

Foreign Press Association of New York, Inc. 333 East 46th Street #1k, New York, NY 10017

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND HOLIDAY RECEPTION

by Ash Bradford

As the summer season tends toward the other side of the globe and casts a shadow for us all to wallow in, the FPA Holiday Reception is a welcome consolation as winter looms.

On December 12th, the event was celebrated by FPA members at the New York headquarters of Burson-Marsteller, the worlds leading global public relations and communications firm, and was well attended.

Before enjoying an impressive array of food and a good stock of wine, it was down to business as the annual general meeting was held prior to the festivities. FPA President, Alan Capper, held the floor with usual grace beginning with a warm welcome to members who had come together to report on an eventful year.

A statement from FPA Treasurer, Jan Latus, was the first item on the agenda. Jan detailed the changes in overhead and inflow to conclude that the FPA's total revenue remained on a level from the previous year, which

was applauded. Further good news was delivered in the form of increased membership numbers.

Alan resumed the floor to reflect on some of the highlights of 2012. The Brown-Forman tequila tasting event, he joked, "was extraordinarily well attended", further noting how interesting it had been to be involved with the 'Occupy' movement, having participated in a talk show with prominent members of the group concerning their documentary, 'While we Watch'. The assembly with Japanese Ambassador Kodama, was described as highly informative- with exceedingly good sushi- and the meeting with Ambassador Thomas Mayr Harting, current Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, was stated as particularly insightful. Profuse gratitude was expressed to all event hosts and contributors.

Alan applauded the efforts of Vice President, David Michaels, who was instrumental in setting up FPA events and in building new relationships for the organization, before addressing what was to become something of a theme for the eve-

ning.

The FPA's own Iron Lady, Suzanne Adams, received a heartfelt ovation in appreciation of her 20th year as FPA Director. Her dedication and resolution was described as "phenomenal" and her "stoic contribution through thick and thin" was declared as something to be admired. Roberto Socas, President of the FPA Scholarship Fund, took to the stage to commend the warmth of the guest speakers who have featured in FPA initiatives, stating "how wonderful they are to give up themselves" and to further the gratitude extended to Suzanne, remarking on the extraordinary success of the FPA Scholarship Fund- which was founded by Suzanne 20 years ago- and her "unfailing ability to get money out of corporations".

Final well wishes for the holiday season brought the annual general meeting to a close, after which the ample spoil of food and wine was descended upon and received by none better than myself- here's to a prosperous 2013 for all.

JOURNALISTS DEATHS SPIKE IN 2012 DUE TO SYRIA AND SOMALIA

by Suzanne Adams

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, the number of journalists killed in the line of duty rose sharply in 2012 as the war in Syria, a record number of shootings in Somalia, continued violence in Pakistan and an increase in Brazilian murders contributed to a 42 percent increase in deaths from the previous year. Internet journalists

were hit harder than ever, while the proportion of freelancers was again higher than the historical average.

With 70 journalists killed in direct relation to their work by December, 2012 is on track to become one of the deadliest years since the CPJ began keeping detailed records. The worst year on record for journalist killings was 2009 when 74 were murdered because of their work.

The numbers reported vary amongst other groups reporting on the deaths. The Press Institute, based in Vienna reported the highest number with 141 deaths. The International Federation of Journalists, based in Brussels listed the death toll at 121.

The Committee to Protect Journalists said that they are still in the process of investigating.

RECENT FPA EVENTS REPORTED BY JAN LATUS

THE PEACEFUL CONTINENT

The European Union brought an unprecedented period of peace between its members. Too often absorbed with the Continent's current economical slump, we tend to forget about the political significance of the common market.

We were reminded about that by Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, current Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations. He held a press conference with the FPA members in November at the mission's office.

Amb. Mayr-Harting is a well-educated and experienced diplomat. He has a law degree from the University of Vienna and joined the Austrian diplomatic service in 1979. He served in Brussels and in Moscow, and was also The Head of Austrian Mission to NATO. From 2008, he served as the Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN in New York. In this latter capacity he also represented Austria for two years on the Security Council, which allowed him to answer questions

regarding this body from the insider's perspective.

Amb. Mayr-Harting started his presentation with a reminder of The EU's humble beginnings, as an association of a few coal and steel producing countries. Thanks to the further growth of the organization and ever-closer links between the member countries, it is, in the Ambassador's own words, "impossible to go to war again." He also pointed out that for 1006 years there has never been such a long period of peace in Europe as we are enjoying now. Taking this into consideration, the recent Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the European Union doesn't seem a stretch at all.

The Ambassador explained the intricacies of the European presence in New York. The 27 Ambassadors of EU members meet monthly to discuss common issues. The situation is tricky since The EU is not a country, thus can act only as an observer and enabler of a common policy.

He stressed that the EU funds 60 %

of global development and also a majority of a total humanitarian help.

In the Q& A part of the evening, the Ambassador, while explaining the current financial troubles of Europe, pointed out proportionally large contributions to the UN budget made by such small countries like Belgium and Greece. He also elaborated on the difficulties of reforming the Security Council, since the unanimous decision of all five permanent members is required.

Discussing the crisis in Syria, Amb. Mayr-Hartwig said that while both sides of the conflict commit atrocities, it is the Assad regime that should be held responsible for the bloodshed.

After the conference, the members of the FPA, who attended in large numbers, had the pleasure of talking to the EU mission's staff while enjoying snacks and good wines.

A special thank you to Christopher Matthews of the EU who helped put this program together.

OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE

FPA members were among the first journalists to hear about a revolutionary technology which can dramatically improve the quality of the world's water resources.

Such a claim has been made by New York-based company ColorZen™. Despite the obvious marketing angle of the event, the presentation was very convincing. They, indeed, may be able to preserve our most precious resource.

The keynote speaker and face of the campaign was Alexandra Cousteau, and it would be hard to find a better advocate. Ms. Cousteau is a granddaughter of Jacques-Yves Cousteau and a daughter of Philippe Cousteau, Sr., the legendary ocean explorers. She told us she learned how to swim before she took her first footsteps. She told us a touching story from her childhood, when her grandfather took her to aquarium in Monte Carlo to explain how all forms of underwater life coexisted and how delicate that balance was. Small wonder she is so well aware of the water crisis in the world and how it can endanger the very existence of humankind.

Not many people know that the textile industry and, precisely, the cotton-dyeing process, is a major contributor to the pollution of rivers and seas around the world. According to the World Bank, 20 percent of industrial fresh water pollution comes from textile treatment and dyeing. In China, where most cotton dyeing is done, one in four people do not have access to clean drinking water. 70% of the country's reservoirs, rivers and lakes are polluted. China's textile industry emits 3 billion tons of waste water a year, and the printing and dyeing industry emits 80% of that amount. Still, for lack of better options, Chinese people still swim and bath in their rivers, and use the water from that source for drinking.

"ColorZen™ pre-treats the cotton fiber making the dyeing process efficient and sustainable by vastly reducing the amount of water, chemicals and time needed to dye cotton," said Michael Harari, president of ColorZen LLC. This technology reduces water consumption by 90% and can dye the same amount of cotton in less than 1/3 the amount of time, which should allow textile companies to triple their production of garments. The environmentally friendly process eliminates the use of toxic chemicals normally flushed back into fresh waterways and rivers.

During the Q&A, journalists inquired about the volume of cotton production (30 million tons a year), its share of global textile production (nearly 50% of all garments are made out of cotton), and where ColorZen cotton treatment will be done (in their factory in China). As the company literature explains, "technology works through a perfect synergy of science and engineering to alter the molecular structure of the cotton fiber and create a natural attraction to the dye – eliminating the need for the toxic chemicals." The technology so far works with cotton only but could be used in future to treat other fiber such as linen, flax, jute, hemp or rayon, however not for synthetics and synthetic-cotton mix.

RECENT FPA EVENTS REPORTED BY JAN LATUS

DINNER WITH AMBASSADOR PURI

A select group of 15 FPA members had the privilege of attending a briefing and supper on September 13th at The Indian Mission to the UN hosted by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, the Deputy Permanent Representative of India in New York. Among his areas of expertise are multicultural relations, environmental and climate problems and sustainable issues. He has been a member of the Indian Foreign Service since 1982 and has held posts in Germany, Thailand, Venezuela to name a few.

Ambassador Puri is a seasoned diplomat who knows well that every word spoken by the government's representative is accountable, thus he insisted that anything he has told that evening would be off the record. This request was honored by the attending reporters, although several were prepared to cover the event for their publication. only. The Ambassador is an outspoken man, who turned responses to the questions asked by the journalists into small, well-crafted responses

During dinner we discussed various subjects, such as India's stance at the conflict in Syria. Mr. Puri reminded us that a large contingent of Shiites are living in India and represent a big growth potential of his country. He addressed the importance of education for Indian people and why those with degrees often end up working, for example, in American healthcare institutions. The Ambassador talked about an imminent economic rise in China, which is destined to become a major supplier of the most technologically advanced goods, taking the place of Japan in a region.

Ambassador Puri turned out to be not only a skilled diplomat but a jovial, gregarious, man as well. It was our pleasure to have dinner with him.

CYPRUS TO PRESIDE OVER EUROPEAN UNION

Once again, members of the Foreign Press Association were the guests of the Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the United Nations. Although previous briefings frequently centered on the occupation of the Northern part of the Island by Turkey, this time the program dealt primarily with Cyprus assuming the Presidency of the European Union. We were greeted by the new Ambassador, Nicholas Emiliou, a diplomat with an impressive educational background and experience with foreign diplomacy.

The Ambassador spoke about the Cyprus Presidency which began on July 1st and will last for six months. For Cyprus, he said, "This is an opportunity to contribute towards European integration and at the same time to advance its credibility as a responsible EU member assuming fully the obligations and competencies of membership".

Ambassador Emiliou outlined the priorities of the Cyprus presidency, such as better integration of the European Union in light of the current economic crisis, which certainly has an effect on his own country. Cyprus is concerned about the high unemployment rates in the EU, especially among younger people. Another priority deals with the establishment of the Common European Asylum System by the end of 2012.

During the Q and A part of the evening, the Ambassador elaborated on that subject. He stated that in the past, Cyprus has accepted a large number of refugees, for example from Lebanon, which is considered a gateway for potential asylum seekers, it being just a short boat ride from the Middle East. He shared his concern as well about the developments in Syria and the risk of another big wave of refugees. In regard to Turkey he spoke about the division of the island into two estranged ethnic groups calling for a diplomatic solution.

Despite these many concerns, Ambassador Emiliou ended his presentation on an optimistic note pointing at the assets of Cyprus, including a wonderful climate, beautiful landscape, a well developed tourist infrastructure, as well as recently acquired strength in the areas of education and financial services.

The evening concluded with a delightful and delicious reception featuring food and wine of Cyprus. Our sincere thanks to the Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the UN for their gracious hospitality.

POLITICIAN AND CAREER DIPLOMAT, JIM McLAY OF NEW ZEALAND

by Dina Pinos

With New Zealand wines and delicious appetizers, New Zealand Ambassador to the UN, Jim McLay, greeted members of the Foreign Press Association, "Welcome to New Zealand ... Welcome to Middle Earth." "And with a new trilogy of 'The Hobbit,' currently being filmed in this small but significant country at the far corners of the planet, the Ambassador started to talk about his amazing country, mentioning the growth of its film industry and the country's official celebratory mode. What were the celebrations about? Their neighbors, the Australians, were elected at the end of last year for their UN Security Council role. "We are very engaged with UN issues and in 2 years time, New Zealand will also be seeking a 2 year engagement with the UN Security Council", announced Amb. McLay. New Zealand was a founding member of the UN in 1945. They are currently lobbying for a non-permanent seat on the Council in 2015-2016.

Amb. McLay described his country's important role as a small, mighty state in our very complex world. He emphasized

what his country can do during our vastly changing times. "The last significant land mass to be reached from history's major discoverers, New Zealand is a geographically beautiful island state which has an extraordinary bird life, where the sounds of the native birds are quite amazing," stated Ambassador McLay with great pride. He added that as there are no predators in New Zealand, many of the country's unique bird species have lost their power of flight.

When one thinks of New Zealand, one thinks of sheep and dairy. They actually have a large agricultural base and there are no agricultural subsidies whatsoever. "Farmers farm for the market," informed Ambassador McLay, "and not for subsidies, and are thus very prosperous." According to the latest economic statistics, New Zealand with its population of 4 ½ million inhabitants and 80 million sheep is one of the better performing economies of world. Dairy farming is an important industry, including its milk, butter and cheese products which are exported worldwide. Wool is made into carpets

and garments. He added that there is no car industry and that the banks are Australian.

New Zealand works together with other countries. "Countries that trade together grow rich together," said the Ambassador. It was the first OECD country to sign trade agreements with China. New Zealand will continue to host international meetings with small advanced economies such as Denmark and Sweden in addition to challenged countries such as Ireland discussing transpacific partnership. New Zealand has shared special economic relationships with Chile, Singapore, Brunei and will continue to continue economic expansion with its Asian neighbors such as South Korea and Taiwan.

Amb. McLay gave examples of what he referred to as "Kiwi Ingenuity." New Zealand claims three Nobel prize winners – including Maurice Wilkins who in 1962 was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology for his contribution to the discovery of the structure of DNA. Richard Pearse, a farmer and inventor performed pioneering experiments in aviation – it is claimed that he flew and landed a powered heavier-than-air machine in 1903 before the Wright brothers flew their aircraft.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

by Suzanne Adams

Every year, early in January, my phone and email get busy with questions from around the world requesting information about the *Golden Globe Awards*. Of course, I refer them to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. On occasion, I am asked about the organization and I have always hesitated to say what I thought I knew about them.

But now the truth has been revealed and I am taking the liberty of quoting from an article in *The New York Times*.

"The awards are voted upon by the less than 70 members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, some of whose members are foreign journalists, but many of whom write for obscure publications. The group has been criticized for being unwilling to open its membership to journalists from major publications abroad for and for being open to influence from Hollywood studios eager to cater to the group.

They state further, "The Hollywood Foreign Press Association earns millions of dollars from the NBC telecast and the network benefits from lucrative advertising sales". Variety reported that the Globes earns about \$4 million for the non-profit Foreign Press organization.

So here's to the **New York Foreign Press Association**, the oldest foreign press organization in the United States. Founded in 1918, we will celebrate our 95th anniversary on February 16th. And the 20th Anniversary of the FPA Scholarship Fund. *Let our good name prevail.*

HEALTH INSURANCE

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT:

FPA members in good standing can now apply for health insurance via a third-party health insurance agency. One of the agents will be happy to speak with you to discuss the various affordable programs that they offer to members of the FPA

Contact: Info @amghealthplans.com

Disclaimer: The Foreign Press Association makes this Health Insurance third-party agency available as a service to its members without any obligation or responsibility on its part.

CHRONICLE

by Suzanne Adams

Bill Blase and his wife, Linda, became the grandparents of Brynn Emily Minar. Best wishes to you and to Sara and Chris.

Heard from one of 2012 Scholarship winners, **Nastaran Tavakoli-Far** who wrote, "How are things in NYC and the FPA. London is having a surprisingly nice summer and the Olympics went very well. I'm currently working on a series of pieces which resulted from my trip to the West Coast looking into tech and innovation stories--made possible by the generosity of the FPA Scholarship Fund. I will keep you posted.

Also had a note from another 2012 scholarship winner **Charu Sudan Kasturi** from India saying, "I'm finalizing my plans for a series on the silent but massive land grab by Indian companies, supported by the Indian government, in East Africa over recent years, how it's impacting local populations, and how the race for resources and land between China and India -- both with voracious appetites -- is playing out in Africa. It's a complex subject, and will require me to spend significant time traveling to Ethiopia and Kenya, to start with, apart from China. I wouldn't be able to work on this project -- which several major publications are interested in -- without the FPA award, and the support I've received from the FPA family. It means a lot to me. And of course I was remembering you."

And another one of our winners, the accomplished **Wei Gu** has left Thomson Reuters to become the Editor of *China Wealth and Luxury* for the Wall Street Journal. She is one of my super stars.

David Michaels returned recently from a trip to the UK where he helped celebrate the 70th Anniversary of his parents. Here's wishing them good health and more wonderful occasions to enjoy together.

Under a beautiful blue moon on August 31st, **Simon Chaput** married the lovely Jennifer Marlowe. Our best wishes to a wonderful couple.

Our own wonderful **Mario Fratti** had two of his one act plays performed at the Theater for the New City. I had the pleasure of being in the audience a few weeks ago to see, and thoroughly enjoy, *Suicide Club* and the brilliant *Three Sisters and a Priest*.

Photojournalist **Jean Nestares** of Venezuela had her work exhibited through January 5th, 2013 at Art Basel in Miami, Florida. Congratulations.

Mazel Tov to **Miri Ben-Shalom** on the birth of a beautiful little girl, Raia Sinai Humblet. Best wishes to you and your family.

On one of the coldest nights of the year, more than 50 people attended the opening of the beautiful exhibit of photographs taken by Executive Committee member, **Kinue Imai Weinstein**. Kinue has had a long and loving relationship with Myanmar (Burma) and the exhibit is a testament to her art and her dedication.

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SINCERE THANKS

The FPA Scholarship Fund is grateful to the our members who have contributed to the "Fund". Please note that your contribution is tax deductible in accordance with section 501 (c) (3) of the IRS.

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FPA NEWS is a publication by the Foreign Press Association of New York, Inc., 333 East 46th Street, New York, NY 10017 Tel (212) 370-1054 Fax (212) 370-1058 The cover of \$1 per issue is included in the \$100 Annual Membership dues. Copyright FPA NY, Inc. (ISSN 1077-0232).

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