

STATE

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July/August 2012

MAGAZINE

Civil Service Promotions
Human Resources Bureau
Releases 2011 Statistics

Monrovia, Liberia
Four Different Views,
One Important Mission

EMBASSY AIR

Taking to the Skies
with the Department's
Official Airline



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Regional Support

Frankfurt center
aids post managers

Frankfurt, located on both sides of the Main River, is the financial and transportation center of Germany.
Fotolia photo



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On the Cover

Photo illustration by Isaac D. Pacheco

Post One

BY ISAAC D. PACHECO

Making Connections

The cover story of this issue recognizes an amazing team of Department employees who help thousands of diplomats around the world stay connected to their missions by air (pg. 10). Embassy Air, as the Department's proprietary airline is affectionately known, manages a fleet of aircraft that rivals that of some regional carriers. Their diverse team of pilots, mechanics and support personnel negotiates a complex set of logistical hurdles every day to ensure that security and geographical obstacles do not hinder diplomats from reaching their destinations and conducting their vital work in Iraq.

This edition also highlights an equally important, but perhaps less visible, group of Department employees who connect millions of people through the Web. This team facilitates the exchange of information and ideas online, a vital element of democracy today.

The emergence of the Internet has made it possible for a single person with a computer to widely distribute ideas in ways that giant media empires labored to achieve only a century ago. Today, with a few simple keystrokes and mouse clicks, anyone is a publisher. This paradigm shift in the flow of information is changing the way people perceive themselves and others, and the ways in which news is gathered and disseminated.

The Web, however, has become more than a technological medium for reporting or repurposing news. Social media have become the go-to format for people around the world to pose questions, offer solutions and enact change. Sites like Facebook, Twitter and Google have reshaped what was once a humble research tool into a modern Oracle of Delphi, a liminal space where people gather together to create, share and engage on differing viewpoints.

By challenging conventions in the safe, open environment of the Web, innovative and sometimes revolutionary ideas have been



given a public forum in which to incubate. As a result, disparate cultures are interacting in new and exciting ways, borders are becoming more symbolic than real and people are voicing challenging viewpoints from regions long silenced by censorship and oppression.

The State Department has heard these voices and responded by creating online platforms where people in countries that limit free speech can engage and be heard. One such project is the Department's online mission to the Iranian people (pg. 25). Despite the absence of a physical embassy in Iran for more than 30 years, the bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and Consular Affairs have teamed with other Department offices and outside agencies to create a virtual embassy that allows Iranians to share their views from behind the "electronic curtain" of their government's censorship.

The highly successful initiative recently celebrated its six-month anniversary, and the team behind it continues to add functionality to the website, making it more useful and engaging. The goal of this online outreach is a sustained conversation that will transform a blossoming virtual relationship with the Iranian people into constructive real-world dialogue between our two nations. ■

Corrections

June 2012, Special Insert – A graphic in the print version incorrectly omitted the grades to which some of the FS Generalists were promoted in 2011. The correct version should have read that 181 FS Generalists were promoted from grades FS02 to FS01 in 2011.



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Submissions

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request our guidelines by email at statemagazine@state.gov or download them from state.gov/statemag.

State Magazine does not purchase freelance material.

Deadlines


The submission deadline for the October issue is August 15. The deadline for the November issue is September 15.

State Magazine (ISSN 1099-4165) is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the Bureau of Human Resources at the U.S. Department of State. It is intended for information only and is not authority for official action. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of State. The editorial team reserves the right to select and edit all materials for publication.

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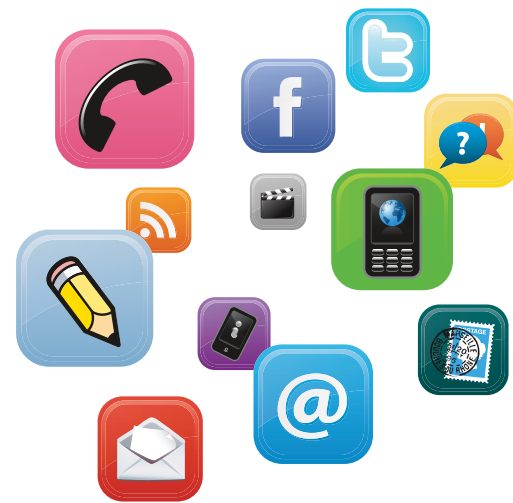
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@ Story Needed Consular Coverage

I read with interest the article about the AIP posts (May 2012, pg. 16), since I served in Pakistan during 2006–2007. I was surprised by the glaring omission of any mention about the important role consular officers and consular sections play in the posts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. It would have been interesting to learn about the contribution consular sections make in implementing our foreign policy, and some of the current challenges they may be facing in these countries.

Nathan Tidwell
Foreign Service officer

Our failure to include consular staff in May's story on service at the AIP posts was in no way intended as a slight to consular officers but arose only because of the limited pool of possible sources we were given and the limited number of those sources whom we were actually able to reach. We'd like to note that, two pages later in the May issue, we ran a consular story, "Passports for Patriots," and a few pages further on was our Post of the Month, CA's National Visa Center. Clearly, we hold consular work in high regard. – State Magazine

FS Career Is 'Amazing Race'

Over the past decade my wife and I (retired from State in 2007) have watched the "Amazing Race" program on TV (in which pairs of partners race around the world over several weeks for a million-dollar prize) and thought often that as FSOs we are so lucky that in our careers we are involved in an ongoing amazing race.

Since we married almost 44 years ago, we have traveled around the world four times, earned several million dollars and been to over 100 countries/territories, working in 44. Our "pit stops" (i.e. posts) during our time with USIA and then the State Department were Pretoria, Washington, Tashkent, Sao Paulo, Manama and Bangkok. Pre-Foreign Service pit stops were Uruguay, Spain, Singapore, Texas, California, Vermont and Colorado, and our post-FS pit stop is Arizona.

A career in the U.S. Foreign Service truly does afford one a life of multiple amazing races!

George K. Wilcox
Foreign Service officer (Ret.)

State, AID Vietnam Vets Gather

On Memorial Day several State and USAID old-timers attended a ceremony at the Vietnam Wall. The event was organized to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War, and to celebrate the return of veterans who served there. The President, Vice President and Secretary of Defense spoke, among others.

The sun was beastly hot, and after the event several of us repaired to a local watering hole where a group photo (right) was taken. All present were State or USAID FSOs.



Bruce Kinsey
Foreign Service officer (Ret.)

Left to right, back rows: Bob Gould, Dick Weeks, Doug Keene, Hal Meinheit, Joe McBride, Mike Strutzel, Bruce Kinsey, FiFi Sheridan, Paul Barbian, Lars Hydle, Parker Borg, Jim Mack. Front row: Joan Anderson, Anton Cistaro, Irene Hydle, Shelia Mack.

In the News



Local entrepreneurs build a demonstration cookstove, as part of a local market assessment in their cookstove enterprise training. Photo by Eva Demaya Centre

Malawi Conference Boosts Low-Pollution Stoves

Firewood and charcoal provide more than 90 percent of the energy needs of the residents of Malawi, a small landlocked nation in southern Africa. These fuel sources affect livelihoods, health and natural resource availability. With the population increasing in this densely populated country, Malawi is seeking cleaner cooking methods.

Compared to traditional open-fire cooking, clean cookstoves transfer heat to the pot more efficiently, offer more complete combustion, burn less wood and feature chimneys that prevent smoke from venting into the user's kitchen. More information is at cleancookstoves.org.

The State Department, U.S. Forest Service, Peace Corps, USAID, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. African Development Foundation and several development partners decided to help: In April, they held a two-day conference on clean cookstoves in Malawi that was organized by Christopher M. Nyce, economic and commercial officer at the U.S. Embassy in Lilongwe, Malawi, and Peace Corps volunteer Brian Smyser.

Mission Malawi's cookstove entrepreneurship project has made improved cookstoves available in rural areas and boosted economic development. The project, initiated by Smyser with U.S. African Development Foundation aid channeled through the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund, trained seven Malawians as cookstove entrepreneurs. Speaking at the conference, Ambassador Jeanine Jackson

noted the value of clean cookstoves in protecting lives and promoting development through entrepreneurship.

The conference also highlighted strategies to increase use of clean cookstoves and expand that market, and fostered collaborative dialogue on technical matters and Malawian implementation strategies, including financing, marketing, entrepreneurship, supply chain management, health protection and performance testing. Attendees included entrepreneurs, project facilitators and public and private stakeholders, including leaders of Malawi's departments of Energy, Environmental Affairs and Forestry, and the Ministry of Health.

At the event, representatives of the Kenyan groups Practical Action and Global Village Energy Partnership International discussed East African cookstove initiatives.

As a result of the symposium, the government of Malawi has committed to collaboration on cookstoves and plans to sign on as a partner of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves by mid-2012.

Malawi's Deputy Director of Energy Lewis Mhango said his department is excited about taking leadership on clean cookstove initiatives and by the formation of a nationwide cookstove stakeholders' task force. Bringing field experience in cookstove promotion and enthusiasm for Malawi's leadership in enhancing their adoption, he dubbed himself a "seasoned veteran on improved cookstoves."

Department Officials Commemorate Memorial Day

On Memorial Day, two high-level Department officials participated in separate events commemorating American service members and civilians who died while serving their nation.

To commemorate the American civilians and members of the military who served in Vietnam, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns and other U.S. officials gathered at the Vietnam Memorial to hear President Barack Obama speak of the nation's debt to its fallen veterans and civilians.

Among those at the event was Cindy Coleman, wife of Joseph Fandino, a Foreign Service officer who died in the line of duty at Bien Hoa Air Force Base in 1972, leaving behind Coleman and two infant children.

"Americans across all branches of the government served in Vietnam, including remarkable expeditionary diplomats like Joseph Fandino, whose equally remarkable wife, Cindy Coleman, joined me at the commemoration," Burns said after the event. "It was a real privilege to honor all those who sacrificed so much through their service in Vietnam."

Coleman said Fandino volunteered to serve in Vietnam because "he thought he could do some good." He was detailed to USAID to work among the Montagnard tribesmen in Vietnam's southern Central Highlands.

After the war, Coleman too tried to do some good by working to resettle Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese refugees fleeing the chaos of Indochina.

She said the commemoration ceremony helped her honor her late husband and those who died in the war.

The nation's commemoration of the war, led by the Department of Defense's Office of Commemorations, will continue and include events in communities nationwide. The Bureau of Public Affairs and the Office of the Historian will lead the Department's participation.

Meanwhile, at a separate Washington, D.C., Memorial Day event held by DACOR to honor fallen Foreign Service employees, Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield said she wanted to honor "our colleagues who led the Department through troubling times such as two world wars, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War."

She said they had "advanced peace, security and freedom around the world; pursued economic opportunity abroad to create jobs at home; protected Americans from the hazards posed by drug trafficking, weapons proliferation and harm to the environment; and assisted Americans traveling or living overseas."



Top: A family reads names on the Vietnam Memorial, after President Obama's Memorial Day speech there honoring those who died in the war. *Department of Defense photo;* **Above:** Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield stands at attention with DACOR President Paul Cleveland at the DACOR event. *Photo by Lewis White*

RSOs Brief Corporate Security Executives

Regional security officers from China, Brazil, Indonesia and India briefed corporate security professionals on threats at their posts during a May conference in New York organized by the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC). A Department of State-private sector partnership, OSAC exchanges security information with corporations, nonprofits, educational institutions and religious organizations operating worldwide.

Bruce Townsend, corporate vice president of global security for FedEx Corporation, said the forum had "great representation from RSOs in countries of interest to our business." He added that he appreciated the RSOs' "high-level overviews" and the chance to speak in a focused way with them individually.

Jennifer Washburne, vice president of sales for On Call International, said she attended a breakout session with the RSO at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, James Schnaible, to learn "the regional safety and security perception for a corporate business traveler" to Indonesia, and that Schnaible said the situation was "the rough equivalent of being a

business traveler in New York City: You have to be savvy and observant."

The RSO at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, James Lemarie, told attendees that Chinese-American business disputes have led to threats of violence; in one case, angry, laid-off Chinese workers took over an American company's offices. Between 2010 and 2011, he said, the number of dispute-related threats reported to the U.S. Consulate in Shanghai went from a handful to 25.

The RSO at the U.S. Embassy in Brasilia, Paul Kennedy, said Brazilian police strikes have affected safety in cities where they occur, and the RSO at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, Tim Haley, said, "Crime rates have increased throughout the country and in New Delhi, but are significantly less than a comparable city of the same size—New York, for example."

Brian Gimlett, senior vice president of security for the New York Stock Exchange, which hosted the event, said the meeting was valuable and others are planned. They will be coordinated by OSAC, the private sector and the Diplomatic Security Service's New York Field Office.

NEWS

2012 Hours Against Hate Goes Olympic

In May, the Greek Olympic Committee and the NGO Olympic Truce participated in the Hours Against Hate campaign by offering U.S. Ambassador to Greece Daniel B. Smith the opportunity to carry the Olympic flame after it was lit in ancient Olympia May 10. He carried the flame through the nearby town of Lechena, where he was received by the mayor, municipal band, local and national media, and dozens of local residents.

The Hours Against Hate campaign arose from a 2010 conference in Kazakhstan on tolerance and nondiscrimination where U.S. Special Representative to Muslim Communities Farah Pandith and Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism Hannah Rosenthal spoke out against anti-semitism and Muslim-hatred respectively.

When young people at the conference asked what they could do, Rosenthal and Pandith created 2011 Hours Against Hate, a virtual campaign run on Facebook and Twitter that asked those under age 30 to volunteer to spend an hour or more with someone who does not look, live or pray like themselves. More than 20,000 hours were pledged by December 2011.

Rosenthal and Pandith later took the campaign to Azerbaijan, Spain and Turkey, and in 2011 they met with British NGOs, which proposed the campaign to the London Olympic Organizing Committee. Relunched as 2012 Hours Against Hate, the campaign involves seven British NGOs that have developed specific volunteer programs for the campaign leading up to the Olympics and Paralympics.

In June, several companies launched the 2012 Hours Against Hate-Walk a Mile platform online to bring the idea of walking in someone else's shoes to life. Available at walkamile.com or as a smartphone application, the platform lets anyone pledge to walk virtually with someone from a different background. Artists such as Peter Gabriel, Maroon 5, Donovan, Alanis Morissette and Tom Waits are involved in this opportunity to encourage diversity and broader community engagement during the Olympic and Paralympics Games.

Hours Against Hate has no U.S. government stamp on its Facebook site, but is instead made up of people from faith groups, NGOs, international organizations, civil society, universities, businesses,



Ambassador Daniel Smith carries the 2012 Olympic torch accompanied by his son Erik, right. Photo courtesy of the Hellenic Olympic Committee

governments and individuals worldwide that have pledged to encourage greater diversity and faith-based community engagement now, during the Olympic and Paralympics Games, and beyond.

Posts interested in programming in support of Hours Against Hate or encouraging volunteerism in their host countries may contact SEASinfo@state.gov. More information is on Twitter at @HrsAgainstHate, on Facebook at facebook.com/2012HoursAgainstHate and in Secretary Clinton's video message about the Hours Against Hate campaign on state.gov and on Youtube.com.

El Salvador Team Holds Crisis Exercise

A recent crisis management exercise at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador reinforced lessons from previous training at a post where frequent seismic activity means emergency preparedness is taken seriously.

The drill began with employees sheltering in place for a simulated 7+ scale earthquake, not unlike the two that occurred within a month of each other in this nation 10 years ago. Family members used emergency radios from home, and floor wardens accounted for embassy personnel in their assigned

areas. Once on-compound personnel were accounted for, the scenario moved to an "explosion and fire" in the cafeteria. (A smoke grenade and barrel full of burning materials added to the realism.)

Facilities personnel and local guards cordoned off the area, while health unit teams established a triage area for "casualties." A general services office tent augmented the triage area, local guards directed traffic and post management ordered an evacuation and instructed the facilities team to inspect

for damage. Then, evacuating employees were accounted for at the rallying points, information management personnel tested the satellite phones to verify communications and local emergency personnel raced onto the compound and removed "casualties."

After the drill, the Emergency Action Committee reviewed what had occurred and discussed needed steps. The consular section drafted a message for American citizens, and the public affairs section worked on a statement for release.

Vietnam's Annual Mission Cup Turns 10

Not even a sudden tropical rainstorm could drown out the drumming and cheers of hundreds of soccer fans gathered for Mission Vietnam's Mission Cup, held every Memorial Day weekend for the past 10 years.

On the field, the Embassy Hanoi Dragons (in white) faced off against the Tigers of the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City. After 84 minutes of (mostly) collegial battle, center midfielder Hieu Trinh from the embassy's facilities maintenance unit became the hero when he took a pass and sailed it into the back of the net.

Ambassador David Shear had noted before the match that 2012 is the year of the dragon, and perhaps it was this bit of lunar luck that helped propel the embassy to a 1-0 victory.

Scott Bellard, who had travelled from Washington, D.C., to attend his seventh Mission Cup since helping begin the tradition in 2003, reflected on his history with the Cup from the grandstands.

"We established the Cup—a soccer match, followed by a big party—to try to get the staffs of the two posts to get to know each other and to feel they were part of one team working for the U.S. in Vietnam," explained Bellard. "This was especially important given the historical nature of the North/South division."

When the first Mission Cup took place in Ho Chi Minh City, very

few of Embassy Hanoi's Locally Engaged Staff had ever been to the former Saigon—now Vietnam's largest and most prosperous city. When the Cup moved to Hanoi the following year, most of the consulate general's players were seeing their capital for the first time.

Vince Carpenter, formerly an assistant regional security officer in Ho Chi Minh City, flew back from Baghdad in 2011 to help lead the Tigers to their third straight victory. Now at Embassy Hanoi, he's captain of the Dragons. Carpenter said preparing the Dragons was challenging physically and mentally.

"After being defeated three years in a row the team lacked confidence, so the first thing I tried to instill was that, with a more positive attitude and hard work, the Dragons could win," he said.

Deputy Chief of Mission Claire Pierangelo noted the interagency nature of the lineups, with the departments of State and Defense, USAID, CDC and several other entities represented.

Tigers captain Sene Tchen, of the Department of Homeland Security, playing in his third Mission Cup, said the event builds bridges between the two posts and their Vietnamese and American staffs, and promotes employees' desire to achieve mission-wide goals.



Contest Seeks Apps for Africa

The Bureau of African Affairs (AF) is sponsoring a series of "Apps4Africa" contests (apps4africa.org) for innovators in Africa, the world's fastest growing market for mobile technology, to develop mobile and desktop applications that address local challenges.

In the first contest, the Civic Challenge held in 2010 in East Africa, civil society groups and citizens in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania challenged technology developers to find innovative ways to address such issues as governmental transparency, health and education. The winning application, called iCow (<http://youtu.be/5t4Yml6tJ6M>), enables farmers to better manage the breeding periods of their cows, improving yields.

In 2011, AF and the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) jointly launched the Apps4Africa: Climate Challenge, three regional competitions challenging African innovators to develop applications for adapting to local climate change. The contests and apps drew on African workshops organized by OES and USAID under the Adaptation Partnership of the United States and more than 20 other countries. During the 17th U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP-17), held in South Africa in late 2011, the U.S. Center (a public diplomacy initiative where visitors learn about U.S. climate actions) hosted discussions on the Adaptation Partnership and Apps4Africa for international audiences.

Apps4Africa brainstorming sessions involving more than 2,000 participants were held in 15 countries, and African innovators submitted more than 250 entries to the climate competition. The grand prize winner in West and Central Africa, the web-based application HospitalManager, helps hospitals and health organizations prepare for disasters such as floods and storms. In East Africa, all three winners focused on agriculture. The top prize winner in southern Africa, MyHealth, helps individuals and communities adjust to shifting patterns in disease and other health threats. The 2011–2012 winners received cash prizes, and private partners such as the Indigo Trust contributed follow-on support.

CNN recently named Jon Gosier, the coordinator of Apps4Africa, and Marieme Jamme, who organized the competition in several regions, as two of the Top 10 leading voices on tech in Africa to follow on Twitter. Their Twitter handles are, respectively, @jongos and @mjamme.

"We are changing people's lives," Jamme said while on a panel at the U.S. Center at COP-17. ■



Marieme Jamme speaks about Apps for Africa at the U.S. Center in Durban, South Africa, in 2011. *Department of State photo*

Diversity Notes

BY JOHN M. ROBINSON
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Wait, What Did You Just Say?

Language is a living, changing and evolving medium, but over time, words create innuendo. Unconventional usage becomes slang or takes on a completely opposite meaning from the original. In interacting with individuals different from ourselves, we attempt to use language in ways that are not offensive, hoping that our intended audience understands the meaning we're trying to convey.

This year, NIKE, the famous footwear company, celebrated Irish culture and St. Patrick's Day by introducing a new sneaker in the United States called the Black and Tan. Ah, Black and Tan, the foamy concoction that is half pale ale, half Guinness Stout. What a wonderful celebratory gesture and appreciation for Irish culture. Not!

What the creator failed to account for is the historical context of the Black and Tan. The original Black and Tans were an ad hoc military group that committed atrocities against Irish civilians; the "tan" referred to the khaki of their uniforms. After many apologies following the public relations nightmare that ensued, NIKE recalled the shoe.

As with any phraseology that has evolved into present-day communications, the "back story" of how a phrase acquired its meaning can influence the meaning itself and impose an entirely different conceptual framework to the communication than intended. Much

has been written about whether the etymologies below are true or merely folklore, but this isn't about their historical validity; instead, it is an opportunity to remember that our choice of wording affects our professional environment.

- How many times have you or a colleague asked if someone could "hold down the fort?" For example, "Could you hold down the fort while I go to..." You were likely asking someone to watch the office while you go and do something else, but the phrase's historical connotation to some is negative and racially offensive. To "hold down the fort" originally meant to watch and protect against the vicious Native American intruders. In the territories of the West, Army soldiers or settlers saw the "fort" as their refuge from their perceived "enemy," the stereotypical "savage" Native American tribes.

- "Going Dutch." Likely you or your colleague meant that each person pays for his or her own meal. The historical meaning: a negative stereotype portraying the Dutch as cheap because they will invite you to a meal but then not pay for it.

- "Rule of thumb." This is an acknowledged and generally accepted benchmark. Many women's rights activists claim this term refers to an antiquated law, whereby the width of a husband's thumb was the legal size of a switch or rod allowed to beat his wife. If her bruises were not larger than the



width of his thumb, the husband could not be brought to court to answer for his behavior because he had not violated the "rule of thumb."

- There is no absolute verification as to the historical roots of the word "handicap." However, many disability advocates believe this term is rooted in a correlation between a disabled individual and a beggar, who had to beg with a cap in his or her hand because of the inability to maintain employment.

Choose your words thoughtfully. Now that you know the possible historical context of the above phrases, perhaps you will understand why someone could be offended by their use. Let us agree that language will continue to evolve with continually improving consciousness and respect for others. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Robinson".

Direct from the D.G.

BY LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD
DIRECTOR GENERAL

A Department of State Reflective of America

America's diversity is one of its greatest strengths. Immigrants from all nations, faiths and ethnicities have come here to build better lives for themselves and their families. What unites all of us is our belief in the principles that make America great: democracy, liberty and the rights of the individual. A diverse workforce demonstrates our country's values and interests, reinforcing our message of inclusion and freedom.

As our world becomes more diverse, and issues become more globalized, we must continue to develop, as Secretary of State Clinton has said, "...a workforce that reflects and respects the rich composition of our nation." It is "a moral and diplomatic imperative." Diversity strengthens the Department, bringing different ideas, perspectives and experiences that contribute to innovative thinking. It is critical to our success as we conduct 21st-Century diplomacy. A Department that represents America to the world should be representative of America.

The Bureau of Human Resources is working hard to recruit and retain that talented, diverse workforce. We combine the use of technology and in-person engagement to identify, educate, attract and recruit prospects to our careers. Our strategy integrates a national diversity-focused advertising plan; social recruitment through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn; and the strong connections our Diplomats in Residence and recruiters in Washington make with diverse prospects throughout the country.

We are building strong relationships with Hispanic Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities in addition to engaging on campuses with highly diverse popula-

tions, participating in diversity-specific alumni, professional and affinity organization events, and administering the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship programs. Whether participating in national events like the National Black MBA annual conference or building relationships with local chapters of the Society of Professional Hispanic Engineers, we are all dedicated to these recruitment efforts.

Overseas, we are also taking steps to employ a more diverse Locally Employed workforce by actively recruiting members of minority clans, tribes and groups in far-flung places such as Kathmandu, and by beginning an intern program for Romani in Budapest, to name just two examples.

While we aggressively undertake diversity recruitment, we recognize it takes a long-term commitment and resource investment that requires ongoing support from all Department stakeholders. You can assist us in our recruitment by reaching out to your local communities, mentoring youth and encouraging promising individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds to consider careers at the Department. Our award-winning website, www.careers.state.gov, includes current information on internship and job opportunities. You can also register at careers.state.gov/alumni to become a volunteer recruiter.

Recruiting a diverse workforce is everyone's responsibility. I recently gave the commencement address at Louisiana State University, my alma mater, and used the opportunity to recruit for the Department. I encourage you as you travel around the country to take a moment to talk about the



Department and help us to recruit the next generation of diverse and talented Department employees.

Recruitment is only part of the equation. As we build a talented, diverse workforce, we must ensure that we focus on retention. We must develop, train, mentor and promote all valuable employees equally. To that end, President Obama has established a government-wide initiative to promote diversity and inclusion among federal agencies. As part of that initiative, the Department recently delivered our Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan for 2012 to the Office of Personnel Management. The plan highlights strategies to achieve workforce diversity, workforce inclusion and sustainability. The plan is, however, just the beginning. There is still much work to be done.

I am committed to ensuring that the Department has the skills, innovation and diversity necessary to advance our nation's interests. I look forward to working with everyone to accomplish these goals and encourage you to contact me directly at DGDirect with your suggestions and comments. ▣

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Linda Thomas-Greenfield".



ROLLING OUT = THE = RED CARPET

Department's airline brings diplomats to talks

Story and photos by Sharon Ketchum, assistant
information officer, U.S. Embassy Baghdad

A silver speck in the distant sky revealed the imminent approach of Dash-8, a passenger aircraft operated by Embassy Air, the State Department's airline for flights into Baghdad. The radio crackled, "Baghdad Tower, State 24 on final [approach] to runway 33R." Seconds later, the gleaming aircraft touched down and discharged its passengers.

The landing appeared no different from the hundreds of other flights run by Embassy Air, which serves 15,000 people countrywide and is equivalent to a small regional airline, with charter and emergency air services. More than 26,000 passengers flew Embassy Air between Jan. 1 and April 30, and 50,000 have flown since operations began in September 2011.

But this flight, from Amman, Jordan, would be historic: Passengers included top diplomats from six countries and the European Union who had come to Iraq for the P5+1 talks with Iran on that country's nuclear program.

Though the flight originated in Amman just two hours earlier, the mission began weeks before in Washington, D.C. Iraq had agreed to host the negotiations, and the delegates had agreed to come to Baghdad. But how would they get there in light of Iraq's challenging infrastructure and security concerns? Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman called Ambassador James Jeffrey, and he agreed Embassy Air would transport the representatives, not

just from the United States, but also from the European Union, Great Britain, Russia, China, France and Germany.

So the planning began. Plan A was finalized, with Plans B and C designed to respond to different circumstances that might arise. From the outside, it might seem that the key work was arranging six flights on the fixed-wing Dash-8 planes and eight aboard S-61 helicopters, each filled with passengers and baggage. But this was just the most visible work. As Tim Rhyne, deputy aviation operations director, said, "Flying from point A to point B is the easiest thing we do."

In addition to scheduling the flights, manifesting the passengers and getting everyone on the planes, Embassy Air had to handle baggage and coordinate with Iraqi customs, and it had to do all that while serving its regular customers, the diplomats and contractors who work at the U.S. mission throughout Iraq.

A dust storm shut down Baghdad's airport just a day before the talks were to begin. Yet the next morning, three planes awaited 57 travelers in Amman, including nine members of the international media. Two hours later they arrived in Baghdad, and the talks began.

While the negotiations proceeded, the Embassy Air team prepared for the next big push—getting participants back out of Iraq the following day. This plan was even more complex, as delegates wanted to leave at a variety of times and head in different direc-

tions. Embassy Air prepared five options from which they could choose, including regularly scheduled Embassy Air flights to Amman and Kuwait, and a flight to Erbil in northern Iraq, where participants could connect with a Lufthansa flight to Frankfurt. An afternoon flight to Amman was added for those who needed to leave later. Finally, a special helicopter flight was scheduled to allow the U.S. delegation to meet a MILAIR flight to Saudi Arabia.

But negotiations were extended to a second day, requiring the Embassy Air team to work until the early hours of the next morning to devise a new departure schedule. They remained unfazed when the dust picked up and again closed the Baghdad airport. As the window to use Plan B disappeared, they replaced it with Plan C and sketched out Plan D. Ultimately, the talks wrapped up just in time for a late-night race to the airport.

All the teamwork, coordination and hard work did not go unnoticed. As Under Secretary Sherman said, "The Embassy Baghdad team was truly amazing. They pulled off a remarkable logistical feat bringing in the P5+1 delegations, in a powerful display of international unity, flying in and out of Amman on Embassy Air. This got us off to a strong start in our complex talks with the Iranians. Embassy Baghdad displayed the true professionalism and skill of the State Department—sharp on substance and flawless in execution."

Aviation Operations Director Billy



Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari greets European Union High Commissioner Catherine Ashton as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman exits the plane upon arrival in Baghdad. **Opposite page:** Iraqis laid out the red carpet for the EU3+3 delegates arriving on Embassy Air flight 24.

Walker said, “We knew we could handle whatever demands they threw at us. This was a special mission, but it was only one step more complex than our daily operation.” In an average week, Embassy Air manages 400-600 movements of people and cargo, and even carries the mail (land transport having become too difficult).

Embassy Air’s fleet includes five de Havilland Dash-8 turboprop planes, each designed to carry 50 passengers with luggage. As temperatures rise, the permitted takeoff weight decreases, so in the heat of an Iraqi summer the passenger limit is typically 35. These planes fly eight roundtrip international flights weekly—four to Amman and four to Kuwait—plus 10 domestic flights to Basrah and Erbil. The fleet also includes 13 Sikorsky S-61ST helicopters that transport diplomats to meetings in Iraq and 18 Bell UH-1 (Huey) helicopters, primarily for medical evacuation and rescue-and-recovery operations, but which also supplement passenger transport.

Since September 2011, Embassy Air has flown 80 medical evacuations, and aircrews stand ready to respond within 15 minutes to evacuate any mission member needing medical treatment. Two aircraft with pilots, crew and medics are on standby 24/7. In a country where U.S.-standard medical treatment is not available, it’s a critical service.

As a self-sufficient operation, Embassy Air maintains and repairs its equipment, manages all logistical requisitions of aviation parts



Embassy Air helicopters almost always fly in pairs to ensure support if problems arise. **Below:** Crew Chief Dan Papizzo inspects the rotor of a “Huey” helicopter.



and supplies, and ensures its staff is well trained—all while building the infrastructure it needs. That’s a lot of work for any airline, but it’s even more impressive considering how young Embassy Air is. The U.S. military ran all scheduled flights into Iraq until May 2011, and provided virtually unlimited support for special flights until its withdrawal in December 2011. Although that support is gone, the number of flights has remained almost constant.

“We have never missed a flight, even while constructing our hangars and laying the concrete on which we park our planes,” said Tony Sparks, Embassy Air’s Iraq Country Program manager.

Frank Ledahawsky, deputy to the management counselor who oversees Embassy Air operations, added, “We will continue to provide this service as long as security concerns in Iraq prevent our staff from safely using commercial airlines.”

Editor’s Note: State Magazine is proud to be the official in-flight magazine of Embassy Air. ■

HR Releases Civil Service Promotion Stats

By Monica Bradley, management analyst, Bureau of Human Resources

In fiscal year 2011, nearly one in five of eligible Department employees at grades GS-1 through GS-15 were promoted. In all, 1,483 Civil Service employees were promoted from within the Department and another 26 from other agencies competed for and were promoted into higher-graded positions within the Department.

Of the 1,509 employees promoted, 66 percent were promoted noncompetitively after having met the minimum requirements.

Unlike the 2011 Foreign Service promotion statistics published in June in this magazine, the Civil Service statistics do not offer extensive detail. One reason is that the Foreign Service is an up-or-out or “rank-in-person” personnel system with employees carrying their personal rank, or grade, with them regardless of the grade of the position they might be filling. By contrast, the Civil Service is a rank-in-position system where individuals compete for and are placed into a position for which they qualify.

Furthermore, Foreign Service employees who have met minimum time-in-grade requirements are reviewed for competitive promotion at the same time each year, and a percentage are promoted based upon their performance and the number of promotion opportunities available. In the Civil Service, the position’s grade is the employee’s rank, and positions may be “career-ladder,” in which employees compete for the position initially and are then non-competitively promoted after meeting minimum time-in-grade and performance requirements. Presidential Management Fellows are career-ladder positions, for instance.

Career ladders provide the developmental, grade-building experiences that qualify employees for non-competitive promotion to the next level but also require them to meet one-year time-in-grade requirements and demonstrate the ability to perform at the next level.

Most of the 2011 noncompetitive Civil Service promotions were career-ladder promotions. If a position is not part of a career ladder, other ways to be promoted are available, such as applying in response to a vacancy announcement, being promoted through accretion of duties or receiving a temporary promotion.

Vacancies may be open to Department employees only, all federal employees or all applicants. If ranked high enough, the applicant is certified to the selecting official, interviewed, and, if successful, selected and hired. In fiscal 2011, 30 percent of Civil Service promotions were competitive, meaning employees were selected after being certified.

The remaining 4 percent of Civil Service promotions were either temporary promotions or arose from an accretion of duties, in which an employee’s position was classified at a higher grade because of the addition of higher-level duties that could only be assigned to that position. Temporary promotions may be awarded to an employee who has been acting in a higher-level capacity for a sustained period of time. Temporary promotions of 120 days or less may be made noncompetitively, but longer ones must be made through competition under the Merit Promotion Program.

As of September 2011, 82 percent of all Civil Service employees in the Department were at the GS-11 or higher grade level and 23 percent were in supervisory positions. Because of the coming wave of baby-boomer retirements, every Department office should be developing its future leaders, and employees should be developing skills for their next career move.

Civil Service retirements increased 29 percent last year compared with 2010 and 47 percent over 2009. ■

FY 2011 Civil Service Promotions

Grade	Number Eligible	Number of Promotions	Percent of Eligibles Promoted	Career-Ladder Promotions	Competitive Promotions	Other Promotions
GS-2 to GS-3	1	1	100.0%	0	0	1
GS-3 to GS-4	9	1	11.1%	0	0	1
GS-4 to GS-5	57	10	17.5%	2	1	7
GS-5 to GS-6/GS-7	78	29	37.2%	16	0	13
GS-6 to GS-7	80	26	32.5%	19	4	3
GS-7 to GS-8/GS-9	374	129	34.5%	100	23	6
GS-8 to GS-9	249	26	10.4%	2	24	0
GS-9 to GS-10/GS-11	531	393	74.0%	364	23	6
GS-10 to GS-11	24	1	4.2%	0	1	0
GS-11 to GS-12	1,409	346	24.6%	264	77	5
GS-12 to GS-13	1,241	317	25.5%	203	107	7
GS-13 to GS-14	2,099	172	8.2%	18	150	4
GS-14 to GS-15	1,331	58	4.4%	4	51	3
GS-15 to SES	950	22	2.3%	0	17	5
Total	8,433	1531	18.2%	992	478	61

Foreign Affairs Day 2012

Retirees reunite, honor colleagues

By Ed Warner, deputy editor, *State Magazine*

If there's a national club for retired Department employees, its annual meeting is Foreign Affairs Day, where retirees reunite with friends and acquaintances, sometimes for the first time in years, and receive an update on U.S. foreign policy from Department leadership.

As usual, 2012's Foreign Affairs Day in May began with schmoozing over coffee in the Delegates Lounge, where several retirees said their foremost reason for attending was, as Matthew Koch put it, the opportunity to "maintain those ties" with coworkers. A 27-year Department veteran, Koch retired from the Japan desk last year as its economics chief.

"[It's] a fun day because everyone comes out of the woodwork," agreed Timothy Towell, formerly ambassador to Paraguay.

However, not every Foreign Affairs Day attendee comes just to socialize and learn. Rob Warne, who's been coming for 20 years, is active in DACOR and said he keeps an eye out to recruit potential DACOR speakers. He was last posted to the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, as economics counselor, and now lectures aboard cruise ships.

Warne struck up a conversation with Joseph Ruth, now a trustee of the American University in Paris, and formerly of the France desk. As they chatted, they discovered that both, in their Army days, had commanded missile units—just the sort of out-of-the-blue connections that seem to pop up when Department retirees gather.

The day has a solemn element, when the Department honors fallen comrades. This year, the Department and American Foreign Service Association honored Sharon Clark, who died of malaria in 2010 while serving in Abuja, Nigeria, her first Foreign Service posting.

Speaking before the AFSA plaque, which honors Clark and 235 other Department employees who died while on duty, Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and



Human Rights Maria Otero said, "Sharon was a goodwill ambassador in the truest sense of the word." Otero quoted Clark's chief of mission as saying Clark "was always ready to help" and noted that Clark had been an "adoptive grandmother" to Nigerian children.

Honors of a happier sort were bestowed earlier in the morning as retired Ambassador Paul Cleveland presented the DACOR Cup to Rozanne "Roz" Ridgway, whom he called "the star negotiator of her generation in the Foreign Service." In her 32-year Department career, Ridgway was ambassador to several nations, including Finland and what was then East Germany. Unable to attend due to a hospitalization, Ridgway asked Avis Bohlen, assistant secretary for Arms Control from 1999–2002, to accept the award on her behalf.

Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield addresses the Foreign Affairs Day luncheon.

Photo by Marc Stewart

Bohlen said Ridgway was a pioneer at a time when women were as "rare as hen's teeth" in the Foreign Service ranks. She lauded Ridgway for defending her positions and mentoring young officers. She noted that Ridgway serves on numerous boards of directors, including those of Boeing, Nabisco and Union Carbide.

Attendees spent much of the rest of the day learning from speakers such as Under Secretary Otero, who noted the Department's need to respond to budget constraints by partnering with nongovernmental entities, and Under Secretary for Management Patrick



Right: Hazel M. Reitz, right, accepts the Civil Service Cup from Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield. *Photo by Marc Stewart* **Below:** Donald Bishop, who retired a year and a half ago, comes to Foreign Affairs Day to “fill up on the issues” and was looking forward to a session on public diplomacy in the Twitter Age. *Photo by Bill Palmer*



Kennedy, who described challenges facing the Department, including responding to visa demand. Former ambassador and luncheon keynote speaker Tom Pickering discussed the U.S.-Iran relationship, which he said was characterized by more mistrust than any since the U.S.-China relationship prior to President Nixon’s 1972 visit. Pickering was ambassador to seven nations, including Russia.

Also during the luncheon, Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield presented the Director General’s Cups. The Civil Service Cup went to Hazel M. Reitz, now retired from the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. Thomas-Greenfield said Reitz’s career was marked by “passionate commitment to the protection of refugees and displaced persons” and “steadfastness and fearlessness in fighting to meet the basic needs of refugees and displaced persons.”

During her Department career and the past six years she has spent as a board member of the Women’s Refugee Commission, the award citation said, Reitz “pressed courageously and creatively for the improvement of refugee conditions on the ground.”

The Director General’s Cup for the Foreign Service went to Ambassador Oliver Pastrano “O.P.” Garza. Thomas-Greenfield noted Ambassador Garza’s role as an advisor to the president of Honduras on fighting against criminal narcotics activity, “horrific violence and rampant corruption.”

The situation, she said, required “a seasoned professional with O.P.’s law enforcement and diplomatic experience. O.P. again has risen to the occasion to do the toughest job.” Garza could not receive the award in person; it was accepted by his colleague of 40 years and fellow Texan, Ambassador Cresencio Arcos.

Garza, who has also been a Diplomat in Residence in Texas, recruiting for the Department, was cited for “unwavering dedication to the principles of democracy and rule of law” and particularly for promoting, while ambassador to Nicaragua, fair and transparent presidential elections in 2001, among other accomplishments. ■



AFSA President Susan Johnson, left, and Under Secretary Maria Otero display Sharon Clark’s name, the latest addition to the AFSA Plaque. *Photo by Bill Palmer*

Twenty Years Later

Staff Recalls Opening Embassy Yerevan at Cold War's End

By Dan Hastings, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs chief, U.S. Embassy Yerevan

Armenians who lived through 1992–1994, when Armenia and Azerbaijan warred over Nagorno Karabakh, still shudder when reminded of those “cold, dark years.” During that time, Armenians saw household gas, electricity and water supplies almost completely disappear—casualties of the war—and endured subfreezing temperatures.

Those hardships generated pride of accomplishment for the team of resilient American diplomats who arrived in Armenia's capital of Yerevan 20 years ago, in early 1992, to open the first U.S. Embassy (the first embassy of any nation) in newly independent Armenia.

Led by Chargé d'Affaires Steve Mann, Foreign Service Officers Ruth Willow, Paul Rich, Patrick Hiddleston, Rolf Mowat Larson and Aubrey Carlson formed the “opening team” that deployed from Washington and Moscow via a staging conference in Frankfurt, Germany, in the last week of January 1992. They sought to fulfill Secretary of State James Baker's promise to Congress that the State Department would open embassies in the Newly Independent States by the end of that month.

The first challenge was getting to Yerevan. Flights from Moscow were sporadic, and even though the team had tickets, there was no such thing as booking a seat in advance. The team had to go out every day to Moscow's Vnukovo Airport and push through mobs of humanity to confirm or refute the rumors about planes to Yerevan. Luckily, they eventually landed spaces on a special standing-room-only flight for Armenia's new president, and even got seats. The effort to find a flight had been exhausting, but the \$4.50 equivalent fare for the two-and-a-half-hour flight helped soften the blow.

“You got what you paid for,” Mann matter-of-factly noted.

As its base of operations in Yerevan, the opening team selected the Hrazdan Hotel, the only place in town with heat thanks to its proximity to the presidential compound, which was fueled by generators. They chose wisely: The 1992–93 winter was one of the coldest and snowiest in Armenia's modern memory. That also meant the city's air was fouled with particulate content from the many wood- and coal-burning stoves. The streets were completely dark, except for the glow from light bulbs run by stray generators. Cars traveled the streets slowly, wary of hitting unlit pedestrians.

“I had never been in a situation like it,” Mann said.

Inside the Hrazdan Hotel, challenges also lurked. To be able to report back to the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, the post's two communicators had to open the metal-tinted windows that prevented their satellite phone's antenna from linking with the satellite and hold the dish outside. They subsequently removed the window and nailed up a plywood sheet so they could transmit while keeping out some of the cold air.

Hiring the embassy's first two Armenian employees was also out of the ordinary. The car and driver that the team had reserved failed to show up, so several team members walked to the park near Yerevan's Opera House, where a man asked if they needed a taxi. The team liked his hustle, so they hired him as the embassy's first driver. The young clerical assistant whom they hired also had a notable credential: He'd once been arrested by the Soviets for listening to Radio Liberty.

In choosing a location for the chancery, the team sought help from Ambassador Nick Salgo, then the Department's special property negotiator, who flew in on an Air Force aircraft.

Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger wanted a chancery that would house no more than five to eight officers (to economize and not have to ask Congress for more money), but Salgo set the team's sights higher: a facility that could hold up to 100 staff.

The best venue by far was the headquarters of the former Kom-somol (Communist Union of Youth organization) on Marshall

Baghramian Boulevard. Salgo and Mann liked that the building was across the street from the Supreme Council (formerly the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia), later to become Armenia's parliament. Another of the site's assets was that it had a large underground movie

Ara Ghazaryan, the first Foreign Service national hired by Embassy Yerevan, installs the U.S. flag at the embassy after its relocation to the Baghramian Boulevard site in 1992.

Photo by Golos Armenii





Chargé d' Affaires Steve Mann, followed by Foreign Minister Raffi Hovannisian, hoists the Stars and Stripes outside the Hrazdan Hotel in Yerevan to mark the establishment of the U.S. diplomatic mission.
Photo by Photolur-Armenia

theater decorated with life-sized reliefs of scenes of socialist labor. There, future U.S. diplomats posted to Armenia would watch Hollywood's latest releases on an intermittently working movie projector.

Salgo and Mann next prepared to negotiate the lease with Levon Ter-Petrosian, Armenia's first president. Before setting out for the Presidential Palace, though, Salgo decided that his interpreter, a U.S. Navy lieutenant, needed a higher rank for such an important meeting, so he had the lieutenant switch uniforms with an Air Force major.

At approximately the same time, Mann met with 32-year-old Raffi Hovannisian, Armenia's first foreign minister, to hand over the note establishing the embassy. Since Hovannisian had lived in Los Angeles, the meeting transpired in rapid-fire American English, leaving the note-takers struggling to document it. They agreed to formally open the embassy in early February.

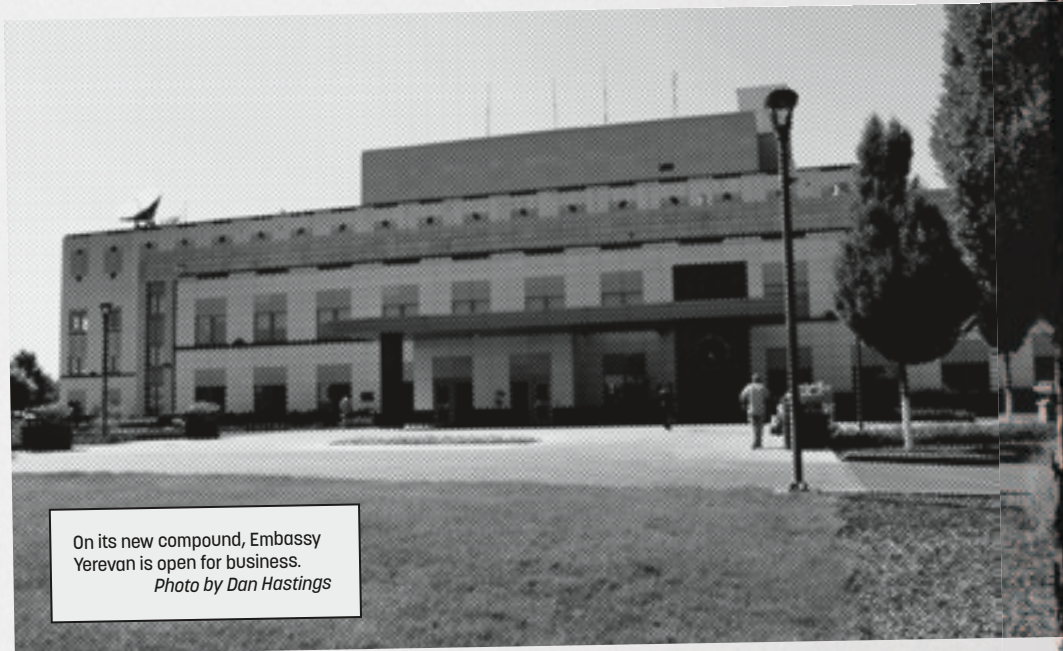
The opening team thought it had accomplished its mission when Margaret Tutwiler, Secretary Baker's chief of staff, called in the middle of the night and asked if the Secretary and his delegation could visit Yerevan in two days? Of course, the reply was, "What a great idea, Margaret!"

Baker's visit on February 11–12, 1992, was an overnight visit with a presidential meeting in the morning. The principals stayed in the presidential guest house, and the Armenian government evicted guests en masse from the Hrazdan Hotel to create space for the Secretary's delegation and the press, who doubled up in the rooms.

After the cordial meeting with President Ter-Petrosian, an opening reception for the U.S. mission was held at the Hrazdan Hotel. With a ballroom full of dignitaries and the event about to be beamed live across the nations of the former Soviet Union, Mann wisely ventured into a back room to check on the rolled-up American flag that would be unfurled as the pinnacle of the event. He found it neatly rolled around a pole with the Stars and Stripes upside down. Mann said that, of all the good things he had done during his long diplomatic career, that precautionary extra step ranked highest.

In May 2005, the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan moved from its beloved Marshall Baghramian Boulevard location to a beautiful new 23-acre site on the edge of Lake Yerevan. Now, 70 Americans and 350 Armenians, representing seven U.S. agencies, work there in buildings containing the chancery, USAID and the Marine House. The facility's recreational lower compound is named for Ambassador Harry Gilmore, the first U.S. ambassador to Armenia.

As for the Hrazdan Hotel, it lives on, its exterior hardly changed from the "cold, dark years" of 1992–1994. ■



On its new compound, Embassy Yerevan is open for business.
Photo by Dan Hastings

A Day of Learning

Myriad activities offer children workplace insights

By Ed Warner, deputy editor, *State Magazine*

At the Department's Take Your Child to Work Day in April, Department employees and their children filled the Dean Acheson Auditorium to hear from the Director General of the Foreign Service and the head of the Office of Global Youth Issues.

Director General Linda Thomas-Greenfield advised youngsters to develop career goals early, even if life's twists and turns later bring course corrections. She said she had wanted since fifth grade to become a lawyer before shifting her focus to the Foreign Service. She also urged the students to take advantage of the day's many activities, saying

"this really is a learning experience, a very real-world experience."

Keynote speaker Ronan Farrow, special advisor to the Secretary of State for Global Youth Issues, spoke of his background—he's a young lawyer who was encouraged to join the Department by the late Ambassador Richard Holbrooke—and of how the day itself is "at the very core of what [the Department] is trying to do" worldwide with youth. He noted that "people not much older than you" were key drivers in the Arab Spring movement of 2011. Worldwide, he said, youth are the "greatest champions of good government and

democracy" and the lifeblood of the world's boom economies, through their competence with new technologies.

In sum, Take Your Child to Work Day represents "how we pass the torch to the next generation," Farrow said.

Then came the day's highlight: The swearing in of the young attendees as temporary Department employees by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton herself. The Secretary especially welcomed the children of those serving at unaccompanied posts, telling them she had learned through her travels that their parents "think about you all the time.



Children sift through dirt looking for "diamonds" to sell at the Diamonds Are Forever activity.

Photo by Bill Palmer

Right: Students recite their “oaths of office” as honorary employees for the day. **Bottom:** A child and mother pet Vivi, a DS bomb-sniffing dog being handled by DS Uniformed Security Officer Heather Drake. *Photos by Ed Warner*

“You are also serving your country,” she added.

The Secretary urged the youngsters to consider Department careers when they get older. (Earlier, during a question-answer session after Farrow’s talk, one youth seemed to have gotten the message: What does it take, she asked, to become an ambassador?)

More typical was the question posed to Farrow by a 9-year-old girl: “How do we help people worldwide?” Farrow pointed to such activities as Trick or Treat for UNICEF, but said a good start would be to respond to the “issues you and your parents care about most.”

Later that morning and into the early afternoon, attendees chose from an array of activities, each sponsored by a Department unit. For instance, the Ralph Bunche Library gave children “passports” that they got stamped at learning stations, each focusing on a lesson about a different state in Mexico. (Mexico’s big Cinco de Mayo holiday was eight days away.) The Bureau of Diplomatic Security, meanwhile, brought a motorcade of security vehicles to Main State’s 21st Street entrance, allowing children to climb into each as sirens howled. Another group learn about the DS bomb-sniffing dogs.

Other activities included:

- Is It Legit, a look at the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs’ efforts to protect intellectual property;
- Finger Talk, a Bureau of Human Resources activity on sign language interpretation;
- When Invaders Attack, the Bureau of Oceans, and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs’ presentation on invasive species;
- Look Who’s Talking, which allowed youngsters to sit for a TV interview in the Bureau of Public Affairs’ press briefing room;
- The Hunger Games, which used knowledge of Middle Eastern nations to win a prize, and was jointly sponsored by the bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs; and
- Ahoy, Mates, an Office of Emergency Management treasure hunt that also taught how to make a “go kit” and what to do in an emergency. ■





MON

Embassy personnel enjoy a view of Mamba Point—which at this moment included a spectacular rainbow—from their residences.

Photo by Dehab Ghebreab

NROVIA

Four Perspectives on
a Vital Post's Mission

Compiled by Embassy Staff





Stability Spurs Embassy Growth

From skeleton staffing at the end of the civil conflict in 2003, the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia has grown into a sizable operation with nearly 400 employees. All are working hard to help Liberia succeed, engaging extensively with the Liberian government, private sector, NGO community and other diplomatic missions on policy and development issues. The United States is Liberia's largest bilateral development assistance donor.

With the return of stability and calm, Embassy Monrovia became a family post (minor-age children allowed) in 2009. The reestablished and growing international school offers classes for grades one through eight.

While the work and living environment has improved dramatically since 2003, an assignment in Monrovia presents challenges. In January 2012, the chancery, Marine House and all other U.S. agencies (with the exception of the Peace Corps) moved to the new embassy compound (NEC). Despite improved working conditions, the NEC brings with it new maintenance challenges due to Liberia's inadequate basic infrastructure. In addition to limited public water and electricity, there are few health care options, no telephone land lines and a limited road network that is nearly impassable for half the year.

On the other hand, the availability of goods has continued to improve. Monrovia has well-stocked supermarkets, and several carry U.S. grocery products, including well-known brand names. Restaurants in various price ranges offer European, Asian, Lebanese and traditional Liberian cuisine.

The home is the center of evening activities for American employees. The post has a tennis court, swimming pool and exercise room to provide recreational outlets. Beach picnics are popular during the dry season. Basketball and golf are popular, too.

Embassy Partners in Reconstruction and Development

Following the 14-year war and the Accra Peace Accords of 2003, the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia rapidly ramped up its response to alleviate human suffering, with USAID deploying resources to reintegrate ex-combatants into society, facilitate the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, and provide basic social services through NGOs.



Liberian women plant rice in Foya, Lofa County. *Photo by Jani Byker* **Below:** Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton displays a newspaper headline at a press conference with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during Clinton's 2009 visit. *Photo courtesy of James M. Garresen*



For the past nine years, the Liberian government and people and the embassy have worked side by side to rebuild from the war. The embassy's development portfolio, mostly managed by USAID, seeks to strengthen democratic institutions (including establishment of a capable and accountable security sector), fight corruption, increase access to quality education and health care, expand economic opportunity through agricultural and private sector enterprises, and help build essential infrastructure in roads, water and energy. USAID is also strengthening the capacity of the government and NGOs.

Working with the Liberian government and other stakeholders, the embassy built the capacity of the National Elections Commission to plan and execute free, fair and transparent elections at the county and national levels in 2011. In education, USAID has supported training and certification of thousands of new teachers, and 75 Peace Corps



Peace Corps Volunteer Natalie Rodriguez teaches chemistry in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County. Photo by Peace Corps Liberia Below: A Liberian woman holds up her inked finger after casting her ballot in the 2011 presidential elections. Photo by Justin Prudhomme



volunteers are teaching math, science and other subjects.

The Liberian government and people are taking more leadership and ownership of their country's development objectives. The new Agenda for Transformation, which succeeded the Poverty Reduction Strategy, will guide development efforts for the next five years, a start toward the Sirleaf administration's ambitious goal of having the population reach middle-income status by 2030.

Building A Force For Good

Embassy Monrovia manages Security Sector Reform activities to help Liberia transform, professionalize and strengthen its defense forces, police and rule of law, all critical to its peace and security.

The first step was disarmament and demobilization of more than 100,000 combatants, including all of the old Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). This was conducted by the United Nations Mission in Liberia with significant embassy support.

Once demobilization was complete, the AFL was rebuilt from the ground up. The embassy's Office of Security Cooperation (OSC) oversaw a State Department contract program that recruited, vetted, trained and equipped a new AFL of approximately 2,000 soldiers, rehabilitated three Liberian military bases and conducted initial training for the Ministry of Defense staff.

After the contract program ended, the U.S. Africa Command stepped in with Operation Onward Liberty, which provides approximately 50 military mentors from the Marine Corps, Air Force, Navy and Army, including soldiers from the Michigan Army National Guard (Liberia's National Guard State Partnership Program partner). Living and working side by side with their AFL counterparts, the mentors are helping the AFL be what Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf calls "a

force for good." The Liberian Coast Guard has been trained and equipped through programs directed by a U.S. Coast Guard officer working out of the OSC.

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) manages the embassy Security Sector Reform programs with Liberian civilian law enforcement agencies and criminal justice institutions, as well as programs to decrease drug demand and support civilian anti-drug efforts. INL provides training and equipment support and police advisors, seconded to United Nations Mission in Liberia, who work directly with the Liberian National Police. On the rule of law side, INL works with the Ministry of Justice and other justice sector actors to build confidence and capacity.

Historic Partnership

Americans visiting Liberia can see the historic footprints of the United States from the time they arrive at Roberts International Airport at Harbel, Margibi County. Harbel has been home to Firestone, the international rubber producer, since 1926. The airport itself was built by Pan American Airways, under contract to the U.S. government, then expanded by U.S. Army engineers during World War II. As visitors drive toward central Monrovia, they pass a resort built by Black Entertainment Television executive and developer/financier Robert L. John-



A worker checks a rubber tree. Rubber is the economic lifeline of Liberia.
Photo by Dehab Ghebream



At a Glance Liberia

- Capital:** Monrovia
- Government type:** Republic
- Area:** 111,369 sq. km.
- Comparative area:** Slightly larger than Ohio
- Population:** 3.9 million
- Language:** English (official), plus 20 indigenous languages
- Religions:** Predominantly Christian and Muslim
- GDP-per capita:** \$400
- Export commodities:** Rubber, timber, iron, diamonds and cocoa
- Export partners:** South Africa, U.S., Spain, Denmark and Venezuela
- Import commodities:** Fuels, chemicals, machinery, transportation equipment and manufactured goods
- Import partners:** South Korea, China, Singapore and Japan
- Currency:** Liberian dollar (LRD)
- Internet country code:** .lr

Source: Country Background Notes

son and the John F. Kennedy Medical Center, established in 1968 with U.S. assistance—all reminders of the strong connections between the United States and Liberia.

These historical links began before Liberia’s founding. In 1822, freed slaves were repatriated by the American Colonization Society (ACS) in what would become Liberia. Founded in 1816 in Washington, D.C., by a Presbyterian minister from Basking Ridge, N.J., the ACS was supported by prominent Americans including Senators Henry Clay and Daniel Webster and Presidents Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe.

In 1824, the ACS established the colony of Liberia, changing the capital city’s name to Monrovia, after President Monroe. From 1822 to 1867 the ACS assisted in the repatriation of 19,000 people, including 4,540 who were freeborn, 7,000 who were released from slavery and 5,700 who were recaptured from slave vessels. Settlements were also established in various locations by other groups. In 1847, Governor Joseph Jenkins Roberts convened a constitutional convention and Liberia declared independence. Its first eight presidents were born in the United States, and the deep kinship is evident today.

Editor’s Note: Karl Albrecht, deputy chief of mission; Justin Prud’homme, USAID development outreach coordinator; Dehab Ghebream, public affairs officer and other embassy staff contributed to this article. ■

Virtual Tehran

Department's online mission to the Iranian people

By Gregory W. Sullivan, senior policy advisor, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs



The long, low two-story brick building that once housed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran has been repurposed since the Iran hostage crisis of 1979. With the Islamic Revolution and the hostage-taking of U.S. Embassy staff for 444 days, formal U.S. diplomatic relations with Iran, and thousands of daily interactions with the local population in administrative, consular, cultural, economic and political affairs, were severed. For the Department's public diplomacy practitioners, the loss of the embassy meant loss of our dialogue with the Iranian people and our best vehicle for promoting understanding.

Despite its shuttering, the embassy, both as a physical compound and representational concept, never lost its emotional hold on the Iranian people. While some in Iran called for its destruction, the embassy compound has undergone several evolutions since the hostage-taking: as a training center for the Revolutionary Guard (the "guardians" of the Islamic Revolution), a bookstore, a museum dedicated to "American imperialism" and an art gallery of murals commissioned by the Iranian regime depicting the United States as an evil empire. This rebranding effort seems only to have reinforced the central, haunting role the embassy and relations with the United States continue to play in the Iranian national psyche.

In an effort to end the 33-year-long diplomatic estrangement from the Iranian people, the Department of State in December launched Virtual U.S. Embassy Tehran. Envisioned as an information hub for a comprehensive online engagement strategy, Virtual Embassy Tehran (iran.usembassy.gov) was an instant hit, collecting more than 770,000 page-views in the first 72 hours from 273,000 visitors, and garnering more than 800 references on websites and blogs. Likewise, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' (NEA) broad Persian-language social networking effort, marketed under the name USAdarFarsi (translated: USA in Persian), has seen a huge upswing in Facebook fans and Twitter followers, and now stands at more than 625,000 viewers for its growing collection of Persian-language videos on YouTube. These numbers are remarkable, considering what Secretary of State Clinton has called the regime's "Electronic Curtain" of censorship, Internet filtering and broadcast jamming, plus the lack of diplomatic relations for 33 years. Demand for new content across these platforms is quickly reaching the capacity of the bureau's small Persian Online Engagement Team (POET).

Virtual Embassy Tehran was the product of many bureaus. Though this site was conceived in and maintained by NEA, the Bureau of Consular Affairs moved mountains to design uniform visa application procedures for the thousands of Iranian citizens who apply every day through posts in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Armenia and elsewhere. The Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) provided a treasure trove of Persian-language materials on Internet freedom, open societies, American culture and other topics compelling to Iranian readers, and continues to support the site with a regular diet of new material. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has shared a wealth of information regarding educational opportunities in the United States and has embraced NEA's request to explore "virtual exchange programs," including a virtual Musical Ambassador series.

One of Virtual Embassy Tehran's goals is countering the Iranian regime's attempt to control the flow of information in and out of the

country by lowering the Electronic Curtain. The Iranian regime seeks to monopolize the information and opinions that reach the Iranian population, thereby limiting discussion and internal dissent. However, Iran's attempts to control online information have not kept up with the development of virtual private networks, proxy servers and circumvention software, which has allowed Iranian Internet users to bypass the Electronic Curtain without detection. Facebook is one example; while the social networking giant has never officially confirmed the number of Iranian users, the Iranian government itself estimates that more than 17 million Iranians have Facebook accounts, despite the fact that Facebook is one of the 5 million websites the regime blocks.

The Department's message through Virtual Embassy Tehran and its social media platforms is that U.S.-Iranian relations do not have a predestined outcome. Through this concerted online engagement effort, we are trying to convey that the United States is not the reason for Iranian isolation, and our relationship could be different if the Iranian government changed its behavior. Over the past six months, there have been strong indications that this message is getting through.

For example, in January, U.S. Navy ships rescued an Iranian fishing boat that had been seized by Somali pirates, who held its crew hostage for more than 40 days. Persian-subtitled video of that rescue and associated photos were viewed more than 183,000 times through Virtual Embassy Tehran. Our story led to discussions on Persian blogs, noting that not only had the Iranian Navy not made the recovery of this vessel a priority, but Iranian media had failed to report on it, despite the vessel's disappearance for more than a month. In short, our reporting not only garnered goodwill toward the United States, but raised legitimate questions regarding the priorities of the Iranian Navy and Iranian state-controlled media.

Similarly, when the Department used the website to congratulate the Iranian wrestling team on its Freestyle Wrestling World Cup victory in Baku in May, the outpouring of positive reactions from Iranian blogs and even state-owned media was striking. The frequency with which the Iranian regime reacts to the Department's online platforms proves that the message is being heard.

Encouraged by their initial success, the Iran public diplomacy teams in NEA and IIP developed yet another way to communicate with young Iranians: animated video. Using a script written at the Department, NEA and IIP developed a short video highlighting the challenges that average Iranians face every day in the form of regime-sponsored censorship and website filtering. This video is another way to raise awareness worldwide of the Iranians' plight, and to turn the tables on regime hardliners by illustrating how they isolate their own people from the rest of the world.

As Virtual Embassy Tehran passes its six-month anniversary, the Department is focused on developing more content and a wider availability of virtual exchange offerings for Iranian audiences. With this website, the U.S. now has a virtual public diplomacy surrogate to the bricks-and-mortar facility that was lost in Tehran more than 33 years ago. Through sustained engagement on this platform, the United States is building a more positive image of America in the hearts and minds of a new generation of Iranians, a critical demographic that may disagree with U.S. policy, but consistently expresses a desire to have a better relationship with the people of the United States. ■

Celebrating Reception Room Donations

By Brianne Brophy, project coordinator, Diplomatic Reception Rooms

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in late May hosted a reception to thank donors to the Diplomatic Reception Rooms for their gifts in 2011. The Secretary gave special thanks to contributors to the Patrons of Diplomacy initiative, which created the first endowment to permanently preserve the Diplomatic Reception Rooms and their collection, and make the rooms' historic collection of Americana accessible to students worldwide via new educational outreach and tools.

By October 2011 the initiative's \$20 million goal had been exceeded by \$300,000. Gifts and pledges ranged from \$100 to \$1.6 million.

At the donors' reception, Secretary Clinton thanked Patrons of Diplomacy Co-Chairs Carlyle Eubank and Nina Ansary, as well as participants in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms Educational Roundtable. Guests enjoyed the newly renovated Secretaries of State Terrace, made possible by the Fund for the Endowment of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms.

Under law, taxpayer funds cannot be used to maintain the 42 Diplomatic Reception Rooms or their collection of more than 5,000 historic decorative and fine art objects. The rooms, located on the top two floors of Main State, were the setting for more than 500 events in 2011, many of them diplomatic.

Among the 2011 gifts celebrated at the reception were the funds donated by Muslim Lakhani and family, which supported the acquisition of a hand-crafted federal style mahogany dining table and a contemporary hand-loomed Egyptian Oushak for the Secretary of State's Conference Room. The table has satinwood banding and rests on four urn-shaped pedestal columns with hand-carved, reeded saber legs, acanthus leaves and brass-paw casters feet.

Also in 2011:

- Mrs. Eugene B. Casey donated panels of French scenic wallpaper named *Les Paysages de Télèmaque dans L'île de Calypso* (Dufour Manufactory, c. 1815–1820) along with funds to conserve and install the wallpaper panels in the Henry Clay Dining Room in August 2012. Identical wallpaper can also be found in The Hermitage, home of Andrew Jackson.

- Paul D. Cronin donated a collection of Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) blue-and-white porcelain in honor of Elizabeth Ann Swift, his wife and a Foreign Service officer (1940–2012).

- The National Trust for the Humanities donated books to U.S. embassies and consulates throughout the world. In accepting the books for the Department, Under Secretary

Patrick Kennedy thanked the trust's chairman, Robert Perry, and said that the books will allow the embassies "to share the story of American independence." The gift was made in recognition of Albert H. Small, whose Declaration of Independence Collection is featured in the book, and who has been instrumental in the formation and preservation of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms.

- Frank L. Hohmann III gave a bronze sculpture of an eagle modeled by Harriet Whitney Frishmuth in 1910. It was placed beneath the seventh-floor portrait of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, mirroring the eagle pin she wears in the painting.

- Robert Kogod Goldman gave several items of Chinese export porcelain, including a pair of famille rose plates (c. 1780), a Chinese export porcelain teacup with the arms of New York State (c. 1790), a Chinese export porcelain cream pitcher and spoon tray (c. 1785–1795) and a Chinese export porcelain teapot (c. 1795–1810), the latter two both made for the American market. The teapot's elegant spout counterbalances the intertwining strap handle and is surmounted by a gilt berry "knop," a small decorative knob. Goldman also gave a 9-foot by 12-foot hand-woven modern Turkish rug.

- Funds donated by Patricia Anne Morton were applied to a 25" x 19" portrait of Ruth Bryan Owen done by Samuel J. Woolf in 1935. America's first woman diplomat, Owen was sent to Denmark as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in 1933.

- Funds donated by Dr. and Mrs. James W. Frank were applied to a pair of Chippendale-style mahogany sofas. Made in the late 20th century, the sofas were reproduced from an original Chippendale sofa illustrated in "American Collections at the Metropolitan Museum," published in 1963. ■



Right: Paul Cronin stands behind some of the Ming Period blue and white porcelain (circa 1500-1600) he donated in honor of his late wife Elizabeth "Ann" Swift, who collected the pieces on Foreign Service assignments in Southeast Asia. *Photo by Bill Palmer*
Below: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton addresses the donors and other guests in the Benjamin Franklin Room. *Photo by Chris Stump*



PD Officers Learn Through Yearlong Fellowship

By Nick Snyder, political section chief, U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

The Kathryn W. Davis Public Diplomacy Fellowship is the only yearlong fellowship dedicated to midlevel public diplomacy (PD) officers that annually allows them to spend a year studying their craft, in the same manner as their colleagues study politics or management at top-flight universities or garner multidisciplinary skills at the nation's war colleges.

The fellowship, offered by the Council of American Ambassadors (CAA) through the Department, gives officers time to understand what public diplomacy involves, within the Department and beyond, via activities guided by seasoned PD pros. A little-known gem of long-term training, the fellowship is a boon for rising PD officers struggling to match their field work with Washington's needs.

Although it's advertised in Department Notices and by cable, I would never have heard of the fellowship but for an appendage to a long email I received from my career development officer. At the U.S. Embassy in Beijing where I was at the time assistant information officer, no one I knew was aware of it.

I found the fellowship's components so compelling, and the feedback I received from prior fellows on their experiences so enthusiastic, that I applied right away. I obtained recommendation letters rapidly via emails, and submitted them with my transcript and an essay explaining what I hoped to gain. I was selected for the 2011–2012 season from a worldwide pool of PD applicants.

The program combines on-the-job training with academic study and mentoring by former ambassadors, PD officers and communications executives. It includes a stipend, the support of CAA's dedicated staff and invitations to a variety of events. According to CAA, the fellowship enhances "the conduct and practice of U.S. public diplomacy through the provision of specialized training and mentoring opportunities for mid-career officers."

The fellowship's activities are spread out over the year and include participation in an intensive two-week Summer Institute at the University of Southern California's (USC) Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School of Communications (one of the few universities where public diplomacy is studied as an academic discipline). Throughout the rest of the year, the CAA, Public Diplomacy Council and Washington's Meridian International Center lead regular mentoring sessions. At the program's end, fellows prepare an article for the CAA's publication, *The Ambassadors Review*, which allows for extensive networking throughout the Department and Washington.

The fellowship is named for Kathryn W. Davis, who worked with Ambassador Bruce Gelb, a CAA member and former director of the U.S. Information Agency. Davis, a lifelong philanthropist who turned 100 in 2007, was the wife of the late Ambassador Shelby Cullom. She began funding the fellowship in 2008 because she said she believes "we must prepare for peace as energetically as countries prepare for war. We must use our communication skills and creative solutions to resolve conflicts."

The fellowship's programs, which are built around the recipient's schedule, fit perfectly with my 44 weeks of FSI language training, which ends this summer. I knew I could use the time I didn't spend studying to pursue meetings and mentorships in California and around Washington.

The highlight thus far was my time at the Summer Institute, where I was the only American diplomat among a group of 17 diplomats and graduate students from around the world. I broadened my perspective by considering public diplomacy as used by corporations, people, and international and regional organizations, while building relationships with foreign diplomats.

Being mentored by Public Diplomacy Council members and their private sector friends was also exciting. That, and the background interviews I conducted for my article, allowed me to explore PD through meetings with senior U.S. government PD officers, former ambassadors, corporate practitioners and top thinkers. I learned the roles of the Department units involved in PD, and learned about the latest trends and best PD practices.

My experience is similar to that of previous fellows, who all speak of being able to think big and expand relationships. The first recipient, for 2008–2009, was Joseph Mellott, now deputy director for PD in the Africa Bureau. He highlighted the mentorship experiences, saying "they were an opportunity to regularly think about what I was doing and why, to focus on a topic of interest and talk to people with lots of experience within each of the topics I had chosen. The fellowship came at the perfect time in my career and gave me a new way to frame my understanding."

Jinnie J. Lee was the 2009–2010 fellow. Now at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School studying for a midcareer master's degree, Lee highlighted the Summer Institute at USC, saying its academic setting and the interaction with other PD professionals were "beneficial in assessing my previous PD work and thinking about the future of PD." Lee started the fellowship after her PD tour at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, and after the fellowship went on a long TDY assignment to Afghanistan to work on strategic communication issues. CAA and the Public Diplomacy Council staff connected her to PD professionals inside and outside government working on Afghanistan.

Michelle A. Lee, a special assistant in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, was the 2010–2011 Davis Fellow. She said, "The fellowship contributed greatly to expanding and building my professional network, and gave me exposure to facets of PD work that I never even knew existed." She too lauded the mentoring, saying it "enhanced my understanding of the history, context and vision of PD's role in foreign policy."

For myself, the fellowship has filled a void in contextual understanding and proactive thinking for PD officers. Public diplomacy is a discipline that's becoming better known and more important, in the U.S. government and beyond.

Getting America's public outreach right through the wide array of tools now available has never been more necessary. The Davis Fellowship allows recipients to start thinking about how best to do that early in their careers. As I head to my new posting in Vietnam, I know I'll use the knowledge I've gained to be a more effective Foreign Service officer in all aspects of public diplomacy.

The program has worked so well that the Council of the American Ambassadors has added a second fellowship for the 2012–2013 year. The two new fellows are Glen S. Davis from the Afghanistan PD desk and Addie Schroeder, a line officer in the Executive Secretariat. ■



The author, left, meets with Addie Schroeder, the 2012–2013 Fellow, and Joe Mellott, the 2008–2009 Fellow. Photo by Angela Norcross

Regional Support

Center aids EUR posts' management

By Neill G. Krost, regional management officer,
Frankfurt Regional Support Center

In an effort to strengthen management support to its posts, the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR) operates the Frankfurt Regional Support Center (RSC), which is unique in its structure. Besides an executive office and training division, it has an organization that largely replicates a typical embassy management section, with offices for human resources, financial management, general services and information management.

The RSC aims to promote innovation, best practices, efficiency and professional development via training, post assistance visits, consulta-

tions and mentoring, regional functional support, leadership development and innovative program implementation—all at no cost to posts.

Launched in 1992 at the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, Germany, as the New Post Support Unit (NPSU), the RSC supported the 14 posts created in the wake of the Soviet Union's breakup, providing them with technical and managerial support. In 1998, the newly named RSC moved to Frankfurt, where it now supports the entire European region and some human resources activities in other bureaus.

RSC Director Mike Tulley, deputy executive director in EUR's Executive Office, originally headed NPSU's Human Resources (HR) unit in the early 1990s. He said he sees his return to the RSC as a way to translate Department initiatives into workable models in the field.

"It's easy to talk about regionalization or continuous improvement, but we have to get from the theoretical to the practical," he said. "Overseas employees are sometimes justifiably suspicious of big ideas that come out of headquarters, so RSC must promote innovations that were created in the field while still marketing and supporting the many good ideas that come out of Washington."

The RSC has a staff of fewer than 30 direct-hire and Locally Employed Staff (LES) professionals who have expertise in training and management functions.

"Everyone who visits our office in Frankfurt says, 'I thought you guys were much larger,'" said RSC Deputy Director Kent Stiegler. "This says a lot about the impact we are having."

The RSC helps set the bureau's overseas management priorities



RSC staff gather prior to a weekly staff meeting.
Photos by Rainer Arnold

and works closely with other Department elements to advance initiatives. For example, it partnered with the Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing and Innovation to implement and refine the Collaborative Management Initiative (CMI), which is now the Department's overseas quality management system.

An overview of CMI is now included in all of the center's General Services Office (GSO) courses. RSC staffers improve and standardize regional GSO elements and often visit posts to review procedures and operations.



"You have to sit down and talk to people, and through conversation you learn where the problem areas lie," said LES General Services Specialist Ken Meade.

The RSC's GSO section also spearheads regional contracting efforts and facilitates post-to-post partnerships in areas such as regional warehousing.

The emphasis on new ideas makes the center a great place to work, said LES General Services Specialist Peter Bruzzese. "We get to try new things and run with new ideas.... Some work out, some don't, but we are encouraged to try."

Bruzzese was instrumental in launching the RSC's regional expendable supply contract, recently named one of the Top Eight Global Management Priorities by the Regional Initiatives Council in Washington, D.C.

The RSC's Training Division works with the Foreign Service Institute to offer courses for LE Staff on management subfunctions and other topics. "Our trainers can both develop curriculum and deliver classroom instruction," said Regional Management Officer Maura Pellet. RSC Trainer Dr. Warna Gilles added that the division can also develop or tailor courses to address specific post issues—a more focused way of assisting posts.

Besides offering at-post training, RSC hosts frequent courses, workshops and conferences in Frankfurt each year.

The RSC's Human Resources unit's six staffers provide policy guidance, training and operational advice on a range of HR issues such as the regional position evaluation initiative, which centrally manages position description grading. Ronnie McCall directs the initiative and has seen it triple in size to serve more than 70 posts in the past two years.

Above: From left, Regional CAJE Specialist John Saip, Regional Human Resource Officer Ronnie McCall and LE Human Resource Specialist Patricia Wittmann discuss a position-description issue. **Right:** LE Education Specialist Karin Wiedemann and the author meet in the RSC hallway after launch of the LE Leadership Seminar.



the-trainer" approach and develops experts on CMD worldwide.

EUR values using Locally Employed Staff to improve management operations, so 10 years ago the RSC created the LES Executive Corps. Members co-teach select courses, travel on post assistance visits, mentor new employees and help out in other ways based on their expertise. According to Jim Melville, director of the EUR executive office, "The LE Staff in our region are a treasure chest of knowledge and expertise. The Exec Corps provides a way to tap into that knowledge and let these gems shine . . . and the RSC has enabled this to happen."

EUR posts needing RSC services can contact the RSC via its SharePoint site. ■

"We cut a pretty broad swath, not just across EUR, but within the bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs as well," he said.

The HR unit also supports EUR's merit-based compensation initiative. Regional HR Officer Carol Jones said this pay-for-performance program is the best alternative to grade- and step-based pay increases. "[The U.S. Embassy in London] has been operating under a merit performance system for more than 15 years, and the employees love it," she said. "We're hoping to duplicate that success Department-wide."

The RSC Financial Management Office (FMO) provides oversight and technical expertise regarding the Web-based Resource Allocation and Budget Integration Tool (WebRABIT), a EUR innovation now managed by the Bureau of Resource Management. WebRABIT is the Department's premier budget-formulation tool for program, public diplomacy, consular and building budgets, and is used by 98 percent of posts worldwide. RSC Management Officer Michael Chung said the FMO continues to search out areas for improvement with regional impact.

RSC's Information Technology team is the force behind the worldwide rollout of the Contact Management Database (CMD), a EUR initiative that has become the Department standard for managing professional contacts at nearly 200 posts.

"A post can use CMD for all its representational events, such as making invitation lists, mass emails and seating charts for big events," explained LE Staff IT Specialist Silvia Seiler.

Information Management Specialist Brian Hering, the CMD program manager, said the IT team uses a "train-

Playground Opens at Freetown NEC

The U.S. Embassy in Freetown recently added a playground to its new embassy compound, which opened in 2006. Several embassy families live in houses adjacent to the compound. The city lacks playgrounds, parks, picnic areas or public venues suitable for a social gathering.

The post's play area, near the embassy tennis court, includes a social gathering spot. The playground committee, made up of embassy community members Karen Mera, Tom Poeschl, Cora Nally (the ambassador's representative to the school board), Pete Lehmkuhl and Lisa Baker, said it took close to a year to get the play equipment. Once it arrived, they included a cabana as a shaded center for social activities. After ground-breaking, it took about three months and five truckloads of sand to get the play area ready. Now, a patio next to the cabana is planned, with a built-in barbecue grill and space for tables.

Coast Guard Cadets Learn from DOS Officials

As part of a Passover event on campus, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues Doug Davidson travelled to New London, Conn., to speak with U.S. Coast Guard Academy cadets about legal and ethical issues stemming from the World War II era.

Earlier, cadets met with a director from the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Kay Mayfield, to learn more about drug- and migrant-interdiction and the dovetailing of Coast Guard and Department of State missions in the Caribbean. They also chatted online with retired Coast Guard member John Milkiewicz, now the Bureau of Diplomatic Security liaison to the Special Operations Command.

To learn more about Russia, cadets in the academy's Russia course participated in digital videoconferences with U.S. Consulate General in Yekaterinburg Consul General Mike Reinert and Chris Panico, one of just five American diplomats remaining in Belarus since the 2008 expulsion of 85 percent of the U.S. staff.



Purple Heart Recipient Honored in Ankara

The U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, in April awarded Information Management Specialist Stephen Adams, who joined the State Department in 2010, a Meritorious Honor Award for outstanding service during his first tour.

Adams, a 24-year military veteran (16 active duty), served in four branches of the Armed Forces—Marine Corps, Army, Navy (Reserve) and Air Force (Reserve), and in both the first Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While serving in Iraq in January 2006 with the 101st Airborne Division, his vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device, and he was later medically retired for his injuries. In January, he received a Purple Heart for those wounds.

Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, left, meets with Purple Heart winner Steven Adams and Brigadier General James Daniel, Embassy Ankara's senior Defense official/Defense attaché.

Photo by Atilla Tunalı



Participating in the Walk to Work event were sign-holders Katherine Hadda, left, and Carol Rodley. David Newell is at far right.
Photo by Sarah Neely

Walk and Bike to Work Days Held

Staff and students at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) participated in National Walk to Work Day in April, while Department employees in the Washington, D.C., area a month later celebrated Bike to Work Day.

The walk was the inaugural event of the FSI Wellness Committee, which plans other activities throughout the year promoting healthy eating, exercise and stress management. School of Professional and Area Studies (SPAS) Associate Dean Katherine Hadda and Leadership and Management School Dean Carol Rodley carried the Walk to Work banner. SPAS Dean David Newell and other FSI staff members participated.

The May bicycling outing was the Department's fourth annual celebration of Bike to Work Day, in which an estimated 12,000 people rode bikes to their jobs in the District. Those arriving at Main State were given refreshments (provided by I.L. Creations, the cafeteria operator) and allowed to use the showers and lockers in the Foreign Affairs Recreation Association gym free of charge. At noon, Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy, the Department's senior sustainability officer, spoke to a group of about 30 cyclists as they prepared for a 45-minute ride on a 4.6-mile circuit of the National Mall.

Cultural Series Features Recitals, Reading

The Foreign Affairs Recreation Association and State of the Arts Cultural Series recently featured a play reading and musical recitals by Department personnel.

In March and May, the dramatic reading of the play "Margherita," by Anthony E. Gallo, intrigued Department audiences. "Margherita" is a historically based two-act drama about love and hatred between Margherita Sarfatti and Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, as they meet after a three-year separation. Gallo has written 11 published and produced works.

Classical pianist and Department employee Wayne Dorsey presented a recital in April. Long a supporter of the State of the Arts se-

ries, Dorsey sensitively played works by Alan Hovhaness and Franz Liszt to resounding applause from the audience, which included many of his colleagues and friends.

In May, the Jazz Collective performed Duke Ellington's "Satin Doll," J.J. Johnson's "Lament" and "Tangerine" (music by Victor Schertzinger and lyrics by Johnny Mercer). The ensemble consists of Department personnel T. Michael Peay, piano/director; John L. Nave, trombone; Sharon C. Cooke, vocals; Tom Pitta, bass violin; and James "Curly" Robinson, congas and percussion. A relaxed and invigorated audience danced its way out of the Dean Acheson Auditorium.

-John Bentel

Upcoming Event

8/15—International Young Artist Piano Competition Winner



Fallen Diplomats Honored in Tripoli

Reinstituting a tradition dating to the 1950s, the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, Libya, commemorated Memorial Day 2012 at the American Cemetery in Tripoli. The cemetery, recently restored by the Libyan government, is one of the newest additions to the Secretary of State's Register of Culturally Significant Property. It contains the graves of five unknown sailors from the U.S.S. Intrepid, killed in action during the 1804 Barbary Wars, the first U.S. overseas conflict, and the graves of 52 American and European diplomats who were posted in Libya during the 19th century.

At the cemetery are, from right, Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, Defense Attaché LTC Brian Linvill and Deputy Chief of Mission Joan Polaschik.

Volunteers Build Habitat Houses in China

On a weekend in mid-April, 12 people from the U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou, China, worked with Habitat for Humanity to help rebuild homes in a small rural village near the city of Conghua. The group, led by Consular Officer Tyler Rogstad, had received a J. Kirby Simon Trust grant to help underwrite the effort.

The trust, which was established by the family of J. Kirby Simon, a Foreign Service officer who died in 1995 while serving in Taiwan, has been involved in many community service projects.

Volunteers, who each contributed \$100, came by bus to the village of Shuiweidong, nestled in a bamboo forest along a river, then split into two groups and formed a human chain to pass bricks to the construction sites, where local residents mixed mortar and laid the walls. After spending the night, the volunteers were out again the next day, carrying bricks, pushing wheelbarrows of bricks and reclaiming improperly set bricks for future use.

By the weekend's end, they had moved approximately 4,000 bricks, and spread mortar and laid bricks under the tutelage of amused local masons.

Embassy Nurses Aid Infant During Flight

Two nurses from the U.S. Embassy in Lomé, Togo, Helena Asiedu-Ofei and Josephine Debi Djahlin, were on an Ethiopian Air flight from Bangkok to Addis Ababa when a doctor's assistance was requested.

None responded, so Debi Djahlin asked her coworker to "get up and go, and off we went to the back of the business class area."

They found a woman cuddling an 11-month-old girl in the middle of an asthma attack and without medication. They asked the cabin crew for the emergency medical box, but found it had no supplies appropriate for children, so they fashioned a pediatric asthma inhaler by making a hole in the bottom of a cup and using the kit's asthma inhaler to treat the baby. The cup covered the infant's nostrils and mouth so she could inhale the medication.

The child's attack subsided, and after the plane landed in Addis the cabin crew asked the nurses' advice on upgrading the in-flight medical emergency kit. The nurses recommended items for pediatric emergencies.

Employee Wins Award for Lengthy Commute

Brenda Wells, of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's (DS) Assignment Office, commutes to Washington, D.C., from Baltimore each workday, leaving home by 4 a.m. to drive 45 minutes to BWI Airport to catch a commuter train to Union Station, where she transfers to the Metro subway. She then takes two subway trains to reach the Foggy Bottom stop, and catches a bus to her office on Virginia Avenue, arriving around 7 a.m. She does the same in reverse each evening, taking care to make every connection, lest she arrive home an hour later than normal.

For her commute's complexity, distance and use of public transit, Wells has been named the winner of the first Commuter Idle contest held by local radio station WTOP, which specializes in commuter traffic information. She'll receive a \$1,000 gas card and a limo ride.

Wells "is undoubtedly one of DS' most dedicated employees," said her boss, Senior DS Assignments Officer Laurie Darlow.

Consulate Marks Friendship With Bermuda

In March, the U.S. Consulate General in Hamilton celebrated the close U.S.-Bermuda relationship with an exhibit of historical photographs and a televised panel discussion co-hosted by Consul General Grace Shelton and Bermuda Premier Paula Cox that examined the ties binding the two nations, U.S.-Bermuda cooperation and the history of the relationship.

The exhibit received extensive positive media coverage and was attended by Premier Cox, three former premiers and several government ministers. It consisted of 26 photos of U.S. presidents in Bermuda, and Bermudian premiers visiting the White House. The chronology began with President Harry Truman's 1946 vacation cruise to the island and ended with former President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's 2009 visit. The photos reflect Bermuda's importance as a venue for international events and portray the two nations' leaders in more personal moments: fishing, golfing, flying kites and attending church.

Consul General Shelton said she has regularly seen evidence of the close relationship and wanted to express that friendship in people-to-people terms. The consulate general partnered with the Masterworks Museum of Bermuda Art to display the photographs.



Admiring the exhibit are from left former Premier Sir John Swan, U.S. Consul General Grace Shelton and Premier Paula Cox.

Photo by Ashley Lusher

Foreign Service Institute Updates on the Web

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- Training Toolkits: Road maps to help you effectively plan your training for the year or beyond
- About FSI: Get a snapshot view of FSI's history and enrollment statistics
- Links to training resources: View information on specific countries, language learning and testing, and myriad helpful reference materials

For more information on all of our distance learning opportunities, visit the FSI website at fsi.state.gov and click on "Distance Learning."

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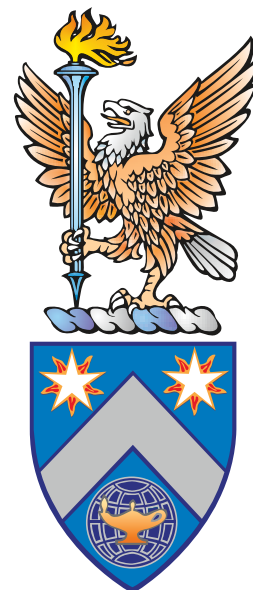
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- Reviewing and printing your Student Transcript
- Tracking the status of your training request
- Canceling an already-scheduled FSI course
- Requesting changes or canceling an External Training registration
- Creating and submitting your Individual Development Plan/Work and Development Plan for Locally Employed Staff

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On the Run

Triathlete takes it one race at a time

By Joseph S. Hulings III

Although I attended the University of South Carolina on a swimming scholarship and ran to keep in shape, I hadn't been a competitive runner or swimmer since college. In fact, I did not run a triathlon until after retirement.

Now, I have been ranked in three years (2007, 2009 and 2011) as the top triathlete in my age group (65–70 or 70–74 years) for the entire state by the Virginia Triathlon Series. I was ranked second in 2008 and 2010.

All it took to get me to the starting line was a phone call. The call wasn't to me but to my wife, Harriet. Our older son, Sims, had called and mentioned volunteering during the Mrs. T's Chicago Triathlon. Harriet had only heard of the Ironman triathlon, not shorter international and sprint triathlons. A few days later, she received an email from one of the directors of the Reston (Va.) Triathlon, an international-distance race, urging recipients to sign up for the September race; though months away, its roster was filling rapidly.

Having learned more about triathlons from Sims, who regularly biked and ran in Chicago, she suggested Sims and I challenge each other to compete in Reston.

To get rolling, I visited the local bike shop and was fitted for a shiny blue Trek and a helmet. My initial rides were short and wobbly, but I gradually gained confidence and ventured out of our subdivision. Meanwhile, Sims found a gym with a rooftop swimming pool and began brushing up on his almost-forgotten crawl stroke. He also talked with a Chicago-area friend who had participated in a few "tris," and received some pointers.

One weekend, Sims called to suggest that he and I might test the waters with an early summer sprint triathlon in Palo, Iowa, as practice for the longer Reston Triathlon. Sims' friend Bill, now in training too, said he'd join us at Palo, a nice flat locale, and therefore an easy first attempt, or so we thought.

When I registered, I learned Palo was in the "alpine region" of Iowa, but we forged ahead anyway. Harriet and I flew into Chicago, and I rented a road bike and a van. We piled three bikes, three triathletes and Harriet into the van and drove to Palo, where we picked up our race packets, located the area where bikes would be parked, and drove the run and bike courses. Then we went looking for snacks, but found only cereal bars and boxed drinks. We have since learned to pack breakfast goodie bags as motel restaurants never open in time to feed triathletes.

At the race site Sunday morning, we joined hundreds of other athletes who'd be sent off in waves (heats) according to age. I was in the next-to-last wave, 15 minutes behind the younger Sims and Bill. Harriett, now cheerleader in chief, followed us along the course. All of three of us finished. I was happy just to have completed the course and was ready for Reston.

As an international distance race, the Reston Triathlon includes a 1-mile swim, 22.3-mile bike ride and a 6.2-mile (10-kilometer) run. When the list of participants appeared on the race

website, we were delighted to discover that two friends from our tour at the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, Tony Paniza and Roger Lowen, were also regular Reston participants. On

the early September morning of that initial Reston Triathlon, I was at the top of the 55–59 age group. When you're young, being the oldest in an age group is an advantage, but, believe me, that's not true in the case of "mature" athletes. The lake swim was no problem. The two loops of the bike route were not too bad either, but the run sure seemed longer and harder than any of my practice runs. There were no mile markers, so it was only when I reached the turnaround point of the out and back course that I realized I had half the distance left to complete. I guess what kept me going was seeing many others still on the outbound leg. I wasn't last! In fact, when the medals were given out, I learned I had placed second in my age group. Within 10 minutes of finishing, my legs felt like they could run again and I was breathing normally. I knew then that I'd be signing up for additional triathlons the next summer. I was hooked!

Over the past 10 years, the Reston Triathlon has become a family tradition, with Sims flying in from Chicago annually and Harriet volunteering on the run portion. For the past five years, I have typically competed in two triathlons each month during the season. Most have been within 100 miles of our home, but I've also gone to West Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia to compete.

Recently, I've competed in triathlons that involved swimming in pools, not lakes, rivers or the Atlantic. Pool swims are good for novice triathletes who are not strong swimmers; having another triathlete swim right over you in an open-water swim is not a confidence builder.

I train year round with little formal coaching, and enjoy running road races as they're good training. For nine months a year, I normally enter at least one foot race of 5 kilometers or more each month. There are road races in the Washington, D.C., area practically every weekend, with entry fees typically benefiting charities. During the three months of winter, I churned the pool with the Fairfax Masters, a swim club that includes older swimmers.

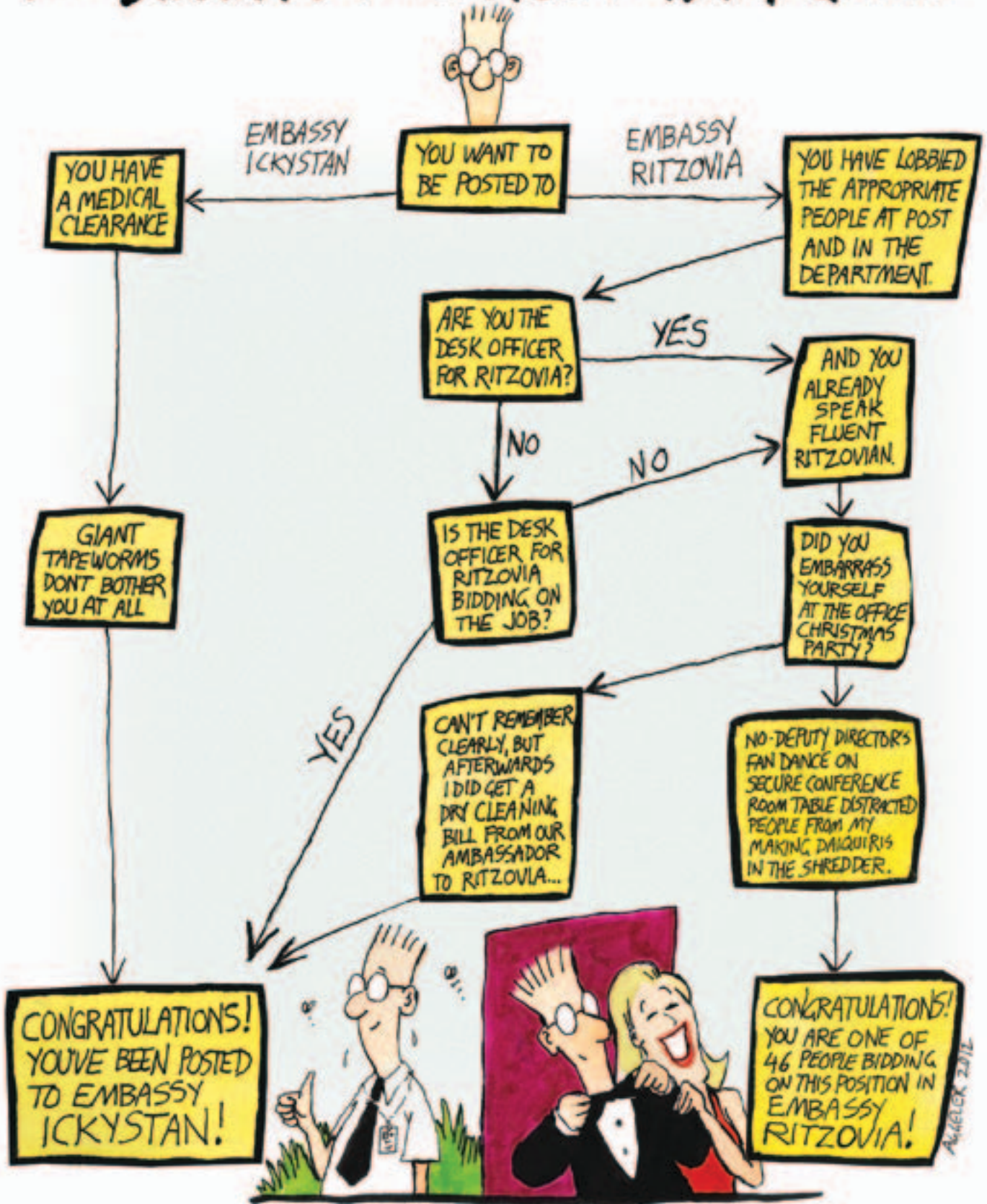
Harriet and I have since moved to Tennessee, and I'm hoping I'll be equally fortunate in finding competition opportunities. On April 15, I won in the 70–74 age group of the triathlon called the Trideltathon at the University of Tennessee.

With all this training, and especially running, one thing still perplexes me: I can't say whether I have improved significantly compared to my first triathlon in Iowa. Maybe I've simply outlived the competition. ■



The author exits the pool-swim portion of the Trideltathon at the University of Tennessee.
Photo by Harriet Hulings

THE BIDDING PROCESS: A STEP BY STEP GUIDE



Appointments

Frederick D. Barton

Assistant Secretary for
Conflict and Stabilization
Operations



David J. Lane

U.S. Representative to
the U.N. Agencies for
Food and Agriculture



Anne Claire Richard

Assistant Secretary for
Population, Refugees
and Migration



Phyllis Marie Powers

U.S. Ambassador to the
Republic of Nicaragua



Adam E. Namm

U.S. Ambassador to the
Republic of Ecuador



Larry Leon Palmer

U.S. Ambassador to
Barbados and the
Eastern Caribbean



Frederick D. Barton of Maine is the new Assistant Secretary for Conflict and Stabilization Operations and Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. Previously, he was senior advisor to the Secretary on Conflict and Stabilization. He has worked to improve the U.S. and international response to conflict in more than 30 of the world's most unstable places. He led independent reviews of Iraq reconstruction; developed civilian strategies for Iraq, Sudan and Sri Lanka; and initiated new approaches to conflict reduction in Pakistan and Nigeria.

David J. Lane of Florida, with the rank of Ambassador, is the new U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. Previously, he served in the White House as assistant to the President and counselor to the chief of staff. He has also served as president and CEO of the ONE Campaign, director of Foundation Advocacy and the East Coast Office of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and chief of staff of the Department of Commerce.

Adam E. Namm of New York, SFS, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador. Previously, he was director of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. His postings include Islamabad, Bogotá, Dhahran and Santo Domingo, as well as various domestic assignments. He is married and has a daughter.

Larry Leon Palmer of Georgia, SFS, is the new U.S. Ambassador to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. He was ambassador to Honduras and president and CEO of the Inter-American Foundation, which fosters economic development in Latin America. Other postings include Uruguay, Paraguay, South Korea, Sierra Leone and the Dominican Republic. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Liberia.

Mark A. Pekala of Maryland, SFS, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia. Previously, he was director of the Entry-Level Division in the Bureau of Human Resources. He was deputy chief of mission in Paris and deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Other postings include Tallinn, the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels and Warsaw. He is married and has two daughters.

Phyllis Marie Powers of Virginia, SFS, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua. Previously, she was ambassador to Panama. Before that, she was director of the Office of Provincial Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. She was deputy chief of mission in Peru and also served in Colombia, Jordan, Russia and Poland.

Anne Claire Richard of New York is the new Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration. Previously, she was vice president of government relations and advocacy for the International Rescue Committee. She has been director of the Secretary of State's Office of Resources, Plans and Policy and deputy chief financial officer of the Peace Corps. She is married and has two children.

Jacob Walles of Delaware, SFS, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Tunisian Republic. Previously, he was deputy assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs. He has served in Jerusalem twice, as consul general/chief of mission and deputy principal officer. He was deputy chief of mission in Athens and also served in Tel Aviv and Amsterdam.




Visit state.gov/statemag to watch a video message from featured ambassadors.

Mark A. Pekala
U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia



Jacob Walles
U.S. Ambassador to the Tunisian Republic



Retirements

Foreign Service

Adamo, Anna Maria F.
Adams, Richard Hugh
Bitters, Lynn K.
Boera, Valerie E.
Borisch, Thomas C.
Borst, Mary Anne
Brocking, M. Elisabeth
Carrig, Stephen J.
Cesena, Michael Allen
Crews, Paul M.
Culp Jr., Theodore F.
Davis, Karen S.
Delaney, Michael John
Drew, Peter W.
Donnelly, Barbara W.
Drabin, Michael S.
Farquhar Jr., Robert N.

Feltman, Jeffrey David
Ferenc, Lynn M.
Gelner, Kathryn L.S.
Greene, Jocelyn A.
Hall, Jan Erik
Hanni, Robert W.
Heinrich, Eric G.
Henke, Raymond Carl
Hickman, Leslie R.
Hinckley, Damien D.
Howard, Linda Susan
Jackson, Linda L.
Jennison, Randal F.
Kalin, Carol Renee
Kraus, Martin Fortune
LeBaron, Richard B.
Majewski, Brian R.

Marple, Lee R.
McGowen, Katherine M.
Meehan, Daniel Francis
Meyer, Harry B.
Molberg, Peter J.
Moran, Brian R.
Olesen, Jeffrey R.
Polidoro, Evelyn Rose
Quinzio, Thomas J.
Sanders, Robin Renee
Solomon, Caryn Marie
Stewart, Nan E.
Vajay, Marcia W.
Warren, James
Washburn, Lisa Louise
Williamson, June T.
Williamson, Terrence K.

Civil Service

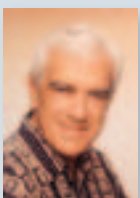
Andersen-Petrie, Loraly
Bleckley, Thomas E.
Blume, Lawrence James
Bouquet, Marcel
Brown, Hazel Mae
Bruce, Gelma Anna
Chan, Stephen K.
Comfort, Mary Wild Ennis
Conway, Giselle L.
Denby, Fred L.
Foster, Judith Ann
Flournoy, Arthur W.
Gallogy, Stephen J.
Goldman, Howard S.
Gross, Robert Leo
Karim, Nazeema

Lucas, Irene Patricia
Matchey, Paul Michael
Medlock, Stephen
Murphy, Maureen B.
Neal, Janice Marie
O'Rea, Eric V.
Pavlov, Vladimir Ivan
Ross, Jerry W.
Rudolph, Deborah A.
Sanvido, Linda D.
Shacklock, Barbara L.
Sunshine, Michael David
Thomas, Margaret Ann
Tyler, Valorie P.
Wills, Regina M.

Obituaries



William R. Belcher, 76, a retired Civil Service employee, died April 10 in Falls Church, Va. He served in the Marine Corps for 24 years, including two tours in Vietnam, before joining the Department's Office of Inspector General. As lead security inspector, he visited 137 countries. He retired in 2010. He contributed to improving the lives of impoverished people he saw as he traveled and was particularly interested in India and Burma.



Edward F. Biedryzcki, 84, a retired Foreign Service communications specialist, died April 29 in Florida from cancer. He served in the Army Air Force. He joined the Department in 1976, traveled to Europe and the Middle East (including Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Italy, Germany and Iran) and helped modernize long-range and domestic communications. After retiring to Florida in 1990, he enjoyed family, the beach, current events and fixing things.



William B. Buffum, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died April 13 of natural causes in Kamuela, Hawaii. He served in the Army during World War II before joining the Foreign Service in 1949. He was ambassador to Lebanon, where he survived three assassination attempts, and also served in Stuttgart and Bonn. He was on a shuttle diplomacy team that helped shape a Middle East peace framework in 1967 and later served as undersecretary-general of the U.N. for political and General Assembly affairs. He retired in 1987.



David H. Cohn, 88, a retired Foreign Service officer, died March 1 in Laguna Hills, Calif. He served with the Army in India during World War II, worked for the Department of Commerce and joined the Foreign Service in 1956. His postings, as an economics officer, included Istanbul, Paris, Karachi, Kabul and Jakarta. He retired in 1980 and was active in his church in New York City before moving to California.



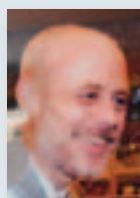
John Miller "Jack" Cooper, 93, a retired Foreign Service officer, died April 5 at his home in Washington, D.C. He served in the Merchant Marine during World War II and worked for the U.N. before joining the Foreign Service. His postings included Paris, The Hague, Rome, Brussels, London, Barranquilla, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Kingston and Seoul. After retiring, he continued working as a consultant at various Latin American posts. He was an avid reader, a collector of art and antiques, and known for his garden.



Robert Davis, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died March 3. He lived in Wooster, Ohio, where his last assignment had been as a diplomat in residence at the College of Wooster. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1947. His postings included Germany, South Africa, Israel, Moscow, Bonn, Tegucigalpa and West Berlin. After retiring in 1979, he enjoyed astronomy, building telescopes, bird-watching, translating the Dead Sea Scrolls, reading, poetry, philosophy and international politics.



Frank J. Devine, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 2 in Delray Beach, Fla. He served in the Army before joining the Foreign Service. During his 32-year career, he was posted to Colombia, Uruguay, Chile, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Venezuela and El Salvador, where he was ambassador. After retiring, he was executive director of the Brazilian-American Chamber of Commerce in New York City and diplomat in residence at Palm Beach Atlantic College.



Darrell A. Jenks, 54, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 14 in Baltimore, Md., of cancer. He lived in Lewisburg, Pa. His postings included Belize, Japan, Taiwan, China, Venezuela, Brazil, Iraq and Yokohama, where he headed the Department's Japanese language school. He was fascinated by people and cultures and was a brilliant linguist, fluent in seven foreign languages. He was an avid amateur drummer who joined bands wherever he was posted.



Earl A. Kessler, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 24 in Fairfax, Va. He served in the Navy during World War II and joined the Department in 1946. He was posted, as an administrative/management specialist, to Shanghai, Athens, Madras, Mexico City, Baghdad, Kobe, Quito, Nairobi and Freetown. Following his retirement in 1986, he was a consultant with the Department and an avid traveler.



William J. Kushlis, 69, a retired Foreign Service officer, died April 6 in Houston, Texas, of complications from leukemia. He joined the Department in 1970 and served in Bern, Bangkok, Moscow, Athens, Helsinki, Manila, Estonia and Moldova. After retiring in 1997, he was a broker and investment counselor in Albuquerque, N.M. He loved to swim, ski, travel and attend the theater, opera and symphony. He was active in the Democratic Party. He and his wife Patricia were among the first Foreign Service tandem couples.



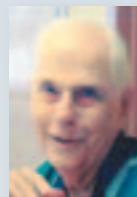
George H. Lane, 79, a retired Foreign Service officer, died May 17 of cancer at his home in New Port Richey, Fla. He joined the Foreign Service in 1964 and served in Austria, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru. After retiring in 1984, he was a self-employed tax practitioner and president of the Florida chapter of the National Association of Tax Practitioners.



Arthur Dee Neely, 76, a retired Foreign Service employee, died May 8 of natural causes in Ash Flat, Ark. He served 20 years in the Air Force before joining the Department. His postings included Madrid and Kinshasa. After retiring in 1987, he served as a jailer/dispatcher in the Sharp County Sheriff's Office for 13 years.



Doug Skelly, 61, husband of Foreign Service retiree Mary Ann Skelly, died Feb. 17 of metastasized prostate cancer. Doug, a retired CIA officer, and Mary Ann served together in Rome (twice), Frankfurt and New Delhi. He also served in the Army and Navy. They retired in 2003 to Las Vegas, Nev. He volunteered with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and sold real estate. They loved to explore the Southwest on his Honda motorcycle.



Fred T. Teal, 99, a retired Civil Service employee, died Jan. 11. He lived in Sandy Spring, Md. He began his federal career in 1933 and worked for several departments and agencies before joining the Voice of America and then the Department in 1945. He helped draft the original Fulbright legislation and spent his career working on educational and cultural exchange programs and agreements. He retired from the Office of the Legal Advisor in 1972.

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960. For specific questions on submitting an obituary to State Magazine, please contact Bill Palmer at palmerwr2@state.gov or (202) 203-7114.

John P. Blane III, 82, a retired Foreign Service officer, died April 13 at his home in Birmingham, Ala. He served in the Army before joining the Foreign Service. His postings included Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Cameroon, Kenya and—as ambassador—Chad and Rwanda. After retiring in 1988, he was a consultant to the president of Albania. He also served as a news editor and English teacher in Albania. In Birmingham, his interests included the local Committee on Foreign Relations and United Nations Association.

Richard W. Boehm, 85, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 28 of chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. He lived in Washington, D.C., served in the Army during World War II and joined the Foreign Service in 1955. He was ambassador to Cyprus and Oman. Other postings included Okinawa, Germany, Luxembourg, Turkey, Thailand and Nepal. He served on the U.S. delegation to the 39th U.N. General Assembly. After retiring in 1992, he enjoyed reading and travel.

Robert F. Fedel, 84, a retired Foreign Service specialist, died Dec. 20. He lived in Sarasota, Fla. He served in the Army, Air Force and National Guard. His postings included Africa, St. Lucia and Barbados, where he directed infrastructure work for the Department. He sang tenor in barbershop quartets and choruses for 50 years. He was an active civic volunteer and served on the Sarasota planning and sewer commissions.

Guy George Jernigan, a Civil Service employee, died April 22 of natural causes in Summerville, S.C. He served in the Air Force for 22 years before joining the Department as a passport specialist at the Charleston Passport Center. He loved his Triumph motorcycle, music and family.

Herbert Brooks Moller Jr., 81, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Feb. 26, 2011, at his home in Atlantic Beach, Fla. His postings included Manila, Frankfurt, Panama, reception centers in New York and San Francisco, Tijuana, Seoul, Auckland, Santo Domingo, Sinai Field Mission and Bridgetown. After retiring in 1983, he served as a WAE courier for several years.

Kevin Morgan, 49, a Foreign Service specialist, died Dec. 3 of brain cancer. He joined the Foreign Service in the 1990s. After six years with USAID's Regional General Inspector's Office in Budapest, Hungary, he transferred to the Department and was posted to Zimbabwe, Yemen, Belarus and Poland. He loved travel and adventure, and enjoyed camping in the West and skydiving.

Susan E. Shea, 66, a retired Foreign Service officer, died April 10 in Alexandria, Va. Her postings included Paris, where she was assigned to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and Baghdad, where she was executive assistant to Presidential Envoy Paul Bremer. She also served on the staff of five Secretaries of State. She was an avid gardener and keen observer of American politics.

End State



Bermuda

Gentle surf washes ashore on one of Bermuda's many pristine beaches. Although usually referred to as a singular entity, the British overseas territory actually consists of 181 islands, with a total area of 53.3 square km (20.6 square mi). The Main Island is a popular tourist destination and boasts one of the world's highest GDP per capita.

Photo by Mark Shaiken

PG.
32



Armenia

An elderly beekeeper helps a young boy mount a horse as they travel a rugged road along Armenia's high plateau on their way to sell honey near Georgia. The Armenian Highland is the central-most and highest of three land-locked plateaus that together form the northern sector of the Middle East.

Photo by Barbara Rich

PG. 16





Togo

A young goat walks along a dusty path in Palimé, Togo, a city in the Plateaux Region near the Ghanaian border. The city's main industries are centered on weaving and farming in the numerous surrounding cocoa plantations.

Photo by Hugo van Tilborg

PG. 31



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Malawi

A fisherman plies the waters of Lake Nyasa in a canoe crafted from a hollowed-out tree trunk. Also known as Lake Malawi, the massive body of water (the world's eighth largest lake) is located in the Great Rift Valley between Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Photo by Lars Plougmann

PG.
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