

Dallas-Area Armenians Host A Texas-Sized Book Signing

Press Release: June 18, 2007

Contact: Bedros Safarian

By Bedros Safarian

(CARROLLTON, TEXAS) Armenia author and photographer Matthew Karanian spoke to a crowd of more than 80 people on Father's Day, June 17, at St. Sarkis Armenian Church in the Dallas suburb of Carrollton, Texas.

Karanian used the event—a book signing for “Armenia and Karabagh: The Stone Garden Guide” – to call attention to Armenia’s deforestation crisis and to urge greater awareness of Armenia’s ecology. “Armenia and Karabagh” is a comprehensive travel guide that Karanian published in September with co-author Robert Kurkjian, Ph D. The book places a strong emphasis on ecology, conservation, and the preservation of historic cultural sites.

Although Karanian denounced what he called the “ongoing illegal logging” in Armenia, and the destruction of the parks and green belt of Yerevan, he also noted some good environmental news.

“To see the good news,” he said, “just travel to Sevan.” Karanian cited the rising water level at Lake Sevan as an indicator of the lake’s restoration-- which he illustrated during a slide show presentation with a dramatic photograph of a washed-out beach resort. He cautioned, however, that Sevan’s ecosystem is still at risk because of the discharge of untreated waste into the lake.

“This is our homeland,” Karanian said. “We need to be aware of what’s going on, and we have the right to advocate for what’s right.”

Karanian, a California lawyer, served as Associate Dean of the law program at the American University of Armenia (AUA) and has taught international environmental law there. Kurkjian is an environmental scientist in Los Angeles and has served as Director of AUA’s Environmental Research and Conservation Center. They have been publishing books about Armenia since 1999 and are passionate about protecting Armenia’s fragile environment, even while they are encouraging Diasporan Armenians and others to visit.

“Armenia and Karabagh” is the largest and most comprehensive travel guide for Armenia and Karabagh, and is illustrated with 135 color photographs. Karanian exhibited a selection of those photos during the 35-minute slide show that



preceded the book signing. A selection of photos and sample pages from the book can be viewed online at www.StoneGardenProductions.com.

The book is available for purchase from Armenian bookstores and also by mail order directly from the publisher. Check or money order for USD \$30 for delivery to addresses in the US and Canada. Check or money order for USD \$35 for delivery to addresses outside the US and Canada. All orders shipped by Priority Mail. Please make checks payable to Stone Garden Productions; PO Box 7758; Northridge, CA 91327.

The Father's Day event, which was billed as an Illustrated Travelogue, was hosted by the Church Council of St. Sarkis Armenian Church of Carrollton, Texas, and was organized by Council Members Jeff Andonian and Paul Kirazian. Parishioners called the presentation "inspiring."