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NEWS IN BRIEF

Philanthropist Pledges \$1 million for Telethon

YEREVAN – The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund announces that Russian-Armenian industrialist and benefactor Samvel Karapetyan has pledged to contribute \$1 million to the fund's upcoming Thanksgiving Day Telethon.

The telethon's primary goal this year is to raise funds for the construction of single-family homes for families in Nagorno Karabagh who have five or more children and lack adequate housing. Thanks to Karapetyan's donation, some 115 children and their parents will be provided with comfortable, fully furnished homes.

"We are grateful to our friend Samvel Karapetyan, who for years has generously supported our projects," said Ara Vardanyan, executive director of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, and added, "I'm confident that many of our compatriots will follow in his footsteps."

The telethon will air for 12 hours on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, beginning at 10 a.m. Pacific Standard Time.

Armenian Among Dead In Paris Attack

PARIS (Combined Sources) – A 17-year-old French-Armenian girl, Lola Ouzounian, died during the November 13 attack in Paris.

Lola, a Parisian, was at the Bataclan concert hall on the evening of November 13. Ouzounian had come to Bataclan concert hall with her father, but when violence broke out, the father was unable to find her.

Two natives of Armenia were in the Bataclan concert hall as well during the attack but miraculously survived.

Hilda Tchoboian, Member of the Rhone Alpes Regional Parliament in France, said the two were in the hall, when the terrorists burst into the building. They had gone to the bathroom and hearing the shots, fled.

President Serge Sargsisian sent his condolences to French President Francois Hollande. It read, in part, "I'm deeply shocked by the news of this unprecedented act of terrorism in Paris. I strongly condemn these actions, which claimed the lives of a dozens of innocent people. We have to join efforts to expose and eradicate all factors that cause such horrifying expressions of radicalism. At this difficult time, Armenia stands by France."

The Armenian parliament observed a minute of silence for the victims of the terror attacks in Beirut and Paris. "We strongly condemn those barbaric acts and reject any manifestation of terrorism. On behalf of the National Assembly of Armenia, we offer our heartfelt condolences and support to the French and Lebanese colleagues and the friendly peoples of France and Lebanon," Speaker Galust Sahakyan said.

More than 130 people were killed during the unprecedented attacks on the French capital.

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Gabriel Aljalian with Patriots quarterback Tom Brady

Paying it Forward on Team G

WATERTOWN – The Aljalian family of Watertown – Rev. Arakel Aljalian of St. James Armenian Church and his wife, Yeretzgin Natasha Aljalian and their son, Gabriel, 3, – received the worst news possible on November 3, 2012: their beautiful boy had leukemia.

By Alin K. Gregorian
Mirror-Spectator Staff

Fast-forward three years: Gabriel's cancer is in remission and the family now includes the rambunctious little Mary.

The family decided to recast November 3, a day awash with dark memories, as a day for all things good. Young Gabriel came up with the idea for Gabriel's Day of Kindness, a day when everyone was encouraged to do something selfless.

The social media campaign spread like wildfire and this day was celebrated see GABRIEL page 6

ADL, Tekeyan Members Convene in Armenia

YEREVAN – On November 2, members and leaders of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL) from several countries assembled at the entrance of Building No. 47 of Yerevan's Republic Street (formerly known as Alaverdian Street) to attend the dedication of the ADL premises.

The building, which houses the offices of the ADL-Armenia, the editorial offices of Azg newspaper, the library, and the meeting halls, has been fully renovated and refurbished by ADL friend and well-known philanthropist from New Jersey, Nazar Nazarian. The center is named the Nazar and Artemis Nazarian Center.

First to address the assembled group was ADL US and Canada Eastern District



From left, Edmond Y. Azadian, Hagop Vartivarian, Hagop Avedikian, in front of the ADL Nazar and Artemis Nazarian Center

Chairman Edmond Azadian, who presented a comprehensive list of the beneficence of the Nazarians in Armenia, including in see ADL, page 8

European Green Party Adopts Resolution on Armenian Genocide

LYON, France – A resolution on the Armenian Genocide was adopted by a large majority at the 23rd European Green Party Council in Lyon, on Sunday, November 15. The text acknowledges that the Ottoman Empire perpetrated Genocide against the Armenian people. It also calls on Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide and work towards reconciliation with the Armenia and its people, the press service of European Friends of Armenia (EuFoA) reported.

With this initiative the European Green Party calls upon all countries which have not yet done so to publicly recognize the Armenian Genocide. It underlines that doing so will positively impact the normalization of the relations between Turkey and Armenia and help prevent further crimes against humanity.

The European Green Party is a pan-European political party which federates see RESOLUTION, page 3

Balakian Finds His Place in Dual Cultural Identity

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

HAMILTON, N.Y. – Poet, memoirist and academic Peter Balakian has been in constant motion over the last few years, and particularly in 2015. He has crisscrossed the globe, engaging with Armenian communities in disparate places like Sydney, Buenos Aires,

Lecture on December 1 Sponsored by Tekeyan, Facing History

Aleppo, and Diyarbakir. He has published two new books this year in different genres: *Ozone Journal*, a volume of poetry, and *Vise and Shadow: Essays on the Lyric Imagination, Poetry, Art and Culture*. He recently reflected on what this all meant personally, as well as the broader significance of the Genocide centennial commemorations.

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Peter Balakian at the ruins of Ani



News From Armenia

Hovik Abrahamyan Visits French Embassy

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Accompanied by Minister of International Economic Integration and Reform, Vice Prime Minister Vache Gabrielyan and Minister-Chief of Government Staff David Haroutunyan, Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan visited the Embassy of France in Armenia.

On behalf of the government of Armenia and himself, Abrahamyan expressed his condolences to French Ambassador Jean-Francois Charpentier, embassy staff and the people of France on the terrorist attacks in Paris.

The prime minister wrote a note in the Condolence Book of the Embassy of France.

Tie and Wind Rally Promotes Bicycle Culture In Armenia

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – A Tie and Wind Cycling Rally was organized at the Sunchild International Environmental Protection Festival on Sunday, November 15.

The Foundation for Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets of Armenia and Amateur Cycling and Cycling Tourism Federation collaborated in organizing the event, while the Foundation's general partner VivaCell-MTS supported the project.

More than 60 cyclers started the tour at Freedom Square to pass through Yerevan's central streets, wearing official suits. The tour aimed to draw society's attention to air pollution, stressing the importance of cycling in big cities.

Representatives of state, social and educational institutions and citizens supporting the idea took part in the event.

Also joining the rally was the chairman of Foundation for Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets of Armenia Ruben Khachatryan.

Sharmazanov Excludes One-sided Concessions In Karabagh Settlement

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – “There is no new process in the Nagorno Karabagh conflict settlement: one-sided concessions are excluded,” according to Vice-President of the Armenian National Assembly Eduard Sharmazanov. He spoke on this topic at the National Assembly, responding to Armenian National Congress faction member Lyudmila Sargsyan's statement, who referred to some previous days media reports on surrendering NK surrounding regions to Azerbaijan.

“Those press reports are false and have nothing in common with the reality,” Sharmazanov stated. He stressed that “the fate of Nagorno Karabagh will be determined exclusively by citizens of the Republic of Nagorno Karabagh.”

Armenian Government To Pay 1 Million Drams To Families of Bus Crash Victims

YEREVAN (Hetq) – Armenian Minister of Transportation and Communications Gagik Beglaryan told reporters on November 9 in Yerevan that the Armenian government's sole responsibility regarding the November 3 bus crash in Russia, in which nine Armenians died and scores injured, was to provide humanitarian assistance and solace. “We, as the state, must assist our fellow citizens and stand by them in these troubled times. After the investigation is completed we will be able to say who will be held responsible. That responsible party, however, isn't the government,” said Beglaryan. Talking of compensation, Beglaryan said that most likely the Armenian government would pay the families of those who died in the bus accident around one million drams, and would pay for all transportation, funeral and other arrangements.



Karen Chshmaritian, minister of economy, with Elizabeth Hafner, deputy assistant US trade representative

Armenia-US Council Hold First Meeting

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – The first meeting of the Armenia-U.S. Council on Trade and Investment was held here on November 17.

This council was established in May under a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) between the governments of Armenia and the United States for further strengthening and deepening of Armenian-American economic cooperation, as well as expansion of turnover of products and services between the two countries.

The Armenian delegation was headed by Karen Chshmaritian, minister of economy, while the US delegation was led by Elizabeth Hafner, Deputy Assistant US Trade Representative.

The Council on Trade and Investment included a high-level US delegation from the US Department of Commerce, Department of State and the trade representative's office. The meeting was attended by the Ambassador of the United States of America to Armenia Richard Mills.

Also attending the meeting were Deputy Minister of Economy Garegin Melkonyan, Deputy Minister of Labor

and Social Affairs Arayik Petrosyan, representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Economy, Finance, Agriculture, Development Foundation of Armenia, Chamber of Commerce, the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen (Employers) of Armenia, the American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia (AmCham) and other interested institutions.

Addressing the meeting, Chshmaritian said: “Armenia is ready to become a center of interests for international business community, adding traditional Armenian hospitality to the favorable conditions for business activities. In this context I would propose to consider the opportunities to establish headquarters of international companies in Armenia, especially considering that the U.S. investors have already appreciated the opportunities of Armenia, particularly in the spheres of tourism, information and high technologies, consulting.”

Opportunities of the growth of mutual trade and investment between Republic of Armenia and the United States were discussed. On the agenda

were discussions on intellectual property rights, customs clearances, technical barriers to trade, sanitary measures for agriculture, investment promotion efforts, private sector engagement, government procurement, WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, and environmental and labor issues.

“By identifying and addressing these technical issues, we will deepen the trade relationship between the U.S. and Armenia,” said Mills.

In addition to the bilateral meeting, a roundtable discussion was held with interested private sector stakeholders. This was the first such meeting, with plans to continue them annually.

“Business leaders and the private sector play an important role in policy and regulatory decision-making,” Mills said. “This roundtable discussion helped provide an opportunity for stakeholders to consult on the on-going trade discussions.”

A joint action plan outlining further steps for promoting mutual trade and investment, as well as expanding areas of cooperation is expected to be adopted at the outcome of the meeting.

US Ambassador: The Whole Economy Suffers from Corruption in Armenia

YEREVAN (news.am) – The whole economy – indeed the whole country – suffers from corruption in Armenia, the US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills stated on November 9 at a meeting with the representatives of the American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia.

“I must be frank with our Armenian friends about the very real toll that corruption exacts on Armenia. I hear about that toll from potential US business investors and from average Armenians as I travel the country. When competition among businesses is not fair and not based on objective commercial criteria, when there are powerful interests that have disproportionate economic and political influence, it limits economic growth,” he said.

According to him, foreign businesses vote with their investment dollars and if they see a country suffering the ills of corruption they either don't invest at all, or may decide to pull their money out. “Among Armenians, the burden of corruption falls on the most vulnerable, the small business owners struggling to start and maintain their operations. But

corruption affects more than just the economy. Corruption undermines democracy and rule of law. It breeds instability and mistrust in institutions, and it can threaten a nation's national security,” said Mills.

In his words, corruption definitely happens everywhere, including in the United States. “The key questions for any nation are whether there is political will to attack corruption, whether the media and civil society feel empowered to speak out against corruption, and whether there are reliable judicial processes in place to investigate and prosecute the cases that are brought to light.

“My decision to devote US government attention and resources to fighting corruption is not one made in a vacuum; the impetus comes from the very top of the US government. In his 2015 National Security Strategy, President Obama outlines why America – at all levels and in all sectors – is partnering with nations and institutions fighting corruption across the globe. With that in mind, let me explain how I, and our Embassy here in Yerevan, plan to tackle this issue.”

He added that the US will work with Armenian groups that demonstrate a commitment to fighting corruption. This will include US Embassy grants to NGOs engaged in anti-corruption activities and that cooperate with government bodies that make progress in fighting corruption and increasing transparency. Our work will also include support to the government's Anti-Corruption Council. Our financial assistance to the Council supports concrete activities, such as the continued development of its anticorruption strategy and the establishment of an action plan. I would like to emphasize that we have conditioned our support to the Council on the attainment of measurable achievements. If the Council does not deliver, our support will end, plain and simple. We also encourage NGOs to serve on the Anti-Corruption Council, for we see it as an opportunity for civil society to constructively engage in direct dialogue with the government.

The US Embassy, he added, will “help civil society shine a spotlight on corruption and combat it,” the ambassador said.



INTERNATIONAL

US, Russia Reject PACE Report on Karabagh

WASHINGTON — US Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chair Ambassador James Warlick and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov share criticism of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) for issuing a report that demands Armenian withdrawal from Nagorno Karabagh and the territory's return to Azerbaijan.

The resolution on Nagorno Karabagh was drafted an Azerbaijan-affiliated former British Parliamentarian Robert Walter and approved by the PACE's Political Affairs Committee on November 4. The document calls for a peaceful settlement starting with "the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces and other irregular armed forces from Nagorno Karabagh and the other occupied territories of Azerbaijan," and "the establishment of full sovereignty of Azerbaijan in these territories."

It also contains criticism of the OSCE Minsk Group, saying that the body co-chaired by the US, Russia and France should "consider reviewing its approach to the resolution of the conflict."

Peace proposals made by the three mediating powers differ from the Karabagh settlement advocated by Walter's resolution. Instead, the OSCE Minsk Group Basic Principles prefer an internationally recognized referendum in Karabagh in which the disputed territory's predominantly Armenian population would be able to reaffirm its de facto secession from Azerbaijan.

"PACE and other [international organizations,] should consult with OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs before issuing reports or resolutions on Nagorno Karabagh," Warlick tweeted on Friday, November 6.

Azerbaijan rejected Warlick's criti-

cism and defended Walter's resolution. Similar to Warlick's position, Lavrov said that attempts by PACE to intervene in the unresolved conflict with such documents only "harm" international peace efforts spearheaded by Russia, the United States, and France. Lavrov emphasized that only these three nations have an international mandate to mediate in the Armenian-Azerbaijani dispute within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group.

"Any drastic, radical actions, whoever takes them, only harm this cause and the work of the co-chairs," Lavrov told reporters. "We — Russia, the United States and France — are firmly against attempts to take this subject to other international platforms that do not deal with the conflict's settlement, instead of a consistent, businesslike and patient dialogue on the Nagorno Karabagh settlement. At least, nobody has given them such a task on behalf of the international community," Lavrov said.

Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Nalbandian reaffirmed Armenia's strong condemnation of the proposed PACE document and accused Walter of working for Azerbaijan. "A person who was for many years a member of a pro-Azerbaijani group in the British parliament and who is financed, according to British press reports, from Baku, could not have had an impartial position," Nalbandian said at a joint news conference with Lavrov.

Walter was named by the PACE leadership in 2014 to launch a fact-finding mission to the Karabagh conflict zone and draw up the resolution titled "Escalation of violence in Nagorno Karabagh and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan."

Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu was reported to have personally handed a Turkish ID card to the

retired parliamentarian at the Turkish Embassy in London.

"It has turned from an organization protecting human rights into an organization protecting special interests," Armenia's Chief of Staff Davit Harutiunian said about the PACE. "Unfortunately, recent years' [PACE] votes on various issues testify to the fact that special interests have started taking precedence," he added.

The Strasbourg-based PACE will debate the proposed resolution on Nagorno Karabagh at its next plenary session due in January 2016.

Bono Honors Jailed Azerbaijani Rights Activist

WASHINGTON (PanArmenian.net) — U2 frontman Bono delivered a speech at the Washington Oxi Day Foundation's Fifth Annual Celebration, hailing Leyla Yunus, an Azerbaijani human rights activist who was sentenced to 8.5 years in jail for speaking out on the deplorable situation of human rights in Azerbaijan.

On 28 April 2014, Arif Yunus and his wife Leyla were detained at the Heydar Aliyev International Airport on their way to Doha, Qatar over allegation of spying for Armenia.

On August 13, 2015, the Baku Court on Grave Crimes sentenced Leyla Yunus to 8 years and 6 months in prison and her husband, Arif Yunus, to 7 years in prison.

"This is a moment to talk about peace as an action. It's not wishful thinking. Creating peace is a gift to make as well as to receive. Azerbaijan is a beautiful country, run by an ugly dictator, who puts his own people, your people, our people behind bars for the crime of expressing an opinion and seeking justice. What a crime," the singer noted.

Speaking about the plight of the human rights advocate who remains imprisoned in Azerbaijan, Bono said Leyla wants peace and reconciliation between Armenia and Azerbaijan. She wants truth from a dictator, who loves to lie, he said.

"So, what Leyla seeks should not be seen as anything other than fundamental right. And yet she is viewed as a traitor and is, as we speak, jailed. We, in this room, all know the free speech and expression are the building blocks of peace. People's rights are still denied for so many people around the world. Leyla, you are on the right side of history. Thanks for your courage," Bono concluded, expressing hope to ever be useful to Leyla.

Astronaut, senator and American hero, John Glenn, and Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, the husband of Queen Elizabeth, joined other world leaders lauding the people of Greece in their courageous fight against Hitler's Axis Forces and the Holocaust and celebrating those who today exhibit the same kind of Oxi Day valor. This was all part of the Washington Oxi Day Foundation's fifth annual celebration on October 28, the 75th anniversary of that historic moment that changed the trajectory of the Second World War.

The foundation is dedicated to informing American policymakers and the public about the profound role Greece played in bringing about the outcome of World War II and celebrating modern day heroes who exhibit the same courage as the Greeks did in continuing to fight to preserve and promote freedom and democracy around the world.

International News

Man Convicted in Dink Murder Offers New Testimony

ISTANBUL (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The man convicted of murdering Agos editor-in-chief Hrant Dink has appealed to the court, seeking to give new testimony, *Hurriyet Daily News* reported.

Ogün Samast has also asked for a transfer to a prison in Istanbul.

Since he was sentenced by a juvenile court to 22 years in jail in July 2011, Samast has not attended hearings at the Istanbul 5th Heavy Penal Court.

Dink was one of the founders of the bilingual Turkish-Armenian Agos and was killed outside his office in Istanbul on January 19, 2007.

His murder sparked widespread protests and led to speculation about the involvement of far-right groups and claims of a cover-up.

Samast, who was 17 at the time of the killing, claimed he killed Dink for "insulting Turkishness."

An earlier investigation showed that the prosecutors who worked on the case ignored serious allegations of the involvement of top police officers in the murder.

Bodies of Five Armenian Crash Victims Will Be Sent to Yerevan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The Civil Aviation Department reported that on November 12 the bodies of the five Armenian citizens who perished when an AN-12 Soviet-built cargo plane that crashed in Sudan on November 4, would be transported home soon.

The victims are aircraft commander Gevorg Tovmasyan, Second Pilot Samvel Hambardzumyan, Engineer Samvel Mkrtychyan, and Technicians Armen Antonyan, and Suren Petrosyan.

Five members of the crew of the cargo plane that crashed in South Sudan today were citizens of the Republic of Armenia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs.

According to reports, the plane was overloaded and crashed along the banks of the Nile River after taking off from South Sudan's capital.

Armenian Women's Chess Team Beats England

REYKJAVIK, Iceland (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The 4th round of European Team Chess Championship was held here on Monday, November 16.

Armenian men's and women's teams played against those of England; the men's game ended in a 2-2 draw, while Armenian women gained a 3-1 win.

The 5th round was set to take place Tuesday, with the Armenian men's and women's teams to play against Italy and Serbia, respectively.

Armenian grandmaster Levon Aronian beat the reigning world chess champion Magnus Carlsen in the 3rd round of European Team Chess Championship helping his team to a 2.5 - 1.5 victory over Norway.

The Armenian team - Aronian, Gabriel Sargissian, Sergei Movsesian and Hrant Melkumyan - gained a 4-0 victory over Iceland, further losing 1.5-2.5 to France in the first two rounds.

Armenia Gets Most Humanitarian Aid from Australia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — In the months of January-September 2015, Armenia got 2,000 tons of goods in humanitarian aid, the total value of which was \$30.8 million, a reduction of 24 percent as compared with the same period of the last year.

As the National Statistical Service of Armenia noted, Australia provided the most humanitarian aid to Armenia with the amount of \$9.1 million: It increased by 36.3 percent as compared with the first nine months of 2014. 1 million and 276.8 thousand dollars was sent to Armenia from Italy, the US sent \$5.8 million, China sent \$3.5 million and India sent \$1.5 million to Armenia.

European Green Party Adopts Resolution on Armenian Genocide

RESOLUTION, from pge 1

over 45 Green parties across Europe, present also in Eastern Partner countries. In the European Parliament their members sit in the Greens - European Free Alliance parliamentary group totalizing 50 seats.

The European Green Party mourns the destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage and calls upon the Turkish government to respect the Armenian cultural legacy and take strong measures to protect it. The resolution asks the Turkish government to re-evaluate historical and cultural narratives and open its archives to historians, researchers and academics in an effort to come to terms with the past. The logical continuation of this would be to immediately abolish Article 301 of the Turkish penal code, which censors political and public debate on the genocide.

The text emphasizes that everybody has the right to have their history recognized and their culture respected. By acknowledging the Armenian Genocide the European Green Party wants to pay due respect to its victims as a step towards reconciliation and historical reparation.

MEP Michèle Rivasi, who is vice-chair of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament and member of the European Friends of Armenia Advisory Council, comments: "As the tragic events in Paris reminds us: the world is in trouble, more than ever. For many years hate speech has not been sufficiently condemned, and helped extremists in spreading their propagan-

da and raising the level of violence. We cannot continue like this, we have to reverse this vicious spiral with an even more opened democracy and also the duty to recognize the errors and crimes that led to the current situation.

The European Green Party resolution on the centenary of the Armenian Genocide aims at reminding every country that they have a part to play for a more peaceful world. This is one of the reasons, why Turkey has to stop now its state policy of denial. Because denial is the fuel that feeds the engine of hate and prevents us from reaching peace. Turkey will only find advantages in finally recognizing the Armenian Genocide and step into history. There will be no peace without recognition of the Armenian genocide."

As 2015 marks the centenary of the Armenian Genocide many other European countries, Pan-European institutions and political parties have acknowledged or reaffirmed their recognition of the Armenian Genocide and have urged Turkey to do so as well.

"I am very pleased to see a growing number of European Political families recognizing the Armenian Genocide," said Eduardo Lorenzo Ochoa, director of European Friends of Armenia (EuFoA, www.EuFoA.org). "The European Green Party resolution is especially important because it not only pays tribute to the victims of the first Genocide of the 20th century, but also explains clearly the importance of doing so if we want to secure a common future and prevent further crimes against humanity."

Community News

American University of Armenia Back in the US for Recruitment and Community Outreach Events

NEW YORK – The American University of Armenia (AUA) Office of Admissions kicked off a second round of community outreach events in the US starting on November 9 – this time on the East Coast. The events highlighted the variety of academic offerings at AUA that are available to American-Armenian students who may also wish to experience life in the homeland.

From AUA's Study Abroad program to degree programs leading to a bachelor's or a master's degree, the university can meet a variety of student needs and interests. AUA offers three undergraduate and eight graduate degree programs in which 1,500 students are currently enrolled. The AUA Study Abroad program is currently in its third year of existence. Last summer, it attracted students from the US and other countries. AUA is the first standalone, US-accredited university in all of the former Soviet Union, and most course credits offered through the Study Abroad program can be transferrable.

Since its establishment in 1991, AUA has developed a well-established reputation as a quality higher education institution within the borders of Armenia. It now aims to expand its reach internationally and to gain wider recognition for the education it offers at a fraction of the cost of universities in the US.

With access to state-of-the-art facilities, AUA is also a research-oriented institution with nine research centers that complement the educational goals of the institution. Its experienced and dedicated faculty from Armenia and around the world are easily accessible.

The university is affiliated with the University of California system. Its American-style education is grounded in principles of academic freedom, knowledge-based learning emphasizing inquiry and critical thinking, and multidisciplinary studies. The university strongly advocates for public service and democratic values, anchored in an ethical and merit-based environment.

By appealing to both Diasporan Armenian and international students, the university hopes to attract students with different backgrounds and to increase diversity on its campus.

Tanya Koroyan, from the University of San Francisco, was thrilled to take part in the program last summer. "This was a life changing experience and the perfect way to visit Armenia. I learned so much about Armenian identity and culture. I was able to learn about the history of Armenia and about the current state of the country, while traveling and seeing many famous locations. Being in Armenia while learning about these locations was an amazing experience! This will be a part of my focus for my Master's Capstone project," Koroyan said.

Jonah Torossian, who studies at Southern Nazarene University and was also at AUA last summer, strongly encourages others to take advantage of the university's educational opportunities. Her simple advice is, "Do it!"

During the November tour of the East Coast, Arina Zohrabian, AUA Director of Admissions, and AUA Assistant Director of Development Matthew Senekeremian will meet with Armenian community and church leaders, Armenian youth groups and student associations, area university Study Abroad directors and other officials, and Diasporan media representatives.

For more information about AUA's degree programs and the AUA Study Abroad program, visit the university's website at www.aua.am.

Arina Zohrabian is the director of admissions at AUA, and manages the strategy and operations for undergraduate and graduate admissions, national and global outreach, and international student services at AUA. Previously, she served as the Regional Director for Education Programs and Country Director for the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) Armenia office, managing and implementing higher education programs funded by the US Department of State and other private sources. Zohrabian, whose parents hail from Isfahan, moved to Yerevan in 2002 as a volunteer. What was meant to be a one year trip evolved into a life-changing experience.



Armenian Heritage Park

Armenian Heritage Foundation Embarks on Final Campaign Phase for Park's Care

BOSTON – As the Armenian Heritage Foundation – sponsor of Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway – gets closer to concluding its successful fundraising campaign, funds are now being raised to fully fund the endowment for the park's ongoing care so that the park is cared for year round.

To date, \$1.7 million has been raised of the \$2 million goal to fully fund the park's endowment for care, with \$300,000 remaining. The focus is both on securing major gifts, and encouraging everyone to participate at all levels of support. A few remaining naming opportunities at the Park are available with a contribution of \$50,000 and above.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone to be a part of this living legacy in a major metropolitan city," comments Gail Talanian O'Reilly, on behalf of the Charles Talanian Family, one of the park's first benefactors.

Annually, the park's endowed funds for care, collectively, need to generate the annual interest to both support the year round care of the park and reinvest a portion of the monies raised to allow the fund to grow and keep pace with inflation. The annual cost of care and maintenance is close to \$82,000 which includes landscaping, cleaning of fountains, litter removal, plantings, snow removal and utilities. The utility costs at the park are minimal as the lights are LEDs (light emitting diodes) lasting hundreds of hours and consuming very little energy. In addition, the waters from reflecting pool upon which the Abstract Sculpture sits and the fountain at the center of the Labyrinth are re-circulated, reducing water costs.

All supporters will be acknowledged in the park's Commemorative Book in the category of giving that combines all their contributions since the campaign's inception and received by June 1, 2016.

A Thank You Reception and Celebration for all supporters of the campaign will be held in November 2016 where all contributors will receive the Commemorative Book.

Contributions may be made online at ArmenianHeritagePark.org or by mail, with a check, made payable to the Armenian Heritage Foundation, to the Foundation, 25 Flanders Road, Belmont, MA 02478. If you have a question regarding the naming opportunities, please call Jim Kalustian 781-643-7758; Charles Guleserian, 617-484-6100; Haig Deranian 617-489-9465; Walter Nahabedian 781-891-7249; Astor Guzelian 781-326-5764; George Elanjian 781-888-2227 or Barbara Tellalian 617-803-8785.

The campaign was successfully launched in 2005 when every parish and organization and individual serving on the foundation's Board of Directors made a commitment of financial support. In addition, through the generosity and support of lead and major gift supporters, funds were raised to both construct and maintain the park and endow numerous public programs. These programs include the Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture and Park's Care endowed by Charles and Doreen Bilezikian, Najarian Lecture on Human Rights at Faneuil Hall endowed by K. George and Dr. Carolann S. Najarian, and public programs endowed by Anna and Noubar Afeyan. Several other public programs, including the Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families and Friends, are offered with thanks to generosity of gifts in kind.

"These programs have attracted visitors from all walks of life, Armenian and non-Armenian, to enjoy our community's gift to the city of Boston, as well as serving as the epicenter of our community's gathering place," said Arlette Yegumians, a supporter, actively involved with the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park.

Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway, a gift to the City of Boston and the Commonwealth from Armenian-Americans, is designed to celebrate the immigrant experience and contributions made to American life and culture. The Abstract

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New Monument in Las Vegas Commemorates Armenian Genocide

By Ann Friedman

LAS VEGAS (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*) – Growing up in Cairo, Las Vegas resident Mary Rose Simon was raised by her grandmother, a survivor of the Armenian Genocide.

"She instilled in me the Armenian values," said Simon, one of 12,000 Armenians who live in Clark County. "And she had no grudges at all."

A monument was unveiled earlier in November at Sunset Park to commemorate the about 1.5 million Armenians who were exterminated by the Ottoman Turks from 1915 to 1923.

"When you grow up with a lady who had wounds and you heard about how they happened, it didn't set in until just now looking at this monument," she said. "This is a gift to the community and we're putting Clark County on the map."

The monument is a replica of the one that was dedicated in 1965 in Yerevan, Armenia, a small nation and former Soviet republic just east of Turkey. It's made out of precast concrete and has 12 pillars, which represent the 12 provinces where Armenians were massacred, as well as a bench and dedication plaque on an adjacent boulder.

Members of the Armenian-American Cultural Society of Las Vegas and Adroushan Andy Armenian, honorary consul of the Republic of Armenia in Las Vegas, first approached Clark County Commissioner Marybeth Scow nearly 10 years ago with the idea for the monument.

Scow said she decided to put a policy in place before taking action to construct the monument in her district.

"I wanted to make sure we were doing this in a fair way so having a policy in place would help judge what rises to the level of doing something like this," she said. "The purpose was to establish criteria for guidelines and consideration."

Scow added that she ensured the monument, which is at the eastern part of the park along Sunset Road, was in a location that wouldn't interfere with the recreation purpose of the park as well as that the Armenian organization would be responsible for upkeep and repairs.

"By having it in Sunset Park, a lot of people can see it and it will be a great tool for our community to remember what happened," she said. "I'm really looking forward to having and appreciating it."

The more than 200 attendees also had a moment of silence at the monument unveiling to pay tribute to the least 120 people who were killed by terrorists in Paris on Friday.

Friday's attack also served as a reminder of why remembering senseless crimes is important, Simon said.

"The timing couldn't have been better," she said. "Terrorism is happening everywhere and while they're working hard to destroy humanity, we're here counteracting what they're doing."

John Dolmayan, a Las Vegas resident and drummer of the Armenian-American rock band, System of a Down, said the Paris attacks hit close to home.

"My friends the Deftones were supposed to play a show tonight at the venue where the attacks happened," he said of Le Bataclan concert hall. "It was just a bunch of kids going to a rock show, what have they done?"

Dolmayan attended the monument unveiling to pay tribute to his heritage, which he said is the most important thing.

"Something like this is for Armenians and non-Armenians to enjoy because it will help people remember about the atrocities that were committed," he said of the monument. "It will also help prevent it from happening again."

Like Dolmayan, Gerard Costantian, an Armenian and Las Vegas resident, hopes the monument serves as an educational tool for years to come.

"I hope people walk through, see it and learn something about this event," he said. "I'm hoping it will bring awareness to one of the most significant events in history."



COMMUNITY NEWS

Trinity Christmas Bazaar to Be Held December 4, 5

By Seta A. Buchter

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – The Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston will usher in the holiday season with its annual Trinity Christmas Bazaar, on Friday, December 4, and Saturday, December 5, in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St. Bazaar hours are Friday, from noon to 9 p.m., and Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Bazaar Co-Chairmen are Gregory A. Kolligian, Jr., Chairman of Holy Trinity's Parish Council, and Ara Hollisian, both of whom have been chairing the Bazaar for several years now. Along with their committees, they have been working tirelessly since the summer to ensure that this year's Bazaar offers something for everyone from the young to the young-at-heart including new booths and menu options.

"Our parishioners and friends look forward to attending each year to see friends, enjoy delicious food and browse the many booths. This year's Bazaar is the perfect place for people to do their Christmas shopping as there will be a wonderful selection of gift items to purchase," stated Kolligian and Hollisian.

The Bazaar's traditional favorites will include the "Farmer's Market" with fresh fruits and vegetables; the "Country Store" with nuts and sweets; the exciting Sports Silent Auction; the



From left to right, Gregory A. Kolligian, Jr. and Ara Hollisian, Bazaar Co-Chairmen, with Fr. Vasken A. Kouzouian, Pastor, Holy Trinity Armenian Church]

Silent Auction offering an array of fabulous items; "The Punch is Right" for Kids; Jewelry; the Sweet Candy Shoppe; Made in Armenia Direct; Poinsettias and Beautifully Decorated Wreaths; KEZI (handcrafted jewelry); ArmenianVendor.com; Love on A Plate - Armenian Cooking Videos; Raffles and More.

New this year are Touchstone Crystal by Swarovski and Tupperware.

Making his annual visit to the Bazaar is Santa Claus who will be stopping by on Saturday, December 5, from 1 to 2 p.m.

Armenian dinners will be served on Friday from noon to 7:30 p.m., and on Saturday from 11:30 a.m.

to 6 p.m. Kheyma will be offered on Saturday only. Take-out meals and an a la carte menu will also be available. This year, optional seating for families with children will be available.

Children will be able to enjoy the Bazaar with their own special activities on both Friday evening and Saturday morning in the Peter Adamian Hall. The "Polar Express" Pajama Party will take place on Friday evening, from 7 to 9 p.m. Children are encouraged to come dressed in their Christmas pajamas as we watch this classic. The movie is recommended for children ages 6 and older (a supervising adult must remain on the Church grounds); children ages 6 and under may attend with an accompanying adult. The movie running time is 92 minutes. On Saturday morning, The Magic and Juggling of Robert Clarke, aka "LuckyBob," will entertain from 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. Admission is free for both "The Polar Express" and "LuckyBob."

Raffle tickets for Apple prizes are available for purchase, \$5 each, \$25 for six, or \$50 for 12. First prize is an iPad Air 2, Wi-Fi 64GB Silver; second prize, iPad mini 4, Wi-Fi 64GB Silver; and third prize, Apple Watch 38 mm, Silver Aluminum Case, White Sport Band.

Parking courtesy – where it says "permit parking only" – is allowed around the immediate perimeter of the church complex over the two days of the Bazaar.

The Bazaar Committee invites the entire community to attend.

Middlesex Sheriff's Office Launches Monday Moments Speaker Series

BILLERICA, Mass. – Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian has launched a new program designed to provide inmates battling addiction an opportunity to hear from community members about the effects of substance abuse on families, careers and communities.

Social and political humorist – and Middlesex County native – Jimmy Tingle kicked off the Monday Moments Speaker Series October 26, addressing a group of 60 inmates.

"I quit drinking 27 years ago," said Tingle, explaining why he agreed to be the first Monday Moments speaker. "I wanted to give some hope and carry a message to the alcohol and drug treatment program [participants] that things can get better."

"It's important for those in our custody battling addiction to not only interact with our treatment and medical staffs, but also to hear from others who have overcome their own addictions, as well as those who have lost loved ones to addiction," said Koutoujian. "My hope is Monday Moments will serve as a spark for constructive dialogue and reflection for those in our treatment program."

Koutoujian credits Tingle for planting the original seed for what has become Monday Moments.

"We were having a conversation and he offered to come speak to inmates," said Koutoujian. "That got me thinking about how we could not only bring in guests to talk on occasion, but how we could create a series which would fit with our goal of preparing these men to successfully re-enter the community at the end of their sentence."

Armenian Heritage Foundation Embarks on Final Phase for Park's Care

PARK, from page 4
Sculpture reconfigures annually, symbolic of the immigrant experience and is dedicated to lives lost during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 and all genocides that have followed. The Sculpture sits atop a Reflecting Pool; its waters wash over its sides and re-emerge as a single jet of water at the Labyrinth's center, representing hope and rebirth. The Labyrinth celebrates life's journey. Art, Service, Science and Commerce are etched around its circle in tribute to contributions made to American life and culture.

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15th Anniversary

Since its inception in 2001, TCA's Sponsor a Teacher program has raised over \$520,000 and reached out to 5,256 teachers and school workers in Armenia & Karabagh.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Paying it Forward on Team G

GABRIEL, from page 1

in all 50 states of the US as well as several countries. The hash tag was used by many people who went on to say what they had done, from buying items for the needy to a young girl saying that she sought out a fellow student who always ate alone. Each act written down in turn inspired yet another person.

On her facebook page, Natasha Aljalian wrote, "On that day [November 3, 2012] our world forever changed and our 3-year-old son started the fight of his life. This day is always dark, difficult and emotional to remember. Yet, through his fight, even in the darkest moments, Gabriel always found a way to smile and let his brave and bright spirit shine through. We want to change what November 3 means for him, and change this dark day into one full of light and happiness. We ask you to join in our gratitude by performing acts of kindness in Gabriel's honor on November 3rd!"

One way or another, this day changed many

to someone else or use it for a good deed.

"When we shared the cards with him, and told him that Gabriel wanted to give him his \$10, the football great was so surprised, and visibly moved. His response was genuine and kind; he then smiled, leaned down and asked Gabriel to give him a hug. Indeed, no act of kindness – towards anyone, however large or small – is ever wasted," his mother wrote.

Brady shared that he was going to tape the \$10 to his locker for good luck until the end of the season, then donate it. "So the fact that Gabriel had the innocence and faith to show an act of kindness toward a football great, when others would not have, speaks volumes to his joyful and giving heart," she added.

Natasha Aljalian hopes that in the long term, Gabriel will continue to be healthy and cancer-free.

"We hope that he will keep his beautiful spirit and kind heart, and continue – in whatever he chooses to do – to touch people around the



Gabriel Aljalian with his mother, Yerezgin Natasha Aljalian

lives other than his.

Gabriel and his family and friends took gifts to kids at Children's Hospital and the Dana Farber Cancer Center on November 3.

Another group of family friends made care packages for homeless people and gave them out in Harvard Square. According to Maria Derderian, they gave out gift cards, socks and food. One of the people they met was so touched that after she received her package she took an old envelope and wrote Gabriel a thank you note. "I said that I hope he recovers and thank you for caring. And I said you have an angel's name," the homeless woman said.

Gabriel received coverage locally and was having a great week. But his week was about to get even better. With fortuitous timing, Make-a-Wish of Massachusetts and Rhode Island fulfilled his wish – meeting and tossing a football with the New England Patriots' Tom Brady – only a few days later, on Saturday, November 7.

The two made even more news when Gabriel passed along a note of thanks to "Mr. Brady" with \$10 enclosed that he had received from someone else, explaining all about Gabriel's Day of Kindness, asking Brady to pass it along

world. We are certain that whatever he does, it will involve him throwing a football around," she told CNN HL.

She added, "We are simply overwhelmed by the response to Gabriel's Day of Kindness. We really believe that light will always overcome darkness, and love and kindness will always prevail. This has reaffirmed our faith in humanity and the desire of people to do good in the world. It also helps for us to know that everything that Gabriel experienced, all the pain he went through, has resulted in good in some way."

The family are especially grateful to Make-a-Wish Massachusetts and Rhode Island for making his wish come true and for meeting the other kids that were there with Gabriel. "Each is a hero and each had a beautiful heart. It was an honor to meet them and their families," Natasha Aljalian wrote.

Plan on doing something great November 3, 2016. For motivation and inspiration, visit <https://www.facebook.com/gabrielsdayofkindness/?fref=ts>

(CNN Headline News and WBZ-TV contributed to this report.)

OBITUARY

Margaret Scott Nalbandian

SEATTLE, Wash. – Margaret Scott Nalbandian of Seattle died on June 27. She was 81.

Memorial services were held in Seattle on September 20.

Nalbandian, known as Maggie to her friends and family, was the wife of the late Noubar Nalbandian of Watertown and is survived by her daughters, Dr. Jana Nalbandian, Laura Nalbandian, Dana Nalbandian and son Gregory Nalbandian, all now living in Seattle.

She also leaves her grandchildren Aaron and Jennifer, Jessica Rose, Jessica and Katherine.

She met her husband-to-be when he was sta-

tioned at the US Army Base in Hanford, Texas. They were married on September 2, 1956 in Richland, Wash., and moved to Boston, where Noubar Nalbandian was attending Wentworth Institute. During their stay in Boston, their daughter Jana was born in 1957. When Noubar Nalbandian returned to Seattle, he graduated from Washington State University with a degree in electrical engineering. He worked at Boeing for 35 years.

Margaret Nalbandian became an astrologer and founded the Keplan College of Astrology Art and Science.

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For the purpose of intact intent of establishment of legal state and civil society in the Republic of Armenia, the Congress of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party of Armenia, announces that it approves the proposed Constitutional Amendments and calls for support for their implementation .

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Chicago Bids Farewell to Fr. Jebejian

CHICAGO – St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Chicago bid farewell to its long-time pastor, the Very Rev. Aren Jebejian, over the weekend of October 24-25. Jebejian has been appointed as the new pastor of St. John Church of Detroit.

In Chicago on Saturday, October 24, parishioners gathered in the church hall for a farewell banquet. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Diocesan Primate, presided. “Here in Chicago, Hayr Aren has proven

Metropolitan Chicago; Jebejian’s sister Rena Megrđichian; Parish Council Chair Arden Karian; Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Baima, Vicar for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago; as well as other parishioners and friends.

The organization Ecumenism of Metro Chicago presented Jebejian with a Waterford crystal cross. The St. Gregory the Illuminator parish presented him with a cross made in Armenia.

“It was bittersweet to say goodbye to a community I have grown so close to for nearly 18 years. A shepherd, like a parent, always wants to protect his flock and worries for their well-being,” Jebejian said. “As long as we pray for one another, miles can never separate us. God brings us together within one another’s hearts.”

On Sunday, October 25, Jebejian celebrated the Divine Liturgy. At a reception following services, parish organizations presented their

outgoing pastor with scrapbooks, photographs, and other mementos.

On November 1, Jebejian celebrated his first Divine Liturgy in Detroit as the new pastor of St. John Church. He gave a sermon on the significance of forming new relationships with his parishioners, and said that as a native of Detroit he felt that this new position is a spiritual homecoming for him as a pastor.



Very Rev. Aren Jebejian with altar servers and choir members at St. Gregory the Illuminator Church.

himself to be a person whose acts of compassion and generosity are part of a whole way of life – a vocation—which honors God, and lifts up His children,” the Primate said. “I know he will carry the spirit he received here, from all of you, throughout his days – wherever our Lord may call him to serve.”

Remarks were also made by the Rev. Stanley L. Davis, co-executive director of the Council of Religious Leaders of

Diran Apelian Receives British Institute of Cast Metals Engineers’ John Campbell Award

WORCESTER – Diran Apelian, Alcoa-Howmet Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) and director of WPI’s Metal Processing Institute (MPI), received the 2015 John Campbell Medal from the Institute of Cast Metals Engineers in the United Kingdom. The award was presented in October during the institute’s national awards ceremony at the Birmingham (England) Botanical Gardens.

Apelian is widely known for his leadership as a researcher and an educator. An internationally recognized pioneer in metals research, his work in molten metal processing, new aluminum alloys, and innovative casting techniques has resulted in more than 600 publications and 11 books, which he co-edited, and helped lay the foundations for significant industrial developments. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering.

The award is named in honor of John Campbell, who presented the medal to Apelian. A British engineer, Campbell is one of the world’s leading experts on the casting industry, with approximately 150 papers and 20 patents. He is a fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering and the chair of casting technology at the University of Birmingham.

In addition to the Campbell Award, Apelian has received numerous honors for his contributions to research and education in materials science and engineering. In April, he received the Audubon Society’s Joan Hodges Queneau Palladium Medal, an award administered by the American Association of Engineering Societies, “for articulating an inspiring vision of sustainable stewardship of our earth’s resources and then rallying varied disciplines and constituencies within the science and engineering community to collaborate meaningfully toward outcomes that satisfy the interests of industries and conservationists alike.”

His previous honors include the 2010 Robert Earl McConnell Award from the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers (AIME), and the Acta Materialia Inc. J. Herbert Hollomon Award, the Brimacombe Prize, and the Bruce Chalmers Award from The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society (TMS), one of the four AIME member societies.

Apelian is founding director of the Center for Resource Recovery and Recycling (CR3), a member-driven collaborative led by researchers at WPI, the Colorado School of Mines, and KU Leuven in Belgium that advances technologies for recovering, recycling, and reusing materials throughout the manufacturing process.

CR3 is one of three research centers that fall under the umbrella of the Metal Processing Institute, which Apelian founded in 1996. The largest industry-university alliance in North America, MPI is dedicated to advancing the field of materials processing through research in the areas of metal casting (in the Advanced Casting Research Center, or ACRC), heat treating (in the Center for Heat Treating Excellence, or CHTE), and resource recovery and recycling (in CR3).

Apelian served as the 52nd president of TMS and was one of six Anniversary Laureates at the TMS annual meeting in 2007, the society’s 50th anniversary year. He is one of only 100 living TMS Fellows and was the first person



Diran Apelian

from WPI to be named a fellow of APMI International, the professional society for individuals involved in powder metallurgy technology and particulate materials. He is also an honorary member of the French Materials Engineering Society, a fellow of ASM International, and a foreign member of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. He received an honorary doctorate from Northwestern Polytechnic University in Xian, China, in 1997.

After earning an undergraduate degree in metallurgical engineering at Drexel University and a doctorate in materials science at MIT, Apelian worked at Bethlehem Steel’s Homer Research Laboratories and then joined Drexel, where he ultimately was named vice provost. At WPI, he served as university provost from 1990 to 1996. Since then, he has focused on teaching and research in materials processing. WPI has twice honored him: in 2006 with its Board of Trustees’ Award for Outstanding Research and Creative Scholarship, and in 2009 with its Chairman’s Exemplary Faculty Prize.

TCA’s Aram Arkun to Speak at St. James Men’s Club December 7

WATERTOWN – On Monday, December 7, Aram Arkun, historian, executive director of the Tekeyan Cultural Association and assistant editor of the Armenian Mirror Spectator, will be the speaker at the St. James Men’s Club and the topic will be “Zeytun: The Armenian Eagles’ Nest.” The mountaineers of Zeytun inspired several generations of Armenians through their heroic battles and became the subject of song, poetry and art in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Arkun, is a specialist in modern Armenian history who has published a number of articles on the Armenians of Cilicia, and other Ottoman and Iranian-Armenian topics, as well as translations of books and articles from Armenian, French and Turkish.

Formerly the Coordinator of the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) and editor of the quarterly English-language Armenian periodical *Ararat* published by the Armenian General Benevolent Union, Arkun is a Princeton University graduate (B.A.), with a master’s degree in international relations (University of Pennsylvania), and a C. Phil. from UCLA. He has taught at New York University, UCLA, and the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

This will be a very interesting and informative talk, accompanied by slides. The social hour



Aram Arkun

starts with Mezza, at 6:15 PM followed by a complete kheyma and losh kebab dinner 7 p.m. \$14 per person. The dinner meeting will be at the St. James Armenian Church, Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall.

The program is open to the public and ladies are welcome.


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COMMUNITY NEWS

ADL, Tekeyan Members, Leadership Visit Armenia

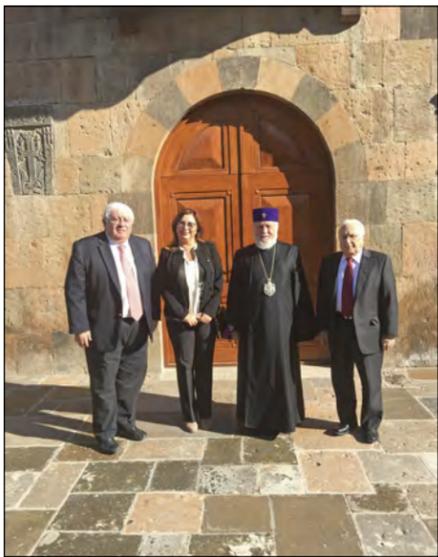
ADL, from page 1

Echmiadzin, and in other communities in the world. Azadian underscored the patriotism of Artemis Nazarian, a descendent of a devoted ADL family in Boston.

Hagop Vartivarian, chairman of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) of Greater New York, spoke next, expressing gratitude to the philanthropic couple, and praised this most recent achievement. He said the new center will significantly promote the political activities of the organization which is now established in a quarter of Yerevan where the Prosperous Armenia Party, the Social Democrat Hnchagian Party, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the ruling Republican Party headquarters are located, as well as the Armenian General Benevolent Union Center which has also been sponsored by the Nazarian benefactors.

Visit to Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II

On November 7, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II received Azadian and Vartivarian, accompanied by Baydzig Kalaydjian from Lebanon. Even though the Catholicos was presiding over the sessions of the Supreme Spiritual Council, he still managed to meet with the ADL delegation. The visitors congratulated him on the occasion of his 16th anniversary of enthronement, and offered the allegiance of the



From left, Hagop Vartivarian, Baydzig Kalaydjian, Catholicos Karekin II, and Edmond Y. Azadian

ADL membership to the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin and to the Catholicos.

On the subject of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, the delegation commended the initiatives of the Armenian Church: the sanctification of the million and a half martyrs of the Genocide, the historic declarations by the leader of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis, the participation of the Church of Armenia and Christian churches throughout the world to commemorative events, and finally the blessing of the Holy Muron.

The Catholicos spoke about propositions related to the internal organizational issues of both patriarchal chairs, on the efforts toward the eventual reestablishment of the unity of the Armenian Church, on the mission of the spiritual colleges and on the internal reorganization of some diasporan dioceses.

Karekin II appreciated the role of the ADL in the Diaspora and emphasized the importance and the necessity of the unconditional cooperation between the Mother See and the ADL.

ADL/TCA Delegation Meets Prime Minister

On November 3 a delegation of leaders of the ADL and TCA paid a courtesy visit to Prime Minister Hovik Arahamian at the headquarters of the Republican Party of Armenia. The delegation consisted of Azadian; the chairman of the Central Committee of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Armenia, Prof. Rouben Mirzakhanian; Vartivarian; and ADL Western District former Chairman Vartan Nazirian.

Discussions centered on the proposed changes in Armenia's constitution and their connotations. As part of the continuing evolu-



Edmond Azadian speaking at the Vanadzor Genocide Monument

tion of the country's independence, the prime minister considered it a major step forward in the perfection of the governing process of the country. The changes proposed in the constitution, based on the experience of a quarter century in the third Armenian Republic, were brought forward to assure further progress in democratization. The ADL delegation expressed its satisfaction in view of the proposed adoption by the government of the parliamentary system and its support of the choice of a referendum as the means to achieve this goal.

Also discussed during the meeting were issues related to the Diaspora, more specifically, the concerns of security in Syria and more generally in the Middle East, as well the importance of consolidating Armenian resources in facing issues related to Armenian rights. To assure a more balanced national political life in the Diaspora, it was considered essential to create a rearrangement of forces for the future based on more earnest and unselfish relations.

A range of issues related to Armenian culture and the preservation of Armenian identity were

discussed in depth. The Tekeyan Cultural Association's high-quality programs for expanding the scope of culture in almost all communities worldwide were revealed and were commended by the prime minister.

discussed in depth. The Tekeyan Cultural Association's high-quality programs for expanding the scope of culture in almost all communities worldwide were revealed and were commended by the prime minister.

Azadian offered details on specific future projects of the ADL and praised the achievements of ADL of Armenia. Vartivarian reported on the role of the ADL press in the last 90 years, espe-

cially in spreading the news of progress of Armenia in the Diaspora.

Meeting Diasporan Minister Hranoush Hakobian

On November 3, Minister of the Diaspora Hranoush Hakobian received a delegation of American leaders of the ADL and the TCA, including Azadian; Dr. Haroutiun



ADL meeting with Armenian Diaspora Minister, from left, Baydzig Kalaydjian, Dr. Haroutiun Arzoumanian, Edmond Y. Azadian, Minister Hranoush Hakobian, Hagop Vartivarian, and Sima Arzoumanian

Arzoumanian, chairman of the TCA of the US and Canada; Sima Arzoumanian; Vartivarian; and former editor of the ADL newspaper of Beirut Zartouk, Kalaydjian.

During the course of the frank conversation,

facing multiple challenges. She also suggested a more expanded participation from the diaspora in the summer youth programs of the ministry, the goals of which are preservation of Armenian identity for the new generations and the strengthening of their ties with the homeland.

ADL of Armenia Assembly

On October 31, the ADL held its 23rd Delegates' Assembly (the second after the reform of the party) at the premises of the Tekeyan Center in Yerevan. The Assembly received the report of the previous three years and deliberated on a series of important issues. The Assembly dealt with party-related and internal political challenges. The stance of the party regarding proposed changes in the country's constitution was clarified in a formal resolution. The Assembly also discussed the situation of the Syrian-Armenian refugees in great detail.

The Assembly appreciated the activities of the past three years, and specified and clarified future plans and stances. The presence of 97 elected delegates out of the total of 105 delegates was appreciated.

A large number of ADL members, intellectuals and leaders from the Diaspora took part in the Assembly as observers. Also present at the Assembly was former president of the party Rouben Mirzakhanian. Veteran member of the ADL Varaztad Avoyan was elected as chairman of the Assembly. Edmond Azadian from the USA spoke on behalf of the diasporan guests.

At the end of the meeting the Nomination Committee proposed to reelect Hagop Avedikian as chairman; the proposition was adopted unanimously. The chairmen then presented the 21-member board of directors.

Gayane Muradyan presented the resolution that had been clearly formulated after a deliberate discussion of the proposed changes in the constitution of the country. It was clearly evident that the party was in favor of the proposed changes. Hagop Avedikian reminded the members about the formal meeting and discussion he had with the president of the Republic regarding the proposed changes of the constitution and declared, "Our chief concern has been that any law,

especially a fundamental law, has to be formulated and realized without loop holes, because to have a good law is still not sufficient if it does not pertain to all situations."

Dedication of Memorial in Vanadzor

On November 1, the formal inauguration of a memorial dedicated to the Armenian Genocide was held in front of the ADL Center at 44 Dikran Medz St. of Vanadzor, Lori Province, while inside the building the artistic creations of painter Samuel Gharipian were exhibited. Taking part in the program were ADL leaders and members from Lebanon, the East and West Coasts of the US, Canada, Great Britain, France, Egypt, Iraq and Greece, as well as local writers, artists, intellectuals, soldiers, and others from Armenia.

TV producer Ivan Andonian served as the master of ceremonies. Encouraging words were addressed by the Primate of the Diocese of Gugark, Archbishop Sepuh Chulchian, who highly appreciated the initiative of the president of the ADL Lori Province Seyran Gharipian.

The actual inauguration was performed by Gharipian and the vice governor of Lori Province, Tigran Badoyan. The master of ceremonies then presented the meaning of various parts of the monument according to explanations provided by the sculptor, most significantly the sword that symbolizes the continuation of our struggle of liberation.

The formal allocution was presented by the editor of *Azg* newspaper Hagop Avedikian. He said, "This memorial is a witness of our commitment to the memory of our victims and to our obligation and will to persist in our demands and our national rights. This memorial is intentionally built low, so that the passerby will have to bow in respect of our martyrs."



From left, Vartan Nazirian, Edmond Y. Azadian, Prime Minister Hovik Arahamian, Hagop Vartivarian, Prof. Rouben Mirzakhanian

discussed in depth. The Tekeyan Cultural Association's high-quality programs for expanding the scope of culture in almost all communities worldwide were revealed and were commended by the prime minister.

Azadian offered details on specific future projects of the ADL and praised the achievements of ADL of Armenia. Vartivarian reported on the role of the ADL press in the last 90 years, espe-

cially in spreading the news of progress of Armenia in the Diaspora.

Hakobian appreciated the decisions of the ADL Assembly, and stressed the importance of the reunification of the ADL in the diaspora as a necessity for preserving Armenian identity and



COMMUNITY NEWS

Also addressing the gathering was the chairman of ADL Eastern US and Canada District, Edmond Azadian. He stressed the importance of the symbolism of the memorial, which indicates that the only the sword and the arm, i.e. labor, can build a free and independent Armenia.

Brief addresses were presented by playwright and distinguished artist of the Armenian Republic Samuel Khalatian, President of the Lori Province of the Armenian Writers Union Manuel Mikoyan and President of the Lori Province of the Armenian Painters Union Papaz Aloyan.

Following the official program, the gathering moved into the hall to enjoy an impressive exhibit of 33 paintings by Samuel Gharipian and a reception. President of the Armenian Painters Center Khachik Aprahamian offered explanations and personal memories of the late artist. Seyran Gharipian offered one of his brother's oil paintings, "Haghardzin," to Chulchian. Also addressing the gathering was the chairman of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of US and Canada Dr. Haroutiun Arzoumanian from Montreal.

Seminar Devoted to the 130th Anniversary of the Armenagan Party

On November 3, a seminar was held in the Armenian National Academy of Sciences in Yerevan on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the Armenagan political party. The opening session of the seminar was attended by the president of the Academy, Radik Martirosian. In his opening remarks, the erudite academician Suren Sargisian congratulated the full house for this jubilee and reiterated that the Armenagan party was the first in the



Armenagan Party Symposium at the Armenian Academy of Sciences

liberation movement that had erupted in the Armenian world. He remarked that it was born from conditions that developed following the Treaty of Berlin and sponsored by the three Mgrdichs of the revolutionary era: Khrimian Hayrig, Portukalian and Avedisian.

The senior member of the Academy Prof. Nikolay Hovhannisian and its diasporan member, Edmond Azadian, welcomed the scholars. Six papers were presented on the Armenagan organization and evaluated their role in the Armenian national liberation struggle.

The historians who contributed by their dissertations were: Prof. Levon Shirinian, Doctor of Political Sciences, who spoke on the theme of "the ideal of political liberty and the Armenagan Ideology"; Knarik Avagian, doctoral aspirant in history sciences, discussed the subject of "the activities of Armenagans in the United States"; Prof. Hamlet Kevorkian, Doctor of Historical Sciences, presented "Episodes of Relations between the Armenagan and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Political Parties"; Ruben Sahakian, Doctor of Historical Sciences, discussed "Panos Terlemezian, the Activist of the Liberation Struggle"; Prof. Ashot Nersisian, Doctor of Historical Sciences, discussed "An Evaluation of the Armenagan's Liberation Strategies for Western Armenia"; and Armen Karapetian, aspirant of Historical Sciences concluded the presentations discussing "Mgrdich Avedisian, collaborator of [the newspaper] Armenia."

This seminar was organized jointly by the National Academy of Sciences and the Ramgavar Azadagan (Democratic Liberal) Party.

Edmond Azadian's Opening Remarks At the Seminar

"This is the appropriate time to reevaluate and reappraise the Armenagan party based on objective historical evidence, and it was appropriate for Armenia's Democratic Liberal Party, the worthy heir of the Armenagans, to be the initiator of this venture.



Newly elected ADL Republican Committee of Armenia

"The Armenagan party had the singular characteristic of being formed on native Armenian territory, and now when we look back on the past history of 130 years, we affirm that as policy and ideology it had adopted the most realistic and achievable political direction. The party that was born on historic Armenian lands today is returning back to the Armenian lands.

crushed under the heavy Turkish yoke.

"The histories of our political parties in general have been written by party members or their affiliates who have not been always concerned by the concept of impartiality and have overestimated their party's merits and underestimated those of other parties, or worse, have dismissed their existence altogether.

"But today, when situations are being reevaluated, alongside the recognition of commendable achievements, the examination of the mistakes of the parties can be turned into a learning process. Therefore, each party as well as our historiography in general will benefit by analyzing the past objectively.

"On the occasion of the centennial of the Genocide we published Yervant Odian's volume called *The Cursed Years*, to bring out the story of an entire nation's holocaust. In order to keep a straight view we should have simultaneously published also another of Odian's books, *Parasites of the Revolution*, to recognize the tremendous sacrileges committed on the holy fields of liberty. And to rightfully adjust our insight we should have read Arpiar Arpiaryan's Garmir Jamuts book. The authors of these books have been persecuted or even murdered in their days, but they still send us from eternity their lessons of realism.

"The arches of this National Academy of Sciences suggest to us prudence as we immerse ourselves in the chaos of 130 years of history. A serious seminar has been prepared which does not allow us any partisan conceit. Our honor-

ten by ADL activist of New Jersey Hagop Vartivarian, took place in the National Academy of Sciences. The first of a projected series of six volumes, this publication is devoted to the history of the Armenagan party and the Popular Party.

Secretary of Armenia's ADL Republican Committee Suren Sargisian talked about the significance of this volume in the context of the period's national liberation movement, and appraised its value and significance.

Vartivarian expressed gratitude to the National Academy of Sciences for honoring his book through the presentation in the presidential hall and for the traditional "kinetson" (wine dedication) ceremony.

In his remarks, Avedikian, who knew the author since his childhood in Beirut, praised the latter's political party and general Armenian archives, as well as his collections of publications. He highly valued the recently published volume. He then invited the dean of Armenia's Khachatur Abovyan Pedagogical University, Mirzakhanian, to conduct the actual ceremony. Vartivarian expressed his gratitude and signed copies of his book at the end of the event.

Tekeyan Delegation Visits Yerevan, Stepanavan and Garpi's Vahan Tekeyan Schools

There are five schools named after Vahan Tekeyan functioning in Armenia and Artsakh. In the last 15 years the Tekeyan Cultural Association has been overseeing the needs and problems of these schools located in Yerevan, Stepanavan, Garpi, Gumri and Berdzor, and motivates the staff in their educational mission. TCA Boston central offices' former director Kevork Marashlian said in an interview with the Yerevan newspaper *Azg*, "When we started this program the social status of the teachers was pitiful. For the last 15 years we have established a humanitarian program to aid teachers and non-teaching staff in the Vahan Tekeyan schools of Yerevan and Artsakh."

Since its inception, this program has been directed by Maro Bedrosian, the treasurer of the Central Board of Directors of TCA. The monetary funds necessary are solicited from the community in US and Canada. After distribution of the allocations, the name of each recipient is submitted to the corresponding donor. For 15 years this distribution has been performed by Gayane Muradyan.

The TCA was established in 1947 in Beirut, and in 1969 in the US in Boston. Later branch-



Hagop Avedikian, second from left, and Hagop Vartivarian, second from right, with local artists and journalists

able scholars will open for us the veil of history so that we shall see both victory and mistakes as well as an impartial evaluation.

"I wish all scholars to leave this hall by taking with them only the truth of historic facts, because we shall build our new statehood on that truthfulness. I salute all participants and our ardent listeners."

Presentation of New Vartivarian Book on ADL History at National Academy of Sciences

On November 3, after the seminar dedicated to the 130th anniversary of the Armenagan party, a book presentation of *The Travelers of the Big Dream and Comprehensive History of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party*, writ-

es in Canada, others cities in the US, and in various European and Middle Eastern countries followed.

The Sponsor a Teacher program that started in year 2000 is still quite timely. As in previous years, leaders and members of the TCA recently visited the schools named after Vahan Tekeyan in Yerevan, Stepanavan and Garpi (in Arakadzodn District). Thanks to this annual program, teachers and non-teaching staff of the schools receive a donation. "This act of benevolence is a small bit of aid in these difficult times. The importance is the feeling of being appreciated. This has taught us not just to expect donations, but the obligation of benevolence on our part," said the Garpi school's principal Arsen Ohanian.

Arts & Living

NAASR Christmas Open House to Feature Talk by Christina Maranci

BELMONT, Mass. — Dr. Christina Maranci, the Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Professor of Armenian Art and Architecture at Tufts University, will be the featured speaker at the 2015 NAASR Christmas Open House on Thursday, December 10. The Open House will begin at 6:00 p.m. with Maranci's talk set for 7:30 p.m. The evening's events will take place at the NAASR Center, 395 Concord Ave.

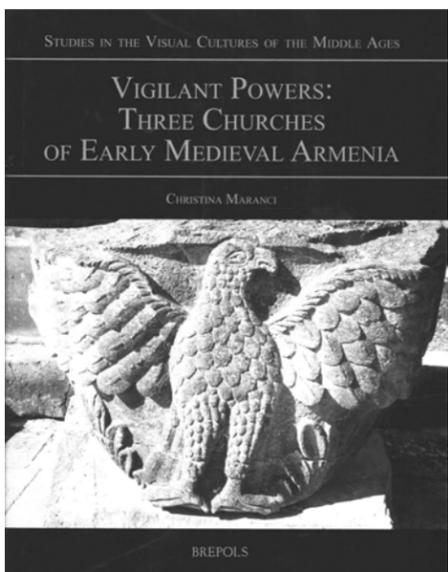
Maranci's illustrated talk draw on her recently published book *Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia* (Brepols, 2015), which offers in-depth examinations of three important sculpted and inscribed Armenian churches (Mren, Zvartnots, and Ptghni), produced during the "global" wars of the seventh century. In her talk, Maranci will share both her scholarly insights into these remarkable monuments as well as her personal experiences of the trials and tribulations of fieldwork in Western Armenia.

Both before and after the lecture, NAASR's bookstore will be open and feature a 20-percent-off sale. Numerous recently published titles will be available. Refreshments will be served.

Vigilant Powers opens to the reader the world of early medieval Armenia: its sacred landscapes,



Dr. Christina Maranci



striking churches, and rich literary and religious traditions; and demonstrates the close engagement of Armenia with Byzantine imperial interests and with contemporary events in the Holy Land. The seventh-century monuments of Armenia are important not just as an extraordinary moment of local cultural production; they fill a crucial gap in our knowledge about the medieval traditions of the Christian East at a time from which little survives from Constantinople and the imperial heartland. *Vigilant Powers* is the first English-language book devoted to the subject.

Admission to the event is free (donations appreciated).



The Hovsepian Trio with dad Jirair, mom Ani and son Haig

Music and Family Mix Well for Hovsepians

BELMONT, Mass. — You can title this work a "Rhapsody on a Hovsepian Theme." There is Haig Aram, a talented 16-year-old violin virtuoso who has obvious potential for stardom in the professional world.

His mom is right there as pianist, accompanying her son at concerts while continuing her own career.

There to tie the whole production together as a photographer and video specialist is dad Jirair. Where you often find one, you usually get all three.

By Tom Vartabedian

planning a future event. Getting through many obstacles that the process inevitably requires has certainly been an additional binding force."

Throughout her career, Ani Hovsepian has appeared in piano and ensemble performances in her homeland of Armenia, along with the former Soviet Union and United States with various soloists and groups.

Prior to immigrating here in 1991, she taught at the Yerevan State Conservatory, conducted a research on Armenian-American composer Alan Hovhanness, and worked as a freelance correspondent for newspapers in Armenia.

She currently works at Brandeis University and operates a private studio in Belmont, teaching piano and music theory. In the long run, it doesn't get any better than accompanying your own son. While performing, they are not simply mother and son; they are colleagues.

"Whether it's Haig or any other soloist, the challenges present themselves in many aspects," she admits. "But playing with your own son is a beast of a different nature. When Haig was young, I used to feel his heartbeat when we played together. Now that he has grown older and matured as a musician, he is the one listening to my heartbeat. I'm thrilled to witness the process of reversed roles."

It is not very often a teenager gets to play Khachaturian's *Violin Concerto* in Boston's Jordan Hall but that is the privilege you get at winning the New England Conservatory Prep School's Concert Competition. To do it, he beat out a strong group of young musicians playing Dvorak and Haydn.

Haig Hovsepian is a student at Belmont High School and the New England Conservatory Prep School. He is also an avid saxophonist, member of the high school Wind Ensemble and prize-winning Jazz Collective, no stranger to pop music and occasionally pays homage to break dancing.

"I love hanging out with my friends and playing basketball with them," he admits. "If I have free time, I enjoy playing video games. As for break dancing, the rhythm and movement is most exciting. I have to remain still when I play violin. The opposite is true of break dancing."

At a mother-son concert in Merrimack Valley this September, the selections they performed works by composers such as Khachaturian, Spendiarian, Baghdasaryan, Komitas and Sardarian.

And what does Haig think of his collaborator?

"I may take her for granted," he points out. "I can't imagine how it would be if I didn't have her as a built-in accompanist always standing by. That makes me very fortunate."

Besides being a proud dad, Jirair Hovsepian doesn't sit still for a second. He has got the cameras working in overdrive. When needed, he produces CDs, DVDs, photos for auditions and competitions attended by his son.

Though he doesn't perform publically, Jirair Hovsepian enjoyed studying and playing the accordion as a child. He has participated in the Tekeyan Dance Group and Daron Dance Ensemble while also singing with the Komitas Choral Society under Rouben Gregorian and Jimmy Garabedian.

see FAMILY, page 13

"A Genocide Film with Vision — And Hope"

By Tom Vartabedian

BRYN MAWR, Penn. — Filmmaker Stephanie Ayanian is on a long, yet relentless journey toward fruition.

Ayanian is a year into her hour-long documentary called "A New Armenia," combing the roads and byways for engaging stories about Armenians in the Diaspora.

She's 50 percent there and keeps the flickering flame of expectation burning at both ends. Hopefully, viewers may get to see it as a feature on PBS sometime over the next year.

With a proposed budget of \$760,000, tens of thousands of miles logged and up to three crew members, the question remains: Will it end up in a primetime PBS slot or will public television stations across the United States screen it independently?

"If for some reason PBS doesn't wish to air it on prime time, there are a number of other public television distribution models we will pursue," said Ayanian. "We've never had an issue getting our films screened on public television. Every film we have ever made for public television (five total) has screened broadly across the United States on PBS stations."

The feedback from PBS executives was pretty straightforward: Make sure the film is relevant to non-Armenian audiences. PBS is watched by 211 million Americans through TV with a primetime audience that is larger than many featured networks combined.

The glass remains half full when you're a film producer laden with optimism. Ayanian follows her path with a work that is destined to capture an audience and bring awareness to our rich culture.

Over the past year, Ayanian and her crew have been able to research and develop 11 stories. They have completed filming two of them and are in the midst of six others. Three other stories are in the waiting stages.

Her travels have gone universal, covering such areas as Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, New York and Armenia. The miles logged have been tens of thousands.

"The inspiration," she says, "comes from everywhere. It evolves in the lives of individuals, stories of people willing to share their dreams, those who've overcome adversity to succeed."

She calls it a "labor of love," yet Ayanian knows nothing comes easy. She's halfway there ... and counting. With an estimated budget of \$760,000, funding is a concern. But people are buying into it.

"Although my filmmaking partners are not Armenian, they have sacrificed a lot to make this film," said Ayanian. "I expect that of myself, as I am Armenian, and I expect to put in 'volunteer' time on this project. Each has gone above and beyond the call because they love this project, believe in its stories, and have a great deal of respect for the Armenians."

Her subjects remain just as excited. A photo of prominent musician Richard Hagopian and his grandson Andrew is but one example.

"Richard is a gem of a human being and has tremendous talent," Ayanian describes. "Others have shown me what it really means to be Armenian. They are talented, humble and thoughtful — and they have maintained our Armenian culture in America."

Producing a work of this magnitude is one objective. Marketing it is another. After filming comes the editing process, then distribution and outreach. Screenings, discussions and live cultural events like music, dance and cuisine are planned.

"These events are intended to draw a non-Armenian crowd to enjoy an immersive cultural experience with Armenians that will evolve into a lasting impression," Ayanian points out.

Both Ayanian's grandparents are genocide survivors. She and her partners have made

see FILM, page 11



ARTS & LIVING

Los Angeles TCA Chapter and AIWA Pay Tribute to Writer Siran Seza

By Kevork Keushkerian

ALTADENA, Calif. — Tekeyan Cultural Association's Los Angeles Chapter, in collaboration with Istanbul Armenians' Cultural Association and the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA), organized a public forum to present two recently published books by the late Siran Seza.

This event took place on November 5, at the Tekeyan Cultural Association's Beshgeturian center in Altadena. Despite the fact that it was a weekday, there were well over 150 people in attendance. Nazig Kojayan was the mistress of ceremonies.

Siran Seza, born Siranoush Zarifian in Istanbul in 1903, was the sister of author Mateos Zarifian. After her primary education in an Armenian school, she attended the American College for Girls and then traveled to the United States to get her higher education at Columbia University in New York. She then returned to Beirut, and became an ardent advocate for women's rights. She passed away in 1973.

Maria Krisian was called upon to present Seza's first book, *Book of Genesis* (Kirk Tznntots). It is a fascinating third-person account, written simultaneously as both a memoir and a novel that tells the story of a young heroine growing up under difficult circumstances. As the story develops, the reader follows along as the young protagonist evolves into an independent person with a grounded, relatable point of view, articulating pointed and insightful convictions on social affairs. This book reveals the perspective of an innovative author who was far ahead of her time.

Next, Silvia Kachigian, representing AIWA, took to the podium. Kachigian called Seza a pioneer for feminism who invited Armenian women to stand up for their rights and independence. Seza, Kachigian continued, promoted gender equity and criticized "stagnant minds" in her monthly publication of the journal *Yeridasart*

Hayuhi, (The Young Armenian Woman), founded in 1932. This journal was published from 1932 to 1934 and then from 1947 to 1968.

Annie Kupelian, the daughter-in-law of Siran Seza, presented a PowerPoint presentation. The slides depicted the old Istanbul suburbs where Seza was born and raised. It also featured some of the historic sites of the famous city.

A musical interlude featured the mother and daughter duo of Sossie and Salpi Kerkunian, on harp and clarinet, respectively. It included a song from Armen Dikranian's "Anoush" opera, *Alakiaz* by Gomidas and *Spanish Romance* from an unknown composer.

Dr. Minas Kojayan presented Seza's second book, *Shattered Lives* (Khordagvatz Gyanker). Kojayan had flown in from Jerusalem especially for this occasion, as he was the editor of the book. He said that the book was a novel, a unique literary depiction of the lives of Armenians in Istanbul from the year 1912 to the year 1918. Seza wrote it when she was only 21 years old.

Kojayan dwelled upon the setting of the novel, which conveys the inner turmoil of Istanbul's Armenian youth, revealing how their romantic dreams were shattered and their aspirations for a bright future had collapsed around them. It is important to note that around this time, the same time in which the events of the novel take place, prominent Armenian intellectuals, including Krikor Zohrab, Taniel Varoujan and Siamanto were massacred, while Gomidas Vartabed, not able to endure the sufferings of his



The speakers at the TCA event honoring Siran Seza

nation, lost his mind and was confined to an asylum. Thus, in this particular instance, we see how life reflects art, and art reflects life.

Rosaline Madoyan, representing the Istanbul Armenians' Cultural Association, reiterated the fact that Seza was a true fighter for Armenian women's rights, at a time when Armenian women were confined to the home, their duties

revolving around family and household chores.

Furthermore, she had published two other books during her lifetime in Beirut, Lebanon: *The Barricade* (Badneshu) in 1959 and *The Sinning Woman* (Meghavorouhin) in 1960.

At last, Rev. Dr. Zaven Arzoumanian offered the Benediction, which was followed by reception.

A Genocide Film With Vision

FILM, from page 10

multiple films that have been screened across the United States, shown internationally at festivals, winning awards.

A successful Kickstarter campaign has been complemented by benefactors and donors who have bought into the project. For areas outside the country, the film will be available on DVD and Blu-ray. It may also be considered for film festivals and live on at public screenings and events.

"We lack a film that documents and celebrates the joys, struggles and values of these Armenian Americans," Ayanian maintains. "We're peeking into their kitchens imparting thousand-year-old recipes. We're sharing social and religious traditions with laughter and solemnity, huddling with business leaders as they bring honor and financial security to their families and communities."

The audience will be introduced to the genocide for a foundation of understanding, then meet survivor families, delving into their lives and accomplishments.

"Where are we now, 100 years after the geno-

cide?" Ayanian wonders. "We are thriving but what does the future hold? No one was tackling these questions in this way. So my partners and I started developing 'A New Armenia.' We're looking at what it means to be a survivor and the challenges we face in America generations after arriving here."

With the plethora of films, books and events marking the centennial, Ayanian said that sees this project as being different from the rest; it is more of an opportunity to celebrate what we have accomplished as strong, vibrant communities.

Ayanian holds an undergraduate degree in Film and Video from Penn State University and a Master of Fine Arts in Film & Media Arts from Temple University.

She previously worked as a senior producer/director for Penn State Public Broadcasting where she was a producer and director of "Liquid Assets." As an independent producer, her film "Kinderwald" was an Official Selection of Munich International, Seattle International, Slamdance and Napa Valley film festivals.

She concluded, "I'm inspired by writers, filmmakers, musicians, artists, dancers, chefs, doctors, lawyers, businesspeople and scientists who share their stories. It thrills me to watch people create, think and share their gifts with others."



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"Drifting Clouds over Mountains"

Tashjian Pictures at Santa Fe Gallery

SANTA FE, N.M. — The Santa Fe Six Art Exchange Winter Show features the works of six local artists, including Richard H. Tashjian.

Since relocating to Santa Fe several years ago, and until now, at age 90, he is still awestruck by the western landscape. A native of Watertown, he has painted the landscapes of New England, traveled to Armenia in the 1990s, Crimea, Russia and France.

The exhibit will be at the Santa Fe Six Art Exchange Gallery, 60 E. San Francisco Suite 10, through January 31.

Balakian Finds His Place in Dual Cultural Identity

BALAKIAN, from page 1

"I think that it is fair to say that the world coverage of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide was singular and perhaps even beyond our expectations. That the New York Times would cover the Armenian Genocide with three days of two-page spreads with full color images and focus on the ethical problems of Turkish denialism really does represent a decisive move forward" in the history of the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide, Balakian said. He found this emblematic of the general world response, with coverage of declarations by Pope Francis, the pop culture Kardashians sisters, and various world governments amplifying the "adamant outcry about the degree of injustice that still exists in the aftermath of this large human rights crime."

"I think that the issues are more bare and open than they have ever been," he continued. "There is an opportunity for the Armenian community to pursue the impunity problem with Turkey, in perhaps new ways that are more creative and have more world support than before."

In 2015, Balakian gave more than 25 lectures. He took this, he said, as "a sign that the mainstream institutions want this history to be front and center on their college campuses. I'm sure this is true for many others in our field who were on campuses this year. I think it is due to an evolution and growth in the discourse that has come into its own. ... Our historical past has been solidly situated in an academic, cultural and global discourse, and the issue of Turkish impunity and Turkish denialism is seen clearly as an ethical problem that needs to be dealt with properly. There is world community engagement and concern about this in a way that there never has been before." He exclaimed that in the perspective of the course of the last 90 years, this is a really dramatic change, and although it is unclear how the next chapters will unfold, it seems that Armenians are in the strongest place they have been in decades.

His international travels over the past few years, Balakian said, "created a very rich per-

professor at Lafayette College, organized a symposium at Columbia University in February 2015 after their inspiring journey to the medieval city of Ani together in May 2014.

In the United States, Balakian said he feels that Armenian-Americans have been resourceful and creative in many ways. "There is a lot of cultural vitality in the Armenian-American scene. However, there needs to be more unity, and, from my perspective as a writer and a scholar, more backing of cultural institutions and funding of culture. We need to build museums, think tanks, translation centers, and be really aggressive about bringing out culture into the mainstream. This can't be done without money and organization," he said.

Balakian bemoaned the absence of literary and cultural publications, however. He said, "I think *Ararat* [the quarterly published by the Armenian General Benevolent Union until recently] was a really important journal for decades. It did so much to define and nurture Armenian talent, and I think Armenian Forum was a wonderful journal, though it could not stay afloat for long. I think we need good journals for Armenian literature and culture. It takes care, money and some thought, but this is a good time for thinking about such a project."

Balakian writes in English, not in Armenian, and he is an American poet, yet he also considers it an organic continuity to call himself an Armenian diasporan poet and writer. He said, "My immersion in Armenian culture and history has had a big impact on my imagination and on my literary forms and my language, which is English; but meanings and materials, significations and tropes are inflected by my Armenian sensibility and preoccupations; the same is true, I'm sure for visual artists and composers. In my poems there are fusions of Armenian iconography and imagery and culture with my American poetics and form. In the 1970s, I wrote poems that dealt with Armenian memory and the lost world of Anatolia in the wake of the Genocide, and my grandmother was the voice of the transmission of trauma across generations. In the 1980s I found myself embedding threads and

ary tradition, Balakian also ended up as part of a literary tradition in his own family. He said, "As time unfolds and you explore the other writers of your family, in my case three of them across three generations – my great-uncle Grigoris Balakian the bishop, my aunt Anna Balakian, the scholar of French poetry, and my aunt Nona Balakian, *New York Times* book review critic and writer – you find that there are some interesting preoccupations and passions that seem to have continued across generations."

In his last two books of poems Balakian has been able to push his form further. He said about many of the poems in his new book *Ozone Journal*, "I'm interested in pursuing the shifting perspectives and the jolts in consciousness as the mind takes in the wired and discordant realities of our contemporary culture and I'm interested in bringing landscapes of difficulty and violence into an expansive form." The poems in this volume shift from the Native American pueblos of New Mexico to inner city Detroit, to the slums of Nairobi, and to the border of Turkey with Armenia at the Kars-Gumri line.

Ozone Journal includes a long 55-section eponymous poem framed by two sections of lyric poems. Balakian's persona in these poems engages with various places and explores self and cultural location. Some of the poems reflect, through invented lenses, Balakian's life experiences and the lives of family members while exploring the idea of diaspora and connections with historical pasts with a sense of the perpetual motion of the self. The threads of Armenian cultural realities are ever-present here. For example, "Ozone Journal" begins with the persona digging bones out of the Syrian desert with a television crew, with whom he is filming a segment on the Armenian Genocide, and the rest of the poem is a flashback from that present. Balakian said, "It deals with the complexity of life in the 1980s in New York City as AIDS becomes a crisis and the beginning of awareness of environmental erosion and climate change become another kind of crisis." It is the second work in a trilogy. The first was "A Train – Ziggurat Elegy" (2010), which dealt with New York both in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and then with a memory of New York culture in the 1970s.

Both poems have some dimensions of a love poem interwoven in them, and incorporate many complex allusions. Balakian explained that, "My long poem poetics is tied to a collage form of lyric segments that create threads as they unspool through the poem. My hope is that the reader will find the intended ways that the threads weave themselves together."

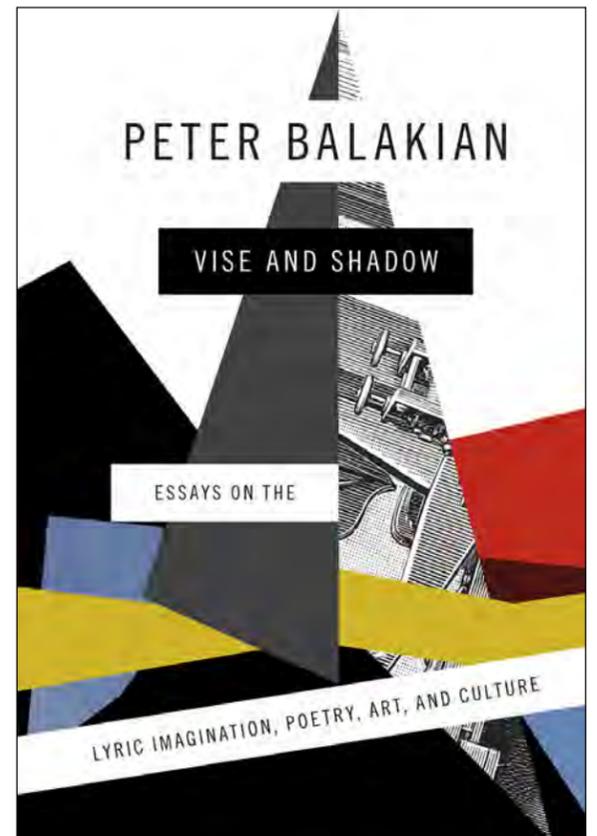
Balakian feels that "every poet hopes readers will read a poem first for its texture and energy and its language rhythms that draw the reader in. However, I, like many poets, still work out of the assumptions of early literary modernism, that the poem should be an intellectual challenge for the reader, as well as something that the reader will enjoy."

He hopes that Armenian readers who have been raised on an Armenian poetic tradition continue in the US to remain connected to the great art of poetry, because poetry "poetry is the animating force of all literature; it is language at its most compressed, searing, primal and elemental; remember that the poem takes us back to song and chant and prayer, and dithyramb," back to the beginning of the human voice.

Along with poetry, Balakian is a master of the essay form. His new collection *Vise and Shadow* includes essays written between 1988 and 2012, some of which have been expanded and revised. Like his poems, the essays move from one cultural and geographical zone to another, but all deal with the power and the

meaning of the lyric imagination as expressed in various domains. The essays deal with poetry, art, film and music (song lyrics). Several concern Armenian writers, artists or topics: Siamanto, Yeshishe Charents, Arshile Gorky, and Elia Kazan's film "America, America." Others explore issues that are important for the Armenian experience, such as poetry as witness to violence, collage and modern poetic form, the literary rock of Bob Dylan.

He pointed out that "America, America" "has been a misunderstood film, and a misrepresented film." Though most of the movie examines anti-Greek and anti-Armenian violence in the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century, in particular the Hamidian massacres of Armenians, it is popularized on American tele-



vision as a movie about the American immigrant story. Only the last 15 or 20 minutes of the film take place in the US.

Balakian said, "It is original and edgy and groundbreaking as a film. The film is very autobiographical. It is almost a memoir, in which Kazan tells the story of his Greek family's harsh journey out of Turkey and in doing so tells the history of Greeks and Armenians under Ottoman rule. Kazan states in the opening of the film that that Greeks and Armenians were a colonized people. The film was completely ahead of the grain of the world at that time. It is valuable and important as a work of art and as a work of history. Kazan called it his favorite film."

Balakian's chapter in *Vise and Shadow* examines the myths in understanding of this film, and its strange reception, which perhaps was due to various political reasons at the time.

He will be screening a brief excerpt from the film and discussing it at a free 7 p.m. December 1 lecture sponsored by the Tekeyan Cultural Association and Facing History and Ourselves. The lecture, cosponsored by the Armenian Museum of America, with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, will take place at the museum.

Looking back on his career, Balakian said, "I'm incredibly grateful to the Armenian readership for its embrace of my books over the years. It's spiritually important for writers to know that readers are engaged in their work. It's important that Armenians in America and elsewhere continue to embrace their culture and to pass it on to the next generation. Intellectual and artistic work is at the core of our culture, it's how we stay together, how we have conversations about who we are and where we're going; it connects past and present. The Armenian cultural present is as rich as it's ever been. There are so many terrific writers, artists, and scholars out there."

(For more information or to RSVP, email Elana Megerian at Elana_Megerian@facinghistory.org or Aram Arkun at tcadirector@aol.com.)



Peter Balakian with writers Elif Shafak at left, and Maureen Freely, in Istanbul after their reading in October 2014

spective for me as a person and as a writer. I have been able to see a great deal and listen to a lot of voices." His trips to Turkey, he continued, "have let me see the complexity of life in Turkey and gain a sense of the progressive voices which are working hard for democracy and intellectual honesty, and I've had a rich and rewarding time with fellow Turkish and Kurdish writers. While this has been an affirmative encounter, he continued, "in traveling to eastern Turkey/Historic Armenia, I've had to stare at the ruins of our ancient civilization; it's hard to take in. It's bitter-sweet, because you also acquire a great deal of knowledge in going there; you can see, feel and smell the great buildings of the Armenian past, and you can feel the beauty and achievement of Armenian culture, and the landscape where Armenians lived."

One of the outcomes of his trips was creative productivity. In addition to fueling his own writing, he and Dr. Rachel Goshgarian, assistant

pieces of Armenian culture into my poems."

For example, in 1987, a poem of his appeared in *Poetry Magazine* with a whole stanza devoted to the Armenian medieval miniaturist Toros Roslin. While Balakian says he does not know what American readers made of this, he hoped they would go and do what T. S. Eliot urged his readers to do – look it up.

He said, "It is a way of bringing the Armenian tradition into the American tradition, and creating a richer form. In various new poems, there are Armenian elements twined throughout various landscapes. I hope readers will read my new poem 'Near the Border,' which deals with Armenian diasporic and transnational complexities." In a feature spread of Balakian's poems in the prestigious German literary journal *Neue Rundschau*, Balakian's work was introduced with the heading "Peter Balakian, Armenien 2015." "I guess that's one way the outside world sees me," he said.

Aside from feeling part of the Armenian liter-



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

DECEMBER 1 — **The Tekeyan Cultural Association, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator and Facing History and Ourselves are presenting a talk by Peter Balakian** on the classic film "America America" written and directed by Elia Kazan. The film is about a young Anatolian Greek man from the provinces who loses his family fortune on his way to Constantinople and is dreaming of going to America. 7 p.m. Balakian will also sign copies of his two recent books, *Ozone Journal* and *Vise and Shadow: Essays on the Lyric Imagination, Poetry, Art, and Culture*. At the Armenian Museum of America, together with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

DECEMBER 3 — **Richard Hovannisian, "The First Republic of Armenia and Its Importance Today,"** at First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. 7:30 p.m. Presented by NAASR and co-sponsored by Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of America-Eastern Mass., Hamazkayin Armenian Cultural and Education Society, and First Armenian Church. Contact NAASR at 617-489-1610 or hq@naasr.org for more information.

DECEMBER 4 and 5 — **Trinity Christmas Bazaar**, Friday, 12-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Featuring delicious Armenian dinners, a la carte menu and take-out meals; booths and vendors — perfect for doing your Christmas shopping; Armenian gourmet foods, delicacies and pastries; raffles, and more. Activities for Children, Peter Adamian Hall: Friday, 7-9 p.m., All Aboard "The Polar Express" Pajama Party, recommended for children ages 6 and older; Saturday, 10:45-11:30 a.m., The Magic and Juggling of Robert Clarke, aka "LuckyBob," for "children of all ages." For further information, contact the church office at 617.354.0632, or log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/111/.

DECEMBER 5 — **Lowell ARF "Aharonian" Gomideh 120th anniversary celebration**, 6:30 pm, Kazanjian Memorial Pavilion, Sts. Vartanantz Church, 180 Old Westford Road, Chelmsford; dinner and program; Armenian National Committee Freedom Awards to James Milinazzo, former Lowell mayor; Daniel Varoujan Hejiniian, noted artist; David Boyajian, journalist/Armenian activist; Community Service Awards to Kathy Cryan-Hicks, Chelmsford Public Library; The Lowell Sun newspaper; Jennifer Doaks, Chelmsford High instructor; musical oud performance by Datev Gevorgian; donation, \$50 adults, \$15 students; reservations, Armen Jeknavorian, (978) 256-2538 or armenij@comcast.net.



Peter Balakian will speak about the classic film by Elia Kazan, "America America," on Tuesday, December 1, at a program jointly sponsored by the Tekeyan Cultural Association, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator and Facing History and Ourselves, Armenian Museum of America, Watertown, at 7 p.m. He will also sign copies of his two new books.

DECEMBER 6 — **The Greater Worcester Armenian Chorale presents a special Christmas Concert** led by Artistic Director and Conductor Konstantin Petrossian, Sunday, 1:30 pm, with a fellowship at 12:30 p.m., at Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, 635 Grove St., Worcester. Admission is free. Soprano Knarik Nerkararyan is the guest soloist. For additional information call 508-963-2076.

DECEMBER 7 — **Aram Arkun, Historian and Executive Director of Tekeyan Cultural Association** and Assistant Editor of the Armenian Mirror Spectator will be the speaker at the St. James Men's Club. Topic will be "Zeytun: The Armenian Eagles' Nest." Losh Kebab and Kheyra Dinner Social Hour (mezza) 6:15 p.m. Dinner 7 p.m. \$14 per person. St. James Armenian Church Charles

Mosesian Cultural & Youth Center - Keljik Hall 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Ladies welcome.

DECEMBER 10 — Christmas Open House, 6-11 p.m., with talk at 7:30 by Christina Maranci, "Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia," at NAASR, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont. Contact NAASR at 617-489-1610 or hq@naasr.org for more information. 20% off all on-site purchases.

DECEMBER 13 — **St. James 84th Anniversary Name Day Celebration** & Banquet Honoring Raffi & Carol Yeghiayan, Parishioners of the Year. Save the Date, details to follow. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

DECEMBER 13 — **Christmas Holiday Concert – Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra**, 7 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Founded by the Very Rev. Fr. Oshagan Minassian (1930-2008), and now under the direction of Composer Konstantin Petrossian, Music Director and Conductor, the concert will feature the Vocal Quartet from the Bostonians, and Knarik Nerkararyan, Soprano. The program will consist of a variety of traditional Armenian and Western sacred and holiday music. The public is warmly invited to attend this complimentary concert which is a gift to the community. For further information, contact the Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

DECEMBER 31 — **St. James 2016 New Year's Eve Celebration**. Entertainment by Arthur Apkarian and Band from Montreal. Save the date, details to follow. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

RHODE ISLAND

DECEMBER 5 — **The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church** in Providence presents "Silent Night, Holy Night" Christmas Concert featuring The Armenian Chorale of RI, with special performances by Joanne Mouradjian, Gohar Manjelijian, Debra Pjojian and Junior Choir - Saturday, 6:30 p.m. in the Church Sanctuary. Light refreshments following concert - Donation \$10. Those attending the Christmas Concert will receive \$10 off the admission to the ACYOA dance !!

DECEMBER 5 — **ACYOA Annual Holiday Kef, Saturday**, at 8:30 p.m. in the Egavian Cultural Center Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church. Adults \$25, Students, \$15 (ID required). Mezze & Cash Bar. Featuring Mal Barsamian (Clarinet); Jason Narioian (Dumbeg), m Ken Kalajian (Guitar), Brian Ansbikian (Oud), David Hoplamazian (Violin). Reservations and information, contact Christina (401-256-2686) or Greta (401-556-0771). If you attend the Cultural Committee's Christmas Concert, you will receive \$10 off of the cost of the dance!

Music and Family Mix Well for Hovsepian

FAMILY, from page 10

"It is always amazing to witness the hard labor that takes place at home and see it transformed to the stage," he confirms. "It gives me

great satisfaction to see this energy brought to light for others to enjoy. Watching the audience respond gives me the utmost satisfaction and sense of pride for my family."

Jirair looks back with fondness upon his days as an engineering student at UMass/Lowell when he and colleague Ara Jeknavorian started the Armenian Club there and also launched the

Lowell Tech Armenian Radio Hour.

As a producer, his passion extended to human rights issues, specifically the Armenian Genocide, serving with the Boston Commemorative Committee. Recently, he videotaped the complete events of the centenary commemorations and aired them on the Belmont Municipal Cable Channel.

"As an avid photographer, I believe that a memorable event is like a blink of an eye," he says. "It instantly becomes history if not preserved by the blink of the camera."

This past summer offered many momentous occasions for the youngest Hovsepian. He received an invitation to participate in a performance with The Piano Guys at the world-renowned Summer Festival at Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony, in the Berkshires.

"Next morning Haig woke up and went right back to practicing," Jirair Hovsepian added. "Nothing really changed. It was all in a day's work."

Becoming a professional musician and traveling the world with his violin has always remained Haig Hovsepian's biggest dream. After graduating from high school, he plans to move on to a school where he can continue mastering the skills of music interpretation.

"Historically, Armenians were always known to the world as the greatest translators which is

the same as interpreters," he notes. "Learning to play music is like learning to speak many languages at once. The more of them I speak, the more audiences I can communicate with."

The family ties extend to a violin-playing grandmother, the renowned Anahit Tsitsikian, who has provided her own inspiration. Haig's role model and favorite violinist, however, is the inimitable Sergey Khachatryan.

"He's also fearless when it comes to performing, driving race cars or exploring new ideas," he says. "I admire those qualities in him. I hope that someday I have the honor of playing with him."

The challenges have been innumerable. Finding the right teacher. Maintaining reasonable balance between school work and practicing. Juggling between the violin and saxophone. Coordinating complex schedules at Belmont High and the Conservatory, not to mention the travel, lessons and recitals — rain or shine. The motivation becomes self-induced when you pursue success.

"Regardless, it all becomes worth it," agrees Jirair Hovsepian. "The world would be a different place without people carrying this ancient, unique and original form of art in an age of robotics and technology."

As Ani Hovsepian sees it, "We love it. We love what we do and do what we love. It doesn't get much better than that as a family."

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e-mail: headasa@aol.com

Deadline for returning completed Applications: March 15, 2016



COMMENTARY

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COMMENTARY

Armenia's Entangled European Ties

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Armenians feel a natural affinity with Europe. They feel that culturally and through history, Armenia has a virtual place in Europe. But that feeling – more often than not – is shaken by realpolitik, as European countries pursue their perceived political interests, ignoring Armenia.

By the same token, many Armenians take for granted that Georgia, being the only other Christian nation in the South Caucasus, must be Armenia's natural ally. But recent history has demonstrated time and again that Tbilisi coordinates its policies and economic interests with its Muslim neighbors Ankara and Baku, at Armenia's expense.

Some recent developments in Europe made Armenia's political planners painfully aware that often Armenia is a diplomatic orphan at best.

Those developments center on two major issues: the verdict of the European Court of Human Rights, which struck down a Swiss court's guilty verdict brought against Dogu Perinçek for his denial of the Armenian Genocide, as well as the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) proposal about Nagorno Karabagh.

Armenia is being snubbed by Europe because of its fragile political stranding and because of its ties with Russia; Moscow seldom compensates Armenia in the arena of world politics for this close alliance.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled on October 15 that a Turkish politician, Dogu Perinçek, should not have been prosecuted for denying that the mass killing of the Armenians by Ottoman Turkey in 1915 was a genocide. In a landmark free speech ruling, the ECHR judges ruled by a vote of 10 to 7 that Perinçek, the chairman of the Turkish Workers' Party, should never have been convicted of racial discrimination by a Swiss court for saying that the "Armenian Genocide is a great international lie."

This was a devastating blow to the Armenian case, which rendered nil the efforts of international lawyers Geoffrey Robertson and Amal Clooney. It also dampened the significance of the European Parliament's motion earlier this year that the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians by Ottoman Turkey was a genocide.

On the other hand, it was a victory for Turkey, which was being criticized by the international community for its penal code article 301 (insulting Turkishness) restricting freedom of speech.

Armenian lawmakers tried to find some saving graces in the ECHR verdict by arguing that the court did not deny the veracity of the Genocide itself, yet dwelt only on the legal aspect of freedom of speech.

But unfortunately, the impact of the ruling will be far reaching. In a smart move, the court made a clear distinction with Holocaust denial, whose specific history meant its denial would always be "seen as a form of incitement to racial hatred" in certain countries. Thus, it blocked the argument that Holocaust denial should be considered a crime and the denial of the Armenian Genocide only as an issue of freedom of speech. This is the nature of European justice.

Further impact will still be forthcoming because it is a moot issue if Switzerland will maintain its laws or revise them to conform to the ruling of the European Court. Moving further one step, the ruling will provide ammunition to French legislators who were opposed to the law in France similar to the Swiss law. Following flip-flop position of President Nicolas Sarkozy, the incoming French president, François Hollande, had pledged iron-clad provisions to the criminalization of the Armenian Genocide denial. That pledge is still on the back burner in the French parliament and may be impacted severely by the ECHR ruling.

The other slap on the face for Armenia came when PACE decided to meddle in the issue of Nagorno Karabagh. Indeed, a three-page document was prepared by a former British parliamentarian and approved by PACE's political Affairs Committee on November 4, calling for a peaceful settlement of the conflict starting "with the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces and irregular armed forces from Nagorno Karabagh and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan" and "the establishment of full sovereignty of Azerbaijan in these territories."

If the proposal is not stopped in its tracks, it may end up on the agenda of the plenary session of PACE in January 2016.

It seems that Azerbaijan's caviar diplomacy is sometimes more successful than Armenia's more penurious diplomacy. There are always calls for better Armenian representation in Europe.

In this particular case, former British Parliamentarian Robert Walter had a checkered past, as described by Armenia's Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian. Walter has been accused of having close ties with the Azerbaijani government. He has repeatedly defended Baku's dismal human rights record, which has frequently been criticized by Western rights groups.

Walter is married to a Turkish woman and recently became a Turkish citizen. His new Turkish ID was personally delivered by Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu – very much like Matthew Bryza, who caused so much damage to the Karabagh process as the co-chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group and later as the US ambassador to Azerbaijan. Bryza's true colors were revealed when news came out that his elaborate wedding to his Turkish wife was financed by the Azerbaijan government.

Unfortunately, Armenia does not possess similar resources and has to rely on traditional diplomacy rather than cash or caviar, in order to present its case to the world.

In the case of the PACE debacle, the reaction was prompt and constructive in a rare scenario of cooperation when two co-chairs of OSCE expressed opposition.

"PACE and other [international organizations] should consult OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs before issuing reports on resolutions on Nagorno Karabagh," US Ambassador James Warlick tweeted on November 6.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov concurred, stating, "We – Russia, the US and France – are firmly against attempts to take this subject to other international platforms that do not deal with the conflict's settlement, instead of a consistent businesslike and patient dialogue on the Nagorno Karabagh settlement. At least, nobody has given them such a task on behalf of the international community."

As we can see, Europe has been using a stick and carrot policy vis-à-vis Armenia, on the one hand recognizing the Genocide and on the other, undermining its Karabagh position. Right now, a European delegation is in Armenia to work out a legal framework of economic cooperation.

Armenia has to navigate through these contradictory political positions to find its own place within the international community.

Foreign Minister Lavrov's unscheduled visit to Armenia a few days ago has been taken as a reassuring signal and at the same time, has indicated that some behind-the-scenes movement is in



the offing, to force Armenia to make some territorial concessions in Karabagh, in return for Russian guarantees, including stationing of Russian peace-keeping forces on the contact line. Also, a complicating issue is Russia's decision to install an air defense system in Armenia. But it is ironic that the more Russia increases its military assets in Armenia, the more vulnerable the latter becomes, not necessarily stronger, because the move serves as a legitimate target for the opposing side.

International political order is such that every time there is a positive movement or statement, Armenia's foreign policy planners have to look also behind the statements for a hidden agenda. Earlier this month, US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills stated that Armenia's relations with Russia and the West were not mutually exclusive. A promising sign if taken at face value.

But at this moment, Armenia has a huge task ahead of it, sorting out its entangled relations with Europe.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Only 35 Percent of Americans Are Aware There Was an Armenian Genocide

For the first time, a prestigious nationwide survey, conducted on November 9 by Zogby Analytics, reveals the extent of the American public's knowledge and opinion on the Armenian Genocide and Artsakh (Karabagh). The survey results, made available exclusively to this writer, have a +/- 3.1 percent margin of error.

To the question, are you aware that there was an Armenian Genocide, surprisingly only 34.8 percent of those surveyed answered "yes"; 49.6 percent "no" and 15.6 percent "not sure." One would have expected that a much higher percentage of US citizens would be aware of the Armenian Genocide, particularly after the large-scale Centennial commemorative events this year. The fact that half of all Americans have never heard of the Genocide of 1.5 million Armenians indicates that a major effort is needed to educate the public.

Zogby Analytics provides extensive information about the background of the participants in the survey. Here are some interesting details:

- While male respondents are evenly divided on the above question, there is a serious imbalance among women – twice as many females are unaware of the Armenian Genocide compared to those who are.
- Around half of all respondents are equally ignorant

about the Armenian Genocide, regardless of political party affiliation. Liberals are slightly more knowledgeable than Moderates and Conservatives. Surprisingly, the majority of 'Tea Party' and 'Occupy Wall Street' sympathizers are cognizant of the Armenian Genocide.

- College graduates are more likely to know about the Armenian Genocide than those who are not.
- The 25-34 age group is the most knowledgeable about the Armenian Genocide, while the least knowledgeable is the 35-53 age group.
- Hispanics are far more knowledgeable than 'Whites' about the Armenian Genocide; African-Americans and Asian-Americans are the least knowledgeable.
- Catholics are more aware of the Armenian Genocide than Protestants.
- West Coast Americans are more aware of the Armenian Genocide than their counterparts in the East; while those living in Central and Southern US are the least knowledgeable.

Americans with the highest income category (\$100,000+) know the most about the Armenian Genocide; those making \$35,000-\$50,000 a year know the least.

In summary, the American most informed about the Armenian Genocide is: male, right or left wing political activist, college graduate, 25-34 years old, Hispanic, Catholic, lives on the West Coast, and makes over \$100,000 a year; whereas the American least informed about the Armenian Genocide is: female, mainstream political party member, not a college graduate, 35-53 years old, African-American or Asian-American, Protestant, lives in the Central or Southern states, and makes \$35,000 to \$50,000 a year.

Here are eight other genocide and Artsakh-related questions that survey participants were asked to answer:

- 46.5 percent of Americans agree that the United States government should call on Turkey to publicly admit the Armenian Genocide; 16.1 percent disagree; and 37.4 percent don't know.
- 39 percent agree that "the U.S. Congress should pass a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide... even if it

risks destroying diplomatic relations with a key, strategic ally in the Middle East"; 22.5 percent disagree; and 38.5 percent don't know.

• 63.2 percent agree that "if an ally of the United States initiates a program to eradicate, persecute or displace populations within their own country, the U.S. should end economic and/or military aid to that ally"; 10.5 percent disagree; and 26.3 percent don't know.

• 20.1 percent believe that when a country commits genocide, it should pay reparations "in cash"; 11.8 percent say that it should compensate by returning the occupied "land"; 10.7 percent, "by other symbolic act"; 9.4 percent, "no reparations should be paid"; and 48 percent don't know.

• 31.3 percent believe that the United Nations should determine what the reparations should be when genocide is committed; 23.8 percent say it should be decided by the International Criminal Court; 12.1 percent, the United States Congress; 3 percent, Amnesty International; 2.5 percent, the European Court of Human Rights; 0.8 percent, the Pope; and 26.5 percent don't know.

• 37.9 percent believe that the United States should use "economic sanctions" against a country that "refuses to recognize and take responsibility for its crimes against humanity"; 16.4 percent say the U.S. should use "political/diplomatic pressure"; 8.6 percent, "embargo"; 2.6 percent, the U.S. should declare war; 4.5 percent, "do nothing"; and 30 percent don't know.

• 38.3 percent agree that "the United States should intervene if Azerbaijan acts to expel the ethnic Christian Armenians [of Artsakh] who have resided there for centuries"; 21.8 percent disagree; and 39.9 percent don't know.

• 40.4 percent agree that if Azerbaijan attacks Artsakh, the United States should call on Israel, which is selling sophisticated weapons to Baku, to cut off its diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan; 16.9 percent disagree; and 42.7 percent don't know.

This first of its kind survey could serve as a valuable guide to the Armenian-American community to know where to concentrate its educational efforts and lobbying resources.

Alexanian Offers Conservative Response

To the Editor:

I would be remiss if I didn't respond to Berge Tatian's letter to the editor dated October 31, 2015. It never ceases to amaze me that American Liberals like Berge Tatian imagine that regurgitating a list of Democratic National Committee talking points is a substitute for intellectual engagement.

Tatian accuses the Republicans of "blaming all of the ills of society, foreign and domestic on those weak minded liberals." Well yes, Liberals certainly have a lot to answer for. But true to form as a liberal ideologue Tatian doesn't present any facts to refute the ones that I presented in my previous letter, but just expresses upset and opinions. As far as the "blame game" goes, President Obama didn't invent it but he certainly exacerbated it by constantly blaming President George Bush for all of America's ills." It speaks volumes that the majority of Americans feel that the country is going in the wrong direction.

There are myriad examples of missteps and contradictions by Liberals in the areas of foreign policy and the economy but let's use one issue that Tatian refers to in his letter as an example. As far as "curbing gun violence goes," I'm tempted to say that people in glass houses shouldn't fire bullets. Unless Liberals are willing to defund sanctuary cities, and hold their government officials' "feet to the fire" to enforce the laws that are already on the books to prosecute, to the full extent of the law, criminals who commit gun related violent crimes, including and especially illegal aliens, they can't point fingers at the Republicans. Harry Reid, an ultra liberal, just prevented Kathy's law from passing, a law which the majority of Americans agree with, which would prevent convicted illegal immigrants from reentering the US. I think that the phrase "selective morality" can be applied here.

President Obama has been the most divisive president in the history of the United States. He has misguidedly pitted black against white; women against men; and Democrats against Republicans thus preventing the "common sense solutions" that Tatian yearns for.

Like most Armenian Liberals, Tatian is simply an apologist for what is arguably an anti Armenian administration. For 40 years now the Democrats in general and more recently President Obama in particular have been touted to Armenian Americans as our sympathetic allies who will advance our aspirations for Genocide recognition and bring Turkey to some measure of justice. President Obama has proved that sales pitch is less than truthful. Today in the centennial of the Genocide we are no closer than before to American recognition of the Genocide. In fact, the most Liberal president in history who has good things to say about every real or imagined victim, cannot bring himself to utter the word Genocide which he solemnly promised to do in 2008 (so far only Reagan, a Republican has had the courage to use the word Genocide) Turkey is the President's favorite "ally" and Erdogan has been strengthened instead of being weakened by Obama's policies.

This is exactly the opposite of what we were promised by our Armenian "leaders" when they endorsed Obama for president in 2008 and 2012. In retrospect those endorsements were clearly wrong and ill-advised. It seems that since those so-called "leaders" still continue to protect and defend Obama, despite his failed presidency, perhaps using the Genocide issue was just their way of getting Armenians to support their Liberal presidential choice.

The question remains: When are those who were duped by these Armenian pro-Obama "leaders" going to receive an apology for misleading them in this way?

Adrienne Alexanian
New York, New York

Where Do We Go From Here?

By Mary Ann Kibarian

I enjoyed reading Noubar Afeyan's open letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in the October 3 issue regarding the Genocide Centenary activities. I am certain I speak for the majority of the community in saying that we are very grateful Noubar picked up the gauntlet to chair this monumental event for all Armenians. Being a visionary leader, he rose to the occasion to successfully organize appropriate gatherings to mark this solemn occasion.

In the letter, Noubar stated the goals of the Centenary were to raise awareness, offer gratitude and to forge a more peaceful future by working together. I feel the first two objectives were met. The following are my thoughts on how we can go forward for the next five years to embrace the third goal. I believe it is time to embark on new ideas to give some closure, shed more light on our Genocide and to strengthen our heritage.

For more than 50 years we worked very hard to have the Truth believed. We had a lot of courage to persist year after year. However, having this as our main effort and expecting it to bear the freight of ameliorating such a cataclysmic event was not wise. Yes, we learned a lot, but we also used up a great deal of political and financial capital to say nothing of time. Now, as we enter the second century after the Genocide, we should put our learned skills to use, along with all the other bag of tools we have to bring a better focus on our future needs.

What happened to the Armenians was so horrific that it has taken a long time and great efforts to lessen the pain. But we do have a hundred years of education, experience and capital that we can bring to the table. We just need to pull out the stops to use this cumulative wherewithal to be more effective.

As the survivors' descendants, many of us ask what is the best way today to neutralize hundred years of cynical deceit – by law? I propose that a Genocide Survivors' Legal Defense Fund be created to deal with the return of confiscated properties, loss of livelihood and lack of fulfillment of international agreements by current governments.

Armenians have legal claims, but it takes enormous effort to do the research, write the briefs and present the case. However, there is in history, a time when it is more auspicious to act than not. Geoffrey Robertson, the international jurist, recently stated that this is the best legal climate in which to launch these cases in the international courts. The issues of reparations and recovery have been studied by academicians, such as the Armenian Reparations Study Group.

This is a daunting task, and I know Armenians are risk averse, but we owe it to those who perished, as well as to those who survived and struggled to make a new life. It is the best way we can demonstrate our respect for their sacrifices and that we will not rollover and die.

Armenians have always believed that education was the best and most lasting investment. To prevent future Genocides, we need to support and enlarge Genocide Education. When one speaks to an average Turkish person, we see the effect of early education on Turkish youth as a result of what is taught today in Turkish textbooks. We need to educate American students about our Genocide.

There is already in place a very able Genocide Education Project headed by Sara Cohan. It needs to be enlarged with an objective of introducing American students not only to the Armenian Genocide, but also to Armenia.

Last, but not least, it is critical that we not lose touch with the Homeland. We must stay close to Armenia and give our support where we can. The Armenian people need to know we care about their fate regardless of what we think of the leadership. Administrations come and go. We need to focus on keeping the people in Armenia whole and safe. Yerevan is in great shape.

We need to help lessen the disparity of development between Yerevan and the villages. It is imperative that we work to reduce this gap and it is important to give the villagers the tools for a better future.

We all need a community of involvement to do something to preserve this wonderful country. Choose a program or cause and begin work.

My inspiration for feeling so strongly about this is the memory of the celebration the First Anniversary of the Republic. I watched those who attended singing for the first time in 70 years the Mer Hairenik with tears streaming down their cheeks. These were the tears of joy because, once again, they had a viable independent Homeland. We must never let that go. For them, and for you, I don't want anyone to become an Armenian without an Armenia.



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