

Armenian Genocide Is ‘Widely Recognized’ in Israel

By Elina Chilingarian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The 1915 mass killings and deportations of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey are widely recognized as a genocide in Israel, an Israeli cabinet minister said after visiting the Armenian Genocide memorial here on Friday, August 24.

Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs Minister Yuli-Yoel Edelstein also drew parallels between the Jewish Holocaust and the World War I-era slaughter of some 1.5 million Armenians, which many historians consider the first genocide of the 20th century.

“True, there is no state law [in Israel recognizing the Genocide,]” Edelstein said. “But I think that in Israel, in view of ... our common history and some similar elements and moments, you will hardly find people who will deny the Genocide, who will say, like we unfortunately hear, that all this is fabrications and lies.”

“So I think that unfortunately – I stress, unfortunately – in this area our peoples have quite a lot in common, quite a lot for mutual understanding,” he said.

Citing the strategic character of Israel’s relationship with Turkey, successive Israeli governments have resisted domestic calls



Israel’s Diaspora Affairs Minister Yuli-Yoel Edelstein lay a wreath at Tsitsernakabert.

for Armenian Genocide recognition. An Israeli Foreign Ministry official reaffirmed this stance during landmark hearings on the issue that were organized by an Israeli parliament committee last December.

Support for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide appears to have grown within the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, and the government since 2010. Some

observers link that to Israel’s worsened relations with Turkey, which vehemently denies the Genocide.

New Selection of Poems By Vahan Tekeyan Published in Armenia

YEREVAN – During his last visit to Armenia, Edmond Azadian, vice president of the Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc., presented to the public at Tekeyan Center his compiled, edited and annotated book of selected poems by Vahan Tekeyan in Armenian.

Present at the event were Armenia’s Culture Minister Hasmik Poghosian, President of the Armenian Academy of Sciences Radik Mardisrosian, Dean of Yerevan State University Aram Simonian, Dean of Pedagogical Institute of Armenia Rouben Mirzakhanian and *Azg* daily editor Hagop Avedikian. Samvel Muratian presented Vahan Tekeyan’s poems in the context of the period he lived, adding that the poems are as pointed now as they were a century ago, when they were written.

In his speech, Azadian said that the book is going to be published in English this fall, in Detroit, translated by Gerald Papasian and John Papazian.

During the presentation, Nora Azadian, the only person in the hall who had met Vahan Tekeyan in Egypt, recited two of his poems, the translated names of which are “The Armenian Soul” and “My Only One.”

Avedikian thanked the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation of Portugal and its Armenian Department Director Zaven Yegavian for funding the publication of the book.



Edmond Azadian signs books.

Armenian-Born Boxer Becomes World Champ

BERLIN (DPA-AFP) – Arthur Abraham has become World Boxing Organization (WBO) super middleweight champion in a unanimous decision over fellow German Robert Stieglitz on August 25.

Abraham defended his middleweight title 10 times between 2005 and 2009 before moving up a class.

Stieglitz, the champion for the past three years, suffered heavy bruising and cuts around both eyes in the punishing title bout, but Abraham was left relatively unmarked en route to the 116-112, 116-112, 115-113 decision.

“King Arthur” is now 35-3 in his career, with 27 knockouts. This is the third loss for Stieglitz in 45 fights.

“This is an emotional moment for me and it’s hard to describe how I feel,” Abraham said. “I always wanted to be the middleweight world champion and now I am the super middleweight champion too. I trained hard for this and I had to box cleverly against such a good champion.”

Abraham had a tough fight against Piotr Wilczewski to hang on to his European WBO title in March, but was back in top form for Saturday’s bout in Berlin.

Stieglitz’s face showed marking by the fifth round, and Abraham was able to drop his guard and lure in the champion to deliver hard shots. By the start of the 12th round, Abraham could confidently raise his fists for the Berlin crowd.

Another German, World Boxing Association (WBA) super middleweight and International Boxing Federation (IBF) middleweight title-holder Felix Sturm, announced before the fight that he would take on the winner.



Arthur Abraham

French Textbooks to Include Chapter on Armenian Genocide

PARIS – French President Francois Hollande’s administration has included a chapter about the 1915 mass killings of ethnic Armenians in eastern Anatolia in secondary-school textbooks, a move that could once again upset relations with Turkey.

The Turkish daily *Sabah* reported on Sunday that the French Education Ministry has decided to include chapters about the Armenian Genocide in history and geography books used in French secondary schools.

Hollande said last month that he will stand by a campaign pledge to make it illegal to deny that the killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks in 1915 was genocide.

Relations between Paris and Ankara had begun to thaw after a decision in February by France’s constitutional court to strike down the Genocide denial law as contrary to free speech.

Turkey had canceled all economic, political and military meetings with France in December after the French parliament voted in favor of the draft law.

At a joint news conference early in July, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said the law was unlikely to be resurrected and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu hailed the opening of a warmer phase in relations with France.

Turkish FM Suggests Turkey Should Host Karabagh Talks

ISTANBUL (PanArmenian.net) – Turkey would like Azerbaijan and Armenia to hold talks in Istanbul, the Azeri news website Trend quoted Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu as saying, to resolve the frozen conflict over Nagorno Karabagh (Artsakh).

He stressed that Ankara pursues a policy of regional conflict management and that it is a regional powerhouse.

“We would like to see talks on Syria in Turkey. We also want negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan to be held in Istanbul,” Davutoglu said.

Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharian, when asked about Davutoglu’s suggestions, said, “If the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs truly wants to support the settlement of the conflict, Turkey should not attempt to distort the essence of the Nagorno Karabagh problem, i.e. the realization of the right to self-determination of the people of Nagorno-Karabagh, to which the authorities of Azerbaijan responded with ethnic cleansing and widespread aggression against the self-determined Nagorno Karabagh Republic.”

He added, “For the resolution of the conflict it would be productive if Turkey could encourage Azerbaijan to negotiate with the real party to the conflict, Nagorno Karabagh.” He suggested that Turkey take an independent course and not support indefensible Azeri positions.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Yerevan to Host 3rd Intl. Theoretical Physics Workshop

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – The third international workshop “Super symmetry in Integrable Systems” was held at the Yerevan State University from August 27 to 30.

Researchers from Japan, Korea, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, US, Brazil, Iran, Morocco, Ukraine, Moldavia and Greece attended the event. Researches in the sphere of theoretical physics and the scientific achievements of the last years were present at the workshop.

The 2010 workshop took place at Yerevan State University, while in 2011 it was held at the Leibniz Universität in Hanover, Germany.

Road Construction Gets Attention of President

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President Serge Sargsian on August 21, accompanied by Yerevan Mayor Taron Markarian, visited the construction site of a new road which connects Leningradian Street with Admirak Isakov Avenue.

The mayor reported to the president about the process of construction works there and in other neighborhoods in Yerevan.

Court Rejects Civilitas Foundation's Complaint

YEREVAN (Hetq) – The Yerevan Court of First Instance, with Judge Mkhitar Baboyan presiding, rejected the Civilitas Foundation's complaint requesting that the court require the National Security Service (NSS) to remove the decision based on which it had initiated a criminal case involving the Civilitas Foundation, and its founder, Vartan Oskanian.

“This was a decision that was unfortunately expected, and we will of course appeal all the way to the European Court of Human Rights,” said Civilitas Director Salpi Ghazarian. “The work of Civilitas and CivilNet is being obstructed, delayed, our attention is being diverted in pursuit of phony accusations and artificial claims.”

Further, in response to the statements made in Court by the NSS investigator, Ghazarian said the following: “The investigator concluded his statement before the Court by claiming that the NSS is conducting its investigation, ‘in order to protect the interests of the Civilitas Foundation.’ This is incomprehensible, unacceptable and a breach of the freedoms that are afforded to non-governmental organizations of all types. How can any government agency decide for itself, that the interests of the Civilitas Foundation or any non-governmental entity have been violated, and decide to defend them? The law on non-governmental organizations makes clear that the operation of a non-governmental organization is regulated by its own by-laws, board and director, and not by a government agency, least of all the National Security Service, carrying out its own agenda.”

Demand for Armenian Carpets Increases

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – In Armenia and international markets, there is a noticeable increase in the demand for Armenian carpets, according to the executive director of the Tufenkian Trans Caucasus company, Arman Grigoryan, and Megeryan Carpet Director Leonid Andreasyan.

“Because of the crisis during the last four years, the demand on our carpets increased but this year is a rather great growth,” said Grigoryan.

He added that “90 percent of the production is exported to Europe, Asia and the US and the rest is for the domestic market.”

Andreasyan also noted that in comparison with the past several years, internationally the carpets are in demand.

Each year these companies present Armenian carpets at the exhibition in Atlanta, Ga.

American University of Armenia to Launch Undergraduate Program in Fall 2013

AGBU among Early Founders

YEREVAN – The American University of Armenia (AUA) announced plans to launch its first-ever bachelor's degree program, set to begin in the fall of 2013. In its over 20-year history, AUA has become one of the country's premier research institutes. With the addition of a new, four-year undergraduate curriculum, the university raises the bar for education in Armenia even higher.

The announcement was made by AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian at a recent press conference which garnered worldwide media coverage. Boghosian noted that the undergraduate program will enroll approximately 300 students every year, with the goal of accommodating 1,200 undergraduates by 2017.

AUA's new undergraduate program will offer majors in computational sciences, business and English and communications. The bachelor's degree in computational sciences will include topics in applied mathematics and computer science, as well as courses in computational techniques for the simulation and modeling of systems of relevance to science and engineering. The coursework for the bachelor's degree in business will include a solid grounding in economics, finance, accounting, marketing, management and business communications. The bachelor's degree in English and communications will include courses in journalism, public relations, writing, translation and other aspects of communications.

AUA's four-year program will help lay a foundation for graduates who are well-positioned to pursue careers and advance progress in their homeland. All three programs will have a strong general education component and will be taught in English. These new majors will complement the seven master's degree programs that AUA currently offers.

The new AUA undergraduate program will allow the university to further its mission of providing accessible, high-quality education for the next generation of Armenian professionals while at the same time making the school a destination for international students. “All of us at AUA are excited about reaching this new milestone...We remain committed to offering rigorous academics and an Armenian education, and look forward to a vibrant, international faculty and student body from Armenia and abroad,” noted Boghosian. He further emphasized, “The university will keep in place its ‘need-blind’ admissions poli-



At the press conference announcing AUA's new undergraduate program (from left), Director of Accreditation Sharistan Melkonian; Vice President of Operations Ashot Ghazaryan; AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian; AUA Foundation Board member Dr. Yuri Sarkissian and Vice President of Finance Gevorg Goyunyan

cy, continuing to ensure that no qualified Armenian student is denied an education at AUA because they lack the means to pay tuition.”

AGBU has played a critical and important role in the founding of AUA. In the aftermath of the 1988 Shirak earthquake, as part of the organization's broad efforts to help Armenia recover and rebuild, AGBU agreed to underwrite a major share of the operational funding necessary to establish the university. AGBU has helped AUA grow and expand by establishing the AUA Endowment Fund, the earnings of which are distributed to AUA on an annual basis. In the past 15 years, the university has received \$10,000,000 in support from the AUA Endowment Fund at AGBU.

AGBU President Berge Setrakian expressed enthusiasm for the new initiative by stating, “Since its earliest days, AGBU has staunchly supported education, and we are proud to have played a role in the development and expansion over the years of such a vibrant institution that attracts some of Armenia's brightest minds. We look forward to a new cadre of students benefiting from all that AUA has to offer.”

AUA is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Following an intensive proposal process, which included a visit to the university, the Commission approved the offering of the new undergraduate program. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges is one of six regional accreditation agencies recognized by the US Department of Education. The undergraduate program has also already received a license from the Republic of Armenia's Ministry of Education and Science.

For information on application requirements and to learn more about the American University of Armenia, visit www.aua.am/undergraduate.

Gumri Mayor's Son again Linked To Gun Violence

GUMRI (RFE/RL) – One man was arrested in Gumri on Tuesday in a criminal investigation into a shootout allegedly provoked by the allegedly unruly son of Vartan Chukasian, the outgoing mayor of Armenia's second largest city.

News reports said that a group of men allegedly led by Spartak Chukasian attacked on Friday activists working for Samvel Balasanian, a government-backed businessman tipped to become Gumri's next mayor in an election slated for September 7. The violent incident reportedly involving gunfire took place shortly after Balasanian met voters in a local neighborhood.

Police and state prosecutors confirmed the shootout but declined to specify who was involved in it and whether it had any connection to the upcoming election. A statement issued by the regional prosecutor's office said only that a criminal case has been opened under articles of the Armenian Criminal Code dealing with hooliganism and illegal arms possession.

A police investigator said that one man has been arrested in connection with the incident but refused to identify him.

The Balasanian campaign and local residents were also reluctant to comment. “It's a lie, nothing like that happened in our neighborhood,” one man said.

The younger Chukasian has a history of violent conduct that has only reinforced his father's controversial reputation. In 2007, he was sentenced to 18 months in prison for provoking an apparently election-related street gunfight between two groups of young men. Spartak Chukasian was granted parole after serving one-third of the sentence.

The Gumri mayor, in office since 1999, announced earlier this month that he will not seek reelection. The announcement came shortly after the ruling Republican Party of Armenia, of which Chukasian is a senior member, decided to back Balasanian's candidacy.

Night Driving through Shushi Is Hazardous

SHUSHI (Hetq) – When the evening fog falls on the highway connecting Goris and Stepanakert, visibility diminishes drastically and drivers rely on the road reflectors installed on the shoulders or the luminous lane markings.

But when drivers approach Shushi there are no such guideposts, even though seven kilometers of roadway were blacktopped some two months ago.

On the night of August 21, visibility was so poor that drivers were forced to pull off and wait for the fog to lift.

Taxi driver Kamo Poghosyan complained, “They should do the right thing and service the road. After all we are paying taxes.”

His passenger, Sofya Aghajanyan, noted that nothing would be done unless there was a bad accident.

“Sometimes you have to travel after dark. It's a unique Armenian trait to do nothing until something happens.”

Genady Hakopyan, who runs the Division of Road Construction at the Artsakh Ministry of Urban Construction, assured us that lane markings and reflective columns would be in place by the end of autumn.

“The work hasn't been completed in places. Even the road shoulders aren't ready. The road from Stepanakert to the border with Armenia is normally serviced by Vahe Karapetyan Road Ltd. Work on the stretch of road you refer to is being done by the contractor Karavan Ltd.,” said Hakopyan.

He added that some people, for some unknown reason, steal the reflective foil from the columns.



INTERNATIONAL

Diocese Sets up Fund to Aid Syrian Armenians

NEW YORK — In response to a directive issued by the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin calling on all dioceses to initiate efforts for Syrian relief, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), is asking parishioners of member churches of the Eastern Diocese to take part in the relief effort.

As fighting in Syria continues, the local Armenian community has been beset by increasing difficulties — including heightened threats to safety and financial stability. The Armenian community of Homs and many Armenian families living in Aleppo and Damascus have fled their homes to find refuge with relatives. Local Armenian institutions have been struggling to continue operations.

Bishop Armash Nalbandyan, the Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Damascus, informed Holy Echmiadzin that a Syrian-Armenian emergency aid organization has been formed to provide refugees with housing and medical assistance, and to meet other immediate needs of the community. In addition, the aid organization supports local churches, schools and cultural institutions, which strive to preserve the historic Armenian presence in Syria.

Individuals and parishes can make checks out to the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (write “Syrian Relief” in the memo). All funds collected should be sent to the Diocesan Center (630 Second Ave., New York, NY 10016) no later than Monday, October 1.

Individuals can also contribute online at www.armenianchurch-ed.net. (Click on “Make a Donation” on the homepage. In the lower part of the online information entry form, select the button “In Memory of” and type “Syrian Relief” in the memo bar that appears.)

All proceeds will go to the relief efforts, to be distributed through the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin.

“Above all, we ask everyone to include the people of Syria in your prayers, and to ask our Lord to bestow peace on the victims and consolation on their families,” Barsamian wrote in his message.

Another fund has been jointly set up by the Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America and the Exarchate of the Armenian Catholic Church.

Third Group of Syrian-Armenian Children Arrives in Armenia

YEREVAN (news.am) — The third group of Syrian-Armenian children arrived in Armenia on Tuesday, August 22, to spend their summer vacation in the country. Close to 150 children have arrived in Armenia via two airplanes.

Numerous officials, including Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan, First Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration Vache Terteryan and Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Manasaryan, had come to Yerevan’s Zvartnots International Airport to wel-

come the Syrian-Armenian — specifically, Aleppo-Armenian — children.

A group of Damascus-Armenian children, who are currently spending their summer vacation at a camp in Armenia’s Hankavan city — and who soon will return to Damascus — likewise had come to welcome their peers.

Prior to the Aleppo-Armenian children’s arrival, the children from Damascus said they spent a very good time in Armenia, and they wish to visit again.

Syrian refugees in Turkey could top 200,000: UN

GENEVA (Reuters) — The number of Syrian refugees in Turkey could reach 200,000 as the conflict deepens and many others could flee to Jordan, the United Nations refugee agency said on Tuesday.

“The increase in the number of Syrians arriving in Turkey has been dramatic. Compared to previous weeks in which we saw about 400-500 people arriving a day, we’ve been seeing peaks of up to 5,000 people in one day over the past two weeks,” Melissa Fleming, chief spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told a news briefing.

A growing number of unaccompanied children without parents are also turning up in camps, the UNHCR said. Refugees from the southern Syrian province of Deraa have reported being bombed by aircraft or shelled on their journey across the border.

“We are already looking at potentially up to 200,000 and are working with the Turkish government to make the necessary plans,” another spokeswoman, Sybella Wilkes, told Reuters.

The figure would include the more than 74,000 Syrian refugees already registered in Turkey, which is building at least five new camps in addition to the existing nine.

In the past 24 hours, more than 3,000 Syrians crossed into Turkey, with a further 7,000 expected in coming days.

Turkish authorities have sought assistance from UNHCR and other agencies, Fleming said.

“But they will continue to provide access and open borders to Syrians fleeing the conflict,” she said.

Turkey’s Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu on Monday called for more help from other countries with the growing refugee crisis. Last week Davutoglu suggested the United Nations may need to create a “safe zone” inside Syria.

Fleming said that was a question for the UN Security which the UN humanitarian organizations could not address.

Overall, 214,120 Syrians have been registered in four neighboring countries — Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey — exceeding the UNHCR’s forecast of 185,000 for this year.

Armenian Genocide ‘Widely Recognized’ in Israel

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Israel’s Environment Minister Gilad Erdan, a close ally of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, publicly called for the Jewish state to “formally recognize the Holocaust perpetrated against the Armenian people” during further Knesset discussions on the sensitive issue in June. Erdan acknowledged that the Israeli government has not changed its policy yet.

Edelstein, who is also a member of Netanyahu’s Likud party, lay a wreath at the Genocide memorial on Yerevan’s Tsitsernakabert hill during what was the second trip to Armenia by an Israeli government member in four months. Agriculture Minister Orit Noked visited Yerevan and paid her

respects to genocide victims in April.

Edelstein arrived in Armenia to attend, together with Armenian Culture Minister Hasmik Poghosian, an event marking the 20th anniversary of an organization representing the country’s small Jewish community. He also held separate talks with Poghosian.

“When it comes to cultural exchanges, there are benefits to both sides involved,” Edelstein said. “That is why I hope this is not just a visit but perhaps also a change to some different phase in at least cultural ties between us.”

“I am sure that such meetings and contacts will continue and we will turn our relations from being just good and normal to relations that will fully realize the potential for coopera-



Culture Minister Hasmik Poghosian (L) and Israel’s Diaspora Affairs Minister Yuli-Yoel Edelstein hold a press conference after signing a memorandum of cooperation in Yerevan on August 24.

International News

Armenia to Ratify Free Trade Zone Agreement With CIS in Fall

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Armenia enjoys friendly relations with the European Union (EU) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and is an active member of Eastern Partnership (EaP) project, chairman of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Financial-Credit, Budgetary Affairs, Gagik Minasyan said this week.

He noted that Armenia will ratify the agreement on joining free trade zone with CIS during the fall parliamentary session.

Young Armenian Chess Players Win in European Championship

PRAGUE (Armenpress) — Armenian chess players performed successfully in the European 8-18 category championship hosted in Prague, winning one gold and two silver medals.

The Armenian Chess Federation said Hayk Martirosyan won the under-12 category, as did Manuel Petrosyan, the under-14 category. Hovhannes Gabuzyan won silver in the under-18 category, while Anna-Maya Ghazaryan, representing the Netherlands, won a silver medal.

The tournament was played by a nine-rounds Swiss system.

Armenia Pays Tribute to Ethiopian Patriarch

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II on August 27 celebrated a requiem mass for Patriarch of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Abune Paulos.

Before the requiem there was a solemn ceremony honoring the years of the late cleric’s serving the Ethiopian Church.

Present at the requiem mass were t Deputy Foreign affairs Minister Sergey Manasaryan, and Armenia’s ambassador to Ethiopia, Armen Melkonyan, as well as various other diplomats in Armenia.

Bell of Armenian Church In Turkey to Toll Again

ISTANBUL (PanArmenian.net) — The bell-tower of Surp Giragos Armenian Church in Diyarbakir, Turkey, is set to return to use after a 97-year interval, with a new bell made in Russia.

As part of repair and restoration work at the Surp Giragos Church a new bell was made in Moscow, and has been delivered to Diyarbakir. The bronze bell weighs 100 kilograms and will ring from the bell-tower beginning at its reopening ceremony on November 4.

The church’s bell-tower was demolished during the years of Genocide, on the grounds that it was “higher than the minarets in the city.”

Diyarbakir’s Surp Giragos Armenian Church Foundation began restoring the church in 2010. The restoration work, which was also supported by Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality with 1 million Turkish liras in financial aid, was completed, and the church was reopened to service, in October 2011. Work on other parts of the church has continued, stopping from time to time due to financial problems. A total of two million liras have been spent on the restoration and repair work so far, and the total cost will be 3.2 million liras.

The church, which was built in 1376, is located in the Fatihpasa neighborhood in Diyarbakir’s Sur district, densely populated by Armenians. The title for the land the church is built on used to belong to the Armenian community, and it served as a metropolitan until 1915. Regarded by art historians as the biggest church in the Middle East, the Surp Giragos Church covers 3,200 square meters and can hold up to 3,000 people.



INTERNATIONAL

Balkans: Shifting Landscape of Human Trafficking

SARAJEVO (reportingproject.net) — A raggedy child tap-dancing on the sidewalk in front of a box to collect coins. A man in a foreign country far from his home working long hours at backbreaking labor. A young girl apparently doing endless chores at a neighbor's house in some rural neighborhood.

The face of trafficking in the Balkans has changed.

In the 1990s, victims were stereotyped as young Eastern Europe women in skimpy outfits at loud bars. They had indeed mostly been dragged into the region by organized crime groups to perform at nightclubs and in brothels.

Now the victims are underage and mostly local. They are in private apartments and secluded locations. And the traffickers are local gangs or individual criminals, and in some cases, even families of the victims.

Lejla Kablar, author of a 2011 report by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on "Trafficking in Human Beings for the Purpose of Labor Exploitation," said that when human trafficking emerged in the Balkans, the profile of the trafficking victims was determined by the presence of foreign soldiers and aid workers. Far from their families, these men were willing to pay for sex that trafficking victims were forced to provide.

But the crime has changed in response to new socio-economic conditions, law enforcement strategies and political situations.

OSCE Trafficking reports as far back as 2009 chronicle the changes. "Today, the typical victim of trafficking is often a citizen of the country where traffickers offer their services and below the age of 18" the report reads. Trafficking is carried out by "single or small groups of individuals... More often than before, the perpetrators resort to secluded locations, such as apartments and holiday homes."

The OSCE report also cites case studies that show how traffickers exploit the age, mental state, illness, poverty and lack of family support of victims. These show the extent of physical, mental and sexual abuse that victims endure under the noses of their families, neighbors and law enforcement.

The one thing that has not changed is the scope and profit of the crime. "Trafficking, as an international phenomenon, knows no borders, nationality or religion." The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that about 21 million victims of forced labor, including the sexually exploited can be found today.

Evolution of Balkan Trafficking

Kablar said that in the 1990s Eastern European women were tricked into leaving their countries by promises of legitimate work abroad. Many were kidnapped or sold by their families. They frequently came from extreme poverty and were kept in bondage by physical and psychological violence, as well as by threats against their families. In addition, they were taken to foreign countries where, at the time, no effective measures were in place to help trafficking victims.

All this required organized crime networks operating across borders and division of roles within the organization. Some members were assigned to finding and luring victims, others with making counterfeit travel documents and fake job offers for them, transporting them across borders and delivering them in destination countries. There, the women were sold on modern-day slave markets to local criminal groups who forced them into prostitution in nightclubs and brothels.

These slave markets and brothels were well known to the public, and Eastern European women became the symbol of human trafficking in the region.

Then with the expansion of the European Union, the Balkan nations faced increased pressure to protect their borders, to cooperate to limit trafficking and to bring anti-trafficking laws up to international standards, Kablar said.

The ratification of the Palermo Protocol (the full name is the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children) in the early 2000s by several Balkan countries was an important step. This supplement to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime spelled out what trafficking meant and what to do to quell it.

But, as law enforcement in the region got better at detecting and preventing trafficking across borders, criminals shifted to local victims.

The ironic consequences are that now many who see it, may not even realize they are witnessing human trafficking, or if they do, are reluctant to report it. The OSCE report said people fear retaliation by the traffickers or heed cultural views about "minding one's own business."

Combating Trafficking

Police actually need citizen reporters more than ever now that trafficking is more hidden.

Educating the public on recognizing human trafficking is important; non-government and government institutions in the Balkans agree. Kablar said raising awareness of the consequences trafficking has on its victims and on society is crucial.

Marija Andjelkovic, president of the NGO Anti-trafficking Action (ASTRA) in Belgrade, said high school-age children are especially vulnerable and need to know about trafficking. She said victims in Serbia are local, much younger than before, and that trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation is becoming more prevalent. Frequently, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), children are being forced to beg on the streets and in restaurants, and they are often sexually exploited or threatened with sexual exploitation if they refuse to beg. Many are also forced to collect recyclable materials from trash or to steal.

Protection of Roma children in the region is especially complicated. Authorities are reluctant to address cases of Roma child exploitation, and many citizens have a passive, racist attitude about the whole matter. They see begging as a "custom" of the Roma and because traffickers in these cases are frequently relatives, the authorities don't want to get involved.

Kablar said she found that Roma children frequently are kept out of schools, making it even harder for them to find legitimate work as adults. Too often they become exploiters themselves. This keeps a cycle of poverty and cultural prejudice going.

Getting at the Root Causes

Poverty drives trafficking. As the global economy has deteriorated, more people are willing to work in bad conditions and to accept risky and shady job offers. Increasing rates of unemployment and cost of living persuade people that any job is better than no job. Some travel to foreign countries and end up doing hard physical labor without compensation. Women in these situations are frequently sexually exploited as well, said Kablar. She and Andjelkovic note that the organizers of such exploitation are more often than not from the same country as the victims. Astra consults on job contracts with Serbian citizens considering working abroad, to safeguard against work exploitation.

BiH's State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration Samir Rizvo said people are often forced to work in substandard conditions, and this makes it hard to separate traffick-

ing for labor exploitation from poor working conditions in general.

In their 2011 report, the OSCE quotes a 2009 US Department of State "Trafficking in Persons Report" to highlight the difference between hard working conditions and trafficking for labor exploitation. Under a section, titled "Debunking Common Trafficking Myths," the Department of States explained: "A person may agree to work for an employer initially but later decide to stop working because the conditions are not what they agreed to. If an employer then uses force, fraud, or coercion to retain the person's labor or services, the employer becomes a trafficking offender and the employee becomes a victim."

The country's ethnic and political complexity makes it much harder to curtail trafficking, Rizvo said. Unified law enforcement and political structures would ease that. Streamlined and coordinated law enforcement would improve detection and prevention of human trafficking. But there is little promise of that happening. As an example, Rizvo said material on detection and prevention of trafficking has gone into high school curriculums in several parts of the Muslim/Croat section of the county, but the smaller Serb entity has shown no interest in it.

BiH laws also reflect this complexity. The state-level criminal code defines trafficking in accordance with the European Commission Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. But the criminal code in the administrative unit of the Brcko District does not provide for human trafficking at all. Provisions the country's two units follow contain some elements of trafficking, but they do not provide for the criminal offence of trafficking in accordance with international standards.

The law enforcement and judicial communities also need training in dealing with the new, domestic, form of trafficking. In Serbia, Astra is educating prosecutors on victims' legal and psychological needs. Similar efforts are in place in Bosnia.

Another thing that has changed radically over the past decades has been funding for anti-trafficking efforts. Foreign governments and aid organizations have pulled out, leaving states unable to staff shelters or to provide the psychological and medical attention and work training victims usually need. Astra in Serbia and Emmaus Europe in Bosnia are leading current efforts on behalf of victim rehabilitation.

Armenian NGOs Urge Hungary not to Extradite Azeri Assassin of Armenian Soldier

YERVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Several Armenian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) issued a statement on possible extradition of Armenian officer Gurgen Margaryan's assassin to Azerbaijan.

In the statement, the groups recounted the events of 2004. "A horrific event took place during trainings in the framework of Budapest-hosted Partnership for Peace NATO program in 2004. Late at night Azerbaijani officer Ramil Safarov brutally hacked the sleeping Armenian officer Gurgen Margaryan with an ax. This unprecedented crime shocked not only Armenia and Hungary, but also all Europe," the statement read in part.

In the ensuing trial, which lasted more than two years, the Azerbaijani lawyers of Safarov, discredited the memory of the Armenian victim, leveling different accusations against him, none of which could be proven. The judge in the case, Andrash Vaskuti, presided over the trial, which eventually found Safarov guilty and sentenced him to life imprisonment with no possibility of applying for a pardon for 30 years.

All Azeri appeals were rejected.

Meanwhile, in Azerbaijan Safarov was declared a national hero.

Now, the Azeri government is redoubling its efforts to win freedom — or at least a ticket home — for Safarov. "For the past eight years, the Hungarian side has reaffirmed commitment to international law, rejecting any possibility of extradition of



Ramil Safarov, right, with a guard at his trial

criminal to his homeland. However, the Azerbaijani and Turkish parties continue their efforts to extradite Safarov. Thus, a recent report proves that a signatures campaign was held in Turkey, urging the proponents to reconsider the sentence, implementing unreasonable and unacceptable historical parallels. Similar messages are also common in the Azerbaijani media," the NGOs' statement read.

"We believe it is our duty to address the Hungarian public and government agencies with an appeal to prevent the extradition of Safarov to Azerbaijan, where he will be granted freedom, honor and even greater glorification. We present only one sentence to prove the point: a year ago head of the department of Political Analysis and Information Support of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan Elnur Aslanov said that 'Ramil Safarov's valor gave Azerbaijani society and people a second wind.'"

In 2011 a report by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance noted xenophobic attitudes against Armenians. Moreover, the Azeri president called Armenians the country's number one enemy during a recent speeches.

The statement continues, "Safarov's attorney stated at Budapest trial that 'killing an Armenian is not a crime in Azerbaijan.'"

"Extradition will mean a call to action to Azerbaijani youth. In this case, the responsibility for the potential crimes will lie not only on Azerbaijan, but also on Hungary. It's noteworthy that the extradition against Azeri frequent violations could spark a renewal of bloody war," the NGOs wrote, adding, "We call upon the relevant institutions of friendly Hungary to consider the inevitable consequences of such a step. Only in the country of the crime, in the colony of strict regime Safarov must serve his sentence, imposed on him by Hungarian court."

Community News

Two Cultures Join To Celebrate Common Dreams

By Lianna Aghajanian

GLENDALE (*Glendale News-Press*) – Armenian and Korean immigrant communities have been living side by side in the pockets of Los Angeles for decades, but beyond the namesakes of Little Armenia and Koreatown, they have quietly and mutually called the Crescenta Valley home too.

So when the idea came up a year-and-a-half ago among community leaders to collaborate on a multicultural festival, it almost seemed like a non-question.

In less than three weeks, the Korean Armenian Cultural Festival – organized by the Korean-American Federation of North Los Angeles and the Armenian Community and Youth Center in Montrose – will make its debut at the Crescenta Valley Park.

At the two-day event, to be held on September 15 and 16, expect to find Korean and Armenian BBQ, dance groups, martial arts exhibitions, traditional wedding displays, cultural arts and crafts and probably what I am personally most looking forward to: K-Pop or Korean pop music that has transcended beyond the borders of South Korea, gaining fans across the world.

Plus, there is going to be a roaring rendition of the international sensation, “Gangnam Style.”

James Pak, representing the Korean community, and Arick Gevorkian, from the Armenian community – both of whom had a huge role in organizing the event – said how important it was not only to form strong bonds between Armenian and Korean-Americans, but to use this festival as a tool for letting others know the benefits of working together, instead of against each other.

“We want to let other communities know how two different nationalities can come together and work harmoniously to bring a strong community with benefits,” said Pak, adding that the partnership is especially important for future generations in the city.

Gevorkian echoed that sentiment.

Oftentimes, Armenian and Korean kids sit next to each other in middle and high school without ever interacting. But, he said, if they see the collaboration emerging from progressive leadership open to change, then the rest of the community will follow.

Gevorkian stressed that an important factor of this event is to showcase how immigrant communities have become so deeply and positively intertwined in the fabric of our cities, while advocating for mutual understanding.

“Be proud of your heritage,” he said. “But also, know your neighbors.” He notes that he has seen how other communities have raised artificial barriers without giving each other a chance to understand each other and individual customs and hopes the mutual efforts between Armenian and Korean counterparts can have a ripple effect on all parts of the community, including city leaders.

Along the way, Pak and Gevorkian have realized how similar Armenian and Korean communities, and the values they uphold, are. From the importance put on family, higher education, culture preservation, respect for elders and spirituality, as well as entrepreneurial spirit, they have more in common than they originally thought.

Even the planning process alone has had a positive intercultural impact: the Korean-American Federation is now even using the Armenian Community Center on Honolulu Avenue as a weekly meeting place.

Organizers hope this first event will lead to bigger and more diverse festivals in coming years, where they can add to the mix “Irish,” “Mexican” and other ethnic groups that make up LA’s landscape.



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian ordained Joseph Sarkis Gabrielian (left) and Stan Sheridan (right) to the diaconate

Two Ordained to the Diaconate in Racine

RACINE, Wis. – Two parishioners of St. Mesrob Church were ordained to the diaconate by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), on Sunday, August 19.

Joseph Sarkis Gabrielian and Stan Sheridan are active members of the Racine parish, who have been working hard to prepare for Sunday’s ordination. Gabrielian has served as a Parish Council chair for six years; Sheridan, who studied at St. Nersess Seminary, is the longtime advisor of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA) Juniors.

Under the guidance of Deacon Charles Hardy, the parish’s senior deacon, they learned the chants and hymns of the Divine Liturgy and other services of the Armenian Church. They received theological lessons from Rev. Yeprem Kelegian, parish pastor. During their training, Gabrielian and Sheridan also visited the sick and elderly and assisted with the parish soup kitchen – tasks they will continue to take up as deacons.



The Rev. Yeprem Kelegian delivers remarks during the luncheon that followed services.

On Sunday, Barsamian celebrated the Divine Liturgy. During the *badarak*, the Primate performed the ordination service.

“It is a great joy to see dedicated individuals stepping forward to serve the Armenian Church,” said Barsamian. “May God guide you in your service and may He strengthen you as you take up the responsibilities of the diaconate.”

When asked about the significance of his ordination, Gabrielian responded with a passage from the ordination service: “Pour down the grace of your Holy Spirit so that I may be an example to others.” Sheridan said he prayed that he “may be worthy to receive grace from almighty God.”

“Joseph and Stan are worthy of ascending to the diaconate of St. Stephen,” Kelegian said. “I pray that they stay aware of the great grace and responsibility bestowed upon them.”

A luncheon and program followed services. Diocesan Council Chair Oscar Tatosian, who was among the day’s speakers, congratulated the newly ordained and spoke about the importance of lay ministry.

“Earlier today we sang *Orakh Ler* (Rejoice, Holy Church), and indeed our church rejoices today,” he said. “This is a day of celebration – a celebration of our faith and of our unity in Christ.”

Parish Council Chair Steve Gengozian served as the master of ceremonies. Violinist Lillian Proctor performed musical selections.

The ordination was preceded by a Vespers service on Saturday, August 18.

Mark Geragos to Host Armenia Fund’s 20th Anniversary Gala

NEW YORK – Mark Geragos, the internationally-acclaimed trial lawyer and principal of Geragos & Geragos, has agreed to take time from his demanding schedule in court and in the media to serve as master of ceremonies for the Armenia Fund USA gala on September 29, celebrating 20 years of helping Armenia and Karabagh.

Later this year, Geragos will preside over the 12-hour long Armenia Fund Thanksgiving Day

Telethon for the

10th consecutive

year, putting his

magnetic imprint

on what has

become a tradition

for many Armenian-

American families.

They tune in to

watch Geragos use

his formidable powers

of persuasion to

keep the phones

ringing with new

donations from across the country and abroad.

His in-depth knowledge of Armenia Fund can also be attributed to his service, as since 2006, he has served on the board of trustees of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, the central umbrella organization of which Armenia Fund USA is an affiliate.

Armenia Fund USA is the first of the now 22 international affiliates, formed at a time when Armenia and Karabagh were reeling from all the challenges testing the very survival of these newly-independent states.

Armenia Fund USA had to bring to bear all the ingenuity, know-how and related experience that its founders and members could muster to help bring back both Armenia and Karabagh from the brink. It was the first to come to the rescue, with an airlift of fuel, food and medicine made possible with the cooperation of the United Armenia Fund. It also took the lead in some of the most groundbreaking infrastructure projects that fundamentally changed the anatomy of the country with the Goris-Stepankert highway, connecting Armenia and Karabagh, and the North-South Highway, linking all the major towns of Karabagh.

“The impact of these civic projects on national security and economic development cannot be overestimated,” said Khoren Bandazian, current chairman of the Board of Directors of Armenia Fund USA.

“We are very proud to have Mark Geragos hosting our milestone celebration,” he added. “We know his passion for Armenia and Armenian causes isn’t just words. He is actively engaged in some of the biggest issues of our times, bringing his highly visible presence into arenas that need his special brand of intellect and skill.”

Geragos was one of the lead lawyers in a pair of groundbreaking Federal class action lawsuits against New York Life Insurance and AXA Corporation for insurance policies issued in the early 20th century during the genocide of more than 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Turk government. These two cases have settled for close to \$40 million. Currently, the issue of his other lawsuits seeking damages is before the US Supreme Court, but a US federal court ruled that “Armenians did not have the right to sue against foreign insurance companies for unpaid claims because the US government does not legally recognize that an Armenian Genocide occurred.” Such an outcome only compelled Geragos to escalate his efforts.

He is currently suing the government of Turkey itself for reparations arising out of the Armenian Genocide.

Geragos is also on the Advisory Committee of see GERAGOS, page 8



Mark Geragos



OBITUARY

OBITUARY

Armand Tatossian

Acclaimed Canadian Painter

MONTREAL (Canada News Wire) – Painter Armand Tatossian, the youngest artist to ever be accepted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (RCAA), died suddenly on August 23.

Tatossian, was a Canadian-Armenian artist of unparalleled talent and artistic vision.

Born in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1951, he descended from a long line of artists. His grandfather, after whom he was named, was a painter and curator of the Alexandria Museum of Egypt. His uncle, Yeghiche Tatossian, was an Armenian landscape painter who traveled to Paris to study Post-Impressionism, ultimately

and muralist Adam Sherriff-Scott.

In 1970, Armand Tatossian travelled to Paris to study under the French painter and lithographer Jean Carzou (Karnig Zumulian), painter Bernard Buffet and painter Jansem (Jani Semerdjian). Following the Academy des Beaux-Arts, Tatossian studied mural technique at the Carrarra Academy in Italy.

Tatossian's exuberant artistic energy was largely expressed in oil-on-canvas paintings as well as lithographs on Arches paper (his preferred artistic mediums). His subject matter varied: abstracts, landscapes (country and city),

still life, tone on tone and the ever so distinctive style dubbed "Tatossianisme." Tatossian's vision and artistic style received international exposure by being featured in exhibitions and museum collections worldwide as early as 1968. In addition, numerous presidential as well as private and corporate collections internationally are home to many Tatossian originals.

In addition, Tatossian's work has graced the walls of the Musée du Quebec (Canada), the National Gallery of Athens (Greece), Musée de Saint-Lazaro (Italy), the Fine Arts Museum of the Republic of Armenia (Armenia), the Presidential Library (Washington DC) and the Armenian Library and Museum of America (Watertown, Mass.). Several galleries in North America have featured his works.



Armand Tatossian

returning to Armenia to bring the style home. Finally, his father, Charles Tatossian, was and still remains a painter in Canada.

Armand Tatossian was only 6 when he was first introduced to art by his grandfather. Some of his early teachers included: his father, Charles Garo Tatossian, the Serbian sculptor Jose Majzner as well as the respected portraitist

Funeral services were held at St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Cathedral, Outremont, on Friday, August 31.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made by check to: The Tatossian Foundation, an entity soon to be incorporated.

To reach the family, write to his sister, Mary Tatossian, at artcetra2011@gmail.com.

Giragosian

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Send resumes and writing samples to the editor, Alin K. Gregorian, at editor@mirrorspectator.com.

Re-Elect Marilyn Petitto Devaney

Our Governor's Councilor on Thursday, September 6

"Always There for Us"



- When an earthquake hit Armenia, Marilyn organized a fundraiser for victims and held an event at the Oakley Country Club.
- When a Town Councilor, Marilyn refused to renew Watertown's proclamation of ADL's "No Place for Hate," because of the ADL's work against the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.
- Marilyn wrote a "New" Proclamation on removing Watertown from ADL's "No Place for Hate."
- Marilyn was the only elected official who traveled to towns and cities convincing them to withdraw from ADL's "No Place for Hate."
- Marilyn wrote a proclamation requesting the Massachusetts Municipal Association to stop sponsorship.
- Marilyn authored a resolution requesting the President of the US to support Congressional resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide – and for reparation to the Armenians.
- Marilyn has attended every Martyr's Day Commemoration at the State House since 1985, when the late Speaker George Keverian initiated the program.
- She was always endorsed for election by her dear late friend, George Keverian.

"We support Marilyn for her integrity, experience and commitment and the positive changes she has made on the Governor's Council."

"We ask you to join us by voting for Marilyn (Councilor on your ballot) on Thursday, September 6."

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Congressman Michael Capuano,
Congressman Stephen Lynch,
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Committee to re-elect Marilyn Petitto Devaney;
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COMMUNITY NEWS

St. James Armenian Church Men's Club to Meet on September 10

WATERTOWN, Mass. — On Monday, September 10, Zack Minasian, administrative assistant to Boston Red Sox Manager Bobby Valentine, will be the speaker at the joint dinner meeting of the St. James Armenian Church Men's Club and the Holy Trinity Armenian Church Men's Club. The topic will be "A Baseball Life."

Minasian is in his 28th year in professional baseball. He was hired by the Boston Red Sox organization as the administrative assistant to the manager at the beginning of the 2012 season.

He was previously appointed equipment and home clubhouse manager for the Texas Rangers in 1994 after six years as the visiting clubhouse manager in Texas, ultimately

spending 22 years in the organization.

As a teenager, Minasian mentored under the Hall of Fame Manager Tommy Lasorda, working in the Dodgers organization in the late 1960s as a minor league clubhouse attendant and equipment manager in Ogden, Utah.

Minasian was selected by his peers as Equipment Manager of the Year in 2008.

He previously worked with Caps for Kids, a charitable organization dedicated to giving caps signed by athletes, entertainers and other celebrities to children who are suffering from cancer, and has worked with other sports-related charitable organizations over the years.

Minasian and his wife, Barbara, reside in Chicago during the off-season. They have four sons and two granddaughters: Lola, almost 3, and Minka, 1. Their son, Rudy, is an entrepreneur in Chicago; Perry is director of professional scouting for the Toronto Blue Jays; Calvin is a Minor League equipment coordinator for the Washington Nationals and Zack is the director of professional scouting for the Milwaukee Brewers.

The social hour starts with mezza at 6:15 p.m. following by a complete Armenian dinner at 7 p.m.; tickets are \$12 per person. The dinner meeting will be at the St. James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center-Keljik Hall, 465 Mount Auburn St. Women are welcome.



Zack Minasian

Vahe Der Manuelian Never Skipped a Beat

By Tom Vartabedian

HAVERHILL, Mass. — Vahe Der Manuelian never met an Armenian band he didn't like.

With his trusty *dumbeg* tucked away safely in his trunk, he made the rounds, looking for a gig. He traveled to picnics, anniversary celebrations, house parties, weddings and kefs, itching for a chance to play.

Over the years, he performed with his favorite *dumbeg* companion, the late Roger Krikorian, whenever and wherever the two should meet. Other notables who relished his services were *oud* virtuosos George Mgrdichian, Johnny Berberian and Harry Minasian, and clarinet impresario Kachig Kazarian.

He would fill in the gaps, stand in for respites, enhance any band's repertoire and accompanied such divas as Anahid Changelian during one concert/recording series.

But nothing replaced his early years with the New England Ararats. He joined that orchestra in the mid-1950s and established his niche as a fledgling talent on the *dumbeg*. In essence, he never stopped playing, instrument or not.

"He hit the steering wheel on his car, banged on tables and chairs, and just about anything else in sight," said his wife Satenik. "You could say he had an unquenchable thirst for his *dumbeg*. That's who he was. That's how I met him. That's how I saw him die."

Der Manuelian died suddenly on August 7, during a visit to Rockport, one of his favorite seashore destinations, leaving behind a rich legacy that included his family, friends, the Armenian community and consummate musicianship. He was 73.

"Much as Vahe considered George Mgrdichian the epitome when it came to the *oud*, he always felt Roger was at the head of his class as a *dumbeg* player," added his wife. "When Roger died, Vahe was devastated. He never got over it."

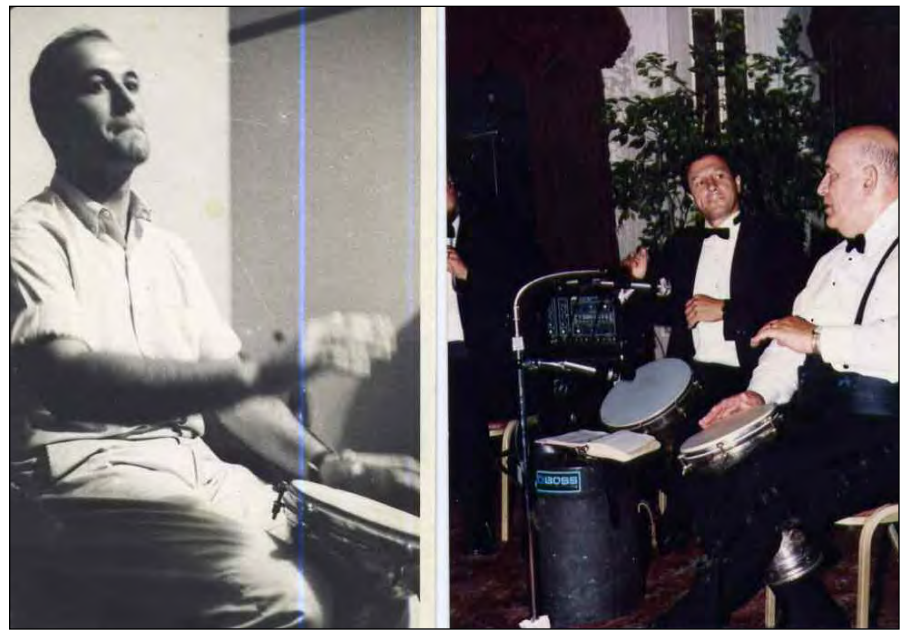
By the casket stood one of Vahe's favorite *dumbegs* with a towel draped over it, used to wipe the perspiration when he overexerted himself. Three *dumbegs* formed an elegant decor in the living room of his Haverhill home and they were all spoken for as heirlooms for

the grandchildren. One day perhaps they will carry forth the tradition set by their granddad.

At Boston University, which he attended in the late 1950s, he was one of the catalysts behind the formation of an Armenian Club.

He was a founding member of the St. Stephen's Church Couples Club and served as Sunday School superintendent.

"He was a man of deep faith and devotion to God," said Rev. Antranig Baljian in his eulogy.



Vahe Der Manuelian, left, in his playing days with the New England Ararats, and right, with the inimitable Roger Krikorian, his favorite *dumbeg* buddy

"I saw him in church a few days before his death. What a blessing to him and a consolation for his family that one of the last things he did was worship the God he loved so much. His great charm, kindness and happy-go-lucky nature will never be forgotten."

He and his family traveled to Lake Tahoe to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary just two weeks prior. The entire Der Manuelian clan, which featured son Stephen, daughter Susan Grubbs, their spouses Betsy and Todd, along with grandchildren Michael, Matthew, Samantha and Jack had the time of their lives.

"I'm the happiest and luckiest man alive," he later told friends. "How many people get to celebrate a golden anniversary with their entire

family around him? It's everything a guy like me would ever want."

After graduating from Somerville High in 1956, he went on to secure a degree in Business Management from Boston University. In his early years, he was practically weaned on the violin before turning into a percussionist.

He spent 25 years working in human resources for Star Market Corporation, ultimately climbing the corporate ladder to direc-

tor. He eventually established his own personal development/HR consulting firm, which continued until his death.

Nobody was more prompt than DerManuelian, meeting all appointments on the dot and expecting the same punctuality from everyone else.

"We'll miss his easy smile, the mischievous twinkle in his eye, and especially his admonishment to his kids, grandkids, nieces and nephews when they got a little antsy," added Baljian. "His sense of humor added a little levity to life."

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Stephen's Church, 38 Elton Ave., Watertown, MA 02472.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Hyatt Hotel CEO Hoplamazian to Be Speaker at Assembly's 40th Anniversary Gala

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America announced recently that Hyatt Hotels President and CEO Mark Hoplamazian will be the featured speaker of the Assembly's 40th Anniversary Gala taking place in Los Angeles on September 22.

Hoplamazian was named president and chief

executive officer (CEO) of the Chicago-based Hyatt Hotels Corporation in December 2006. Prior to his appointment as CEO, Hoplamazian served as president of The Pritzker Organization, LLC (TPO), the principal financial and investment advisor for Pritzker family business interests. During his 17-year tenure with TPO he served as advisor to various Pritzker family-owned companies, including Hyatt Hotels Corporation and its predecessors.

According to last month's article in *Barron's* magazine, "Mark Hoplamazian helped the Pritzker family assemble the Hyatt Hotels business, and then found himself running it. So far, he's doing great. Build global, think local. ... The world is smaller than ever today, but no less diverse. The CEO of a company that serves the global mobile class needs to sweat the small stuff, but with systematic rigor. It sounds like the perfect assignment for a serious sort, and Hoplamazian is handling it beautifully."

Hoplamazian was also featured last month in the *Chicago Tribune*, which noted that "under his leadership, the company is breaking out of a conservative mold that left it vastly outpaced by expanding rival chains. It is moving rapidly from its stylized, luxury roots into a more diverse array of hotel offerings, including limited-service and extended-stay, and from its domestic foothold into a broader spectrum of key foreign locations."

Hoplamazian is the current chairman of the

National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprise. He also serves on the Advisory Board of Facing History and Ourselves, a nonprofit organization that teaches about Armenian Genocide, as well as the Council on the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, the Henry Crown Fellowship Program Board of Overseers and the Board of Directors of New Schools for Chicago.

A Harvard graduate, Hoplamazian also shares another distinction – he is a trustee of the Armenian Assembly and an alumnus of the Assembly's Summer Internship program. First established in 1977, more than 950 students have come through the internship program in the nation's capital with 2012 marking its 35th anniversary.

"It is an honor for me to be part of the Assembly's 40th Anniversary Gala, which also coincides with the 35th anniversary of the Internship program," stated Hoplamazian. "I am looking forward to sharing this important milestone with Assembly supporters from across the country."

"The Assembly is proud to have Mark Hoplamazian, a business leader and former Assembly intern, as our featured speaker," stated Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. "He joins a stellar group of political leaders, community leaders and philanthropists."

The gala will pay tribute to former Gov. George Deukmejian and his wife, Gloria, who in turn will present the Assembly's Deukmejian Award for Public Service to Chuck and Debbie Poochigian. The Assembly's Distinguished Humanitarian Award will be presented to Elizabeth Agabian, Flora Dunaian and Savey Tufenkian.

For further information about the gala, contact Aline Maksoudian at amaksoudian@aaa-inc.org.



Mark Hoplamazian

Mark Geragos to Host Armenia Fund's 20th Anniversary Gala

GERAGOS, from page 5

Birthright Armenia and is chairman of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. He is also involved with the Armenian religious community.

"Quite simply," said Irina Lazarian, executive director of Armenia Fund USA, "Mark's Armenian identity is much stronger than his media persona would at first reveal. He is a modern-day leader in our community. His energy and enthusiasm make him the ideal person to carry the Armenia Fund banner, which unites Armenians worldwide behind a common cause."

Geragos' cemented his national reputation as a trial lawyer 14 years ago with back-to-back State and Federal Court jury trial acquittals for Whitewater figure Susan McDougal, the former business partner of former President Bill Clinton. In early 2001, Geragos completed his representation of McDougal by securing a presidential pardon for McDougal for a conviction she sustained prior to his representation of her.

In March 2006, Geragos won a dismissal of special circumstances murder charges after he was able to prove that the eyewitness identification of his client was fatally flawed. The client was freed from custody after being held without bail for more than eight months. This dismissal came on the heels of another exoneration of a Geragos client who was freed from custody and his case dismissed by the prosecution after DNA tests conducted by the defense proved that he also had been falsely accused as a result of a flawed eyewitness identification.

In 2008, Geragos won dismissal of murder charges for the third time for a USC co-ed charged with murder in the death of her fetus. That same year, he also won the dismissal of a 27-year-old murder charge against Japanese national Kazuyoshi Miura, a case which mesmerized the Japanese media and was labeled the "Japanese O.J. Case." In December 2008, he secured for his client, a non-profit foundation, a \$59 million jury verdict in Santa Clara Superior Court in a trade secrets case against pharmaceutical giant Pfizer Corporation. That verdict was voted both "Top Ten Verdicts in 2008 in California" by the *Daily Journal*, as well as "Top Fifty Verdicts in the United States" by the *National Law Journal*.

Geragos' client list has included singer Chris Brown, Nicole Ritchie, former Rep. Gary Condit, former first brother Roger Clinton, Academy Award-nominated actress Winona Ryder, pop star Michael Jackson, hip hop stars Nathaniel "Nate Dogg" Hale and Sean "Diddy" Combs, Usher Raymond, Mike Tyson and the Sarkisyan family, whose 17-year-old daughter died when Cigna Corporation refused to authorize a liver transplant. Over the last 14 months, he has won all eight jury trials he has tried, including a stunning \$8 million bad faith verdict on behalf of a 90-year-old World War II veteran.

Geragos regularly appears as both guest and legal commentator on the "Today Show," "Good Morning America," "Anderson Cooper," "Dateline NBC," "60 minutes" and "48 Hours," and has lectured extensively and authored numerous articles and *Law Review* publications on the subject of media and the law.

Also present at the gala will be Eduard Nalbandian, Armenia's foreign minister, and French-Armenian pop singer Patrick Fiori in his New York premiere performance.

For more information and tickets, visit www.armenianfundusa.org.

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Armenia Fund USA



COMMUNITY NEWS

TCA Arshag Dickranian School Board Appoints Dr. Maral Yeranossian New Principal

LOS ANGELES – The Board of Trustees of the TCA Arshag Dickranian School has announced the appointment of Maral Yeranossian, PhD, as the school's new principal.

Yeranossian earned her doctorate in philosophy from Stanford University and her doctorate in psychology from Pepperdine University. She has served as Dickranian School's counselor for the past 15 years and has extensive background in education through her work at several schools, including Rose & Alex Pilibos and Campbell Hall.

Prior to her appointment as principal, Yeranossian was a clinical psychologist in private practice in Los Angeles, specializing in adolescent therapy, testing, diagnostic and treatment of various challenges, adult crisis intervention and adjustment therapy. She is associated with Cedar Sinai Hospital, where she worked as an associate psychologist, supervisor psychologist for a teen hot line and on-call psychologist for crisis intervention.

Currently, Yeranossian is a member of the American Psychological Association, the American Counseling Association and the American Academic Counsel. She also is a member of the panel for admissions to the University of California system.

She is also active in the Armenian community. She is a member of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, where she has served in its Western District Committee for several years. She is also a member of the Armenian International Women Association (AIWA), where she has acted as panelist/speaker in the association's functions and conventions.

She is a founding member of the International Parents Inc., where she has worked to strengthen families by bringing generations together. She is also a founding mentor of the Summerstage Theatre Group, the first non-profit theater group run solely by young actors between the ages of 16-26, which presents several benefit theatrical productions annually.

"We are quite certain and most confident that Dr. Yeranossian will devote her experiences and expertise to uphold the mission of Dickranian School in keeping pace with the changing times and introducing new programs to the school's curriculum," said Chairman George K. Mandossian, when making his announcement on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Located at 1200 North Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles, the TCA Arshag Dickranian Armenian School is a federally-tax exempt, Pre-K to 12th grade private educational institution. For more information, visit www.dickranianschool.org.

Assembly Interns Meet with Speier and Dold as Part of Capitol Ideas Series

WASHINGTON – Earlier this month, as part of the Armenian Assembly of America's Terjenian-Thomas Internship Program's Capitol Ideas series, the 2012 Armenian Assembly summer intern class met with Representatives Jackie Speier (D-CA) and Robert Dold (R-IL).

An active member of the Armenian Caucus and a cosponsor of H. Res. 304, the Armenian Genocide resolution, Speier serves on the House Armed Services Committee as well as the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Speier shared her experiences throughout her career path, emphasizing the power of a resilient attitude in the face of adversity. She encouraged the 2012 internship class to take risks and pursue their dreams.

Dold, a member of the House Financial Services Committee, introduced the Armenian Genocide resolution, H. Res. 304, along with Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA). This bipartisan bill continues to garner cosponsors and is currently pending before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

In addition to H. Res. 304, Dold, together with Schiff, spearheaded a "Dear Colleague" letter, urging Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to clarify remarks she made about the Armenian Genocide during a Town Hall meeting held in February of this year.

The interns expressed their appreciation to Speier and Dold for their support of issues of concern to the Armenian-American community.



Rep. Robert Dold (R-IL) and Assembly Interns meet on the Capitol steps.



Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA) meets with Assembly Interns.

Vahe Apelian to Give Talk at Ararat-Eskijian Museum on Generic Drugs

MISSION HILLS, Calif. – Dr. Vahe Apelian will present an illustrated talk on Sunday, September 9, at 4 p.m. at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, 15105 Mission Hills Road, on the development of drug products from inception to production as generics and will cover the regulations that govern their marketing as the more affordable alternative to their branded counterparts. Along with the facts pertaining to their development and testing to assure the same safety and efficacy as their brand counterparts, the Food and Drug

Administration's (FDA's) response to some of the prevailing myths will be addressed.

Apelian was born in Beirut. He received a bachelor's degree in pharmacy and a master's degree in microbiology from the American University of Beirut, where he also trained as a clinical pathologist. In 1976, after moving to the US, he embarked on a career of more than three decades in developing pharmaceutical products with multinational pharmaceutical companies where he held scientific and managerial positions. He received his second master's

degree in industrial pharmaceutical sciences and PhD in pharmaceuticals from St. John's University in New York.

In recognition of his academic excellence, he was elected to Rho Chi, the only national Pharmaceutical Honors Society.

He has published, presented and co-authored in his line of specialty. He is the primary author of a US pharmaceutical patent.

He and his family live in Loveland, Ohio.

For more information, contact the Ararat-Eskijian Museum at ararat-eskijian-museum@netzero.net.

Datev Hovannisian and Armen Abkarian Receive Marilyn Arshagouni Scholarships



Armen Abkarian and Datev Hovannisian with Marilyn Arshagouni

LOS ANGELES – Two promising university seniors, Datev Hovannisian and Armen Abkarian, on August 22, accepted their checks as co-winners of the Marilyn Arshagouni Scholarship.

The scholarship is designed to assist Armenian students who have achieved at least junior status at an accredited university in the United States. Preference is given to Ferrahian graduates pursuing careers in the humanities, fine and performing arts, social sciences and education.

Hovannisian, a senior at UCLA majoring in mathematics, with an interest in English and the creative arts, has demonstrated her commitment to education by volunteering as a math tutor for middle and high school students. Her goals include becoming a certified public accountant and volunteering her services to those in need.

Abkarian, a senior at Cal State University Northridge, is pursuing a degree in political science, with the goals of completing law school and becoming an attorney. His experience as an intern for the Armenian National Committee helped him understand the role government can play in the advancement of the Armenian community.

Both have participated in a wide range of activities associated with Armenian organizations and institutions and demonstrate that, as they earn their professional degrees, they will actively contribute to the life of the Armenian community.



Arts & Living

Cross Cultural Eyewitness: Philip Hagopian

By Amy Rahn

BURLINGTON, Vt. (*Seven Days*) — Philip Hagopian creates paintings that seem like glimpses of a beautiful, vanished world. His lavish works currently on view at Salaam on Burlington's Church Street are painted in bold, unctuous oils, their settings festooned with woven rugs and patterned draperies that cascade around exotic women. Hagopian evokes an atmosphere of mystery and sensuality so palpable that you can almost smell perfume wafting from censers and hear the rustle of silk. This fluent brushwork flows from an artist who is passionate about history, family and painting itself.

Born to an Armenian father and American mother in East Longmeadow, Mass., Hagopian, now 53, manages to straddle the two lands and cultures. Accordingly, his paintings combine classical Western techniques honed at the Art Institute of Boston with the rich patterns, landscapes and traditions of Armenia.

Hagopian's exhibit includes figurative works, still lifes, pastoral scenes set around the high-altitude Lake Sevan in central Armenia and examples of "multi-dimensionalism," a term the



"If Sand Could Speak," by Philip Hagopian

artist coined to describe a mixture of painting and assemblage. Hagopian's wife, Naira, often appears in his paintings. In "Above Sevan," she stands holding mounds of blossoms on a grassy hillside dotted with pink, purple and white flowers. She is also in the works "A Change of Mood" and "Gathering Flowers," among others.

While Hagopian is primarily a visual artist, he is also an avid musician who plays the Armenian *dumbek* (an ancient drum) and guitar. In 2006, Hagopian made his first trip to Armenia to seek out other Middle Eastern musicians. While on that trip, he met Naira, who was working as a translator. The couple moved to Vermont, where Hagopian has lived on and off for 27 years total, since his parents brought the family there in the late 1970s.

When Hagopian talks about his life as a painter, his story is marked by the births of his

see HAGOPIAN, page 13



Some of the creatures created by glass artists Alex Abajian and Jerry Lin-Hsien Kung

The Unusual 'Creatures' Of Alex Abajian and Jerry Lin-Hsien Kung

OAKLAND, Calif. (*East Bay Express*) — For the past four or so years, Alex Abajian and Jerry Lin-Hsien Kung have been making "creatures" — tripodal formations of bended glass, typically coated in a mirror finish. In isolation, one of these creatures might appear a merely decorative object — a chic, sensuous addition to a posh lobby or some such space. However,

By Alex Bigman

Abajian and Kung have no interest in delivering their creations to such a fate.

To thwart such a banal reading, the duo crowds the creatures in a runway installation, wherein they become a reflective, mercurial melee of limbs and curves, capturing viewers' reflections and enlivening one another. "They naturally want to go together in certain ways," said Abajian. "Like one will be pushing and the other will be pulling. They nestle into these groups and you see it looks like a group of people, how people actually congregate."

With a \$40,000 grant from the Tacoma Museum of Glass, Abajian and Kung were able to create quite a sizable congregation. This also makes the exhibition, "Creatures," now at Vessel Gallery, one of the most expensive in the history of Oakland's gallery scene.

But it's not exactly clear how someone seeking art should approach these objects. One thing is sure: They are not like conventional sculptures, where the art is in some sense encapsulated in the finished form. Rather, Abajian and Kung's art is in the process.

The artists have been collaborating since they were students at the Rhode Island School of Design. They have a seemingly inexhaustible supply of shared stories, and even possess matching cranial scars (each the result of a serious injury, neither glass blowing-related). Together, they pursued the craft end of glass-making for a while, but soon started drifting toward something else — a more playful, organic process free of rigid expectations.

Their approach — unique in the heavily traditional world of glass-blowing — involves a serious amount of coordination and a great deal of trust. Basically, Kung pours hot glass from above, blowing into it to control its melt, while Abajian, below, negotiates with gravity to influence the glass' form, using rods to pull out "legs" and arching "trunks" before the material freezes up. It is a play with the most basic of physical constraints: time, space and gravity.

Many of the resulting creatures wind up in a broken heap ("the graveyard," as it is known), but no matter; the physical object here is mostly an indexical one, pointing to the art more than constituting it — something like abstract expressionist gestural smears. "It's kind of a physical snapshot, where the glass is recording our movements," said Kung. "It's about one person's breath and the movement of two people, physically moving like a marionette."

Indeed, more than sculpture, this is dance.

"Creatures" runs through September 1 at Vessel Gallery (471 25th St., Oakland).

They are not like conventional sculptures, where the art is in some sense encapsulated in the finished form.

New Play on Armenian Experience to Open in NYC

NEW YORK — New York Theatre Workshop (NYTW) Artistic Director James C. Nicola and Managing Director William Russo have announced that Kathleen Chalfant will lead the cast of NYTW's production of "Red Dog Howls," written by Alexander Dinelaris.

Ken Rus Schmoll will direct the production, which opens the 2012-13 season, beginning performances on September 5.

"Red Dog Howls," which will officially open on September 24, will also feature Alfred Narciso and Florencia Lozano.

In "Red Dog Howls," a box of old letters and a father's dying wish lead Michael Kiriakos to uncover the buried secrets of his family history. As Michael gets to know Rose, an elderly Armenian woman, Michael discovers a past he never knew existed. "Red Dog Howls" explores the horrors of a forgotten genocide, the enduring strength of the human spirit and how the choices one generation makes for their children, for better or worse, will reverberate for generations to come.

Chalfant earned a Tony nomination for "Angels in America: Millennium Approaches" and appeared on Broadway in "M. Butterfly," "Angels in America: Perestroika" and "Racing Demon." Her off-Broadway credits include "Wit," "Painting Churches," "Talking Heads," "Family Week," "Dead Man's Cell Phone" and "Spalding Gray: Stories Left to Tell." Her film and TV credits include "The Laramie Project," "Kinsey," "Perfect Stranger," "Junior," "Rescue Me," "Duplicity" and "Law & Order."

NYTW is known for its innovative adaptations of classic repertory. Each season, from its home in New York's East Village neighborhood, NYTW presents three to five new productions, more than 80 readings and numerous workshop productions, for more than 45,000 audience members. Over the past 28 years, NYTW has developed and produced more than 100 new, fully-staged works.

NYTW's acclaimed productions of "Once" and "Peter and the Starcatcher" are currently enjoying Broadway runs, having garnered 20 Tony Award nominations, and "Rent," which premiered at NYTW, is currently playing an off-Broadway revival. In 1991, NYTW received an OBIE Award for Sustained Achievement and in 2000 was designated to be part of the Leading National Theatres Program by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Kathleen Chalfant to Lead Cast of 'Red Dog Howls'



Kathleen Chalfant



Playwright Alexander Dinelaris



ARTS & LIVING

Paul Ignatius to Speak on *Now I Know in Part*

FRESNO — Paul R. Ignatius, former US secretary of the navy and assistant secretary of defense, will speak on his new book, *Now I Know in Part: An Armenian-American Reflects on his Life and Times*, at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 12, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium.

The lecture is part of the Armenian Studies Program Fall 2012 Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

Ignatius' *Now I Know in Part*, a substantially

revised and expanded edition of a memoir that was first published privately in 2000, was issued in late 2011 by NAASR's Armenian Heritage Press.

In *Now I Know in Part*, Ignatius looks back on family history, childhood in Glendale (before it had a major Armenian community), colorful characters (famous and obscure), Hollywood brushes with greatness, military service during World War II, a memorable journey to Historic Armenia with NAASR in 2006 and more.

A descendant of Armenian parents from the Kharper region of historic Armenia, Ignatius is a graduate of the University of Southern California. He earned an MBA from Harvard University after serving as a naval officer in World War II. He is also the author of *On Board: My Life in the Navy, Government, and Business* (Naval Institute Press, 2006).

Ignatius served for eight years in the presidential administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, first as an assistant secretary of the army, then as undersecretary of the army and assistant secretary of defense, and finally in 1967 as secretary of the navy. Following his government service, he was president of the *Washington Post* for two years and president of the Air Transport Association for 15 years. He is the recipient of the Army Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award, and the Department of Defense Distinguished Public Service Award.

Copies of *Now I Know in Part* will be available for purchase after the lecture.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



Paul R. Ignatius

New Editions of Bournoutian's *Concise History* Published

COSTA MESA, Calif. — Mazda Academic Press has just published the sixth edition of George Bournoutian's *A Concise History of the Armenian People*. The revised and up-to-date edition is dedicated to Bournoutian's friend, the late Aris Sevag, who edited this edition.

Bournoutian's book, the first comprehensive survey in English of the history of the Armenians from ancient times to the present, has been adopted as a textbook in a number of high schools and colleges and has been well-received by Armenian and non-Armenian readers. Students and teachers of history have made use of the special maps and timetables. Some 15,000 copies have been sold.

In 2003, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) chapter of Argentina commissioned a Spanish translation of the book to be undertaken by Tiravanti de Margossian. Published in Buenos Aires, the book is titled *Historia Sucinta del Pueblo Armenio* and was featured at the International Book Fair in Buenos Aires. That edition was sold out and a

new printing is in preparation.

In 2011, Bournoutian gave Aras Press of Istanbul permission to publish a Turkish translation prepared by Ender Abadoğlu and Ohannes Kilichdaghi. The title of the book is *Ermeni Tarihi* and it was featured at the Istanbul International Book Fair.

In 2012, the Egypto-Lebanese Publishing House, at the behest of the AGBU in Egypt, obtained Bournoutian's permission and prepared an Arabic translation by Sahar Tawfiq. Published in Cairo the book is titled *Mawgez Tarikh al-Sh'ab al-Armani* and was featured at the Cairo International Book Fair.

Simultaneously, the AGBU has undertaken to prepare an Armenian translation of the sixth English edition. Translated by Artsvi Bakhchinyan, the book is titled Hay Zhoghovrdi Hamarod Patmut'un, and will be published next week in Yerevan by the Hayastan Press.

While in Tokyo at the invitation of Sophia University to deliver two lectures on his books dealing with Iran and the Caucasus in the 18-

The 'Aegean Trio' Moves to Vermont

JOHNSON, Vt. (*Art Mail*) — Barbara Murphy, president of Johnson State College, announced that the college recently received a set of three statues from Dr. Carolann and George Najarian of Massachusetts.

The couple, who wanted to donate artwork to a Vermont college, went through the Vermont Arts Council. The Najarians —

donors and art collectors — chose Johnson State College based on what they learned about the school through its website. The piece, called "Aegean Trio," was created by the late Vermont sculptor, Judith Brown.

"This all felt like a gift from the deities. Colleges are often fortunate to receive gifts; usually they come from old friends and alumni; this gift came to us from people we did not know, people who had chosen us because they intuited that our priorities and commitments as a college, the values we place on art as a means of building and sustaining community, aligned with what they, too, believe about the role of art and artists," said Murphy.

She noted, "We

were nervous about whether Carolann and George would like the place we had chosen to install 'Aegean Trio.' Our coordinator of arts on campus, Leila Bandar, considered several sites and ultimately recommended one that features the 'Trio' near but apart from a building and looking toward a pond and the Sterling Mountain Range. Also, the placement fronts



Dr. Carolann and George Najarian dancing before "The Aegean Trio"

on a walking path and is within sight of another large-scale outdoor work."

There were some interesting coincidences. The Najarians, as it turned out, used to go for dinner and music at a Middle Eastern restaurant in Cambridge, Mass., the owner of which was the arts coordinator's father.

"So, we marked the arrival of the 'Aegean Trio' and the Najarians — and their extended family — with dancing, Middle Eastern food and a very grateful art faculty who already look forward to bringing their students to observe and study this new addition to our art on campus," Murphy said.

The couple, it turns out, love the "Trio's" new home.

19th centuries, Bournoutian signed an agreement with the Japanese publishing firm Fujiwara-Shoten to prepare a Japanese translation by Professors Komaki and Watanabe to be published in Tokyo in 2013 under the title *Armenia-jin no Rekishi*.

Terzian Wins 2012 Global E-Book Award

WHITTIER, Calif. — Mary Terzian, a member of the Writers' Club of Whittier, has been awarded Dan Poynter's 2012 Global E-Book Award for Multicultural Non-Fiction for her book, *The Immigrants' Daughter: A Private Battle to Earn the Right to Self-actualization*.

Terzian, a freelance writer, was born in Egypt to Armenian parents and immigrated to the United States in 1967.

The *Immigrants' Daughter*, a coming of age memoir on her experiences in Egypt, also won a Best Books 2006 Award and was finalist in Indie Excellence 2007 Book Awards, both in multicultural nonfiction. The book describes a fascinating journey through adolescence in search of oneself, and is an inspiring story overall.

Three educational institutions have been interested in including excerpts from *The Immigrants' Daughter* in their curriculum materials targeted to high school and junior college students. One of them, the Department of Education in Queensland, Australia, posted an excerpt from the prologue on their website, with the author's permission, for use by their students and teachers.

Terzian also contributes to newspapers, magazines, anthologies, and to publications online. She acknowledges that her Writers' Club affiliation has had an influence on bringing her stories alive, by increasing her objectivity.



Mary Terzian

TRINITY FAMILY FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 9, 2012

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- Moon Walk for kids
 - Watermelon-eating Contest
 - Three-legged Race
 - Sack Race
 - Face Painting
- And more family fun
Starting at 1:30 pm!



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ARTS & LIVING

Photographer, Artist Preserve Armenian Letters and History in Two Volumes

YEREVAN – The independent Armenian publisher Craftology has announced the American release of the twin titles, *Armenian Ornamental Art* and *Armenian Ornamental Script* – the result of a landmark collaboration of the artist-designer Armen Kyurkchyan and the photographer Hrair Hawk Khatcherian, who have spent more than a decade excavating and capturing the Armenian patterns, symbols and scripts that have survived centuries and civilizations to take their place in the world cultural treasury.

For the first volume, *Armenian Ornamental Art*, the collaborators journeyed across the east-



Cover of Armenian Ornamental Art



Cover of Armenian Ornamental Script



Armenian letters are turned into ornamental art in Armenian Ornamental Script.

panying the glossy, full-color volume.

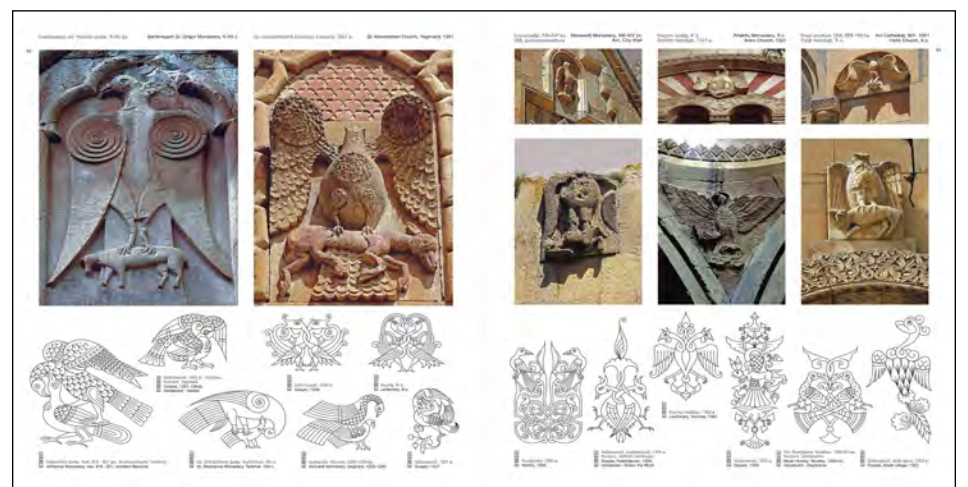
“Our intent was not merely to collect and present our national treasures for admiration on coffee tables and in classrooms,” Kyurkchyan said, “but also to offer our country’s native designs – true masterworks of medieval art – to practicing designers, architects and artists who might incorporate them in their own creations, giving them new life in the 21st century.”

The second volume, *Armenian Ornamental Script*, sent the collaborators on a journey of another kind – an excursion to the libraries, repositories and archives of the world, where ornamented Armenian manuscripts have been scattered through time.

In their pages the authors found the original 36 Armenian letters, but not in their standard geometric forms. The Armenian masters have transformed our letters from mere symbolic units into unique masterpieces of ornamental art. Now we, too, can see them – letters that blossom into flowers or take flight into birds or find higher life, with a sudden burst of imagination, in human forms.

“The Armenian illuminated manuscripts are especially dear to me,” Kyurkchyan said, “decorated as they were not only by skilled professionals, but also by monks – sometimes even by their young students. These illustrations are my favorite. They are so simple, so charming, even naïve. It is almost heartbreaking to consider their innocence and sincerity.”

Both volumes are now available on Amazon



The photographs by Khatcherian are accompanied by sketches by Armen Kyurkchyan.

ern and western homelands, crossing rivers and borders to visit every church, cemetery and monument where an Armenian craftsman might have taken chisel to stone. They uncovered thousands of miniature masterpieces: rosettes, birds, human figures, angels and crosses. Now, for the first time, these masterpieces have been captured both as photographs (taken by Khatcherian) and as meticulous drawings (rendered by Kyurkchyan), which are presented side-by-side in print as they are on a CD accom-



From left, Armen Kyurkchyan, Atom Egoyan and Hrair “Hawk” Khatcherian at the launch of Armenian Ornamental Art

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Tekeyan Cultural Association ~ Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group



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\$30 Donation
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For information/tickets please call Marie Zokian 201-745-8850,
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ARTS & LIVING

Ryan Reynolds to Star in Atom Egoyan Thriller ‘Queen of the Night’

TORONTO (Hitflix) – Ryan Reynolds is giving the indie-film circuit another go. Following recent mainstream star-vehicle disappointments like “Green Lantern” and “The Change-Up” (Reynold’s “Safe House” co-star Denzel Washington was undoubtedly the major factor in that film’s box-office success), the actor has signed on to topline psychological thriller “Queen of the Night” for Canadian auteur Atom Egoyan. The plot centers on a man who picks up the search for his long-missing daughter after coming across “disturbing clues” that lead him to believe she is still alive. The film is scheduled to begin production in Ontario next February, according to scoop-getter Deadline. In a statement regarding the new project, Reynolds called Egoyan “a provocative filmmaker [whose] films demand that we face what is most complex in our own psyches. ‘Chloe,’

‘Felicia’s Journey’ and ‘The Sweet Hereafter’ all possess the unique and careful touch of a true artist. I look forward to collaborating with him on this project and having an opportunity to observe his innovative directing style first hand.” Egoyan also offered words of praise for his new lead actor. “I’m very excited about working with Ryan,” said the director. “The richness of [Reynolds]’ performances in such diverse films as ‘Buried,’ ‘Safe House’ and romantic fare such as ‘The Proposal’ is extraordinary.” Reynolds was last seen in a cameo in Seth McFarlane’s comedy blockbuster “Ted” and will next appear in the action-comedy “R.I.P.D.” opposite Jeff Bridges. Egoyan, meanwhile, just wrapped on “Devil’s Knot,” a drama based on the notorious West Memphis Three case. That film stars Reese Witherspoon and Colin Firth.



Ryan Reynolds

Cross Cultural Eyewitness: Philip Hagopian

HAGOPIAN, from page 10
three children and the choices he has made to support them, including moving the family to Armenia for the past four years and taking a businesslike approach to his art making. Each step of his life seems to pivot on his concern for his parents, wife and kids. Hagopian, who recently returned to Morrisville, Vt., admits the Armenian culture he paints is more traditional than contemporary. His expansive grasp of the country’s history helps fuel his desire to celebrate and preserve its unique culture, even as Armenia has incorporated some of the traditions of bordering nations. Hagopian calls Armenia the “epicentral crossroads of very ancient trade routes between far Eastern Asia, India, Africa, the Mediterranean cultures and, of course, the Middle Eastern neighbors.” In Hagopian’s paintings, the sumptuous patterns and colors of the region sweep across the canvas. In “Hayuhi Girl,” a painting displayed in the front window of Salaam, a woman tilts her face upward, partially obscured by the shadow of a teal and purple curtain. Her full, red lips and long neck seem spotlighted in a beam of daylight that illuminates the scene. Golden coins from a traditional Armenian headdress tumble to her shoulders. The shimmering discs recall the gilded ornamentation of 20th-century Austrian painter Gustav Klimt, whom Hagopian cites as an influence on his work. In another Klimt-like touch of ornate decoration, he has given the woman several richly beaded necklaces, one with a heavy, red, rectangular medallion. Swirls and arabesques crisscross her beaded gown, continuing the dance of line, pattern and color that animates the work and conjures the richness of Armenian culture. Hagopian’s “multi-dimensional” works combine disparate elements such as intricately carved wooden frames, superbly painted surfaces and almost dollhouse-like niches, which are recessed several inches into the paintings and hold objects ranging from talismanic artifacts to action figures. In these works, illusionistic fragments of ancient Assyrian reliefs, small replicas of famous paintings and a demure brass Buddha jostle one another. In “Cecropia,” one small niche brings together a green, plastic alien toy, a nun figurine and a toy monkey. A circular magnifying lens covers another niche, simultaneously enlarging and distorting its contents. Foreign coins seem to levitate in yet another niche, while, near the artwork’s center, an old-fashioned brass lock serves as a metal frame for – or a doorway into – the small “room” of the niche. Hagopian’s heady blend of references deepens the enigma of his works, though his convoluted musings on history, culture, politics and religion can sometimes be confounding to the viewer. After creating art for more than 30 years, Hagopian speaks humbly about the talent and tenacity required to make a life as an artist. He compares selling his paintings with a street performer juggling for coins, yet he also seems proud to have used his considerable skills to provide for his family. Inside the colorful quarters of the Salaam store, Hagopian’s bold hues and mesmerizing patterns are simpatico with the similarly vibrant clothes. Likewise, his passion for a faraway country seems right at home in Vermont. Hagopian’s exhibit remains at Salaam and the Men’s Store in Burlington through September. For more information, visit philiphagopianarts.com.

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 9 — Trinity Family Festival, 12-5 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Delicious dinners; Moonwalk for kids; children and family games, starting at 1:30 p.m., Armenian music by the Greg Krikorian Ensemble. Blessing of Madagh, 4 p.m., followed by raffle drawing for cash prizes. Bring your tavloo board. For info, contact the church office, (617) 354-0632, e-mail office@htaac.org or www.htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 30 — Holy Trinity 50th Anniversary Grand Finale Banquet, following church services, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

OCTOBER 25 — K. George and Carolann S. Najarian Endowed Lecture on Human Rights. Speaker: Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, founding director, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University and former US ambassador to Israel (1992-1994) and the Syrian Arab Republic (1988-1991). Faneuil Hall, Boston. Thursday, 7 p.m. An endowed public program of Armenian Heritage Park. Free and open to the public.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEPTEMBER 29 — Ararat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem NH Annual Shish Kebab Supper. 4:30 to 7 p.m. 2 Salem St., Salem.

NEW JERSEY

OCTOBER 5 — Save the date. His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of Armenian Church, invites everyone to attend a tribute banquet in honor of Hrant Gulian. Details to follow.

OCTOBER 21 — Hye Doon (Armenian American Support and Educational Center), 35th Anniversary Celebration, with the participation of Akh’Tamar Dance Ensemble of the Hye Doon, Arev Armenian Folk Ensemble of Hamazkayin of Boston, Sunday, 3:45 p.m. Bergen County Academics, 200 Hackensack, NJ 07601. All net proceeds to benefit the Hovnanian Armenian School. Tickets: \$50, \$35 and \$25. For tickets, call Sonya Bekarian, (201) 315-5916; Juliyet Tabibian, (201) 233-0326; Nivart Arslan, (201) 475-0224; Maral Kalishian, (845) 729-1888; Maral Kaprielian, (201) 289-6486; Lina Bakhtiarian, (732) 299-1120; Linda Gezdir, (201) 394-6310 or the school, (201) 967-5940.

NOVEMBER 17-18 — Musical theater presentation by TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group, Yervant Odian’s “Love and Laughter” (Ser yev Dzidzagh), directed by Krikor Satamian, with more than 20 actors participating. Dwight Englewood High School, Englewood Cliffs, 8 p.m., Saturday and 4 p.m., Sunday. \$25, \$35, \$50. For tickets, call Marie Zokian or Noushig Atamian.

NOVEMBER 18 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group Cast Party and tribute to Karnig Nercissian on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the group. Special program and dinner, with Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of the Armenian Church, presiding. St. Thomas Armenian Church, Tenafly. Donation, \$30. For tickets, call Marie Zokian or Noushig Atamian.



On September 30, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston will hold their 50th Anniversary Grand Finale Reception and Banquet, following church services, in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 22 — “Evening Under the Stars,” benefit reception and silent auction, at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. Enjoy cocktails, hors d’oeuvres and music under an elegant candlelit tent on the scenic grounds of the seminary campus at 150 Stratton Road, New Rochelle, while reminiscing on 50 years of St. Nersess past, celebrating the present and launching an exciting future for generations to come. Donation, \$75 per person. Register at www.stnersess.edu or call (914) 636-2003. Auction items go live online September 10.

SEPTEMBER 29 — Armenia Fund’s 20th Anniversary Gala, at Gotham Hall, New York City. Celebrity lawyer Mark Geragos, as master of ceremonies, entertainment by French-Armenian pop singer Patrick Fiori; keynote speaker, Eduard Nalbandian. Details to follow.



COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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COMMENTARY

Syria's Armenian Community Is Bleeding

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Armenian history has been a procession of losses; loss of territory, loss of leadership, loss of blood and loss of population. If Armenians were left in their historic homeland, they would now have numbered at least 20 million, like the Kurds who – despite all repressions – were not eradicated from their habitat. Therefore, any new loss of life needs to rightfully alarm Armenian communities worldwide.

We cannot afford any more losses than we have sustained thus far. Mass acculturation and alienation from identity are already taking their toll.

Armenians who still have the blood of their ancestors in their veins were alarmed when calamity befell the Syrian-Armenian community, one of the oldest diaspora communities upholding its traditions, culture and language. The 60,000-strong Armenian community is mostly concentrated in Aleppo. Smaller communities are scattered in the capital city of Damascus, Kessab, Latakia and Kamishli.

Aleppo was the closest major city to Der Zor; thus Armenians who survived their march through the desert first settled there, and they were received with open arms by the indigenous population. They became law-abiding and creative citizens, contributing tremendously to the local industry, economy and technology. They were afforded a comfortable and peaceful life, contrary to the demonization and brainwashing in the Western press.

The transplanted opposition today is blaming Armenians for sitting on the fence or supporting outright the Assad regime, which has been extremely beneficial to the Armenians and the minorities in general.

Robert Fisk, the Middle East correspondent of the daily *Independent* in London, recently wrote in one of his columns that it is ironic for the West to trust the Emirate of Qatar or Saudi Arabia, both backward and medieval potentates, to bring democracy to Syria.

This is a broad political game, played under the guise of “the Arab awakening” or “democracy” movement to keep all the Arab countries in turmoil so that they would not be able to confront Israel. The US has nothing to gain; in fact, it has too much to lose by antagonizing a whole region, and the US taxpayer is already paying through his nose at the gas pump.

Turkey, which has assumed the role of regional power, is the major villain in this political game. Recently, Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu bragged about his country's new role and invited the warring parties in the region to resolve their conflicts through Turkish mediation. He specifically addressed the Syrian and

Karabagh crises. This level of “benevolent” interest by Turkey is ironic, especially since Turkey has been meddling in both crises. It has blockaded Armenia in lockstep with Baku and trained the Azeri army to spill Armenian blood. Ankara is also the instigator of the Syrian problem, arming and sending mercenaries to pretend to the world that local people have risen against the regime seeking democracy. Thus, Turkey has been creating the problems and then inviting cynically the warring parties to make peace through its good offices.

Those intent on toppling the regime in Syria have little concern about what may happen to the Armenian community there. On the contrary, Ankara has an added incentive in Syria to see the decimation of a burgeoning Armenian community there, before the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the worldwide Armenian community to get organized and help the Armenians in Syria to stay where they are, if possible, or shelter them wherever they move around the world.

Fortunately, the response so far has been healthy and overwhelming. Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and Catholicos Aram I of Cilicia not only have come up with supportive messages, but they also have taken concrete measures to help out the refugees.

The Armenian government has come up with bold measures to take the Armenians under its wing – whether they stay in Syria or wish to move permanently or temporarily to Armenia.

While the Armenian government cautiously participates in the world politics imposed on Syria, in the meantime it has quietly but steadily been bringing children from Syria to Armenia and helping the families which are already in Armenia by providing accommodation, jobs, medical help and education, contrary to what the naysayers are publicizing.

The AGBU has announced releasing \$1 million in relief assistance and promising to house the refugees in the Melkonian Educational Institute's facilities in Cyprus, should the deteriorating situation warrant it.

The AGBU has again assumed its traditional role reaching out in a meaningful way, when urgent need arises.

Joint committees have been formed on the US West Coast and elsewhere to address the Syrian crisis.

This spontaneous response is certainly laudable, but disparate actions can prove to be wasteful. Rather than collectively coordinating the humanitarian and political support, it looks like traditional Armenian rivalries are in place to demonstrate which entity outdid the other entities.

The Syrian-Armenian community is bleeding and it deserves all the help it can get; in the process, the need may teach us to be unified and more organized demonstrating true leadership.

LETTERS

Put aside Differences and Try to Build Genocide Museum by Centennial

To the Editor:

April 24, 2015 is the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, which is two-and-a-half years away. I am truly disappointed that a project that began quite a few years ago has not been built. In fact, I think that the Armenian community has to focus now on trying to get the Genocide Museum built in Washington, DC by the centennial.

Our adversary is not one of us but those who planned and executed the forced exodus of our surviving ancestors to live in exile.

Since there seems to be little or no transparency about this project, it is difficult for our communities to know what is going on and what is wrong at this time.

The facts, as I know it, are that basically it began as an Armenian Assembly project with the purchase of a bank building which was to be converted into a Genocide museum. A major benefactor who was an Assembly trustee purchased three small adjacent buildings in order to expand the museum space.

After the purchases, a group of us, under the auspices of the Assembly, toured the bank building. Looking inside on the first floor, I thought that the bank space for a museum that will serve the public seemed to be quite limited especially as a registered historical building which needs approval for changes to the original structure. I thought the additional square footage gained by the addition of the three small buildings was a big plus since it would enable visitors, a few or many, to be comfortably accommodated

as well as to make public space available for many contemporary exhibits that would help odars as well as future generations understand their history and heritage.

“The forgotten genocide” may finally become general knowledge to fellow Americans and tourists from all over the world who visit the nation's capital.

Let us shine a bright light on the museum project. If the two men involved are interviewed by an objective Armenian press, the democratic way, it should help the community understand the reasons for the delay in constructing the museum. Is a mediator needed to help resolve this dispute? The courts take too long. Can a group be assembled from benefactors and our major organizations who can work through any complicated details? Should the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum be the pro-

ject of the Assembly alone? Should selected Armenians in the diaspora be included? The overwhelming majority of the diaspora are descended from the survivors of the Genocide.

In addition, the project is to memorialize our ancestors who rest in unmarked graves throughout Anatolia, Der-el Zor and God only knows where else. Let us not even wonder what our ancestors' response would be about our inability or indifference to follow-through and complete the construction of this memorial located near the White House.

In April 2015, let us look at photos in newspapers showing dignitaries outside and hopefully inside the newly-constructed Genocide Museum in Washington DC.

– Sonia Hagopian
Havertown, Penn.

Notice to Contributors

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

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

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



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Time for Action: Syrian-Armenians Need Your Urgent Assistance

There has been too much talk about the tragic crisis in Syria by self-described analysts and experts who have managed to spread misinformation, while inadvertently jeopardizing the safety of the Armenian community.

At this late hour, rather than propagating half-baked political ideas, the diaspora should concentrate on providing urgently needed humanitarian assistance to Syrian-Armenians.

It is encouraging that Armenian organizations have started raising funds to meet the needs of Armenians in Syria. Going a step further, in some countries, social, religious and political organizations have formed coalitions to extend the needed help in a coordinated manner. Hopefully, these groups will shortly issue statements about the specific needs of Syrian-Armenians, the amount to be raised and the mechanism to distribute the funds.

In the absence of a diaspora-wide structure that would represent all Armenians worldwide and deal with their collective problems, each community is trying to form its own umbrella organization. In some instances, several joint committees

are established in the same community, each dealing with a specific issue. To avoid redundancies, it would be preferable to form a single joint committee in each community with subcommittees dealing with separate tasks.

Additionally, two pan-Armenian bodies can play a critical role in this humanitarian crisis – one located outside Syria and the other inside the country tasked with the coordination and distribution of humanitarian assistance from all sources:

1) The entity outside Syria – which is yet to be formed – would not only coordinate aid from the diaspora and Armenia, but more importantly, secure assistance from governments, international organizations (United Nations, World Council of Churches) and non-governmental organizations.

2) The recently-created pan-Armenian entity within Syria is composed of all Armenian religious and charitable organizations. It is charged with communicating the needs of the community to the outside world, receiving the incoming aid and distributing it to Armenians throughout the country.

While a comprehensive assessment of the Syrian-Armenian community's extensive needs has not been made, it is clear that millions of dollars are required to provide thousands of destitute families with food, water, medical care, fuel, electricity and tuition for needy students. It is imperative that the aid be shared with all people living in or near Armenian neighborhoods, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation.

In order to carry out such a worldwide large-scale fundraising drive, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund should consider dedicating its telethon this year to the Syrian-Armenian relief. Major organizations and benefactors should be asked to make generous contributions to preserve the historic Armenian presence in Syria that predates

the Genocide. The All-Armenian Fund has already taken a first step by opening a special bank account in Yerevan to solicit donations for Syria, which so far has raised \$50,000. This amount has been spent on airlifting hundreds of children from Aleppo to summer camps in Armenia.

Funds should also be urgently raised to provide housing and living expenses to Syrians who have recently moved to Armenia either on a temporary or permanent basis. This is not the time for arguing over the difficult choice between helping Armenians stay in Syria or move out, since their very survival is at stake. Everyone must respect the wishes and judgments of Syrian-Armenians and support their personal decisions. After all, since their lives are on the line, their choices must not be questioned. This is also not the time to make judgments on the quality and quantity of assistance provided by the Armenian government to Syrian-Armenian refugees. Such assessments can be made at a later date, after the storm has subsided.

Finally, even though financial assistance is the most urgent need, equally important is conveying the message to Syrian-Armenians that they are not alone in their greatest hour of need! They should be made to feel that Armenians and good people around the world sincerely care for their well-being and are doing everything possible to safeguard their survival.

Such a hopeful and caring message is critical not only for Syrian-Armenians, but to all Armenians throughout the world. The pain of any one community must be shared by all Armenians who should rush to help the stricken community, because they are all members of one big family. This spirit of mutual support would assure all Armenian communities that in case of misfortune, they will not be abandoned to their tragic fate.

In view of the dire situation of Armenians in Syria, let's set aside all other considerations and rush to their rescue.

Contact, Learn and Vote: Armenian-Americans Can Make Their Voices Heard

Local politics are often forgotten, overshadowed and swept under the carpet, especially in the presidential election year.

Many of us are unaware of local elections and debates, assuming the large ones are the only ones that matter. This could not be further from the truth, however. There are three levels of government that enact law: congress which ratifies laws for the country; a state legislature that enacts laws statewide and city councilors that approve laws for cities and towns. All three levels are capable of affecting our daily lives and deserve equal attention from us as Armenian-Americans and Americans, alike.

By Jivan H. Purutyan

Many people do not follow local politics, and even fewer bother to vote. There is a belief that change cannot be accomplished at the local level, but I strongly disagree with this notion. Change starts at the local level, and then expands.

I would like to urge others to become involved, connecting with elected officials and voicing goals and concerns. Elected officials are our voice in representative government, and if we show that as Armenians and individuals our issues matter, we will have greater influence in our communities. If one is concerned about issues such as immigration or our educational system, for example, it does no good to complain behind closed doors. If we want to persuade politicians to be concerned about issues important to our families, we have to educate ourselves and show interest in the electoral process.

I have learned that a campaign has limited time and resources, which are often spent on the media and targeting citizens who can make a difference. When campaign workers connect with people using pamphlets, going to door-to-door and calling homes, they usually contact those that are interested in the process, and are sure to vote, evidenced by voting in prior elections. Therefore, if we want a voice in the political process, we must involve ourselves now, so as not to be overlooked or forgotten. We can get involved just by learning about the candidates and making it to the polls on election days.

As I have discovered, contacting a representative about issues most pressing to us can be a challenge, but statewide candidates are willing to spend time and discuss issues that affect us all.

Over the past few weeks I have met with Joe Mullin, who is running for the 3rd Middlesex District state senate seat. He informed me about the upcoming election, including his positions, such as "adequate and accessible healthcare for all Americans." For students like me, and others wanting to learn more about our government, it is vital to make contact with people who are knowledgeable and willing to discuss the issues. In fact, I became involved with his campaign because Mullin gave me a chance to participate in the campaign.

Another public servant that has taken time to discuss with me the intricacies of local government is Peter Koutoujian, the incumbent sheriff of Middlesex County who is running for re-election this November. Koutoujian was previously a Massachusetts state representative and has always made time to answer my questions.

Though there are flaws in the system, dollars seemingly wasted and debates held in vain with little public response, if we make an effort to learn about our government, it becomes more clear that it is in our hands to shape. We have priorities as individuals and also within our Armenian community. We have the power as a whole to make a difference. However if we are not involved and organized, contacting politicians, attending debates and voting and we don't voice our needs, we will never accomplish our communal goals.

First we must become informed and involved in the important political life of our state, cities and towns. Then we can begin to cultivate those who aspire to public service.

(Jivan Purutyan is a 15 year old from Concord, Mass., and a freshman at The Middlesex School.)

The Anti-Defamation League Is a Bully That Defames Armenian People

By Shahkeh Yaylaian Setian

We all know that the national Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has long refused to forthrightly acknowledge the factuality of the Armenian Genocide and has actively helped Turkey defeat US Congressional resolutions about it.

Since 2007 the ADL's immoral, hypocritical position has prompted over a dozen Massachusetts cities to toss out the ADL's alleged anti-bias program, "No Place for Hate."

With these facts in mind, I attended a presentation on "bullying and anti-Semitism" by the ADL's New England regional director, Derrek L. Shulman, at the Jewish Congregation in Falmouth, Mass., on July 22.

I asked Mr. Shulman two questions during the question-and-comment period.

Question 1: Would you comment on the ADL's lobbying the US Congress each year to defeat the Armenian Genocide recognition resolution?

Shulman's answer: "We are opposed to the resolution as are others such as members of Congress and the President."

Of course, that was no answer at all. Plenty of members of Congress support the resolution. In 2007, the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, headed by a Jewish American, voted in favor of the Armenian Genocide resolution. And several Jewish American organizations support passage of the resolution.

Question 2: Would you comment on Turkey's threat that it cannot guarantee the safety of Jews in Turkey if the ADL does not succeed in defeating the Armenian Genocide resolution?

Shulman's answer: "I don't know about that."

It is well-known that in 2007, when the "No Place for Hate" issue and the Genocide resolution were being extensively reported by the media, ADL National Director Abe Foxman said that one reason he opposed the resolution was anxiety about Jews in Turkey. At that time, Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan made this threat: "We have told them [the ADL and other Jewish groups] that we cannot

explain it to the Turkish public if a road accident happens. We have told them that we cannot keep the Jewish people out of this."

Shulman is a clever speaker who digresses when put on the spot. His background may partly explain his evasive answers. Before being hired by the ADL, Shulman was a political director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). AIPAC has admitted that it has lobbied Congress on Turkey's behalf to defeat the Armenian resolution.

As such, Shulman is an appropriate spokesperson for the ADL, which has become a political organization posing as a human rights group. It made a deal with the devil – genocide-denying Turkey – and is sticking to that deal.

Shulman said that the ADL was a driving force behind the creation of Massachusetts' anti-bullying law for schools and is a leading voice nationwide on the issue of bullying.

It's rather ironic that ADL preaches against bullying while at the same time it uses its considerable political weight to bully Congress into defeating the Armenian Genocide resolution. The ADL is also an agent of a bullying country, Turkey, and as such wears the mantle of bully.

Is "anti-bullying" another way that the ADL is working its way into public schools and communities under the guise of being a human rights organization? The ADL has no right to insinuate itself into the public arena through such an important issue as bullying.

The ADL was founded with the noble mission of fighting bias against Jews, but has morphed into a political entity that, while claiming to uphold human rights, commits a human rights abuse by opposing recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

All Americans, including those of Armenian descent, must continue to counter the ADL's immoral stance on the Armenian Genocide and oppose its attempts to penetrate communities under the pretext of human rights.

(Shahkeh Yaylaian Setian holds a doctorate in Education from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Her recent book on the Armenian Genocide, *Humanity in the Midst of Inhumanity*, is available on www.Xlibris.com.)

Rebel Army? They’re A Gang of Foreigners

By Robert Fisk

A victorious army? There were cartridge cases all over the ancient stone laneways, pocked windows and bullet holes up the side of the Sharaf mosque, where a gunman had been firing from the minaret. A sniper still fired just 150 yards away – all that was left of more than a hundred rebels who had almost, but not quite, encircled the 4,000-year-old citadel of Aleppo.

“You won’t believe this,” Major Somar cried in excitement. “One of our prisoners told me: ‘I didn’t realize Palestine was as beautiful as this.’ He thought he was in Palestine to fight the Israelis!”

Do I believe this? Certainly, the fighters who bashed their way into the lovely old streets west of the great citadel were, from all accounts, a ragtag bunch. Their graffiti – “We are the Brigades of 1980,” the year when the first Muslim Brotherhood rising threatened the empire of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s father, Hafez – was still on the walls of the Syrian-Armenian hotels and silver shops. A 51-year-old general handed me one of the home-made grenades that littered the floor of the Sharaf mosque, a fluffy fuse poking from the top of a lump of shrapnel, coated in white plastic and covered in black adhesive tape.

Inside the mosque were bullets, empty tins of cheese, cigarette butts and piles of mosque carpets, which the rebels had used as bedding. The battle had so far lasted 24 hours. A live round had cut into the Bosnian-style tombstone of a Muslim imam’s grave, with a delicate stone turban carved on its top. The mosque’s records – lists of worshippers’ complaints, Korans and financial documents – were lying across one room in what had evidently marked the last stand of several men. There was little blood. Between 10 and 15 of the defenders – all Syrians – surrendered after being offered mercy if they laid down their arms. The quality of this mercy was not, of course, disclosed to us.

The Syrian soldiers were elated, but admitted that they shared immense sadness for the history of a city whose very fabric was being torn apart, a world heritage site being smashed by rockets and high-velocity rounds. The officers shook their heads when they led us into the ramparts of the immense citadel. “The terrorists tried to capture it 20 days ago from our soldiers who were defending it,” Major Somar said. “They filled gas cylinders full of explosives – 300 kilos of it – and set them off by the first entrance above the moat.”

Alas, they did. The huge medieval iron and wooden gate, its ornamented hinges and supports – a defense-work that had stood for 700 years – has been literally torn apart. I clambered over carbonized wood and hunks of stone bearing delicate Koranic inscriptions. Hundreds of bullet holes have pitted the stonework of the inner gate. Below, I found a T-72 tank whose barrel had been grazed by a sniper’s bullet which was still lodged in the sheath, its armor broken by a grenade.

“I was inside at the time,” its driver said. “Bang! – but my tank still worked!”

So here is the official scorecard of the battle for the eastern side of the old city of Aleppo, the conflict amid narrow streets and pale, bleached stone walls that was still being fought out yesterday afternoon, the crack of every rebel bullet receiving a long burst of machine-gun fire from Major Somar’s soldiers. As the army closed in on the gunmen from two sides, 30 rebels – or “Free Syrian Army” or “foreign fighters” – were killed and an undisclosed number wounded. According to Major Somar’s general, an officer called Saber, Syrian government forces suffered only eight wounded. I came across three of them, one a 51-year-old officer who refused to be sent to hospital.

Many of the rebels’ weapons had been taken from the scene by the military “mukhbarat” intelligence men before we arrived: they were said to include three Nato-standard sniper rifles, one mortar, eight Austrian machine-pistols and a host of Kalashnikovs, which may well have been stolen by Syrian deserters. But it is the shock of finding these pitched battles amid this world heritage site which is more terrible than the armaments of each side. To crunch over broken stone and glass with Syrian troops for mile after mile around the old city, a place of museums and Mosques – the magnificently minareted Gemaya Omayyad stands beside yesterday’s battleground – is a matter of infinite sorrow.

Many of the soldiers, who were encouraged to speak to me even as they knelt at the ends of narrow streets with bullets spattering off the walls, spoke of their amazement that so many “foreign fighters” should have been in Aleppo. “Aleppo has five million people,” one said to me. “If the enemy are so sure that they are going to win the battle, then surely there’s no need to bring these foreigners to participate; they will lose.”

Major Somar, who spoke excellent English, understood the political dimension all too well. “Our borders with Turkey are a big problem,” he admitted. “The border needs to be closed. The closure of the frontier must be coordinated by the two governments. But the Turkish government is



From left, Karen Kazarosian, Raffi Kebabjian, Sonia V. Boyajian, Belmont Police Chief Richard McLaughlin and Peter Boyajian

Perkins School Hosts Social Evening at New Center

WATERTOWN – Belmont and Watertown residents and business owners gathered in June at the Perkins School for the Blind’s new Grousbeck Center for Students and Technology, to raise awareness for the school. This large group of friends was brought together by two co-hosts, Sonia V. Boyajian, president of Real Estate 109 in Belmont, and Mona Jomaa, parent of a Perkins student and a Watertown resident. The evening included prizes from all local businesses, a student-run station featuring brailled name cards and catering by Vicki Lee Boyajian.

on the enemy side. Erdogan is against Syria.” Of course, I asked him his religion, a question that is all innocence and all poison in Syria these days. Somar, whose father was a general, his mother a teacher, and who practices his English with Dan Brown novels, was as quick as a cat. “It’s not where you are born or what is your religion,” he said. “It’s what’s in your mind. Islam comes from this land, Christians come from this land, Jews come from this land. That is why it is our duty to protect this land.”

Several soldiers believed the rebels were trying to convert the Christians of Aleppo – “a peaceful people,” they kept calling them – and there was a popular story doing the rounds yesterday of a Christian storekeeper who was forced to wear Muslim clothing and announce his own conversion in front of a video camera. But in wartime cities, you find talkative soldiers. One of the men who recaptured the entrance to the citadel was Abul Fidar, famous for walking between Aleppo, Palmyra and Damascus over 10 days at the start of the current conflict last year to publicise the need for peace. The president, needless to say, greeted him warmly at his final destination.

And then there was Sgt. Mahmoud Dawoud from Hama, who had been fighting in Hama itself, Homs, Jebel Zawi and Idlib. “I want to be interviewed by a reporter,” he announced, and of course, he got his way. “We are sad for the civilians of this land,” he said. “They were in peace before. We promise as soldiers that we will make sure a good life returns for them, even if we lose our lives.” He does not mention all those civilians killed by army shellfire or by the “shabiha,” or those thousands who have suffered torture in this land. Dawoud has a fiancée called Hannan who is studying French in Latakia, his father is a teacher; he says he wants “to serve his homeland.”

But the thought cannot escape us that the prime purpose of men like Sergeant Dawoud – and all his fellow soldiers here – was not, surely, to liberate Aleppo but to liberate the occupied Golan Heights, right next to the land which the “jihadis” apparently thought they were “liberating” yesterday – until they discovered that Aleppo was not Jerusalem.

(Robert Fisk is a columnist for the Independent. This commentary originally appeared in the August 23 issue of the paper.)

Belmont Acres Farm Grows as New Community Farm

By Abigail Bartalini

BELMONT, Mass. (*Belmont Citizen-Herald*) – Mike Chase knows the importance of community farming. Starting as an apprentice under Sal Sergi of the former Sergi Farm, Chase now leases five acres of land from Lydia Ogilby, making his property Belmont’s go-to local farm.

Chase opened Belmont Acres Farm in 2011. Sergi Farm was a family-operated farm in town for 65 years. Two of the Sergi brothers, Peter and Victor, chose to close the farm last season. In January, Chase took over and is enjoying his expansion as the farming season revs up.

“You get to see your plants grow. You get to eat your effort, but it’s also a way of life for my wife and I,” Chase said.

The family dedication to the farm doesn’t stop with Chase and his wife, Hermik; one of Chase’s best helpers is his daughter, Narnineh, who plants, weeds and picks crops. She is also especially soothing to the animals, which she has no trouble approaching in a gentle manner.

It is pretty impressive considering Narnineh is just 7.

“She’s a real spitfire. She planted all my potatoes last year. She’s a sharp kid,” Chase said.

He is certainly teaching her all there is to know about organic, natural farming. He grew up in Detroit, Mich., where his neighbors had farms. But Chase developed an interest for agriculture when an organic gardener asked for his help in the early 1980s. He and his wife both work in public health, but he cut down to part-time when his passion for farming required more responsibility.

Obtaining the Sergi Farm land was an emotional experience for many; when Sal Sergi passed away, there seemed to be confusion about what was supposed to happen with the farm.

“The reality is that when I came here, Sal knew that the family was not going to proceed with the farm, and it was his real interest of getting somebody else that had the same passions in terms of continuing on,” Chase said. “The reality is the discussions were in place. Peter didn’t quite see it that way.”

Eventually, the Sergis parted ways with their leased land, citing age as the main driver for closing up shop.

Chase hopes to set up a farm stand similar to what the Sergis offered.

“We’re exploring some of that stuff, but for the most part, we are really interesting in selling what we produce. What we grow on the farm is what we sell,” Chase said.

The farm is pesticide-free and is watered by drip-line irrigation, an efficient system, which waters a plant’s roots directly.

Chase acknowledges farming in New England is risky business, but he is confident his farm will do well.

“I think there is a big movement in food and health, what food quality means, what local means,” Chase said.

To help share some of the risk, the farm features community supported agriculture (CSA), where people can purchase shares of crops. Using the service allows people to purchase shares of produce at a significantly reduced rate than what would be found at the supermarket. And, Chase adds, the quality is far better than what might be found in the produce aisles at a large store.

“We’ve had our customers say our food tastes better than other CSA’s they’ve been members of. It’s fresh – literally fresh,” Chase said.

Depending on weather and the growing season, there is no guarantee a customer will get their fair share of crops, which Chase said is all

part of the risk.

Now that Belmont Acres has a stand, people will be able to purchase fresh produce more easily than before. Chase will not be seen at the Belmont Farmer’s Market, however, citing a lack of resources as the reason; he relies on only his family and one hired staff person, Abby Harper, to run the farm.

Sophia Skopepos, owner of Sophia’s Greek Pantry, suggests the ride to the farm is completely worth it. She started serving home-cooked meals at her store last year, and she gets her produce from Chase’s farm.

“It can’t be fresher than what you see there when you pick up the vegetable yourself,” Skopepos said. “Anything they produce, I get.”

She added the farm is a great place for families to spend time together.

“It’s a nice place that people can go and not only buy their fresh veggies, but also have fun with their children. I mean, it’s a family adventure,” she said.

Belmont Acres Farm is located on 34 Glenn Road and is open to the public this summer Wednesday from 2 to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 2 to 5 p.m. To see their available produce, visit their website, belmontacresfarm.com.