

NYPD HOSTS MEMBERS OF FPA

By Neheda Barakat

“Start spreading the news” Frank Sinatra began his famous tribute to NYC. “I want to be a part of this, New York. New York.” The song came to mind after a briefing at NYPD headquarters with Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, to FPA members on December 17. It was all good news.

Commissioner Kelly has spent 31 years in the New York Police Department and in 25 different commands. In 2002, and only four months after 9/11, the new mayor, Michael Bloomberg appointed Ray Kelly as Police Commissioner making him the first person to hold a second, separate tenure. “Bloomberg came in at a time when the world thought NY had nowhere to go but down, and crime would go up,” Commissioner Kelly said.

The gloom and doom forecast predicted by the commentators and pundits never eventuated. In fact Commissioner Kelly kept all the clippings, “I still have all the clippings and columns that crime and homelessness will increase. Simply, that hasn’t happened.” According to Commissioner Kelly, crime in NYC has been on the way down since 1990 and continues to decline. “Since 1997 crime is down 30%. Last year homicide was 496. In 1990 it was 2245 and we’ve been able to do that with 5000 fewer police officers.”

The NYPD force is 52,000

strong, 37,000 of them are in uniform and 15,000 are in civil uniform; combined they handle some 23 million contacts with the public

the main priority was the safety of NY and its residents. For Commissioner Kelly it wasn’t simply about doing more with less but law en-



Photo by Jan Latus

every year. The NYPD has been under budgetary pressures since 2001. The fiscal restraints will continue with the current economic slump. Commissioner Kelly’s department will have to shed another 1,000 police personnel this year. At this stage no particular areas have been targeted for the cut-back. “It will depend on where attrition takes place. But our focus will remain on providing basic and fundamental service first,” explained Commissioner Kelly.

The September 11th attacks changed the world forever. For the new mayor and his administration

forcement took on a new meaning, and intelligence gathering had to be part of everyday duty for the NYPD.

“We knew since 2002, when we came in we had to re-think strategy. Counter-terrorism is the first of its kind in a municipality in the US,” said Commissioner Kelly.

Under Commissioner Kelly’s vision and guidance, NYPD’s counter-terrorism division included a new intelligence gathering centre called Real Time Crime Centre, RTCC.

“It looks like NASA HQ,” the

Cont. on Page 2

FPA BIDS FAREWELL TO 2008 AND LOOKS FORWARD TO 2009

By Nevena Mandadjieva

The foreign journalists working in the United States are about to wrap up one of the most exciting and fruitful years they ever had as reporters. 2008 was literally loaded with events - the epic battle for the democratic presidential nomination, followed by the presidential elections campaign, the historic pick of Barack Obama as the first African American President and recently the transition period between the two administrations, the unprecedented economic and financial crisis - just to name the milestones which attracted the world's attention to the U.S. We - the lucky ones who were reporting from the very eye of the storm - have witnessed the history in the making and have covered it.

On December 16th we gathered for the Annual General Meeting and Holiday Reception to remember the most meaningful events of the outgoing year, to enjoy each other's presence for one more time and to share our plans for the incoming 2009. The Foreign Press Center of New York once again generously hosted our gathering at their

friendly premises.

President Alan Capper greeted those present and opened the General Meeting. First and foremost the President made reference to the celebration of the 90-th anniversary of the FPA in 2008.

He also gave us a summary of the events and programs of the FPA, the various benefits provided to our members and he made a brief preview of the events planned for the 2009.

Among the highlighted programs of the past year was first of all the evening at the New York Institute of Technology and the very interesting briefing given to our members by President Dr. Edward Giuliano. Undoubtedly one of the successes of 2008 was the presentation followed by a delightful reception at the Taipei Economic and Cultural office in New York. The president also mentioned the visit to the Liberty Science Center, an extraordinary tour of the New York Times and a private tour of the European furniture at Christies qualifying them as one of the most educational and enlightening happenings of the outgoing year.

President Capper did not spare us some of the disappointments of the pre-

vious 12 months. He admitted that regrettably the wonderful "First Wednesday" initiative wasn't very well supported and attended by the members of the FPA but he outlined his determination to revive it and make it happen at least six times during the next year. The President expressed our gratitude to our irreplaceable Director Suzanne Adams for being a strong pillar of our association and helping navigate the FPA through the murky waters of the financial crisis with a steady arm and devotion.

Our Treasurer Jan Latus reported on our financial standing in 2008 and thanked the audit committee for its work on the accountant's report.

Yolanda Gerritsen, the President of the FPA Scholarship Fund summarized the outcomes of the last year and thanked Suzanne Adams for her tireless work on raising money for the scholarship awards. Carl Bernstein was our keynote speaker at the Awards Dinner.

After our meeting adjourned we enjoyed a well-deserved buffet dinner and delicious wine which gave us the opportunity to continue our discussion in an informal and friendly atmosphere.

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Cont. from Page 1

Commissioner explained enthusiastically. "RTCC created data warehouse for NYPD. The centre is able to push information out as crime happens. Detectives immediately respond. The RTCC is able to put a profile victimology (sic!), maps of the crime and the result is the offender is immediately taken off the streets."

In addition to the technology, which includes early warning systems such as radiation detection, intelligence officers were recruited from federal agencies such as the CIA, and for the first time NYPD officers were embedded with local police agencies around the world to ask the "NY questions." Postings have included Abu Dhabi, Jordan, Tel Aviv, Singapore and Madrid.

As part of the re-structure and to handle crime fighting in these uncertain times, the NYPD has become one of

the most diverse police forces in the world. This year's police academy graduates, include foreign born nationals from 58 countries. They make up a third of the total and bring with them foreign language skills that are pertinent to the NYPD's effectiveness. According to Kelly, among the foreign language speakers in the force there are over 100 Arabic speakers, as well as Hindu, and Bengali. The recent Herald Square bomb threat was foiled because the unit was able to place an undercover officer of Bangladesh origin.

Almost all areas of crime continue to decline but no one really can tell what the current un-chartered economic climate will bring with it. Overall though it was good news from the Police Commissioner. So "start spreading the news", NY residents can feel assured about their safety and must be glad to be "part of this New York. New York."

CHRONICLE

By Suzanne Adams

Delighted to learn of the engagement of Sarah Blase, the lovely daughter of **Bill and Linda Blase**. Start saving for the wedding.

Mario Fratti recently returned from Korea where not only did he lecture on Theater, but three of his plays were performed "*Nine*", "*Matra*", "*Cage*".

Just in time for Valentine's Day, **Laura Thompson** has had her book of poems published, Entitled "Mosaic of Love" she writes about love and the mysteries of life. Beautifully done, Laura.

I was so sorry to learn of the death of **Zev Cooper**. Our sincere condolences to his wife Dahlia and their children.

Condolences as well to **Joan Ramirez** whose Mother passed away.

BRIAN ROSS ABC News' Chief Investigative Correspondent

Brian Ross is one of the most honored and respected journalists in the country. As ABC News' Chief Investigative Correspondent, he reports extensively for "World News with Charles Gibson," "Nightline," "Good Morning America," and "20/20" as well as for ABC News Radio and ABCNEWS.com. Ross joined ABC News in July 1994.

Through his investigative reports, Ross has exposed corruption at all levels of government, changed domestic laws and prompted reforms abroad. Ross and his team most recently made headlines with their groundbreaking reports on auto company CEOs who flew in private jets to ask for public money in Washington.

In 2006 Ross broke the Mark Foley-congressional page scandal for ABC News, reporting the first details on "The Blotter" on ABCNEWS.com. Within a day of being questioned by ABC News, the congressman had resigned. Ross has received numerous honors for his reporting on this story, including an Emmy Award, a Peabody Award, a USC Annenberg Walter Cronkite Award, an IRE Award, the 2007 National Headliner Award for Television Affiliated Online Journalism, and the Online News Association Journalism Award.

Ross received the 2007 Edward R Murrow award for investigating reporting for a two part 20/20 prime time investigation into retail pharmacy errors, focusing on Walgreens drugstores. He was also honored with a 2007 Business Emmy for exposing corruption on the West Virginia State Supreme court.

Also among Ross' recent work is a three-part series on the existence of secret CIA prisons in Eastern Europe, where top al Qaeda figures were held. The exclusive investigation, which aired on "World News" and "Nightline," garnered a 2005 George Polk Award, the fifth time he has won the award in his career.

Ross was honored with the 2005 Outstanding International Investigative Reporting Award by the Center for Public Integrity for his "20/20" story that revealed sexual misconduct by U. N. peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of Congo. His noted investigation into whether American authorities could stop a shipment of radioactive

material from entering the country earned him his third duPont Award, one of the most prestigious honors in journalism.

During the 2008 political season, Ross' "Money Trail" series has investigated the nexus of corporate money



and politics, focusing on the corporate presence at the 2008 Democratic and Republican National Conventions. Ross and team first launched the award-winning series at the 1996 conventions.

Following September 11, Ross and the Investigative Unit broke numerous stories about the investigation into the terrorist attacks and anthrax letters. Among several exclusive reports, Ross was the first reporter to name Mohammed Atta and describe him as the ringleader of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks. He was also the first to report on Zacarias Moussaoui's alleged role in the attacks and his questioning by the FBI prior to September 11. His "Primetime Thursday" story about the hijacking of United Airlines Flight 93 featured the first airing of transmissions between the plane's cockpit and air traffic controllers.

In addition to filing for all ABC News' broadcasts, Ross files reports for ABC News Radio which are available to 2,500 affiliates around the country. He also reports throughout the day for the Investigative Unit's web column, "The Blotter," on ABCNEWS.com. Since launching in April 2006, the Blotter has quickly become one of the most popular destinations on

ABCNEWS.com.

Ross' investigative reports have won four duPont awards, five Peabody awards, five awards from the Overseas Press Club, eleven Emmys and two Murrow Awards.

Prior to joining ABC News, Ross worked for 20 years at NBC News, reporting for the "NBC Nightly News" and "Dateline NBC."

In an award-winning two-part report for "Dateline NBC" in 1992, Ross exposed Wal-Mart's use of child labor in overseas sweatshops to provide clothing for their "Buy American" campaign. Ross also broke stories on the French Intelligence spying on American businessmen and was the first reporter to track down the fugitive Marc Rich at his Saint Moritz hideaway.

Ross solidified his reputation for investigative reporting by breaking stories such as the 1980 ABSCAM story, for which he was honored with a National Headliner Award. His exclusive report in March 1990 about Iraq trying to buy trigger mechanisms for nuclear weapons just months before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait made headlines worldwide.

His five-part "NBC Nightly News" series on the Teamsters Union won the 1976 Sigma Delta Chi Award and a National Headliner Award. In 1977, he won a National Headliner Award for a five-part study of organized crime in the United States.

Ross began his professional career in 1971 as a reporter at KWWL-TV in Waterloo, Iowa. He later worked at WCKT-TV in Miami and WKYC-TV in Cleveland. He is a graduate of the University of Iowa.

SAVE THESE DATES

February 20th

Wine Tasting at Cipriani

March 4th

First Wednesday

March 31st

Briefing With Proctor & Gamble
for Financial Journalists

April (date to be announced)

Reception with Cyprus Mission

May 7th

Scholarship Awards Dinner, Brian
Ross Keynote Speaker

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By *Suzanne Adams*

Every year, about this time, my phone gets busy with calls from all over the world requesting information concerning the Golden Globes Awards. Of course, I refer the callers to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. On occasion I am asked about this 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 on by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, some of whose members are foreign journalists, but many of whom write infrequently for obscure overseas publications. The group has been criticized

for being unwilling to open its membership to journalists from major publications abroad and for being open to influence from Hollywood studios eager to cater to the group".

They state further, "The Foreign Press Association earns millions of dollars from the NBC telecast, and the network benefits from lucrative advertising sales; about 20 million Americans watched the ceremony last year. Variety reported that the Globes took in over \$3.6 million last year 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 91 years on February 16th. Let our good name prevail.

FIRST WEDNESDAY MARCH 4TH

Our speaker for First Wednesday is **Mariwan Hama-Saeed**. You may recall that Mariwan was one of the brilliant students who received an FPA Scholarship Award at our annual Dinner in May 2008.

Mariwan,, a native of Halabja, Iraq, moved to the U.S. to study journalism at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he received a Master's Degree in 2008. Mariwan joined the *Committee to Protect Journalists* in July 2008. Prior to joining CPJ, he worked as the Iraq editor at the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, a London-based nonprofit that promotes

independent media in post-conflict countries. He holds a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Sulaimaniyah in Iraq. In 2006, Mariwan was the first Iraqi ever chosen for the Journalism and Democracy fellowship, hosted by the Institute for the Further Education of Journalists in Sweden. At CPJ Mariwan does research, reporting and advocating for press freedoms in the Middle East and North Africa regions.

We look forward to seeing you on March 4th at KENNEDY'S which is located at 327 West 57th Street.

WELCOME ABOARD

JOLANA BLAU
Freelance

SABRINA CARVALHO
A Noticias/Brazil

ELIZA GLOWALA
Polish Daily News/Poland

ANASTASIOS PAPAPOSTOLOU
Greek Reporter

RACHEL A. PORTELE
Greek Reporter

FRANZ VALLA
A Noticias/Brazil

SINCERE THANKS

The FPA Scholarship Fund is most grateful to the following members who have made a contribution to the "Fund." Please note the your contribution is tax deductible in accordance with section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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