



COMMUNITY NEWS

Philadelphia Chapter of TCA Hosts Successful New Year's Eve Dinner Dance

PHILADELPHIA – More than 150 members of the Philadelphia-Armenian community rang the New Year in style at Tekeyan Cultural Association's dinner dance on December 31, 2010. The family-oriented celebration featured a full-course prime rib dinner catered by Finley Catering, preceded by *mezza* prepared by the committee. After dinner, the committee arranged a Viennese Sweet Table display as guests danced the night away to the sounds of Jaq Hagopian from Northern New Jersey. A raffle was held, with more than 15 prizes being handed out to winners. In addition, Santa Claus arrived at midnight with gifts for the children.

These annual traditional New Year's Eve celebrations began about 70 years ago and continue on to this day through the efforts of dedicated ADL and Tekeyan leaders. Each New Year's celebration was enhanced with a new hope to better support the nation-building mission of two prestigious publications: first, the former *Baïkar Armenian Daily* and the dynamic, 78-year-old *Armenian Mirror Spectator*, the first English-language Armenian weekly in the United States.

This fine Philadelphia tradition is the treasured legacy of our beloved, departed generation. From the proceeds of this year's banquet, as in the past, 14 gift subscriptions of the *Mirror-Spectator* and 11 gift subscriptions of *Abaka Armenian weekly* (Montreal) will be donated to the five Armenian churches in the Philadelphia area, the clergy, the Armenian Sisters' Academy and several select Armenian cultural activists.

– TCA Philadelphia Executive Committee

Journalist Steve Kurkjian Lectures On-line To University Students in Yerevan

By Jack Medzorian

BOSTON – On December 16, 2010, journalist and award-winning *Boston Globe* reporter Stephen Kurkjian gave an online lecture for journalism students of the V. Bryusov Yerevan State Language University.

Kurkjian, who retired from the *Boston Globe* as their lead investigative reporter, shared his experiences, presented the main aspects of investigative journalism and talked about obstacles which could crop up in their professional lives as journalists.

The lecture was unique in its content. It took three weeks for the university to negotiate and resolve all the time difference issues and technical difficulties to make it happen. With the help of technology, the lecture was conducted online from Boston.

There was a discussion and question-and-answer session following the lecture, which Kurkjian answered and promised to have more online meetings with them.

Kurkjian worked as a journalist and an editor at the *Boston Globe* starting in 1968. He received three Pulitzer Prizes for his outstanding investigative work. He also received 22 state and national awards.

The idea to conduct an online lecture to exchange the American investigative journalism methods and ideas came from Tatyana Hovhanissyan the head of the Scientific-Educational center at V. Bryusov Language University. She had visited Boston in October 2010 on a three-week USAID-funded Community Connections program "University Partnership and Workforce

Development," hosted by the Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA) and administered by Washington-based World Learning, Inc.

CYSCA Program Director Jack Medzorian arranged a visit by Hovhanissyan to the *Boston Globe* and Boston University School of Journalism. She met Kurkjian and discussed the current problems facing journalists in Armenia, challenges and the future, as well as necessary modern teaching methods world-

ture to her students about my work in journalism. Having spent my career in journalism, particularly as an investigative reporter, I love the opportunity to impart what I have learned about the importance of journalism and the techniques that I have learned to students. I teach a course in Investigative Journalism at Boston College and speak at least a dozen times a year to journalism students at local colleges and even a few high schools. So for me to be able to share my experience with stu-



Journalism students in Yerevan on-line with Stephen Kurkjian

wide. During the visit the idea of collaboration was born. Being Armenian, Kurkjian immediately showed his willingness to assist journalists in Armenia, to share his experience and knowledge and to be part of the collaboration. The first step was this online lecture.

Kurkjian wrote to Medzorian after the event, "I want to let you know that your efforts didn't end when the specialists left Boston in October. I connected with Tatyana via Skype late in December after having met her here in Boston and agreeing to give a lec-

ture to her students about my work in journalism. Having spent my career in journalism, particularly as an investigative reporter, I love the opportunity to impart what I have learned about the importance of journalism and the techniques that I have learned to students. I teach a course in Investigative Journalism at Boston College and speak at least a dozen times a year to journalism students at local colleges and even a few high schools. So for me to be able to share my experience with stu-

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Journalist Florence Avakian Speaks at NY Public Library

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interviewed on Al Jazeera TV from the United Nations and the Voice of America.

Noting the controversial nature of her work, she pointed out that her Genocide article in the *New York Times* and her tough questions to Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev during a United Nations press conference resulted in anonymous and threatening phone calls to her for weeks. "This work can put you in danger. You have to decide how important it is, and how far to go."

Avakian also spoke of her "arrest" at the UN when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev visited the world body on the day of the Armenian earthquake. "He had not announced it yet, and

UN officials must have been afraid I would question him about it. I was kept in the security office until he departed. The rest of the press corps had already heard of this, so I gave my own impromptu conference to the UN press, which made headlines," she said.

Among the hundreds of exclusive interviews Avakian has conducted, she listed as her favorites the ones with Makarios, Prime Minister Gandhi, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin I, Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, former Attorney General Ramsay Clark, British actress Maggie Smith and the six she has had with Charles Aznavour whom she described as "the most fun to interview."



Tekeyan Cultural Association and ADL of Detroit

Request your presence to honor

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to benefit

Sponsor a Teacher Program &
Orphans Higher Education Fund

Coffee cup readings by Vartoug Karadolian

Gourmet Dinner Committee

Yn Roberta Kochakian

Zabel Belian

Marina Arakchyan

Dr. Nadya Sarafian

Nadya Vaporciyan

Nora Azadian

Saturday, February 19 at 7:30 pm - Donation \$65 - RSVP by Monday, 2/14/11 to
Pam Coultis (248) 646-7847 Diana Alexanian (248) 334-3636

Saturday, February 19, 2011 at 7:30 pm - St. John's Armenian Cultural Hall
22001 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield MI 48075



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