

ՀԱՅ ԴՊՌՈՅ

ԱՐՉԱԳԱՆԳՆԵՐ ԱՐՉԱԿ ՏԻԳՐԱՆԵԱՆ ՎԱՐԺԱՐԱՆԻՑ
ԱՍՍՈՒԹԻ ՄՐՑԱՆՔ ՆՈՒԻՐՈՒԱԾ
ՑԵՂԱՄՊԱՆՈՒԹԵԱՆ 94-ՐԴ ՏԱՐԵԼԻՑԻՆ



Մրցանակի հրամանը, դատական կազմը եւ դաստիարակ ուսուցիչը

Արշակ Տիգրաննեան վարժարանի Գարապեան պրահում աւանդութիւն ուժ ստացած հերթական ասմունքի մրցանքներից մէկն էր, այս անգամ այն նուիրուած էր Մեծ Եղեռնի 94-րդ տարելիցին; Մրցում էին երկրորդական բաժնի աշակերտները:

Ժողովրդի պատմութիւնը, լեզուն սովորեցնելու, արեան կանչը արթուն պահելու սքանչելի նախաձեռնութիւնն: Ասմունքի մրցանքի պատասխանատուն էր երկրորդականի հայոց լեզուի ուսուցիչ Գրիգոր Սուքիանեանը:

Արտասանուող բանաստեղծութիւնները մէկը միւսից յուզիչ էին: Աշակերտների արտասանած կոորդինը անրուելի զանգակատան նման հանչեցրին իրենց յարգանքը նահատակների հանդեպ, պայքարը անսրդարութեան համար, ցեղասպանութեան ցաւը, վերածնումի հաստակամութիւնը:

Հանդիսավար, աւարտական

դասարանի աշակերտուհի Ռիմա Նաջարեանը գեղեցիկ նախաբանով խօսեց մրցութիւն մասին եւ բեմ հրաւիրեց ասմունքի մրցանքին մասնակցող աշակերտները:

Աշակերտների կատարումները վարժ էին, տպատորիչ: Դատական կազմի նրբաճաշակ անդամների համար շատ դժուար եղաւ որոշել մրցանակացին տեղերը:

Դատական կազմի անդամներն էին հոգաբարձական կազմի փոխ ատենապետ Պրն. Բարսեղ Գարժաւեան, Տիկին Մելո Քիոքեանը, Փրոփ. Օշին Քէշշեանը:

Պրն. Գարժաւեանը շնորհաւորեց աշակերտներին եւ ասաց յաղթուկներու անունները:

Աննա Թութունջեան՝ 1-ին մրցանակ,

Լուսինէ Զէլթունցեան՝ 2-րդ մրցանակ,

Արմէն Բալէզեան՝ 3-րդ մրցանակ:

ՅՈՒՆԱՐԱՆԴԵՍ ՆՈՒԻՐՈՒԱԾ ՄԵԾ ԵՂԵՌՆԻ 94-ՐԴ ՏԱՐԵԼԻՑԻՆ ԵՒ ԲԱՐԵՐԱՐ ԱՐՉԱԿ ՏԻԳՐԱՆԵԱՆԻ ՅԻՇԱՑՎԱԿԻՆ



Հոգեհանգստեան արարողութեան ընթացքին

Ապրիլի 23-ին թէքեան Մշակութային Միութեան Արշակ Տիգրաննեան վարժարանի աշակերտները հաւաքուել էին Սր. Յովհաննու Կարպեատ եկեղեցին, նշելու ցեղասպանութեան գոհերին, ամրապնդելու հայ Դատի պահանջատէրի ողին, յարգելու լիշտատակը վարժարանի է հիմնադիր եւ ազգային բարերար Արշակ Տիգրաննեանի:

Հոգեհանգստի արարողու-

թեանը ներկայ էին Ամերիկացի Արեմանտեան թեմի Առաջնորդ Գերշ. Տ. Յովհանն Արք. Տէրտէրեանը, Տէրտանուկ Աւագ քն. Մարգարեանը, Հոգեբարձական կազմի ատենապետ Պրն. Գէորգ Մանտուանը, Տիկին Էլէնոր Տիգրաննեանը, Տիկին Լորը Գարապեանը եւ Տիկ. Սինտի Նորեանը:

Տար. էջ 19

ԵՂԵՌՆԻ ՈԳԵԿՈՉՈՒԾ ՄԵՐՏԻՆԵԱՆ ՎԱՐԺԱՐԱՎԱՆ ՆԵՐՍ



Մերտիմեան վարժարամի աշակերտական երգչախումբը

Հայ դպրոցը նոր մերունդի հայապահանման դարբնոցն է: Հոն է որ, յատկապէս, պատանիին հոգին կը թրծուի հայկական ոգիով, կը լեցուի ազգասիրութեան ու հայրենասիրութեան զգացումներով, իսկ այս զգացումները կ'ամրապնդուին ազգային-պատմական տօներու նուիրուած յատագիրներով:

Հայոց Յեղասպանութեան 94-րդ տարելիցը ոգեկոչուեցաւ Մերտիմեան վարժարանին մէջ, 23 Ապրիլ, 2009ին: Ոգեկոչման ներկայ էին Վեր. Յովհանն Արք. Յովհանն Մաթոսեանը, հոգաբարձութեան կազմին պրն. Աւետիս Տէմիրճեան՝ փոխ-ատենապետը եւ պրն. Գօրգ Պալեանը: Յայտագրին մէջ ելույթ ունեցան 7րդ եւ 8րդ կարգերու աշակերտները եւ վարժարանին երգչախումբը:

Օրուան հանդիսավարը, 8րդ

կարգէն լեւոն Գալստեան, հրաւիրեց ներկաները յոտընկայս պահ մը լուութեամբ յարգել նահատակներուն յիշատակը, ապա կատարեց Հայ աշակերտին ուխտը:

Արմէն Արալանեան, 8րդ կարգէն, ողջունեց ներկաները, բացարեց օրուան խորհուրդը եւ աւելցուց՝ «Հայ երիտասարդը մեծ գործ ունի կատարելիք Սփիւռքի մէջ, մեր պարտքն է յարգել մեր նահատակները, ուխտել հայ մնալ եւ աշխարհին ծանօթացնել մեր դատը:»

Պրն. Յովհանն ինձէմիքեան բեմ հրաւիրեց Հիւսիսային Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու ովկիւը՝ Վեր. Յովհանն Մաթոսեանը, օրուան պատգամը տալու: «Ապրիլ 24ին մեր արիւնը կ'եռայ, Տար. էջ 19

ՀԲԸ ՓԱՍԱՏԻՆԱՅԻ ԵՐԿՐՈՐԴԱԿԱՆ ՎԱՐԺԱՐԱՎԱՆ Զեր Զաւակին Լաւագոյն Դաստիարակուրեան Համար



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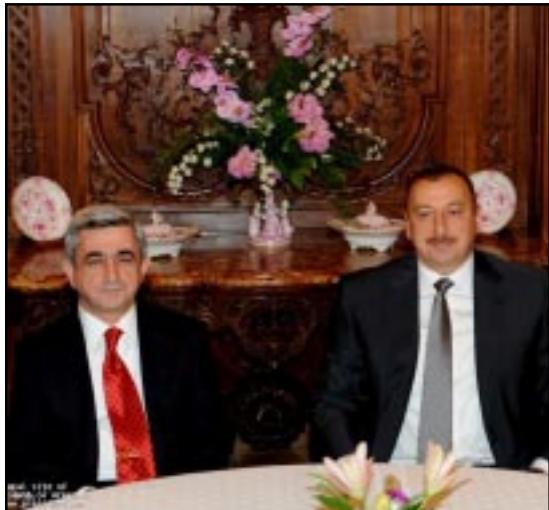
Sarkisian and Aliev Meet in Prague Reports of a Deal on Land Return by Karabakh

PRAGUE -- The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan reported further progress towards the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh after holding fresh talks in Prague on Thursday.

Presidents Serzh Sarkisian and Ilham Aliev met there on the sidelines of a European Union summit that offered their nations as well as four other former Soviet republics to forge closer ties with the EU. The meeting began in the presence of their foreign ministers and the American, French and Russian diplomats co-chairing the OSCE Minsk Group.

Aliev and Sarkisian then spoke one on one for more than two hours. Neither leader made any public statements afterwards, leaving it to the three mediators to present the results of the talks to journalists. Matthew Bryza, the chief U.S. negotiator, said the presidents made "significant progress" towards finalizing a framework peace agreement along the lines of the basic principles put forward by the co-chairs.

"Presidents Aliev and Sarkisian were able ... to reduce their differences on our basic principles and gen-



Sarkisian and Aliev Meeting in Prague

erally agree on the basic ideas that they came here to discuss," Bryza said. "We had some specific ideas and elements of the basic principles we are trying to finalize and they do agree on the basic approach."

"We plan in coming days and weeks to work together with the foreign ministers to finalize the details of these key remaining concepts within the basic principles," added the diplomat.

"We are preparing a break-

Continued on page 2

Opposition Campaigners Again Attacked in Yerevan



photos of pro-government tugs responsible for attacks on oppositionists

YEREVAN -- Three women were injured and hospitalized Monday on the second day of reported attacks in a Yerevan suburb on activists of the main opposition Armenian National Congress (HAK) campaigning for this month's municipal elections.

The victims told RFE/RL that they and other HAK campaigners were attacked by groups of young men while handing out booklets and leaflets to residents of the city's northern Avan district.

One of them, Ofelia Markarian, was hit in the head by a stone. "They hit me and my friends and disappeared in a second," she said, lying on her hospital bed.

Astghik Aghegian, another opposition activist, said of the attackers: "They started yelling, 'Who the hell

are you to stand here? You have no right to hand out booklets here.' They were so drunk."

Aghegian said she was repeatedly punched and knocked down after starting to photograph them. "I lay on the floor for two minutes," she said.

Some witnesses claimed police arrived at the scene more than 30 minutes after being alerted about the violence. Show me that person."

Similar incidents were reported in Avan on Sunday. According to Aghegian and other opposition activists, groups of aggressive men used force to stop them distributing election campaign material. Speaking to RFE/RL earlier on Monday, just hours before being assaulted and taken to hos-

Continued on page 2

Obama Administration Proposes Cut in Aid to Armenia

WASHINGTON, DC -- President Barack Obama is requesting to cut aid to Armenia, increase military assistance to Azerbaijan, and end U.S. aid to Nagorno Karabakh, reported the Armenia Council of America (ACA).

The Obama Administration in its proposed fiscal year (FY) 2010 foreign assistance budget is calling for only \$30 million in assistance to Armenia, which is a drastic decline from the FY2009 approved allocation of \$48 million. Contrary to decreasing Armenia's funding, the administration is seeking a 20% increase in aid to Azerbaijan, ending the long-term congressional policy of U.S. military aid parity between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In addition, the budget did not include funding for Nagorno Karabakh.

In response to the Obama Administration budget proposal, Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues co-chairs Representatives Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Frank Pallone (D-NJ) pledged to work with their congressional colleagues to increase economic assistance to Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. "As co-chairs of the Armenia Caucus, we are confident that as the FY10 appropriations process moves forward, Congress will increase economic assistance to Armenia beyond the Administration's budget proposal and will provide aid to Nagorno Karabakh," Kirk and Pallone said in

their joint statement. The co-chairs will also seek to prohibit military funding for Azerbaijan by maintaining Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act.

"By proposing to reduce assistance to Armenia and eliminate aid to Karabakh, President Obama is breaking another commitment by now reversing his pledge to strengthen the U.S.-Armenia relationship", said ACA Chairman Vasken Khodanian. During his election campaign Obama pledged to "maintain our (U.S.) assistance to Armenia. My administration will help foster Armenia's growth and development through expanded trade and targeted aid." "Even more unsettling is the suggestion of tipping military assistance in favor of Azerbaijan. This is sending a contradictory message of the United States' position in seeking a balanced and just solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict," Khodanian continued.

The president's draft budget will next head to the Foreign Operations Subcommittees of House and Senate Appropriations Committees. This will provide congressional appropriators the opportunity to modify the administration's proposed amounts. In March, the Caucus Co-chairs made their recommendations of \$70 million in economic and \$5 million in military assistance to Armenia, and \$10 million in aid for Nagorno Karabakh.

Statement of the US Ambassador to Armenia

YEREVAN -- In response to news reports carried recently by several media outlets regarding assistance from the United States for Armenia, I would like to inform you of the following:

Since international assistance to Armenia began over twenty years ago with the relief effort following the 1988 earthquake, the U.S. government has provided almost two billion dollars of humanitarian aid and development assistance for Armenia's economic, social and governance sectors. The Obama Administration's request for Armenia for FY 2010 (\$30 million) is 25 percent above the last Bush Administration budget request (\$24 million was requested for FY 2009; Congress doubled this request to \$48 million). The actual level of assistance for Armenia for FY 2010 has not yet been determined by the U.S. Congress.

With respect to funding for Nagorno-Karabakh, there has never been a budget request sent to Congress because there is no mechanism for doing so in the budget process. Rather, the humanitarian assistance provided to Nagorno-Karabakh is worked out afterwards, during the budget negotiation between Congress and the Administration.

Regarding military assistance, the Administration's FMF request for Ar-



US Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch

menia in FY 2010 is the same level as Armenia received in FY 2009. There has been no decrease. The specific increase for Azerbaijan is linked to U.S. priorities in peacekeeping and maritime security, particularly regarding proliferation and drug trafficking on the Caspian Sea. The respective levels requested for Armenia and Azerbaijan are carefully considered and calibrated to ensure that they do not adversely affect the military balance in the region or undermine efforts for a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; they do, however, provide appropriate assistance to each country that will enhance their interoperability and military professionalism.

The United States remains committed to its longstanding partnership with Armenia and the Armenian people. Helping the people of Armenia has been, and continues to be, a high priority.

IMF Sees Deeper Recession in Armenia World Bank Sees Increased Poverty in the Country

YEREVAN -- Armenia's economy will contract by 5 percent this year and will not start growing again until 2011, the International Monetary Fund said on Monday in a further downward revision of its economic outlook for the country.

As recently as in early March, the IMF expected Armenia's Gross Domestic Product to shrink by only 1.5 percent in 2009. However, subsequent official statistics showed the economic downturn accelerating in March and resulting in a first-quarter GDP decline of 6.1 percent.

"The projections we have for Armenia mirror those you see in the global economy as well as in the rest of the region," Mark Lewis, head of an IMF mission visiting Yerevan, said as he and other officials presented the fund's latest economic outlook for the region. It forecasts zero growth for the Armenian economy in 2010.

Lewis singled out a sharp decline in the local construction sector as the key factor behind the revised projections. "There was a rapid boom in the construction sector in recent years, reflecting strong demand for residential and commercial property," he said. "That pace of development in the construction sector will be difficult to maintain this year, and that will be the key thing."

According to the National Statistical Service (NSS) the total volume of construction work carried out in Armenia tumbled by almost 22 percent in the first quarter of this year. The country's first-quarter macroeconomic performance was also greatly affected by a 9.5 percent fall in industrial output. It resulted, in large measure, from a last year's collapse in international prices of non-ferrous metals, the number one Armenian export item.

Echoing statements by other IMF officials, Lewis praised the Armenian government and Central Bank for their "sensible and sound approach to managing the crisis." "We think that the authorities are doing a very good job," he said. He stressed at the same time the importance of further structural reforms and, in particular, improved tax administration for mitigating the impact of the global economic crisis.

External assistance is vital for the success of the government's anti-crisis strategy that envisages, among other things, increased spending on infrastructure projects and financial support for private firms. The IMF's

managing director, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, described that strategy as "strong and credible" as he announced the impending release of a \$540 million "standby" loan to Yerevan on March 3.

The announcement came immediately after the authorities allowed a nearly 20 percent devaluation of the national currency, the dram. The Central Bank of Armenia (CBA) had injected at least \$700 million worth of hard currency in the local financial market to keep the dram's value virtually unchanged since last fall.

Opposition politicians and economists critical of the government have strongly criticized that as a needless waste of the country's scarce external reserves which stood at around \$1.4 billion a year ago. They believe that the authorities should have ensured a smoother dram depreciation instead.

But Ratna Sahay, an IMF deputy director for the Middle East and Central Asia, dismissed the criticism. "It is a balance because if sometimes depreciation is not warranted by fundamentals then it does make sense for countries to prevent or smooth out the [exchange rate] fluctuations that might happen," she said. "And to make the right judgment is very hard. We think that the authorities did the right thing in stabilizing the exchange rate."

Lewis agreed, calling the authorities' exchange rate policy "sensible." "It made sense to proceed in a cautious way on this front to avoid a more destabilizing impact on the financial system," he said.

The continuing economic crisis in Armenia will translate into a sizable increase in poverty already this year, a senior official from the World Bank said on Wednesday.

According to Aristomene Varoudakis, head of the World Bank office in Yerevan, the bank now expects the figure to rise by 4 to 6 percentage points by next year. He said living standards in the country are certain to be affected by the ongoing contraction of the Armenian economy which made up 6.1 percent in the first quarter of this year.

"This contraction will have a serious social impact on the poor," Varoudakis told a news conference. He said the Armenian government will therefore have to revise its new poverty reduction program and targets adopted last October. The government plans to set up a "working group" for that purpose soon, he added.

Opposition Campaigners Again Attacked in Yerevan

Continued from page 1

pital, Aghegian said, "They started wresting booklets from the girls' hands. When I tried to stop them they hit me in the neck and I fell over."

"We were approached by a young man with a thick neck who tried to steal a stack of booklets," said another woman, Anahit Grigorian. "I said, 'Young man, what are you doing?' He said, 'You must leave this place now. Don't you know that this is my neighborhood?'"

Levon Yeghiazarian, head of the

HAK chapter in Avan, claimed that the two dozen or so thugs were led by members of the ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK). The HAK insisted that these and other recent attacks on opposition activists campaigning on the streets of Yerevan were organized by the authorities. "This regime gets terrified whenever there is a political process unfolding, accelerating and involving new people in the country," said Arman Musinian, the spokesman for the opposition alliance. "That's why they resort to such immoral and illegal actions."

What Is Outside Is Also Inside

By Hakpo Badalyan
Lragir.am

Almost no one has any doubt that the Armenian government takes advantage of the foreign developments of the Armenian politics, in particular the Armenian and Turkish relations and the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, to distract people from the home problems and to secure at least its external legitimacy instead of the internal one. But, is it certain that the Armenian home problems are not presented and have no significance in the external processes which the Armenia is undergoing now. Probably they are not.

The point is that when it is time for actions, the Armenian government will need the home legitimacy and the assistance of the public to carry them into life. And, they are able to have this assistance only through serious and real reforms in the home life. The Armenian external partners, at least the U.S. and the Europe, cannot but understand all this.

It is another question that the urgency of the home problems is less for them, because the external questions are rather uncertain and are far from being settled. The Armenian government cannot but understand this situation either. Consequently, in order to be able to make steps in the external questions, besides giving promises, the Armenia government will, sooner or later, have to return to the home life. But, to avoid returning to it, the government may try to prolong the external

processes for them not to reach the moment of the settlement so it will not need internal legitimacy. Does Armenia have enough potential for prolonging the processes? It can hardly have it, sure, if some super power does not assist the government in this connection or in case the government does not come to an agreement with Turkey and Azerbaijan, which are its immediate participants in the process of the Armenian and Turkish relations normalization and the Nagorno-Karabakh.

But, if some criminal agreement is present in these processes to prolong them, so the states which are interested in the settlement of those processes, for instance the U.S., if they really have intention to settle the processes, will surely try to approach the question from the other side. In other words, if the Armenian government will be evident to prolong time in order to gain time in the home life and to preserve the status-quo, the U.S. may think that by changing the home life they will record changes in the external life too.

Anyway, the Armenian home problems, though a little overlooked, are present in the external field. Either the government or the states, which encourage the Armenian foreign politics now, will need them. As Herman Hesse would say, what is outside is inside. Consequently, not everything depends on the outside, a lot depends on the inside too. And, who will realize this fact first, they will win in the present process.

Reports of a Deal on Land Return by Karabakh

Continued from page 1

through," said Bernard Fassier, the group's French co-chair. "We are in a position to identify what could be the break, but we are not yet through. So we need to progress and we are expecting to realize that in the following weeks."

Fassier, Bryza and their Russian opposite number, Yuri Merzlyakov, refused to disclose what specifically Aliev and Sarkisian have agreed on.

In a written statement, Sarkisian's office confirmed that the two presidents have narrowed their differences over "some points" of the proposed settlement. It said they instructed their foreign ministers to continue to work on its details with the mediators and to prepare for another Armenian-Azerbaijani summit.

Merzlyakov said Aliev and Sarkisian will likely meet again in Saint-Petersburg, Russia early next month. The two leaders held their first face-to-face talks there in June last year.

Karabakh Leaders Oppose Land Return

Nagorno-Karabakh's top military official signaled on Monday his oppo-

sition to the return of any of the districts in Azerbaijan proper that were occupied by Armenian forces during the 1991-1994 war.

"All the territories that we had liberated required human victims, and every person here has memories related to them," General Movses Hakobian, defense minister of the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), told a news conference. "It will be difficult to cede those territories to anyone."

The remarks highlighted the NKR leadership's serious misgivings about the basic principles of a Karabakh settlement proposed by the U.S., Russian and French mediators co-chairing the OSCE Minsk Group. The call for the liberation of at least six of the seven Armenian-controlled districts surrounding in Karabakh that would be followed by a referendum of self-determination in the disputed region itself.

The so-called Madrid principles have been largely accepted by Armenia. But Georgi Petrosian, the NKR foreign minister, said on April 29 that the authorities in Stepanakert strongly disagree with "several basic points" of the proposed peace accord.

San Diego Armenian Community Commemorates Genocide

By Lisa Kirazian

The Armenian Community of San Diego commemorated the 94th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at UC San Diego's Price Theater with a thought-provoking program of speakers, music and documentary film.

The event was co-sponsored by the UCSD Armenian Students Association, St. John Garabed Armenian Church and the Armenian Genocide Joint Commemoration Committee, comprised of leaders from all of the Armenian organizations of San Diego.

The commemoration began with



a provocative Armenian Genocide documentary geared toward raising student awareness and activism about the Armenian Genocide so that such atrocities are not repeated.

The event's Master of Ceremonies, Steven Kradjian, spoke fervently about the state of Armenian Genocide denial as it continues today and led the audience of 400 in a moment of silence for the victims of 1915.

San Diego City Councilperson Marti Emerald of the 7th District attended the event and announced a proclamation from the City Council in honor of April 24th. She remarked that the powerful event opened "old wounds" for her as well, as a member of the Jewish community in solidarity with the Armenian community.

California State Senator Mark Wyland was represented by his Deputy Director Christine Rubin, who attended to show the Senator's support for his Armenian constituents in North San Diego and South Orange County. She also spoke of Sen. Wyland's Bill AB 234 — "Genocide Awareness Act," which is currently before the State Senate, to require students to study genocide oral histories as part of their social studies curriculum.

UCSD students Henrietta Movsessian, of the Armenian sorority Alpha Gamma Alpha, and Hovannes Nalbandyan, of the Armenian fraternity Alpha Epsilon Omega, welcomed the audience to UCSD. They are also members of the Armenian Students Association on campus. All three of these Armenian student organizations helped put on this commemoration event with great dedication and generosity. Speaking in English and Armenian, respectively, Henrietta and Hovannes spoke about the importance of young Armenians never forgetting their history.

A proclamation from San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders was read by Gary Takessian, St. John Garabed Armenian Church representative and Genocide Committee member. He also noted that a proclamation was received from San Diego City Councilperson Donna Frye.

Fellow Genocide Committee member Sergey Arutyunyan read Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's proclamation honoring Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day and spoke of the need to never stop trying to succeed in getting the Armenian Genocide recognized in the U.S. and Turkey.

An insightful presentation by UCSD Professor Fonna Forman-Barzilai explored the issues facing both descendants of genocide victims and descendants of genocide perpetrators.

Her genocide seminars on campus have attracted students from Armenian, Jewish, Rwandan, Cambodian, and Mayan as well as German, Bosnian, and Turkish backgrounds – students whose families either endured or helped enact genocide. Professor Forman-Barzilai also shared about the intimate nature of these issues, as her own grandparents were Holocaust victims and survivors.

For the evening's musical interlude, Nikolai Mndoyan, an environmental sciences student at Grossmont College, radiantly performed a movement from one of Bach's Suites for Unaccompanied Cello.

The Honorable Judge Larry Burns of the U.S. District Court gave a heartfelt keynote speech about his Armenian heritage on his mother's side and the common history that binds us all. He commented how the tragedy of the Armenian Genocide does not make our ancestors mere victims, but rather inspiring survivors. In turn, we as their descendants can call our legacy one of victory, not of defeat: victory that our ancestors persevered to survive and to keep their Christian faith and Armenian heritage alive for us.

The Judge received a standing ovation.

The final remarks were made by The Rev. Father Datev A.K. Tatoulian, parish priest of St. John Garabed Armenian Church. With great emotion he emphasized that, one day, true and full acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide will come.

He then led the large audience in a candlelight vigil outside of the Price

Farwell to Childhood

By Lucy Toutjian

As a child I loved to play in the streets. Life was safer and simpler then. Returning home from school in the evening, I would throw away my school bag to its usual corner in my room, and rush down the staircase from our third-floor apartment.

Almost always, I would be among the first few to arrive the earliest and wait for the rest of our schoolmates to join us and complete the team. We were all from the Armenian Elementary School that belonged to the only Armenian Church in Nicosia on the eastern Mediterranean island of Cyprus. Our carefree hearts would fill with contentment as we started playing our self designed games jumping ropes or hopping over the chalk-marked lines. Later, upon arrival of our remaining comrades, we would pass to the more passionate and active game of hide-and-seek. This would mark the glorious moment of late evening. One of us would be selected to close the eyes and start counting excitedly up to fifty, while all the other participants of the game would run as fast as possible and hide themselves in a most unlikely corner that was hard to find. After the hiding, the successful discovery of each of the hideouts would then be filled with burst of genuine pleasure for the finder and faked or mixed disappointment for the found.

Other evenings, I would take down with me our two badminton rackets and the few feather balls that my father had bought in Denmark where he had been for getting trained in athletics. These gadgets made us, the three sisters, feel very privileged. Needless to say, we would play badminton only when the weather was good and calm, so that we could control the feather ball. Otherwise it would be the wind that would be the controller.

Christmastime and especially during the Easter vacation, we would meticulously go about making arrangements for our seasonal soccer games. For this purpose, the width of our soccer field would automatically be that of our everyday playground bordered by a high retaining wall on one side just facing our house. The layout of our soccer field would then be finalized by placing two pairs of the largest stone available to mark the locations of the goal posts at opposite ends of the field.

And then the soccer ball would start flying above our one-of-a-kind field, even though we had no training whatsoever in playing the game. We relied, however, on our unique training method which was attained

Center, saying prayers for not only the Genocide departed, including the non-Armenians who also perished (Greeks, etc.), but also for the recent victims in Darfur.

The San Diego community's annual Armenian Genocide Commemo-

by carefully watching many good teams play several times a week. We were thus reasonably familiar with most of the rules, so we could play with a satisfaction almost akin to that of the pros.

But life is never that simple, and the days ahead kept some sad incidents in store. One of those tragic incidents happened like a flash of lightning, all of a sudden transforming our innocent lives forever.

For we saw the ugly face of death gaping into our eyes in the most horrible manner imaginable for a group of pure spirited children. Early death struck with fanatic fury, causing senseless misfortune to innocent lives. We were too young at that time to find the answer as to why it happened, and so we felt utterly miserable and sad.

News of the instant death of our classmate spread with the speed of lightning in our small city of Nicosia on the peaceful island of Cyprus. After a normal evening of playing with us, Jirayr had left us and, on his way home, had stopped for a moment in front of a wooden electric pole to catch his breath before resuming his home run.

A heavy-built boy from the Turkish neighborhood, a few years his elder, had approached him.

"Why are you standing there?" the Turk had asked him threateningly, and had hit him on the forehead with full force toward the power pole without even waiting for Jirayr's answer.

A nail that was on the wooden pole had penetrated the back of our classmate's head. He had succumbed instantly to the massive bleeding. A lady who lived across the street had witnessed the whole incident from her window from beginning to the fatal end. She had immediately run outside and cried for help.

Alas, it was too late!

In my eyes, that day on life had changed forever. It was not simple and pure any more. At that early age of a twelve year old girl, I deeply felt that I had left my childhood behind for good.

And I was heading toward a life that was much, much more complex than games.

The following days and nights, I was unable to forget our innocent classmate. At such moments, the thought of our stark inability to control and prevent the small and big evils shattering our lives matured me tremendously. I kept asking myself why such an incident should have happened out of nowhere. I could not find a valid reason, or a clear explanation.

But now I do.

ration grows bigger each year, as more members of the non-Armenian community attend and even participate. This year, was no exception, and the Joint Commemoration Committee looks forward to an even more exceptional 95th Annual Commemoration next year.

Armenia Fund Elects New Executive Board

LOS ANGELES -- Armenia Fund U.S. Western Region is pleased to announce the recent formation of its Executive Board at its first Board of Directors meeting.

At the initiative of the newly elected President of Armenia Fund, Inc., Ara Aghishian, Esq., on Thursday, April 30, 2009 the Board of Directors convened to form the Executive Board (Divan). This marked the first time the newly composed Board of Directors met for fiscal year 2009. At the recommendation of Mr. Aghishian, all present directors unanimously approved the appointment of the following individuals to their respective executive positions: Mr. Koko Balian, Vice President; Mrs. Suzy Antounian, Esq. Chief Financial Officer; Dr. Jouleta Grigorian, Secretary; and Dr. Jack Sarkisian, Advisor.

Mr. Koko Balian, a long time community leader in the U.S., has graciously served on the Homenetmen U.S. Western Region board, as well as the World Executive Committee, the organization's international governing body.

Mrs. Suzy Antounian, a taxation and estate attorney by profession, is a very active member of the greater Armenian-American community of the Bay Area. Prior to her appointment, Mrs. Antounian spearheaded

fundraising efforts for a milk collection unit in the Tavush region of Armenia, part of the Armenia Fund's Rural Development Program.

Dr. Jouleta Grigorian, a long time Armenian Relief Society member, is active with the Armenian-American community of Montebello, CA.

Dr. Jack Sarkisian, a family physician by profession, is an active member of the Armenian American Medical Society of California.

Present at the Armenia Fund, Inc. Board of Directors meeting in their respective representative capacity were, Mr. Leonard Manoukian, Armenian Cultural Foundation; Mr. Hrayr Sherikian, Armenian Catholic Eparchy; Dn. Vahe Charkhutian, Armenian General Benevolent Union SCDC; Ms. Sossie Poladian, Armenian Relief Society of Western USA; Mr. Khachig Janoyan, Tekeyan Cultural Association; Mr. Raffi Kendirjian, Western Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of N.A.; Mr. Meher Der Ohanessian, Western Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America; and Mr. Yeghig Keshishian, Armenian Assembly of America. Due to unforeseen personal circumstances, Mr. Greg Zeronian of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and a representative from Nor Serount Cultural Association were not present.

Centennial of Composer Alan Hovhaness Music Giant to be Honored in Arlington

ARLINGTON, MA -- As the centennial date (2011) of the world renowned composer Alan Hovhaness approaches, the town of Arlington will honor its most illustrious son by declaring May 17th "Alan Hovhaness Day." On that day at 2:00 p.m., the Alan Hovhaness Commemorative Committee will acknowledge his outstanding contribution to the world of music by unveiling a monument in his honor on the grounds of the Jefferson Cutter House in Arlington Center. Attending the event will be officials of the Town and other dignitaries.

The dedication of the monument will constitute the central feature of several memorial events which were launched on October 5, 2008, with a concert held at the Armenian Cultural Foundation.

A second memorial event, a long distance road run called "The 'All Men are Brothers' Run" (named after Hovhaness's 11th Symphony of that title for which the composer wrote, "Let all unite in peace on our tiny planet"), began on May 2 at Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire. This memorial run will end on May 14th at Hovhaness's boyhood home on Blossom Street in Arlington.

After the dedication of the Hovhaness monument on Sunday, May 17, a free, open-to-the-public concert will be given in the auditorium of the Arlington Town Hall at 3:00 p.m. The concert "In Tribute to Alan Hovhaness" will be directed by Dr. Pasquale Tassone, former director of Performing Arts in the Arlington Public Schools. Featured performers will include pianist Martin Berkofsky, renowned and dynamic pianist, known primarily for



his interpretations of music by Alan Hovhaness and Franz Liszt, and pianist Ani Hovsepian. The program will include the world premiere of Dr. Tassone's composition Dzon for solo marimba, string orchestra, and percussion featuring Sivlie Zakarian on marimba as well as music of other composers. Participating in the concert will be the Honors Orchestra and Madrigal Singers of the Arlington High School.

Alan Hovhaness grew up on Blossom Street in the Arlington Heights section of town. He attended the Cutter Elementary School, the Junior High West (now Ottoson Middle School), and graduated from Arlington High School in the class of 1929. While still a student in high school, he composed two operettas, as well as several other pieces. (Hovhaness went on to write an amazing 67 symphonies and 434 other compositions.) The recipient of Fulbright and Guggenheim Fellowships, a faculty member of the

\$624,000 Raised During AMAA Children's Fashion Show and Luncheon in Los Angeles



Some of the Orphan and Child Care Committee members with the AMAA's Executive Director. (l to r) Grace Kurkjian; Lori Muncherian, Los Angeles area Committee Co-Chair; Elizabeth Agbabian; Caroline Tufenkian, Luncheon Co-Chair; Andy Torigian, AMAA Executive Director; Leslie Kevorkian, Luncheon Co-Chair; Savye Tufenkian, Joyce Stein, National Co-Chair; and Arsine Phillips, Los Angeles area Committee Co-Chair.

Over 450 guests attended the Armenian Missionary Association of America's (AMAA) Orphan/Child Care luncheon and children's fashion show at the Crystal Ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel, adorned with floral centerpieces donated by Mikaela & Co. The luncheon co-chairs Leslie Kevorkian and Caroline Tufenkian warmly welcomed those present. Tina Segel gave a moving devotional and prayer thanking God for the support received for this worthy cause.

The silent auction was spectacular. Nicole Barsom Nishanian, the silent auction chair, Leslie Tevrizian Shahinian, Sandy Bedrosian and many other members procured many of the over 100 quality items, including resort packages.

Joyce Stein, National Co-Chair of the Orphan/Child Care Committee, remarked about AMAA's ministry to deprived children and their families. Andy Torigian, Executive Director of the AMAA, explained about AMAA's programs. Andy thanked everyone for their continued support, especially of the child and orphan care projects. During lunch, a poignant video was shown describing the substandard conditions of many of Armenia's children. Maro Najarian Yacoubian asked everyone to sponsor a child, and over 60 needy children were sponsored.

After dessert, the children's fashion show was introduced by coordinators Caroline Tufenkian and Marilyn

Boston Conservatory of Music, the creator of artistic works for playwright Clifford Odets and dancer Martha Graham, Hovhaness's prolific compositions became a staple of the American music repertoire. He later became a full professor at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where a chair was established in his honor. On October 6, 1991, Carnegie Hall celebrated his 80th birthday with musicians, composers, conductors, and entertainers from throughout the world. They all came to pay tribute to this former Arlington resident known to the world of classical music as Alan Hovhaness.

Hovhaness's father, Haroutioun Hovanes Chakmakjian, a professor at Tufts University, was Armenian; his mother was of Scottish descent. In his music Hovhaness especially drew on his

Bezdikian, with 50 children participating. We thank Nordstrom Glendale for sponsoring and producing the fashion show.

The finance and reservations chair, Sandra Kalemkiarian, announced that the proceeds this year totaled \$624,000. "We are grateful for the very generous donations we received this year," explained Sandra, "this has been a record year."

Each guest received a bag of goodies donated by Jessica Vartoughian of Jessica Nails and LindaKay Abdulian of National Raisin Company. The beautiful gift bags with the AMAA logo were created and donated by Arsi Seraydarian of Pacobond, Inc.

We appreciate the committee members who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the event. Plans are already underway for next year's fashion show and luncheon which will be held in April at the Beverly Hills Hotel, explained Lori Muncherian, the west coast co-chair of the committee. Many children in Armenia lack the basic necessities of normal life – food, clothing and shelter. "We are trying to help change a child's life and give hope for a better future – one child at a time," explained Joyce Stein, who has led this committee for many years. If you would like to sponsor a child or make a donation, please contact the AMAA at 201-265-2607 or visit the website: amaa.org.

Armenian roots, but he also introduced orchestras and music lovers everywhere to Asian and Far Eastern music. He was truly an American composer who spanned many continents.

Alan Hovhaness is an American icon whose music transcends national boundaries. His roots and earliest compositions were as a son of Arlington. We hope you will join us in celebration of this famous citizen.

The Alan Hovhaness Commemorative Committee is an ad hoc committee established by a group of musical enthusiasts to commemorate and celebrate the life and legacy of a great composer and humanist.

For further information on the dedication of the memorial or the concert, please contact the Armenian Cultural Foundation at 781-646-3090 or the following e-mail address: .

