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NEWS IN BRIEF

US Supreme Court Asks Government to File Brief on Genocide-era Life Insurance Claims

WASHINGTON – The Supreme Court this week asked the solicitor general to file a brief detailing the US government’s position on the Ninth Circuit Court decision earlier this year which had struck down a California law that allowed Armenian Americans to pursue Genocide-era life insurance claims, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

ANCA Government Affairs Director Kate Nahapetian welcomed the move, adding, “The right to seek redress from insurance companies and banks which have improperly profited from the Genocide-era murders of their parents and grandparents should be absolute.”

The US solicitor general will have several months to review and file its brief regarding the Ninth Circuit Court decision, after which the Supreme Court will decide whether or not to hear the case.

The Supreme Court’s decision is the latest in a long and complex legal history that has included three separate and conflicting opinions from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the most recent one on February 23.

Armenian Woman Dies In Aleppo Shelling

ALEPPO, Syria (PanARMENIAN.Net and Armenpress) – An Armenian woman was killed in an Aleppo shelling, Outreach to Syrian Armenians Facebook group founder Anahit Adamyan said.

Citing Aleppo-based Serob Jahukyan, the 53-year-old woman died of her injuries in a hospital on Saturday, September 29.

According to preliminary data, the number of Armenian victims in Syria has topped 20.

However, according to Aleppo Prelacy Press Secretary Jirayr Reisman, residents are gradually returning to their everyday life.

Arab mass media reported that the clashes in the old market areas are ongoing. Earlier information was received that 500 stores and shopping centers have been burnt down in the historic old market.

Mexicans Puzzled by Aliyev Monument

MEXICO CITY (AP) – A life-size bronze statue of late Azerbaijan President Heydar Aliyev on Mexico City’s main boulevard has some Mexicans upset.

The memorial to an authoritarian leader from the Caucasus been erected within sight of Mexico’s bicentennial monument. Apparently, Azerbaijan contributed millions of dollars to landscape and remodel the park where the monument is located, as well as another public square in downtown Mexico City.

Protesters say that a man who ruled such a far-away land with a heavy hand should not be on a boulevard decorated with statues to Mexican and



AGBU volunteers form an assembly line to ensure that families throughout Syria receive necessary food and supplies.

Donations Continue Pouring in to Support Humanitarian Aid Initiatives across Syria

NEW YORK – The online and phone fundraising campaign launched by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) earlier this month to aid Armenian communities affected by the deepening crisis in Syria has seen an overwhelming response, with more than \$150,000 donations received in September. Support has poured in from all corners of the world to meet the growing needs of thousands of Armenian families in Aleppo, as well as in Damascus and Kamishli, where cautionary security measures are being taken.

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At UN General Debate Armenia Pledges to Contribute to UN Reform

NEW YORK – On the last day of the General Assembly’s high-level debate on October 1, Armenia’s Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, pledged to make a “feasible contribution” to United Nations reform stressing the urgency of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

“A few days ago, in the framework of the UN, the first-ever High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace took place, urging tolerance and building mutual understanding and mutual respect,” Nalbandian told the 67th Assembly at its general debate, at the UN Headquarters in New York.

“Unfortunately,” he added, “nowadays hate and intolerance are continuing to spread in some parts of the world and we

HARRY KOUNDAKJIAN PHOTO



Armenia’s Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian shares a laugh with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

have yet to dig into the roots and causes of such a situation, to have the courage to openly ask difficult questions on the reasons and face sometimes painful responses.”

In his statement, Nalbandian referred to what he termed the government of Azerbaijan’s “release and glorification” of Ramil Safarov, who was convicted of killing an Azeri officer, saying, “the scandalous affair has serious undermined the Nagorno-Karabagh negotiation process and endangered the fragile regional security and stability.”

Nalbandian also voiced concern at the worsening situation in Syria, which he said directly affected the large Armenian community. “The denial of genocide and impunity pave the way for the repetition of new crimes against humanity,” he noted.

Nalbandian is one of scores of world leaders and other high-level officials presenting their views and comments on issues of individual, national and international relevance at the Assembly’s general debate. (See the full text of his speech on page 2.)

Armenian Assembly of America 40th Anniversary Celebration Pays Tribute to Political, Social Leaders

WASHINGTON – In a capacity-filled venue, Armenian Assembly members, supporters and friends alike gathered last Saturday in downtown Los Angeles, Calif., as the Assembly celebrated its 40th anniversary, reported the Assembly. The Assembly gala honored several outstanding individuals exemplifying decades of public and community service.

Presenting the Assembly’s “Distinguished Humanitarian Award” to Elizabeth Agbalian, Flora Dunaian and Savey Tufenkian, Assembly

Chairman Hirair Hovnanian praised their work stating, “I am truly proud of them for their dedication and their loyalty to the Armenian people.” Hovnanian added: “You have set an example for people to follow in your footsteps.” Speaking on behalf of all three women, Dunaian stated, “we are overwhelmed and grateful for the honor.”

Headlining the program, George Deukmejian, the 35th governor of California, presented the Assembly’s “George Deukmejian Award for Public Service” to Deborah and Charles Poochigian. In accepting the award, Deborah Poochigian expressed her appreciation stating that the governor and his wife were role models, adding, “we will always make you proud.” Charles Poochigian thanked the Assembly and its

see ASSEMBLY, page 8



George and Gloria Deukmejian with Hirair Hovnanian

Mary Papazian Inducted As President of Southern Conn. State University

NEW HAVEN (Combined Sources) – Dr. Mary Papazian was inducted as the 11th president and second female president of Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) on Friday.

Papazian, 53, the first Armenian-American woman to lead a US university – focused academically on British literature, specifically 17th-century poet and clergyman John Donne. She was provost and senior vice president for academic affairs and professor of English at Lehman College of the City University of New York before coming to SCSU.

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Mary Papazian (center) is invested by Michael Meotti (behind Papazian), Executive Vice President of the Board of Regents, as the 11 President of Southern Connecticut State University.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Syrian Armenian Families Request Asylum In Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Eighty-five Syrian-Armenian families, totaling 220 persons, have requested asylum from Armenia.

As the head of the service said, more than 4,000 Syrian-Armenians are currently in Armenia, the head of the immigration office, Firdus Zakaryan, said. “The most urgent issue our Syrian compatriots are facing is lack of jobs. Some specialties do not conform to the available work.”

Union of Employers of Armenia is also making efforts to alleviate the difficulties by offering free advice. Head of the Union of Employers of Armenia Gagik Makaryan said, “In the near future we have intentions to convene another similar conference with the participation of international experts. We shall exert junctions to settle Syrian-Armenians job issues.”

The Ministry of Diaspora highlighted the problem of textbooks and programs. “We are sparing no efforts that Syrian-Armenian children would be able to keep to the program when back to Syria. We are looking forward to textbooks which are due to arrive from Syria,” said a spokesperson.

Currently Syrian-Armenians are attending the schools of the capital to get acquainted with Eastern Armenian. The Syrian school is located in Kentron administrative district’s School 14, where 85-90 percent of the 200 pupils will continue their studies in Armenia.

Heffern and Deputy PM Discuss Child and Labor Trafficking

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian deputy prime minister and chairman of the National Anti-Human Trafficking Committee, Armen Gevorgian, received a US delegation headed by Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern.

The two groups discussed ways to cooperate in the fight against trafficking. The guests praised the activities of the Interdepartmental Working Group on human trafficking, stating they were impressed by the work done in recent years and were ready to assist them to develop it further.

Gevorgian noted that currently issues related to labor and child trafficking are central issues. In the course of the meeting the sides dwelled on the Armenian part of the report prepared by the US dealing with forced labor by children. Gevorgian stated the relevant bodies will be instructed to examine the issues raised in the report. He also presented the work done in the field of child protection in recent years.

Loris Tjeknavorian to Celebrate Anniversary in Homeland

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Composer and conductor Loris Tjeknavorian is scheduled to celebrate his 75th anniversary in Armenia at the invitation of Alexander Spendiaryan Opera and Ballet National Academic Theatre Artistic Director Karen Durgaryan. The program, featuring works by him, will take place on October 19.

Tjeknavorian said he is extremely happy to celebrate his birthday in Armenia.

Tjeknavorian has made a great contribution in the recognition of Armenian independence; a concert was held, titled “Yes to Independence,” to prompt independence recognition. “All Armenia was following the concert and in a night the voices of the favoring people got 96 percent. Yet I was not an Armenian citizen, I just could not cast my vote in favor of independence. I cooked the dish and did not eat it,” Tjeknavorian said.

Throughout different periods of times Tjeknavorian has received different prizes, the latest the “prominent conductor” award and the first degree medal for “services rendered to the Motherland” on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of Armenia’s independence.

Text of Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian’s Speech at the United Nations

NEW YORK – Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian delivered a speech at the General Debate of the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly. In his speech, he touched upon the release of the convicted Azerbaijani murderer Ramil Safarov, who had been released from a Hungarian prison, the quest for peace in Nagorno Karabagh, the state of Syrian’s Armenian community and recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Excerpts from the text of the speech are presented below:

Armenia has committed itself to the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the United Nations. We support the United Nations reform processes and are ready to bring our feasible contribution to them. We believe that the reforms are an opportunity to make the role of the UN stronger on crucial issues facing the world and to accomplish both the Millennium Development and Sustainable Development Goals.

We welcome the fact that along with the agenda of the 67th session that encompasses the pressing issues of joint responsibility for maintenance of international peace, security, it is proposed to focus during this session on the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

In this context we consider the goals of disarmament and arms control as major elements of global and regional security systems. We must also shoulder the responsibility to work together to counter militaristic threats.

A few days ago, in the framework of the UN the first-ever High-Level Forum on Culture of Peace took place urging for tolerance and building mutual understanding and mutual respect. Unfortunately nowadays hate and intolerance are continuing to spread in some parts of the world and we have yet to dig into the roots and causes of such situations, to have the courage to openly ask difficult questions on the reasons and face sometimes painful responses.

Regrettably, we have witnessed intolerance and hatred in our part of the world, too. Year after year Armenia has been raising its concerns from this podium over the militaristic rhetoric, blatant violation of international commitments and anti-Armenian hysteria being instilled into the Azerbaijani society from the highest levels of its leadership.

Many international organizations on human rights alerted about flagrant cases of xenophobia, racism, intolerance and violations of human rights in Azerbaijan, in regards to its policy of hatred against Armenians.

What is the Azerbaijani response? It is not only ignoring the expectations of the international community, but it is constantly making new steps going against the values of the civilized world. The latest such case is the Azeri government’s release and glorification of the murderer [Ramil] Safarov, who had slaughtered with an axe an Armenian officer in his sleep, during a NATO program in Budapest simply because he was an Armenian. The Azerbaijani leadership made him a symbol of national pride and an example to follow. The world reaction was unanimous and very clear in condemning what was done by Baku. Azerbaijan expresses bewilderment on the stance of the international community. And what did they expect? That the international community would

applaud the glorification of a heinous murderer? Azerbaijani leadership is continuing to pretend that this act corresponds not only to the Azerbaijani constitution and legislation, but also to the norms and principles of international law, the respective European Convention.

The Council of Europe Commissioner of Human Rights warned, “to glorify and reward such a person flies in the face of all accepted standards for human rights protection and rule of law.” The European Parliament president and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe president alerted about the abuse of the European legal instrument. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said that “ethnically motivated hate crimes of this gravity should be deplored and properly punished – not publicly glorified.”

It is very clear that there are different perceptions about international legal principles and laws, different perceptions in Azerbaijan and the rest of the world about what is good and what is bad. This is deeply irresponsible and shameful behavior of not only a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, but also a member of the UN.

It is clear that international community should not tolerate the attempts of the Azerbaijani leadership to adjust the international law to their own racist ideology. Having a rich internal experience in corruption, Baku is attempting to transfer it to interstate relations exploiting it as a tool to impose its own misperceptions on others. The international community could not tolerate the attempts of Azerbaijan to replace the rule of law with the rule of oil.

Safarov’s scandalous affair has seriously undermined the Nagorno-Karabagh negotiation process and endangered the fragile regional security and stability.

Azerbaijan poses a threat to the security and stability in the region by its constant threat to use force against Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia along with unprovoked daily war-mongering by its leadership, by not only rejecting the proposals of the three co-chair countries on the consolidation of the ceasefire agreement, on the creation of a mechanism of investigation of incidents on the line of contact, but also by systematic ceasefire violations not only on the contact line between Nagorno-Karabagh and Azerbaijan, but also by provocations on the border with Armenia, by ceaseless acts of vandalism towards the Armenian historical and cultural heritage.

While Armenia together with the international mediators is exerting efforts around the table of negotiations, Azerbaijan is multiplying its military budget, increasing it more than 20-fold during the last few years, and boasting about it. While Armenia and the international community are calling for withdrawal of snipers from the line of contact, Azerbaijani leaders are rejecting it and opening sniper schools for the youth. While Armenia is calling for regional economic cooperation, which could become a tool for increasing confidence between the parties, Azerbaijani authorities are declaring that together with Turkey, they will continue the blockade until there are no more Armenians in Armenia.

Armenia and the international

community are speaking in one language regarding the Nagorno-Karabagh issue. The documents on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict adopted in the frameworks of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Astana Summit of 2010 and Ministerial Conferences of Helsinki 2008, Athens 2009, Almaty 2010, Vilnius 2011, the statements of presidents of the co-chair countries in the frameworks of the G8 Summits in L’Aquila in 2009, in Muskoka in 2010, in Deauville in 2011 and during the G20 Summit 2012 in Los Cabos are proofs of that. Armenia’s position is in line with these documents, is in line with the position of the international community – to go for the settlement on this basis.

Despite the intensive efforts of the three co-chair countries it has been impossible to reach a breakthrough in the conflict resolution, because the Azerbaijani side rejected one after another of all proposals presented by the mediators.

Regardless of Azerbaijan’s destructive stance, Armenia will continue to exert efforts towards the settlement of the Karabagh issue exclusively through peaceful means and on the basis of the purposes, principles and norms reflected in the UN Charter and the international law.

As many speakers, I should also express our concerns about the developments and worsening of the humanitarian situation in Syria, which directly affects also the large Armenian community in this country. This community was formed mainly by the survivors of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Empire in the beginning of the 20th century. Today they are struggling for life as many Syrian citizens. Armenia is continuing to receive refugees from Syria that are full of worries about the escalation of violence in this country. It is impossible to reach a durable settlement without the cessation of hostilities by all parties and without an inclusive political dialogue taking into account the interests of all Syrians.

The United Nations will mark the 65th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide next year. That anniversary will become an important landmark to make it a more effective instrument in combatting the crimes of genocide. The denial of genocide and impunity pave way for the repetition of new crimes against humanity. As descendants of the nation that survived the horrors of the first genocide of the 20th century we are convinced that independent of any kind of considerations, the international community should stand together in the recognition and strong condemnation of genocides to be able to prevent them. It is due to the absence of this unanimity that humanity witnesses new attempts of crimes against humanity. Our strong conviction is that we should keep this issue high on our common agenda. We should recommit ourselves to a world where the crime of genocide would never occur again.

Armenia shares its part of our common responsibility to support the United Nations as the stage of dialogue, multilateralism and collective action to address the multiple challenges of today’s world.



INTERNATIONAL

Seeking Return of Art, Turkey Jolts Museums

By Dan Bilefsky

ISTANBUL (*New York Times*) – An aggressive campaign by Turkey to reclaim antiquities it says were looted has led in recent months to the return of an ancient sphinx and many golden treasures from the region's rich past. But it has also drawn condemnation from some of the world's largest museums, which call the campaign cultural blackmail.

In their latest salvo, Turkish officials this summer filed a criminal complaint in the Turkish court system seeking an investigation into what they say was the illegal excavation of 18 objects that are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Norbert Schimmel collection.

Last year, Turkish officials recalled, Turkey's director-general of cultural heritage and museums, Murat Suslu, presented Met officials with a stunning ultimatum: prove the provenance of ancient figurines and golden bowls in the collection, or Turkey could halt lending treasures. Turkey says that threat has now gone into effect.

"We know 100 percent that these objects at the Met are from Anatolia," the Turkish region known for its ancient ruins, Suslu, an archaeologist, said in an interview. "We only want back what is rightfully ours."

Turkey's efforts have spurred an international debate about who owns antiquities after centuries of shifting borders. Museums like the Met, the Getty, the Louvre and the Pergamon in Berlin say their mission to display global art treasures is under siege from Turkey's tactics.

Museum directors say the repatriation drive seeks to alter accepted practices, like a widely-embraced UNESCO convention that lets museums acquire objects that were outside their countries of origin before 1970. Although Turkey ratified the convention in 1981, it is now citing a 1906 Ottoman-era law – one that banned the export of artifacts – to claim any object removed after that date as its own.

Theft and looting are wrong, Turkey says, no matter when they occurred. "Artifacts, just like people, animals or plants, have souls and historical memories," said Turkey's culture minister, Ertugrul Gunay. "When they are repatriated to their countries, the balance of nature will be restored."

Turkey is not alone in demanding the return of artifacts removed from its borders; Egypt and Greece have made similar demands of museums, and Italy persuaded the Met to return an ancient bowl known as the Euphronios krater in 2006.

But Turkey's aggressive tactics, which come as the country has been asserting itself politically in the Middle East in the wake of the Arab Spring, have particularly alarmed museums. Officials here are refusing to lend treasures, delaying the licensing of archaeological excavations and publicly shaming museums.

"The Turks are engaging in polemics and nasty politics," said Hermann Parzinger, president of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, which oversees the Pergamon. "They should be careful about making moral claims when their museums are full of looted treasures" acquired, he said, by the Ottomans in their centuries ruling parts of the Middle East and southeast Europe.

One example is a prized sarcophagus named for Alexander the Great, discovered in Sidon, Lebanon, in 1887, and now in Istanbul's Archaeological Museum. Suslu said the sarcophagus was legally Turkey's because it had been excavated on territory that belonged to Turkey at the time.

Turkey's campaign has enjoyed notable success, however. Last year the Pergamon agreed to return a 3,000-year-old sphinx from the Hittite Empire that Turkey said had been taken to Germany for restoration in 1917. German officials said Turkey had threatened to block major archaeological projects if the sphinx did not come home.

But even after it had, the Germans complained, Turkey still declined to collaborate and refused to lend four objects for a current exhibition. Suslu indicated that the Pergamon had to return other disputed items before loans would resume.

Parzinger said Turkey had no legal claim to the contested objects it says his museum has illegally, and that treating Germany like a petty thief puts more than a century of archaeological cooperation at risk and harms relations between the countries as Turkey seeks to join the European Union. He pointed out that Westerners had been at the forefront of safeguarding Turkey's rich history.

"If all Westerners are just thieves and robbers," he asked, "then who has been restoring their cultural heritage?"

In another victory for Turkey, last month the University of Pennsylvania's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology announced that it had agreed to lend indefinitely 24 artifacts to Turkey from ancient Troy whose murky provenance helped inspire the 1970 UNESCO convention. Turkey, in turn, promised future loans and collaboration with the university.

Some museum directors said that they feared that the surrender of the objects by the university, which acquired them in 1966, threatened to

lead to a flood of further claims.

In September 2011, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, returned the top half of an 1,800-year-old statue, "Weary Herakles," which the Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, triumphantly took home on his government jet.

To press the Met for documentation on the Schimmel objects, Turkish officials said they had refused to lend to a Met exhibition that ran this year, "Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition."

The Met denied it had asked Turkey for pieces for the show. Its director, Thomas P. Campbell, said in an interview that the Met believed the objects sought by Turkey had been legally acquired by Norbert Schimmel in the European antiquities market in the 1960s before being donated to the museum in 1989, and thus were in compliance with the Unesco accord.

He acknowledged that most of the objects had no documented ownership history, but also said that there was no evidence of an illicit excavation. Turkish officials said they had not yet uncovered evidence proving that the objects had been illegally smuggled out.

Marc Masurovsky, an expert on plundered art at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, said it was no surprise that in the absence of an international agency to enforce anti-plunder measures, the Turks were resorting to hard-nosed diplomacy. But Turkey faces hurdles trying to apply an Ottoman law outside its borders, he noted. And even if that law is accepted as applicable, dating the illegal excavation of any site is difficult because no records are typically kept.

Georgian Opposition Celebrates as It Seems Headed to Victory in Parliamentary Election

TBILISI (Reuters) – An opposition coalition led by a billionaire claimed victory in a parliamentary election in Georgia on Monday, but President Mikheil Saakashvili's ruling party could yet cling to power.

Thousands of supporters of the Georgian Dream coalition celebrated in the streets of Tbilisi, sounding car horns and carrying blue party banners and red-on-white national flags over their heads.

"I expect that we will get no less than 100 seats in the new (150 seat) parliament," the coalition's leader, wealthy tycoon Bidzina Ivanishvili, told a cheering crowd. "I have achieved what I have long been striving for."

Exit polls showed Ivanishvili's coalition had won more votes in balloting by party list to fill 77 of the parliament seats, while Saakashvili's party claimed it won most of the individual races to fill the other 73 seats.

Saakashvili says the Georgian Dream coalition would move Georgia away from the West and back into Moscow's orbit.

An exit poll shown by private pro-government channels Imedi and Rustavi-2 put Georgian Dream on 50 percent of ballots in party-list voting, to 41 percent for Saakashvili's United National Movement (UNM).

Ivanishvili, a former recluse who entered politics only a year ago, said he was confident Georgian Dream candidates won at least 50 of the individual races.

"A very interesting precedent has been set in which the leadership has been replaced through elections," he said.

Saakashvili swept to the presidency in the bloodless Rose Revolution of 2003

but led Georgia into a disastrous five-day war with Russia over two break-away regions in 2008.

Saakashvili must step down after a presidential election next year, when reforms weakening the head of state and giving more power to parliament and prime minister are to take effect.

If his party retains control of parliament, it may give him a way to keep calling the shots. If not, Ivanishvili could become premier and Georgia's dominant politician.

"Besides being a contest for parliament, it is also a shadow leadership election," said Thomas de Waal, a Caucasus expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

In a televised address after polls closed, Saakashvili, 44, said it appeared Georgian Dream had prevailed in the party-list voting but his party had come out ahead in the individual races.

Tension was already high after video footage of torture, beatings and sexual assault of prison inmates led to street protests after it was aired on two television channels opposed to Saakashvili about two weeks before the election.

The footage undermined Saakashvili's image as a reformer who had imposed the rule of law and rooted out corruption.

"I'm voting against violence and abuse. How can I do otherwise after what we have all seen on TV?" Natela Zhorzholiani, 68, said as she voted in Tbilisi.

Ivanishvili has won votes by promising to tackle poverty and corruption, blaming these problems on Saakashvili, although not everyone trusts him to do better than the current president and Saakashvili portrays him as open to Russian manipulation.

International News

Turkey to Exhume Ex-President Ozal As Death Investigated

ISTANBUL (Reuters) – The remains of former Turkish President Turgut Ozal are to be exhumed from his grave in Istanbul on Tuesday on the orders of prosecutors investigating suspicions of foul play in his death 19 years ago.

Mechanical diggers arrived at his tomb within a towering mausoleum in a cemetery on the European side of Turkey's largest city under the supervision of a prosecutor-led team including forensic experts, television footage showed.

After Ozal's death, relatives and associates said he was poisoned and forensic teams will investigate whether any poisonous substances are present in the remains.

Ozal, the eighth president of the Turkish Republic, died of heart failure in April 1993 in an Ankara hospital at the age of 65 while in office.

Ozal gave his firm support to the West, helping the US-led coalition which expelled Iraq from Kuwait in 1991.

Prosecutors decided two weeks ago that Ozal's remains should be exhumed and another autopsy performed after a state supervisory board, acting on the order of President Abdullah Gul, produced a report in June voicing suspicions about the death.

After a period of military rule following a 1980 coup, Ozal dominated Turkish politics during his period as prime minister from 1983-89 and parliament then elected him president.

Turk Distorts Number of Armenian Churches

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey Bekir Bozdog announced that 349 Christian churches and 38 synagogues currently functioned in Turkey. He stated that in Turkey there were 52 churches which belonged to the Armenians, 140 that belonged to the Greeks and 58 to the Assyrians, according to timeturk.com.

Bozdog distorted the real number of the Armenian churches located in Turkey. He mentioned only the number of churches, which are currently under the auspices of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Bozdog forgot that after the Genocide of 1915 his ancestors massively plundered and destroyed or turned into mosques the Armenian churches, the number of which had reached about 2,000.

Akhalkalak Protest Seeks Freedom of Vahagn Chakhalyan

AKHALKALAK, Georgia (hetq) – Hundreds of Armenians took to the streets this week, demanding the release of Javakhk-Armenian activist Vahagn Chakhalyan.

The protestors assembled in the town's central Mashtots Square and condemned what they described as the beating of inmates in Georgian correctional facilities.

United Javakhk, the group which organized the protest, stated that similar demonstrations would continue if Georgian authorities did not heed their calls for Chakhalyan's release.

Armenian Ambassador Speaks on Independence

BEIRUT (Armenpress) – The Tekeyan Cultural Association of Beirut organized a celebration dedicated to the 21st anniversary of the independence of Armenia. The event was opened by the chairman of the association, Aram Sepejyan.

Then the keynote speaker, Armenia's Ambassador of Lebanon Ashot Kocharian, presented the achievements and challenges since independence.

The event included musical performances and recitations as well as a film about Armenia. Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Lebanon Archbishop Gegham Khacherian gave the benediction.



Community News

AGBU Orange County Saturday School Celebrates 20 Years with Longtime Principal

COSTA MESA, Calif. – This summer marked two great milestones for the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Orange County Saturday School: its 20th anniversary and the 80th birthday of its principal, Krikor Mahdessian, whose dedication has helped the school grow over the past two decades.

On Saturday, June 16, students, alumni, parents and teachers, both past and present, came together in Costa Mesa to celebrate what has proven to be a strong pillar in the local community. In addition to hosting Saturday classes, in 2009, the school, in collaboration with the AGBU Orange County Chapter, became one of the founding members of the Armenian Studies Groups, initiating the first Armenian history classes at the University of Southern California, Irvine. Plans to establish a permanent Armenian chair at the university are ongoing, as the school's students continue to benefit from Armenian history courses.



AGBU Orange County Saturday School President Krikor Mahdessian celebrates both the school's 20th anniversary and his 80th birthday alongside his wife, Vehan Mahdessian.

The evening's festivities were started off by event coordinator Armine Gekchyan, a teacher at the school for more than 10 years. Gekchyan welcomed family and friends before handing the microphone to several current students who took the opportunity to share the ways the school has positively shaped their lives. Sofia Sakzian was one of those students who spoke before the guests and said, "I have been going to Armenian School for almost 10 years and I've enjoyed every minute of it. Every Saturday I come and make more wonderful memories and new friends... I am so thankful for everyone that helped me learn and experience my own culture and history."

Following the students' remarks, the school's first teacher, and its only teacher for 20 consecutive years, Geganoush Muradian, reminisced about the school's beginnings, looking back fondly on the tight-knit group of eight students who first sat in her classroom and all those who have done so since. She then introduced Mahdessian, who thanked all for attending, and for their continuous support of the school.

The lasting impact that the AGBU Orange County Saturday School has had over the past two decades was made clear by the presence of several graduates, many of whom have gone on to complete their college degrees and returned especially for the event. Sitting together throughout the evening, the former students see PRINCIPAL, page 6



AGBU YSIP interns shadow a doctor at the Arabkir Children's Hospital as they prepare for their careers in medicine.

AGBU Yerevan Summer Internship Program Leaves Students Transformed at End of Sixth Year

NEW YORK and YEREVAN – For six years, the AGBU Yerevan Summer Internship Program (YSIP) has provided Armenian university students from across the diaspora with the unique opportunity to gain valuable hands-on work experience, bond with their global peers and witness firsthand the natural beauty and ancient landmarks that have been the subject of their studies and their family histories for as long as they can remember. This year, 27 students from Germany, Lebanon, Syria, the UK and the US took advantage of everything that YSIP has to offer, enjoying a complete cultural immersion experience that left all participants already planning a trip back to Armenia when the program came to an end.

On June 25, planes that had taken off from various parts of the world touched down in Armenia's Zvartnots Airport, carrying this year's talented and enthusiastic YSIP participants. The interns immediately settled into their new home and new routine, which was filled with work, weekly language classes at the American University of Armenia and dance classes at the AGBU Nork Children's Center, as well as volunteer projects. They also met with government officials and community leaders, including the Speaker of the Karabagh Parliament Ashot Ghulyan, Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan and Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian, who gave them a well-rounded view of Armenia and Karabagh.

Students were placed in a broad range of organizations, which included the Arabkir Children's Hospital, the American University of Armenia's Engineering Department, ArmNews TV, the Ministry of the Diaspora, the United Nations Development Program and many others. They shadowed neurologists and cardiologists, provided much-needed social services and even oversaw the construction and development of AGBU's newest headquarters, a building that will soon stand tall in the heart of the city. Chair of the Department of Neurology at Yerevan State University and supervisor Hovhannes Manvelyan commented on YSIP's positive impact, stating, "Programs such as these are essential in order to ensure future ties with the homeland especially for those young men and women who have never been to Armenia before and were raised in the diaspora. It's important for them to come to Armenia, get a better understanding of their culture and make friends."

The students' internships opened their eyes to both the complexities and rewards of their chosen career paths, while their daily encounters opened their minds to a country they thought they knew, but which continued to amaze them. They were overwhelmed by the ever-present hospitality, the city's large squares constantly filled with music and people, and the breathtaking landscapes of the countryside.

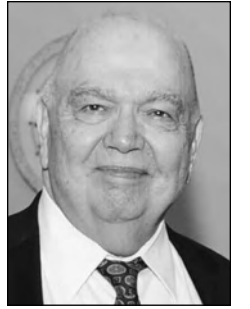
As in previous years, highlights of YSIP 2012 included excursions around the country and a journey to Karabagh. Bella Arutyunyan, a University of California, Los Angeles student reflected on her trip, noting, "One of the best experiences this summer was getting the chance to get out of Yerevan and take a four-day trip to Karabagh. Everyone kept telling me how beautiful the wilderness was going to be and how much I was going to love it. In all honesty, however, I didn't think I could find any connection to a piece of land and a people I didn't know much about. But if there is one thing I've learned from being in Armenia, it's how important it is to see things with your own eyes because stories alone aren't enough."

see INTERNS, page 5

Prof. Richard Hovannisian to Receive Vahan Cardashian Award

MAHWAH, N.J. – The Armenian National Committee of America Eastern Region will be honoring Prof. Richard Hovannisian with the Vahan Cardashian Award at the sixth annual Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) Eastern Region Banquet on December 1, at the Sheraton Crossroads.

"We are proud to honor Richard Hovannisian with the Cardashian Award for his many accomplishments, including his outstanding research and development of Armenian Studies in higher education," said ANCA Eastern Region Executive Director Michelle Hagopian.



Richard Hovannisian

Hovannisian is a professor of Armenian and Near Eastern Studies at UCLA. Born and raised in Tulare, Calif., Hovannisian received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of California-Berkeley, and he obtained his PhD from UCLA in 1966. In 1987, Hovannisian was appointed the first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Endowed Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA.

He is a Guggenheim Fellow who has received many honors for his scholarship, civic activities and advancement of Armenian Studies. Hovannisian is the author of numerous books, including *Armenia on the Road to Independence* and *The Armenian Holocaust*. He has edited and contributed to at least a dozen other works and has published more than 50 scholarly articles.

Hovannisian serves on the board of directors of nine scholarly and civic organizations, including the Facing History and Ourselves Foundation, the International Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, International Alert, the Foundation for Research on Armenian Architecture and the Armenian National Institute. He also received the UCLA Alumni Association's 2010-2011 Most Inspiring Teacher award.

The Vahan Cardashian Award is given annually to an ANCA supporter who demonstrates dedication and active involvement in the Armenian-American community and its issues.

Primate to Visit Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Archbishop Khajag Barsamian will preside over the activities the weekend of October 13 and 14 at Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church.

On Saturday, October 13, at 7 p.m., vespers and ordinations will take place in which 10 young men will receive the four minor orders, with a reception to follow in Hanoian Hall.

On Sunday morning, Episcopal Divine Liturgy and Ordinations will be celebrated by Barsamian; he will elevate three men to the rank of sub-deacon. Following church services, the "Name Day Dinner" will take place honoring the Parishioners of the Year George Chakoian, Jean Farmanian Ricci and Marion Der Vartanian.

Tickets are \$20 and for children under 15, \$10. For tickets, contact Ann Ayrassian or the church office. The deadline for tickets sales is October 10.



COMMUNITY NEWS

AGBU Yerevan Internship Program Leaves Students Transformed

INTERNS, from page 4

Her words underscored the importance of connecting Armenian youth with their ancestral homeland, which AGBU has accomplished through YSIP and a number of other Armenia-based programs that drew more than 500 participants to the country this summer alone.

In addition to the trip to Karabagh, the YSIP group toured the Garni Temple and the Geghard Monastery, before climbing Armenia's highest peak, Mt. Aragats. Gumri was another destination outside of the capital, where the interns visited the Terchoonian Home, an orphanage that provides shelter and care for more than 20 children. The YSIP interns brightened the children's day, bringing them new toys, playing together outside and admiring their rug weaving, a favorite hobby in the home. The visit was one that had a lasting impact on intern Kathrine Kazanjian, from the US, who stated, "After this program and the interactions I have had



At one of YSIP's many planned seminars, the interns gather in Armenia's Ministry of Defense, where they met with Minister Seyran Ohanian.



Interns spend the afternoon with the local youth of Gandzasar during a four-day trip to Karabagh.

with the people of Armenia – everyone from taxi drivers and sales people to the children of Karabagh and the orphans of Gumri – I returned home feeling a great sense of responsibility to my homeland and its people. Now, I want to learn even more about where I come from and do more to create a better future for Armenia."

After six weeks, the YSIP participants prepared for their departure. But they couldn't leave without showing the youth and staff of the AGBU Nork Center all they had learned

during their weekly dance classes. On the evening of July 31, the group stepped on the center's stage for a special performance, hand in hand, to the sound of Armenian music. Their routine drew applause everywhere in the auditorium, as well as praise from their new friends and colleagues. It was one last great moment that they would all share before YSIP officially came to an end. On August 3, the participants headed home.

For more information about AGBU and its worldwide programs, visit www.agbu.org.

SOCIAL DEMOCRAT
HUNCHAKIAN PARTY

125

THROUGHOUT
HISTORY

PARTICIPANTS

PROF. RICHARD HOVANNISIAN . PROF. GERARD LIBARIDIAN . PROF. KEVORK BARDAKJIAN
PROF. ARA DOSTOURIAN . PROF. ARA SANJIAN . PROF. HRATCH TCHILINGIRIAN . DR. GARABET MOUMDJIAN
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COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Stephen's Elementary School Campus Expansion

Grand Opening Scheduled for Sunday, October 14, 2012

WATERTOWN – St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) announced that its campus expansion construction project, which had been launched on June 15, was completed on August 31 and met the school's goal of opening for the 2012/2013 academic year.

The Grand Opening Ceremony for the expanded building will take place on site, at 46 Elton Ave., on Sunday, October 14 at noon.

The expansion, one of the largest projects in the Greater Boston Armenian community in the past two decades, cost approximately \$1.37 million and includes the addition of a new 6,000-square-foot, two-story structure encompassing new classrooms, a learning center and indoor and outdoor recreation areas. Its completion represents a milestone in the school's history and allows it to further enhance its core offering with dedicated classrooms for Armenian, reading, STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) instruction and more.

"A further enriched SSAES experience today, delivers better-prepared students tomorrow – which was the primary goal of the expansion," said Principal Houry Boyamian.

The additional space also allows the school to increase its enrollment capacity. The project was funded by donations from the community, with the majority of the funds raised in 2012.

"We are very grateful to our donors, many of whom are longtime supporters of the school," said Dr. Avak Kahvejian, chairman of the Board of Directors. "Thanks to their immediate, generous financial support, the school did not have to use its endowment fund or incur any debt to finance this significant construction project."

The ribbon-cutting and donor-recognition ceremony, will be presided over by Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan. Everyone in the community is invited to attend.

SSAES, founded in 1984, is the only Armenian day school to be fully accredited by the Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE), the accrediting body for independent elementary schools. AISNE has commended the school for "creating an environment where all the students love to read and appear committed to academic excellence." The AISNE accreditation puts St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School academically on par with top private schools in the region. To learn more about SSAES, visit www.ssaes.org.

AGBU School Celebrates 20 Years with Longtime Principal

PRINCIPAL, from page 4

decided to form an alumni committee to help make similar reunions even more frequent. Their efforts are sure to bring together the 500 graduates that have passed through the Saturday School's doors.

Soon after the first informal alumni association meeting got underway, everyone gathered to serenade Mahdessian for his milestone birthday. Pleased with the turnout, Gekchyan com-

mented, "It was amazing to see so many generations share the dance floor, break bread together and share their many memories of the school. The event was enjoyed by all and hopefully more such events will be organized in the future."

The AGBU Saturday School is one of three schools within the AGBU Western District. For more information, visit <http://agbuca.org/index.jsp>.



AGBU Orange County Saturday School Principal Krikor Mahdessian celebrates the school's 20th anniversary and his 80th birthday with students and alumni.

Bible Study Classes

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We Would Like To Invite You To Come And Join With Us and Attend Our 'Excellent' Bible Study Classes.

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PROGRAM

Social Time: Coffee, chorag and cheese 6:30-7:00 P.M.

Bible Study Class 7:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Armenian Memorial Church, 32 Bigelow Avenue, Watertown, MA

Call us at 617-923-0498 and let us know if you are planning to attend. You will be greatly enriched.

OBITUARY

Rev. Bernard A. Guekguezian Longtime First Armenian Pastor

FRESNO (*The Fresno Bee*) – Rev. Bernard A. Guekguezian, pastor emeritus of First Armenian Presbyterian Church, died on September 22 at age 85.

Guekguezian served as pastor of First Armenian Presbyterian Church from 1978 to 2000. The church is California's oldest Armenian congregation, chartered on July 25, 1897.

In his 55 years of ministry, Guekguezian served in Worcester, Mass., Paramus, NJ, and Belmont, Mass.

His son, Rev. Ara R. Guekguezian, who is senior pastor of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, says his father will be remembered for helping others.

"I am very grateful he lived so long," he said. "My father was a very loving, generous man, especially with time and money. His most significant contribution to our community was helping new Armenian immigrants transition to life in Fresno. In the late '70s, it was Armenians from the Middle East. In the '90s, it was Armenians from Armenia."

He spent his final years of ministry with his son as they served together for eight years at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church.

He leaves his wife and partner in ministry, Knar; his two sons, Ara (Evelina) Guekguezian, and Asbed "Bernie" and (Amy) Guekguezian; and five grandchildren.

Gifts in lieu of flowers may be sent to the Armenian Missionary Association of America,



Rev. Bernard A. Guekguezian

31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652 (Bernard Guekguezian Endowment for Church Development).

A funeral service was held September 28 at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Mary Papazian Inducted as President of Southern Conn. State University

PAPAZIAN, from page 1

She and her husband, Dennis Papazian, have two daughters, Ani and Marie. They reside in Woodbridge.

"After speaking with her I have no doubt that this is just the beginning of a great era for Southern under her leadership. She is a dedicated, hard working person who thinks outside of the box," said Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman last week.

Southern, which was founded as a teachers college in 1893 and now offers 114 graduate and

undergraduate programs, welcomed Papazian as president in February and since then, she has fit right in.

"Today marks the beginning of the next chapter in Southern's storied 120-year history. Today we welcome Mary Papazian, an academic, an administrator and in my short time getting to know her, a teacher who is sure to invigorate the campus community in the months and years to come," said Erin McGuckin, class of 2013.

McGuckin called her administration "partici-



Dr. Mary Papazian at the ceremony



From left, Edmond Azadian of Detroit, Panos Tiitizian of Los Angeles, Ani and Dr. Roupen Mirzakhonian of Yerevan, Dr. Mary Papazian, Dr. Dennis Papazian and Hagop Vartivarian of New Jersey

patory by design" and stressed that she supports academics, campus activities and community service.

In her speech, Papazian spoke about her vision for the university as well as her heritage.

"This I pledge: I will have an open administration, I will provide equitable treatment for all and I will fulfill without fail all official and unofficial responsibilities. My administration will be evenhanded and predictable," said Papazian. "This is a university where we strive to give the students every opportunity to acquire a first-class education with a global vision in an enlightened, compassionate, supportive and diverse environment. And we intend to do more in the future. ... Together we will work to make Southern the most successful university in its class."

Papazian expressed interest in recruiting more international students to enrich the social and educational experiences of Connecticut students and better prepare them for a global society.

"Public universities like Southern (Connecticut State University) must lead the way in showing that what we can accomplish here is vitally important to the future of our society," Papazian said.

"We must make it clear to the public, to the business community, and to the political establishment that investing in an institution like Southern is not only an investment in the students who attend the university, but also by extension, it is an investment in the whole com-

munity and — and this isn't overstating it — in the very future of America."

She also tipped her hat to her Armenian heritage. "In the United States, the Armenians form a small, tightly-knit community, primarily born out of the tragic genocide of the early 20th century in which three quarters of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire were annihilated," Papazian said.

"Our roots as Armenians lie in a society and rich culture that span thousands of years. The



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Dr. Mary Papazian

King James Bible says that the Ark of Noah landed on the mountains of Armenia (Genesis 8:4), and I might suppose that in one sense all of us are Armenian. Because of our shared past, we all of Armenian ancestry have common interests and a strong connection to each other."

Guests also included the Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and Rouben Mirzakhonian, rector of the Armenian State Pedagogical University in Yerevan, Armenia.

Wyman expressed confidence in Papazian's ability to lead the university, calling her dedicated, hardworking and innovative. "I have no doubt this is just the beginning of a great era for Southern Connecticut State University," Wyman said.

In his invocation, Barsamian said, "We are privileged to stand in the company of the trustees, administrators and faculty who have led this school with great distinction as well as with the students they serve. Bless, O Lord, these fine men and women, whose devotion to learning is a beautiful and praiseworthy vocation. We rejoice to be in the presence of our distinguished guest of honor, Dr. Mary Papazian, as she begins her service as the university's 11th president.

"Her achievements as a scholar and educator are truly admirable; and we know her to be an exemplary daughter, wife, mother and leader of the Armenian Church community. Bestow your blessing on her presidency, Lord, and strengthen Dr. Papazian as a woman of character and substance, who exemplifies the dignity of a life devoted to education."

Lewis J. Robinson Jr., chairman of the state Board of Regents for Higher Education, presided over the ceremony and administered the investiture charge to Papazian. Other speakers included Wyman, US Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-3), New Haven Mayor John DeStefano Jr. and Hamden Mayor Scott P. Jackson.

(A story from the *New Haven Register* was used in this report.)

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Assembly 40th Anniversary Pays Tribute to Political, Social Leaders

ASSEMBLY, from page 1
membership for the “incredible contributions that you have made to our people, to the legacy of our people and to the future of the Armenian people.”

The Assembly also paid tribute to George and Gloria Deukmejian. A video presentation shown at the gala captured key moments in their professional lives as well as in their personal lives. The Assembly, through its sister organization, the Armenian Tree Project (ATP), planted a grove of trees in Armenia in honor of the Deukmejians, with Hovnanian presenting the award. In his remarks, the governor described the Assembly as “a premier organization for Armenians” and one that he has “highly respected and admired.”

The gala was chaired by master of ceremonies and Assembly Board member Peter Kezirian, who thanked Margaret Mgrublian of the Assembly’s



Gov. George Deukmejian, Charles and Deborah Poochigian

Evangelical Church provided the benediction.

Speaking on behalf of the organization, Assembly Board member Van Krikorian reflected on the Assembly’s 40 years of advocacy in Washington, DC.

Featured speaker, Mark Hovnamazian, president

The event coincided with Armenia’s 21st anniversary of independence. The presidents of Armenia and of Artsakh sent special greetings as did Armenia’s foreign minister and its ambassador to the United States. In addition, Armenia’s consul general in California, who attended the gala, extended his congratulations.

The gala was made possible through the support of numerous sponsors from across the United States.

•Grand Patron: Hirair and Anna Hovnanian

•Silver Patron: Armenian Missionary Association of America, CA; Talin Yacoubian and Varuj Babikian, CA; Albert and Diane Cabraloff, CA; Michelle and Peter Kezirian, CA; Hovik and Tsovinar Kiramichian, CA; James and Connie Melikian, CA.

•Bronze Patron: John and Linda Kay Abdulian, CA; AGBU Western District Committee, CA; Nazir Ashjian Jr., CA; Armenian Film Foundation, CA; The Vartkess and Rita Balian Family Foundation, VA; Anthony and Nancy Barsamian, MA; Shahan



Elizabeth Agbalian, Assembly Chairman Hirair Hovnanian, Flora Dunaian and Savey Tufenkian



A capacity crowd gathers for Assembly’s 40th anniversary gala.

Southern California Regional Council for her leadership in making the evening such a success. Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of North America, gave the opening blessing, while Rev. Vartkes Kassouni of the Armenian

and CEO of Hyatt Hotels Corporation, congratulated the Assembly on running a successful internship program in Washington, DC for the last 35 years and recalled his own experience as an Assembly intern and the “ethic of engagement” that the program instilled.



Victoria Hovhannissian and Armenia’s Consul General in Los Angeles Grigor Hovhannissian, Aline Maksoudian, Assembly Board member Van Krikorian, Gov. George Deukmejian, Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Gloria Deukmejian, Hyatt President and CEO Mark Hovnamazian, Charles and Deborah Poochigian



Gala Committee members, from left, Albert Cabraloff, Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, James Melikian, Lisa Kalustian, Margaret Mgrublian, Annie Totah, Talin Yacoubian, Diane Cabraloff, Assembly Western Region Manager Aline Maksoudian and Peter Kezirian.

Foundation, NJ; Carolyn G. Mugar, Armenia Tree Project, MA.

•Platinum Patron: David and Margaret Mgrublian, CA; Stephen Philibosian Foundation, CA; Sami and Annie Totah Family Foundation, MD; T. F. Educational Foundation, CA; USC Institute of Armenian Studies Leadership Council.

•Gold Patron: Anonymous; Elizabeth and Mihran Agbalian, CA; George and Flora Dunaian, CA; Lu Ann and Bruce Ohanian, MA; Peter and Charleen Onanian, MA; Savey and Ralph Tufenkian, CA; Jeanne Tumanjan, Commerce Casino, CA.

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Tekeyan Cultural Association 2012 Lecture Series

THE CAVES OF ARMENIA

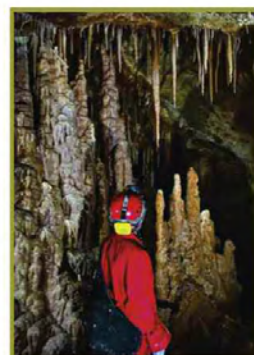
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In celebration of the opening of Armenian Heritage Park



**Ambassador
Edward P. Djerejian**

Date & Time: **Thursday, October 25, 2012 at 7pm**

Place: **Faneuil Hall, Boston**

Speaker: **Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian**

An Ambassador's Reflections on U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East and Caucasus

Founding Director, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, Ambassador Djerejian was the former U.S. Ambassador to Israel (1992-1994) and to the Syrian Arab Republic (1988-1991).

Ambassador Djerejian has served in the U.S. Foreign Service for eight Presidents from John F. Kennedy to William J. Clinton (1962-1994). Prior to his nomination by President Clinton as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, he was Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs in both the George H.W. Bush and Clinton administrations (1991-1993). After his retirement from government service in 1994, he became founding director of the Baker Institute. His book "Danger and Opportunity: An American Ambassador's Journey Through the Middle East" was published by Simon & Schuster (2008). In 2011 he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and named to the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Join us for our third annual lecture

Free and open to the public

About the Lecture on Human Rights

This endowed lecture at Faneuil Hall has been inspired by the New England women and men - intellectuals, politicians, diplomats, religious leaders and citizens - who from 1895-1918 at Faneuil Hall heard the eyewitness accounts of the atrocities taking place against the Armenian minority of the Ottoman Empire and spoke passionately about the urgent need for intervention. Relief workers, missionaries and diplomats including the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau provided accounts. Many who heard these accounts were moved to action. Distinguished Bostonians, among them Julia Ward Howe, Clara Barton, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Alice Stone Blackwell, heard these accounts and were moved to assist the Armenians. As a result, the American Red Cross launched its first international mission with Clara Barton bringing aid to the Armenians. Philanthropists nationwide raised over \$100 million in support. This was America's first internationally focused human rights movement. Source: Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris, The Armenian Genocide and America's Response*. HarperCollins, 2003

A Century Later

Just as these brave and noble witnesses gave voice to those in crisis and mobilized the gathering of Bostonians at Faneuil Hall which was to spark a nationwide response, it is our hope that this lecture will serve to refocus our attention, not only on past events, but upon the critical human rights issues of today, inspiring us to meaningful action.

"This endowed lecture on human rights, a public program of the Armenian Heritage Park, is in my father's honor as he taught so many about the need to pay attention, spot injustice and speak out wherever and whenever it occurs." -

Carolann S. Najarian, M.D.

Arts & Living

'Foodies' Nourishes Visual and Visceral Senses

By Meg Barone

WESTPORT, Conn. (*WestportNews*) – If it is true that art feeds the soul then an estimated 600 people were satisfied Friday after dining on a sumptuous visual feast of paintings, photography, sculptures and mixed-media artwork on display at the Westport Arts Center (WAC) for the opening reception of its new exhibit, "Foodies."

The exhibit, which runs through November 4, showcases art with titles such as "Symphony of Oranges," "Baking Day," "Earth's Bounty" and "Pomegranate Limelight."

"Foodface, Happy Meal" is a real Happy Meal encased in a polymer emulsion. Other works include "The Dagwood Sandwich," "Leftovers" and a humorous watercolor by Hans Wilhelm called "Pigs and Peas."

And then there are dessert-themed works – "Sweet Surprise," "Banana Split," "Strawberry Garden," "Rainier Cherries," "Red Grapes" and Nancy Reinker's mixed-media "Your Just Desserts."

"The show is very stimulating for all of your senses," said artist Valerie Lynn O'Halpin of Stamford, whose rapidograph pen-and-ink creation featured eggs, melon, lobster, strawberries, chocolate cake and grapes. It took her more than 100 hours over six months to complete the piece that she calls "Food for Thought."

WAC board member Dan Levinson said food for thought is what the arts center serves up every day. "The mission is to engage the community in meaningful conversation ... Art is the only thing that has a shot at changing the world," he added.

For Friday night's opening, the center doubled as an art and food gallery featuring local artists' works and local chefs' creations.

Helen Klisser During, WAC's director of visual arts, invited local artists to submit their interpretation of food in any medium, from painting and sculpture to photography and video. While appreciating the artists' conceptual displays of food, patrons savored real culinary artistry by well-known local chefs and purveyors.

The Foodies showcase includes the work of 70 artists from across the state and New York. The pieces were chosen by a panel of four jurors and food experts from more than 140 submissions: Chef Michel Nischan, owner of the Dressing Room; Bill Taibe, chef and owner of Le Farm and The Whelk; Pat Callahan, president of Pepperidge Farm, and Stew Leonard Jr., of Stew Leonard's supermarkets.

"What a great way to end the week by celebrating art and food," said Callaghan, pointing out that Pepperidge Farm started the week opening a new innovation center in Norwalk.

Taibe said he always wanted to paint and draw but didn't have artistic talent. "I wanted to get what was in my head down on a piece of paper. Food is my way of doing it. Food can be artistic and creative," said Taibe, who especially enjoyed "Grounded," a large-scale oil painting of carrots still in the ground by Dale Najarian.

Westport artist Scott Glaser's acrylic and collage, titled "181 Movies, 173,760 see FOODIES, page 13



Tenor Steve Amerson (left) and OMSF artistic director and conductor Aram Gharabekian

Artistic Performances Complement Arrival of Shuttle in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES – On September 21, as the Space Shuttle Endeavour arrived here, the welcoming ceremony at Los Angeles Airport (LAX) included artistic performances led by Aram Gharabekian. The program, comprising music and dance presentations throughout the arrival ceremony, featured the Open Music Fest Orchestra, tenor Steve Amerson, choreographer Aida Amirkhanian and the Open Music Fest dancers.

In the months prior to Endeavour's arrival in Los Angeles, the Open Music Society Foundation (OMS) worked closely with the City of Los Angeles and the California Science Center, the spacecraft's new home, to design an integrated artistic program for the arrival ceremony. The concept that resulted was developed jointly by Gharabekian, the OMSF's artistic director and conductor, and a dedicated team. The artistic presentations at the arrival ceremony marked the performance debuts of the OMSF.

The arrival ceremony, held at an United Airlines hangar at LAX, was attended by some 600 guests, among them several elected officials. Dignitaries who delivered remarks at the event included Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Inglewood Mayor James Butts and California Science Center President and CEO Jeffrey Rudolph. The event's mistress of ceremonies was actress Nichelle Nichols, of "Star Trek" fame.

Toward noon, the ceremony's artistic program began with a flash-mob dance performance inside the hangar, featuring the Open Music Fest Dancers led by Amirkhanian. The dancers performed to a specially-created soundtrack, with works by Richard Strauss, James Brown and Aaron Copland, as well as a recording of the poem, "The Early Morning in Space," recited by its author, Hilaire Belloc.

During the dance performance, employees and volunteers from the California Science Center and United Airlines joined the flash mob. As the shuttle-arrival countdown began and the hangar gate opened, gradually revealing the ceremony stage outside, the flash mob concluded its performance with a grand finale. The dancers then ran outside, inviting the guests to follow to their seats across the bleachers and the VIP section.

Subsequently the attendees watched Endeavour's aerial spin over Los Angeles and marks on a Jumbotron screen, and were awed by the sight of the shuttle flying overhead. NASA's Shuttle Carrier Aircraft, carrying Endeavour, touched down to the strokes of timpani, bass drum and tam-tam, the opening of Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*. Offstage, trumpets and horns played the opening phrase of

see SHUTTLE, page 11



A scene from the flash-mob performance by the Open Music Fest Dancers

Arpa International Film Festival Celebrates 15th Anniversary with Landmark Films, 'Lost And Found in Armenia,' 'If Only Everyone'

LOS ANGELES – This year marks the 15th anniversary of Arpa International Film Festival, the signature event of Arpa Foundation for Film, Music, and Art (AFFMA), which will be held November 29-December 2. The foundation and the festival derive their name from Arpa, a river that flows through Armenia. As water provides a source of life and energy, so does art to the human soul. This year's main films epitomize Arpa's mission statement, with the inclusion of the comedy "Lost and Found in Armenia" and Armenia's official submission for Foreign Language Film at the 85th Academy Awards, "If Only Everyone."

The film festival begins Thursday, November 29 at the Egyptian Theatre and culminates with the Arpa Awards Gala at the Sheraton Universal on Sunday, December 2. The festival will present more than 40 films, receptions, red carpet opening and closing night premieres. Feature narratives, short films, documentaries, music videos and animated films will be showcased from more than 25 nations.



Poster for "If Only Everyone"

"Our committee of board members and devoted volunteers are working hard to stage yet another dazzling festival," said Sylvia Minassian, AFFMA's founder. "Our goal is to launch the careers of emerging filmmakers and celebrate the independent film work of our festival's most gifted filmmakers."

The festival begins with the North American premiere of "Lost and Found in Armenia," starring Jamie Kennedy ("Bending the Rules") and Angela Sarafyan ("The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part II"). Directed by Gor Kirakosian (2007 Arpa Best Screenplay Award recipient) the film is the first American comedy filmed on location in Armenia.

Closing night will feature the North American premiere of Natalya Belyauskene's, "If Only Everyone," starring Michael Poghosian ("Symphony of Silence").

The festival will also present a special panel event to promote social understanding among media and entertainment professionals. Global Event and Media Accessibility Initiative (GEMAI) partners with Arpa this year to stage a panel discussion focusing on GEMAI's mission to develop initiatives that will enhance the experience of the 30 million deaf or hard of hearing and the 3.4 million blind movie-going audience in America. The GEMAI partnership with Arpa aims to provide a forum, which addresses the last social component to

see FILM, page 11



ARTS & LIVING

Artistic Performances Complement Arrival of Shuttle in Los Angeles

SHUTTLE, from page 10
the *Fanfare* while the Open Music Fest Orchestra musicians joined the percussion in front of the podium. It was at this juncture, as Endeavour and its host aircraft taxied toward the hangar, that Gharabekian approached the orchestra and conducted *Fanfare*. With the climax of the *Fanfare*, the shuttle came to its final halt in front of the guests.

"It was a profoundly humbling experience to conduct Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* while Endeavour took its last few steps before coming to a spectacular stop," Gharabekian said. "I will never forget the expression and emotions of the musicians and guests at this larger-than-life sight of man's scientific triumph. I was deeply moved by the historic moment, and will always treasure the enthusiasm, dedication and commitment which our musicians, dancers and the entire OMSF



Aram Gharabekian (far right) conducts the Open Music Fest Orchestra.

the stage to deliver an a cappella performance of *America the Beautiful*. He was soon joined by the brass and percussion of the Open Music Fest Orchestra. During the third verse of the

ceremony's artistic program and chief operating officer of the OMSF, said, "As commented on by several news networks, the music and performances created a profound moment of grandeur for Endeavour's arrival. The historical significance of the moment will forever be remembered each time we hear Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*."

"What a sight: Shuttle Endeavour with all its history and might, approaching, as the Open

Music Fest Orchestra delivered a powerful fanfare, timed perfectly to climax as the spacecraft came to a halt," Koutnouyan continued. "We are proud of the talented artists who performed at the arrival ceremony: Aida Amirkhanian and her dancers' celebratory kick-off inside the hangar, Aram Gharabekian's commanding selection for and conducting of the orchestra, and Steve Amerson's powerful salute to one of this country's greatest achievements."

"The union of the shuttle's arrival and the OMSF performances was simply awe-inspiring," stated OMSF founding board member and chief financial officer, Varand Gourjian.

Amirkhanian said, "Time stood still and everything became perfect as the shuttle did its last majestic dance to the dignified music played by the orchestra. It was a magnificent experience to watch the birth of the OMSF as Endeavour was retiring. The beginning and the end united to create a rare moment of universal perfection. It was one of the most beautiful choreographies I have ever seen: so instinctive, so resplendent, so dignified, so perfect."

The OMSF is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing musical education and mentorship for young talent and increasing public interest in the arts through Open Music Fest, a series of arts festivals in which artistic collaboration embraces cultural diversity, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation. For more information, visit openmusicsociety.org.



Open Music Fest dancers, with choreographer Aida Amirkhanian (fifth from left)

team brought to this unique celebration." As VIP passengers descended from the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft, tenor Amerson took

song, guests joined in at the encouragement of Amerson and Gharabekian. Alina Koutnouyan, executive producer of the



From left: Varand Gourjian, Alina Koutnouyan, Aram Gharabekian, Lynda Oschin, William Harris and Steve Amerson

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Tickets: \$50, \$35, \$25

Arpa Film Festival Celebrates 15th Anniversary

FILM, from page 10
media landscape – using artistic and technological advancements of the film industry to build a seamless and organic road map of inclusion.

Marc Bovee, GEMAI founder, said about GEMAI's participation at Arpa, "It is exciting to be enabled by vision and technology to finally bring everyone to the 'table of media.' It is an honor and a privilege to have been invited to be a part of this amazing forum of talent."

The festival concludes this year with the Arpa Awards Gala. The evening will include a reception and awards program at the Sheraton Universal. The festival will also present its Armin T. Wegner Humanitarian Award, named after German author and human rights activist Armin Theophil Wegner (October 16, 1886 – May 17, 1978), which it has been awarding since 2002. Arpa Career and Lifetime Achievement Award recipients will also be recognized. Since 1997, AFFMA has staged the four-day

Los Angeles festival, growing into larger venues during its 15 years.

Tickets to Arpa International Film Festival are available at www.affma.org.

For more information or sponsorship and advertising opportunities, visit www.affma.org or contact talia@affma.org. To make a tax-deductible donation to AFFMA, visit www.affma.org or mail donations to AFFMA - 2919 Maxwell St., Los Angeles, CA 90027. All



Angela Sarafyan and Jamie Kennedy from "Lost and Found in Armenia"

donations go towards AFFMA's grant program which supports filmmakers, musicians and artists.



ARTS & LIVING

Two Mothers Bond over Grief for Lost Children

By **Daphne Abeel**

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Griefland by Armen Bacon and Nancy Miller. Skirt, an Imprint of Pequot Press. 2012. 170 pp. \$19.95. ISBN 978-0-7827-8084-6

This is a book for a select audience – parents who have lost children and who are dealing with the grieving process. The authors, Armen Bacon and Nancy Miller, each lost a child to a drug overdose. Bacon lost her son, Alex, when he was in his early 20s, after many attempts at rehab and after he had become a father. Miller lost her daughter, Rachel, when she was in her teens, also after many attempts to save her through drug rehab programs and therapy.

The two women were introduced to each other by a mutual friend and embarked on a bonding process that helped them both deal with their grief and create a new and important friendship. The act of sharing their experiences also led to the writing of this book.

The *Griefland* of the title refers to that “uncharted territory, surrounded by chaos and uncertainty.” As they say in their jointly-written introduction, “Throughout this grief journey, we’ve leaned on each other’s shoulders, borrowed makeup to cover tearstains, and stayed up into the wee hours rehashing our children’s lives. Through this unlikely pact born of tragedy, we have discovered the medicinal power of friendship.”

The book is organized around alternating chapters by each author with an introductory commentary to each chapter. When they meet, Bacon’s son has been gone for nearly five years, while Miller’s daughter has died relatively recently.

What remains somewhat obscure are the histories of Alex and Rachel, the children who are mourned. While it is clear that both families (Miller is divorced) struggled mightily with their children’s problems and addictions prior to what was, apparently, suicide in both cases, the authors provide few substantial facts that would help the reader understand why these tragic events took place. It is reasonable to assume that the mothers themselves have little insight into the causes of their children’s drug addictions.

Miller does recount the last dinner she had

with her daughter before she overdosed on Christmas Day. “I ... spent my last evening with Rachel. She was out of rehab, relapsing again, and we had agreed that she would not be allowed to come home until she could demonstrate she was clean for at least one year.” And thus, the reader is left to surmise that there had been multiple attempts at rehabilitation.

The focus of the book is relentlessly on the experience of loss, grief and the act of sharing grief. And there has been a certain trend in recent years, led by the well-known writer Joan Didion, to set down accounts of personal loss. Didion has published two widely-publicized books, *The Year of Magical Thinking* and *Blue Nights*, about the deaths, respectively, of her husband and daughter. This book is situated squarely in that trend.

Here is a book that may give some comfort to grieving parents and may also serve as a model for the forming of a relationship, a friendship that eases grief through sharing. It is probably not a book to be perused by the casual reader who has not experienced the loss of a child.

One can only guess, due to her name, that Armen Bacon is of Armenian descent; she does not touch on this aspect of her life in the course of this short book, although she does mention a trip to Turkey.

The goal for those who have experienced painful loss is, of course, survival and some sense of redemption, and these two women seem to be progressing towards those ends as they share not only with each other but with a broader public by giving lectures and workshops that deal with the experience of profound grief.

Towards the end of the book, they again write jointly, “We have come to believe there can be something divine, a sort of knowledge and power that has occurred with death and grief. To travel this path, to remain standing for the duration of such an extraordinary journey, is a feat of significant proportions. We are stronger than ever now. ... Death, in its devastation, has forced us to re-create ourselves.”

Certainly, the purpose of the authors is to help others and the readers who seek out this book, no doubt, will welcome their solace.

Bacon is a freelance writer and motivational speaker. She also serves as administrator of communications and public relations for the Fresno County Office of Education. She resides in Fresno. Miller teaches English at the university and junior college levels. She lives in Olympia, Wash.



BURBANK, Calif. — The KCET Women’s Council convened for a tour and luncheon at KCET’s new, state-of-the-art studios on September 20. Speeches delivered by KCET President Al Jerome and Val Zavala, lead anchor for KCET’s nightly news program “SoCal Connected,” highlighted the ways in which a newly-independent KCET, the largest public television station in the country, continues to flourish with award-winning new programming and online community arts and culture reporting. Above, from left, are Lily Balian (past president of the Women’s Council), Joan Agajanian Quinn (board member of Women’s Council), Anna Nersesyan (KCET development associate) and Nancy Rishagen (KCET executive vice president of development).



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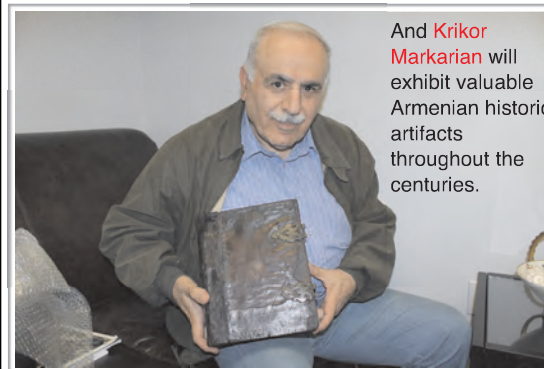
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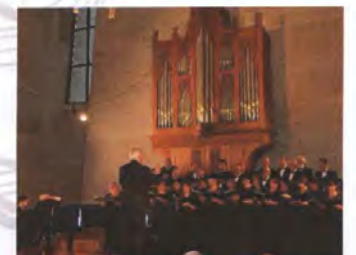
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ARTS & LIVING

Murat Cankara to Give Talk on Three Early Turkish Novels

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Manoogian Simone Foundation post-doctoral fellow Murat Cankara will give a talk focusing on three early Turkish novels in the Armenian script, titled "The Language of One, The Script of the Other: Early Armeno-Turkish Novels and Ottoman/Turkish Literary Historiography," at the University of Michigan.

These novels, written between 1851 and 1868 by Ottoman Armenians, have so far been ignored in Ottoman/Turkish literary historiography.

In order to make a critique of historiography and to place these Armeno-Turkish novels into a historical and literary context, he will discuss cultural encounters between Ottoman Armenians and Muslim/Turks with special emphasis on script and historiography of the late

Ottoman Empire and the basic features of Armeno-Turkish novels. Cankara will also draw a literary comparison between these three novels and early novels written by Muslim/Turks with special emphasis on the appropriation of romanticism. Cankara will also give a brief overview of major problems and theoretical tools for students of Armeno-Turkish literature.

Cankara was born in Smyrna in 1976. He studied physics and mathematics for two years. After majoring in theory and the history of theater, Cankara received his PhD in Turkish literature from Bilkent University in 2011, with a dissertation titled, "Empire and Novel: Placing Armeno-Turkish Novels in Ottoman/Turkish Literary Historiography."

Cankara's research focuses on the novels written by Armenians in the Turkish language using the Armenian script, specifically those from the second half of the 19th century. He focuses on the literary culture of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century in which Armenians play a prominent role, cultural interactions between Ottoman Armenians and Muslim/Turks, the appropriation of Turkish by Armenians and the historiography of Ottoman/Turkish literature.

The event is co-sponsored by the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies. It is free and open to the public.

A live web videocast will be available at www.ii.umich.edu/asp on Wednesday, October 10, at 4 p.m.

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 17 — Haigazian University Trustees Banquet in Honor of Joyce Philibosian Stein, Ellis Island honoree, Sheraton Universal Ballroom, Los Angeles. Social hour, 6 p.m., dinner, 7 p.m. For more information, call (323) 456-8031 or joyceabdulian@gmail.com.

MASSACHUSETTS

OCTOBER 12-13 — St. James Armenian Church Annual Bazaar. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., St. James Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Delicious Armenian food, delicacies and pastries. Vendor booths, attic treasures, silent auction and more. Raffles, including the \$100 raffle, apple raffle and \$2 raffle. Kidzone, including pumpkin decorating, games, clown/balloon animals. For information, call (617) 923-8860 or e-mail info@stthagop.com.

OCTOBER 13 — Sayat Nova Dance Company, North America's leading Armenian dance company, performs "Journey Through Time" presented by Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church of Worcester, 3 p.m. at North High School, 140 Harrington Way, Worcester. Tickets are \$35 and \$15 for children, 12 and under. For tickets or more info, call (508) 770-1124 or (508) 754-1039.

OCTOBER 16-25 — Muriel Mirak-Weissbach book presentation of *Madmen at the Helm: Pathology and Politics in the Arab Spring*, on four dates:

- OCTOBER 16** — with panel discussion with Prof. Roger Owen, author of *The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life*. This program is presented as part of the Partners in Public Dialogue program at Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington St., Boston, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact info@osmh.org or call (618) 482-6439;

- OCTOBER 18** — BookEnds, 559 Main St., Winchester, Thursday, 7 p.m. For information, (781) 721-5933 or www.bookendswinchester.com;

- OCTOBER 21** — Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St., Arlington, Sunday, 3 p.m. For information, (781) 646-3090; and

- OCTOBER 25** — Robbins Public Library, 700 Mass. Ave., Arlington, Thursday, 7 p.m.

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

NOVEMBER 1 — Save the date. An Evening with the AUA Administration Team. American University of Armenia (AUA) president, Dr. Bruce Boghosian to speak, along with top university administrators to review AUA's academic and institutional accomplishments during its 20 years of operation in Armenia and the strategic plans that will shape the future of the university. Details on venue and start time to follow.

MICHIGAN

OCTOBER 12 — A photographic slide presentation and commentary by Charles G. Chavdarian, PhD, member of the US National Speleological Society (NSS). Tekeyan Cultural Association 2012 Lecture Series. Journey to the Hidden Realms of Armenia, visit Armenia's natural and centuries-old man-made caves, Friday, 7:30



On Friday, October 12, and Saturday, October 13, St. James Armenian Church will hold its annual bazaar, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., at the St. James Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, Mass., featuring Armenian food, vendor booths, silent auctions, raffles and pumpkin decorating. For information, call (617) 923-8860 or e-mail info@stthagop.com.

p.m. AGBU Alex & Marie Manoogian School, 22001 Northwestern Highway, Southfield. Multipurpose room. Open to the public. Reception to follow.

NEW JERSEY

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

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

NOVEMBER 18 — Join the TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group Cast Party to celebrate "Love and Laughter." Special honoree, Karnig Nercessian, one of the founding members of the TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group. St. Thomas Armenian Church, East Clinton Ave. & 9W, Tenafly. 8 p.m. Donation: \$30. BYOB. For tickets, call Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850, Maro Hajakian (201) 934-3427 or Noushig Atamian (718) 344-5582.

'Foodies' Nourishes Visual and Visceral Senses

FOODIES, from page 10

Calories" features a large kernel of popcorn against a backdrop of ticket stubs from films he has seen.

Sherry Adler of Harrison, NY, said it was a treat to be able to speak to Glaser and have him explain his work to her.

Elizabeth DeVall, who works at the Westport Historical Society, was taken with Nancy Reinker's "Your Just Desserts." Reinker, of Weston, said she used pieces of paper cut from a newspaper article to create round balls that looked like ice cream scoops, which she placed into dessert cups. DeVall said it reminded her of the news of the day and the flavor of the day.

First Selectman Gordon Joseloff pointed out to the crowd that the WAC event coincided with the opening of a food festival in Westport, Ireland. He had everyone sing what they could remember of the lyrics to *Food Glorious Food*, a song from the musical "Oliver."

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COMMENTARY

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EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR

Marc Mgrditchian

COPY EDITOR

Dilani Yogarantnam

SENIOR EDITORIAL COLUMNIST:
Edmond Azadian

CONTRIBUTORS:

Florence Avakian, Elizabeth Aprahamian, Daphne Abeel, Dr. Haroutiune Arzoumanian, Taleen Babayan, Prof. Vahagn N. Dadrian, Diana Der Hovanesian, Philip Ketchian, Kevork Keushkerian, Sonia Kailian-Placido, Harut Sassounian, Mary Terzian, Hagop Vartivarian, Naomi Zeytoonian

CORRESPONDENTS:

Armenia - Hagop Avedikian
Boston - Nancy Kalajian
Philadelphia - Lisa Manookian

Contributing Photographers:

Jacob Demirdjian, Harry Koundakjian, Jirair Hovsepian

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FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com

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COMMENTARY

Looters or Landlords?

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Since Fatih Sultan Mohammed occupied Constantinople in 1453, the Ottoman rulers have been destroying and desecrating churches, castles, architectural monuments of Hittites, Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks and other nationalities who had been the indigenous people of Asia Minor, occupied and ruled through blood and sword.

Now, all of a sudden, the destroyers of all these cultures presume to be landlords, claiming treasures originated in Asia Minor to be returned to the present government of Turkey. Those artifacts and treasures which have been preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Getty Museum, the Louvre and Pergamon Museum have been saved from the Turks themselves, becoming part of the legacy of human civilization. Had they been left in the hands of the Turks, they would have been doomed to suffer the same fate as the 2,000 Armenian churches, monasteries and architectural monuments which were systematically destroyed and rendered into ashes. After 200,000 Armenians escaped from Van in 1915, the Turkish Army burned tens of thousands of illuminated manuscripts and Bibles on the island monastery of Leem in Lake Akhtamar.

All that barbarism was tolerated and permitted by the Western powers because of political expediency, fueling the arrogance of the Turks, in turn, to get back at the West, which had saved antiquities from Turkish-Ottoman plundering hands in the first place.

The latest example was the destruction of thousands of khachkars in Jugha, Nakhichevan, now an exclave ruled by Azerbaijan, by the Azeri Turks in broad daylight; not one finger was raised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or other agencies or governments despite protests by Armenia's government.

Also, in a cynical condescension towards small nations, the British Museum and other museums stubbornly keep mislabeling Kutahya tiles or the head of Diana (Anahid, "The Satala Aphrodite," as Seljuk art or any other label in the name of academic propriety, rather than ascribing it to the Armenian talents and skills which are the true creators of those treasures.

As late as this year, UNESCO refused to label Armenian architectural monuments in Europe their true name during an exhibition, giving in to Turkish threats. That policy today has opened up the major museums in the West to Turkish threats and lawsuits.

In a front-page article on October 1, the *New York Times* covers Turkish arrogance under the title "Turkey Demands Return of Art, Alarming World's Museums." Museum curators consider Turkey's newfound aggressiveness "cultural blackmail."

At issue are many art treasures originating in the countries occupied by Ottoman rulers. Mr. Murat Suslu, director-general of cultural heritage and museums, says, "we only want back what is rightfully ours."

"The Turks are engaging in polemics and nasty politics," answers Hermann Parzinger, president of the Prussian Cultural Heritage

Foundation, which oversees the Pergamon in Berlin. "They should be careful about making moral claims when their museums are full of looted treasures."

One example of such looted treasures is a sarcophagus named after Alexander the Great, which was discovered in Sidon, Lebanon, in 1887, and is now in Istanbul's Archeological Museum. According to Mr. Suslu the sarcophagus was legally Turkey's because it had been excavated on territory that belonged to Turkey at the time.

With the same warped logic, Turkey can claim all the Armenian churches and art treasures in Jerusalem, because at one time Jerusalem was under Ottoman rule.

There are no firm international laws that govern the ownership of art treasures originating from different parts of the world which are now preserved in museums in the West. There is a UNESCO convention that allows museums to acquire objects that were outside their countries of origin before 1970.

Turkey wants its cake and to eat it. Although it has ratified the convention in 1981, it still cites a 1906 Ottoman law to claim any object removed after that date as its own.

Since Turkey selectively wishes to use its Ottoman heritage, than it has to recognize the Ottoman Genocide against the Armenians, which not only destroyed millions of human lives but also the cultural heritage of that subject nation.

Turkey, using its double standard, has been successfully suing Western museums and retrieving major pieces of art for its own museums.

For example, in 2011, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston returned the top half of an 1,800-year-old statute, "Weary Herakles," which is an example of Greek cultural heritage.

Throughout history, the Turks have not been known as creators in the fields of art and culture; they are rather known as destroyers of culture, valuing militarism and brute force. But since they have realized belatedly that art and culture have some monetary value in the form of tourism in their country, they are aggressively going after treasures originating in the land they presently occupy.

This is a dangerous precedent. If it is not stopped in its track, the Turks may go after all Armenian treasures around the world, claiming by the same logic and citing the Ottoman law that those works had originated in territories under Ottoman rule.

Especially in Turkey's case, UNESCO and the UN have to declare the universal ownership of treasures created by Armenians and other nationalities but occupied or looted by the Turks. Turkey must be held accountable for the destruction of Armenian cultural monuments on its occupied soil which to this day are kept in ruins. Those ancient churches and monuments that belong to the Armenians must be declared part of human civilization and thus warrant some protection from further damage.

Otherwise, looters and plunderers will present themselves as owners of a cultural heritage, which does not belong to them and which has been abused by them for centuries.

The irony is that the looters have become landlords under the tolerant gaze of the civilized world which is delinquent in its duty of preserving universal treasures of humanity.

Juskalian's 'Mixed Emotions' in *Times* Piece on Karabagh Are Baffling

By Dr. Carolann Najarian

Russ Juskalian, in his article, "Off the Map in the Black Garden" (*New York Times* Travel Section, September 21, 2012) describes having "mixed emotions" during his visit to Nagorno-Karabagh, (the Black Garden or Artsakh) he recently visited. He writes about dual feelings of sadness for the Azeris forced to leave Nagorno-Karabagh and who cannot return because of ethnic conflict, and those he feels for his grandparents, survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 who could not return to their homes in Turkey. Perhaps I, too, the child of Armenian Genocide survivors, would have had the same conflicting emotions had I, as a physician, not spent years (rather than the two days he did) bringing medical relief to the people of Nagorno-Karabagh, during and after their war of liberation.

Referring to Armenians and Azeris, Juskalian writes, "... both ethnic groups were subjected to pogroms" – a statement which grossly misleads the reader. Even a superficial review of that history will clarify important facts about how the conflict started. The pogroms were against the Armenians living in Azerbaijan and started long before there was any armed conflict. Briefly, in February 1988, in the port city of

Sumgait, Azeri gangs, with government-issued lists of Armenian residences, went on a murdering rampage, house by house. The killing continued for three days before the Azeri government took action to stop it. Next, the Armenians of Baku were targeted (January 1990), brutally beaten and many murdered either in their homes or as they fled. All this was in response to peaceful demonstrations and lawfully-submitted petitions for self-determination by the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh to Moscow for either return of Nagorno-Karabagh to Armenia, or for the right to self-determination. In other words, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh wanted to take advantage of Glastnost, promised by Mikhail Gorbachev, and to be free of the Azeri domination which Stalin had placed on them. (The history of that period – the human rights violations, the pogroms against the Armenians, the brutal crack down in Nagorno-Karabagh, the blockade of the area, and the war that followed are well documented and easily accessed online.)

Fast forward to 2004, to a NATO-sponsored English language course in Budapest where an Armenian military officer attending the course was murdered by an Azeri military officer – a fellow attendee. The Azeri admitted to the brutal murder, butchering the sleeping Armenian with an ax with more than 16 blows nearly severing his head. The

court found no other reason for the horrendous act other than the soldier was Armenian. Sentenced to life in prison, the murderer was recently extradited back to Azerbaijan by the Hungarian government, assured by Azerbaijan that he would serve his full sentence. Instead, President Ilham Aliyev not only immediately pardoned the murderer, but he was hailed as a national hero and promoted to a higher military rank. (See Amnesty International's statement <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR55/015/2012/en/8e84f955-9f8f-488c-ad34-c68a744b6878/eur550152012en.html>)

Mixed emotions? Yes, I too, have mixed emotions based on the fears I have. I fear that the fragile 1994 cease-fire between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabagh will not hold and that the foreign powers charged with monitoring and negotiating full peace will fail. The consequences will be sad indeed for the Armenians of the regions, albeit Azeris too, will pay a high price in blood and treasure. Articles such as Juskalian's about Nagorno-Karabagh written in ignorance and with self-serving flagellation do a great disservice to these brave Armenians without advancing the cause of peace. It would have been better if Juskalian had stayed home.

–Carolann S. Najarian, M.D.
President,
Armenian Health Alliance, Inc.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Two LA-Area Congressmen in Heated Debate over Armenian Issues

Rep. Howard Berman and Rep. Brad Sherman, both serving on the powerful Foreign Affairs Committee, are forced to run against each other in the November 6 elections, because of redistricting.

The two congressmen are both Democrats, Jewish Americans and both consistently supportive of Armenian issues. Voters of the 30th congressional district have a difficult choice in this hotly contested congressional race!

The Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region hosted a public debate at the Ferrahian School's Avedissian Hall in Encino on September 29, giving the congressmen an opportunity to present their views on Armenian issues to Armenian-Americans voters. ANCA Co-chair Nora Hovsepian delivered the welcoming remarks, followed by moderator Zanku Armenian, who introduced the two candidates.

The debate got heated right from the start when Representative Sherman pointed out that while he has been exclusively a member of the Armenian Caucus, Representative Berman has been a member of both the

Turkish and Armenian Caucuses in Congress.

Representative Berman countered stating: "for nearly three decades of service in the Congress, I have been an ardent, consistent and outspoken advocate for the Armenian Cause. I worked persistently to achieve US recognition of the Armenian Genocide. As chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I led the successful effort to win that recognition at the Committee level." He went on to affirm that it would be his priority to have the House recognize the Armenian Genocide before its 100th anniversary, and he would personally urge President Obama to keep his pledge on the Genocide. The failure to recognize the Genocide is "a huge moral stain on this great nation's record," Representative Berman stated. He then proudly announced: "I halted the transfer of sensitive arms to Azerbaijan because I grew sick and tired of Azerbaijan's arms build up and bellicose rhetoric. Just this week, I wrote a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton about one of the most disgusting actions any world leader has taken within memory – I am talking about President Aliyev's decision to pardon an Azerbaijani axe-murderer who was serving a life sentence for killing an innocent Armenian soldier in his sleep.... I asked Secretary Clinton that first, all of NATO condemns Aliyev's action, and secondly, that Azerbaijan is suspended from all future NATO-sponsored activities."

In response to questions from panelists, this writer, who is publisher of the *California Courier*, and Ara Khachatourian, English-language editor of *Asbarez*, the congressmen addressed US recognition of the Armenian Genocide, reparations from Turkey, Israel's refusal to recognize the Armenian Genocide, protection of Armenian communities in Syria and Georgia, payment of rent for US air base in Incirlik, Turkey to Armenian owners of that land, return of churches in Turkey to Christian communities, Israeli arms sales to Azerbaijan, US aid to Karabagh

(Artsakh), Azerbaijan's and Hungary's culpability in releasing the Azeri axe-murderer, independence of Artsakh, US trade agreements with Armenia and Turkish Gulen charter schools in the United States. Below are excerpts from their remarks:

Representative Berman: "Turkey has to understand that they have to come to terms with their own history. I am Jewish. The notion that in order to avoid hurting sensibilities, we do not acknowledge the historical truth of the Genocide, to me, is a horrible stain on our country."

Representative Sherman: "Genocide denial is the last step in genocide; and the first step in the next genocide. That's why, it is critical that America recognize the first genocide of the 20th century. I will work ... as many years as it takes, but hopefully as quickly as possible, to get Congress to recognize the Genocide. ... It is time to put pressure on the administration, especially in the next 38 days, to turn to both candidates for president and get a clear statement from them. ... We should know what they are going to do next April."

Representative Berman criticized Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for having referred to the Armenian Genocide as an "historical debate." He stated: "No one in the Congress makes the case that the Genocide didn't happen. They may argue 'oh, we can't hurt our relationship with Turkey' or may be they're close to some people who are representing Turkey ... but nowhere do I hear now, like I used to hear, 'this is an historical debate.' ... It is very disappointing when the leadership of our country goes back to raising that issue.... This happened. It has to be acknowledged. The Germans acknowledged it, and particularly for somebody who is Jewish, the notion that you can get away with denying this or try to fuzz it up as a historically debatable point, is in a very fundamental sense wrong."

To be continued...

Dr. Aram Chobanian Addresses Hypertension As Major Public Health Challenge for Armenia

YEREVAN – On September 26, the American University of Armenia (AUA) College of Health Sciences, in collaboration with the National Competitiveness Foundation of Armenia, organized a public health seminar with Dr. Aram V. Chobanian, a noted cardiologist and president emeritus of Boston University as well as a dean emeritus and Provost of Boston University School of Medicine.

Chobanian talked about the major public health challenge of cardiovascular diseases, particularly hypertension, in Armenia. He emphasized the importance of appropriate control of hypertension through healthy lifestyle and medical therapy to prevent cardiovascular complications. Chobanian also shared with the audience the international evidence behind the recommendations of the Seventh Joint

National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in the US, which he chaired.

The large audience of public health and medical professionals, including students, faculty, researchers and physicians and members of the AUA community, asked questions and received advice from Chobanian during an active question/answer session following his presentation. The reception in the AUA Akian Gallery provided the opportunity for informal interactions between Chobanian and attendees of the public health seminar.



Dr. Aram Chobanian speaks at the American University of Armenia.

Chobanian founded the Whitaker Cardiovascular Institute at the Boston University School of Medicine in 1974 and oversaw its rapid development into a center for pioneering research into the biological and clinical aspects of cardiovascular disease. Boston University recently awarded him with an honorary degree, a Doctor of Humane Letters *honoris causa*. Chobanian has received numerous awards for his basic and clinical research on cardiovascular diseases. These include the First Lifetime Achievement Award in Hypertension of the American Heart Association, the Modern Medicine Award, the Award of Merit of the American Heart Association, the Abbott Award of the American Society of Hypertension and the Freis Award of the National High

Blood Pressure Education Program. He recently chaired the Seventh Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. He has published more than 275 papers and two books, served on several editorial boards and had chaired the Publications Committee of the New England Journal of Medicine.

Chobanian was elected as a foreign member of the Armenian National Academy of Science and recently received the St. Mesrob-Mashtots Medal from Catholicos Aram I. Chobanian has been involved in several programs to improve health care in Armenia, including training of physicians, nurses and other health professionals in emergency medicine, trauma care and health care management; development of medical residency and post-graduate educational programs in Armenia and the establishment of a successful medical student elective program for US medical students to spend one to two months in Armenian hospitals and clinics. He has also been instrumental in the provision of much-needed medical equipment, supplies and medications for Armenia.

Chobanian was in Armenia at the invitation of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR).

Barev, Armenia!

By Betty Londergan

When I told people I was going to Armenia with Heifer International, the most frequent response was, "Wow, um...where is that?"

So first, the geography lesson: Armenia is just east of Turkey and bordered by Georgia to the North, Azerbaijan to the East and Iran to the South. Which basically means Armenia is a raft of Christianity in a sea of Muslim countries. In fact, Armenia was the first nation in the world to adopt Christianity as its state religion in 301 AD and that has pretty much defined and shaped its turbulent history through the ages.

Armenia is a mystical place – filled with monasteries, pagan temples, prayer stones and churches, most tucked away in wildly remote places to protect them from destruction. (It didn't.) These pockmarked Christian monuments are the pride of Armenia as well as testament to a seemingly endless parade of invaders: conquering Persians, rampaging Mongols, invading Turks, totalitarian Soviets, as well as the ravages of devastating earthquakes. For more than 600 years, Armenians knew themselves to be a distinct people and yet were not a sovereign country. Faced with hostility from all sides, Armenians held fast to their identity and managed to survive into the modern era with a faith as deep and constant as the obsidian stone that is part of this beautiful landscape.

Although the Kardashians are undoubtedly the world's most famous Armenians, they are not typical of the Armenian character (sorry, Kim) – although I did see an awful lot of beautiful women in the modern capital of Yerevan. Actually, it's a bit hard to get a firm grasp on the Armenian character because it's full of such deep contradictions.

Armenians are enormously proud, highly educated (with a literacy rate of almost 100 percent) and hospitable beyond your wildest expectations. In centuries of life along the Silk Route, Armenians became known for their business savvy in commerce and trade, and they interacted easily with almost every European and Asian culture. But Armenia's psyche is indelibly haunted by the memory of great loss (1.5 million annihilated in 1915 alone) and like all the Caucasus's states, the people have experienced centuries of brutal conflict that staggers the imagination and continues today in the convoluted conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabagh.

Armenia was a part of the Soviet Socialist Republics for more than 70 years, and has only been independent for 21 years. Armenia's economy was far more robust and productive under Soviet rule, and the country is still struggling to establish a modern economy with almost no natural resources (and with its two borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan closed). While the capital of Yerevan is bustling, elegant and thriving, in the countryside there is little besides subsistence farming to support the villagers and the poverty rate approaches 35 percent. Many men still immigrate to take jobs in neighboring countries; in fact, three times as many Armenians now live outside the country as inhabit it. That's why Heifer is investing \$3.7 million in projects to help the smallholder farmer in Armenia achieve economic independence and food security – and what I came to see.

Despite the economic challenges, Armenia is hardly depressing. For one thing, the country is beautiful. The food is incredible, and though the people are tough (they've had to be) they are also joyful, sweet people who love to garden, to eat, to talk and to welcome visitors – particularly if you're one of the 8 million Diaspora Armenians who's coming back home.

Even their blooming Christian cross never features the crucified Christ, because Armenians believe in the rising – not the suffering.

And that is as good a prescription for moving forward as anything I can imagine!

(This commentary appeared in HuffingtonPost.com on September 27.)

Correction

Due to a typesetting error, the date for the attack of the Egyptian Mamluk rulers on Cilicia and the subsequent end of the Cilician Kingdom was incorrect in the column by Edmond Azadian last week ("Is Another French Betrayal in the Offing, Sept. 29). The correct date is 1375.

We regret the error.



Donations Continue Pouring in to Support Humanitarian Aid Initiatives across Syria

AID, from page 1

Across the country, a specially-formed AGBU Armenian Youth Association (AYA)

secure 24 hours a day, while social and educational projects have been developed to keep the youth active and engaged inside.

In anticipation of medical emergencies, a clinic, dispensary and pharmacy, all managed by a nurse and doctor, are in place within the site and ready for utilization should the need arise. Moreover, if necessary, the AGBU-AYA committee has made arrangements with local hospitals to admit patients, who would be transported via a van converted into an ambulance, which the committee has acquired. While each of these initiatives is underway, AGBU volunteers are also conducting field visits to families whose homes have been assailed and who require immediate emergency assistance.

AGBU's on-the-ground relief humanitarian

aid efforts, and the \$1-million emergency fund set aside by the AGBU Central Board, are providing a safety net for scores of Armenians across Syria. Yet, as the conflict continues to escalate, the need is quickly outpacing resources. The AGBU is appealing to Armenians worldwide to renew their pledges to those families in Syria, to provide them not only with provisions, but also with much-needed hope during this dire time.

Donate online at agbu.org/syriarelieff/index.html. Donate by phone at 1-855-AID-AGBU (243-2428), or send checks to: AGBU, Syria Emergency Fund, 55 East 59th St., New York, NY 10022.



Boxes of provisions line the walls of a local AGBU site in Aleppo where families are arriving en masse for support.



AGBU volunteers prepare boxes of humanitarian aid that they are distributing among thousands of families across Syria.

Committee is overseeing recovery and preparedness activities in collaboration with a pan-Armenian network of local organizations, the Syria-Armenian Emergency Relief Committee. The AGBU chapter in Aleppo has mobilized more than 80 volunteers who are working to administer aid to more than 2,500 families in the city. Every day, food packages with staples such as cereal, cooking oil, dry meat, eggs, lentils, milk, potatoes, rice, sugar and wheat are being distributed to the hundreds of families arriving en masse at a local AGBU facility. All recipients are registering with AGBU, as efforts are coordinated with other Armenian organizations, including Catholic and Evangelical churches, to compile official rosters of those in need. More than 250 boxes of food and additional stockpiles are also ready to be allocated to families in Damascus, where, like Kamishli, dozens of volunteers are prepared to take further action should the situation there worsen.

Food is one of the four areas of humanitarian aid that the AGBU is currently focused on, in addition to emergency response, healthcare and shelter. In the event that families in Aleppo are forced to leave their homes, AGBU has made provisions to transform a local building into a secure space where they may take refuge. The premises are now equipped with generators, water reserves for bathrooms, supplies of drinking water, fire extinguishers and a kitchen and cafeteria complete with a refrigerator, oven and food storage facilities. A security staff has also been enlisted to keep the outside

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