

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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## Armenia Celebrates 22nd Anniversary of Republic

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – On September 21, Armenians in Armenia as well as around the world, celebrated the 22nd anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Armenia. Messages poured in from leaders near and far.

Armenian President Serge Sargsian, for the occasion, signed decrees to confer high state awards, honorary titles and high military ranks upon a group of representatives in the fields of science, education, health, economy, arts and culture. The award recipients were from Armenia and the diaspora.

He also issued a statement, in which he congratulated those who had received awards. “While the state itself is strong with persons like you, who through their work and service are providing a strong momentum to state structures and our society. Moreover, the state is the people and first of all, capable people. The more you can do in your areas, the stronger we will be as an entity and as a state. I congratulate you on receiving the high state awards. Certainly, it is gratifying. However, this reality does not make your job easier: on the contrary, you are assuming a greater responsibility. You have become exemplary, worthy persons whose services to the state and people are significant.”

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II in his statement said, “We extend greetings and blessings from the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin and congratulate all our peo-

ple in Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora, on the joyous occasion of Armenian Independence Day. On this glorious day in 1991, we re-established an independent Armenian State. We solemnly celebrate this day, vanquishing the struggles and sacrifices of our generations in obtaining it. Placing faith in God, our people always hoped that the blessed daybreak would

come, as a plight and pledge for its national awakening.”

From the US, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement. “On behalf of President Obama and the American people, I extend my warmest wishes to the people of Armenia as you celebrate your Independence Day on September 21. The see REPUBLIC, page 3

### Armenia Opens Embassy in the Vatican

VATICAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Rome’s Palazzo della Cancelleria hosted a reception dedicated to the opening of the Armenian Embassy at the Holy See, the 22nd anniversary of Armenia’s independence and the launching of the “St. Gregory the Illuminator: Common Christian Heritage” exhibition.

The reception hosted by the Armenian Ambassador to the Vatican featured Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, the prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches, Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, secretary for Relations with States, clergymen of the Armenian Apostolic Church, representatives of the Armenian Catholic Church, high-ranking clergy from the Vatican,



Officials attend the opening of the Armenian Embassy

Armenian and Italian MPs, ambassadors accredited to the Vatican, heads of European and Italian NGOs, businessmen and representatives of the Armenian community.

“This is a symbolic day, as Armenia – the first nation to adopt Christianity as state religion – is opening a diplomatic representation in the Holy See,” Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said in his opening remarks.

“Our cooperation has deep historic roots. Christian belief has served as a basis for these special ties,” Nalbandian said, adding that prominent figures like St. Nerses Shnorhali, Mkhitar Sebastatsi and others see VATICAN, page 16

### Vicar General of Armenian Patriarchate Of Constantinople, Abp. Svajian, Dies

ISTANBUL (Combined Sources) – One of the prominent spiritual leaders of the Armenian community of Turkey, the vicar general of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, Archbishop Shahan Svajian, died in the Armenian Hospital of Holy Savior at the age of 87 on September 22.

Archbishop Shahan Svajian was born on September 15, 1926 in Constantinople. His father, Toros, was from Caesarea, and his mother, Martha, came from Kharbert. He received his primary education in Constantinople and continued with his education in Jerusalem.



Archbishop Shahan Svajian

see SVAJIAN, page 4



Partial view of the southwestern chapel

### Monastery Carved out of Rock Discovered in Historic Armenia

CHUKURAYVA, Turkey (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The ancient Armenian monastery complex Tzarakar has been discovered near the village of Chukurayva, five kilometers south-east of the fortified town of Kechror, modern-day Turkey (the old Gabeghiank district, Ayrarat province of Greater Armenia), reports the website peopleofar.wordpress.com.

What remains of it are the interior cut-in-rock structures, while the exterior buildings are irretrievably lost.

The monastery consists of a church with several entrances connected with each other, at least six chapels and other adjoining buildings. It is remarkable for its very interesting structure and extended lapidary inscriptions. Despite the uniqueness, however, until recently neither specialists nor topographers had ever paid any attention to it.

see MONASTERY, page 16

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Genocide Memorial Unveiled in France

PARIS (PanArmenian.net) – The French Roquebrune-sur-Argens commune in the Var department hosted an unveiling ceremony on September 21 of a memorial for Armenian Genocide victims created by architect Antranik Zakarian.

The ceremony opened with the music by Jean Marc DerMesropian and Charles Aznavour, with sisters Fabienne and Laurence Chanoyan performing Komitas songs.

Mayor Luc Jousse, members of the French National Assembly and representatives of the Armenian embassy in France attended the ceremony.

### Former Presidential Candidate Sentenced

YEREVAN (PanArmenian.net) – Former presidential candidate Vardan Sedrakyan was sentenced to 14 years in prison for the murder attempt of his opponent, Paruyr Hayrikyan.

Kachatur Poghosyan and Samvel Hartyunyan, who were ordered to assassinate Hayrikyan, by Sedrakyan, according to the charges, were sentenced to 14 and 12 years, respectively.

According to the investigation, in early January, Sedrakyan ordered the murder in order to stop Hayrikyan’s political activity. The perpetrators received money to purchase a revolver.

Hayrikyan was shot on January 31. He was taken to the hospital where doctors removed the bullet. The politician travelled to Holland for further treatment.

### Sculptor of Friendship Monument Files Appeal

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Turkish sculptor Mehmet Aksoi, the creator of the now-dismantled “Friendship Monument” on the border of Turkey and Armenia, has appealed to European Court of Human Rights.

The sculpture, which was intended by Aksoi to be a symbol of friendship between the two countries, was dismantled in 2010 because Turkish Premier Recep Tayyip Erdogan called it “grotesque” in 2009 during his visit to Kars. Erdogan visited Kars in October 2009 after signing protocols on establishing relations between Armenia and Turkey.

In an interview with *Haberler*, Aksoi said, “Turkish courts today are not free and impartial. How can a piece of art be called ‘grotesque?’ It is an obvious abuse. This monument was being built for three years. The meaning of the monument is friendship with Armenia. But Erdogan destroyed it. It means that Erdogan, who wished for peace, was against it. We appealed to all kind of Turkish courts which was like a comedy theatre. Now we will appeal to European Court of Human Rights,” he said.

## INSIDE

### Iran Architect

Page 10

#### INDEX

Arts and Living	10
Armenia	2,3
Community News	5
Editorial	14
International	4



## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Armenian Cheese Banned in US

YEREVAN (ARKA) – Armenia's State Food Safety Service, an affiliation of the Ministry of Agriculture, said it had certified a batch of Armenian cheese Lori, produced by a Gumri-based company AMM as safe before it was shipped to US and banned there for consumption.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said the Armenian cheese appeared to have been contaminated. On September 13, the FDA published a list of cheeses imported from 28 countries which an FDA examination found to have microbiological contamination. It said the Armenian Lori cheese contained E.Coli (Typical).

"The entire batch of 1000 kg of the cheese (N69-A), was produced in May 2013 with a shelf life of six months before being exported to US. The batch was found to be safe and was given a certificate on June 18 based on laboratory examination," the Armenian agency said. The FDA had earlier banned the import of some Armenian soft drinks and sweets because they contained coloring agents.

## UNHCR Armenian Rep. Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakobyan welcomed the Armenian office of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) Kristoff Frederick Otto Biervirti. The head of the Coordinating Center on Syrian-Armenian issues NGO Lena Halajyan was also present at the meeting.

Hakobyan underlined Armenian positions on the issue of Syrian-Armenians and the programs that have been implemented. She also noted that the Asharak Armenian government is currently constructing the suburb of New Aleppo.

Biervirti thanked the minister for her presentation and support, noting that both sides had committed to working together to help those affected by the Syrian crisis.

## Hovhannes Chilinkiryan Receives Medal of Honor

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian President Serge Sargisian hosted Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and French-Armenian publicist and historian Hovhannes Chilinkiryan on September 14 to thank them for their efforts in opening the Ruben Sevak House-Museum in Echmiadzin dedicated to the Genocide survivor and poet.

During this dinner, Sargisian awarded Chilinkiryan with a medal of honor.

Chilinkiryan expressed gratitude to Sargisian for awarding him with the honor and Karekin II for supporting his implementation his vision for the museum.

## Requiem Service for Victims in Syria

ECHMIADZIN – On September 22, following the Divine Liturgy, a prayer for peace in Syria and a requiem service for all the Christian victims in Syria were offered under the aegis of Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, in the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin.

The catholicos addressed the faithful gathered at the Mother Cathedral, emphasizing that Syria is dear to the Armenian people, where especially following the Armenian Genocide, thousands of Armenian children found shelter and an opportunity to build their spiritual and cultural life, creating a prosperous life within the safety of the churches.

Reflecting on the current state of Syria and the needs of the Armenian community there, he said, "We exhort and urge you, dear children of Armenia, to support your brothers and sisters in need. We encourage you to pray more, because your prayers will bring them comfort and reinforce their spirit to overcome all their hardships."

He led a prayer for the safety of all nations and people, and prayed in addition for Christian victims who have died during the conflict.

# Lord Byron School Reopens With New Heating System

GUMRI, Armenia – On September 13, the Lord Byron School celebrated the opening of the school year with the unveiling of its new heating system. Byron students had previously braved cold classrooms due to a lack of a modern heating system.

The Lord Byron School was opened with the aid of the British government after the 1988 Spitak earthquake devastated the city. The official opening of the school was in 1990, with the participation of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who was then taking her first trip to the Soviet Union.

At the time, the school was a state-of-the-art building with modern facilities and furniture. Unfortunately, Byron students could not enjoy the innovations for many years to come after its opening. The country faced new disasters such as the war, blockade, energy and economic crises. As a result, all of the facilities including the heating system, went into disarray. The number of students gradual-

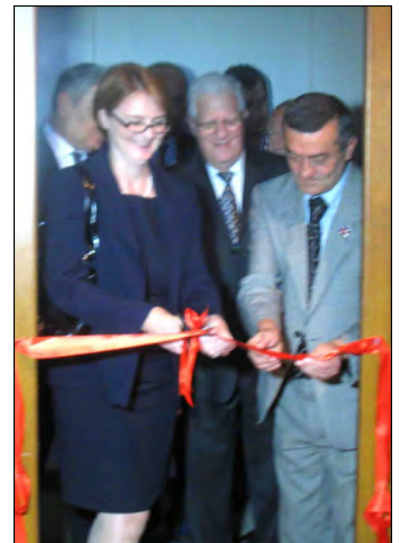


UK Ambassadors to Armenia Jonathan Aves and Katherine Leach with Vartan Ouzounian and staff at the reopening of the Lord Byron School.

school. Lord Byron School Headmaster Grigor Haroutunian, on behalf of the staff, schoolchildren and parents,



Vartan Ouzounian speaks at the program.



Cutting the ribbon to the newly-reopened school



The students perform for the dignitaries.

ly decreased, as the school teetered on the verge of closure.

After 16 years of challenges, the school can now enjoy improved facilities. The project to provide gas, water and a heating system for the school, was realized thanks to the British Embassy in Yerevan, Tekeyan Centre Fund (TCF), London Tekeyan Trust, as well as benefactors both in Armenia and the diaspora.

Several dignitaries attended the opening, including UK Ambassadors to Armenia Jonathan Aves and Kathy Leach, Chairman of Tekeyan Centre Fund Vartan Ouzounian, TCF Director Armen Tsulikyan, the Governor of Shirak region Felix Tsovakyan and other guests.

Leach opened the ceremony by cutting the traditional red ribbon. Byron students then put on a concert for all the benefactors who had saved their

expressed deep gratitude to those who implemented the project and assured that warm winters would contribute to



UK Ambassadors to Armenia Jonathan Aves and Katherine Leach

the school achievements and would promote education.

In his welcoming speech, Ouzounian thanked all the supporters of the project and particularly mentioned that the extra funds would be spent on the Byron School repair. He added that TCF has always been willing to cooperate with other charity organizations; and, based upon its experience, knowledge and funds it is ready to implement other educational projects.

The UK ambassadors, who had turned to Tekeyan Centre Fund for cooperation and support, played a significant role in the realization of the heating project. Aves delivered his welcoming speech in Armenian and specified the importance of the project. Leach thanked all the people devoted to the Lord Byron School who tried to contribute to the project even with small amounts.

The event concluded with a reception and tour of the building.



## ARMENIA

# Armenia Celebrates 22nd Anniversary of Republic

REPUBLIC, from page 1

United States and Armenia have a strong relationship based on historic ties and mutual respect. I am proud and grateful for the enduring friendship of many in the Armenian community. As someone who for three decades represented Massachusetts, which boasts one of the largest populations of Armenians outside of Armenia, I have special firsthand knowledge of the contributions that you have made to America's culture, democracy and economic vitality."

He continued, "Today our two countries are working together on a dynamic bilateral and regional agenda. Through forums such as the US-Armenia Economic Task Force, we look forward to further strengthening the economic and commercial bonds between our peoples. I wish all Armenians a joyful and prosperous Independence Day, with peace and happiness in the coming year."

Close to Washington, DC, Maryland's Gov. Martin O'Malley issued a proclamation recognizing September 21, 2013 as Armenian Independence Day in Maryland.

"I am very thankful that the governor of our great state has issued this proclamation celebrating Armenia's 22nd independence day," stated Armenian Assembly Board Member Annie

Totah. "Governor O'Malley has helped Maryland Armenians prosper and has worked tirelessly to make Maryland one of the top states in the country. It's been a real pleasure for me working with him and his administration."

Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), in his statement said, "I'm so glad to join with the vibrant Armenian community that I represent and proudly say 'Urakh Ankakhutyan Or' (Happy Independence Day) as we celebrate the 22nd anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Armenia. The road to independence has not been easy, but time has proven that Armenians are survivors in the truest sense of the word, survivors of foreign domination, survivors of the first genocide of the 20th century.

"Armenian Americans continue to illustrate what a valuable asset they are to our society, breaking new grounds economically, socially and politically across the nation, and enriching our customs, traditions and the quality of life.

"Over the years I've been privileged to work hand in hand with many individuals in the Armenian community in a wide variety of issues that concern the community such as securing aid to Armenia and Artsakh, supporting self-determination for the people of Artsakh, ending the US Government's tragic failure to recognize the Armenian Genocide."

Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), co-chair and founder of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, made the following statement on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to commemorate the Anniversary of Independence for the Republic of Armenia: "Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 22nd anniversary of independence for

the Republic of Armenia. On September 21st, 1991 Armenia gained its independence from the Soviet Union and the Caucasus region saw new opportunities as well as new challenges. I am proud to say that the Republic of Armenia has taken on those opportunities and challenges with great success and is now an important democratic ally of the United States. Eighteen years ago, I helped found the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues and have served as a co-chair of the caucus since that time. Together, our two countries continue to work towards developing greater economic ties including trade and investment and seek to build regional stability. Here in Congress, the Armenia Caucus is working towards these ends. I ask my colleagues in Congress to join me, along with the Armenian people and Armenian Americans across the country in celebrating 22 years of Armenian independence."

In Tokyo, Japan, the Armenian Embassy organized an official reception at the Okura hotel on September 21, where more than 180 guests gathered, including members of the Japanese parliament, ministries, other state agencies and the diplomatic corps.

Armenian Ambassador to Japan Hrant Poghosyan spoke, underscoring that the Armenian government wants stronger and closer ties with Japan.

A congratulatory address was also delivered by a Japanese parliamentarian, Kazuyuki Hamada. He noted that Armenia has been an attractive country for the Japanese people because of its history, culture and tradition. The proof, he said, is the great number of Japanese

tourists and businessmen who visit that country.

Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin congratulated his Armenian counterpart and all the citizens on the occasion. Putin praised Armenia's successes in the socioeconomic, scientific and technological and cultural fields and pointed to the country's growing standing in the international arena.

He also stressed that Russian-Armenian relations have risen to the level of an allied partnership and will continue to develop.

In addition, Putin expressed the conviction that with joint efforts Armenia and Russia will strengthen the bilateral ties and expand the cooperation, including in the context of Armenia's accession to the Customs Union (CU).

This very same Customs Union brought a group of demonstrators to the streets of Yerevan, in protest of Armenia joining the Russian-led CU.

March organizers released a statement arguing that Sargsian does not speak for all Armenians and that Armenia should not join any outside union that threatens its sovereignty.

The marchers, from various political affiliations and stripes, assembled in Yerevan's Liberty Square and then made their way down Northern Boulevard to Republic Square.

As the ranks of the marchers swelled, they took over one half of Amiryan Street.

A number of minor scuffles broke out between the marchers and police along the protest route.

(Stories from Panorama.am, Armenpress and Hetq were used to compile this report.)

## Armenia Says Hungary Made no Effort to Resolve Friction over Azeri Murderer

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Over the past year, the Hungarian government has made almost no effort to resolve the friction that resulted from the repatriation of an Azeri murderer who was freed after arriving home.

Azeri officer Ramil Safarov, who was sentenced to life imprisonment for killing an Armenian in Budapest in 2004, was transferred back to his home country on August 31, 2012 under an extradition agreement. Although Azerbaijan formally pledged that the life sentence handed down in Hungary would be continued when he was returned to his homeland, the Azerbaijani president granted him clemency immediately upon his arrival. Armenian President Serge Sargsian announced on the same day the suspension of Armenia's diplomatic relations with Hungary.

Two days later State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Zsolt Nemeth summoned the Azerbaijani ambassador to his office and condemned the Azerbaijani step as unacceptable to Hungary in a diplomatic note.

The head of the Armenian self-government in Hungary Sevan Serkisian told the press that it is still not known what advantage Hungary had gained from the repatriation of Safarov. The European Union could put pressure on Azerbaijan through the Eastern Partnership programme but Hungary has taken no steps to achieve this, he added. According to Serkisian, the "total lack of interest" demonstrated by Hungary in this matter is "shocking."

The Foreign Ministry said in response that the Hungarian government had taken several steps to restore Hungarian-Armenian diplomatic links, for instance Foreign Minister Janos Martonyi sent a letter to Armenian counterpart Eduard Nalbandian about this on September 7, 2012. The ministry also sent a diplomatic note to the Armenian ministry to confirm the wish to restore relations.

The Foreign Ministry initiated dialogue with the officials of the self-government of ethnic Armenians in Hungary right after the repatriation of Safarov, the statement added.

"It is in Hungary's interest that Hungarian-Armenian friendship should further deepen and cooperation between the two countries should strengthen and broaden in every field of life, including diplomatic relations," the ministry said.

The ministry also said that the standing of diplomatic links between Hungary and Armenia must not, and does not, have any effect on the situation of ethnic Armenians in Hungary.

## California Delegation Meets with President

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – President Serge Sargsian received a delegation headed by California State Assembly Speaker John A. Perez last week, the presidential press service reported.

Welcoming the guests, Sargsian underscored that Armenia aspires to strengthen its traditionally friendly relations with California. According to the president, these relations are due to the close historical ties of the two nations and presence of a large Armenian community in the US, as well as a common understanding of the ideas of democracy and freedom. Sargsian noted that the Armenian-American relations are currently at their strongest level. Stressing that US plays an important role in preserving security and stability in the region and provides great assistance to Armenia in the process of reformation, Sargsian expressed gratitude to the government and people of the US.

Sargsian expressed hope that the visit of the delegation headed by Perez will become an additional impetus to opening new prospects for the development of cooperation between Armenia and California which would undoubtedly create favorable prerequisites for the deep-

ening of the Armenian-US relations.

Both parties praised the role of the large Armenian community of California in the state's social, political, economic and cultural life as well as in enhancing the bilateral relations.

Sargsian expressed his gratitude to the authorities of California which have adopted resolutions on the state and local levels, paying tribute to the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide and strongly condemning that crime. According to

the president, such a position speaks to their adherence to all human values.

Sargsian stressed the importance of the visit of the members of the delegation to Nagorno-Karabagh which will allow them familiarize others with that ancient Armenian land, its rich heritage and recent achievements.

At the guests' request, the president spoke



President Serge Sargsian receives the California delegation.

about the forthcoming economic programs, reflecting on the prospects of development of the Armenian-American economic cooperation.

Perez expressed his thanks to the President of Armenia for the warm reception, open and frank discussions and a detailed presentation of Armenia's position on a number of issues.

## Leadership School Looks to Train Future Leaders

YEREVAN – According to the Leadership School's founder Samvel Movsisyan, the school has a "distinct vision for the students of this young republic." Taking experience from South Korea and other countries with rapid development phases, Leadership School officials said they recognize that investments in education hold the way forward for Armenia.

"The main goal of the Leadership School is to support the development of future Armenian leaders," Movsisyan said. "With the insight and support of prominent Armenian and international leaders, thinkers and organizations, we have fostered an environment for expansive growth opportunities."

Foreign professionals travel to Armenia each year to administer the admissions process and to share their diverse visions as guest speakers into the school year. Countries such as Finland,

UK, Japan and the US have been represented in the past.

Founded five years ago, the school receives about 150 applicants for a spot in the program each year, with approximately 20 students being selected.

Tuition fees are nominal and are typically applied to second semester projects aimed at providing an opportunity to develop self-made projects, which can eventually materialize into start-up businesses or public-benefit initiatives. In each graduating class, roughly half of the students go on to create their own start-ups in Armenia, in sectors such as finance, medicine, information technology and even fashion. The other half of the student body, according to the Leadership School, have a good chance to land a competitive job. Employment numbers provided by the Leadership School indicate

that graduates have close to a 100 percent job rate.

Past lecturers have included John Heffern, US ambassador to Armenia, Ken Hachikian, chairman of the Armenian National Committee of America, as well as several international businessmen and businesswomen from the US, Brazil, UK and Israel.

The Leadership School offers internships for both international Armenian and non-Armenian students. Past students have hailed from schools such as Stanford, the London School of Economics and Australian National University.

Knowledge of Armenian is helpful but not required for interns, as courses are taught in both Armenian and English. For more information regarding opportunities, visit the Leadership School website at [http://leadershipschool.am/en/visiting\\_students.php](http://leadershipschool.am/en/visiting_students.php).



## International News

### Armenian Police to Provide Security to Sochi Olympics

SOCHI, Russia (Armenpress) – Representatives of the Russian Federation Internal Affairs and Armenian Police are currently working on a security cooperation policy to ensure safety for the Sochi Games.

Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation General Vladimir Kolokoltsev and the head of the Police of Armenia Vladimir Gasparyan informed announced plans for the cooperation policy at a recent press conference.

The Sochi Winter Olympic Games will be held February 7-23, 2014.

### Armenian Team Medals In Powerlifting Championships

EGER, Hungary (Armenpress) – The Armenian national powerlifting team competed in the 2013 World Powerlifting and Benchpress Championships.

The Powerlifting Federation of Armenia announced that in the 67.5 kilogram category, Sevak Manukyan took first place, with a result of 157.5 kilograms. In the 75 kilogram category, Sergey Asaturov captured gold, with a result of 167.5 kilograms.

### Kicdaroglu Pledges to Protect Armenian Village In Turkey

VAKIF, Turkey (Armenpress) – The head of the main opposition Republican People's Party of Turkey Kemal Kicdaroglu stated this week that he will do whatever required to protect Vakif, the sole Armenian village in the Hatay Province of Turkey, from losing its cultural independence.

The population of the village expressed their concern with a new Turkish law that states their village will be united with the Hatay Province as a district, and that its Armenian culture will subsequently disappear.

Kicdaroglu told the Armenian villagers that his party will present a legislative proposal so that village will keep its status.

### Sargisian Condemns Pro-Azeri Statements on NKR

SOCHI, Russia (ArmeniaNow) – Armenian President Serge Sargisian criticized allies for their statements regarding Nagorno-Karabagh (NKR) during a session of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Council on Monday.

Sargisian, who was on a working visit to Russia accompanied by Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, said that “contrary to the decisions adopted by ourselves, some Member States at other platforms and in other organizations make statements on the same matter that are not consonant with the decisions made within the framework of the CSTO.”

“Let me give you just one example: in our documents, including in the Moscow statement issued in December last year, we underlined the importance of settling the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict peacefully through the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs on the basis of the UN Charter, principles and norms of international law that specifically relate to the nonuse of force or threat of force, equality of peoples and self-determination and territorial integrity,” said Sargisian.

Sargisian made the statement perhaps taking into account the fact that three of the CSTO member states, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, are also members of the Islamic Conference organization, which has a distinctly pro-Azerbaijani position in the Karabagh issue. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are also members of the union embracing Turkic states and their officials have stated in Baku that the Karabagh problem must be settled within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

## Turkey Presses for UN Action in Syria

NEW YORK (*Today's Zaman*) – Top officials in Turkey – one of the countries most affected by the Syrian crisis – pushed for a tougher stance on the Syrian regime by the United Nations. During talks at the UN General Assembly's 68th meeting, a Turkish delegation of high-level diplomats pushed for greater UN involvement.

On his way to the US, Turkish President Abdullah Gül said that the conflict in Syria is the top item on Ankara's agenda for the UN General Assembly meeting, and that it is considered the most important foreign policy and national security issue for Turkey.

On Tuesday, Gül spoke at the UN Assembly, questioning the UN's reticence to end the crisis in the war-torn country.

Gül said that a lack of action from the UN Security Council (UNSC) only emboldens aggressive regimes. “We need a UN capable of forcing the perpetrators of brutal actions to submit to justice and the rule of law. Decisive action is the only way that the UN system will remain relevant and credible. To face this new reality, we need a Security Council which is truly democratic, representative, effective and accountable,” added Gül.

Gül held a meeting with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Monday, in which he stressed the need for a political strategy to overcome the crisis in Syria.

During his talks, Gül also stepped up his criticisms of the UN's ineffectiveness, saying the world body has to take concrete action to avoid damaging its reputation any further.

“It is a disgrace that the UNSC has failed to uphold its primary responsibility in this case. It is deeply regrettable that political differences, balance-of-power politics and geopolitical considerations have prevailed over the imperative to end this tragedy,” said Gül.

Previously, Gül noted that the UN's stature has lessened in the eyes of the people and the credibility of the world body has dropped. Gül recently urged the UNSC to listen to Turkey, one of the countries that is most affected by the Syrian crisis.

According to Gül, Turkey is frustrated by the stalemate in the 15-nation UNSC, where permanent members Russia and China have blocked attempts to pass a resolution criticizing the Syrian regime for the bloodshed in the country.

Gül also maintained that the problem in Syria was not only about chemical weapons, and that a comprehensive political strategy must be found to put an end to the crisis. “There has to be a sound strategy with well-defined and well-calculated objectives for a peaceful solution,” he said.

“Were it not for the use of chemical weapons, would the international community have continued to turn a blind eye to the deaths of more than 100,000 people? For how long can we afford to evade our moral responsibility to the people being killed even as we speak? This conflict neither began with the use of chemical weapons, nor will it end with an agreement to eliminate them,” maintained Gül, adding that such an approach ignoring the killing of people is immoral and totally unacceptable.

Gül also stated that he considers the US-Russian deal to destroy Syria's chemical weapons to be a useful opportunity.

Russia and the US put aside their differences and announced an agreement under which Syrian President Bashar al-Assad will account for Syria's secret chemical weapons stockpile and permit international inspectors to destroy it by mid-2014.

“I hope it will be a first step in the formation of a security architecture to ensure the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East,” said Gül, although he added that the deal must not allow the regime to avoid responsibility for its other crimes.

The Turkish president also noted that the Syrian crisis has evolved into a real threat to regional peace and security, adding that any recurrence of the proxy wars of the Cold War era would plunge Syria into further chaos.

“Once extremist groups take root in a state, they form autonomous structures and become a real threat to security, not only at home but also abroad. We must be aware of this threat and realize that with each day we lose in indecision, the more remote the prospects for a peaceful Syria become,” said Gül.

In the wake of an al-Qaeda affiliated group's seizure of a town near the Turkish-Syrian border, Gül recently said the country had taken all the necessary measures against such terrorism.

Gül also blamed international inaction on Syria for the rise of extremists. “There were no extremists in Syria. If things are left on their own in Syria, people will become extremists first, then radicals and then terrorists. We should have been much stronger in our reaction at the very beginning, but this was not done,” he said in an interview with the *Washington Post*. “If things go on the way they have been going, then in six months or a year from now, we will see the emergence of very well-established, well-structured groups with quite high numbers of people involved, and it will be very difficult to disperse them. Those who allow this to happen will have a burden of responsibility in terms of what happens in Syria.”

He, however, declined to point a finger at any country when asked if he blamed the US.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who came to New York with Gül, drew attention to the rise of extremist groups in Syria, saying the number of al-Qaeda terrorists is at risk of increasing next year.

Davutoglu noted that due to a failure to take measures previously, there is now a power vacuum in the war-torn country.

“If Assad left power two years ago, today there would not be al-Qaeda in Syria. This year there is a much larger group. Next year there is a risk of it growing larger. As long as this continues, the risk increases. Assad being in power is not a precondition for the stability of Syria, rather it is a handicap,” said Davuto lu.

Al-Qaeda and other radical groups have started to play an increasingly prominent role in the current power vacuum in Syria, aiming to transform the country into a proxy battlefield as the revolt against the Assad regime escalates.

Turkey, which has been a staunch supporter of the Syrian opposition fighting to topple Assad, is accused of providing logistical support to al-Qaeda-linked groups. However, Ankara has made its position clear, saying it is not taking any part in the ongoing fighting.

Davutoglu noted that there was not sufficient data for optimism in Syria. “The situation is really tragic. Therefore, we have no enough data in hand to be optimistic at the moment. We are making great efforts. But we have concerns as the international community has failed to pass the test in Syria so far,” said Davutoglu.

If elected, Turkey will bring an independent voice to UNSC, said Gül.

The Syrian issue aside, Turkey conducted lobbying for its UNSC candidacy in the 2015-2016 term during meetings at the UN.

Speaking at the UN Assembly meeting, Gül noted that Turkey is a candidate for a non-permanent member seat of the UNSC in the term of 2015-2016, saying that: “If elected, Turkey will bring an independent voice to the Security Council, one that listens to all and tries to find comprehensive and lasting solutions through dialogue.”

As part of this lobbying activity, Davutoglu separately met with the foreign ministers of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

Apart from the UNSC lobbying, Davutoglu had bilateral talks with other foreign counterparts, including US Secretary of State John Kerry, Greek Foreign Minister Evangelos Venizelos, Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh and the foreign ministers of Kosovo and Malta.

The Turkish foreign minister also denied claims that Turkey is isolated by its foreign policy choices, saying that these are only a myth created by some circles.

“Both in Turkey and abroad, there were some circles that tried to create this myth. Many foreign ministers are lining up to talk with me at the UN. What kind of isolation is this? The ones that created such a myth aimed to shake the paradigm that Turkish foreign policy has gained in recent years. Some are trying to create this kind of perception. Some may want to push Turkey out of some processes. When you become a big country, you are not [always] appreciated,” said Davutoglu.

### Vicar General of Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, Archbishop Svajian, Dies

svAJIAN, from page 1

He was ordained to the diaconate in 1951 by Bishop Zareh Payassian, becoming a member of the Brotherhood of St. James. In 1954, he was ordained as a celibate priest by then-Patriarch of Jerusalem Archbishop Yeghish Derderian, and given the priestly name of Shahan. Upon his ordination, Father Shahan lectured at the Holy Translators school of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem. His first pastoral assignment was to serve the Armenian faithful in Haifa as their spiritual pastor.

In 1957, upon the invitation of then-Patriarch of Constantinople Karekin Khachatourian, he came to Constantinople and was appointed to serve as the vice dean of the Holy Cross Seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.

In 1963, his ministry led him to education and the further enlightenment of the faithful. He served as a lecturer for 23 years on Armenian religion, language as well as ethics at the colleges of Gatekiugh and Firekiugh.

He received the rank of Senior Archimandrite (Dzayraguyn Vardapet) by Derderian, in 1961. He was consecrated as a bishop by the Catholicos of All Armenians, Vasken I.

In 1991, by the Pontifical Encyclical of Vasken I, he was elevated to the rank of archbishop.

# Community News

## Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church Will Celebrate 35th Consecration Anniversary

CHELMSFORD, Mass. – On Sunday, October 13 the Saints Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church will celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the consecration of the church. The celebratory event will be officiated by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

“The celebration of the 35th anniversary of the consecration of the church in Chelmsford is truly a blessing. It provides us with the opportunity to once again offer praise and glory to the Lord for blessing us with a house of worship,” said Reverend Khachatur Kesablian, pastor of Saints Vartanantz.

The church will begin its celebration at 9 a.m. with the Divine Liturgy. Barsamian will preside, along with Kesablian. Following the Divine Liturgy, the ordination of a sub-deacon and acolytes will be performed. Recipients of the honor will be sub deacon Jeremy Oldham and acolytes Gregory Chekmeyan, Benjamin Clark, Dominic Sampson and David Arakelian.

The activities, lead by the 35th Consecration Anniversary Chairwoman Sandra Boroyan and her committee, will continue in Kazanjian Memorial Ballroom, with a Fellowship Reception at 1p.m. and the Commemorative



Sandra Boroyan, chairman of the 35th Consecration Anniversary Committee and Reverend Khachatur Kesablian, pastor of Saints Vartanantz Church working on the final details of the event.

Banquet following at 1:30 p.m.

The Sunday afternoon event and program will include special guests Matt Hanson, chairman of the Chelmsford Board of Selectman and James Kalustian, chairman of the Diocesan Council. It will also feature the presentation of the Diocesan “Saint Vartan Award” to parish see CHELMSFORD, page 7



Recipient of the Saint Vartan Award, Patricia Amboian of Andover



Parishioners express their devotion to the Relic of St. Vartan, during the 45th anniversary Divine Liturgy at New York's St. Vartan Cathedral.

## St. Vartan Cathedral Celebrates 45th Anniversary

NEW YORK – More than 200 parishioners and friends gathered in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium on Sunday, September 15 to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the consecration of St. Vartan Cathedral.

The event took place following the celebration of the *badarak* by the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), Archbishop Kahajag Barsamian on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The names of more than 150 departed St. Vartan godfathers and Cathedral Project committee members were read in a special requiem service during the services.

**By Florence Avakian**

In his homily, the Primate recounted the spiritual importance and symbolism of the cathedral – not only for the Armenian community, also for Americans who have come to pray and light candles throughout countless occasions. He especially singled out the tragic day of September 11, 2001, when hundreds of people entered the sanctuary to find solace and comfort in the wake of the terrorist attack on New York.

The Primate also expressed great appreciation to the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II for his gift to the Eastern Diocese of the 1,500-year-old relic of St. Vartan the Brave, in honor of this 45th anniversary. The relic, a piece of stone encrusted with the blood of St. Vartan, is encased in a hand-crafted silver cross, which was sanctified in Echmiadzin in a special ceremony in late August, and brought to St. Vartan Cathedral. It was unveiled for the first time on Sunday in a procession led by members of the Knights of Vartan.

Opening the luncheon and program in Kavookjian Hall, Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian gave the invocation after which Commemoration Committee co-chair Paul Zakian offered a toast to “all who sacrificed for this sacred place.”

Mistress of Ceremonies Arpine Barseghian, a medical student, speaking in English and Armenian, introduced the keynote speaker: Mark Movsesian, professor of Law at St. John's University and an authority on the nexus of law and religion.

In an inspiring address, Movsesian related that this cathedral which was consecrated by the late Catholicos of All Armenians Vasken I “required vision, skill and courage, and has been part of the fabric of this city.” Modeled in part on the ancient St. Hripsime Church in Armenia, it is not only a “monument to antiquity, but a living spiritual and cultural center.”

He recounted many milestones that have taken place in the cathedral, including the liturgical celebrations, events for young people, families and the elderly,

see ANNIVERSARY, page 8

## Eight Defendants Plead Guilty in Los Angeles In Armenian Gang Case

WASHINGTON – Four members and associates of the Armenian Power gang and four other individuals pleaded guilty late yesterday to charges relating to the activities of the Armenian Power criminal enterprise, including racketeering conspiracy, bank fraud, aggravated identity theft, drug trafficking and illegal possession of firearms.

The guilty pleas were announced this week by Acting Assistant Attorney General Mythili Raman of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney André Birotte, Jr. of the Central District of California and Assistant Director in Charge Bill L. Lewis of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office.

The following defendants pleaded guilty before US District Judge Dean D. Pregerson in the Central District of California:

- Karo Yerkanyan, aka “Guilty,” 32, of Tujunga, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy, bank fraud, aggravated identity theft, conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute marijuana, and felon-in-possession of a firearm
- Arman Tangabekyan, aka “Spito” and “Thick Neck,” 34, of Encino, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy, bank fraud and aggravated identity theft
- Artur Pembejian, aka “Cham,” 36, of Burbank, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy
- Raymond Tarverdyan, aka “Rye,” 35, of Montrose, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy and bank fraud
- Simon Antonyan, aka “Simo,” 38, of Hollywood, pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft
- Khachatur Arakelyan, aka “Khecho,” 39, of Glendale, pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft
- Vartenie Ananian, 29, of Tujunga, pleaded guilty to bank fraud
- Adam Davoodian, 32, of Glendale, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute marijuana

The defendants who pleaded guilty on September 10 were among 70 individuals charged in a 140-count indictment in July 2011 for criminal activities associated with the Armenian Power gang. The indictment accused 29 defendants, including four of those who pleaded guilty yesterday, of participation in the Armenian Power RICO conspiracy. The RICO conspiracy charge alleges a host of illegal activities, many of which involved sophisticated fraudulent schemes of identity theft, bank fraud, credit card skimming, manufacturing counterfeit checks, and laundering criminal proceeds, often electronically. In addition, defendants were involved in a variety of violent crimes, such as extortion, kidnapping, and firearms offenses. Among the schemes charged in the racketeering indictment is a bank fraud and identity theft scheme that victimized hundreds of customers of 99 Cents Only Stores throughout Southern California. Through the scheme, defendants caused more than \$2 million in losses when they secretly installed sophisticated “skimming” devices to steal customer debit card account information at cash registers and then used the skimmed information to create counterfeit debit cards to steal money from victims' bank accounts.

The eight defendants who pleaded guilty yesterday played various roles in the activities of the Armenian Power gang, including participating in bank fraud, drug distribution, access device fraud, identity theft, and illegal firearm possession.

Yerkanyan, a member of the Armenian Power conspiracy, participated in a bank fraud scheme that obtained the personal identifying information and account information of victims. He and his co-conspirators used the information to open fraudulent bank accounts, loans, and lines of credit at HSBC Bank and Bank of America without the knowledge of the victims.

see GANG, page 7



## COMMUNITY NEWS

## OBITUARY

## Aram Avedisian

LONDONDERRY, N.H. — Aram G. Avedisian, 59, formerly of Auburn, Mass., died on September 10 surrounded by his family at the Arbors of Bedford, after a lengthy illness.

Avedisian was born April 28, 1954 in Boston, and was a son of the late Aris and Annie (Kachagian) Avedisian.

He was raised and educated in Watertown and had been a resident of Auburn for 22 years, prior to relocating to Londonderry three years ago.

Avedisian was employed as a senior technical database designer at Fidelity Investments of Marlboro, Mass. for 16 years. He was also instrumental with organizing a hockey league with Fidelity employees during this time.

Avedisian was a longtime member and former deacon at Grace Free Presbyterian Church of Litchfield.

Members of the family include his wife of 32 years, Kathleen M. (Kille) Avedisian of Londonderry; a son and his wife, Scott and Katey Avedisian of Goffstown; a daughter, Sabrina Avedisian, of Londonderry; his grandson, Jason Aram Avedisian; a sister, Margaret DeFreest of Hooksett and a large extended family.

A Funeral Service was held at Peabody Funeral Homes on September 13 and interment followed at Pillsbury Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Grace Free Presbyterian Church, Attn: Missions, 11 Colby Road, Litchfield, NH 03052.

## Dr. Aramays Pashayan

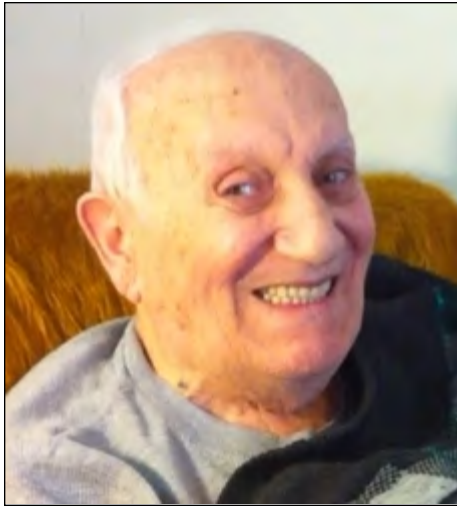
WATERTOWN — Dr. Aramays Pashayan died on September 11.

Pashayan was the husband of Ofelya Gasparian and father of Anoush Pashayan and her husband Rouben Bagdassarian of Watertown, Mushegh Pashayan and his wife

Susanna Pashayan of Yerevan, Gagik Pashayan and his late wife Marina Pashayan of Las Vegas, Nev. and Nora Khazarian and her husband Aghassi of Buenos Aires, Argentina. He also leaves seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, as well as a sister, Vera Pashayan of Los Angeles.

Pashayan was born on June 5, 1920 and lived a life of 93 years and 98 days, enduring the full spectrum of human experience and emotion, ranging from early childhood hardships when he lost his mother at the age of 11, to young adult years of faith and discipline surviving — against all odds — the violent and destructive years of WWII as a medical soldier on the front lines. He reached his middle adulthood years of hope, dedication and new beginnings marked by his marriage to his wife and the arrival of their children, followed by his relaxing and rewarding years of late adulthood, when he enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Services were held at St. James Armenian Church on Saturday, September 14, and interment followed at Ridgelawn Cemetery. Expressions of sympathy may be made in his memory to St. James Armenian Church.

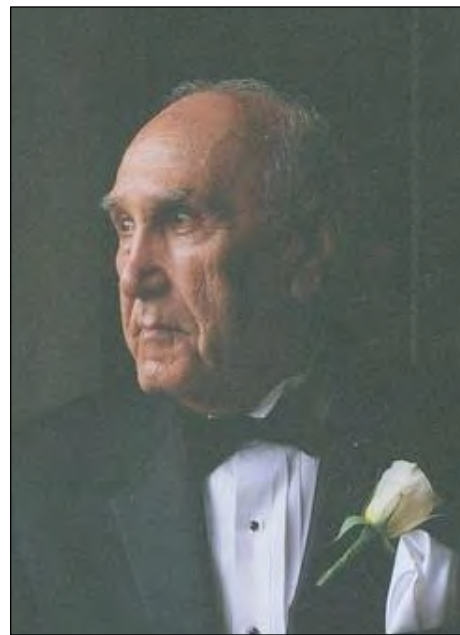


Aramays Pashayan

## George Hurant Kevorkian

SUDBURY, Mass. — George Hurant Kevorkian died on September 2. He was the husband of the late Malina (Shahlamian) Kevorkian; father of Marguerite Kevorkian-Birkner and her husband Jeff Birkner of Norfolk, Edward C. Kevorkian and his wife Mary-Jo Kevorkian of E. Northport, NY, Thomas P. Kevorkian and his wife Ivy Brown Kevorkian of Bethesda, MD and George P. Kevorkian and his wife Lynn Kevorkian of Milford. George Kevorkian was also the grandfather of Stephen, Lilit, Diana, William and Jonathan Kevorkian; brother of the late James, Henry and Peter Kevorkian and father-in-law of the late Kathleen Kevorkian. He is survived by several nieces and nephews. He was a Navy veteran of World War II.

Services were held at St. James Armenian Church in Watertown on Saturday, September 7. Interment followed at the Mass. National Cemetery in Bourne on Monday, September 9. Expressions of sympathy may be made in his memory to St. James Armenian Church or the charity of your choice.



George Hurant Kevorkian

## Alice Melkonian

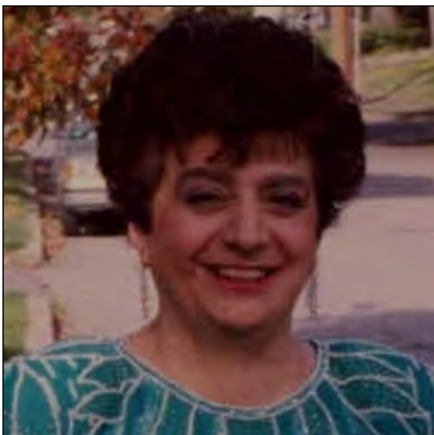
WATERTOWN — Alice (Mulkigian) Melkonian died on September 22.

Melkonian was born on October 15, 1930 and worked as an accountant.

She was the wife of the late Michael Melkonian; mother of Mark Melkonian and his wife Natalie Melkonian of Wilmington and Robert Melkonian and his wife Genie Melkonian of Lexington. She was the grandmother of Aleena, Michael, Shant and Tania Melkonian; sister of Agnes Gazelian and Pat Guluzian both of Watertown and the late Gary Mulkigian and companion of the late Charles Hatabian.

Services were held at St. James Armenian Church on September 26 and interment followed at Ridgelawn Cemetery.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in her memory to St. James Armenian Church or The American Stroke Association, PO Box 417005, Boston, MA 02241.



**DETROIT —** The recent Soiree Musicale concert at the Birmingham Unitarian Church sponsored by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, featuring pianist Karen Hakobyan and violinist Henrik Karapetyan, and dedicated to the memory of the late Dr. Garabed Belian, was a great success. (A story and photos appeared last week in the *Mirror-Spectator*.) Above is a photo of the committee members. They are, standing back row, from left, Garineh Koundjakian, Karen Hakobyan (musician), Henrik Karapetyan (musician), Hagop Minassian, Marina Papasian and Captain Jack Alexanian; seated, from left, Edmond Azadian, Leslie Balian Bush, Chairman Nora Azadian, Eric Bush and Ara Belian.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Hye Pointe Armenian Church Picnic Draws 700

By Robert Serabian

HAVERHILL, Mass. – On Sunday August 25th the Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe held its annual picnic to a crowd of 700 people on the grounds of the American Legion Farm.

The picnic began with a Jashou service on the picnic grounds followed by a Requiem service in memory of departed members of the Hye Pointe Parish. Picnic attendees enjoyed Armenian cuisine prepared by the church's cooking crew.

Music for the event was provided by Hye Pointe's own seven-piece Jason Naroian Ensemble, with guest vocalist Haz Essegian and Mal Barsamian on his saxophone. We were surprised by a visit from Jay Baronian who sang and played a few songs. The church raffle had prizes totaling \$1,000, as well as gift certificates to area restaurants and boutiques. Representatives from area clergy and city government were in attendance to meet the crowd, sample the cuisine, and enjoy the day. The Parish Council had an informational table on upcoming church activities, as well as plans for the new church complex.

The picnic drew attendees from the Merrimack Valley, North Shore, Metro Boston, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island and even a few from New York! The Hye Pointe church picnic reflects a tradition when picnics were held in wooded areas or parks out-



Guest vocalist Haz Essegian with the Jason Naroian Ensemble

side of the cities. Each year the picnic attracts a larger following, which can be attributed to the spirit and dedication of its parishioners, as well as the quality cuisine and generous portions. The picnic provided an opportunity for friends, family, and Armenians in the Merrimack Valley to come together and connect for the love of their church, culture, and com-

munity.

During the past year, the church has held a number of dinners which have been well attended by the community. These dinners will be held periodically throughout the year. For further information on the Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, visit [www.hypeointearmenianchurch.org](http://www.hypeointearmenianchurch.org).

## Eight Defendants Plead Guilty in Los Angeles in Armenian Gang Case

GANG, from page 5

Tangabekyan, a member of the Armenian Power conspiracy, participated in a bank fraud scheme by obtaining personal information and account information for victims and then obtaining or transferring over \$475,000 in funds.

Yerkanyan also participated, along with Davoodian, in a scheme to steal approximately 207 pounds of marijuana, worth approximately \$450,000, from another drug distributor.

Pembejian, a member of the Armenian Power conspiracy, abetted the illegal possession of a firearm by a leader of the Armenian Power gang, Mher Darbinyan.

Tarverdyan, an Armenian Power member, and Antonyan, Arakelyan and Ananian participated in the scheme to install secret skimming devices at the 99 Cents Only Stores in order to obtain victims' account information.

According to court documents, the Armenian Power street gang formed in the East Hollywood district of Los Angeles in the 1980s. The gang's membership consisted primarily of individuals of Armenian descent, as well as of other countries within the former Soviet bloc. The Armenian Power has been designated under California



An Armenian Power tattoo on a gang member

state law as a criminal street gang and is believed to have over 250 documented members, as well as hundreds of associates. According to court documents, Armenian Power members and asso-

ciates regularly carry out violent criminal acts, including murders, attempted murders, kidnappings, robberies, extortions, and witness intimidation in order to enrich its members and associates and preserve and enhance the power of the criminal enterprise.

The defendants are scheduled to be sentenced beginning on November 25, 2013. Yerkanyan faces a maximum penalty of 102 years in prison. Tangabekyan faces a maximum penalty of 52 years in prison. Tarverdyan faces a maximum penalty of 50 years in prison. Ananian faces a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison. Pembejian and Davoodian each face a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. Antonyan and Arakelyan each face a maximum penalty of two years in prison.

Fifty-one defendants have previously pleaded guilty for their roles in the activities of the Armenian Power gang.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant US Attorneys Martin Estrada, Elizabeth Yang, and Stephen Wolfe of the Central District of California and Trial Attorney Andrew Creighton of the Criminal Division's Organized Crime and Gang Section.

## Ararat Armenian Church Holds Annual Supper on Sept. 28

SALEM, N.H. – The Ararat Armenian Congregational Church is scheduled to hold its annual Shish Kebab Supper on Saturday, September 28 from 4:30 to 7 p.m. The dinner takes place at the church, which is located at 2 Salem St.

The Ararat Church is New Hampshire's only Armenian church. In the late 1800s, Armenian refugees came to America in order to establish themselves in a place where they could work and live in a free society. These newcomers wished to practice their religion as well as nurture and preserve their precious Armenian culture. In 1912, a group of individuals in Salem met to establish a church where they could nurture their faith and maintain and preserve their Armenian culture and traditions. Help was attained from the Congregational Conference (today known as the United Church of Christ), and a land grant was obtained from the Northeastern Street Railway Company. Within a short time the church was built, and the building was dedicated in November 1913. For nearly a century, the church has participated in the life of Salem's community and shared its cultural heritage by hosting an annual shish kebab supper.

Church moderator John Janigian reported that all church members participate in hosting the shish kebab supper. Children assist with cleaning up, setting tables and serving soda and coffee. Adults work the grill, make the pilaf, fill the plates and sell tickets. Every household contributes to the bake sale.

Janigian also noted that the Ararat Church will host a 100th birthday celebration luncheon at the Tuscan Kitchen restaurant on November 3.

## Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church Will Celebrate 35th Consecration Anniversary

CHELMSFORD, from page 5

ioners, Patricia Amboian of Andover and George Simonian of Chelmsford, recognizing their stewardship of the Armenian Church and for their years of dedicated service. Entertainment will be provided by soloist Victoria Avetisyan and pianist Levon Hovsepian.



Recipient of the Saint Vartan Award, George Simonian of Chelmsford

"For the past 35 years, Saints Vartanantz has attended to the spiritual needs of her flock by bringing the living word of the Lord to his faithful, nurturing their faith and proclaiming His message of salvation. And this is what we celebrate today," said Kesablian. "It is a joyous occasion for all."

For more information or to attend the event, contact: [office@stsvartanantz.com](mailto:office@stsvartanantz.com). Saints Vartanantz is located at 180 Old Westford Road.

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To apply please send resume and cover letter to Howayda Affan. [howayda@almainc.org](mailto:howayda@almainc.org). No phone inquiries please.


**New York**  
**METRO**

# St. Vartan Cathedral Celebrates 45th Anniversary

ANNIVERSARY, from page 5

musical performances, art exhibitions, spiritual and educational workshops and ecumenical gatherings.

Dedicated to Vartan the Brave whom, in preserving Christianity for Armenia, achieved a “moral victory,” the history of St. Vartan “resonates with the concept of religious liberty that is so fundamental to American culture—the arguments of waves of immigrants who came here,” he continued. “Many of these immigrants came so that they could worship God free from state compulsion.”

The story of Avarayr is one of “blood and sac-



Mistress of Ceremonies Arpine Barseghian, a medical student, at the cathedral 45th anniversary luncheon

persecution in Azerbaijan in the 1980s; and even the Copts who also have suffered persecution, conduct services here, he related.

The name of St. Vartan is a reminder that in other parts of the world, especially in Syria today, Armenians “continue to pay a price for their faith,” Movsesian declared. “We must do what we can to help our brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their religion - our religion—and welcome them as our ancestors did. May the cathedral be a symbol of hope for them.”

To the delight of the audience, St. Vartan Armenian School students Erik Assatryan, Valentina Assatryan, Marar Makarian, Ariana Pamoukian and Jano Tokatyan recited several beloved Armenian poems in clear and proud voices.

Violinist Sami Mardinian and pianist Riko Higuma offered selections from Komitas, Khachaturian and Edgar Baghdasarian.

A video presentation was shown outlining the cathedral building’s history and consecration, produced by Artur Petrosyan and narrated by the Diocesan Communications Director Chris Zakian.

Armenia’s Ambassador to the United Nations Garen Nazarian stated that for Armenians who live outside of Armenia, the cathedral is “a piece of the homeland. It is not only a peaceful sanctuary, but also embodies the strength of our faith, our spiritual and cultural heritage, and symbolizes the memory of our history and our reconstructed identity.” He recalled how during the late 1980s and early 1990s, with Armenia struggling after the devastating earthquake, war, blockades and a depressed economy, St. Vartan Cathedral and the diocese served as a launching point for many of the relief efforts to support the “vital programs” in Armenia and Karabagh.



Members of the Mid-Atlantic Knights of Vartan escort the Relic of St. Vartan into St. Vartan Cathedral, on September 15.

rifice, of martyrdom and survival, emblematic of our history as a Christian people from the beginning,” he said. The Genocide survivors were the founders of this cathedral, Movsesian noted, and “associated this new American cathedral with the message of survival and rebirth.” Many have since come having survived

The mission of the church today, the ambassador continued, is “revival and renewal of our religion and social lives. The Armenian Apostolic Church has always been, is, and will be our solid pillar of faith and love towards each other, and towards the homeland.”

Closing the evening, Barsamian recalled the



Diocesan Primate Khajag Barsamian presents the Relic of St. Vartan to the congregation, during the Divine Liturgy honoring the 45th anniversary of New York’s St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral, on September 15.

“I Have a Dream” speech of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. “This dream became a reality for us in this country of equality and opportunity. The dream of the Armenian immigrants – 60, 70, 80 years ago – became a reality. Here, we welcomed the first ambassador of a free Armenia, and here we now see the young people reciting in Armenian.”

That was the dream of those who built this cathedral, and “we express our deep appreciation to them. The dream now is to see that the younger generation feels proud of their identity,” the Primate stated. “It’s our mission to keep the dream alive now and in the future.” Expressing appreciation to the members of the Commemoration Committee, and to Nazarian who “represents for us the strength of our country,” the Primate declared, “May the ties between Armenia and the diaspora always and forever grow stronger.”

The closing prayer by Gizirian, and the singing of the *Hayr Mer* by all present closed a day of reflection and gratitude.

The Commemoration Committee was under the auspices of the Primate and under the direction of the Cathedral Dean, Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian. Committee members included Paul and Berta Zakian, co-chairs; Araks Yeramyian Andrews, Talene Baroyan, Sona Haratunian, Dr. Kevork Niksarli, Shoghik Oganessian, Avedis Ohanessian and Vartges Saroyan.



Prof. Mark Movsesian of St. John’s School of Law, keynote speaker at the St. Vartan Cathedral 45th anniversary luncheon, on September 15



Yeghishe Gizirian speaks with cathedral 45th anniversary committee co-chair Paul Zakian (left) and keynote speaker Mark Movsesian (right).





## New York METRO

# Noyan Tapan Group Celebrates 22nd Anniversary of Armenian Independence

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – The 22nd anniversary of the independence of Armenia was celebrated by the Noyan Tapan (Noah's Ark) organization, at a gala reception held at the Kavookjian Hall of the Armenian Diocese (eastern), on Sunday, September 22 with more than 200 in attendance. It took place under the auspices of the Armenian Diocese and the Armenian Mission to the United Nations, and was sponsored by the Knights of Vartan, the Armenian Assembly of America and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

The event was organized and presented by three founders of Noyan Tapan – Tigran Sahakyan, Artyom Sahakyan and Vadim Kalashian – who have been formulating, presenting and financing these gatherings for 10 years. The hall was decorated with flower-laden tables, and huge Armenia and Artsakh flags flanking the stage with Armenia's state symbol as a centerpiece.

With the representatives of several Armenian organizations present, the festive occasion was opened with a prayer by the Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian, dean of St. Vartan Cathedral, and the American and Armenian national anthems sung by Vagharshak Ohanyan, accompanied on the piano by Dr. Lloyd Ariola. Welcoming the guests, Master of Ceremonies Tigran Sahakyan introduced Artyom Sahakyan who pointed out the significance of the organization, and the importance of the event.

Communications Director of the Armenian Assembly of America Taniel Koushadjian, who was present with the Assembly's Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, noted that "in charting this new course of independence, Armenia is filled with pride, hope, accomplishments, but also with uncertainty." Calling this journey "a work in progress," he said that it would take years of hard work. "Armenia has to overcome many obstacles." To counter the oil petrodollars of the enemy, the strength of the human spirit is needed, he related. "We must all unite not only for the coming of the 100th anniversary of the Genocide, but also for the progress of Armenia's future."

Among the many cultural presentations

which delighted the audience were several beloved Armenian songs sung by Anoush Barclay, accompanied on piano by Lucine Vahradyan. Hripsime Harutyunyan, one of the Brooklyn Armenian School teachers, recited selections of Armenian poetry. And singer Maria Sahakyan, accompanied by Lina Pantilova on piano, shared classical numbers.

A video presentation, titled, "Armenia-Independent State," focused on the military might of Armenia, showing waves of soldiers and military hardware. The Antranig Dance Ensemble in colorful costumes echoed the pride and strength of the independent republic. And one of the dancers sang a robust rendition of the popular Hayastan receiving a cheering reception.

Armenia's Ambassador to the United Nations Garen Nazarian, in a reflective address in both Armenian and English, called independence, "the materialization of our dream and today 22 years later, we are justly proud of our many achievements as an independent Armenia. During the past 22 years, which is a very short time for state-building, Armenia has become a country with an ever-growing tendency towards deepening market reforms, democratic transitions, and international integration." With emphasis, he stated that "Genocide recognition and prevention, the protection of peace in our complex region, are vital foreign policy issues for us."

Nazarian noted that "in sharing the values at the core of the United Nations, Armenia continually demonstrates its commitment to the maintenance of peace and promotion of demo-

cratic values and human rights. Today our country is advancing, and progress means that there is a force pushing us forward. This is being done not only through the contributions of our compatriots, but also through each of us. And that makes this celebration a proud holiday," he declared to sustained applause.

Closing the memorable event, Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian gave the benediction, and in an inspiring message, related that for centuries Armenia's attributes as a noble nation has been heard in songs and poems. "Our enemies have wanted to obliterate us, but we will always be here. From the time of our great figures, including Noah, Dikran, Vartan, Mesrob, Komitas, etc., Armenia's great culture, history and accomplishments have been related by its

philosophers, architects, writers, artists, musicians. Everyone's heart is tied to our motherland and its progress."

Armenia, he continued, "is our country, our responsibility so that it will always flourish. What country doesn't have its faults? I salute our country, its people and its institutions. It is the root that is important, and it's advancement on its own soil. Branches will spread out everywhere, but the roots are what count and are crucial. Our homeland will always persevere as long as its roots are strong."

Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian stated, "I salute the Armenian nation, the president, its people and its institutions. May our homeland live forever, strong, healthy and progressive," he declared to a standing ovation.



From left, Taniel Koushadjian, Bryan Ardouny, Artyom Sahakyan, Ambassador Garen Nazaryan and Tigran Sahakyan

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## 77th Annual Festival To Be Presented by St. Leon Armenian Church in October

FAIR LAWN, N.J. – Bringing the sights, sounds and tastes of Armenia stateside, St. Leon Armenian Church will present the 77th annual Armenian Food and Arts Festival, October 18-20 on the church grounds. The event is free and open to the public.

Food and beverages are available for purchase.

From dining and dancing to art exhibits and cooking classes, the Armenian Food and Arts Festival offers cultural fun for the family. Event highlights include performances by Zulal and the Arekag Chorus, dance performances by both the Akhtamar and Antranig Dance Ensembles and an exclusive art exhibit showcasing award-winning Armenian artists; cooking classes and hands-on demonstrations led by Armenian culinary experts in a professional on-site kitchen; a *tavloo* (backgammon) tournament and a clinic for novice players; 3-on-3 basketball tournament for children ages 10 and up; a gift shop featuring authentic handmade items crafted by Armenian artisans and a tour of the Church sanctuary with a historical overview of Armenian Apostolic traditions of worship.

The festival runs from 5 to 9 p.m. on Friday, noon to 9 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Parking is ample, though early arrival is advised. The church is located at 12-61 Saddle River Road.

# Arts & Living

## Lillian and Varnum Paul 2013 Screenwriting Award Finalists and Jury Announced

LOS ANGELES – The Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance (ADAA) announces the three finalists of the 4th Biennial Lillian and Varnum Paul 2013 Screenwriting Award: “1915,” by Garin K. Hovannisian and Alec Mouhibian; “The 13th Image,” by Yervand Kochar in collaboration with Jeani Di Carlo and “The Second Journey,” by Levon Minasian and Eric de Rocquefeuil.

Screenplay submissions were received from across the United States, Europe and Armenia. Entries were required to be full-length, unproduced film scripts written in English and based on Armenian themes. The screenplays submitted were of high quality, which made the selections difficult for the first round judges, all of whom are industry professionals.

The three finalist screenplays will be evaluated by a jury composed of Anahid Nazarian (producer, American Zoetrope Productions), Michael Goorjian (Emmy-winning actor) and Hank Saroyan (Emmy-winning TV producer).

The winner of the \$10,000 grand prize will be announced at ADAA's awards event on November 8, at the Writers Guild of America Theater in Beverly Hills, along with a panel discussion for young artists navigating their careers in Hollywood, “Making the Connection: Linking Armenians in the Entertainment Industry.” The panel will feature industry professionals from film studios. A wine and cheese reception will follow. Tickets are \$10/person and available on <http://www.itsmyseat.com//events/232924.html>.

The Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance's mission is to make the Armenian voice heard on the world stage through the dramatic arts of theatre and film. The Lillian and Varnum Paul Screenwriting Award is administered by ADAA through the generosity of the Paul Family through the Western Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church, under the auspices of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese.

In addition to the Paul award, ADAA administers the \$10,000 William Saroyan Prize for Playwriting, the deadline for which is April 15, 2014.

For more information about ADAA, visit [www.armeniandrama.org](http://www.armeniandrama.org).



Eric de Rocquefeuil and Levon Minasian



Garin K. Hovannisian and Alec Mouhibian



Yervand Kochar in collaboration with Jeani Di Carlo



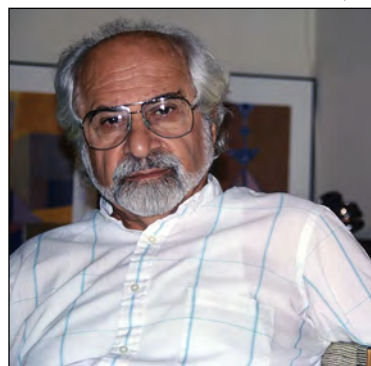
Detail of Holy Cross Chapel, Ararat Stadium complex, Tehran, Iran

## Rostom Voskanian's Architectural Legacy

TEHRAN, Iran – The architecture of Rostom Voskanian can be described as a sober, real and deeply persuasive answer to the wide-ranging dilemmas of modernism between the 1960s and the 1990s. Primarily working in a rapidly-developing Iran,

By Talinn Grigor, PhD

Voskanian's architecture was born out of a Beaux-Art tradition that helped transform and define Iranian as well as diasporan Armenian modernism. Voskanian was born into a Christian Armenian family from Tabriz. He was picked as the fifth recipient of the prestigious Paris scholarship for architects who were sponsored by the state to study in France. Graduating from the l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1964, he returned to Tehran University as an assistant professor, initially working with renowned Iranian architect and educator, Houshang Seyhoun. Voskanian soon became the dean of Tehran University's School of Architecture after Seyhoun and chaired it until the temporary closing of the university in 1980. In an interview some 10 years ago, Voskanian



Rostom Voskanian in his home-studio, Glendale

noted, “Those who returned from Europe had considerable influence.” Seyhoun, himself one of the earliest Beaux-Art architects in Iran, was critical of the “design of Armenian architects,” namely leading first-generation architects Vartan Hovannessian and Gabriel Guevrekian, because, as Voskanian noted, “they were after modernism.”

In the mid-1960s, trends were changing swiftly in Iran and Voskanian was initially a witness to and soon an instigator of these stylistic transformations. By the early 1970s, “the university saw the birth of Regionalism, cultural sensitivity,” maintained Voskanian, adding, “Finally, we gave up Formalism.” The discourse on Iranian architecture had shifted from the International Style of the 1930s and the Beaux-Arts principles of the 1950s to the reinvention of a new modern and local architecture of and for Iran.

In 1973, Voskanian made a special visit to the office of architect Louis Kahn and examined his large-scale works that paid particular attention to details. Kahn's monumental regionalism had a particular influence on Voskanian's subsequent architecture. Kahn was proposing to the world a new modernism that was regional and modernistic; a tradition that Voskanian carried forward in Iran. At the time, he could not have known that the last two decades of his creative life would be spent not too far from Kahn's masterpiece, the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla. In 1974, Voskanian became the head of the architectural department for the following three years, when the revolutionary movement forced him to resign his post. Championed and often sponsored by Empress Farah Pahlavi, notable examples of this new regionalism included praiseworthy examples in Tehran: Kamran Diba's Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (1976); Amanat's Shahyad Aryamehr Monument-Museum (1971-74); Nader Ardalan's Iran Centre for Management Studies (1974) and Voskanian's Holy Cross Chapel on the grounds of Ararat Sport Complex (1987). These outstanding works of architecture represent the originality, productivity, and stylistic richness that existed in modern Iran.

see ARCHITECTURE, page 11

## One Student's Indebtedness To a Former Professor

By Tom Vartabedian

MEDFORD, Mass. – When I sent my son off to Tufts University in 1988, I offered him a lot of fatherly advice: “Study hard, enjoy the campus life, and don't lose sight of your Armenian heritage.”

I had no doubt about the first suggestion, considering his Advanced Placement classes in high school and high SAT scores. Or the second recommendation, given his athletic ability and Eagle Scout credentials.

I did have some reservations about the third proposal, however. As a parent who tried to raise his children Armenian, he had been introduced to the Armenian Youth Federation, church activities and language school.

But much too often, these ideals get lost in transit when a teenager fosters a life of independence as they get older.

I thought he would lose his identity in college.

“Think about joining the Armenian club at school and get acquainted with



Dr. Lucy Der Manuelian built up a venerable portfolio with her students at Tufts University.

others of your kind,” I mandated. “Maybe there's a nice Armenian coed out there just waiting to meet you.”

“Dad ...”

I heard that before. The more you push, the more they pull away in this ethnic tug-of-war. I was comfortable knowing I had done my best, along with my wife, in raising our children well. The rest was up to fate.

The first Armenian to greet my son was Mr. Jumbo himself, the late John Baronian, who introduced him to the Tufts Armenian Club and treated his young protégés to dinner one night, in getting them properly acquainted.

It wasn't until his junior year as I recall when he came home from semester break with the news that he was taking an Armenian course. I had no idea.

“It's an elective,” said my son, an engineering student. “Sounded very exciting and right up my alley.”

The subject was “Armenian Art & Architecture” and it was being taught by Dr. Lucy Der Manuelian, an engaging storyteller whose excitement for her subject was contagious. In 1989 – the same year my son had arrived at Tufts – Der Manuelian was named to the first endowed chair in the field of Armenian art ever established at any university.

I had read about her pioneering efforts to uncover hidden treasures in Armenia

see DER MANUELIAN, page 12



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Rostom Voskanian's Architectural Legacy

ARCHITECTURE, from page 10

## Of the Masterpiece

Voskanian undertook his largest commission in 1971 for the Ararat Armenian Cultural Organization: a 10,000-seat athletic stadium in northern Tehran. The two-hectares-plus land had historically belonged to the Armenian community as a Christian cemetery from the 17th century. A six-member committee was formed to manage the establishment of this massive project. A design competition was organized, wherein Voskanian won first prize. He had been a longtime member of the Ararat organization and a veteran sportsman and mountaineer. That he was one of the leading architects of Iran sealed the selection. But there was something else at play here; Voskanian was above all a man of integrity, a people's architect.

Unlike postmodernists, modern architects believed in changing the world for the better for everyone. The welfare of ordinary people was always at stake, always at the forefront of priority. For Voskanian this was of essence. And like Voskanian, this priority has come and gone.

That Voskanian won the bid was indicative of the populist spirit of the project. Chairman of central board of directors and head of constructions of Ararat, Vachik Gharabegian, was pivotal to inseminating among the Armenian community of Iran, the idea of ownership. Of owning one's land, one's culture and thus one's destiny. An essential aspect of that will to ownership was the realization of the Ararat project. Donations were collected from the community. The architect and his team were supported by the board of directors in this politically and financially sensitive undertaking. At the end, Voskanian's design successfully rose to the expectations of the will of the people, of openness, transparency and communal ownership.

A topographically difficult terrain with a difference in elevation of 26 meters, did not phase Voskanian, who instead managed to turn it into a series of highly functional and spatially effective agglomeration arranged around the soccer field and each maintaining their individuality and independence. The modernist design of the structures went hand in hand with the choice of the material and function: pure concrete, brick, and glass. The people's stuff. The complex was ready for partial use as of 1975; the project was handed over to the Executive Board of Ararat in late 1976.

The project's implication for the Armenian community not only in Tehran, but also all around Iran and Asia, has been vast since the inception of the project. This space has become a sanctuary for Christian Armenians in order to survive as an independent cultural,



Holy Cross Chapel at the Ararat Stadium Complex

offices, classrooms, meeting halls, storage rooms, shops, camping areas, parking amenities, and a world-class swimming facility. In the following years, the stadium was used for significant community and national events as a result of its successful spatial configuration, solid construction, and forward-looking engineering.

Voskanian's Holy Cross Chapel on the southeastern corner of the campus was an addition after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which certainly encapsulates not only the architect's artistic and architectural brilliance, but also his lifelong commitment to both the people and to a local modernism: the modern Armenian religious structure. The Iranian Revolution that took an Islamic turn in 1980-82, gave urgency to the construction of an explicitly Christian icon in the existing stadium complex. Iranian identity framed by the authorities in terms of religion compelled minorities, including Armenians, to represent themselves as religious minorities. Although initially the complex was designed and used as a secular space, Ararat's governing committee judged it best in the early 1980s to erect an Armenian Apostolic chapel in order to continue to preserve the complex as a property belong to the Armenian community.

As many properties were being seized during the chaos of the revolution, the governing committee petitioned for an urgent approval of the design of the proposed chapel by the Armenian Apostolic Prelacy of Iran. Voskanian's scheme was a masterpiece of modern Armenian architecture: a reinterpretation in poured concrete of the best examples of medieval Armenian churches, transformed into an interwoven system of supports, openings, and suspensions. While

remaining true to the symmetric and central floor plan of domed architecture of medieval Armenian churches, for instance that of Saint Hripsimeh in Ejmiatsin or the Holy Cross (Surb Khatch) on the island of Akhtamar, Voskanian carves out a novel form that boldly incarnates the elevation and section of traditional churches into an allegorical representation of the Christian cross: simultaneously ancient and avant-garde. An architecture of

sculpture or a sculpted architecture, the chapel stands as the most powerful symbol of the endurance of Armenian identity as both ancient and contemporary.

Voskanian's avant-garde architecture was highly progressive and revolutionary, then and now. Finding the proposal, as it were, "too modern and unorthodox," the Armenian prelate ordered the imitation of a church in Antioch, Syria, dating from the 19th century.

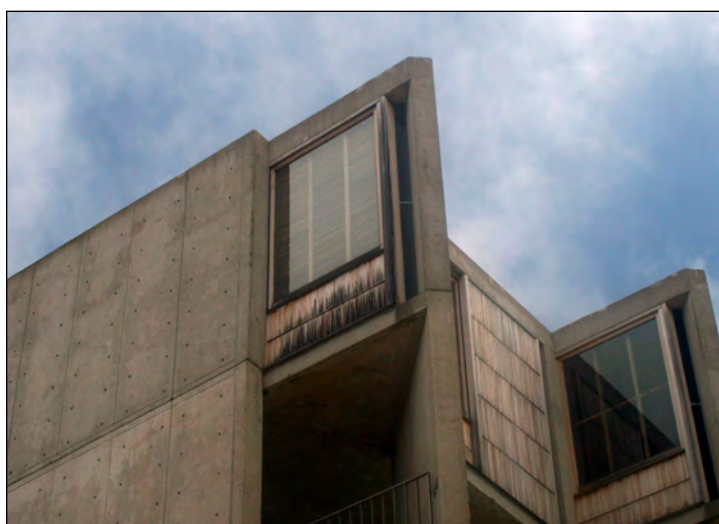
"Your holiness, I am either building this or nothing at all," Voskanian replied.

A man of integrity, of principles. A modern man of the people; a true modernist architect. To this, the stadium's chairman, Baghdik Der Grigorian had added, "Clearly sir, you don't

Voskanian left behind a legacy and a tradition in Iranian-Armenian modern architecture when he left Tehran in 1988. By so doing, he also left behind his architectural practice. Moving to Southern California, he showed an exceptional ability to adapt. With his Beaux-Arts training, Voskanian dropped the ruler and picked up the brush, perhaps because to a Beaux-Arts-trained architect, painting and sculpting are sub-processes of the artistic process. He restlessly produced works of art in his home-studio in Glendale. This resulted, over the last two decades, in a series of very successful one-person and group exhibitions in various North American cities.

Yet at his core, Voskanian remained a modernist architect. His *matur* embodies one of the few examples of Armenian contemporaneity in architecture; an exquisite answer to the history of architecture's modernism, to Corbu, Mies, Gropius, and Kahn. The *matur* is a masterpiece. With the skillful pouring of concrete, with its protruding three-dimensional crosses, with its low modernist interior reliefs, and with its quadrupling of design, it is an answer to "how does modern Armenian architecture look?" An answer to the Modern Movement, of which Voskanian was a faithful follower. Simultaneously, his works belong to the rich repertoire of Armenian architectural tradition. His legacy is the persistence of the modern and the traditional in Armenian art history. Therein rests his work's genius. The *matur*, as all his other architectural and fine-arts creations, stands tall as a brilliant manifesto of his intellectual powers, his profound philosophy, his artistic talent and his unique instinct and insight.

That both King Gagik's cathedral on the Akhtamar island and Voskanian's chapel on the grounds of Ararat stadium are named Holy Cross is prophetic. Both stand proud as representative masterworks of Armenian architecture, one of the Middle Ages and the other of the modern era. Gagik's exquisite high reliefs on the surface of Holy Cross are echoed by the equally exquisite minimalism of the poured concrete of Voskanian's Holy Cross. One could



Louis Kahn, the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, Calif.

ethnic, religious and linguistic minority in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Ararat Sport Complex has provided Armenians the space in which to practice their cultural and linguistic heritage and to preserve its ethnic and religious distinctiveness. The masterful architecture of the varied spaces of the complex has been since its construction the key to this preservation: a large open-air stadium, several indoor and outdoor sports halls, tennis courts,



Detail of Holy Cross Chapel, Ararat Stadium Complex, Tehran, Iran.

grasp the real implication of this monument, skirmishing over its style."

The architect tirelessly supervised the complex and unique construction process of the *matur* (chapel, in Armenian) during the following months. In September 1987, the *matur* was consecrated.

"I never approached the chapel as a political work," Voskanian told me decades later. "That which has been built, is a reality that remains; people change their political views, which have no influence on my art." The *matur* has helped maintain the stadium as an essential aspect of the preservation of Armenian cultural heritage in Iran.

## Of the Legacy

As most revolutions do, the Iranian Revolution has taken away from artists and architects their livelihood and peace of mind, as well as their guarantee of posterity.

touch both surfaces and grasp the artistic spirit of its time. Both speak so sincerely of their *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the age), of their place, of their artistic foresight. Visionary and deeply true.

To have lost one's context in which one had made his name, yet to persistently continue to create original, thought-provoking, and critical work of art is a mark of an exceptional mind, a pure heart, and a true artist. Voskanian was that architect-artist. To have lost that artist to cancer is the loss of not one but two nations, if not the entire artistic world. Not one, but two nations are at a loss today. Not one but two nations ought to mourn today. One of unmatched talent, one of integrity and honor, one who believed in the project of modernity and with his creation, became one with it. May he rest in peace as his art endures onto eternity.

(Talinn Grigor is a professor of art history at Brandeis University.)



## Avik Derents Deyirmendjian Presents New Book of Poems

ARLINGTON, Mass. — The Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston (AIBB), on Saturday, September 21, organized a double celebration of a new book of Armenian poems by Avik Derents Deyirmendjian and the 22nd anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Armenia.

The title of the book is *Khachartsan* (cross monument).

The celebration took place at Armenian Cultural Foundation. Garbis Zerdelian, president of the AIBB, welcomed the audience and introduced Dr. Ara Ghazarians, master of ceremonies and the Armenian Cultural Foundation's executive director.

Khajag Megerditchian introduced and presented the book. He noted that in this era of facebook and twitter it is a courageous act to

publish books, especially a book of poems in Armenian.

Mezzo-soprano Victoria Avetisyan and tenor Yeghishe Manucharyan presented popular Armenian songs accompanied on the piano by Lilit Shugarian.

Silva Youzbashyan of Armenia, noted for her recitations of poetry, was especially invited for this event. She recited many poems from the book and announced that the book is already translated into Georgian.

Rev. Father Avedis Boynerian of the Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown made the closing remarks before the ceremony of *Kinetson*, or blessing of the book with Armenian wine being poured on it.

A reception followed.



Haiguhi and Avik Deyirmendjian with Yevkine Gharibian, director of the Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston, during the Kinetson ceremony

## Coffeetown Press Announces Release of *Beyond the Two Rivers*

SEATTLE — On December 1, Coffeetown Press will release *Beyond the Two Rivers: The Continuing Story of Mannig the Heroine of Between the Two Rivers* (246 pages, \$15.95, ISBN: 978-1-60381-151-4), by Aida Kouyoumjian.

*Beyond the Two Rivers* is the sequel to *Between the Two Rivers: A Story of the Armenian Genocide*, the account of the real-life saga of Kouyoumjian's mother Mannig, who as a young girl was one of a small minority of Armenians who survived the massacre and

deportation from the Ottoman Empire during and after World War I. Historians estimate that between 1.5 and 2 million Armenians perished.

Critics had high praise for *Between the Two Rivers*: "From the first page of *Between the Two Rivers*, your attention will be captured," wrote Carol Hoyer, PhD, for *Reader Views*. "Readers won't be able to put the book down. You will hiss at the villains and cheer for the underdogs," she added.

In *ForeWord Reviews*, Elissa Mugianis wrote, "With this writing, Kouyoumjian joins authors Thea Halo and Peter Balakian, whose finely penned accounts of family members' survival of the Ottoman atrocities are essential reads for the understanding of these genocides."

"An absorbing account that confirms the adage, 'Truth is stranger than fiction,'" said Mary Terzian, author of *The Immigrants' Daughter*.

*Between the Two Rivers* won first place (Washington State) in the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) At-Large Communications Contest in the nonfiction: history category.

*Between the Two Rivers* was a true Cinderella of Mesopotamia story. Young Mannig rose from starving Armenian orphan to the teenage bride of a wealthy philanthropist. *Beyond the Two Rivers* begins in Baghdad amid the political tur-

moil of 1958 and flashes back to where the first book left off in 1922, when Mannig travels to the desert castle of her in-laws. As a young mother, Mannig moves from one isolated farming village outpost to another while her engineer husband makes the desert bloom. Mannig, Mardiros and their three children eventually settle in Baghdad, where the tumult of World War II has soured relations between the various tribes who have shared these lands peacefully for centuries.

Whether hobnobbing with royalty or escaping from angry Bedouins, Mannig retains her resilience and joie de vivre. This is an Iraq that no longer exists, except in memories and imaginations.

The author explained, "Ever since *Between the Two Rivers* was published, I've been asked about a sequel. Did the Cinderella of Mesopotamia get to enjoy a Happily Ever After? Well, the answer is complicated, as you will see. She certainly had a wonderful husband, who also became a loving father to his children. But those were turbulent years, and what began as a luxurious idyll in the castle of her husband's family soon turned into an itinerant existence far from her friends, her in-laws and her sister." She added, "During my childhood, my father's engineering work took us from one remote outpost to the next, and eventually we had to flee for our lives. Mannig's life was full of adventure and it

was certainly happier than most. It had its moments of fear and tragedy, but she was tough: anyone who survived what she did as a child had to be. I think many will find it fascinating to relive those years with her, in an Iraq that struggled to find its place in the twentieth century, fell into the hands of a dictator, and now continues to reel as violence breaks out in surrounding countries. What's going on in Syria these days is so reminiscent of what has been happening in the Middle East since the beginning of human history — in Babylon, which is only a few miles from where I was born."

Kouyoumjian was born in Felloujah and raised and educated in Baghdad, Iraq. In 1952, she came to Seattle to attend the University of Washington on a Fulbright Scholarship. She married an American and eventually settled on Mercer Island.

For more information on her, visit [www.ArmenianStory.coffeetownpress.com](http://www.ArmenianStory.coffeetownpress.com).

*Beyond the Two Rivers* is currently available for pre-order on Amazon.com. After December 1, it will be also available in eBook and print editions on Amazon.com, Amazon.co.uk, Amazon.de and Amazon Japan. Bookstores can order wholesale through Ingram, Baker & Taylor or by contacting [info@coffeetownpress.com](mailto:info@coffeetownpress.com). Libraries can also order through Follett Library Services or Midwest Library Services.

## One Student's Indebtedness To a Former Professor

DER MANUELIAN, from page 10 and dangling off cliffs and helicopters to get her pictures. The boy was in good hands.

She handed out the most challenging of assignments, one that lifted an eyebrow with its intensified research.

"I want you to go out and do a paper on Armenian churches throughout Greater Boston," she proposed. "Focus please on the architectural concepts, the construction process, tied with any religious institutions in Armenia and ultimate resolve."

It took a semester. Out he went, visiting such sites as Holy Trinity, St. Stephen's and St. James, taking copious notes, interviews, artwork and icons that enhanced the sanctuary.

The final result proved commendable. Moreover, it was everything his professor had expected — and more.

Two years later, he graduated from Tufts and made his way into the world, losing touch with his professors and most fellow students. He settled into a life of his own, secured work in his field, raised a family and became entrenched in community life.

Whether the assignment he had received from Der Manuelian did any good materialistically remains to be seen. If anything, it broadened his concept of Armenian art and architecture. More than once, he'd pass along a comment during our travels together.

For 20 years, distance had kept them apart until one day recently. I was giving a presentation at the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) on 50 years of journalism and there in the front row sat Dr. Lucy Der Manuelian. Her appearance lent an auspicious air to the audience.

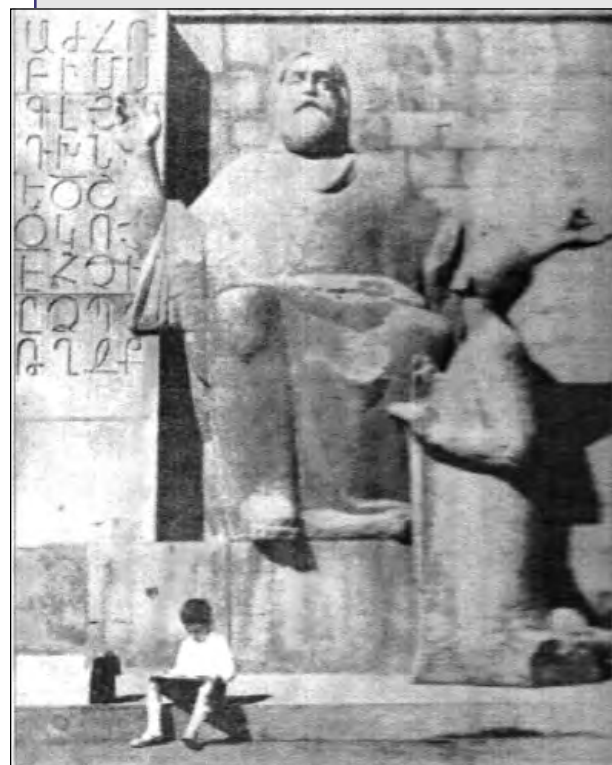
My son was handling the video presentation and was unaware of her presence until I told him.

"Do you know that woman over there?" I said, pointing to a corner of the room. "You had her at Tufts. She gave you that church assignment."

In a moment marked by time, the two converged in a warm and tender embrace.

"I appreciate all you did for me and others at Tufts," he said. "You gave me a deep perspective of my heritage. I'm forever grateful."

## Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2013



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



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

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## MASSACHUSETTS

**SEPTEMBER 28 — Story SLAM workshop with Nora Dooley of Massmouth.** 4-6 p.m. at ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. Learn to tell a story! Topic will be objects that have special meaning in our lives, so bring an object or heirloom to discuss. \$5 donation appreciated.

**SEPTEMBER 28 — Smithsonian Magazine's Annual Museum Day:** Free Admission to ALMA. Admission tickets available for download on the Museum Day Live! Website. One ticket admits one person, plus a guest; 65 Main St., Watertown.

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

**OCTOBER 1 — Winchester Reads presents Armenia's Living Legacy: Armenian History and Today,** 7:30 p.m.; panel discussion with Gail O'Reilly, owner of Made in Armenia Direct; Gary Lind-Sinianian, curator of ALMA; Jim Kalustian, president of the Armenian Heritage Foundation and Robert Mirak, president of the Armenian Cultural Foundation. Steve Boodakian will moderate the panel discussion and there will be a display of Armenian crafts. Free and open to the public; Pond Room, Jenks Center, 109 Skillings Road, Winchester.

**OCTOBER 3 — Avak Luncheon at St. Gregory Armenian Church,** 12 p.m., with speaker Vartus Varadian on "Fighting Cancer Through Chinese Art," 158 Main St., North Andover.

**OCTOBER 5 — Fall Reunion Dance hosted by the St. James ACYOA Seniors,** Watertown, St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mount Auburn St., Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall, Featuring Markos and the Hayasa Band! All ages welcome. Mezze will be served. Tickets: \$35 in advance/\$40 at the door, \$20 Children 12 and under. Tables of 10 may be reserved with advance payment. Tickets: Aaron Derderian [amderderian@gmail.com](mailto:amderderian@gmail.com) 781-264-8680

**OCTOBER 5 — "Inheriting the Light:" In Conversation with Diana Der Hovanessian and Nancy Kricorian,** 5-7 p.m., ALMA, 65 Main St., Watertown. Poet Der Hovanessian and novelist Kricorian will engage in a dialogue about how family and communal history have inspired and shaped their writings. \$5 donation appreciated.

**OCTOBER 13 — Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church in Chelmsford will celebrate the 35th anniversary of its consecration.** His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) will preside. Following divine liturgy, ordination of sub-deacons and acolytes will be conducted. Fellowship reception at 1 p.m., followed by dinner at 1:30 p.m. Donation \$35. At the banquet the Primate will present the St. Vartan Award to Patricia Amboian and George Simonian, for their years of dedicated service to the church. Advance reservations requested by September 25. Contact Rose Amboian at (978) 256-3430 or Patty Kayajanian at (978) 937-9379.

**OCTOBER 16 — Meet the Author: Chris Bohjalian discusses NY Times Bestseller Sandcastle Girls,** 7:30 p.m. Winchester Town Moderator John Sullivan will introduce the author. Free and open to the public; McCall Middle



**On October 5, ALMA will present "Inheriting the Light:" In Conversation with Diana Der Hovanessian and Nancy Kricorian, 5-7 p.m. Poet Der Hovanessian and novelist Kricorian will engage in a dialogue about how family and communal history have inspired and shaped their writings. A \$5 donation appreciated. ALMA is located at 65 Main St. Watertown, MA.**

School, 458 Main St., Winchester. Sponsored by Winchester Reads, a volunteer-based town-wide "Read" program.

**OCTOBER 18 and 19 — St. James Annual Bazaar!** Delicious shish, losh, kheyma and more! Fabulous pastries, manti, kufte and toorshi! Children's activities, vendors galore, farmer's market. Fun! Friends! Family! 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily, at the church hall, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown.

**OCTOBER 19 — Hye Kef 5,** featuring Leon Janikian, Joe Kouyoumjian, Greg Takvorian, Ken Kalajian, Bob Raphalian and Jay Baronian, Haverhill, 7:30 pm., Michael's Function Hall, 12 Alpha St. Tickets \$40, students \$30. Includes individually-served mezza platters. Proceeds to benefit all Amrenian churches in Merrimack Valley and New Hampshire. Call either John Arzigian, 6-03-560-3826, Sandy Boroyan, 978-251-8687, Scott Sahagian, 617-699-3581, or Peter Gulezian, 978-375-1616. No tickets will be sold at the door. For advance tickets, please call a committee member. Organized by Armenian Friends of America.

**OCTOBER 24 — K. George and Carolann S. Najarian MD Lecture on Human Rights: In Our Midst: Slavery Unmasked;** 7 p.m., Faneuil Hall, Boston, with keynote speaker Siddharth Kara, fellow at the Carr Center Program on Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery, Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Contact Barbara Tellalian for more info: 617-332-1880.

**OCTOBER 26 — Fall Harvest Bazaar, First Armenian Church,** 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. Noon – 8 p.m. Armenian delicacies - manti, choreg, kufte and more. Enjoy kebab dinners (lamb, beef or chicken with pilaf and salad,) losh, boreg, paklava, pastries and more in our festive hall or takeout. 617-484-4779, or [www.firstarmenianchurch.org](http://www.firstarmenianchurch.org). Handicapped and MBTA accessible.

**NOVEMBER 16 — Second annual Mer Doon Benefit Dance,** 7:30 p.m. to 1 a.m., Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown. Featuring John Berberian, Bob Mougamian, Mal Barsamian. For tickets and table reservations, please call Mark at 61-256-5358.

**NOVEMBER 16 — Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) 38th Annual Luncheon/Auction,** 11 a.m. at the Burlington Marriot, 1 Burlington Mall Road. Event kicks off with a silent auction and bidding; Visa and MasterCard accepted, tickets \$60. For reservations, contact [awwaauction@gmail.com](mailto:awwaauction@gmail.com).

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

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**SEPTEMBER 28 — Shish Kebab Supper at the Ararat Armenian Congregational Church,** 4:30-7:30 p.m; tickets at the door; 2 Salem St., Salem.

**NOVEMBER 3 — Ararat Armenian Congregational Church Celebrates 100 Years: 1913-2013.** Join the historic Armenian American community of Southern NH for a celebration lunch at Tuscan Kitchen restaurant, 67 Main St., Salem; 1 p.m. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, contact [janigian@comcast.net](mailto:janigian@comcast.net).

## NEW JERSEY

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

## RHODE ISLAND

**OCTOBER 20 — Program in honor of the dedication of the 100 anniversary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church,** with the Cultural Committee and ACYOA presenting the Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble in a program titled "Song and Dance.. Seta Paskalian - Kantardjian, artistic director and Choreographer; Andranik Mouradian, musical director, Armen Hovhannisyian and Salbi Mailyan, vocalists from California. 3 p.m., Roberts Hall, Rhode Island College, 300 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Providence. Donations: Adults \$20, Students \$10, children under 12 free. Tickets available at the Church office (401) 272 7712, The Deli (401) 461 4774, Sonya's Market (401) 941 9300.

## Tootikian Book Looks at Armenian Faith and History

By Philip Tavlian

A leading pastor of the Great Lakes State has just published his 35th volume, a readable compendium of inspirational essays in the English and Armenian languages, titled *Keeping the Balance*.

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, pastor emeritus of the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit, has prepared a bilingual work emphasizing "a balance between one's personal salvation and the social implications of one's religious experience." As the author states in his preface, "[W]ithout faith a person's good works are futile and without good works one's faith is dead."

The English-language portion of the volume

comprises 31 articles divided into three sections — "Holidays and Observances," "Views on Issues," and "Armenian Issues." The initial section includes thoughtful pieces relating to the Advent and Lenten seasons as well as Independence Day in the American Republic.

"Views on Issues" surveys the underpinnings of the Christian faith, from the imperative of outreach to the friendship and nonconformity exemplified in the life of Jesus of Nazareth to the distinctions between Divine Knowledge and human wisdom. Essays dealing with the pilgrimage of life — storms, weaknesses, good and evil, love, rejection, prayer and religious education — are of special benefit to 21st-century readers.

The section addressing Armenian issues eloquently examines theological diversity among Armenian Evangelicals, the 98th Anniversary of

the Armenian Genocide, problems and solutions in the modern Republic of Armenia, the 2009 Armenia/Turkey Protocols and the interdependence of Armenia and the diaspora.

The Armenian-language portion of the volume is titled, "Nertashnagootyun" (meaning "harmony"), consists of 10 articles dealing with religious and patriotic subjects. The author acknowledges that not "all Christians and all Armenians think alike, feel alike, worship alike or act alike." He nevertheless urges that "in spite of their differences, they must united and create harmony, much like a choral group, with different voices blended together, creating beautiful music."

"Balance" is the rich literary harvest of a gifted scholar whose five and one-half decades of Christian ministry have taken him from Beirut, Lebanon and Damascus, Syria to pulpits in

Massachusetts and Michigan as well as to the classrooms of Harvard University, Andover Newtown Theological Seminary and the University of Michigan.

Given recent tragic developments in the Near East and other points around the globe, the informed reader is well-advised to acquire this estimable volume and keep it within arm's reach in the trying times ahead.

Inscribed copies may be ordered from the Armenian Heritage Committee, 3922 Yorba Linda Boulevard, Royal Oak, Michigan 48073-6455.

(Philip Tavlian is Past President of the Armenian Theological Students' Aid, Inc.)

**Keeping the Balance.** By Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian. Royal Oak, Mich.: Armenian Heritage Committee, 2013. Pp. 160 ISBN 1-891583-15-8. \$25 plus \$3.25 shipping and handling.



## COMMENTARY

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror Spectator

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## Into the Minotaur's Cave of Diplomacy: How Russia Became Syria's Deterrent

By Robert Fisk

The Syrian delegation to Moscow left Damascus on the night of Saturday, September 7, as much to find out its fate as to negotiate.

The US President Barack Obama and the Russian President Vladimir Putin had been hatching their plan to prevent American missile strikes and Walid Muallem, Syria's extremely shrewd Foreign Minister, had no idea what it was. Far from bringing specific proposals to Russia, he wanted to know what the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov knew – if he knew anything at all.

It was a weird situation. Syria did not want to be attacked by the US after sarin gas was used in Damascus on the night of August 21, but it must have been clear that the Syrian regime – the principal target of American cruise missiles – had been cut out. Russia was making the decisions.

Muallem and his team – who are well-known in the Arab world and especially in Iran (and in the good old days, in London, Washington and Paris) – arrived at Sheremetyevo airport exhausted at dawn on Sunday, September 8, checking in, as they always did in Moscow, at the President beside the Moskva river, a cavernous and soulless hotel from the Brezhnev era. Their appointment with Lavrov was set for Monday at the Russian Foreign Ministry and Muallem and his delegation, still tired from their overnight flight, talked to Damascus and watched the satellite television shows out of Washington.

This was a moment in Syria's history of which Muallem and his colleagues were all too aware. The foreign policy of Syria – or perhaps its military policy – was being decided by others. And so it came to pass that on 9 September, Muallem sat opposite Lavrov in the ministry. The Russian Foreign Minister bluntly told the Syrians what he thought. It

was obvious from the start that he believed that Obama was going to strike their country.

This was not good news, especially when Lavrov made it clear that the operation would “definitely” take place. There was some discussion before Muallem stated his own country's position: that “if the real reason for the proposed aggression against Syria was the chemicals, then diplomatic means have not been exhausted”. The Syrians like Lavrov – they believe (with what proof I have no idea) that he writes poetry in his spare time, something which would naturally appeal to a people who often learn Arabic poetry by heart before they can write. “He is a good friend to the Arabs,” is a constant refrain in Damascus. Readers must be left to decide if this is true.

Digging like a sleuth for the details of Russian-Syrian diplomacy – never mind the extraordinary military relationship – is like wandering the cave of the Minotaur. A wrong turning can put you in danger, a long-standing friend lost forever, a contact angered, an official enraged by an understanding lost in translation. So as your correspondent in Damascus tip-toes through Russian and Syrian sources, he must remember the risks. This is the best I can do and I have every reason to believe it is spot on. It is a story that tells you about the future Syrian state.

In any event, Lavrov broke off the conversation by telling Muallem that he was going at once to see President Putin at the Kremlin. “I will get back to you,” he peremptorily told the Syrians. Muallem again insisted that “diplomacy is not exhausted.” He must have hoped he was right; after all, if he was wrong, he might not have a Damascus airport to return to.

The Syrians returned to the bleak President hotel for lunch. In Washington, John Kerry was blathering on with more threats. Syria must hand over chemical weapons. They only had a week to hand over an inventory. At 5 p.m., Lavrov called Muallem. They should meet in an hour. There was to be a press conference.

All along, Muallem had insisted that Syria wanted to sign the treaty banning chemical weapons. Yet everyone – not least the Russians – knew that Syria's chemical arsenal was its only deep strategic defense if the country faced a doomsday war with Israel. Still Muallem did not know what was in store for him. He and his colleagues had not slept for 36 hours. Lavrov was worried for different reasons. If the Americans hit Syria, they would destroy Bashar al-Assad's army, Islamists might storm into Damascus and Russian forces – with a naval base and marines in the Syrian port of Tartus and other warships at sea in the eastern Mediterranean – would be “forced to react.” This, at least, is the Russian version of events.

Now Lavrov told Muallem of Putin's deal: all Syria's chemical weapons to be monitored, details handed over within days, all stocks to be under international control within a year. And the Russians would be most grateful if Muallem – at a press conference that evening – would be good enough to agree. Muallem called Damascus. He talked to the government and of course to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. He agreed. And so a long-faced, exhausted Muallem appeared in front of the world's television cameras – apparently almost overwhelmed with exhaustion – to “say yes” (in the words of the Russians).

Syria wanted to save its people from aggression and placed complete confidence in its Russian friends. One of his assistants, Bouthaina Shaaban – who is also an adviser to Assad – looked equally overwhelmed.

Afterwards, Muallem told Lavrov that the agreement took from Syria its “No 1” weapon. And Lavrov replied: “Your best weapon is us.” And that was it. Syria's strategic deterrent had become Moscow. Kremlin rules.

(This column by Robert Fisk originally appeared in *The Independent* newspaper's September 22 edition. Fisk is the Middle East correspondent for *The Independent*.)

## Not the New Year's Honors List

By Odette Bazil

Traditionally, before every New Year, the British Government publishes a list of the names of people to be honored for their contribution to the welfare and good of Britain and for their exceptional personal achievements in various fields, and many British Armenians have been bestowed with that great honor, but the “Honors List” I am referring to in this article has not been published by the British Government, nor does it refer to positive achievements for the good of anyone: it has been issued by the Azerbaijani Government – not to honor or appreciate – but to single-out with hatred each and everyone who is “black listed” and labelled “persona non grata” in Azerbaijan.

I have the great honor to be included in that list and – although I am not a journalist – to be described as such.

I have also the great honor of having my name listed alongside the names of very important and universally acclaimed and respected persons, placing all of us 335 lucky individuals named in that list in very good company indeed.

The Azerbaijani “Honors List” includes people from all walks of life and different as journalists, politicians, artists, writers, scholars, historians, academicians, benefactors, TV presenters, opera singers, diplomats, etc. from countries as far as Japan or Argentina and even as close as Turkey, affirming that Azerbaijan has enemies all over the world.

What is the common factor that links all of us 335 fortunate people together in this public declaration of animosity and discrimination?

Does an opera singer become a fierce and dangerous enemy of Azerbaijan if invited to sing in Karabagh?

Does a parliamentarian who is visiting Karabagh to discuss peaceful means of solving – diplomatically and not militarily – the thorny issues created by the Azerbaijani aggression of Karabagh and the ensuing war become an enemy of the Azeri State?

What is the criteria that can help anyone to receive the honorable accolade of being included in that List?

I personally believe that instead of listing us 335 people as enemies, the Azeri government should invite each one of us to Baku, treat us with the same “oil and caviar diplomacy” used in their everyday dealings with dignitaries and strategically important people, show us courtesy and consideration and try to put forward their own views and arguments, logically, patiently, rationally and truthfully.

Although I do not read Azerbaijani, the pictures published helped me realize that there are two very important names missing from that list of enemies of Azerbaijan: the two names of Ramil Safarov and President Ilham Aliyev. For these two individuals have and are harming Azerbaijan far more than an opera singer or a benefactor could.

By killing savagely in his sleep an innocent Armenian man purely because of that man's ethnicity and by being returned to Azerbaijan to receive praise, honours and gifts, the Azeri Safarov proved to the world that crime and murder are accepted, are rewarded, are encouraged and are the norm in Azerbaijan. Safarov must hold a place of distinction in the Azeri “Honors List” because by his criminal action he did more damage to Azerbaijan's image in the world, than

could all of us 335 nominees ever do together.

Maybe I should place Aliyev's name higher than that of Safarov's in that list, for it was the president who bought Safarov's freedom with its “oil dollars and caviar diplomacy” and it was the President who showed to the international community at large that murder is accepted, rewarded and encouraged in Azerbaijan.

And now, nearing election time in Azerbaijan and Aliyev seeking a third term in office, what would serve his purpose better than another aggression of Karabagh, a new war to keep the people of Azerbaijan busy and engrossed with the spoils of war and, while suffering and bleeding, attempting to save their families and just to survive, they will be made powerless and unable to hold or rally any opposition to the president.

By taking his people to war, by creating the opportunity for everyone in the world to think that maybe all Azeris are (like Safarov) potential criminals – although I do not believe that – Aliyev deserves the highest honor and place in the list published by the Azeri government.

I am pleased and grateful that the Armenian and Karabagh governments are using their media (TV, newspapers, radio and diaspora media) to publicize and encourage visits to Armenia and Karabagh by internationally famed dignitaries, scholars, journalists, politicians and by doing so, are creating a list of well-wishers and friends of Armenia and Karabagh.

May both lists “Friends of Armenia and Karabagh” and “Enemies of Azerbaijan” grow everyday, include thousands more names, gather momentum and when published again (maybe next year) show to the world the difference of culture that exists between Armenia and Azerbaijan.



## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Cathedral in Moscow and Conference in Yerevan

I just returned from a three-day conference in Yerevan where 40 Armenian activists, journalists, and representatives of political, religious and cultural organizations from 18 countries (Argentina, Armenia, Artsakh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Netherlands, Russia, Syria, US and Uruguay) attended closed-door briefings from senior government officials.

The attendees met with the vice speaker and chairs of all parliamentary committees, president's Chief of Staff Vigen Sargsisian, Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan, Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan, National Security Council Secretary Artur Baghdasaryan, Constitutional Court Chairman Gagik Harutunyan and Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan.

Since the briefings dealt with sensitive political and national security issues and were off-the-record, I can only disclose the general topics without attribution to a specific speaker or participant:

- Armenia's decision to join the CIS Customs Union instead of signing the European Association Agreement;
- Threats to Armenia's national security and efforts to neutralize them;

- Preparations for possible international legal action against Turkey to secure restitution for the Armenian Genocide;

- Plans for the centennial of the Armenian Genocide;
- Status of the signed but not ratified Armenia-Turkey Protocols;

- Superior morale of victorious Armenian soldiers – an advantage over Azeris in a renewed war with Azerbaijan;
- Diaspora's participation in the economic development of Armenia and Artsakh.

The conference, organized by the Diaspora Ministry, provided the participants the rare opportunity to offer their critical assessment of the situation in the homeland and to openly question Armenia's and Artsakh's highest officials. The political leaders and their diasporan guests emphasized the urgent need for a framework or structure that would coordinate the efforts of Armenians in Armenia, Artsakh and Diaspora. During the conference and media interviews, I proposed the creation of a pan-Armenian committee which would include representatives from Armenia, Artsakh and Diaspora, to deal expressly with the critical needs of Artsakh, similar to the Centennial Committee for the Armenian Genocide, except that the Artsakh committee would be of a permanent nature.

On September 21, the conference participants were invited to attend the special presidential reception in celebration of Armenia's Independence Day. The evening ended with an impressive concert and fireworks show in Republic Square.

Prior to arriving in Yerevan, I attended the spiritually uplifting consecration of Moscow's Armenian Cathedral, which reportedly cost tens of millions of dollars contributed by generous Russian-Armenian businessmen. The magnificent church structure and the nearby community center are expected to play a critical role in preserving the Armenian language and Christian faith for the two-million

Armenians living in Russia. The September 17 consecration ceremony was attended by the Presidents of Armenia and Artsakh, Catholicos Karekin II, high-ranking Armenian clergymen from around the world and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill. Putin did not attend due to his absence from Moscow.

On this august occasion, a series of concerts, receptions and banquets were held in Moscow hosted by the Armenian Diocese of Russia for the large number of guests from throughout the world. In appreciation, Karekin II recognized the two-dozen benefactors of the Cathedral by bestowing upon them the highest honorific medals of the Armenian Church.

While in Moscow, I attended several jewelry-related events, organized by prominent Armenian jewelers in Russia. For the first time in a hundred years, an Armenian, Gagik Gevorkyan, president of Estet Jewelry House, was elected head of the prestigious Russian Jewelers Guild. Gevorkyan sponsored the lavish annual Jewelry Charity Ball at his company's headquarters in Moscow, attended by over a thousand jewelers and their families, including well-known Armenian jewelers from France, Canada and the US.

With a sense of great pride, I watched members of the Armenian Jewelers Association from Russia and North America address the distinguished guests at the International Jewelry Economic Forum and display their precious handiwork at JUNWEX, the XII International Jewelry and Watch Exhibition.

Before departing Moscow, I gave several television interviews and participated in a panel discussion on Hayk Demoyan's new book, *Turkey's Foreign Policy and the Karabagh Conflict*.

Despite the hectic schedule, my journey to Moscow and Yerevan opened up important networking opportunities for closer collaboration between Armenia and the two largest diaspora communities of Russia and the US.

# Changing Armenia: The 12-Cent Dilemma

By Mihran Aroian

We have all heard stories of corruption in Armenia. We read stories of election irregularities and how humanitarian aid ends up in the wrong pockets. My involvement with the Armenian government is limited. Aside from obtaining a travel visa, I have no real experience. It was what the government did not do that impressed me this summer.

The government allowed people to protest. I saw people protesting in Armenia who I would not have expected to see. I did not see these protests last summer. It was all quite civil, but people were protesting for what they believed were injustices. Retired pilots, veterans of the Karabagh war, and average citizens were protesting the rise in bus fares. They were all-out protesting to bring about change. When a government allows its citizens to criticize what they see as wrong in society, it is a very positive step in the right direction.

It would have been very easy for the government to close down these protests or not allow them to happen in the first place, but they did allow them and they continued. They allowed the average citizen to voice their discontent. This shows both restraint by the government with an attitude toward change. And, one of the protests actually did bring about change!

The summer of 2013 was my second summer working in Armenia. In my business ethics class, students asked if it was ethical for them to pay the recent 50-percent increase in the local bus fare. The price had changed from 100 drams to 150 drams – an increase of 12 cents. Although I did not think of this as an ethical issue, my students were very vocal in their disagreement. I told them that if the price for the fare was posted on the bus and that they were informed of the new price, that it was unethical to not pay the higher price. They had a choice, pay the higher fee or don't take the bus.

The bigger question was did the bus operators have the right to add a 50-percent increase? In a free enterprise system, the answer is yes. But to some degree, this was seen as a tax on the poor. If you depend on the bus to go to work and earn \$250 per month, is it ethical to add yet another "tax" onto the citizens?

Over the course of the next few days, the pop-

ulation in Yerevan protested. Natural gas prices had just increased by 20 percent, as had the cost of electricity. For the month of June, I had spent under \$10 for electricity, gas and water. For the month of July, these same services tripled in cost – and I spent few waking hours in the apartment each day. How were those cost increases absorbed for families with limited incomes?

The increase in bus fare was simply the last straw for Yerevan residents. The youth took to the streets. At major bus stops, they told the riders to pay only the old fare to the bus drivers. If everyone held firm, their thinking was that they would succeed.

If you kept up with this summer's news, you already know that the fare increase was reversed. Could this be the start of a new way for people to gain some level of control? Could true democracy be just around the corner?

I am impressed that Armenian citizens were allowed to protest. Sure, police were often found at these protest sites, but they were there to ensure that nobody was hurt. They were not interfering. Why would the government allow people to protest? Perhaps the government knows that Armenia must change if it is to survive. Perhaps the government recognizes that the people want change.

Every Friday from 10 a.m. until noon, a group of retired airplane pilots are allowed to hold a protest in front of the Presidential

Palace. Technically, they protest across the street but still in front of the Palace. For two hours, they hold up their signs and talk to passersby to tell them their stories. The police who watch over them generally mind their own business, but one particular week things get a little testy and the police argued with the protesting pilots. Perhaps having an American present changes the dynamics of the situation. I don't know.

I was told by a policeman that entry-level police officers in Armenia do not receive a salary until they reach a certain rank. One cannot help but wonder if this lack of salary encourages unethical behavior in young policemen. Does this have an impact on their professional behavior as they move up in rank? I reminded these policemen that if things do not change, they could find themselves on the same protest line in 30 years, asking the government why they, too, have not received the retirement benefits they were promised.

The Yerevan Opera House was a favorite protest site for Karabagh freedom fighters. These brave veterans also were promised benefits. The signs they held expressed a jarring though interesting message that set the tone for their protest. With high unemployment, high taxes, increasing energy costs, and increasing concerns for the future, Armenian's clearly want change. How much more will the people endure before they demand change? Actually,

quite a lot of endurance. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence "...and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed." On the path of least resistance, we will endure a lot of hardship before we demand change.

The Karabagh veterans held protest signs saying, "Turkey removed 1.5 million Armenians, but the Armenian Government has removed 2 million Armenians." With a poor economy and high corruption, the general belief is that some 2 million Armenians have left Armenia. The "brain drain" of Armenia has been going on for decades. Unless Armenia grows strong, will there be anyone left in Armenia a decade from now?

Still, I am impressed that the Armenian government lets this sort of protest proceed. It is important for the citizens of Armenia to voice their concerns. It is also just as important for Armenians in the diaspora to support the committed citizens of Armenia.

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## 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 noon on the 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.



# Monastery Carved out of Rock Discovered in Historic Armenia

MONASTERY, from page 1

It was only in 1999 that the monument was first visited by a specialist, Scottish researcher Stephen Sim, who took photographs of it and drew its schematic plan. Later it was visited by seismologist Shiro Sasano, who published a small-scale research on it together with several photographs he had taken there in 2009.

In this way, these two foreign researchers discovered the monastery which is carved into rock. They, however, failed to find out its name and called it after the adjacent village presently inhabited by Kurds.

Understanding the importance of conducting comprehensive studies in the monastic complex, in 2010 the members of Research on Armenian Architecture conducted scientific expeditions and revealed much about it. The available sources attest that this newly-discovered monument complex is the monastery of Tzarakar, which is mentioned in medieval records, and the location of which remained unknown until very recently.

As is known, Tzarakar was one of the renowned monastic complexes in medieval Armenia, but in the course of centuries, it lost



An 11-line inscription as it appears and when traced on paper

its glory and was consigned to oblivion to such an extent that in now even its location remained obscure.

In the late 19th century, Ghevond Alishan used the available sources to point to the area where the monastery could have possibly been

situated: "...Tzarakar, which is mentioned in some works by historiographers and geographers, is known to have stood in a naturally impregnable site in the vicinity of Kechror: first of all, a cut-in-rock monastery was erected..."

S. Epikian came to the same conclusion:

"Supposedly, a monastery of this name and a village used to be situated near Kechror, Gabeghenk District, Ayrarat [Province]."

The colophon of an Ashkharatsuyts (a geographical work), dating back to 1656, also confirms: "...the district of Gabeghenits and the castle of Kaput also called Artageraits – the town of Kechror is situated there together with the cut-in-rock monastery of Tzarakar, where Archimandrite Khachatur Kecharetsi's grave is found..."

This passage reveals two facts of the utmost importance: firstly, Tzarakar Monastery was cut in the rock, and secondly, most presumably, it was situated not far from the town of Kechror. That Khachatur Kecharetsi, an educator and poet who lived between the 13th and 14th centuries, was buried somewhere near Kechror, is also attested to by the following note on a map of 1691 compiled by Yeremia Chelebi Kyomurjian: "Town of Kechror, bordering on Basen, and Archimandrite Khachatur's grave."



Conchas of the hall

These two records clarify that the monastery of Tzarakar was truly located near the fortress town of Kechror.

Every visitor may easily see that the structures of the monastic complex are cut into quite friable masses of rock which are naturally striped and have certain coloring, looking like the parallel circular lines showing the age of a cut tree – evidently, the name of Tzarakar, which in Armenian means tree stone, is conditioned by this resemblance meaning a monastery cut into a tree-like stone.

The only surviving parts of Tzarakar Monastery are those of its structures which are cut into the rock, and therefore, are difficult to destroy, whereas the others have been irretrievably lost.

## Armenian Embassy Opens in Vatican

VATICAN, from page 1

have contributed to the development of these relations.

The Minister said Armenia highly appreciates the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the Vatican in 2000 and its reconfirmation in 2001.

"Opening of the Armenian Embassy is an evidence of the high level of friendly relations between Armenia and Vatican, but also an expression of the will of the two countries to further deepen these relations," Nalbandian said.

## Peter Koutoujian FOR CONGRESS



Koutoujian for Congress

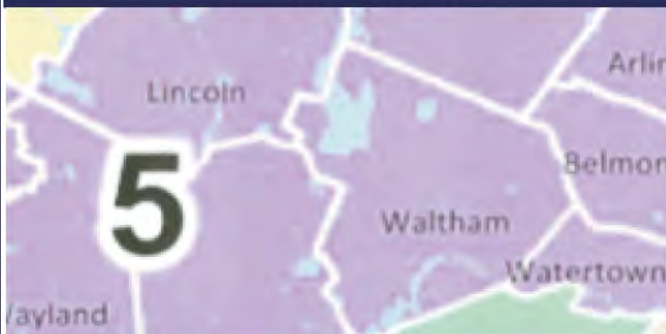
My family's story, like so many others in Massachusetts and across the nation, reflects the promise of the American Dream.

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

They instilled in me a desire to help people and to try to make a difference in their lives. They taught me that when you listen to people, empower people, and help them take action – you can change lives for the better.



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