



# Overseas Press Club of America

## BULLETIN

### Brussels Hosts Congress of International Press Clubs

BY JONATHAN KAPSTEIN

**W**ITH 75 delegates representing 21 countries – 22 if OPC readers consider Scotland a separate nation – and representatives of several international organizations, the biennial congress of the International Association of Press Clubs exchanged best practices and experiences in Brussels from May 31 to June 2.

The Press Club Brussels Europe hosted the event with club president Maroun Labaki, former foreign editor of Belgium's daily *LeSoir*, Executive Director Laurent Brihay, and consultant Gregor Kupper handling arrangements. The lone American representative was Jonathan Kapstein, longtime OPC member and immediate past president of the Brussels club. Kapstein flew from his new Connecticut home to ensure an OPC presence. Patricia Kranz, OPC executive director who was present with Kapstein at the 2016 congress in Geneva, had a conflict and couldn't attend. The OPC is the only North American press club that is a member of the IAPC.

The *Guardian* newspaper won the prestigious Freedom of Speech award for coverage on breaches of personal data. One panel focused on problems of press freedom in Africa. Another panel explored the role of the press in fostering national governance. The subtext throughout the discussion and Q&As related to politi-



Left to right: Peter Kramer of the Netherlands, past president of the Press Club Brussels Europe; Maroun Labaki of Belgium, current PCBE president; Jonathan Kapstein of the US, past president; and Laurent Brihay, PCBE executive director.

cal pressures felt by journalists not just in emerging economies but worldwide.

A random, alphabetical sampling of attendance showed journalists from Albania, Australia, Bahamas, Belarus, China, Egypt, India, Israel, Poland, Rwanda, Switzerland, Togo, Zambia, and other countries adding value to the exchange of ideas.

Didier Reynders, Belgian foreign minister and deputy prime minister, was the main speaker at a gala

*Continued on Page 2*

### INSIDE

Event Preview:  
OPC Theater Night 2

IAPC Welcomes  
Press Clubs 2

Phnom Penh Post 3

OPC Condemns  
EPA's Reporter Ban 4

People Column 4-7

Press Freedom  
Update 8-9

New Books 11

Q&A:  
Scott Sayare 12

### Sieberg to Introduce 'Civil' - a New Platform for Journalists

#### EVENT PREVIEW: JULY 11

**I**MAGINE YOU could take everything you don't like about journalism – from broken business models to trolls to bad actors – and put them in a box for a minute. Just for a minute. Now imagine building a decentralized platform that's in service of journalism – essentially starting

all over again in the current media climate. What would that look like? And how do blockchain and cryptoeconomics provide a foundation for a platform that's driven by journalism, supported by developers and owned by the people? In a nutshell, that's Civil.

Please join Daniel Sieberg, a former OPC Governor who is a co-founder and business

development lead at Civil, to learn more about this new global eco-system that is launching this summer and needs help from the broader industry to collaboratively create a sustainable future. In others words, find out how – and why – you can get involved. Sieberg previously served as global head of media outreach at Google.

The program will be held at Club Quarters, and gets underway at 6:30 p.m. on July 11. Click on the gold button below to register. ❖

Click here  
to RSVP for the  
program.

# OPC Night at the Theater

**EVENT PREVIEW: SEPT. 20**

**T**HE PLAYCOMPANY (PlayCo) is reserving a block of tickets for OPC members at discount prices on Sept. 20 for *Intractable Woman*, *A Theatrical Memo on Anna Politkovskaya*. Anna was a Russian

journalist who was murdered in Russia for her brave coverage of the war in Chechnya. Following the performance, there will be a panel discussion about reporting on conflicts.

*Intractable Woman* is written by the Italian playwright Stefano Massini and directed by Lee Sun-

day Evans. The production will be staged at 122 Community Center (formerly P.S. 122), at 150 1st Avenue in New York. Information on pricing and a link to buy a ticket will be sent to members and published on the OPC website later this summer. ❖

**Intractable Woman**  
A THEATRICAL MEMO  
ON ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA



## IAPC Welcomes Press Clubs From African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries

**D**ELEGATES FROM the International Association of Press Clubs welcomed press clubs from African, Caribbean and Pacific countries for the first time during the IAPC General Assembly on June 2.

During the annual meeting in Brussels, the group released a statement expressing solidarity with press clubs in “countries of those regions who face serious safety challenges, including killings, arbitrary arrests and other various forms of attacks and offer support for their pursuit of press freedom.”

The IAPC expressed support for the creation of an independent African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Press Clubs Federation to bolster professional standards and ethics in journalism “for the benefit of media organisations and the

public they inform.”

The group offered the ACP group temporary observer status with the IAPC while the parties work out a more permanent arrangement.

“In the interim we invite those individual press clubs which are members of the ACP Press Club Federation and wish to join the IAPC to apply for membership directly to the Secretary General of IAPC so that their individual applications can be considered by the current member Press Clubs at forthcoming meeting,” the IAPC wrote in a statement.

The ACP Press Clubs Federation was founded in October 2016 at a congress in Kigali, Rwanda. The IAPC and the ACP-PCF convened in November 2017 to discuss membership arrangements. ❖



Press club representatives and other leaders at the founding meeting of the ACP Press Club Federation in October 2016.

### ‘IAPC’ *Continued From Page 1*

dinner in the elegant Solvay Library building next to the European Parliament. On the eve of a trip to New York inaugurating Belgium’s two-year seat on the UN Security Council, Reynders, 59, emphasized Belgium’s commitment to press freedom. In that context, he noted that Belgium was a founding member of the United Nations, NATO, and the original, six-nation Common Market which has evolved into the 28-country European Union.

The IAPC’s next congress is set for London in 2020. In the meantime, the Press Club Brussels Europe welcomes all visiting journalists, and especially those from clubs like the OPC with which it has reciprocity. ❖



Belgian Deputy Prime Minister Didier Reynders addresses journalists at an IAPC dinner.

# A Post Script on the Besieged Phnom Penh Post

BY JAMES REDDICK

**F**OR MONTHS, rumors had been floating around about the future of *The Phnom Penh Post*. Almost every day, it seemed, a new theory was presented as fact – that the newspaper would soon be in the hands of a government-linked tycoon, or that a sale was being brokered by the owner of a rival newspaper. When the news finally came out that the paper had indeed been sold, the reality appeared not much better than the doomsday predictions.

In early May, it was confirmed that Bill Clough, an Australian with mining interests who had owned the paper since 2008, had sold it to Sivakumar S. Ganapathy, a Malaysian PR man. A simple Google search immediately turned up clues that the sale might seriously impact the *Post's* editorial freedom. Ganapathy's firm listed Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen's government as one of its clients in the 1990s; one of its offered services is "covert PR" on behalf of politicians and foreign governments; and Ganapathy had seemingly devoted much of his journalism career to writing a fawning biography of a controversial Malaysian politician and timber baron accused of large-scale corruption and environmental destruction.

To understand the reaction to the news, some context is needed. Throughout last year, the Cambodian government shut down more than two dozen radio stations that had broadcasted content from Voice of America, Radio Free Asia and other often critical voices. It imprisoned two RFA reporters for alleged "espionage", as well as an Australian filmmaker. All three are still awaiting trial. And *The Cambodia Daily*, the country's other independent newspaper, closed down when it was unable to pay a mammoth tax bill widely seen as inflated for political reasons. With elections coming up in July, the ruling party made it clear that there would be little room for dissent. The *Post* was the exception, and we all knew that we were operating on borrowed time.

Naturally, the editorial staff wanted to cover the sale of the newspaper, and we didn't want to sugarcoat it. We laid out the potential conflicts of interest involving the new ownership and put the story on the front page.

When we sent that Monday edition off to the printer just before midnight, we weren't sure exactly what the reaction would be, but we definitely weren't prepared for the chaos that would follow. First thing in the morning, a representative of the new owner demanded the removal of the story from the website. The article's reporters Ananth Baliga and Brendan O'Byrne immediately resigned, as did Managing Editor Stuart White and Web Editor Jenni Reid after they were ordered to take the article down. Next, widely respected Editor-in-Chief Kay Kimsong was fired. In all, nearly every native English-speaking editor and reporter resigned that day.

While I can't speak for all of them, some local staff who stayed have told me they did so because they have few reporting options in a country where nearly every media outlet censors itself to remain in the good graces of the government. The foreigners like me have the privilege of being able to work all over the world, a luxury not available to our Cambodian colleagues.

It is still unclear what the new ownership's vision for the paper is, and why they purchased it. Ganapathy insists that it was a business decision, despite the fact the previous owner never managed to turn a profit over the last decade. At the moment, there is no credible evidence that he is working in league with the government. What is clear is that he and new Editor-in-Chief Joshua Purushotman have different beliefs in the role of journalism than the previous owners. At a press conference following the bumpy transition, Ganapathy asked reporters why the newspaper would need to be "critical" of the government. "Where I come from, we report the facts," he said.

That mentality has, by all accounts, been enforced in the newsroom. Multiple



Reddick

reporters have told me that they are discouraged by the new management from getting analysis from sources, including from respected human rights organizations.

After the sale, outlets around the world decried the "silencing" of the *Post* and contended the sale was part of a larger crackdown on media. That's a premature assessment. There are still talented journalists there working every day to present the real picture of a country where the message is tightly controlled by the government. But its editorial standards have slipped noticeably and by all accounts morale is abysmal.

We may never know if the government was involved in the sale, but in the end it appears we didn't need it to rein us in. The previous owner was more than happy to have found a willing buyer, and in so doing may have ended the newspaper's 26-year run as an outlier in the region – a publication that used quality journalism to hold the powerful to account.

*James Reddick was deputy managing editor at The Phnom Penh Post through the end of May. He was the winner of the Overseas Press Club Foundation's Irene Corbally Kuhn Scholarship in 2015. ❖*



# OPC Condemns EPA for Barring Reporters From Event

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

ON MAY 23, the OPC released a statement denouncing actions of the Environmental Protection Agency, which barred reporters from news organizations from an event on the impact of toxic chemicals on drinking water at the agency's headquarters. OPC president Deidre Depke strongly condemned the agency's actions.

"This is an unacceptable intrusion into the public's right to monitor the workings of government and sets a dangerous precedent," she said in a statement.

On May 22, the agency allowed a select group of reporters to cover the first hour of a national summit on toxic chemicals that included introductory remarks from agency head Scott Pruitt, but then escorted journalists out of the event. Ejected reporters were from The Associated Press, CNN and E&E News. The AP reported that security guards physically forced one of its reporters, EPA beat reporter Ellen

Knickmeyer, after threatening her when she refused to leave. The AP's David Bauder wrote of his colleague that "after security told her that 'we can make you get out,' Knickmeyer said she took out her phone to record what was happening. Some of the security guards reached for it, and a woman grabbed her shoulders from behind and pushed her about five feet out the door."

On the second day of the summit, the agency said no reporters would be allowed to attend and blocked journalists for Politico, E&E News, Crown Publishing and CNN.

The summit surrounding Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, or PFAS, had been planned for months, but gained more attention after journalists reported that senior agency officials had helped to block the release of study that might have increased warnings about the chemicals. Watchdog organization Environmental Working Group reported a White House aide as saying the suppressed report would create a "public relations nightmare."



EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt arrives at a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on Capitol Hill, May 16.

The US Federal Advisory Committee Act requires that "any committee, board, commission, council, conference, panel, task force, or other similar group, or any subcommittee or other subgroup" used by an agency to provide recommendations to the federal government should be open to the public. ❖

## PEOPLE

By Farwa Zaidi and Chad Bouchard

### OPC SCHOLARS

**Dake Kang**, the 2016 Fritz Beebe winner, had a piece published for The Associated Press on May 17 about atrocities committed against Muslims held in detention centers in China. The article, "Thank the Party! China Tries to Brainwash Muslims in Camps," covered China's detention of possibly hundreds of thousands of Muslim Chinese and foreign citizens in internment camps. In April, a US Commission called it "the largest mass incarceration of a minority population in the world today." Kang interviewed a former prisoner who had been seized while visiting his family from Kazakhstan. Kang is currently a reporter for the Associated Press in Beijing.

**Adriane Quinlan**, 2013 Flora Lewis winner, is now a show writer for Vice News Tonight on HBO. Before that, she worked for two years as a writer for CNN International, and started her career as a reporter with the *Times-Picayune* in New Orleans. She also was a fellow at The



Kang

*New York Times*, a freelancer in China, and is a graduate of Yale University.

### WINNERS

OPC member **Jesse Pesta** edited a *New York Times* piece about the business of addiction treatment that has been named a finalist for a 2018 Gerald Loeb Award for feature writing. The piece, "Addiction, Inc.," is a deep dive into the shady and lucrative world of drug treatment amid America's ongoing opioid crisis. In a



Quinlan

tweet, Pesta congratulated the reporting team, Michael Corkery, Jessica Silver-Greenberg, David Segal "and a cast of brilliant designers!" Pesta is currently deputy editor in the climate and environment group at the *Times*. The Loeb Award winners will be announced at a banquet in New York on June 25.

**Clay Bennett**, this year's Thomas Nast Award winner, was also named winner of this year's Silver Reuben Award for editorial cartooning from the National Cartoonists Society. The Reuben Awards have been nicknamed the "Oscars of Cartooning." In a snafu that prompts memories of the 2017 Oscars, a tabulation error caused two Reubens to be handed out to the wrong recipients at the May 26 ceremony in Philadelphia. The *Chattanooga Times Free Press* cartoonist joked during his acceptance remarks that "since it was al-

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### Rebecca Murray

Freelance  
Beirut, Lebanon  
Active Overseas

### Jennifer O'Mahony

Freelance  
Dakar, Senegal  
Active Overseas, Young  
(29 and under)

### Brenda Smiley

Freelance  
Brooklyn, NY  
Active Resident, Retired

ready announced that I lost, it would be an understatement to say that this honor was unexpected." Bennett also won the Society of Professional Journalists' Sigma Delta Chi Award this year.

### UPDATES

Craigslist entrepreneur **Craig Newmark** has announced a \$20 million gift to the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, and the school will be renamed in his honor as a result. The money will fund an endowment for the school, which comes amid a decline in state funding. Newmark gave \$10,000 to the school's election coverage initiative in 2016, and added a \$1.5 million research grant in February 2017. Newmark has also donated \$1 million to ProPublica, \$500,000 to the *Columbia Journalism Review*, \$1 million to research institute Data & Society, and more than \$560,000 to the International Center for Journalists.

Editorial staff at **The New Yorker** magazine have organized a union. On June 6, staff members sent a letter to editor David Remnick, informing him that the group has formed a union and asking for the magazine and owner Condé Nast have to voluntarily recognize membership with the NewsGuild of New York. The letter outlined a lack of job security and salary disparities as two top motivating factors. According to NewsGuild, 90 percent of *The New Yorker* staff has signed on. The move comes as a growing number of print and digital journalists seek to unionize. On the same day, staff members at Fast Company also announced that they had formed a union with the help of The Writers Guild of America, East. In April, staff at *The Chicago Tribune* formed a newsroom union, the Chicago Tribune Guild, marking the first of its kind in the newspaper's 171-year history.

Digital politics news site **Politico** is launching operations in Asia. Three years after expanding coverage in Europe, the website has now launched a partnership with the

*South China Morning Post*. The SCMP is a 115-year-old English newspaper based in Hong Kong. It was acquired by Chinese billionaire Jack Ma's Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. in 2015. Politico's collaboration with the paper will start small, with a content-sharing partnership involving joint projects between the editorial operations of each publication. If the project goes well, the two companies plan to expand financial and editorial ties on both sides. For now, Politico is not hiring any additional staff.

Fox News and the Fox Business Network have named **Suzanne Scott** as the network's first female chief executive officer. Scott will report jointly to Lachlan Murdoch and Rupert Murdoch, 21st Century Fox Executive Chairman, Executive Chairman of Fox News and Co-Chairman of the proposed New Fox. Scott has served as president of programming since last May, following the departure of longtime programming chief Bill Shine. The news comes after a turbulent year for Fox News, with a sexual harassment lawsuit by former anchor Gretchen Carlson, and firing of co-founder, and CEO Roger Ailes. The network also settled a racial discrimination lawsuit from several employees in May for \$10 million. Scott joined the network in 1996, helping to launch Greta Van Susteren's show *On the Record* in 2002. She was promoted to vice president of programming in 2007.

OPC member **Theo Padnos** wrote an open letter in *Rolling Stone* magazine to President Trump's CIA nominee, Gina Haspel, about his experience in a Syrian torture prison and why she should not obey torture orders from the president. Padnos was abducted and held hostage by al-Qaeda in Syria from October 2012 to August 2014. In an interview with Slate's Virginia Heffernan on *Trumpcast*, Padnos recounted his experience, saying that torture practices are "infected with the sick sexual hangups" that the torturers have. He wrote in the letter

that President Trump and Haspel would set the tone for torture, and that amid allegations of sexual assault against Trump, "and because he has performed his enthusiasm for torture before cheering thousands ('They asked me about water-boarding. I said, 'I love it. I love it.')" can anyone doubt that people tortured under his orders will assume that his perversities have infected our military?" Padnos wrote a letter for the *Bulletin* in March last year talking about his ordeal and giving advice to colleagues on conflict reporting, under the title "Dear Journalists Who Are Thinking About Going to the Rebel-Held Bits of Syria or Any Other Newsworthy Place We Have Bombed." He joined the OPC in January 2017.

**LOS ANGELES:** The *Los Angeles Times* has named longtime OPC member and award sponsor **Norman Pearlstine** as the paper's top editor. The announcement came on the first day billionaire biotech executive Patrick Soon-Shiong took ownership of the paper. In an interview with *The New York Times*, he called Pearlstine "the perfect person to guide us into this new era." Pearlstine has led a number of major news operations in the past, including *TIME*, *Bloomberg* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Soon-Shiong announced plans to purchase the *Times* in February for \$500 million. Since then, Pearlstine has been acting as his advisor and helping him select possible candidates for the editor position. As time progressed, Soon-Shiong realized Pearlstine was the right person for the job. Pearlstine sponsors the OPC's Hal Boyle Award honoring the best newspaper, news service or digital reporting from abroad.

**NEW YORK:** OPC member **David Rohde** has taken a new post as executive director at *The New Yorker*. Rohde has already been serving as online news director for the publication. He previously worked as reporter, editor and columnist for Reuters and reporter for *The New York Times*. Rohde was

### Continued From Page 5

also Eastern Europe correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* in the 90s. He has been an OPC member since he won the club's President's Award in 2015.

OPC Governor **Charles Graeber's** book, *The Breakthrough; Immunotherapy and the Race to Cure Cancer* [Hachette/Twelve], will be released on Nov. 6. The book describes how a new generation of scientists finally cracked the code on how the human immune system can fight and defeat the disease. Charles did three years of intensive reporting on new answers to an ancient question: why doesn't the body respond to cancer the way it does other diseases? Graeber wrote that his research revealed that "our natural defenses react to the common cold, or even a splinter, but did not appear to even notice cancer until it was too late. The answer to that question turns out to be that cancer has evolved various tricks to hide from and shut down our immune response. That new understanding has led to breakthrough therapies that defeat the tricks and unleash the disease. One of the first to be approved was what most people think of as "the Jimmy Carter drug," the one that cleared the melanoma from the 91-year-old former President's brain. But few people realize how different this approach is from therapies that cut out, radiate or poison the tumor, much less what we can expect in the years ahead."

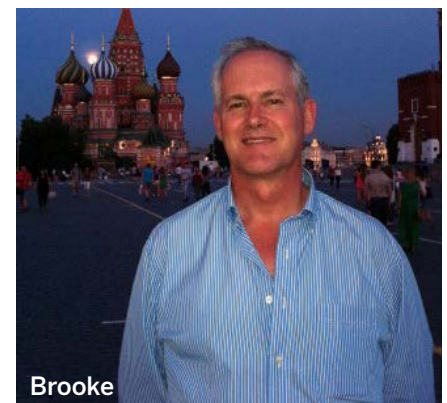
OPC member **Kumiko Makihara** is set to release a new book on July 17. *Dear Diary Boy: An Exacting Mother, her Free-spirited Son, and Their Bittersweet Adventures in an Elite Japanese School* is the story of a mother and son navigating their way through Japan's private school system. The memoir takes place in Japan, and touches on many issues for parents who have concerns about the best parenting philosophies and frustrations about education and testing systems. Author Johnathan Alter wrote that the book "speaks volumes about motherhood, boyhood, cross-cultural adjustment and the power of conformism and parental ambition everywhere." This is Makihara's first book. Her work has previously appeared in the *International Herald Tribune*, *New York Times Magazine* and *Newsweek*. She has been an OPC member since 2016.

OPC Governor **Minky Worden** wrote a pointed opinion piece for *The New York Times* calling on FIFA to hold Russia to account in its mistreatment of gender and sexual minorities. She pointed out that the governing body of international soccer pledged to require minimum human rights standards for host countries, including zero tolerance for discrimination based on sexual orientation. Worden said FIFA so far had largely ignored Russia's anti-gay policies that penalize LGBT advocacy and foster a climate of stigma and violence against LGBT people. "Instead of speaking out, FIFA is at best turning a blind eye to such homophobia and, at worst, rewarding it," she wrote. She called for FIFA and sponsors to express public support for the LGBT community, and to put Qatar on notice to repeal its anti-LGBT laws before hosting the next World Cup in 2022. Worden is director of global initiatives at Human Rights Watch.

Award-winning reporting from OPC members **Azmat Khan** and **Anand Gopal** on the undisclosed civilian casualty toll from US-led airstrikes against ISIS continues to make ripples. A recent Amnesty International report claims the US killed thousands of civilians when it tried to wrest Raqqa from ISIS in 2017. In response on June 2, the Pentagon said the US military only killed about 500 civilians in 2017 while injuring 169 more. Vox and other outlets reporting on the Amnesty International study have cited a story that Anand and Gopal wrote for the *New York Times Magazine*, "The Uncounted," in November last year that found the US-led collusion was killing civilians at a rate 31 times higher than the military claimed. That report won this year's Ed Cunningham Award for best magazine reporting, among accolades from other organizations, including the National Magazine Award and the Hillman Prize for Magazine Journalism. Khan also currently serves as a Governor of the OPC.

A photo exhibit at the Laurence Miller Gallery in New York is showcasing the wartime photography of four-time OPC award-winner **Larry Burrows**. Burrows worked for *LIFE* magazine, covering conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, and is particularly known for his iconic images of the Vietnam War. Burrows died with fellow photojournalists Henri Huet, Kent Potter and Keisaburo Shimamoto, when

their helicopter was shot down over Laos in 1971. Many of his photos appeared recently in the Ken Burns documentary series "Vietnam." The exhibition, "Larry Burrows Revisited," features more than 50 images, and will run through June 29. This marks the fifth time the gallery has held a solo exhibition of Burrows' work since 1985. He won the Robert Capa Gold Medal Award in 1963, 1965 and 1971, and an OPC award for "Best Photographs, Magazine or Book" in 1970.



**KIEV, UKRAINE:** OPC member **Jim Brooke** has taken a new post as editor-in-chief of *Ukraine Business News*. Brooke previously served as editor-in-chief of the *Ukraine Business Journal* in 2016 and 2017, and CEO of the *Kyiv Post* before that. He also worked as managing editor and editor-in-chief of *The Khmer Times* in Cambodia for two years before moving to Ukraine in November 2015. He reported for 24 years for *The New York Times*, mostly overseas in countries such as Japan, South Korea, Ivory Coast and Brazil. *Ukraine Business News* is an English-language subscription news site based in Kiev.

**WASHINGTON, DC:** OPC member and former governor **Steve Herman** sparked headlines with a tweet about a sinkhole on the White House North Lawn near the press briefing room that was "growing larger by the day." The tweet, accompanied by a photo of the hole in question surrounded by safety cones and police tape, stepped into the spotlight on the social media site as users quipped "drain the swamp" jokes. The New York Times published a story covering the sinkhole, with comments from geologists and the National Park Service



on the real-life swamp that forms the foundation of the district. Herman is White House bureau chief for Voice of America.

Associated Press reporter and 2017 Madeline Dane Ross Award winner **Susannah George** has joined the agency's Washington bureau to cover U.S. intelligence agencies and national security. George was part of the team of reporters that won the OPC's award for best international reporting showing a concern for the human condition for their coverage of the ISIS defeat in Mosul. George has been reporting for AP since 2015, when she was hired as acting bureau chief in Baghdad. Her coverage was also part of a body of work that was named as a Pulitzer finalist this year.

**PARIS:** OPC member **Rachel Donadio** has filed several stories for *The Atlantic* about political developments in Europe over the last few weeks. She wrote at the end of May that the collapse of a populist coalition in Italy has set the country on a path of instability with possible ripples across the EU. After the coalition of the anti-establishment Five-Star Movement and right-wing League party dissolved, Donadio wrote, strengthened the countries hard-liner right and sparked a de facto referendum on the euro currency. Only one week later she wrote a piece entitled "It's the Right Wing's Italy Now" profiling Matteo Salvini, the leader of the League party and the country's new interior minister, who is calling for more migrant deportations. "We need to keep these desperate people in their countries of origin through an economic collaboration that blocks their departure," he announced during a visit to a migrant arrival point off the coast of Sicily. Donadio is a Paris-based staff writer at *The Atlantic*, covering politics and culture across Europe, and has been an OPC member since 2016.

**MOROCCO:** OPC member **Sudarsan Raghavan** filed a story from Morocco for *The Washington Post* about issues facing African migrants who can no longer travel through Libya to Italy due to European efforts to stem the number of immigrants reaching Europe. He traced new alternative routes that immigrants use that wend through Morocco to reach Spain. Raghavan wrote that more than 8,200 migrants have reached Spain in the first five months of 2018, with more than 240 people dying on their way to Spain due to perilous

conditions. He cited threats of violence from Moroccan security officials who divide families amid widespread allegations of sexual assault against women. Raghavan is the *Post's* Cairo bureau chief and has reported from 17 African wars.

**TORONTO:** OPC member **Scott Gilmore** wrote an opinion piece that appeared in the Canadian news magazine *Maclean's*. In an article entitled "The G7 Question: How do we America-proof the West?" Gilmore argues that the U.S. has turned from a keystone of the Western alliance to a "rogue member" of the G7 that other member must protect themselves against. He cites Trump's recent maneuvers, such as starting trade wars with five G7 members, calling Canada a national security threat, and scolding French President Emmanuel Macron over the phone, while he congratulated Putin after rigging the Russian election and celebrated China's Xi Jinping for being declared "president for life". Gilmore wrote that Canada should distance itself from the U.S. as Trump makes increasingly bad diplomatic decisions. Gilmore also suggests that Canada should invest in their own armed forces and take a lead role in international crises such as the Syrian civil war. Gilmore has been an OPC member since 2015.

OPC member **Simcha Jacobovici's** documentary "Hollywoodism: Jews, Movies and the American Dream" was featured on June 2 as part of a special matinee series titled "This Jewish American Life" at the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema in Toronto. The 1998 film shed light the rise of several Hollywood moguls, including Louis B. Mayer, Harry Warner and Sam Goldwyn. The documentary, co-directed with Stuart Samuels, is based on Neal Gabler's book *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood*.

**MANILLA:** OPC member **Aurora Almendral** has continued award-winning coverage of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's brutal drug war for *The New York Times*, with pieces delving into ripple effects of the crackdown and profiling law enforcement behind the operation. In the first week of June, Almendral filed a story about Ronald dela Rosa, the chief of the Philippine National Police, and a separate story about those who have been displaced by the antidrug campaign, which has claimed at least 4,000 lives, with thousands

more "under investigation." Almendral won the David A.andelman and Pamela Title Award this year for coverage of the war along with collaborator Ed Ou, who won an OPC Foundation scholarship in 2007.

**HONG KONG:** OPC member **Suzanne Sataline** filed a story for VOA News surrounding a recent directive from the Chinese government requiring Hong Kong scientists and researchers to demonstrate their "love the country and Hong Kong" in order to receive state funding. More than 20 educational groups and individuals launched a petition in protest, saying that including a patriotic test could interfere with their work. Sataline quoted Carrie Lam, the city's chief executive, as saying the furor was an overreaction, and that "some commentators have read too much into this term." The announcement comes as Hong Kong hammers out a bill under Beijing's orders, that would require citizens in the special semi-autonomous region be required to honor China's national anthem. Sataline has been an OPC member since 2016.

## PEOPLE REMEMBERED

Longtime CBS News correspondent and former Associated Press reporter **Murray Fromson** died on June 9 after a battle with Alzheimer's disease at age 88. Fromson is known for coverage of key stories of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, including the Korean War, the Vietnam War, civil rights, and the famine in Bangladesh. He reported from Hong Kong, Moscow, New Delhi, Tokyo and other countries during his career. He later became a journalism professor at the University of Southern California and directed its j-school from 1994 to 1999, had a particular interest in fostering international journalism. He is also known as a champion of press freedom during a time when President Richard Nixon's administration was using subpoenas to summon reporters and pushing them to violate confidentiality with sources. He was a founding member of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the press in 1970. ❖

# PRESS FREEDOM UPDATE...

By Farwa Zaidi

The **Committee to Protect Journalists** has announced this year's International Press Freedom Award winners from across the globe, including heroes in the Sudan, Ukraine, Venezuela and Vietnam. Honorees are **Amal Khalifa Idris Habbani**, a freelance journalist and contributor to the Sudanese news outlet Al-Taghyeer, who faced physical attacks, imprisonment, and threats by the authorities in connection with her reporting; **Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh**, known as "Mother Mushroom," one of Vietnam's most prominent independent bloggers, who has been imprisoned since 2016 on charges connected to her work; **Luz Mely Reyes**, a Venezuelan investigative reporter and co-founder of the independent news website Efecto Cocuyo, who has covered politics in Venezuela for more than 25 years; and **Anastasiya Stanko**, a journalist and TV presenter who fighting censorship and was taken hostage in eastern Ukraine in 2014 while covering the Russian annexation of Crimea. The CPJ will also present the Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award to **Maria Ressa**, who in 2012 founded Rappler, a Philippine news website known for bold coverage of President Rodrigo Duterte's controversial policies and orders. The awards will be presented during a dinner on Nov. 6.

The CPJ blasted the **US Justice Department** for going after a journalist's data for the first time under President Trump's administration. Prosecutors obtained records from telecommunications companies, including Google and Verizon as part of an investigation into leaked government information. "We fear it could be an opening salvo in an ongoing battle over reporters' ability to protect their sources," the CPJ said in a statement. The Obama administration prosecuted a record number of cases involving leaks, including subpoenas for records of Associated Press reporters. During a press conference last year, Attorney General Jeff Sessions pledged to triple the number of leak investigations, and called for review of Justice Department policies to make obtaining journalist records easier.

Serbian investigative reporter **Stefan Cvetkovic** was found alive and well after going missing for two days near the town of Bela Crkva. President Aleksandar Vucic said the journalist turned up without any trace of injury. His car had been found on June 13 with the motor running, the lights on

and the driver's door open. Cvetkovic has been critical of Serbian officials and investigated claims of embezzlement. The Serbian Association of Independent Journalists says he has been the target of numerous acts of intimidation and violence, including death threats.

The apparent staged death of Russian journalist **Arkady Babchenko** has sparked condemnation and confusion after news that he had been murdered in Ukraine turned out to be a sting operation by Ukraine security officials aimed at exposing his would-be killers. Babchenko turned up at a press conference the day after news of his death, and explained that he'd been in on the plot for more than a month. The story has sparked calls for more transparency in the case. Reporters Without Borders condemned the actions outright, saying that there is no justification for faking a journalist's murder. In an open letter, CPJ President Joel Simon demanded that President Poroshenko answer key questions about the incident, and expressed deep concern for press freedom implications, including undermining confidence in the work of journalists and tempering public outrage when they are killed.

A suspect arrested on June 12 in connection with the shooting death of newspaper editor **Gauri Lankesh** in India has confessed to being the gunman, according to local media reports. Lankesh was shot and killed in September last year in the state of Karnataka in southwestern India in an incident widely thought to be carried out by Hindu extremists. Police assigned a special team to investigate Lankesh's murder. The editor was an outspoken critic of Hindu nationalism. The suspect, Parashuram Wagmore, is a member of the far-right Hindu group Sri Ram Sene, and told police that he was recruited to carry out the shooting in May last year to "save my religion." He said he had shot Lankesh several times from the back on a motorcycle outside her home on Sept. 5, 2017.

Meanwhile, another journalist in India, **Suman Debnath**, was nearly killed on June 18 in the state of Tripura when two unidentified attackers stabbed him with a knife and attempted to slit his throat. Neighbors heard Debnath cry out and came to his rescue, causing the main suspect to flee, though a second was arrested. Debnath had gone to the location, an oil depot, to meet

with supposed traffickers of stolen fuel. The meeting had been a trap to target the journalist, who is an investigative reporter. Two journalists were murdered in the same state late last year. Shantanu Bhowmick was beaten and stabbed to death, and another, Sudip Datta Bhaumik, was shot and killed.

At least **seven Palestinian journalists** were injured by Israeli gunfire while covering protests in the Gaza Strip on May 14. Thousands of Palestinians had been protesting for seven consecutive weeks against Israel refusing to allow refugees to return to their pre-1948 homes. The protests coincided with three events: Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day, Palestinians' commemoration of the anniversary of their displacement, and the opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem. Of the seven journalists shot, two required intensive care afterwards. Yasser Qudeih, a freelance photographer for the daily *Palestine*, and Nihad Fuad, a reporter for a community radio station. Since the protests started on March 30, at least 22 journalists have been hit by live rounds fired by the Israeli Defense Force. Two of them - Yaser Murtaja and Ahmed Abu Hussein - later died from their injuries.

Egyptian police detained blogger **Wael Abbas** on May 23 and later charged him with "spreading false news" and "joining a banned group." [what group?] Police arrived at his Cairo home at dawn and took him to an undisclosed location. According to The Arabic Newtork for Human Rights Information, the police did not present a warrant or give any reason for the arrest. They blindfolded him and seized his computer, phones and books. He has been blogging since 2004, often criticizing the Egyptian government and security forces. Last year, Abbas told the CPJ that hackers had tried to break into his email and social media accounts after he reported on the government's crackdown on NGOs. In 2010, he was convicted on charges of "providing telecommunications to the public without permission from authorities" after publishing a series of blog posts accusing the government of human rights abuses.

Indian paramilitary officials have been accused of assaulting freelance reporter **Muheet ul Islam**. The journalists said that officers from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) beat him on June 2 while he was on his way to the funeral of a civilian



who'd been crushed to death by a CRPF vehicle the day before. Islam was going to the funeral in Srinagar city, when he noticed the road had been cordoned off with barbed wire. HE said when he told an officer that he was a journalist on his way to cover the funeral, the officer began physically and verbally assaulting him, and six or seven other CRPF officers then joined in, beating ul Islam on the back, arms and legs. In a separate incident on the same day, witnesses reported that CRPF officers in Srinagar beat Junaid Bazaz, a reporter for *Kashmir Reader*.

Two Pakistani journalists were abducted in separate incidents on June 5. Journalist **Gul Bukhari** was abducted by unknown men while on her way to record a television program for Waqt News. Bukhari is a senior journalist known for outspoken criticism of the military. She was in a press car on her way to the station when her vehicle was intercepted in an army cantonment area near her home. The driver was forced out, beaten, and told to run away. The men put a mask on Bukhari and dragged her off. She was released a few hours later and tweeted a confirmation that she was safe. On the same night, BOL TV journalist **Kharal** was intercepted on his way to Lahore airport and beaten. He sustained several injuries to his head. Kharal is critical of the former ruling party, and often reports on government corruption.

Privately owned Liberian newspaper **Front Page Africa** is facing a \$1.8 million civil defamation lawsuit. The newspaper has long been dogged by complaints and harassment for critical reporting on the government. This lawsuit relates to an advertisement about land administration published by the paper in March. On April 9, court sheriffs delivered a summons to the newspaper's Monrovia office. Police briefly detained at least seven journalists, and shut down the office. The staff was held at a civil court for three hours before their lawyer posted bond for their release. The paper reopened on the same day, and has continued to publish. Liberian journalists are often intimidated and harassed with defamation lawsuits and ordered to pay exorbitant fines.

**Journalists in Brazil** were attacked and verbally abused in April while attempting to cover President Luiz Inacio Lula de Silva's last minutes of freedom before he was sent to prison. At least eight journalists

were attacked by demonstrators who had gathered to support the president before he surrendered himself to authorities. Reporters with three radio stations, CBN, Bandnews FM, and Jovem Pan, and three TV channels, Bandnews, Rede TV, and Globo, suffered verbal and physical violence. Similar attacks were reported in different cities in early April. Reporters' vehicles in Sao Paulo and Brasilia were attacked and their windows were smashed. In Joao Pessoa, demonstrators attacked the Cabo Branco TV headquarters. The president's imprisonment has intensified an already polarized Brazil. The upcoming presidential election in October is expected to fuel increased violence towards the media.

## MURDERS

Yemeni journalist **Anwar al Rakan** died two days after he was released from a Houthi prison as a result of mistreatment during his detention. A Yemeni journalist group said he was ravaged by starvation, torture and disease when he was released. His family did not know he was being detained, so did not campaign for his release. Family members said Houthi militiamen in Al-Houban province arrested him about a year ago after he had departed from the Houthi-controlled capital, Sanaa. The family said press cards the soldiers discovered were the reason he was arrested.

Mexican journalist **Alicia Diaz Gonzalez** was found murdered on May 24. Her sons discovered her body soon after she was killed, in her home in Monterrey, the capital of Nuevo Leon. She bore marks of multiple blows, including stab wounds to the back of her neck. Nothing was stolen during the attack. Diaz was working for the *El Financiero* newspaper, covering local business, real estate, taxation and public investment. She had previously written for the *El Norte* and *La Moneda* newspapers. Her colleagues said that Diaz did not cover "sensitive" topics. A Nuevo Leon judicial official said that "all lines of investigation are open." Diaz is now the fifth journalist to be murdered in Mexico since the start of 2018.

Mexican journalist **Juan Carlos Huerta** was gunned down near his home on May 15. Huerta lived in Villahermosa, the capital of southeastern state of Tabasco. He had just left his home in his car when gunmen in a gray vehicle blocked his route and shot him several times. Huerta was a well-known and

influential radio and TV journalist in the Villahermosa region. He was the founder and host of "Panorama Sin Reservas," a radio show that focused on local politics. He also presented a news program on the TV channel Canal Nueve. The governor of Tabasco, Arturo Nunez Jimenez, told sources that Huerta was the target of a planned murder, not just a victim of a random crime. Mexico is the deadliest country in the western hemisphere for journalists.

The body of Mexican journalist **Hector Gonzalez Antonio** was found on May 29 with signs that he had been beaten to death. Gonzalez was a correspondent for national newspaper *Excelsior* and the television program Imagen. An unidentified person found his body in Ciudad Victoria, the capital of the northern Mexican state of Tamaulipas. He was last seen leaving his girlfriend's house the night before at approximately 11:00 p.m. His face and body showed signs that he had been beaten with rocks. The head of the Federal Special Prosecutor for Attention to Crimes Committed Against Freedom of Expression (FEADLE) told CPJ on May 30 that a federal investigation had been opened. Gonzalez's colleagues say that the journalist had never received threats in relation to his work. He covered general news, including politics and crime, for *Excelsior* and Imagen. His most recent articles for *Excelsior* were on crime in Tamaulipas, including gang activity and the arrest of four police officers involved in a kidnapping. ❖

# NEW BOOKS

By Farwa Zaidi

## PHOTOJOURNALISM

**O**PC MEMBER and former *National Geographic* staff photographer Steve Raymer has published a visual memoir entitled *Somewhere West of Lonely: My Life in Pictures* [Indiana University Press, May 2018]. Raymer, now an Indiana University professor emeritus, collected more



than 150 images and wrote around 65,000 words of text and captions to present a career that spans five decades as a writer, photographer, and professor of journalism and media ethics.

Photographs in the book capture vistas and people from Raymer's travels in 100 countries and five continents, documenting conflicts and tragedies such as famines in Bangladesh and Ethiopia, and exposing corruption surrounding the

controversial Trans-Alaska pipeline.

In a blog post about his career on the Indiana University Press website, Raymer said following global stories took him to what he called "embattled corners from the world" including the Middle East, Afghanistan,



South Asia, Northern Ireland, El Salvador and Cambodia, where he was wounded in 1974. "In these and many other cases, it was my job, or calling, to take an unblinking look at the world's heartaches," he wrote. "In my experience, it is not the pay or the awards that motivate war correspondents, but a sense of moral outrage at the obscenities of our times."

Thomas R. Kennedy, executive director of the American Society of Media Photographers and former director of photography at *National Geographic*, wrote that *West of Lonely* "expresses clearly what it takes to make compelling visual journalism that informs and educates, and how the experiences of the life journey as a *National Geographic* photographer shaped his view of his own responsibilities."

Raymer is also author and photographer of *Redeeming Calcutta: A Portrait of India's Colonial Capital* [Oxford University Press, 2012], *Images of a Journey: India in Diaspora*, [Indiana University Press, 2007], *Living Faith: Inside the Muslim World of Southeast Asia* [Periplus Editions (HK) Ltd., 2001], and *St. Petersburg*, a 1994 book about the imperial Russian capital.

Raymer has won multiple awards for his photography. He was awarded "Magazine Photographer of the Year" from Pictures of the Year International for his reporting of the global hunger crisis in 1976. He received a citation in the 1981 Olivier Rebbot category from the

Overseas Press Club for his *National Geographic* work "The Illegal Trade in Endangered Wildlife." Raymer has also received multiple honors from the National Press Photographers Association and the White House News Photographers' Association. ❖

## YEMEN

**I**NTERFAITH DIALOGUE can be a challenge to begin, promote and encourage. This is especially true in a country like Yemen, a majority Muslim country where people of different faiths are enemies. *The Fox Hunt: A Refugee's Memoir of Coming to America* [William Morrow, April 2018] tells the story of how four interfaith activists saved a Yemeni Muslim man's life in a grueling thirteen-day ordeal.

Born in a devout Muslim household, author Mohammed Al Samawi was taught that Jewish people and Christians were responsible for all the world's turmoil and spent most of his life not questioning these beliefs. That was until at the age of twenty-three, he met a Christian man named Luke, who gave Al Samawi his first Bible. After reading it, the author realized commonalities between Christianity and Islam. He began connecting with Christians and Jews on social media and used his newfound knowledge to become an activist in Yemen, spreading interfaith dialogue and promoting unity.

Many people were upset with his new activism. He began receiving death threats. To protect himself and his family, Mohammed moved to the southern port city of Aden. The city would soon become a battleground in a north-south civil war and a proxy conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia. While his city exploded with grenades and gunshots, Mohammed holed up in his bathroom and desperately tried to reach his Facebook contacts.

A handful of people responded. *The Fox Hunt* follows four young, ordinary people with no international diplomacy experience as they helped Al Samawi escape Yemen. The group worked across six technology platforms and social media sites to save his life. Despite low food and water supplies and the threat of electricity outages, Al Samawi ended up on an Indian Naval ship to America.

Studio executives have acquired an option to make *The Fox Hunt* into a film in coming years, with *La La Land* producer Marc Platt and Oscar-winning screenwriter Josh Singer attached to the project.





Scott Sayare

## Meet the OPC Members: Q&A With Scott Sayare

BY CHAD BOUCHARD

**S**COTT SAYARE is a writer and reporter based in Paris. He reported for five years for *The New York Times* with the paper's bureau in Paris, during which he filed stories from across France, southern Europe and North Africa. He currently writes for *The Atlantic*, *GQ*, and *Harper's*.

**Hometown:** I grew up in Boston.

**Education:** Stanford University, BA in Human Biology.

**Languages you speak:** French; enough Portuguese to be a danger (mostly to myself); enough Maghrebi Arabic to earn an occasional smile.

**First job in journalism:** Intern at the AP bureau in Paris – an undeserved first shot for which I will forever remain grateful.

**Countries reported from:** France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, England, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Tunisia, Egypt, Canada.

**When and why did you join the OPC?** In 2017, to keep abreast of colleagues, mostly.

**How did you become involved in reporting in the French-speaking world?** My interest in reporting from the French-speaking world was, at the outset, entirely logistical. When I finished college, where I studied science, I decided that I wanted to be a reporter. It was a bad time to be looking for a job in American

journalism and, insofar as I had no experience whatsoever, I was a particularly poor candidate. I did speak good French, though – I'd learned in high school – and I speculated that I might be able to parlay my language skills into some sort of relationship with an American news outlet in France. I moved to Paris to get a job, not with the usual stars in the eyes; it was only after I'd arrived, I'm embarrassed to admit, that I really became interested in France in its own right, or in Europe or North Africa more generally.

**Major challenge as a journalist:** Finding stories, especially stories with enough narrative and intellectual meat for a magazine feature. It's absurd that this should be so difficult, but I've never met a journalist who thought it was easy.

**Best journalism advice received:** It's not journalism advice, exactly, but on the first day of the only journalism class I ever took, the instructor (a brilliant reporter and foreign correspondent himself) told us that if we were ever approached by a journalist, we should immediately turn and run. His point was that journalists are dangerous, because they, and not their subjects, control the stories they tell. I think that's absolutely right, and I try to remind myself that people are always putting themselves in danger when they speak with me. I'm grateful for their willingness to take the risk.

**Worst experience as a journalist:** Those moments when I feel I'm part of the media circus – this is a feeling I associate with press conferences, in particular – being used by the powerful to carry

their water. If you understand how the press works, its norms and constraints, it's not terribly complicated to use it to your advantage (which is to say, to manipulate it). I don't much like being used; but it's the feeling of being trapped, unable to do anything to avoid being used, that I truly despise.

**When traveling, you like to ...**  
Walk, and walk everywhere.

**Hardest story:** The hardest stories for me have always been the ones that involve speaking with victims of some sort, and especially those that involve speaking with victims who don't particularly want to speak. There are few better ways to feel like a parasite.

**Journalism heroes:** There are so many, but Orwell above all the rest, I suppose.

**Advice for journalists who want to work overseas:** Listen carefully, and ask why. A big part of the job is interpreting cultures not your own; the best way to get to know those cultures, and how they operate on the people who inhabit them, is to ask those people to explain them to you.

**Favorite quote:** A theory of journalistic practice that I've always liked, from Michael Herr: "I stood as close to them as I could without actually being one of them, and then I stood as far back as I could without leaving the planet."

**Most over-the-top assignment:** Maybe not over-the-top, exactly, but reporting on wolves and shepherds from the middle of nowhere in the southern Alps is probably the most fun I've had (and the most exercise I've gotten) as a journalist.

**Most common mistake you've seen:** Not daring to ask.

**Twitter handle:** @scottsayare ♦

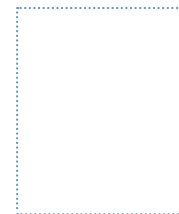
Want to add to the OPC's collection of Q&As with members? Please contact [patricia@opcofamerica.org](mailto:patricia@opcofamerica.org).





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