inadequate perception. Our experience shows a growing tendency of unintended pregnancies among teenage girls," obstetrician-gynecologist Donara Alagoyan said in an interview.

Not only Armenia but the entire region is affected by this issue. Post-soviet countries are having a hard time overcoming the "no sex" soviet ideology and the habit of keeping silent about it. Despite the fact that after long resistance and struggle in 2008 the subject of sexual education entered the public school upper grade curricula under "Life Skills" category, containing information on sexual relations and sexually transmittable diseases, the teaching methods and quality are "highly doubtful."

"Certainly, it was a crucial step forward that the subject got introduced in school curricula and annually seven academic hours are devoted to sexual education, but our monitoring has revealed poor tutoring competence, when many among teachers find it difficult to overcome their own complex of openly speaking on the topic," United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Armenia Assistant Representative Garik Hayrapetyan said.

Maternity rates among teenage girls in Armenia make 28.3 percent, meaning that every year more than 1,000 teens give birth. Hayrapetyan says "it is not a dangerous index, as it is not too high comparing with other coun-

tries, but pregnancy and delivery at that age is fraught with serious consequences – it affects women's reproductive health, posing a threat to their ability to conceive another child later."

The need for sexual education was one of the four key topics discussed in Geneva during the United Nations' "Enabling Choices: Population Priorities for the 21st Century" conference on July 1-2. Member of the Geneva conference's High-Level Task Force group on reproductive health issues Anna Nikoghosyan, project manager at Society Without Violence NGO, says the issue of sex education was also included in the final report-agreement of the conference. "It is very important that the conference registered this demand not as simply 'sex education', but with a term 'comprehensive integrated sexual education' implying its introduction as a mandatory and comprehensive school program," she said, adding that what is being taught at schools

today is far not enough. "We have a long way to go in terms of education and availability of assistance. Teens are a very vulnerable target group, the situation is terrible, when often the medical personnel lacks either knowledge or proper approach to the issue, which can have life altering consequences when dealing with teenagers," said Nikoghosyan.

Armenia, nonetheless, is doing better than its neighbors in terms of teenage pregnancy rates. In Georgia, because of the Muslim ethnic minorities, where early marriages are quite common, 39 percent of teenagers get pregnant, in Azerbaijan that index is 40 percent.

Turkey has made tangible progress in this respect cutting the number down to current 29 from the 49 percent of 2001.

"The progress in Turkey is laudable, however more than 90,000 teenage girls get married every year and become mothers, losing their

right for education and with no right to control their own reproductive life, and that's highly disturbing," Pinar Ilkharacan, leading Woman for Woman's Human Rights NGO, said.

Hayrapetyan is convinced that many issues, including the dangerous rates of 12 percent secondary infertility, would be possible to resolve through appropriate sexual education. UNFPA is planning to assist introduction of a sexual education discourse at the State Pedagogical Institute or State Institute of Physical Education, meaning that future teachers will be taught the skills of openly speaking on the topic while still in high school/university, rather than being trained later as is the case now. "This would contribute greatly to training teachers who would teach the subject with high competence, because right now we have the subject in our curricula, and the issue still remains unresolved," said Hayrapetyan.

## US Embassy, Fuller Center for Housing Join to Build Home for Needy Family

YEREVAN – On August 6, the United States Ambassador to Armenia, John A. Heffern, Libby Heffern, and members of the Embassy's Helping Hands organization will join the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) in the village of Ujan (Aragatsotn Region) to build the home of the Aleksanyan family, currently living in substandard and poor conditions.

The US Embassy and FCHA have partnered on home builds since 2008. Every year, staff of the U.S. Embassy works together with FCHA's local and international volunteers. This partnership demonstrates a unique collaboration that is focused on helping people in need. This year, members of the Embassy's Helping Hands organization and FCHA will assist the Aleksanyan family, including the father, the mother, and their four children, ages 15, 14, 4, and 3.

For many years, the Aleksanyans have lived with 12 family members in one small house. In the beginning, the family lived in harmony, but over time the house became very cramped with

two growing families. At one point, Gagik, the father, moved his family to a separate home to give everyone more space. But because of financial difficulties, he could not manage the expenses, and moved back to live again in his parent's home.

"To have a home where my children can have a happy and sustainable life, that's my greatest dream," said Gagik.

For many years, Gagik saved money to build a house for his family. Last year he started the construction, but unfortunately his savings were not enough to complete it; he was losing hope of ever having enough money to provide a home for his family. In the spring he approached the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia for support and assistance.

FCHA President Ashot Yeghiazarian stated, "We are all united in our conviction and dedication to making a difference in the lives of people who are in need of a decent house. This is a basic human right that is vital in everyone's life.

On August 6th, we are honored that Ambassador & Mrs. Heffern, along with members of the Embassy's Helping Hands organization will work with us to build the Aleksanyan's dream home, creating a strong foundation for a happy and stable Armenian family."

The Fuller Center for Housing Armenia is a non-government, charitable organization that supports community development in the Republic of Armenia by assisting in building and renovating simple, decent and affordable homes, as well as advocating the right to a decent shelter as a matter of conscience and action. FCHA provides long-term, interest-free loans to low-income families. The monthly repayments flow into a Revolving Fund, which is used to help more families, thereby providing a financial foundation for a sustainable community development effort. In its five years, the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia has helped 250 families obtain simple, decent and affordable homes.



## International News

### Aznavour to Support Lebanese-Armenians' Charity Initiative

BEIRUT (Armenpress) – The Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Switzerland, renowned singer Charles Aznavour will support the charity initiative of prominent Lebanese-Armenian Yeprem Jewelry Company.

Yeprem has produced a bracelet made of gold and diamonds for a charity auction. Five percent of the bracelet's sale will be directed to the foundation providing assistance to the Armenian schools.

In order to attract the attention of the Armenian and foreign buyers Yeprem representatives got in touch with Aznavour, who welcomed the initiative and promised to help support the charity effort.

### Turkish Wrestler Banned For Insulting Armenians

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) – Turkey's Olympic medalist Riza Kayaalp was banned recently for six months by the International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles (FILA) for his racist remarks against Armenians and Greeks, *Business Standard* reported.

Kayaalp had targeted Greeks and Armenians in his Tweets during the Gezi Park unrest in Turkey. He later deleted the Tweets.

FILA president Nenad Lalovic said that Kayaalp was suspended for his racist tweets from international matches.

"He was given an immediate suspension of six months by the FILA judge and he has the right to appeal," Lalovic said.

### Armenian Foundation Demands Lists of Coded Armenians

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Nazar Ozsahakyan, the chairman of the Holy Three Youths Armenian Church Foundation in the Boyacikoy district, demanded all of the lists of "coded" Armenians from the director general of the Civil Issues Department of Turkey's Ministry of the Interior, Mehmet Guongor.

Documents were recently discovered stating that non-Muslim minorities were secretly coded in Turkey, with Greeks coded as "1," Armenians as "2" and Jews as "3."

Ozsahakyan stated that the information is necessary for the community of Istanbul and the formation of electoral lists.

### Assyrians Call on Kurdish Government to Acknowledge Genocide

ERBIL, Iraqi Kurdistan (Hetq) – The American Mesopotamian Organization and the Iraqi Christian Relief Council challenged the Kurdish Regional Government to issue a formal apology to the Assyrian and Armenian descendants of the survivors of the Genocide committed by the Kurdish allies of the Ottoman Turks against the indigenous Christian populations of the region, during and subsequent to WWI.

In a letter addressed to Masoud Barazani, president of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and in commemoration of Assyrian Martyr's Day of August 7, Assyrians around the world demanded the KRG in northern Iraq formally recognize the Genocide of Assyrians and Armenians at the hands of the Turks and their allies from Kurdish tribes.

In December 2007, the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS), recognized both the Assyrian and Greek genocides (in addition to its 1997 recognition of the Armenian Genocide).

KRG was urged to give the same recognition to Assyrians if it desires to receive from western governments, pertaining to the issue of "Kurdish genocide" at the hands of Saddam's regime.

American Mesopotamian Organization was founded to influence and guide US policy on matters of interest to the Assyrian-American community.

## AGBU Armenian Virtual College Founder Visits Argentina

BUENOS AIRES – AGBU's Armenian Virtual College (AVC), which is used by over 2,700 students from 63 countries, reached even more potential users this spring in Argentina's second largest city, Cordoba. During a recent trip there, AGBU Central Board member Dr. Yervant Zorian, who founded the program in 2009, saw firsthand the positive impact that AVC's digital community is having on the Armenian diaspora.

Dr. Zorian spent a weekend in Cordoba that began at the local AGBU Center, where he met with Chapter leaders and members of both the Youth League (Liga de Jóvenes) and the Ladies Committee. He spoke with local youth who have already taken advantage of AVC, as well as dozens of prospective students who wanted to explore the AVC course offerings in Armenian culture, history and language. Pointing to the success of the AGBU Marie Manoogian School in Buenos Aires, which has incorporated AVC into its current curriculum, Zorian discussed the possibility of doing the same in Cordoba's Armenian elementary and middle schools.

The AGBU meeting was attended by AGBU Cordoba Chair Javier Petenian; President of the Armenian Community of Cordoba Eduardo Guedikian and his Steering Committee; Pastor of the Saint Kevork Church of Cordoba Father Ieremia Khachatryan; and former AGBU Cordoba chairs Artin Bilikian, Ricardo Erezian, Juan



Students at the AGBU Marie Manoogian School in Buenos Aires take advantage of the Armenian Virtual College courses that are a part of their current curriculum.

Guedikian, Juan Nourikhan and Adriana Torcomian. They, along with the chapter's youngest members and students from the nearby schools, turned to Dr. Zorian with questions on how AVC connects international students. As he explained, "When we designed AVC, we wanted to give Armenians scattered across the globe, especially those who don't have access to traditional, face-to-face Armenian educational programs, the opportunity to both deepen their Armenian language skills and connect with their

Armenian peers. By providing courses at different skill levels and allowing for virtual interaction among classmates, we accomplished just that."

Zorian's Cordoba trip also included a visit to the Saint Kevork Church and a tour of the nearby Sahag Mesrob School with AGBU Central Board Member and Buenos Aires Chapter Chair Rubén Kechichian. To learn more about the AGBU community in Cordoba, email chapters@agbu.org.

For more information on AVC, visit: <http://www.avc-agbu.org>.

### Turkey Critical Partner for Russia, says Ambassador Karlov

MOSCOW (*Today's Zaman*) – Russia's newly appointed ambassador to Turkey, Andrey Karlov, has stated that Turkey is one of the most important Russian partners in the region, adding that the two countries are playing a more active role in boosting bilateral ties.

"Russian-Turkish relations are developing in various fields, including the economy, politics, tourism and culture,

and a few days ago Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdo an had a telephone conversation with President [Vladimir] Putin. We are doing our utmost to maintain and intensify this tempo," Karlov said in an interview during his visit to the Turkish-Russian Cultural Center in Moscow on Monday.

Karlov stated that the main target is to triple the trade volume between the

two countries. "Trade and economic ties are not growing by themselves. We need to increase our trade volume from \$34 billion to \$100 billion and therefore need to advance regional cooperation," Karlov said, adding that he plans to concentrate on working towards further developing the ties in this field. He specifically noted that it has already been two weeks since he began having meetings with regional representatives and managers deeply interested in trade, economic and investment cooperation with Turkey. "Our duty is to help the connections be established between the two sides in the region," Karlov added.

Moscow calls on Turks to frequently visit Russia

Describing Turkey as an important political partner of Russia, Karlov said Turkey is one of the first countries Russians are interested in visiting. However, he said, "The number of Turks visiting Russia is very low, unfortunately," and added that he does not think "Russia is less beautiful than Turkey."

Mentioning 3.6 million Russian citizens who traveled to Turkey last year, Karlov called on Turks to frequently visit Russia.

"Russia is the world's largest country, extending from east to west, and from north to south. There are lots of places in the country that one may enjoy visiting. Also, our country [Russia] lives in cooperation with neighboring cultures. I am aware of the huge interest both Russian and Turkish artists get in both Turkey and Russia," Karlov said.

Noting that his team is going to work for the development of several great projects between Russia and Turkey, Karlov specifically cited great efforts made by Vladimir Ivanovski, former Russian ambassador to Turkey, saying that Ivanovski represented Russia very well and that he himself will continue carrying on the same tradition.

### Activists Who Reported 'Putin's Palace' Jailed

MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) – Four environmental activists in southern Russia who once made controversial allegations about real estate linked to Russian President Vladimir Putin have been given lengthy jail terms for extorting money from a real estate developer, Russian media reported.

The Gelendzhik Human Rights Center activists in the Krasnodar Region received jail terms of between eight and 13 years on extortion charges.

The four were convicted of forcing a real estate developer to pay them 2 million rubles (\$61,000) by threatening to harass him with complaints over an apartment building he had built in Gelendzhik with alleged violations.

The activists denied the accusations, saying in court the money was to be a payment for a legal out-of-court settlement they had negotiated on behalf of a resident, but denying they had taken the money themselves, the report said.

They also complained about police torture, reporting beatings and being burned with cigarettes. One activist said police had sexually assaulted him, *Novaya Gazeta* reported last year, adding that local investigators had thrown out all the complaints.

No information about the verdict was available on the website of the Gelendzhik City Court on Monday after-

noon, and it was not immediately clear when the sentence had been issued. *Novaya Gazeta* said an appeal hearing was set for Thursday.

The rights center was targeted after it mounted a crackdown on illegal gambling clubs in Gelendzhik.

The group was the first to report in 2009 the existence of an opulent mansion near Gelendzhik allegedly built for Putin with numerous environmental violations. The Kremlin denied involvement in the project, dubbed "Putin's Palace" by bloggers and the media, and Putin's spokesman said Putin, then the prime minister, had nothing to do with the mansion.

The center also reported together with the Environmental Watch North Caucasus group in 2011 the construction of a so-called dacha for the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, also saying it was being built with violations.

Rights activists in the Krasnodar Region have run into trouble with the authorities before. The head of Environmental Watch North Caucasus, Suren Gazaryan, was granted asylum in Estonia in June after he was included on Russia's wanted list for threatening to kill a guard at "Putin's Palace," a charge he said was fabricated.

# Community News

## Monumental Decision in Pasadena

By André Coleman

PASADENA (*Pasadena Weekly*) – Although the Pasadena Parks and Recreation Commission unanimously voted to accept the design of a monument honoring victims of the Armenian Genocide, it left the final decision of where the memorial should be placed up to the City Council.

The commission backed off from making a decision after a handful of local residents voiced opposition to putting the memorial – designed by 26-year-old Art Center College of Design student Catherine Menard – in Memorial Park, located on the northeastern edge of Old Pasadena. Prior to the meeting, opponents of the plan met briefly with City Manager Michael Beck to express their concerns.

The council is expected to take up the matter on September 9.

“We received a couple of emails and comments,” said Beck, who appeared not to be swayed by the arguments. “We did look at other parks. Ultimately, from a staff perspective, we still think Memorial Park is the best location, but we are taking one more look to see what other locations might exist.”

In letters and during the public comment portion of last week’s meeting, opponents said they were against using the park because it has traditionally been used to honor American war veterans. Located on the corner of North Raymond Avenue and Walnut Street, Memorial Park contains tributes to local residents that lost their lives fighting in the Civil War and Vietnam. The Vietnam War memorial was a project started by Bill Paparian, a former US Marine, while he was on the City Council in the late 1990s. That memorial was first placed in Central Park, south of Colorado Boulevard, between South Fair Oaks and Raymond avenues, but was later reinstalled at Memorial Park.

The roughly five-acre park also contains the Levitt Pavilion amphitheater, which attracts hundreds of people during the summer when concerts are held there.

Paparian, who chairs of the Pasadena Genocide Memorial Committee (PASAGMC), which commissioned Menard’s design, did not return phone calls seeking comment for this story.

According to Parks and Recreation Commission Member Donabed Donabedian, a quarter of the 16 people who spoke at the meeting opposed the use of the Memorial Park. The remaining dozen speakers at the meeting were for the idea.

One person against the plan was Old Pasadena businesswoman Debbie Meymarian.

“My grandparents were all genocide survivors and I couldn’t be more proud of my family or my heritage,” Meymarian wrote to the commission. “However, I think that the placement of the proposed memorial in Memorial Park is perhaps short-sited and misguided. All of the commemorations in the park have to do with United States servicemen and women. What is to keep another ethnic group in this city from wanting a memorial to their ancestors in Memorial Park?”

Where does it stop? Surely, there is a more appropriate place to honor our ancestors.”

Emina Darakjy, a longtime resident and a member of the city’s Urban Forestry Advisory Committee, also opposes using Memorial Park as a location for the memorial. Darakjy’s husband’s grandparents escaped to the United States after witnessing the murder of several family members during the Armenian Genocide

see PASADENA, page 7



From left, at Raytheon Awards Ceremony, Mike Shaughnessy, vice president, Raytheon IDS Integrated Supply Chain; Alex Karapetian, director of sales and marketing, Acopian Power Supplies and Robert Curbeam, vice president, Raytheon IDS Mission Assurance

## Acopian Is Tower of Power Supplies for a Half a Century

EASTON, Penn. (*Lehigh Valley Business Journal*) – A nuclear power plant with a 30-year-old part that no longer worked called Acopian Technical Co. and within days, it had a replacement part that may have otherwise been obsolete.

“They thought for sure that they would not be able to find a place that would be able to help them, but we made their power supply and shipped it to them so they had it in three days,” said Alex Karapetian, director of sales and marketing at Acopian, adding that other power supply man-

ufacturers likely would not have been able to replace that old part.

Karapetian credits advances in technology for allowing Acopian to provide customers with customized orders that fit their needs. He says the company’s goal is to get the customer a product within three days and offer a five-year warranty.

Run by an Armenian-American family, Acopian has been in the Lehigh Valley for more than 50 years. Karapetian’s uncle, the late Sarkis Acopian, founded the business in 1956 with the policy to remain American-made and never outsource and today his family goes by the same philosophy.

Acopian supplies power components for a variety of markets such as computing, research labs, medical, telecommunications, military, automotive, aerospace, amusement and entertainment. Some of the company’s accomplishments include helping to power the New Year’s Eve ball at Times Square each year and producing a part used in the lighting at the Oscar and Grammy award shows.

“Some well-known companies use our power supply [such as,] Boeing, JPL Research Labs, Disney, GE, to name a few,” Karapetian said. “What we make is an electronic AC-DC and DC-DC power component.”

Sarkis Acopian, a man before his time, invented the Acopian Solar Radio. The solar concept was perhaps too revolutionary for that time period. So he focused on manufacturing power supplies, a product he knew from experience that was in short supply.

“One day [while working as an electrical contractor], Sarkis was asked to locate an emergency power supply, and, when he could not find one, he built one and finished the job,” and the idea for a business started to take form, Karapetian said.

Acopian now has a workforce of 140 at two locations: its corporate office in Easton and a manufacturing facility in Melbourne, Fla.

Brothers Greg and Jeff Acopian, sons of Sarkis Acopian, run the Easton location. Two other members of the family, Ezra Acopian, purchasing and facilities manager, and Jeff Calhoun, production supervisor, work in Florida.

It is Karapetian’s job to extend the company’s online reach by maintaining the Acopian website, blog, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

see ACOPIAN, page 7



Sarkis Acopian, founder of Acopian

## Alleged Armenian Gang Members Charged in Craigslist Robbery

LOS ANGELES (CBSLA.com) – Two San Fernando Valley men faced robbery charges Tuesday after they allegedly held a man at gunpoint and stole an iPhone during a meeting set up through Craigslist.

Levon Iskandaryan, 23, and Mambreh Khachian, 33, were arrested after meeting up with a Panorama City man who advertised computer equipment for sale on Craigslist, according to the Los Angeles Police Department.

Iskandaryan and Khachian showed up with a third suspect at a McDonald’s restaurant at 9107 Van Nuys Blvd. around 8 p.m. on August 3 and made contact with the victim in the parking lot, police said.

When Iskandaryan saw the seller was holding an iPhone 5, he allegedly coerced the man to a nearby vehicle by claiming the rear passenger was pointing a gun at him, according to police.

The victim followed Iskandaryan to a gray Toyota Solara, where Khachian was holding a gun and a third man was seated in the driver’s seat, police said. Iskandaryan then grabbed the phone from the victim, and the two engaged in a brief struggle.

When the victim lost his grip on the phone, the car door shut, but caught his clothing and dragged him for several feet as the car sped away, tearing his clothes and scraping and burning his skin, according to police.

Detectives pinged the phone and traced the signal to a house in the 7900 block of Hillrose Street in Sunland.

Officers went to the residence and spotted the gray Toyota, but waited until Khachian left the house in the vehicle around midnight to detain him, according to police.

Officers conducted a search of the house, where police say Iskandaryan lived with his parents, and found Iskandaryan inside. Since he was on probation for other crimes, officers were able to search the house without a warrant, but did not find any iPhone.

Police say before their arrests, Iskandaryan and Khachian went back to Craigslist and contacted a person who listed a want ad for an iPhone 5. They later met the potential buyer at a Starbucks in Glendale and sold the stolen iPhone for \$350.

“There’s nothing new from this angle of crooks targeting sellers for robbery, but it’s what they did afterward to sell the stolen phone that surprised us,” said Lt. Paul Vernon, commanding officer of the Mission Detective Division.

Police say both men were documented members of AP, or Armenian Power, a local street gang. Neither Khachian and Iskandaryan would provide police with the name of the third man, who was driving the car.

The man, described as Armenian with a chrome bracelet and green eyes, was allegedly dropped off in North Hollywood after the robbery, but before the phone was fenced, according to police.

Iskandaryan and Khachian were booked for armed robbery and their bails were each set at \$125,000.

Police hope that by publicizing this case, the unwitting buyer will come forward and surrender the iPhone so detectives don’t have to track it down. They also believe there may be additional victims and unwitting buyers linked to the suspects.

Anyone with information about the suspects or the case was urged to visit LAPDOnline.org.



## OBITUARY

# Jeff Tanielian Loved Fresno, its History

By Pablo Lopez

FRESNO (*Fresno Bee*) — Jeff Tanielian was a workaholic free-spirit who made a living by creating neon signs. He loved family, friends and church, and hated to see Fresno destroy its history.

When the old Outpost restaurant closed at Olive and Chestnut avenues in 1997, he bought the eatery's neon sign and restored it.

The sign now hangs inside his northwest Fresno business, Commercial Neon, among dozens of other neon signs that he saved from the wrecking ball.

He also collected motorcycles. He had about two dozen of them, including a 1968 Norton 750 and a 1972 Bulltaco flat track racer that he keeps in his northwest Fresno office.

Tanielian died July 18 after crashing a 2008 Ducati DS1100 motorcycle on a sweeping curve on Highway 25 in the backroads of Monterey County. He was 57.

"It was a freak accident," said his wife, Susan Tanielian. "It still hard to believe it happened." In addition to his wife, Tanielian leaves behind two children, Andromeda and Arlen, and a legacy of commercial neon signs that dot Fresno and the Valley.

Among his creations is a tall neon sign along Highway 99 in north Fresno that tells the time and temperature to passing motorists. His company also created the 85-foot Tachi Palace casino sign in Lemoore — one of largest neon signs in the California when it built around 1997.

Friends and family said Tuesday that Tanielian died doing what he loved: riding a motorcycle on an open road with the wind in his face.

"He was very cool in everything he did," said longtime friend, Carrie Zulewski, of Fresno.

Zulewski recalled that Tanielian liked to make people feel special. She recalled that she once organized a dinner event and Tanielian made a bumper sticker that said "the Z team" and handed them out to guests.

"Everybody laughed, but they loved them," Zulewski said. "The stickers ended up all over town."

Tanielian also had a serious side. He loved his church — the downtown Holy Trinity Armenian Church — and often reflected how fortunate he was to live in Fresno, especially since his ancestors endured the Armenian Genocide.

"He never forgot his past," said Mark Arax, who wrote about Tanielian in his book, *West of the West: Dreamers, Believers, Builders, and Killers in the Golden State*.

In a chapter called, "Confessions of an Armenian Moonshiner," Tanielian is called Suren after his grandfather. The setting is his ranch in the town of Biola near the San Joaquin River. He collected worldly goods such as pinball machines, guitars, neon signs, roadsters and motorcycles, and had no clue about farming grapes.

But he tells Arax he's at peace because he had a ranch manager to take care of the crop. "I just walk the rows and take a deep breath," he said.

Born in Fresno, Tanielian attended

Norseman Elementary School, Yosemite Middle School, and McLane High School. An only child, his parents, Harry and Flora Tanielian, owned the Cedar-Olive liquor store.

When his father sold the liquor store, his son kept the sign.

As a teenager, Tanielian developed a passion for motorcycles and cars. "He was a genius when it came to engines," said Arax, 56, who met Tanielian at church Sunday school. "He could tear apart any engine and rebuild it."

He also was great at pin-stripping cars, Arax said.

Susan Tanielian said her husband showed a flair for sign painting as a kid, when he and his aunt Helen Torigian would paint Christmas settings on store windows all over town.

From McLane, Jeff Tanielian went to Los Angeles to work for a company that pin-stripped cars. At age 21, he returned to Fresno and worked for Arnold Signs during the week and traveled to car and motorcycle shows on the weekends, his wife said. Once he became a master of both pin-stripping and hand lettering, he left Arnold Signs and went to work for Ed Antenucci Signs to learn the art of making electric and neon signs.

During the day, Tanielian made patterns for signs. At night, he learned the neon craft from Howard Lund, his wife said.

After mastering the trade, Tanielian started his own company in a garage he built next to his home on Thesta Avenue near Olive Avenue. He later purchased Ward Sign and Graphics, turning it into Commercial Neon. The business was on Barstow Avenue near Highway 99 for 13 years before it moved to a four-acre site on Golden State Boulevard. When it opened in January 2000, it was the largest sign fabrication company in the Valley, Susan Tanielian said.

Though Tanielian was a workaholic, his wife said he joined the Indian Guides with Andromeda and coached all of Arlen's sports teams. He also was a past president and board member emeritus of the California Sign Association. In addition, he was a member of the Fresno Exchange Club and past president and board member of his church.

He often held fund-raisers at his business for local charities, including for the river parkway and the California Armenian Home.

Tanielian was with friends and headed to the Laguna Seca track to watch motorcycle races when he crashed and hit a barb-wire fence, and then a metal pole, the California Highway Patrol said.

His last project was pin-stripping his 1932 Ford Roadster, which he had finished shortly before his last birthday on July 11, his wife said.

"He was so creative and so organized," Susan Tanielian said. "He packed 150 years in his 57 years of living."

In addition to his wife and children, he is survived by his mother, Flora.

His funeral was held at Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. He was buried at Masis Ararat Armenian Cemetery next to his father, Harry.

Remembrances can be made to Holy Trinity Courtyard Renovation Fund, 2226 Ventura Ave., Fresno, CA, 93721.



Jeff Tanielian died July 18 in a motorcycle crash in Monterey County. Tanielian was the owner of Commercial Neon.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS



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## Acopian Is Tower of Power Supplies

ACOPIAN, from page 5

"It is comforting to work with family, knowing you can always rely on them and trust that everyone is looking out for the best interest of the business and each other," he said. "There is a feeling of not wanting to let your family down that drives me to work harder. I am proud to be a part of something that my family has worked so hard to create and grow here in America."

Recently, the company received a Three Star Supplier Excellence Award in recognition of its performance as a supplier for Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems. Raytheon, which has thousands of suppliers, honors a select number at its annual awards ceremony, according to Karapetian.

"There are lots of companies that strive to be the best," he said. "We always try to make a reliable product, and you won't contact us and get an automated system. You get an actual person on the phone. We do everything to ensure that our customers come back to us."

Purchasing manager Chad Peterson of Erdman Automation in Minnesota has been Acopian's customer for more than five years. He said Acopian has pulled his company out of a

bind several times by getting Erdman's machines running properly again.

"Acopian has provided a good product that has helped us be competitive because of the competitive prices and their technology," Peterson said. "I like Acopian because they reply right away and follow through on orders and emergencies."

Acopian's founder was known as a charitable man, personally and professionally, and the company continues to make an impact in the community.

Sarkis and wife Bobbye Acopian supported the Acopian Engineering Center at Lafayette College, Acopian Center for Ornithology at Muhlenberg College, the Acopian West Campus at the Children's Home of Easton, the Acopian Ballroom at the State Theatre in Easton and the Acopian Center for Conservation and Learning at Hawk Mountain.

The Acopians also made one of the largest donations to the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC, information that was kept secret until after he died in 2007.

"Sarkis Acopian was many things — a mechanical engineer, inventor, patriot and philanthropist," Karapetian said.

## Monumental Decision in Pasadena

PASADENA, from page 5

"I like the design," Darakjy wrote in an email. "I think the monument should be built. However, I do not think the monument should be erected in a park that has become a sacred ground for memorials for US servicemen and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice defending our nation. Besides the Vietnam memorial and the Union soldier commemorating the Civil War, the perimeter of the park has banners honoring the Pasadena servicemen who lost their lives during the Iraq War."

Darakjy said another major concern is the size of the park, which she said is too cramped.

"The site is too small for such a monument, which will draw thousands of people every April 24, a day of remembrance for the Armenian community, when stores and restaurants close," stated Darakjy. "Are we going to have to close down Walnut, Holly and Raymond streets every April 24 to accommodate the crowds?"

The Armenian Genocide Memorial is expected to be unveiled April 24, 2015. The memorial's circular design features a 16-foot-tall tripod at its

center. From the apex of the three beams will fall a single drop of water every 21 seconds, totaling 1.5 million drops.

"We are certainly sensitive to the feeling that the park is not the right location," said former Pasadena Police Chief Bernard Melekian, a member of the PASAGMC. "But it is equally important to note we have gone through the entire city process and the memorial fits the use of what was intended for the park. We're comfortable with that part of it and a number of Armenian veterans, myself and Bill Paparian included, are going to speak to why we think it is important to put it there. We are memorializing one of the defining events in the 20th century."

Since the US Census does not classify Armenian as a race and many Armenians register as white, it is difficult to estimate how many Armenians live in Pasadena. However, according to church membership rolls, there are about 20,000 Armenian Americans living locally. Neighboring Glendale has the highest percentage of residents of Armenian descent in the United States. That city commemorates the genocide every year on April 24 in front of City Hall with a resolution acknowledging the Great Crime, which began in 1915 and ended in 1923, killing 1.5 million Armenians, who had been hanged, poisoned, drowned or marched into the desert to die at the hands of soldiers from the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The Pasadena City Council has been issuing an annual proclamation commemorating the Armenian Genocide on April 24 for more than 30 years.

Turkish Deputy Consul General Arif Celik voiced his opposition to the project on an Aug. 9 visit to Pasadena Deputy City Manager Julie Gutierrez.

Congressman Adam Schiff (D-Burbank) renewed his longstanding calls this year for the United States to formally acknowledge the genocide. During the 2008 election, then-candidate Barack Obama promised that he would recognize the genocide if elected, but later went back on his word.

"I urge you to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide in your statement this year, to call genocide genocide and to stand with the ever-dwindling number of survivors, as well as the descendants of those who were lost, and who must otherwise continue to suffer the indignity, injury and pain of denial," wrote Schiff in a letter to the president.

Meanwhile, members of the Armenian Community Coalition (ACC) an alternative group led by former City Council candidate Chris Chahanian, which broke off from the PASAGMC, presented the city with an update on its separate plans for a memorial.

"It was a meet and greet," said Pasadena Public Information Officer William Boyer. "They wanted to update us with their plans. So far, nothing has been submitted."

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Detroit Armenia Fest Enjoys Record Attendance

ROYAL OAK, Mich. — On Saturday, July 20, the Metro Detroit Armenia Fest Committee and the local chapter of the Knights of Vartan hosted the sixth annual Armenia Fest at the Royal Oak Farmers Market. The Fest was conceived to honor and showcase Armenian culture, food, dance and music and has become one of the area's most anticipated events, attracting thousands of compatriots and guests.

A year in the planning, the 2013 fest featured a rich collage of Armenian culture. Local vendors lined the market offering homemade Armenian food, Armenian crafts, jewelry and cultural exhibits. A fortuneteller was reading coffee cups while a clown entertained the children with balloon animals.

The program began with introductions by Co-Chair David Terzibashian and MC Vaughn Masropian. Presentation of the flags and the American and Armenian anthems were performed a capella by renowned vocalist Deacon



The young dancers impressed the crowd.



From left, Ray Boujoulian, Sheriff Michael Bouchard and David Terzibashian

Rubik Mailian. Co-Chair Corinne Khederian recognized and introduced the visiting elected officials and dignitaries. The Armenia Fest All-Star Band, under the direction of committee member Masropian, provided live traditional Armenian and contemporary music, including

violinist Harry Hovakimian and vocalists Sam Alajajian and Ani Patterson (née Atikian), enticing guests to dance and dance they did!

A highlight of the evening was two performances by the Arax Hamazkayin Dance Troupe. These beautiful Armenian youth trained in the art of Armenian folk dance provided flawless performances with beautiful costuming and choreographed dance routines. Their enthusiasm and talent brought the crowd to their feet

with much applause.

Two lucky guests went home with raffle items donated by supporters Hagopian World of Rugs (a beautiful "Ararat" rug) and Ed Karamanian (adult mountain bike and helmet).

It was a very special night of camaraderie, pride and fun for a good cause. Organizers look forward to the community's continued support and participation in Armenian Fest 2014.

The Fest is free and open to the public and serves as a fundraiser for Armenian humanitarian causes. From this year's proceeds the sum of \$4,000 was donated to the Syrian Armenian

Relief fund to be distributed through the AGBU and the Armenian Relief Society's concerted efforts.

The Metro Detroit Armenia Fest Committee is a composed of local Armenian-American activists dedicated to presenting programs like Armenia Fest that unite the community and celebrate Armenian heritage. Committee members are Ed Bedikian, David Terzibashian, Corinne Khederian, Agop Alexanian, Ray Boujoulian, Ken Khezarian, Paul Kulhanjian, Shirley Sarkisian, Angela Hagopian Snow and Madeline Thomasian.



Musicians Vaughn Masropian (left) and Harry Hovakimian



The members of the planning committee

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# New Group Raises Funds, Awareness to Battle Leukemia

HOLLYWOOD — #IWEARORANGE, a non-profit organization, had its first blood drive Saturday July 27, at Los Angeles Children's Hospital (CHLA), 4560 Sunset Blvd. Approximately 80 people had signed up for the blood drive using social media sources, specifically Facebook. The blood drive was a success due to family, friends and walk-ins, who all came in and proudly, donated their blood to benefit Leukemia patients. With the support of Bruce Redack and director Dr. Ajay Perembuti, who were checking on the donors, overseeing the

hand to make sure every donor was qualified to donate. The screening process involved filling out questionnaires about the donor's history and a physical exam where a small sample of blood was taken in order to make sure that donors were eligible to donate (eligibility was determined upon various different criteria's in which each donor was expected to meet). As donors were approved, they were guided to a larger room specifically designated for the #IWEARORANGE Blood Drive. Once in the room and ready to donate one pint of blood was drawn from each donor. On average, one pint of blood helps save three lives, however, each pint is usually tested further to match donors producing 50-percent loss factor; hence the ongoing purpose of blood drives to help support patients suffering from leukemia.



With Gaspar Melikyan and board members Armen Melikyan, Nellie Plouzian, Peter Blikian, Kristine Chakmayan, Paul Gayon and Maral Yeranossian

Melikyan, a 21-year-old leukemia survivor, started this organization along with his brother, Armen Melikyan, and five board members, Nellie Prouzian, Peter Blikian, Kristin Chakmayan, Dr. Paul Gaynon and Dr. Maral Yeranossian.

The mission of # IWEARORANGE is to promote Leukemia awareness, while supporting affected individuals and families, and to collect funds towards treatment and research through philanthropic events, merchandise sales, and social media connections.

process and making sure everyone was comfortable, this blood drive could surely be deemed as a success. Raul Gonzales, CHLA Blood Donor Recruiter, was impressed by the efforts put forth by the organization. Gonzales personally acknowledged Gaspar Melikyan, the founder, telling him that "[He] proved to [him] that [#IWEARORANGE] can take it to the next level."

Donating blood takes roughly 10 minutes; however, doctors, nurses and staff of CHLA made sure every donor was screened before-

ment and research through philanthropic events, merchandise sales, and social media connections. # IWEARORANGE raises money by selling different types of apparel, such as T-Shirts, bracelets and other paraphernalia advertising Leukemia awareness. Fundraising events and activities including mobile blood drives and support groups are also in the plans of the organization donating 100% of the profits, after expenses, to raise awareness and aid research.

The group's website is IWEARORANGE.com.



# Geoffrey Zakarian Has Become Culinary Director of the Plaza

NEW YORK (*New York Times* and NJ.com) — Geoffrey Zakarian has become the culinary director of the hotel, where he will be responsible for reinvigorating the iconic Palm Court and eventually resurrecting the Oak Room, which reopened five years ago after extensive restoration and much fanfare, but then closed yet again. He will also supervise food and beverages for the Oak Bar, Rose Club and Champagne Bar and for room service.

He was tapped for the job by Sant Singh Chatwal, the owner of Chatwal Hotel in the theater district, where Zakarian has been running the Lambs Club restaurant.

Last fall, Chatwal's company, Sahara Hampshire Hotel Management, won a 20-year contract to manage food and beverages for the Plaza.

Zakarian has been in hotel restaurant kitchens since 1987; he also runs the National Bar and Dining Rooms in the Benjamin Hotel. High on his to-do list at the Plaza is the Palm Court, where he hopes changes will be completed by early 2014.

"I want to leave as much as we can in place, the way they do with the great old restaurants in Paris," he said. The Palm Court now serves breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea.

Across the river, in Atlantic City, Zakarian is busy at the Borgata. On August 16-18, Zakarian, an Iron Chef on the program of the same name on the Food Network, will open the first ever pop-up restaurant presentation of his Manhattan restaurant, The Lambs Club, inside Borgata's 28 West restaurant with a four-course menu priced at \$89 per person.

During the weekend, Zakarian will host a culinary demonstration at Borgata's Music Box theater on Saturday, in addition to book signings on Saturday and Sunday in the restaurant.

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8:00 PM

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# Arts & Living

## Diyarbakir Exodus Chronicles Memories Of Three Families

By Gabriella Gage  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

MADISON, Wisc. — The late Josephine Mangasarian's *Diyarbakir Exodus* is more than the story of a singular life; the memoir is an extensive family history — the interconnected stories of Mangasarian's mother's, father's and husband's families — between the years 1895 and 1927. In April, the Mangasarian family published her unfinished memoir.

In 1905, Josephine Mangasarian's father, Achod Amassian, had accepted a transfer from his post at the Diyarbakir telegraph office at the mysterious urging of the telegraph office's director and relocated his young family there — roughly a 15-day journey. Her family was in Aleppo at the time of the Genocide and deportations and she watched as countless relatives came to Aleppo seeking refuge. At one time, 20 people lived in her family home, many friends and family who had fled the massacres.

Josephine Mangasarian wrote of how she collected these stories, saying, "The events that I have described in this family memoir are all true. The account of these incidents was related to me by the survivors who took refuge in my family's home in Aleppo." Her father's position at the telegraph office afforded her access to secret messages that he decoded corroborating the mass killings and much of what she learned was confirmed by eyewitness accounts from family members.

The publication of *Diyarbakir Exodus* itself was a family endeavor. Josephine Mangasarian had begun the work with three detailed genealogical charts completed in her late 80s.



Josephine Amassian Mangasarian

From there, she wrote 270 pages by hand about her family and the events during this time period.

Josephine Mangasarian died in 2002 before she could complete the section on the 35 years of her life spent in Baghdad, Iraq after they left Syria. Her son, John Mangasarian, had already begun aiding his mother in her endeavor by transcribing and typing her handwritten pages. Upon her death, he continued editing and assembling the materials for the book until he passed the torch to his sister-in-law, Claire Mangasarian, in 2010. In 2011, John Mangasarian died and she continued editing and assembling the manuscript. Claire Mangasarian, a painter, had experience assembling memoirs after she had put together and published her own grandfa- see EXODUS, page 12



Zarig Baghdadian and Katherine Sabbagh during rehearsal at the Tekeyan Cultural Center in Englewood, NJ

## 'Where's Your Groom?'

### Young Group Prepares for Humerous Play on Culture

NEW YORK — Among the many concerns Armenian parents around the Diaspora face, there is one universal question that stands out: Will our children marry an Armenian? Will they be able to continue our Armenian heritage?

The play, "Where is Your Groom?" (Pesad Oor Eh), written, produced and co-directed by Taleen Babayan, raises these questions of identity, assimilation and generational divides in a comedic manner.

"Where Is Your Groom?" will debut at The Players Theatre in New York's Greenwich Village on Saturday, October 26. A special guest appearance will be made by international musician Robert Chilingirian.

Taking place in the present day but emulating the voices of older generations, the story revolves around an Armenian-American family who is concerned that their daughter, Lara, has not found a suitable Armenian *pesa* (groom). The patriarch of the family, Koko, enlists his wife, Siroun, son Saro and mother-in law, known endearingly as "Medz Mayrig," to find young Armenian men for Lara to meet. What ensues is the introduction of humorous characters as potential suitors who serve as caricatures of all different "types" of Armenians — from Armenia to America to Iran to Turkey and to Lebanon.

"It doesn't matter where in the diaspora we're from or what cultural nuances we grew up with," said Babayan, 28, who is the producer of a Brooklyn-based news show. "At our core, we are Armenian and we shoulder the same responsibilities, traditions and old-word expectations regardless if we're born in New York, Beirut or Istanbul."

The play struck a chord with young Armenian-Americans in the New Jersey area and a cast and crew of over 20 enthusiastic individuals have come together to bring the play to life. While many are newcomers to the stage, they only needed their cultural ties to serve as motivation to be involved in the performance.

"From the first moment I heard about the play, I was immediately interested," said Katherine Sabbagh, 21, a student at Ramapo College who plays the role of Siroun. "Being with Armenians and expressing my personality through the arts is important to me."

"When I heard about this play, I instantly knew I wanted to be involved no matter the time commitment," said Zarig Baghdadian, 23, who works at the HB Group in New York, and who is playing the role of Lara. "I'm so happy to be part of this very relatable play by a talented writer and I'm hoping we'll take this play to other cities with Armenian communities as well."

The play has not only given young Armenian-Americans the opportunity to meet fellow Armenians and connect with their culture in a new way, it's also given those with an interest in acting a chance to try it out in a friendly atmosphere.

"I've always wanted to act, so this was a good opportunity to really get into it amongst Armenian peers," said Jiro Khorozian, 25, who works in real estate and who is playing the role of Jiro the Jeweler. "Maybe this play will inspire me to take up acting."

"When I read the script, I was immediately drawn to the character of the father Koko and I knew this was something I wanted to commit my limited free time to,"

see PLAY, page 11

## Northampton's Poet Laureate Reviews a New Collection from David Kherdian

By Richard Michelson

NORTHAMPTON, Mass. (Valley Advocate) — Four years ago a world-class poet moved to Northampton, city of poets. Perhaps you read about it in the newspaper headlines. Or you would have if poetry was celebrated in the manner of other arts. But David Kherdian settled in quietly and went about the business of writing poems, as he had been doing for the previous 45 years, and now a new book, *Living in Quiet: New and Selected Poems* has gathered his life's work in a beautifully designed edition with a woodcut by his wife, Nonny Hogrogian (more about her in a moment), on the cover. It has been published by Deerbrook Editions, a literary publishing house based in Maine.

Kherdian found his voice early. His first volume, *On the Death of My Father*, of which William Saroyan correctly said, "The title poem is one of the best lyrics in American poetry," sets out one of the many themes that Kherdian explored in the more than 20 books that followed. What does it mean to be the American-born son of an Armenian immigrant father? How does one celebrate the family and heritage that is in their blood and lineage, while forging one's own path and identity?

It is a lifelong struggle with no easy answers but the questioning is all:

...Because our relationship did not end with your death, but continued in this way, my way, on the page and right on through to the heart of everything that matters, the eternal matter of life on earth and after death. (from "Our Time")

They stare at each other unable to communicate aware of the abyss on one side father Armenia and on the other, son America (from "The Father and the Son")

Originally identified with the Beats and the San Francisco renaissance of the '60s, Kherdian quickly went in his own direction, eschewing cliques and "isms" for a style that would serve him well and never waver. There is depth without the need for overt difficulty; there is personality without false humbleness or the flaunting of self, and Kherdian is never afraid to risk sentiment in his search for truth. These are poems hurled into being by the grace of love.

Which brings me back to Nonny Hogrogian, a two-time Caldecott-winning artist and Kherdian's partner of 43 years and collaborator on many books for children. In *The Nonny Poems*, originally published in 1971, many of which are reprinted in the current volume, he charts their relationship from first meeting — to marriage — to a life in art lived together.

Hogrogian means earth carrier In the language of our ancestors And now Nonny takes up the tools Of her new trade, putting the Tools of art aside for the moment— To actualize something new, that Is as old as our people, whose Beginnings precede Biblical time, Knowing, as she has always known, That to work is to enter mystery... (from "Nonny Hogrogian")

There is so much to recommend in this book. The boyhood poems of growing up in Racine, Wis. take on some of the subject matter of US Poet Laureate Phil Levine's *Detroit* and its industrial landscape. But while Levine's work is see KHERDIAN, page 13



ARTS & LIVING

# Young Armenian Group Prepares for Cultural Play

PLAY, from page 10

said Aris Hamparsumian, who works in the Risk Assurance practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers. "Acting has always been a passion of mine, but I never had a chance to pursue it until now."

A proponent of the arts as a vehicle to move the Armenian culture forward is singer Chilingirian, who will make a special appearance during the performance. Chilingirian himself has modernized Armenian music, making it more accessible to the younger generation of Armenians.

"I feel that it is very easy for the young generation to adapt to the music of the country they are living in, and eventually forget about their Armenian roots, culture and music all together," said Chilingirian, a Los Angeles-based singer. "It's important to give them something that is attractive to their ears so they will continue to listen to our music."

He is also firm believer in the importance of Armenians pursuing the arts.

"Armenian youth must always keep creating art," said Chilingirian. "Through their music, theater, paintings, they can familiarize the world with our culture, history and language."

Forming the cast of crew of "Where Is Your Groom?" has been one step in that direction.



Singer Robert Chilingirian will be making a special appearance during "Where Is Your Groom?"

The group consistently attends weekly rehearsals on Sunday mornings at the Tekeyan Cultural Center in Englewood, kindly provided by the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

"Being back in the theater is one thing, but



Aris Hamparsumian, Katherine Sabbagh, Tanya Bas and Zarig Baghdadian practice a scene during rehearsal at the Tekeyan Cultural Center in Englewood, NJ.



Gourgen Manoukian in front of two of his paintings

## Gourgen Manoukian Exhibit Opening at ALMA

WATERTOWN – An exhibit dedicated to the works of artist Gourgen Manoukian will open at the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) on Tuesday, August 27, with a reception at 7 p.m.

Manoukian, born in Yerevan, Armenia, studied at the Moscow Art Institute. He later returned to Armenia and worked in the HayFilm studios as an art director where he worked on more than 30 films. Exhibiting across the Soviet Union, Manoukian worked in a range of artistic expression from graphic design and cinematographic art to miniatures, costume design and his main interest, painting. His work has been featured in a variety of publications, including editions of watercolor, oil painting and a set of specialized illustrations of Armenian ethnic costumes.

On arrival in the US, Manoukian became a member of the "Armenian Artist Associates of America," continuing to exhibit across the US and internationally. His landscapes reflect his memories of Armenia, featuring converging lines of earth and sky and the alternation of shadow and sunlight. He believes that the dynamics of his colors and composition "speak in an international language", whether land or seascapes, still life or architectural renderings.

The reception will take place in the Contemporary Art Gallery of ALMA on the third floor. Admission is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served following the event. ALMA is located at 65 Main St.

The exhibit will run through October 27.

being part of an Armenian play is a whole new and exciting experience that I'm thrilled to be part of," said Baghdadian, 22, a project assistant at East West Institute who is serving as assistant director and stage manager of "Where Is Your Groom?" She was involved in theater at her alma mater, George Washington University,

and has brought her experience to the group. "The beauty of a project like this is bringing Armenian youth together," said Babayan. "I am so proud of our cast and crew who believe in this play and who are translating their love of being Armenian to the stage."

"Where Is Your Groom?" will be performed on October 26, at 8 p.m. at The Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. For tickets, go to <http://www.theplayerstheatre.com>.

A portion of the proceeds from the play will be donated to Friends of Warm Hearth, an Armenia-based non-profit organization that provides group homes for Armenian orphans with mental illnesses and disabilities, who have outgrown the orphanages.

Visit [www.wherisyourgroomtheplay.com](http://www.wherisyourgroomtheplay.com).

## Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2013



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



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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Musurlian Wins Los Angeles Area Emmy Award

LOS ANGELES – He had been nominated seven times since 2001, but it was a solo effort on a 32-minute documentary in Africa that earned broadcast journalist Peter Musurlian a

Los Angeles-area Emmy.

At the August 3 awards ceremony, Musurlian received the Emmy for the documentary he produced, shot, reported, wrote and edited.

Musurlian also shot his own reporter stand-ups while in Botswana, Africa, without the aid of an in-country adviser during the process.

A USC journalism school alum, Musurlian holds three master's degrees, has US Army overseas reporting experience and 14 RTNA Golden Mike Awards.

Before signing on to his current post at the "The Burbank Channel" in 1998, Musurlian reported for television stations in Montana, Texas and Washington, DC. He has reported from more than 20 states, as well as Armenia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Botswana, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Mexico, Nagorno-Karabagh, Nicaragua, Panama, Poland, Romania and Turkey.

His winning documentary, "Burbank's African Sister City," which takes viewers on a journey through various locations, delves into the continent's HIV/AIDS crisis and how the government of Botswana dealt with the issue early, fast and effectively.

Since its debut on "The Burbank Channel," the film has been accessible via YouTube.



Peter Musurlian with his Emmy

## Diyarbakir Exodus Chronicles Memories

EXODUS, from page 10

ther's memoir, Farewell Kharpert: The Autobiography of Boghos Jafarian, years prior to her work as editor on the Mangasarian text.

Claire Mangasarian described her mother-in-law as a "very generous and very confident in her own ability," who had spent years of her life working with charitable organizations in Baghdad. According to Claire Mangasarian, Josephine was known for her "sharp mind" and spoke five languages.

Unlike many memoirs centered on Genocide survival, "hers shows the day-to-day life and situation of a young Armenian woman and

the experiences of these families that fled during turbulent times and started to rebuild," said Claire Mangasarian.

In addition to the three family histories – that of the Amassians, Kurkgys and Mangasarians – Diyarbakir Exodus includes several rare photographs offering a visual perspective into these stories.

Copies of *Diyarbakir Exodus* are available at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), with further copies available upon request.



The Achod Amassian family in Aleppo, circa 1913, young Josephine Mangasarian pictured fifth from left

Armenian International Women's Association, New Jersey Affiliate

St. Thomas Armenian Church Cultural Committee

Tekeyan Cultural Association

Present author

Nancy Kricorian

And her new novel

*All The Light There Was*

The story of an Armenian family's struggle to survive the Nazi occupation of Paris in the 1940s

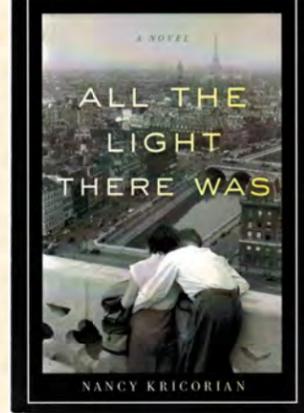
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Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

"Nancy Kricorian is a gem, her work subtle and nuanced and moving. *All the Light There Was* brings Nazi-occupied Paris vividly, tragically, and heroically to life."

–Chris Bohjalian, author of *The Sandcastle Girls* and *Midwives*

Nancy Kricorian is the author of the novels *Zabelle* and *Dreams of Bread and Fire*

For more information, please call Ani Chatmajian at (201) 965-7785 or Talar Sarafian at 201-240-8541

THE ARMENIAN MIRROR-SPECTATOR  
AND

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES AND RESEARCH

Present a Book Launch

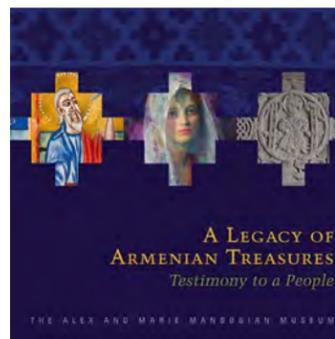
A LEGACY OF ARMENIAN TREASURES:  
*THE ALEX AND MARIE  
MANOOGIAN MUSEUM*

with

Edmond Y. Azadian

Executive Editor, *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures*  
Advisor to the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum

Saturday, August 24, 2013, 7:30 p.m.,  
at the NAASR Center  
395 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA



The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum in Southfield, Michigan, is home to a large and rich collection of Armenian art and artifacts, including illuminated manuscripts, early printed books, rugs and carpets, sacred vessels and vestments, textiles and embroidery, ceramics, metalwork, paintings, coins, and objects from the ancient kingdom of Urartu.

The newly published volume *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures* features more than 160 of the museum's most vital and beautiful pieces, each reproduced in full color and accompanied by a detailed entry. The book features a Foreword by Thomas F. Mathews of New York University and an Introduction by Edmond Y. Azadian; Sylvie Merian of the Pierpont Morgan Library served as the Editorial Coordinator and museum director Lucy Ardash was the General Coordinator. Essays by nine renowned scholars of Armenian art and artifacts shed light not only on the artistic significance of these objects but on their cultural context as well.

At this book launch event, Edmond Azadian will provide background information on the development of the Manoogian Museum and the creation of *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures*. Introductory remarks will be given by Alin Gregorian, Editor of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, and Marc Mamigonian, Director of Academic Affairs, NAASR.

Admission is free (donations appreciated). A reception will follow the program.

The NAASR Bookstore will open at 7:00 p.m. *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures* will be available for one night only at a special sale price of \$ 60 including sales tax (regular price \$75.00 plus tax).

Parking is available around the NAASR building and in adjacent areas.

Advertise in the Mirror-Spectator



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## CALIFORNIA

**AUGUST 18** — Dinner and Conversation on Genocide with Professor Richard Hovannisian and Rabbi Elie Spitz, 6 p.m., hosted by the Congregation B'nai Israel, 2111 Bryan Avenue, Tustin; catering by Zov's Bistro; tickets \$15 (by August 5), call 714-730-9693 or email cbi18@cbi18.org.

## CONNECTICUT

**AUGUST 18** — Armenian Festival, Holy Resurrection Church, 1910 Stanley St., New Britain, featuring Armenian music by the Harry Bedrossian Ensemble, Armenia exhibition, kids games and a special guest appearance. Contact the church office at 860-223-7875.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**AUGUST 18** — Soorp Asdvadzadzin Armenian Apostolic Church of Whitinsville will host its Annual Picnic; delicious Armenian food served and live music provided by the Muqrdrichian Band; free parking. For more info, contact the church rectory at 508-234-3677; 315 Church Street, Whitinsville, Mass.

**AUGUST 24** — Book presentation of *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures: The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum*, 7:30 p.m., NAASR, 395 Concord Ave, Belmont. Featured speaker will be book Executive Editor Edmond Azadian, introductory remarks provided by *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* Editor Alin Gregorian and NAASR Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian. Free event, for more info contact [hq@naasr.org](mailto:hq@naasr.org).

**AUGUST 25** — 2013 Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Picnic at American Legion Farm, 1314 Main St., Haverhill (RTE 495 to Exit 51B onto RTE 125N), 12 noon to 5 p.m. Music by Jason Naroian Ensemble. Menu of shish, losh, chicken kebab dinners, kheyima, pastries and beverages; raffles for cash prizes & gift certificates. Air conditioned functional hall; bring your own chairs; for info: [www.hypointearmenianchurch.org](http://www.hypointearmenianchurch.org) or (978) 372-9227.

**AUGUST 27** — Gourgen Manoukian Paintings Exhibit "Celebrating 50 Years in Art" at 7 p.m., ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. From the Soviet Union to the US, Manoukian's works include a broad range of media painting sea and landscapes, still-life and architectural renderings.

**SEPTEMBER 8** — Greater Worcester Armenian Chorale 13th Anniversary Gala concert and dinner, 12:30 p.m., Cultural Center of the Armenian Church of Our Saviour, 34 Boynton Street, Worcester. Led by conductor Konstantin Petrossian, soloist Narine Ojakhyan, "Arevig" Armenian Children's Dance Group. Reservations call Elizabeth Orsi 508-865-9432. Tickets \$25.00, \$12.00 children; for program donations call Charles Der Kazarian 508-963-2076.

**SEPTEMBER 8** — Sayat Nova Dance Company performs at Peabody International Festival with favorite dances from their repertory; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Members of the Dance Company manning dessert booth featuring homemade delicacies; Peabody Square on Lowell Street. For details, call Peabody Town Hall.

**SEPTEMBER 8** — Picnic Festival, St. Gregory Armenian Church, 158 Main St., North Andover, 12:30-5:30 p.m., featuring Armenian music by Leon Janikian, Jason Naroian, Joe Kouyoumjian, John Arzigian, along with Siroun Dance Group; Armenian food and pastries. For more info, visit [www.saintgregory.org](http://www.saintgregory.org).

**SEPTEMBER 10** — Staged reading of Joyce Van Dyke's "Deported/ A Dream Play," 7 p.m. at Clark University, Little Center, 950 Main Street, Worcester. The play tells the story of two friends, the playwright's grandmother and the mother of Dr. H. Martin Deranian during the Armenian Genocide; directed by Judy Braha, featuring a cast from the recent Boston production; Q&A to follow; free. For reservations, email [charkarts@clarku.edu](mailto:charkarts@clarku.edu).

**SEPTEMBER 15** — Talk by Tom Vartabedian titled, "A 50-year Retrospective into Journalism;" 7 p.m., ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. Vartabedian, award-winning writer and photographer, will kick off the fall season at ALMA with a talk about his 50-year career with The Haverhill Gazette and his work as a correspondent with the Armenian Press since the early 1960s.

**SEPTEMBER 15** — Trinity Family Festival, 12-5 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Delicious food, Armenian music, Children's games, Blessing of Madagh at 4 p.m., raffle drawing and more.

**SEPTEMBER 16** — Armenian Church of Our Saviour hosts 20th Annual Golf Tournament at the Sterling Country Club, Sterling, 8:30 a.m. registration, 10 a.m. start; sponsorships and golf registrations still available; contact the church office at 508-756-2931.



**On August 24, NAASR will host a book presentation of *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures: The Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum* at 7:30 p.m. The featured speaker will be book Executive Editor Edmond Azadian and introductory remarks will be provided by *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* Editor Alin Gregorian and NAASR Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian. The event is free and open to the public; for more info contact [hq@naasr.org](mailto:hq@naasr.org). NAASR is located at 395 Concord Ave, Belmont, MA.**

**SEPTEMBER 21** — Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston presents Avik Deirmenjian's newly published book of poems, *Khachardzan*, 5 p.m. MC Dr. Ara Ghazarian, book presentation by Khajag Mkrtichian, cultural program and reception to follow; free admission; Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St., Arlington.

**SEPTEMBER 28** — Annual "Walk of Life" Walk-a-thon, New England Chapter of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR), in Watertown. To register or donate, visit <http://www.abmdr.am>.

**OCTOBER 19** — Hye Kef 5 featuring Leon Janikian, Joe Kouyoumjian, Greg Takvorian, Ken Kalajian, Bob Raphalian and Jay Baronian, Haverhill, MA, 7:30 p.m., Michael's Function Hall-12 Alpha Street, Tickets: \$40.00 Each Students \$30, includes individually-served mezza platters. Proceeds to benefit all Armenian churches in Merrimack Valley and New Hampshire. Call either John Arzigian, 603-560-3826; Sandy Boroyan, 978-251-8687; Scott Sahagian, 617-699-3581, or Peter Gulezian, 978-375-1616. Organized by Armenian Friends' of America.

**NOVEMBER 16** — Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) celebrates 38th Annual Luncheon-Auction at the Burlington Marriott. Silent Auction and Bidding at 11 a.m.; Door Prizes for early bird bidding. \$60 per person; Visa and MasterCard accepted. For reservation information and general inquiries contact [awwaauction@gmail.com](mailto:awwaauction@gmail.com).

**DECEMBER 6 AND 7** — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 3-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge.

## MICHIGAN

**SEPTEMBER 16** — Detroit Chapter Tekeyan Cultural Association hosts Soiree Musicale, featuring violinist Henrik Karapetyan and pianist Ken Hakobyan, 7:30 p.m., at the Birmingham Unitarian Church, 38651 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Program is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Garabed Belian; reception to follow, \$20 donation For reservations, call Diana Alexanian at 248-334-3636 or Karen Koundakjian at (248) 761-9844.

## NEW YORK

**NOVEMBER 23-24** — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group celebrates 15th Anniversary with production of Hagop Baronian's "The Perils of Politeness" (Kaghakavaroutyan Vnasneruh) directed by Gagik Karapetyan from Armenia; Dwight Englewood High School, 315 E. Palisade Ave., Englewood, NJ. Nov. 23, Saturday at 8 p.m. and Nov. 24, Sunday at 4 p.m. For tickets; \$50, \$35, \$25; call Marie Zokian (201)745-8850 or Missak Boghosian at (212)819-0097 or (347)365-6985.

Poet Laureate Reviews  
New Collection from  
David Kherdian

KHERDIAN, from page 10  
mostly fueled by anger at a succession of "stupid jobs," Kherdian sees his home city as through a child's eyes, reflecting back more quietly, with both horror and wonderment.

The poems Kherdian wrote during the nine years he and Hogrogian spent at a spiritual community in Oregon, studying the ideas of Gurdjieff, are also here, as are the poems he wrote after leaving the community. While there, he gardened, started a small press and tended to the animals. Kherdian's poems appear simple on the surface — the sort of poem that should entice a wide audience — but they are far from commonplace, as he says about the act of watching two horses and a man plowing the earth for nurturance:

...as if one did not know that  
the simple is not commonplace  
as if one did not know  
that the commonplace  
has been nearly lost

and was being recaptured now  
by the quiet, difficult  
necessary toil of honest labor:  
a man, two horses, the earth—  
as if holiness for the moment  
could be anything but this.  
(from "Coming Into The Farm")

And finally, there are poems which directly address the Armenian genocide. How could there not be? Kherdian's biography of his mother, *The Road from Home*, was a Newbury Honor book, and to my mind the definitive exploration of that still under-reported period in history. The poems make the tragedy personal but leave us thankful that Kherdian is the one telling the tale.

This numbness has taken a lifetime  
to lift. Now in your lowered graves,  
I beseech you to look upon the  
empty space I will fill once  
we come to be joined again  
because we were always one.  
(from "Mother Father Poem")

A 2012 recipient of the Armenian Star Award, Kherdian is widely recognized as one of the most important and distinctive voices in Armenian-American poetry over the last four decades. I am pleased he is still writing, and here among us in Northampton.

(David Kherdian reads from his work August 23, 5 p.m., at Food for Thought Books in Amherst. Richard Michelson is the current Poet Laureate of Northampton.)

'Voice of Silence' at  
Regent Theatre

ARLINGTON, Mass. — The Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) is hosting a showing of Armenian director Vigen Chaldryan's latest movie, "Voice of Silence." It will be screened on Wednesday, August 28, at the Arlington Regent Theatre, 7 Medford St. at 7 p.m.

The film features best-actress award-winner Mariam Davtyan, portraying a homeless young woman named Jiji. Her eccentric way of living in a sand pit attracts the attention of film director John, who has returned home to Armenia to shoot a movie after living in the United States. Their encounter raises provocative issues surrounding survival, identity and values. This well-rounded movie is shown with English subtitles.

Chaldryan will be present at the screening. During the evening he will introduce the movie and lead a question-and-answer discussion. Part of the evening's proceeds will benefit the Women's Support Center in Yerevan.

Tickets can be purchased in advance by contacting the AIWA office in Watertown, or on line at: [www.itsmyseat.com](http://www.itsmyseat.com), or email: [evamed-zorian@gmail.com](mailto:evamed-zorian@gmail.com).



## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

## ‘Nation into Dust’

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The celebrated Armenian national poet, Vahan Tekeyan, has written a series of poems which encapsulate in the most concise and effective fashion the woes befallen on the Armenian people throughout history. One of those poems is titled, “Nation into Dust,” which begins with the line: “*You small, diminished land, finer than a grain of dust.*”

This short statement laments the status of the Armenian people and their homeland, which have been reduced to dust as a consequence of the crime perpetrated by the Ottoman Turks. The poet, who, most of the time comes off as a pessimistic prophet, this time around concludes the poem with optimism, writing, “*For grains of dust may some day recast as stone once again.*”

The Turks decided to pulverize the Armenian people so that they may not rise again to claim their ancestral homeland. Tekeyan’s optimistic conclusion notwithstanding, the Armenians remain a “nation into dust” through infighting and internecine squabbles of self-destructive magnitude. What the Turks intended to reduce us into a nation of dust we continue perpetrating that status through our own volition.

We are at the threshold of the Genocide centennial and except some rhetoric and grandiose plans we, as a nation, continue the self-flagellation, while Turkey has already taken counter measures to blunt any effort that Armenians could undertake to reach out to the world.

The Turks already have their strategic plans in place because they realize the national security threat that this “nation of dust” may engender.

Turkey’s Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has announced plans to mark the year 2015 as the centennial anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign, where Turkish forces, under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal, defeated the Allied Troops at the Straits of Dardanelles. Certainly the well-heeled lobbying firms in Turkey will generate enough noise on the international scene to drown all Armenian initiatives.

Following the Ergenekon or Deep State trials and recent convictions, which put behind bars all the military brass undermining Prime Minister Erdogan’s initiatives, the Supreme Military Council of Turkey has nominated new commanders to head its air, land and marine forces, to be able to deal with all the neighbors which may in any way threaten Turkey’s national interests. Militarily Armenia is no match for Turkey, but politically the Ankara leadership is convinced that Armenian lobbying in the US has been jeopardizing American-Turkish relations. It is not a coincidence that Turkey has appointed Hulyasi Akar as the commander of the land forces. It so happens that Mr. Akar is one of Turkey’s “experts” on Armenian issues. In fact, his doctoral thesis at Istanbul’s Bogazici University was titled, “The Armenian Question and the Impact of the Armenian lobby on the American-Turkish relations.”

While Turkey is investing its tremendous resources in money, military power and political clout, what are the Armenians doing to counter the threat?

We can enumerate a few despicable acts and continue lamenting our status of a nation reduced to dust.

Recently one of the topics scheduled to be discussed at the Supreme Spiritual Council at Echmiadzin was the planning of centennial programs. But no one was interested in that topic. Instead, an obscene campaign was unleashed to denigrate the church hierarchy as if to sabotage the more pressing issues. Indeed, the coincidence may lead one to believe in conspiracy theories. At this time, the merits or demerits of the questions raised is not the issue, but the timing is definitely unfortunate.

Another issue was an engrossing situation created by law firms seeking compensation for the survivors of the victims of the Armenian Genocide from the insurance companies.

A statement issued on July 24, 2013 heralded that “Yeghiayan, Kabatek and Geragos amicably resolve their differences.”

It is important to quote some major statement from the release: “The law offices of Vatkes Yeghiayan, the firm of Katabeck Kellner and the firm of Geragos and Geragos jointly announce that they have amicably resolved their differences which arose from the settlement of the Armenian Genocide

claims in the AXA litigation pending in the federal court. Specifically, the lawsuit filed by Geragos and Kabatek Brown Kellner (case no. 2:11-cv-03043-CAS-AGA) against Mr. Yeghiayan, Rita Mahdessian and a number of charities is being dismissed with prejudice forthwith.”

The moral of this uncalled for litigation lies further down in the release: “The lawyers who filed the case are aware that the AXA case is meager compensation for the fathomless injustice committed upon the Armenian people. They know that while they cannot undo the dark pages of Armenian history, they must continue to fight for justice.” Mr. Yeghiyan has further commented: “We must not lose sight of our main objective – which is a measure of justice for the heirs of the victims.”

One wonders if these prominent lawyers knew that our objective was to fight for justice or they learned after they embarrassed each other and the Armenian community with them.

These are venerable law firms which have done so much good for the community and with all their legal expertise it seems that they have lost common sense.

It was a minor victory against Turkey – not even against Turkey, but against a foreign insurance company – and we became a laughing stock of the Turks.

This case also symbolizes our vulnerability, should one day the Turks decide to discuss a compensation of any size. The Turks have already learned that all it takes to create chaos for Armenians is to float a trial balloon.

Another issue of principle has come to upset our scholarly community; a scholarly conference took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, on the topic of the Armenian Genocide. Many of the organizers and participants were Genocide deniers. The ARF media appealed to Armenian scholars to refrain from attending and many scholars heeded the warning. The reasoning was to not legitimize the Genocide deniers, which is a valid point. However Prof. Gerard Libaridian agreed to attend and read a paper. It is beside the point that the scholar failed to show up for health reasons. The ARF media on the East and West coasts (namely the *Armenian Weekly* and *Asbarez*) joined their forces to attack Professor Libaridian’s decision.

For many years the Armenian scholars attended MESA meetings either unprepared or leaving the forum open to Turkish scholars and their hired guns. Some academics maintained that they were not Genocide scholars, others believed that facing the Genocide deniers would place them in the realm of advocacy, which would chip away their academic credentials. In his lengthy rebuttal, Professor Libaridian maintains that we should meet the deniers in the lion’s den face to face and take them to task.

It seems that his detailed reasoning has failed to convince his opponents who have produced another piece, this time around abandoning the niceties of academic discourse.

If we have to face the deniers, our scholars must be as prepared as the opponents are, otherwise, we would fall into the trap of a Quixotic exercise.

But what we learn from this debate is that the ARF media has come to settle old scores with Professor Libaridian, who was a former member of ARF and quit. As senior advisor to President Levon Ter-Petrosian, he is perceived to be the architect of the president’s so-called “pro-Turkish” policy. All these resentments built up over the years and have come out under the guise of academic debate.

Besides the ARF believes that it has a monopoly on the Armenian case and Genocide issues. What we need is a discussion in our community to decide whether or not we should face the Genocide deniers and use such meetings as a positive way to change opinions.

Last but not least, is the issue of the Genocide Museum in Washington. The Cafesjian Family Foundation won the legal battle and gained control of the museum site. But it looks like the museum battle is lost as there seems to be no prospect of opening it in the year 2015 – at least not on the magnificent scale envisioned originally. This is a tragedy on top of the tragedy of the Genocide itself.

Had the poet Tekeyan been resurrected, perhaps he would revise the optimistic punch line of his poem to state that we were reduced to the state of a nation of dust by the enemy and that we will struggle ourselves to continue on surviving as a “nation of dust.”

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## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Baku's Blacklist of Artsakh Visitors Helps Armenia, Hurts Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan's leaders may not be aware that some of their incompetent underlings are causing great harm to the interests and reputation of their own country. President Aliyev should take a short break from issuing daily threats to Armenians and pay a little more attention to "enemies" within his own government.

To begin with, Azeri officials cannot count! Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry recently issued a "Black List," disclosing the names of 335 individuals from 41 countries who had visited Karabagh (Artsakh) since 2005, "without Baku's permission." The list of persona non grata banned from visiting Azerbaijan includes: parliament members, businessmen, journalists, entertainers and other celebrities. They are all accused of violating Azerbaijan's borders and disrespecting "the national sovereignty and territorial unity" of the country. Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry website sheepishly acknowledges that "Nagorno-Karabagh" is "temporarily out of the control of the Republic of Azerbaijan."

Here is the number of visitors from each of the 41 countries who traveled to Artsakh "illegally," according to

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry website:

Argentina (6), Australia (12), Austria (8), Belarus (1), Belgium (6), Bulgaria (5), Canada (6), Cyprus (3), Czech Republic (2), Denmark (2), Estonia (1), France (22), Georgia (11), Germany (22), Greece (2), Hungary (1), Iran (3), Ireland (2), Israel (1), Italy (24), Japan (1), Jordan (1), Latvia (2), Lebanon (1), Lithuania (6), Moldova (3), Netherlands (4), Poland (6), Russia (91), Romania (3), Serbia (2), Singapore (1), Slovakia (2), Spain (1), Sweden (1), Switzerland (7), Turkey (1), Ukraine (8), UK (13), Uruguay (5), and U.S. (36).

The Azeri count of 335 visitors to Artsakh since 2005 is way off! More than 16,000 tourists from 86 countries visited Artsakh in 2012 alone. The Azeri bureaucrats who prepared the "Black List" not only cannot count, but also cannot find publicly-available information.

While the name of every single tourist entering Artsakh is not known, Azerbaijan's intelligence agents must be sleeping on the job. Surprisingly, none of Armenia's leaders appears on Azerbaijan's "Black List," even though they make no secret of their periodic trips to Artsakh. Could it be that Azeri officials consider Artsakh to be part of Armenia, and that's why they do not blacklist Armenian citizens who go there?

Faulty mathematics and shoddy intelligence create additional problems for Azerbaijan. In the list of 335 names, there are people who have never been to Artsakh, while others, like Jonas Hollander from Germany, have visited Artsakh and yet, their names are left off the "Black List." Hollander posted the following sarcastic comment on his Facebook page, displaying a photocopy of his entry visa for "The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic": "Dear Azerbaijan, recently you have published a list of people who are not allowed to enter your country. I am fully offended and frustrated that my name was not included in your list. Please

find attached evidence of my stay in Karabagh and correct the mistake as soon as possible. [Signed] Jonas Hollander, feeling sad and unimportant."

To ridicule the ban on future travels to Azerbaijan, Armenians have set up a Facebook page titled, "I have been to Artsakh without permission."

Here are some critical responses from prominent individuals who have been unfairly blacklisted:

- Marcelo Catelmi, chief editor of International Policy at the prominent Argentine newspaper *Clarín*: "Publishing a blacklist is a despicable and barbaric act. It is a discriminatory method, historically used by dictators and tyrants who intend to punish divergent opinions in a brutal manner."

- E. Wayne Merry, Senior Fellow for Europe and Eurasia at the American Foreign Policy Council, Washington, D.C.: "Azerbaijan harms only itself with its 'black list' of persons who have visited Karabagh. An intelligent policy for Baku would be to invite to Azerbaijan, immediately, every person from a third country who visits Karabagh."

After it was revealed that the "Black List" had inadvertently left out the names of tens of thousands of Artsakh visitors over the years, Elman Abdullayev, chief of the Press Service of Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry, embarrassingly announced that the list will be updated and expanded. Hopefully, he does not forget to add my name to the "Black List," especially since I wrote a column describing my memorable visit to Artsakh.

Armenian officials should help the Azeris by making public the names of everyone who had the good fortune of visiting Artsakh in the past 20 years, so that they would all be banned from entering Azerbaijan, leaving that country with fewer visitors, and isolating it from the rest of the civilized world!

# Helen Thomas: Trailblazing Journalist and Role Model

By Florence Avakian

As the chief White House correspondent for the United Press International (UPI) news agency, and later the Hearst Newspapers, Helen Thomas was the dean and the grand dame of the White House press corps for almost half a century, sitting in the front seat of the first row and always asking the first question to the president. She covered ten presidents from the time of John F. Kennedy to Barack Obama, and literally had a ringside seat to history.

It was from listening to her questions at presidential news conferences, that I learned more about the art of interviewing, than from any journalism course that I took. And it was at a New York luncheon a few years ago that I had the privilege of meeting her. At that time I gave her one of my op/ed articles published in *The New York Times*, the one on the Armenian Genocide. She called me within days with kind

words of praise and encouragement.

Always a tough, fearless, courageous questioner, when other reporters from the mainstream press were asking mundane questions, she didn't shy away from critical war and political issues such as the human rights of the Palestinian people, concerns about the invasions in the Middle East and other areas of the world, and abuses of presidential power. "We're not here to be the friends of the president," she once said. I have witnessed presidents in situations of great triumph and adulation, when they are riding the crest of personal fulfillment, and I have seen them fall off their pedestals through an abuse of power.

And it was her unquenchable drive, energy and constancy that won her the respect of not only her fellow reporters, but also of the many presidents. For her 77th birthday, President Clinton surprised her with a cake, and for her 89th, she received a plate of cupcakes from a beaming President Obama.

However it was her pioneering work in

empowering female journalists a time when the field was almost completely dominated by male reporters that made her the celebrated trailblazer for which was acclaimed. The few female reporters at that time wrote almost exclusively about child rearing, household issues and social events. She literally opened the doors for both men and women in journalism.

1975, she became the first woman who was elected to the Gridiron Club, which for 90 years had been an exclusive men-only organization for Washington journalists. And in 1972, she was the only female print journalist to accompany President Richard Nixon on his groundbreaking trip to China. She was also one of two journalists who first interviewed President

## LETTERS

## Tough Solutions for Getting Land back from Turkey

To the Editor:

Armenians are deluding themselves if they think Turkey is going to voluntarily cede any of its territory to which they claim ownership by way of conquest.

What other option do we have? Certainly not military because Turkey has the most powerful military in the region.

The only country that would be able to challenge it is Russia, and it is not going to engage in a war for our benefit, even though it might come to our aid in case of an unprovoked attack. The Russians had their chance after WWII when the Soviet army, arguably the most potent military machine in history, having decisively beaten the Nazi Wehrmacht, and destroyed a million-man Japanese army in Manchuria in a matter of weeks, was all set to invade Turkey, a quasi ally of Germany, when that rascalion of a president, Harry Truman, dissuaded it from doing so. Truman will also go down in history as a perpetrator of genocide,

having ordered the incineration of hundreds of thousands of Japanese with atom bombs on the pretext of saving American lives in an invasion of the Japanese homeland. This was totally unnecessary because Japan was all set to surrender, being alarmed by a Soviet declaration of war and a threatened invasion by armed forces that were already in possession of the Kuril islands just north of Japan, which would have facilitated such an invasion as apposed to the difficult naval operation the Americans would have had to contend with.

The only thing we can realistically hope for is for Turkey to open its border with Armenia and allow Armenians to resettle in eastern Turkey, which would eventually allow Armenians to regain quasi possession of their historic lands through Armenian's superior initiative compared to that of the present occupants.

Berge Tatian  
Massachusetts



Born in Winchester, Ky., on August 4, 1920, one of 10 children of immigrant Christian-Lebanese parents, she grew up in Detroit, and immediately after graduating from what is now Wayne State University, she went to Washington, DC, looking for a job. She started her career in 1943 as a radio writer for the United Press news service, and became a full time reporter, covering federal agencies in the mid-1950's, as well as presidential campaigns.

She was the first woman assigned by a major news agency as a full-time reporter at the White House. She was also the first woman to be elected an officer and then the president of the White House Correspondents' Association. In

Ronald Reagan three weeks after the attempt on his life in 1981.

Ms. Thomas wrote half a dozen books, centering on her half century of extraordinary experiences, published by the prestigious Macmillan and Scribner publishing houses, and retired in 2010 following an illustrious career.

At every presidential press conference, she had the privilege of closing each session with the words, Thank you Mr. President. For her intelligent, brave and dedicated work, I respectfully say, Thank you Ms. Thomas.

(Florence Avakian, based in New York, is one of the most prolific and well-respected Armenian journalists in the US.)



## Famed Newbury Street Doorman Norman Pashoian Retires after 66 Years

DOORMAN, from page 1

Pashoian, a small man who speaks softly but deliberately, can map most of his life's significant events onto his years working at the Taj. It was the first job he ever held – his first day of work, at age 19, was August 4, 1947 – and Wednesday, at 7 p.m., when he officially retired, it was the only job he had ever had. He has worked at the hotel longer than all his colleagues and is regarded by friends and co-workers as the standard-bearer for class and dignity in hotel service.

"I've always liked the old days. People knew how to dress," Norman Pashoian said.

Pashoian sees himself as a remnant of a bygone era, when men and women checked into hotels wearing suits, ties, and dresses, and employees did not speak to guests unless addressed directly. He remembers, wistfully, a quieter Boston, one with more attention paid to appearances and respectability.

"It bothers me the way people dress today," he said. "Nowadays, you can come into a hotel with a knapsack on your back, wearing

ripped jeans and sneakers. I've always liked the old days, when people knew how to dress and always showed up well groomed and well tailored."

In his first few years on the job, Pashoian could hardly wait to arrive each morning at work, where he would often greet and serve famous politicians and personal idols. These were ladies and gentleman, he said, sophisticated and gracious.

In 1949, when Pashoian's hero, Winston Churchill, delivered an address at MIT, he stayed at the Ritz for a few nights. Pashoian never spoke to him personally – Churchill was surrounded by bodyguards – but he remembers one evening watching Churchill stand on the steps of a dining room staircase, a cigar in one hand, the other signing a V for victory.

"Here I was, just in my early 20s, and I was seeing someone as famous as Churchill," said Pashoian. "I was amazed."

A few years later, after the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963, Jacqueline

Kennedy Onassis became a Ritz regular, he said. Unlike other famous visitors, she always made sure to address Pashoian by name. They would exchange pleasantries by the entrance: Hello, how are you, welcome back to the Ritz. She was a "beautiful, well-dressed, very humble, very gracious lady," he said.

Over time, Pashoian's list of famous guests grew. There were Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio, Joseph Kennedy Sr., Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II, each as exciting as the last. In the 1970s, when Kevin White, then mayor, presided over the racially divisive desegregation of Boston schools, he would often stop for a drink.

George Regan, White's press secretary and now president of Regan Communications Group, said the mayor loved Pashoian.

"The mayor was not a big drinker, but he would go in and have a glass of wine," Regan said. "He spent good days there, but mostly bad days, and after a horrible day Norman would greet him and give him a big hug."

Regan added, "Norman could be having the worst day in the world, but he was always the perfect greeter, smiling, gentle, compassionate. He could have been working at Buckingham Palace."

Ibrahim Assaf, 55, a doorman who has worked beside Pashoian for 27 years, said that Pashoian taught him how to treat guests with respect. Never lose your cool, Pashoian said, always look people in the eye. Pashoian had a knack for remembering names and faces, and knew when guests were entering and leaving. In all his years of service, he never lost his temper.

On Wednesday, his last day, Pashoian worked a normal shift, 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Around lunchtime, dressed in a dark gray uniform, he helped an elderly couple remove their luggage from the trunk of their car. "How long will you stay?" he asked. "Two days," they said.

It was the first time in more than half a century that his guests would be staying longer than he.

## ADL Endorses Peter Koutoujian for Congress

ENDORSEMENT, from page 1

He was formerly a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, where he represented his constituents in parts of Waltham and Newton honorably. He has worked for the rights of victims of domestic violence, greater access to healthcare and women's rights.

Koutoujian, a Democrat, was a catalyst for the creation of the Armenian Heritage Park in Boston, located near some of the city's main tourist attractions. It has become a landmark not only noted for its beauty, but for the public-private collaboration that helped create it.

As sheriff, he has taken an office that was once known for cronyism and corruption, and brought trust and dignity back to it. In fact, he was handpicked by Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick to take the helm, after the resignation of the former sheriff. He has brought his compassionate approach to the prisoners he oversees, among other things, converting an unused room in the county jail to a chapel where the inmates can pray or meditate.

Within the Armenian community, he has been a member of the Knights of Vartan for many years and is a regular presence in Armenian cultural and social programs. He stands out – often literally because of his height – at many Armenian programs around the state, including the annual commemoration of the Armenian Genocide at the Massachusetts State House in April.

He faces stiff opposition for the October 15 primary, ahead of the December 10 special election and needs the support of all Armenians.

For all these reasons, we wholeheartedly endorse his candidacy. He is the right choice for Armenian-Americans and he is the right choice for Massachusetts.

ADL District Committee  
of the US and Canada

## Armenian Assembly Welcomes Markey

ASSEMBLY, from page 1

Armenian Genocide," said Totah.

Markey has been assigned to the Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee, the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee and most importantly for Armenian-American issues, the Foreign Relations Committee where he chairs the Subcommittee on International Development and Foreign Assistance, Economic Affairs, International Environmental Protection and Peace Corps.

In May of this year, then-Congressman Markey was a special guest at the Armenian Assembly of America's awards ceremony in Boston, where he delivered remarks in honor of the Assembly's Distinguished Humanitarian Award recipients Ann Hintlian, Virginia Ohanian and Nevart Talanian.

# K PETER KOUTOUJIAN



My family's story, like so many others in Massachusetts and across the nation, reflects the promise of the American Dream.

My parents always believed in the honor and importance of public service. My mom dedicated her life to teaching and my dad was the City Clerk in Waltham for 30 years.

They instilled in me a desire to help people and to try to make a difference in their lives.

They taught me that when you listen to people, empower people, and help them take action – you can change lives for the better.



[www.koutoujianforcongress.com](http://www.koutoujianforcongress.com)

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