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WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
Senior Lawyers Section  
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# LIFE BEGINS

A Publication of the  
Washington State Bar Association  
Senior Lawyers Section

## Lawyers in Transition: Annual Senior Lawyers Conference Friday, May 9, 2014

Seattle Airport Marriott  
3201 South 176th Street, Seattle, WA 98188

Register online at [www.wsbacl.org](http://www.wsbacl.org). Enter 14860 in search field.

- |            |  |            |   |
|------------|--|------------|---|
| 7:15 a.m.  | <b>Check-in • Walk-in Registrations • Distribution of Course Materials • Coffee and Pastry Service</b>   | 12:00 p.m. | <b>Networking Lunch</b> – included with tuition   |
| 8:10 a.m.  | <b>Welcome and Opening Remarks by Program Chair</b><br><i>John Bergmann – Helsell Fetterman LLP, Seattle</i>   | 1:10 p.m.  | <b>Senior Lawyers Section Business Meeting – Election of Executive Committee</b>  |
| 8:15 a.m.  | <b>Tax Consequences of Financial Planning for Seniors</b><br><i>Gair Petrie – Randall Danskin PS, Spokane</i>  | 1:15 p.m.  | <b>An Inside View of the Court’s Decision-Making Process</b><br><i>Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud – Washington Supreme Court, Olympia</i>                        |
| 9:15 a.m.  | <b>Medicare and Medicaid: Their Impacts on Retirement</b><br><i>Mary Wolney – Mary C. Wolney, P.S., Attorney at Law, Seattle</i>   | 2:15 p.m.  | <b>Planning for Change in Real Estate – New Things If You Are Buying, Selling or Financing Your House</b><br><i>Scott Osborne - Foster Pepper PLLC, Seattle</i> |
| 10:15 a.m. | <b>Break</b>   | 3:00 p.m.  | <b>Break</b>  |
| 10:30 a.m. | <b>Second Career and Volunteer Choices – A Panel Discussion</b><br><i>Robert Boruchowitz – Seattle University School of Law, Seattle</i><br><i>Jo-Hanna Read – Law Office of Jo-Hanna Read, Seattle</i><br><i>Hon. Faith Ireland – Mediator, former King County Superior Court Judge and Supreme Court Justice, Seattle</i><br><i>Scott Wyatt – Attorney and Author, Issaquah</i><br><i>Moderator: Stephen DeForest – Riddell Williams PS, Seattle</i> | 3:15 p.m.  | <b>Ethical Issues for Lawyers in Transition</b><br><i>David Lenci – K&amp;L Gates LLP, Seattle</i>  |
|            |  | 4:00 p.m.  | <b>A Unique Perspective on Criminal Justice Reform</b><br><i>Shon Hopwood – Author, UIW Law - Gates Public Service Law Scholar and 3rd year law student</i>     |
|            |  | 4:45 p.m.  | <b>Complete Evaluation Forms • Adjourn</b>  |

Approved for 6.75 CLE credits for Washington attorneys (6 general and .75 ethics).

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### If you're not already a member of the Senior Lawyers Section for 2013-2014, join now!

Send to: Senior Lawyers Section Washington State Bar Association 1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 600 Seattle, WA 98101-2539	Name _____ Address _____ City/State/Zip _____ Phone # _____ Email address _____ WSBA # _____
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> I am an active member of WSBA <input type="checkbox"/> I am not a member of WSBA	<i>Office Use Only</i> Date _____ Check # _____ Total \$ _____
Enclosed is my check for \$25 for my annual section dues made payable to Washington State Bar Association. Section membership dues cover Oct. 1, 2013, to Sept. 30, 2014. (Your cancelled check is acknowledgment of membership.)	



<b>Print, fill out, and send completed form with payment to:</b> Washington State Bar Association 1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 600 Seattle, WA 98101-2539	<b>Fax your completed form with credit card information to:</b> WSBA CLE Department (206) 727-8324 Phone: 1-800-945-WSBA or (206) 443-WSBA
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### Event Registration

Event/Seminar# 14860STC Event Date: May 9, 2014

Title: Lawyers in Transition: Annual Senior Lawyers Conference 6.75 CLE credits [6 General, .75 ethics]

Location: Seattle Airport Marriott Options: \$170 Section Member/\$250 non-member/ \$195 Join the Section + Tuition

Special Needs-Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  Omit my name from list of attendees available to program exhibitors & registrant networking list.  
 (email address must be provided)

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## Join a WSBA Section Today!

Connect with others in your area of the law.

### Why join a section?

Membership in one or more of the WSBA's sections provides a forum for members who wish to explore and strengthen their interest in various areas of the law. Law students can join any section at a discounted rate. Newly admitted attorneys can join one section for free during their first year.

### Who can join?

Any active WSBA member can join.

### What are the benefits?

- Professional networking
- Resources and referrals
- Leadership opportunities
- Being "in the know"
- Advancing your career
- Affecting change in your practice area
- Skill development in involvement with programs and the legislative process
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With 28 practice sections, you'll find at least one that aligns with your practice area and/or interest.

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Learn more about any section at [www.wsba.org/sections](http://www.wsba.org/sections).

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## Seeking Volunteer Custodians Under ELC 7.7

Section members may be interested in the following WSBA volunteer opportunity.

WSBA is seeking interested lawyers as potential ELC 7.7 volunteer custodians. An appointed custodian is authorized to act as counsel for the limited purpose of protecting clients' interests whenever a lawyer has been transferred to disability inactive status, suspended, disbarred, or dies or disappears and no person appears to be protecting the clients' interests.

The custodian takes possession of the necessary files and records and takes action to protect the clients' interests. The duty usually is centered on contacting clients and assisting them in retrieving their files and finding new counsel. The custodian may act with a team of custodians; much of the work may be performed by supervised staff.

If the WSBA is notified of the need for a custodian, the WSBA would affirm the willingness and ability of a potential volunteer and seek appointment of the volunteer as custodian. Costs incurred may be reimbursed.

If interested, please contact Sandra Schilling at [sandras@wsba.org](mailto:sandras@wsba.org), or 206.239.2118 or Darlene Neumann at [darlenen@wsba.org](mailto:darlenen@wsba.org), or 206-733-5923.

## Acronym Heaven

By Steve DeForest

Healthcare reform has spawned a whole new crop of acronyms. How many of the following can you identify?

Legislation			
PPACA	GINA	MHPAEA	
ACA	WACRA	HITECH	
HIPAA	NMPA		
Agencies/Entities			
CMS	HHS	TPA	
Programs/Policies/Terminology			
QHP	FAQ	HRA	HDHP
SEP	SPD	LTC	EHB
FFE	SBC	CHP	CHIP
SHOP	CO-OP	SHP	PCOR
FF-SHOP	FTE	HPIP	HCTC
ALE	MEWA	EFT/ERA	

If you scored 50% or better, congratulations. You will be an informative resource for your friends.

## 2013-2014 Senior Lawyers Section

[www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Sections/Senior-Lawyers-Section](http://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Sections/Senior-Lawyers-Section)

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## Practice Transition Opportunities Program

by Charity Anastasio – WSBA Law Office Management Assistance Program

Supporting member transitions across the life of their practice is a strategic goal of the Washington State Bar Association for 2013 – 2015. To that end, WSBA increased its Law Office Management Assistance Program (LOMAP) staff to two practice management advisors and one assistant practice management advisor in 2013. (See the sidebar for who's who at LOMAP.)

Among other endeavors, this year LOMAP is revitalizing its fledgling Practice Transition Opportunities Program. This year-old program allows members to post a practice for sale on the WSBA job board. It also contains three timely CLE courses:

- Buying and Selling a Law Practice
- Lawyer's Emergency Kit (Succession Planning for Your Practice)
- Three Firms in Transition: Real Life Advice on Selling, Buying, or Otherwise Transitioning a Solo or Small Firm Law Practice

All are available for purchase by calling 800-945-9722 or emailing [cle@wsba.org](mailto:cle@wsba.org).

Revitalizing the program will be beneficial to lawyers at all stages of their career:

- *NWLawyer* (WSBA's magazine) recently added a section in the Classifieds titled *Law Office Transitions* where lawyers can post a practice for sale or post a desire to buy a practice.
- New written materials are being developed to map out a buy-sell or a wind-down of a law practice from one practitioner to another or from one firm to another. The materials will not be limited to the seller's perspective; they will also discuss the buyer's considerations and steps. The materials will be practical in nature and contain forms and referral sources for further information.
- For internet-inclined lawyers, development of an online Frequently Asked Questions section at [www.wsba.org/lomap](http://www.wsba.org/lomap) allows folks to find answers to their questions about Rule of Professional Conduct 1.17 (Sale of a Law Practice), how to post their practice for sale, how to find a practice for sale, what considerations there are in transitioning out of the law, and more.
- Information on retirement and what comes after leaving the practice of law, including video vignettes of members who have made the transition and lessons that can be learned from their transitions.

### Planning Ahead Packet

On November 5, the WSBA Lawyers Assistance Program is bringing back the stars of "Three Firms in Transition" – Dan Farr, Walt Krueger, and John Mitchell – for their takes on *Transitioning into Retirement* at the WSBA

Conference Center. The program will be accessible online during the presentation, so WSBA members may attend no matter where you are located.

Until then, perusing the [www.wsba.org](http://www.wsba.org) Career Center at <http://www.wsba.org/About-WSBA/Careers> will lead you to a *Buying a Legal Practice* page and a *Sell and Transition Your Legal Practice* page. Both contain a wealth of information on the basics of doing a deal like this, as well as a guide on how to post one's practice for sale on the WSBA job board and a link to any practices posted for sale on the same board. The Career Center also has information on starting your career in the law and winding up a law practice.

Finally, calling LOMAP to request a copy of the Planning Ahead packet or downloading it at <http://www.wsba.org/Resources-and-Services/Ethics/Succession-Planning> is a great first step, because after all, all things must come to an end. Succession planning to protect your clients' interests is ideal. The most minimal plan includes all of the following:

1. an assisting attorney and successor assisting attorney (to triage cases and wind up a practice)
2. an assuming attorney or attorneys (to take cases)
3. an up-to-date active case file list
4. a file archive index

The packet will give you forms to fill out to address emergencies and put a working plan in place: Even a minimal plan is better than no plan at all.

If you are interested in buying or selling a law practice or winding up your practice, LOMAP would be pleased to help. If you are transitioning into another practice area, practice model, or implementing a systems/procedures

*continued on next page*

## The LOMAP Team

The Practice Management Advisors, Charity Anastasio and Mary Wells, are ready and enthusiastic to answer your questions on practice management, starting or winding up a practice, and making changes that work for you. Mary Wells, an MBA with extensive experience running a law office in a rural community and HR background, is the newest addition to the LOMAP team. Aaron Burt, Assistant Practice Management Advisor, is the hub for most callers and can answer many member questions as well as do technical trainings. Charity's bio is below. You can find more about the LOMAP Team at the WSBA website: <http://www.wsba.org/LOMAP>.

## How Can We Step Away Smartly from Our Practices?

by Terry Lumsden



*Life Begins* editor Carole Grayson has invited us Senior Lawyers to submit ideas for articles and or discussion. Well, after 43 years of practicing ... and practicing, I turned an old 68 in April but don't YET know how to step away (smartly, anyway).

Many of us in this time warp are not partners/shareholders of medium to large LLCs or Subchapter S Corps that have buy/sell agreements, retirement plans, or golden parachutes. Many young lawyers will be sliding into the very large shoes of

older retiring lawyers, but how do those of us in sole practice, or very small partnerships, find that transition plan?

In my case, all I have are a successful plaintiff's personal injury practice based in Tacoma, lots of office equipment, inventory of good clients, good referral network, excellent internet and other marketing, accounts receivables (costs advanced), goodwill, great staff, 2-story 4,000-square-foot building at an excellent class A location, and my extreme good looks.

### The Devil is in the Details

I would like to continue to consult, and any "buyer" would want to continue my marketing. Is there anyone out there who has jumped this hoop? I have talked with five law firms, and each comes at it a different way. And what about the retiring senior lawyer who carries a large number of hourly billing clients in a general practice? It seems the lawyer with the "contingency" practice has distinct, well, contingencies. Even hiring a young lawyer comes fraught with issues ... Yep, the devil's in the details.

I'm sure I'm not the first to ponder this issue. Maybe a pseudo-*pro bono* committee could act as a "neutral" to consult on this issue. Even better, there should be many "givens" to balance the gray areas. And maybe there should be some contingencies built-in to allow for modification rather than dissolution of the plan. Binding arbitration comes to mind.

Finally, it also seems that the State Bar would be keenly interested in greasing the skids on this process for many public relations reasons... We don't EVER want the client to come out with the short straw or have ethical issues pop up.

Terry Lumsden can be reached at 3517 - 6th Ave. #200, Tacoma, WA 98359; 253-537-4424; 253-318-6007 (cell); 253-573-1744 (fax); or [telumsden@aol.com](mailto:telumsden@aol.com).

### Practice Transition Opportunities Program

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change to your firm, LOMAP has resources and information that can smooth your transition.

Please contact the Law Office Management Assistance Program at 206-733-5914, toll-free at 800-945-9722 ext. 5914, or at [lomap@wsba.org](mailto:lomap@wsba.org) with questions or to schedule a consultation. Email and phone questions that take less than a half hour are generally at no cost. Consultations are \$95 an hour for lawyers admitted to WSBA more than four years; I understand that senior lawyers reading this article passed that mark a long time ago. The LOMAP team is standing by and ready to assist Washington lawyers of any age or stage in their career.

Charity Anastasio is a Practice Management Advisor with the Law Office Management Assistance Program at the Washington State Bar Association. She graduated from Seattle University School of Law in 2007 and opened a solo practice in 2008 where she focused on Estate Planning, Probate, and Family Law. She joined the LOMAP team in 2013 and she absolutely loves assisting members in their law practice management decisions. You can reach Charity at [charitya@wsba.org](mailto:charitya@wsba.org) or 206-733-5949.

## Article Ideas? Your Input Is Needed!

*Life Begins*, the Senior Lawyers Section newsletter, which you are reading at this very moment, works best when Section members actively participate. We welcome your articles and suggestions regarding *your lives in or out of the law*.

Please contact Carole Grayson, editor, to submit an article, or if you'd like to write an article, or if you have ideas for article topics. Here's how to reach her: phone (206) 543-6486, email [cag8@uw.edu](mailto:cag8@uw.edu), fax (206) 543-3808, or mail at UW Student Legal Services, Box 352236, Seattle, WA 98195.

### The Lean and Fit Law Practice from previous page

Pro which occasionally deals me fits. When I need help I use contract labor.

This way I am able to charge moderate rates and keep most of what I earn. There are two reasons I don't retire: I like the money and I still matter. After I have successfully mediated a case I come home and shout enthusiastically to my ever-calm husband "I am still relevant." Kareem Abdul-Jabbar wrote in a recent *Rotarian* article that he has learned to go from "success to significance." He has no plans to retire, ever!

### The New Generations of Lawyer

In my first three years after leaving the bench I also did public policy work for the Washington Dental Service Foundation on fluoridation issues around the state. That work is now to the point where I can do it *pro bono*. However, I am looking for a new public policy client who wants a spokesperson with experience in two branches of government and a zillion contacts. The public policy work allows for ongoing strategic engagement for a significant cause or client. That supplements the mediations and appellate coaching that come and then are gone.

What about you? Consider part-time house counsel to complement a transactional practice. Perhaps family law to balance a personal injury practice? I find that kind of balance also helps smooth practice ups and downs from recessions after a stock market or real estate crash, when you think someone unplugged the phones!

Another question: How do you stay connected with the new generations of lawyers? I went to a CLE at the bar office and of the 250 lawyers, thought I would probably know 50. I knew five silver-haired guys, like me! For me, I want to know the younger lawyers for the referrals. Also, we need to nurture those coming after us especially in the matters that require judgment and seasoning. Who are you mentoring?

A fit practice benefits from life balance. I met my husband, Chuck, skiing in Park City, Utah. He moved to Seattle to be with me 35 years ago. Of course, he complained about the weather. I told him that when I left the judiciary, he could

decide where we live. Guess what, we're still here. He likes his job at Cray Inc. (supercomputers) and possibly more important he has been playing in the Puget Sound Men's Senior Baseball League ("Don't go soft, play hardball") for about 20 years. These days I have time to watch my husband's baseball games. I never thought that the "boys" cared about fans. I found out otherwise!

### Five Easy Steps

After 14 years of competitive powerlifting all over the world, in three federations with dozens of American records for my age and weight and 14 world records, I appreciate athletics. In meetings people always want to talk to me about fitness, mine and theirs, not my years on the Supreme Court. Powerlifting, like life, has its ups and downs. Sports injuries and surgeries for rotator cuff and now knee, present challenges and test resolve. However, I am so committed to fitness that if the door on one sport were to close, I'd find another. Chuck and I still love skiing and there hasn't been enough time for that. Yoga has been calling my name for years ... it's just waiting for me.

People have lots of reasons not to exercise. But most of them boil down to "It's too late" or "I'm too busy." I have had people in their 20s and 30s tell me it's too late! Nonsense.

When I was trying to make working out a *habit*, I got good advice from a friend. First, find a place to work out that is **convenient**, close to home or work. Second, **schedule** your fitness time like you would any other appointment. Write it on the calendar. Third, in the morning, take your work clothes with you and change at the gym; or at night put your gym clothes on before you leave the office. That sets your **intention**. Fourth, find a work-out **buddy** or hire a trainer. Fifth, remember that the **fun** begins when you've DONE it. You feel so righteous.

Faith Ireland is one of the panel members who will share "Second Career and Volunteer Choices" at the Senior Lawyer Section's annual CLE on May 9.

## Guest Columnist

### The Lean and Fit Law Practice

by Justice Faith Ireland (Ret.)



How are you doing with your practice fitness? How about your physical fitness? Think of them as extensions of each other. When I was on the Supreme Court I took up competitive powerlifting. That involved driving from Olympia, past my house near Seward Park to downtown Seattle to train with my coach. I look back and wonder how I did it. But as my coach points out, "You needed it." Very true.

Although I took up lifting to help with back problems, the mental benefits were incredible. When I started lifting in the late 1990's I had been suffering back problems since a 1983 hit-and-run car accident. I had a sedentary job and was 30 pounds overweight. It took two years before I could work out pain-free. However, I started to get benefits

within 6 weeks. After dragging myself to a gym near the courthouse, I would drive home and find a smile spreading across my face; the endorphins were kicking in.

By the time I ran for the Supreme Court in 1998 I had lost over 30 pounds and gained stamina. I would need it to campaign state-wide, then commute to Olympia and deal with dying parents. At the Supreme Court I found the intense work-outs helped keep me calm in an often tense and impassioned environment of high-powered people. The workouts also helped me with focus, which I needed for some near all-nighters writing a pretrial memo or opinion acceptable to my own perfectionism. What about you? What is your fitness regime?

#### Keep Most of What You Earn

People sometimes ask me why I didn't stay on the Supreme Court longer. Fact is, I would have had to go through another grinding state-wide campaign. Twenty-one years in the fish bowl of the judiciary is a long time. You don't realize how confining it is until you get your freedom of speech back!

Also, I wanted to leave while I could still successfully start another practice and was at the top of my game. Here's where the lean practice comes in. I wanted to be able to continue to travel internationally for powerlifting and pleasure. I was recruited to lots of boards and commissions, and I wanted family time.

The solution: a virtual practice. I built a successful mediation, arbitration and appellate consulting practice without the overhead commitment that requires 60-hour work weeks. I "office" with a firm in Seward Park five minutes from my house. That is, I get my mail there, and when I am doing mediations or arbitrations I rent the conference rooms – very nice ones. They also provide me with Westlaw. I spend most of my time in downtown Seattle law offices anyway.

When I need to do computer work I have my command central at home on Lake Washington with all the bells and whistles and my own IT guy, husband Chuck Norem, who is a systems engineer.

Most of my overhead is for advertising, professional license fees, business meals, and parking. The latter two expand or contract depending on the work demand. That is a key. I employ no one. I do my books with Quick Books

*continued on next page*

### Traveling in Eastern Turkey – Is It Safe?

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on occasion we would lose our way amid the many detours for road construction, and pull to the side to ask directions. Immediately the nearest person, whether a pedestrian or on a bike, or in a car, would stop, come over, and help us find the way. Eastern Turkey is also an archeological treasure trove. Gobekli Tepe, which means "belly hill", was not discovered until 1996. It predates Stonehenge by 6000 years and is thought to be the first human-built holy place. Only an estimated 10 percent of this site has been excavated. It is a mind-blowing experience to gaze upon a circular array of Neolithic megaliths.

For the flight home, we left Istanbul at 6:30 a.m., changed planes in Amsterdam, and landed at SeaTac at 11:30 a.m. – the same morning! – tired but grateful that we had not passed up this remarkable opportunity to learn and see so much.

*Steve DeForest is the prior chair of the Senior Lawyers Section. When he's not traveling and sharing his experiences in travel-ogues in this newsletter, he practices law at Riddell Williams in Seattle. He can be reached at 206.389.1779 or sdeforest@riddellwilliams.com.*

## Traveling in Eastern Turkey – Is It Safe?

by Steve DeForest

Last summer a couple with whom we had traveled several times strongly recommended a three-week tour of south-eastern and eastern Turkey sponsored by Edmonds-based Treasures of Travel, with a departure date of September 22, 2013. Twenty years earlier my wife and I had traveled through western and central Turkey, and we were intrigued by an opportunity to learn more about the area to the east, often referred to as Mesopotamia. We signed up.

When we received the itinerary, we learned that the tour started in Antakya (not to be confused with Antalya, in southern Turkey on the Mediterranean) in Hatay Province, known as Antioch in ancient times. Upon looking at a map, we noted that the border crossing with Syria was about 30

miles from Antakya. We also read that the population in this area is about 90 percent Kurdish. My wife's justifiable reaction to this information was "We aren't going!" She reluctantly came around, in part persuaded by my observation that our tour guide, who was born and raised in Turkey but who became a U.S. citizen a number of years ago, and who has a wife and 3-year-old child in Edmonds, would not take a group to this area if it was unsafe for tourists.

Over the past 30 years various Kurdish insurgent groups have engaged in armed combat with the Turkish army. They have demanded separation from Turkey to create an independent Kurdistan, or to have autonomy and greater political and cultural rights for Kurds inside the Republic of Turkey. The main rebel group is the Kurdistan Workers Party or PKK, which is considered a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States, the European Union and NATO. Although insurgents have carried out attacks in many regions of Turkey, the insurgency is mainly in southeastern Turkey. The PKK's military presence in Iraq's Kurdistan Region has been a base from which it launches attacks on Turkey. The full-scale insurgency began in 1984 and lasted until 1999, when the PKK declared a unilateral cease fire. The armed conflict was resumed in 2004. Since the summer of 2011 the conflict has become increasingly violent.

#### Escalating Conflict

Had we done our homework (Wikipedia), we would have learned that in 2012 the fight with the PKK escalated, in parallel with the Syrian civil war, as President Bashar al-Assad ceded control of several Kurdish cities in Syria to the PYD, the Syrian affiliate of the PKK. After months of negotiations, on March 21, 2013, the Turkish government

and the PKK announced a cease-fire that included withdrawing PKK militants from Turkish soil and an agreement that Kurds within Turkey would be allowed to maintain their culture, including retaining Kurdish names for towns and removing the requirement that Kurdish children recite in their pledge of allegiance that they are Turks.

Is it safe to visit this area? Absolutely! If there was any military presence in the area adjacent to the Syrian border, we did not see it. No military vehicles on the roads, and the first weapons depot was not until we had traveled hundreds of miles north of Antakya. Refugees from Syria are confined to five camps. Local police are no more numerous than in Seattle. We felt safe walking on the streets in the evening. We even got closer to the border, visiting the beehive houses in Harran, an historic site that is 10 miles from the Turkish-Syrian border crossing.

#### Four Phases of Civilization

Every day was a learning experience about the history of this area and the viewing of remnants of prior civilizations. What is now Turkey is a country whose borders were drawn at the conclusion of World War I, when Great Britain, France and Russia, and the United States sat down and divvied up the Middle East, including the former Ottoman Empire. Beginning in the south at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, the countries on the eastern border of Turkey are Syria, Iraq, Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. Before the creation of the Republic of Turkey, the eastern part had been generally known as Mesopotamia, which included the land between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, both of which have their headwaters in the mountains of Armenia. In the extreme south the Euphrates and Tigris unite in Iran and empty into the Persian Gulf.

Trying to keep track of the numerous civilizations that populated this area was for us a daunting task. Early on in Mesopotamia a pattern took hold that was repeated many times over thousands of years: a complex struggle between nomads and city dwellers which often led to bigger empires. An historian has described four phases: conquest, consolidation, expansion, and degeneration, with the latter opening the way to conquest and a new cycle. In approximate chronological order, dating back to 6500 B.C., came the Babylonians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Mongols, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Seljuks, Armenians, and Ot-

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*Colossal statues at Nemrut Dagi*

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tomans, the latter prevailing from about 1500 to 1918. Each of these civilizations left a legacy of interweaving cultures, languages, religions and architectural styles. The Silk Road passed through eastern Turkey, and the mountain passes were protected by fortresses, which collected tolls for a safe passage by caravans of goods.

**Building Boom, Baby Boom**

The southern part of eastern Turkey is very arid and extensively irrigated. We were amazed by the signs of the economic boom which southeastern Turkey is enjoying. The dams built by the Turks over the last 30 years, including 10 each on the Euphrates and Tigris, have brought water and power to an arid land. Farms have spread across the river basins that produce corn, cotton, olives, pistachios (Turkey is the world's largest producer), hazelnuts, and tea.

Especially impressive is the extent of construction activity: apartment buildings in the towns and cities, and highway construction. Four-lane highways are being widened to six lanes. Approaches to cities have been landscaped, often with a center median. Pedestrian overpasses are frequent. If I had been forewarned, I would have started counting the number of tunnels that we passed through. I estimate there were between 40 and

50. Some were short; others were a mile or more long. On a comparative basis, the Mount Baker and Mercer Island tunnels would rate as "tunnels 101". Clusters of apartment buildings, and some condos, 10 to 12 stories high, are a common sight, and are particularly striking when located within an area of single-level dwellings. Many of the apartments are financed and built by the Turkish government, but the building boom is also attributable to investors from oil-rich Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

New construction is also apparent in the religious sector. In recent years new mosques, ranging from quite small and simple design to larger elaborate structures, have been built, and this work continues. Many older mosques are being remodeled. Minarets, many of which look like space rockets on a launch pad, are particularly noticeable in the smaller towns.

The mosques and minarets are constructed by the Turkish government. Approximately 95 percent of the population of Turkey is Muslim. Turkey is a secular state, established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk after World War I. The Turkish Constitution recognizes freedom of religion for individuals, whereas the religious communities may

not be involved in the political process. Critics of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan contend that he is dismantling the separation of church and state, with a goal of creating an Islamic state. It is the current government policy that women should bear three children, and larger families are encouraged. In the last 20 years the population has exploded, especially in what are now the larger cities, such as Diyarbakir (884,000), Gaziantep (1,376,000), and Sanli Urfa (789,000).

**Historical Highlights**

This was a tour with many highlights. A few of the standouts were Mt. Nemrut, Akdamar Island in Lake Van, Mt. Ararat, Ani, Sumela Monastery, and Sinop.

The majestic cone of Nemrut Dagi rises to a height of about 7,000 feet in an essentially treeless area. In 1881 a German engineer employed by the Ottomans to assess transport routes was astounded to come across giant statues covering the mountain top. Archeological work did not begin until 1933. The summit was created when a megalomaniac pre-Roman local king cut two ledges in the rock, filled them with colossal statues of himself and the Gods (his relatives – or so he thought), and then ordered an artificial mountain peak of crushed rock 160

feet high to be piled between them. Earthquakes toppled the heads from most of the statues and now many of the bodies sit silently in rows, with the 6- to 8-foot high heads watching from the ground.

A one-lane road, six miles long, takes you to the parking lot, from which there is a steep but short breath-deprived walk to the summit. We arrived on a cloudless morning, and without nearby trees, the strong wind was not apparent until we opened the car doors. It felt like they were going to be blown off, and the wind was very cold. After about an hour circling the summit, and taking in the amazing vistas in all directions, it was time to leave. We headed down a steep secondary road, which according to our guide book "should only be attempted by competent drivers". The single-lane dirt road, rough in parts, zigzags down the hillside without the benefit of guard rails. It was a great relief for me to get down safely to level ground, and for color to be restored to my knuckles.

One of the marvels of Armenian architecture is the carefully restored Church of the Holy Cross perched on Akdamar Island about three kilometers out in Lake Van.

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*Ani, Armenia across the Tigris*

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The complex was built in 921 A.D. Though little remains of the palace and monastery, the church walls are in superb condition, and there are wonderful relief carvings on the exterior, as well as some frescos inside the church. Lake Van, the largest lake in Turkey, is located in eastern Turkey near the border with Iran. It is a saline soda lake, receiving water from numerous small streams, but having no outlet. Located at an altitude of 5380 feet, it has a maximum length of 74 miles, a shoreline of 270 miles, and a maximum depth of 1480 feet. The only fish known to live in the lake is the pearl mullet.

**Noah's Ark**

The twin peaks of Mt. Ararat have figured in legends since time began, as the supposed resting place of Noah's Ark. Most recently, in 2010 a team of evangelical Christian explorers claimed that they had found the remains of Noah's Ark beneath snow and ice. Many are skeptical. At 16,854 feet, Mt. Ararat is perpetually snow-covered and obscured by clouds much of the time. We were lucky, as it was clear the morning we reached our first viewpoint at about 6,000 feet, and there it was! A truly spectacular sight. But not for long. Within two hours it had disappeared into the clouds.

Ani, the ancient capital of Armenia in the 11th and 12th centuries, is on the eastern border of Turkey, separated from Armenia by a gorge that contains the Tigris River. At one time Ani had about 100,000 inhabitants, and an estimated 1,000 churches and mosques, the ruins of some of which can still be seen. As we stood on the edge of the gorge, Armenia felt so close that throwing a rock into it from the Turkish side was almost a possibility. Strangely enough, you cannot drive from Turkey to Armenia, although their common border is 160 miles long. Because of the atrocities committed by the Turks on Armenians after World War I which have never been acknowledged by Turkey, no diplomatic relations exist between the two countries. Therefore, the only way to reach Armenia from Turkey by vehicle is to drive through Georgia, immediately north of Armenia. But there are daily flights from Istanbul to Yerevan, the capital of Armenia!

The Greek Orthodox Monastery of the Virgin Mary at Sumela (Sumela Monastery) lies 46 kilometers south of Trabzon, the largest city on the Black Sea. The monastery was founded in Byzantine times (386 A.D.) and abandoned in 1923, following forced population exchanges between Greece and Turkey. It is now a major tourist attraction. Su-

mela clings improbably to a sheer rock wall, high above an evergreen forest and a rushing mountain stream. You can drive almost to the monastery ticket office, the last three kilometers being on a narrow mountain road. From the ticket office a steep flight of stairs leads to the monastery complex, sheltered underneath a hefty outcrop. The main chapel, cut into the rock, is the indisputable highlight, covered both inside and outside with colorful frescos.

**Black Sea**

Wrapped around a rocky promontory is the walled city of Sinop, the Black Sea's only southern-facing port. Its protected waters are safe for vessels even in the roughest winter weather, when it can be dangerous for ships to enter other Black Sea ports. Russia is about 100 miles across the sea from Sinop. During the cold war the United States had a military base on the highest point on this peninsula, with multiple listening devices. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the base was closed. Query whether following the takeover of Crimea by Russia in March 2014, and the dispatch of a U.S. destroyer to the Black Sea, this military base will be reopened or become a port of call for the destroyer.

The Black Sea region has a steep, rocky coast with rivers that course through the gorges of the coastal range. Access inland from the coast is limited to a few narrow valleys because mountain ridges at elevations from 5000 to 6000 feet in the west and 10,000 to 13,000 feet in the east form a mostly unbroken wall separating the coast from the interior. The higher slopes tend to be densely forested. We were particularly impressed that the cities and towns along the seacoast have protected the beaches by constructing landscaped pedestrian paths and prohibiting buildings that would have blocked a view of the water – which, contrary to the name, is not black, but blue in the sunshine.

Our tour ended in Istanbul. In terms of landscapes, eastern Turkey has it all: verdant river bottoms, mountainous terrain with peaks to almost 17,000 feet, deep river gorges, forested hills and mountains in the north, rivers, lakes, and the aftermath of volcanoes: lava beds and contoured, multi-colored layers of rock. The food is very good, if a little repetitive, and its people, descended from so many different fascinating cultures, are friendly and helpful, to a degree beyond any that we had experienced in trips to many other countries in the past 28 years. As an example,

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*Church of the Holy Cross on Akdamar Island*