

STATE

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April 2012

MAGAZINE

Dedicated Advocates

Coordinators Stand Up
for Refugee Rights

Democracy Oversight

CSO Team Observes
Historic DRC Election

Protecting Our
Fragile Planet



Contents

April 2012 // Issue Number 566

09

State Department
Goes Green





04



16



22

Features

- 10 Power Gardens**
Posts create indigenous landscapes
- 12 Saving Resources**
Athens, Praia, Chennai go green
- 14 Water Scarcity**
Overseas facilities learn to conserve
- 15 Green Alliance**
U.S., Sweden promote clean energy
- 16 Seeking Refuge**
Far-flung 'refcoords' aid displaced people
- 19 Planning Ahead**
FSI seminar focuses on retirement
- 20 Observe & Report**
New CSO bureau monitors DRC elections
- 22 Kuala Lumpur**
Post of the Month builds ties with Malaysia
- 28 Through a Lens**
Retiring photographer shot history
- 30 Speaking Out**
Office promotes human rights worldwide
- 34 Emergency Planning**
SIMON ensures disaster preparedness

Columns

- 2 Post One**
- 3 Inbox**
- 4 In the News**
- 8 Diversity Notes**
- 35 Lying in State**
- 36 In Brief**
- 37 Retirements**
- 38 Education & Training**
- 39 Obituaries**
- 40 End State**

On the Cover

Our planet floats like a blue marble in space in composite images taken Jan. 4 (Western Hemisphere) and Jan. 23 (Eastern Hemisphere) by the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) aboard NASA's most recently launched Earth-observing satellite.



NASA Photo

Post One

BY ISAAC D. PACHECO

Lean & Green

You may not realize it, but the magazine you're holding is contributing to a Department-wide effort to conserve precious natural resources and reduce our environmental footprint. The paper in our printed issue is Sustainable Forestry Initiative certified and contains a minimum of 10 percent post-consumer material. All waste paper created in the magazine production process is recycled, and we use soy-based inks that are gentler on the environment than those made from harsh chemicals.

Still, we think we can do better.

As part of our continuing efforts to make *State Magazine* as environmentally friendly as possible, we're encouraging readers who have access to Internet-connected computers and mobile devices to consider discontinuing their paper subscriptions in favor of our digital publication available online at state.gov/statemag and in Apple's App Store. Once downloaded, our mobile apps provide readers with enhanced multimedia and interactive content not available in the printed version, and are available anywhere, even without Web connectivity.

For every printed copy we convert to digital, we eliminate an average of 440 pages of paper from our production cycle each year. If only 10 percent of our readers made the switch, we could reduce our annual paper consumption by more than 1.5 million pages. That's nearly 100,000 square feet (12,412 lbs.) of paper, enough to cover two regulation-size American football fields without the end zones!

When you factor in the toll of printing on natural resources such as water and trees, as well as the power required to run our presses and carbon emissions from vehicles that transport all those paper copies to subscribers, the environmental savings associated with reducing paper usage really start adding up.



Using calculations based on research by Environmental Defense and other members of the Paper Task Force, reducing our print distribution by merely 10 percent would save 120 trees, reduce harmful greenhouse emissions by 36,379 lbs., conserve 116,435 gallons of water and eliminate 13,239 lbs. of solid waste from our landfills.

Those are numbers we could be proud of, but they are only a drop in the ink barrel, so to speak. Achieving lasting environmental results will take dedicated efforts by all Department employees, like those highlighted in this month's Green Section (pg. 9.). As with all things worth doing, going green might require some sacrifices, and perhaps adjustments to the way we do business. As famed orator Kermit the Frog once opined, "It's not easy being green ... [but] it's beautiful, and I think it's what I want to be."

If you've already checked out our digital version and prefer to read the magazine that way, or if your paper issue is simply going to waste, consider joining the green initiative by reducing or eliminating the number of paper copies you, your post or office receive. The end result could be a safer, healthier planet for future generations.



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Submissions

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request our guidelines by e-mail at statemagazine@state.gov or download them from state.gov/statemag. *State Magazine* does not purchase freelance material.

Deadlines

The submission deadline for the June 2012 issue is April 16. The deadline for the July/August issue is May 15.

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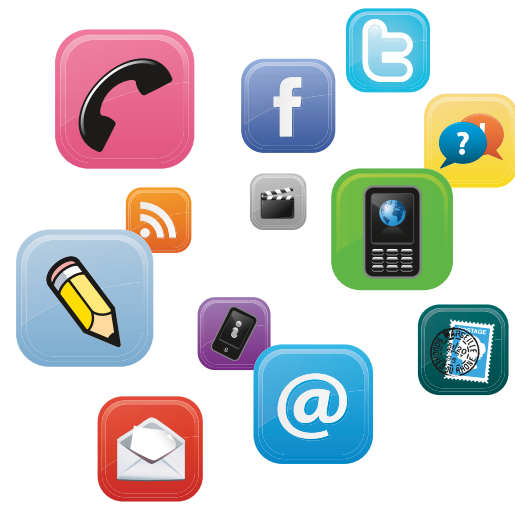


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Inbox



Foreign Service Singles

Regarding Kevin Casey's article "Matters of the Heart" (Feb. 2012, pg. 35), it is good news that FSI now offers a course geared to the special challenges faced by our single FS colleagues. During my service as management officer and DCM, I found the Department's focus to be on FS families—spouse employment, children's needs, whole-family embassy events—with scant attention paid to the often very different concerns of single colleagues.

Beyond that, many administrative regulations, such as those relating to living quarters allowances, seem skewed to favor families. We certainly do not begrudge FS families the support they deserve to thrive and succeed. For the record, I am married, but we should all be heartened that the Department is taking steps to better include "the 30 percent" in its efforts to support and enhance the FS community.

Carol Urban
Retired Foreign Service officer



SportsUnited a Hit

It was great working with you and your team on *State Magazine's* article on SportsUnited (March 2012, pg. 30). I noticed the online version, and will share it with my colleagues. We look forward to receiving hard copies, as they may serve as a sports diplomacy souvenir in our office.

Trina Bolton
*SportsUnited program coordinator
ECA Bureau*



Colorful Read

State Magazine is looking really great these days. It's colorful, has interesting articles and simply has a lot of life to it. Thanks for making this happen, and keep up your excellent work!

Melissa Hess
*Crisis Management Training
Foreign Service Institute*



Crisp and Fresh

Just a quick note to tell you that we like the new look. It's crisp and fresh and feels very current. Thanks for updating our magazine!

Jo Villemarette
*Executive Asst. to the Ambassador
U.S. Embassy Jakarta*



Engaging Issue

Congratulations to the entire staff of *State Magazine* for producing such an engaging March issue. The choice of interesting and timely subjects (e.g. The War on Piracy) and the new layout of the magazine combine to make it a much more pleasant and engaging publication. Also, at long last we don't get the new ambassadorial appointments mixed up with the obituaries! Many thanks for all your hard work.

Peter K. Murphy
*Retired Foreign Service officer
Monte Carlo, Monaco*

How Green is Your Magazine?

State Magazine strives to be an environmentally-responsible publication. We print on recycled paper containing a minimum of 10% post-consumer waste, that is certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Our printing ink is a soy ink, which is made from soybeans instead of petroleum products. And we print the magazine locally to reduce the impact of shipping.

You can help us to be as green as possible. When you're done reading the magazine, pass it along to a colleague, or recycle it properly. Is your office getting too many copies? Email statemagazine@state.gov and have the number of copies adjusted. Or eliminate your paper copy altogether and read the magazine online at state.gov/statemag or with one of our apps.



In the News

Before the game, Texas Rangers outfielder Engel Beltre discusses batting with Ambassador Raul Yzaguirre. Photo by Jose De Los Santos



Embassy Honors Jackie Robinson's Legacy

Residents of the Dominican Republic share a common love of baseball with Americans, so in January the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo arranged a softball game that honored baseball legend and civil rights trailblazer Jackie Robinson.

The post's partner in the effort, New York Yankees second baseman Robinson Cano, was named for Jackie Robinson. He led the Cano Kids against the Embassy All-Stars, a rag-tag team of Americans and Dominicans from the embassy. Other Cano Kids included Felix Pie from the Baltimore Orioles, Engel Beltre from the Texas Rangers, Jordany Valdespin from the New York Mets and Jose Cano, Robinson's dad and a former major leaguer himself. Some last-minute trades on the field helped even out the teams.

The game took place in San Pedro de Macoris, a city known for producing many infielders. The embassy worked with city authorities to bus in several thousand young baseball fans from throughout the city and provided many of them with "Estamos Unidos" (We Are United) T-shirts and information on Jackie Robinson's legacy. U.S.

Ambassador Raul Yzaguirre and Cano spoke to the crowd, urging young people to follow Jackie Robinson's example, which is particularly relevant in the Dominican Republic, where issues of identity and skin color are complex.

Many Dominicans who went to the United States to play professional baseball in the 1950s and 1960s recall being surprised to be described as black, and therefore subject to the same Jim Crow laws Jackie Robinson helped to overcome. Their experience encouraged a broader discussion of identity in the Dominican Republic, which has seen an influx of Haitian migrants, making tolerance and mutual understanding even more urgent.

There was no confusing the game with the diplomats during the game, as the pros put on a clinic. Robinson Cano lined a home run to right field in his first time at bat, the first of many round-trippers that day, and the Embassy All-Stars never quite recovered.

The Cano Kids won both games of the double header, the first 15-8 and the second 20-4.

Consulate Takes Leadership Day to the Street

A bull and a bear, a frozen yogurt stand, a tree wearing a sock and a high-speed train are among the disparate items that were all part of a Jan. 26 Consular Leadership Day scavenger hunt. The Consulate General in Frankfurt, Germany, used the event to bring the Bureau of Consular Affairs' 10 leadership tenets to life.

Approximately 50 consular section staffers launched out on a sunny morning to find 60 sites, statues or curiosities around Frankfurt, all with the aim of implementing the 2012 tenet, "Follow Courageously." The staff was split into nine teams and handed a list of 60 clues, each referring to one of the hunt's objects or places. Some were easy-to-find



Actively responding to a scavenger hunt challenge to find a bull and a bear are, from left, Derek Sherman, Andre Young, Elke Peter, Cindy Foster and Ulla Chira.

Photo by Edyta Jones

streets and landmarks; others were hidden restaurants, houses and stores. Each team had four hours to find and photograph as many as possible.

As there were far too many places for any team to reach in so little time, the teams used creativity, strategy and good decision making.

"When we received the list, we knew we needed to be efficient," said Locally Employed Staff member Kathy Diaz. "We knew we would have to make careful choices and focus only on where we could find a lot of clues."

As teams moved through Frankfurt's neighborhoods, all of the consular leadership tenets came into play.

"Everybody at some point had to be a leader," said Foreign Service Officer Bettina Gorczynski. "At any time, someone would know a particular neighborhood better than others, and they would then become the guide and the rest of us would follow."

"There was no room for one person to take over," agreed FSO Mike Davis. "We all had to work together and move together. If one person tried to dominate, it would slow us down."

According to Visa Chief Ravi Candadai, those in his group who were used to leading and making decisions might actually have known the least about the city. "This gave many LE Staff, some of whom grew up here, the chance to become the boss and really shine," she said.

After four hours of exploring, the teams returned to the consulate to hold group discussions on the tenets and watch projections of other team's pictures.

"It was easy to connect the activity to the tenets," said FSO Rubani Trimiew. "People learned more about leadership by being in the field than hearing a lecture. They got to see the tenets in action."

Celebrating 25 Years of Friendship with Mongolia

The U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar in January marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Mongolia with a celebration that will continue throughout this year.

In the public affairs section's 25th anniversary logo contest, more than a thousand voters selected three finalists from more than 20 submissions. The embassy chose the winning entry, from a Mongolian 11th grader, and will use it to publicize the year's events.

Ambassador Jonathan Addleton, a former journalist and historian who wrote a history of U.S.- Mongolian diplomatic relations, was feted at a book launch in January attended by 200 guests, including Mongolian government officials, embassy staff, media and members of the Mongolian arts and business communities. He in turn hosted a reception that included former Mongolian prime ministers, a former president and foreign minister, and a former ambassador to the United States.

Since the anniversary, the orchestral pop band Canasta has visited Mongolia under the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs Arts Envoy program and a local television station has produced a documentary about American adventurer and naturalist Roy Chapman Andrews' expeditions to Mongolia in the 1920s, which found proof that dinosaurs hatched from eggs. The station is working with the embassy on an exhibit of photographs of the expeditions that will be shown in cities outside Ulaanbaatar.



Ambassador Jonathan Addleton, right, displays a replica of the first American travel pass during a meeting with former Foreign Minister Ts. Munkh-Orgil. Photo by Allyson Algeo

In New York, a Council on Foreign Relations seminar focused on the diplomatic relationship, and in Washington the Library of Congress opened a special exhibit featuring items from its Mongolian- and Tibetan-language collections. Ambassador Addleton attended both events and gave the library a replica of a travel pass issued in 1862 to the first American to travel through Mongolia.

Secretary of State
Hillary Clinton addresses
Department employees at a
January town hall meeting.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



Secretary Clinton Addresses Work-Life Issues, Promotions

During her January town hall meeting at Main State, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the Department has a variety of programs to support working women and help employees balance their work and home lives.

“Balancing family and work responsibilities is challenging,” said Secretary Clinton, “and the challenge falls disproportionately on women in the workplace, and it’s no longer just a question of one’s children; it’s also one’s aging relatives who are often part of the care-giving responsibilities that are assumed. I really want to do more on this [during] this year.”

She mentioned telework as one family-friendly program. To expand this work-from-home option, she said the Department must determine which positions are eligible since “much classified and confidential work can’t be outsourced, so to speak, to telework.”

She also mentioned alternative work schedules, job-sharing and the

Department’s two daycare facilities. A third facility is about to open at a building being revamped for the Bureau of Consular Affairs’.

“We need more capacity; everybody knows that, and we’re exploring everything we can do,” she said, adding that the Department is also looking to increase its number of lactation rooms.

The Secretary said practical and small steps can be taken “which could make a big difference in an individual’s ability to balance family and work. We’ll try to do as much as we can within the confines of the kind of specific constraints that we have to work with.”

Regarding promotions of women, she challenged the Department to resist stagnation, and reward those who deserve recognition regardless of gender. “There should be no glass ceiling or any other kind of ceiling that prevents women from going forward in so far as we can make the work environment successful for you,” she emphasized.

Diplomatic Security Salutes Nonagenarian

At a time when some his age have been retired for more than 30 years, John E. Weston, a personal services contract coordinator for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, is still on the job—at age 95.

Weston, possibly the oldest person working for the Department, was given a surprise birthday bash by coworkers in February. Weston said he was “completely overwhelmed by thunderous applause from more than 100 coworkers, friends and family members.

“I’ll unashamedly admit, that was the most surprised I’ve ever been in my life,” he recalled.

Weston received a congratulatory letter from Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy thanking him for his more than 60 years of federal service with the Air Force, CIA and State Department. His birthday cake was decorated with an image of a B-17G, the aircraft he piloted on 31 combat missions over occupied Europe during World War II.

Weston said he keeps working because “I’m convinced that staying active and involved in a work environment keeps me feeling and thinking young, plus it gives me a sense of still contributing to the exciting, worldwide mission of the bureau.

“I have no anti-aging formula to offer,” he continued. “I try to watch my diet and eat the right things, and I still exercise moderately, mostly stretching daily, trying to stay ahead of the stiffness in muscles and joints so common with old age.”

He also admits to really “enjoying a martini most every evening when I arrive home.”

Weston’s supervisor, Diane L. Khandjian, branch chief in DS’s Management office, said he is a role model and inspiration, “a gentleman in the true sense of the word with the utmost integrity, extensive knowledge base and most incredible work ethic of anyone I know. His 25 years’ experience with DS has made him an invaluable resource in so many areas within the bureau.”



DS photo



Sailors aboard *Lancelot I* enjoy the ocean air as the boat heads into calmer waters, rounding the south end of Barbados.
Photo courtesy of the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown

Embassy Bridgetown Team Sails to Victory

Staff from the U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados, completed a grueling 60-mile nautical circuit of the island nation during the historic Round Barbados Race in January. Despite being the first time a team of embassy staff has participated in the event, both of their boats finished with honors. The race celebrates Errol Barrow, Barbados's first prime minister and an avid sailor, and is sponsored by Mount Gay Rum. The prize for a new record in any class is the skipper's weight in rum.

Embassy staff member Charlie Hillyer found two 40-foot sailing yachts and "shanghaied" 22 crewmembers from seven embassy agencies. The two Team USA boats, named Lancelot I and Lancelot II, competed against

26 other vessels from the Eastern Caribbean, Canada, the United States and Europe.

The boats raced up Barbados's west coast in fair winds, giving crews time to find their sea legs. As they rounded the island's north end, they were met by 25-knot winds, 12-foot waves from the open Atlantic and a dolphin escort. Rounding the south end of the island, they encountered large waves astern. Lancelot I was in fourth place, but bigger and better-rigged racing boats began pulling away.

Meanwhile, Lancelot II dashed for the coast, raised a spinnaker, cruised past Lancelot I and finished first in class and eighth overall. Lancelot I finished second in class and 10th overall. For their efforts, the teams were awarded a commemorative cask

of rum. "It was fantastic seeing all levels of officers and agencies working together for a common cause," said Hillyer.

Department staff participating included Hillyer, Andrea Hillyer, Brian Greaney, Rebecca Ross, Dan Cadwell, Colleen Cadwell, Carol Vargas, Lee Thompson, Mike Biggins, George Gaines, Bill Hobbs, Jerry Aylward, Kit Rosenstein and Fred Melton. Also participating: Department of Justice's Joe Cowan and Mark McHugh, Department of Treasury's Andrew Thornton and Victor Henken, and mission staffers William Conn and Karen Hymbaugh.

Hillyer said it was "fantastic seeing all levels of officers and agencies working together for a common cause."

Diversity Notes

BY JOHN M. ROBINSON
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

What Does it Take to Get Promoted Around Here?

The Office of Civil Rights processes many complaints from those who feel that discriminatory practices have inhibited their career advancement. However, when the layers are peeled back and the objective investigations are completed, those complaints often do not rise to the level of a legally supportable case of discrimination. We find that many times, what is perceived as discrimination is in fact frustration over poorly communicated performance expectations or lack of performance guidance

“So if my inability to get promoted is not a result of discrimination, what is it?”

For many employees, self-induced obstacles stand in the way of career goals. These hurdles often fit into three areas: performance, image and exposure. First, employees must demonstrate the ability to perform the facets of their jobs that are required for the higher grade. Second, they must manage their image—how people around the office perceive them. Finally, they must demonstrate to their managers and to leaders throughout the organization that they are ready for a higher level of leadership.

Here is some candid, practical advice about achieving your next promotion that you will not find anywhere in the FAM, Office of Personnel Management regulations or Bureau of Human Resources guidelines for promotion:

- **Be positive.** You might say *“I can’t be positive all of the time. Some parts of my job really stink,”* but bosses prefer to promote employees who succeed in spite of obstacles. If your talent, experience and ability to articulate ideas or solutions are overshadowed by chronic complaining, your colleague who solves problems rather than merely pointing them out is more likely to get promoted.

- **Don’t bring your bad habits to work.** *“Who are you to say my habits are bad?”* I’d respond that your Friday night drinking club is not the best subject for work conversations, and that



some curse words used for emphasis are probably not a good idea in the office. Inappropriate Facebook photos do not do you any favors either.

- **Support your boss.** *“But my boss is a jerk!”* That may be true, but this is about you getting promoted and the “jerk” is still the boss. If your boss lacks charisma, humility, a sense of humor and table manners, that is not so good. Being a jerk, however, is not a federal offense. You do not have to feign affection for your boss, but you do have to support the mission with vigor, which not incidentally makes the boss look good—perhaps in spite of him or herself.

- **Worry about yourself.** *“But if I try your alternatives stop complaining, give up the bad habits and support my boss—my friends will say I am trying to impress the boss and bucking for a promotion.”* And I say the problem with that is what?

What does it take to get promoted around here? The answer is being the professional whom leaders believe will perform well at their level. With time and experience, I have found that the points above work. If you can authoritatively disprove these assertions, I’ll buy you lunch.... only once, and in the cafeteria...actually the sub-basement cafeteria...and only chili with one topping. Call me. ■



Going Green

Recognizing their obligation to responsibly manage and conserve the Earth's limited natural resources, employees at posts around the globe have redoubled their efforts to reduce the Department's environmental footprint. Whether developing innovative ways to deal with practical challenges like water sanitation and landscaping, or exploring new ways to use renewable power sources like solar and wind energy, green initiatives are making our planet a better place to live.

Native Plants in Post Gardens Conserve Water

Story and photos by the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Office of Ecology and Conservation and the Architectural Division of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

To save water and labor and be environmentally friendly, U.S. posts worldwide are using treated wastewater or collected rainwater for irrigation, featuring native plants in their landscaping and limiting the use of plants that require extensive irrigation, especially grassy lawns.

An example is the U.S. Consulate General in Cape Town, South Africa, which is located on six hectares in a leafy suburb. The Westlake River, which flows through the compound, is home to endangered leopard frogs and numerous birds, and is in an area rich

in plant species, a large percentage of which are found only in this region. The landscape architects specified the use of indigenous plants on the consulate compound since they perform well under local conditions.

“The use of native plants was the right decision for this site,” said Facility Manager James Emery, though finding plants that help stop soil erosion on steep graded slopes was a minor challenge. By using native and locally adapted plant species, he explained, the post reduces the amount of maintenance and irrigation required.

“Since the plants are growing in their natural habitat, they are not subject to the stresses which affect non-native” plants, he said. “The consulate community benefits every day when they look out their windows and see the beautiful landscape.”

The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi also dedicates a portion of its campus to native and locally adapted plants.

“Our gardening staff, led by Chancery Supervisor Vinod Chandran and Horticulturalist Dhruv Sharma, maintains grassy areas for play alongside ‘native-scapes,’” said Facility



Birds and pollinators benefit from the native plants featured at the U.S. Consulate General in Cape Town.

Manager James Horner. He said the embassy's designers chose plant varieties specifically for their tolerance of the monsoon climate's heat and seasonal droughts.

"Hardy native species require little maintenance and are naturally pest- and disease-resistant," he said. "Many of the plants produce showy flowers and abundant fruits and seeds that provide perfect havens for local birds and pollinators."

Another instance of thoughtful landscaping is at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, where the compound incorporates part of the citywide storm water management system of canals and ponds.

"This system creates a beautiful and functional foreground to the chancery building and a unifying element through the lush landscape of native plants," said Tetsuya Yamamoto, a landscape architect with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. "The water features and plants, combined with the grounds' shade trees, naturally and cost-effectively cool the air around the embassy buildings."

The U.S. Embassy in Valletta has no natural source of irrigation and few native plants. "All water used for irrigation is harvested from rain and stored in underground tanks," said Alain deVergie, a senior OBO landscape architect. The post uses Mediterranean plants, which are adapted to dry climates, and features a cactus garden that borders ruins dating from about 1500 B.C. through the Punic, Early Byzantine and Roman eras.



Hardy native and adaptive plants require little maintenance at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi.

Using native, non-invasive plants not only decreases water consumption, but also promotes biodiversity and reduces greenhouse gas emissions and the U.S. government's carbon footprint. It also supports Executive Order 13514, which calls for U.S. agencies to develop an integrated sustainability strategy and reduce greenhouse gas

emissions, and the goals of the League of Green Embassies to conserve water and use energy efficiently. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, implemented by several Department facilities, has similar goals.

Making informed choices about land use demonstrates the Department's effort to be a good neighbor to the host country and world environment through respect for native flora and fauna, and a model of efficient use of water and energy. OBO requires the use of native and non-invasive, well-adapted plant species in all new landscape designs and stands ready to help posts interested in sustainable landscaping. ■

Beyond those quoted, contributors to this article include OES Program Officer Antoinette Condo; Nick Slabbert, from the maintenance unit at Consulate General Cape Town; Embassy New Delhi Information Office Clerk Rakesh Malhotra; and OBO Sustainable Design Coordinator Michelle Hurley.



A variety of native and adaptive plants brighten U.S. Embassy Bangkok's grounds.

Prioritizing the Environment

Posts Take Action to Conserve Natural Resources

In recent months, U.S. diplomatic posts from Greece to Cape Verde and India have implemented environmentally sensitive, or “green,” initiatives.

The U.S. Embassy in Athens has installed solar panels on the top deck of their parking garage and implemented landscaping changes that save millions of gallons of water daily. According to Ambassador Daniel B. Smith, these are just a few of numerous projects that “exemplify the United States’ commitment to renewable energy and to pursuing green solutions while reducing the environmental footprint of the embassy.”

The solar panels, completed in October, can generate approximately 135 kilowatt hours of electricity per year, 20 percent of the embassy’s required power, and cut annual carbon dioxide emissions by 135 tons.

Embassy Athens also replaced an old irrigation system with one that uses 50 percent less water, saving more than two million gallons a year. A well on the chancery grounds helps collect another 900,000 gallons of water annually, and

greenery planted on the grounds thrives in the dry Mediterranean climate and thus requires less water. The greenery and other innovative gardening techniques, such as adjusting the length of the grass according to the growing season and temperature, have helped conserve millions of gallons of water.

Athens Management Counselor Mary Teirlynck worked closely with Locally Employed Staff to re-launch a post Green Team dedicated to making the embassy a greener neighbor. In 2011, it expanded the recycling program to include mobile phones, batteries, glass, plastic and other materials that can contain dangerous chemicals. In less than one year, the post has recycled 551 pounds of batteries; 8,157 pounds of paper; 1,433 pounds of plastic, aluminum and glass; and 340 ink cartridges.

Six of the 11 embassy-owned homes have been equipped with solar water heaters in the past year, and the rest will get them, for an estimated savings of 26 tons of carbon dioxide per home, the equivalent of driving 52,000 miles.

The Green Team also installed 16 filtered-air hand dryers in most embassy and annex bathrooms that use 80 percent less energy

than traditional hand dryers and remove 99.9 percent of bacteria from hands. The embassy immediately saw a 40 percent reduction in paper towel use.

“Embassy Athens has proven that when everyone is committed to a common goal, significant progress can be made,” said Teirlynck. “I am particularly proud of how staff and family members of the embassy community have taken to heart this challenge and achieved so much success in such a short time.”

Ioannis Kordonis, president of the Athens Green Team, suggested that many of the initiatives were simple, saying “it was just a question of tackling one project at a time and doing an effective job communicating our ideas to the community.”

At Embassy Praia, half of the houses now have solar hot water heaters. Cape Verde is a remote place where almost everything, including diesel fuel for electricity production and butane gas for traditional hot water heaters, must be imported at great expense. But Cape Verde does have abundant sunshine. Several years ago, the post began installing solar hot water heaters at all residences and the recreation center.

Cape Verde’s economy is growing rapidly in a fragile archipelago ecosystem. The solar hot water heaters show how new technology can raise living standards and protect the

Embassy Athens Green Team members Ioannis Kordonis, Alexandra Tsilivi and Sotiris Vagias meet on the parking garage roof under the embassy’s new photovoltaic system, which can generate 20 percent of the embassy’s annual required power.

Photo by Jody Sadornas



Left: Chennai Nonimmigrant Visas Clerk Suganya Surendran measures a tree's girth on the consul general's residential compound while Consular Investigations Assistant Preethi Nelson marks the tree for census records and Visa Assistant Surendranath R. Vellore tabulates measurements to calculate the tree's biomass.

Photo by Tom Montgomery

Below: U.S. Embassy in Praia staff show off the solar water heater, which they say functions even on days as cloudy as the one when this photo was taken.

Photo by Antonio Silva



environment. More information on the post's efforts is available from Carla Brigham at brighamcm@state.gov.

On the other side of the globe at Consulate General Chennai, tea time is now green. Instead of using and throwing away paper cups for the milky sweet chai tea and South Indian coffee served to celebrate staff arrivals and other events, employees sip from small, customizable metal cups that are part of the local culture.

The post has also installed composting bins, harvests rainwater on all government-owned properties, replaced household incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs, installed auto-off lights and electric restroom hand dryers and purchased six hybrid and electric vehicles for official use.

The post also conducted a tree census at the consul general's residence. Consular employees measured, tagged and identified the property's trees as part of the Chennai Forestry Department's project to catalog and preserve all of Chennai's trees. The project has raised staff awareness of trees' value in passive cooling, mitigating water runoff and increasing property values, and underscored the importance of maintaining a green environment. ■

Contributors to this article included Marie Blanchard, assistant information officer, Embassy Athens; Tom Marotta, general services officer, Embassy Praia, Cape Verde; and Sarah Talalay and Michelle Zjhra, vice consuls, Consulate General Chennai, India.

Green Teams Inspire Posts

By Donna McIntire, chief, Energy and Sustainable Design, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

Abroad, embassy green teams raise awareness and generate enthusiasm for environmental actions and events. Green teams have recently been active at the following posts:

- Banjul facilitated a cleanup exercise at Tanji Bird Sanctuary to raise environmental awareness;
- Bridgetown declared April "Greening Awareness Month" and celebrates it annually with green games;
- China uses 645,300 fewer sheets of paper and 886,500 fewer printed pages per year after revising its visa processing;
- Ethiopia replaced gas-powered vehicles for guard patrol with bicycles;
- Geneva replaced paper towels with air hand dryers in bathrooms;
- Tokyo implemented a toner cartridge recycling program and bought an electric, plug-in vehicle, reducing operating costs by 24 cents per mile over conventional vehicles;
- London won an award in 2009 for office recycling that reduced CO₂ emissions by about 214,000 pounds; and
- Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, planted 80 trees and changed to green cleaning products.

Department Conserves Water Overseas

By Donna McIntire, chief, Energy and Sustainable Design, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

Seventy percent of the Earth is covered by water, but only .04 percent of the Earth's water is accessible freshwater rivers and lakes. Worldwide annual water use is expected to grow by roughly 10 to 12 percent every decade due to population growth and industrialization. In fact, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development predicts that by 2030 nearly half the world's population will be living in areas of high water stress. Water conservation is therefore becoming increasingly important.

The State Department is doing its part. By conserving water at its overseas facilities, it reduces demand on public water systems and local groundwater. By increasing water reuse onsite and protecting water quality, it sets an example of positive water resource practices.

The Department is committed to reducing potable water use in its buildings 20 percent by 2020 and cutting outdoor use of potable water by half. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) routinely incorporates water-saving technologies and strategies into capital construction projects and major renovations. They include:

- Low-flow and automatic-shutoff plumbing fixtures;
- Air-cooled rather than water-cooled chillers, which reduce water use in air-conditioning;
- Drought-tolerant native or adapted plant species to reduce landscape irrigation needs;
- Drip irrigation with rain sensors to further reduce irrigation needs;
- Constructing wetlands to passively and organically filter wastewater for reuse; and
- Substituting reclaimed wastewater and collected rainwater, where available, for potable water in irrigation systems.

Since a facility can use more than 60 percent of its water on landscaping, OBO strives to balance the desire for lush diplomatic grounds with the need to conserve water for other uses.

OBO conducts comprehensive water audits at posts with high water use or water shortages. An audit at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, a city that suffers prolonged water outages, indicated that redesign of the planting and irrigation system could conserve as much as 8.3 million liters of water per year. The audit also revealed that 8.7 million liters of treated wastewater per year could be reused for

irrigation if minor wastewater treatment plant upgrades were made.

Many U.S. missions are in nations that lack a storm water and sewage infrastructure or appropriate discharge regulations and enforcement. As responsible neighbors, the missions therefore must install their own systems to ensure that water leaving their sites is properly treated. Often, posts treat their wastewater onsite and reuse it for irrigation and other non-potable uses. OBO has constructed wetlands in Nairobi; Karachi, Pakistan; and Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, that use bio-filtration to clarify treated wastewater for reuse in irrigation or offsite discharge.

Monrovia, Liberia, has more than 200 inches of rainfall per year, but lacks a municipal water system or accessible ground water, so the U.S. Embassy there diverts rainwater into tanks that provide for nearly all of the post's water needs—three million liters per year.

More information on global water issues is in the article "Global Water Issues" at ipdigital.usembassy.gov. More information on future water scarcity is at worldwater.org. ■

OBO Architect Melanie Berkemeyer and OBO Civil Engineer Robert Jeter contributed to this article.



Children gather water near the U.S. Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone.
Photo by Mark Madison

U.S. & Sweden Partner for Clean Energy

By Marcus C. Hansson, energy and environment specialist, public affairs office, Embassy Stockholm

Sweden, a country of 9.5 million people, is a leader in environmental sustainability and clean technology, having reduced its use of oil for energy purposes from 75 to 30 percent since the 1970s and made other advances. To draw on Sweden's experience, the U.S. Embassy in Stockholm has for several years fostered U.S.-Swedish partnerships on alternative energy, clean-tech and environmental sustainability.

This work began in 2007 under the One Big Thing initiative, expanded when Embassy Stockholm founded the League of Green Embassies, and reached a new level in 2010 when the post teamed with the Swedish government to launch an expanded framework for cooperation called the Swedish American Green Alliance (SAGA). SAGA builds upon a 2006 bilateral agreement and a shared vision that clean energy solutions and combating climate change go hand in hand with creating high-quality 21st-century jobs and economic growth. The framework seeks to encourage U.S.-Sweden networks and partnerships on clean tech business opportunities, research collaboration and policy innovation. It also focuses on sharing best practices on urban sustainability, clean development and other areas where the United States and Sweden can make a greater difference by working together.

"The idea of SAGA is to engage the entire mission," said Ambassador Mark Brzezinski. The economic section reaches out to the Swedish government to coordinate joint efforts, the Foreign Commercial Service boosts U.S. clean tech exports to Sweden, the management section implements environmental activities at post and the public affairs team coordinates and promotes SAGA and U.S. environmentalism on the program's website and through social media and outreach to media, students and the public.

More than 1,000 articles have been published on the SAGA website (SwedishAmericanGreenAlliance.org), and each month the ambassador picks the most compelling stories for a newsletter sent to approximately 500 key U.S. and Swedish contacts, including Secretary of Energy Steven Chu.

"Secretary Chu and his team at the Department of Energy have invoked SAGA as a model," said Ambassador Brzezinski, noting that during a December visit to Sweden, Chu described the energy/climate problem as one of the world's most pressing challenges.

A core SAGA objective is engaging the private sector to boost U.S. clean tech exports and encourage direct Swedish investments in the United States. Recently, the City of Stockholm selected the Chevy Volt and California-based Vantage electric utility truck as two of six possible electric vehicles for a procurement program of 5,000 energy-efficient vehicles for Swedish cities. This will create business opportunities and help cut greenhouse gas emissions. The embassy also works with GE, Honeywell, BetaLED, Cisco, IBM, Johnson Controls, 3M and other U.S. exporters, promoting their connections with Swedish city officials and partners.

By highlighting how much is happening in the United States on environmental sustainability, SAGA helps to change attitudes. An embassy poll showed that 78 percent of Swedish youth had negative views about the United States regarding the environment. Last year SAGA increased engagement with universities and students to build research links, networks and understanding. The embassy is now working with the NGO Sustainable Sweden to support study visits by five Swedish graduate students to U.S. cities this spring. They'll learn about urban sustainability and get a deeper sense of greenhouse-gas-emission reduction initiatives.

Sweden has joined the U.S.-initiated Clean Energy Ministerial, where it is now an active partner in six of 11 initiatives, and has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on Sustainable Transportation with the United States.

Most of Sweden's environmental sustainability decisions are made locally, so a key SAGA component is outreach to U.S. and Swedish cities to share best practices. When Stockholm hosted an international conference in 2010 as the first "European Green Capital," Embassy Stockholm invited 11 U.S. mayors and city representatives to share their best



Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, left, and Ambassador Mark Brzezinski promote U.S.-made ZERO electric motorcycles in December.
Photo by Ann-Charlotte Olafsson

practices on urban sustainability. This resulted in the signing of an agreement between the U.S. National League of Cities (NLC) and the National Association of Swedish Eco-municipalities. Since then, there have been a number of exchanges.

These visits have boosted business opportunities. In one case, Embassy Stockholm facilitated an agreement between Oregon's Kaiser Group and Fagerdala of Sweden on cooperation in energy efficiency for buildings; under it, a Portland-based manufacturing facility may employ up to 50 workers.

In March 2011, five Swedish mayors attended the NLC annual conference and met with representatives of U.S. clean tech companies. This month, another delegation of U.S. mayors will visit Sweden to share success stories and discuss sustainability in the United States. ■

SEEKING REFUGE

PRM Team helps displaced individuals find better lives

By Deborah Sisbarro

Inger Tangborn, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration's (PRM) refugee coordinator for Palestinian refugees, monitors the work of an organization providing primary health care, addressing the poverty of the most vulnerable Palestinian refugees and educating 500,000 refugee children.

"When I meet with the refugees in their homes and communities, I come away each time amazed and inspired by their resilience," said Tangborn, who works with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA).

Tangborn is one of PRM's refugee coordinators, or "refcoords," mid-level Foreign Service officers responsible for monitoring refugee and displaced persons programs and policies abroad, and advocating for U.S. humanitarian objectives in the regions they cover.

There are more than 43 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide, including five million Palestinian refugees, many of whom are descendants of those displaced more than 63 years ago in the wake of the 1949 Lausanne Conference's attempt to address problems arising from the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Other refugee situations exist in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Bhutan, Burma, Somalia and Western Sahara. Iraqis displaced by sectarian violence remain the third-largest group of refugees in the world. Other significant numbers of refugees come from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and Eritrea. Recently, Syrians have been displaced internally and across borders.

PRM manages, monitors and evaluates the more than \$1.8 billion annual U.S. contributions to multilateral organizations and NGOs providing refugee assistance. It also helps administer the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, which resettled more than 56,000 refugees from 69 countries to the United

States in fiscal year 2011.

Refcoord officers come from all cones and engage in unique work. One such officer, Rebecca Fong, was recently evacuated from Embassy Damascus and is currently posted in Amman. She said refcoord positions are not always "warm and fuzzy." Fong reports on how the Syrian conflict affects Iraqi refugees and Syrian displaced civilians. Their stories tell of hardship, brutality and insecurity. She says the work is demanding, but worthwhile.

"You are in a pivotal position that can direct funding policy and know that you have been instrumental in helping feed, clothe, educate and train someone in need," said Fong. "So often in political work, the results are hard to measure or do not come to fruition on your watch. In the refugee business, you can have tangible results."

Amanda Jacobsen, who works in the public diplomacy cone in Nepal, said outreach is her favorite aspect of the job. She has organized and participated in public programs for Somali, Burmese and Pakistani urban refugees in Kathmandu, town halls in Sri Lanka and hut-to-hut outreach in Bhutanese refugee camps in eastern Nepal with the Office of the UN High



Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

"It's an incredible opportunity to hear firsthand what is on people's minds," she said.

According to Jacobsen, refcoord work is great for "individuals interested in experiencing far-flung corners of the world that few could find on a map; who are not dissuaded from long car rides on impossibly bumpy roads in areas riddled by land mines; who



Vehicles clog a nearly impassable road that Refugee Coordinator Greg Shaw traveled along to get to an IDP camp road in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Photo by Greg Shaw



Left: Refugee Coordinator Greg Shaw helps pump water at a refugee camp in Bétou, Republic of Congo. *Photo by Robin Prinz* **Below:** Refugee Coordinator Inger Tangborn greets an elderly woman at the Nahr el Bared refugee camp in northern Lebanon. She is one of 30,000 Palestinian refugees who lost their homes in 2007. *Photo by U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East*

enjoy being invited to tea at Tibetan households and who are willing to work really hard on humanitarian issues that truly make a difference.”

Great Lakes Regional Refugee Coordinator Greg Shaw, based in Kampala, DRC, agreed. He covers multiple refugee and IDP issues throughout his region, often in remote areas of Burundi, the DRC, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. While there is some progress—more than 1 million Rwandan refugees who fled the 1994 genocide have since returned—those displaced by ongoing conflict in the DRC require immediate assistance.

Shaw recalled visiting IDP camps in the DRC’s cold, wet highlands, camps that are a haven for those driven from their homes by violent militias, but where living is difficult. His group barely reached one camp due to the nearly impassable mountain track. Upon their



arrival, Congolese women dressed in bright traditional clothing emerged from makeshift shelters and greeted the group with a customary welcome dance, thanking the American people for their lifesaving support.

But Shaw soon learned of residents’ urgent needs. Every day, the camp’s women must decide whether to risk venturing into the nearby forest to forage for food and firewood. They and their children face the ever present danger of assault and rape by armed criminals.

“The bravery and resilience that these rape survivors embody in the face of the horrific violence in eastern Congo always reminds me of the need to work harder on their behalf,” said Shaw.

Melissa Pitotti, a member of the Civil Service in a limited non-career assignment to the Refugee and Migration Affairs section at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, said she’s concerned refugees with disabilities are being overlooked and stigmatized. During a 2009 mission to Eastern Sudan, she interviewed many disabled refugees at the Sudanese Red Crescent-run clinic in Wad Sherifey camp. Nearly 600 of the camp’s 15,000 residents were injured or disabled in some way. Pitotti said she saw the need for humanitarian-oriented diplomacy, and back in Geneva in 2010 she chaired intergovernmental

negotiations on a UNHCR resolution to improve protection and assistance for displaced persons with disabilities. Although many nations were reluctant to commit scarce national resources to non-nationals or to grant the U.N. more authority in their territory, they eventually worked out a solution. In October 2010, 79 UNHCR executive committee member nations unanimously

called for the protection of refugees and other persons with disabilities against all discrimination and for the provision of sustainable and appropriate support to them.

“I’m proud of our country’s record on persons with disabilities,” Pitotti said, asserting the United States has the most advanced system for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities at home and is leading by example.

In Iraq, Refugee Assistance Coordinator Oni Blair oversees millions of U.S. dollars

Right: Refugee Coordinator Lubna Khan discovers chipati bread as it bakes on a fuel-efficient mud stove in an Ethiopian Eritrean refugee camp. *Photo by Cathy Baraang* **Below:** Bhutanese children enjoy a cultural orientation class at the IOM Transit Center in Kathmandu one day before their departure to the United States. *Photo courtesy of Amanda Johnsen*

in assistance programs for displaced persons. Iraq has a steady stream of returning refugees and approximately 1.3 million IDPs, which means advocacy with the Iraqi government on their behalf is a high priority. PRM programs in Iraq provide basic humanitarian assistance, health care, education, livelihood programs and shelter rehabilitation.

Refugee Admissions Coordinator Melissa Schubert oversees the large Refugee Admissions Program in Iraq. Since 2007, the United States has welcomed more than 63,000 Iraqi refugees. Consular-coned Schubert said her decisions have far-reaching consequences for applicants, and the program is continually being refined to improve security and efficiency. Back in Washington, Iraqi refugees receive attention at the highest Department and inter-agency levels, Schubert said.

Some refcoords have gone on to serve at the highest levels. U.S. Ambassador to Liberia Linda Thomas-Greenfield, recently nominated to become the Department's next Director General, served as a refcoord in Nairobi, Islamabad and Geneva. Ambassador to Lebanon Maura Connelly served as a refcoord covering Palestinian refugees from 1997 to 2000, which were the last years that mid-level officers could move with relative freedom around the West Bank and Gaza Strip. She said she heard refugees' stories that would not ordinarily reach the desks of Washington policy makers and found that representing the generosity of Americans was an honor. She added that the experience opened her eyes to the poverty and miserable living conditions of the Palestinians.

"The victims of political conflicts over which they had no control, many refugees lived in squalid, overcrowded, unsafe 'shelters' with few pleasures to look forward to in life," Ambassador Connelly recalled. "In other cases, young refugee students worked ferociously at their studies, aiming to rise above the conditions into which they had been born."

She added that the elderly seemed the most forlorn in that they were often living with their offspring, had little to fill their time and seemed lost in the past. Having regional experience, she continued, "allows one to look at a problem in a cross-border, multi-lateral fashion, unrestricted by our more typical bilateral perspective." Refcoord positions, she said, let FSOs acquire and develop important skills, such as humanitarian policy, multilateral diplomacy and program management.

"Being a refcoord," she said, "is a job that makes you feel as though you are doing something good for others." ■



Mid-Career Retirement Planning

By Sarah Genton, division director, Overseas Briefing Center

For mid-career employees interested in retirement planning, the Foreign Service Institute's two-day seminar on the topic (RV105) offers a way for Civil Service and Foreign Service employees with 10 to 15 years left before retirement to learn about annuities, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contributions, federal health benefits, financial management, life after retirement and estate planning. They also learn to assess their tolerance for investment risk while developing post-retirement goals.

"The course was an eye opener," said Bix Aliu, an FSI instructor in the Public Diplomacy Training Division. "It shook us up a little, [by saying] here's where you are now; here's where you want to be, and how are you going to get there?"

"We encourage participants to explore every possible scenario," said Catherine McCormick, coordinator of the FSI Career Transition Center and the course organizer. She said attendees often want to know the steps to prepare for retirement, the reasonable retirement age, the right date to maximize retirement benefits and how to manage their TSP or pay college tuition during retirement. She said the course aims to give attendees an understanding of the process and a plan for action.

Research shows that the most successful retirees are those who put together reliable and flexible financial resources that will provide for their retirement lifestyles and emerging needs. This calls for retirement planning that starts at mid-career, when one can effectively estimate employment needs and family circumstances, understand benefit packages and create adequate contingency plans.

Retired government employees' financial security arises from a combination of the federal retirement annuity; Social Security, military or private sector pension benefits; TSP income; and income from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and other investments.

The FSI seminar helps employees learn to calculate estimated income and projected expenses in retirement, review investment and savings options, and consult with experts regarding wills and trusts, powers of attorney and tax implications. Presenters explain the complexities of Civil Service and Foreign Service annuities and how to use EBIS (the Employee Benefits Information System, which is available via HR Online) and its high-three salary and annuity calculators. Attendees also learn about life insurance and health care benefits, including potential pitfalls when proper beneficiary designations are not made and declared at retirement.

"I think everybody is fearful that they won't have enough money in retirement. You hear stories about people who did not plan," said attendee Kathy Cox, a legal assistant at the Foreign Service Grievance Board. She said one thing she learned was to build an emergency fund to cover several months of expenses.

Another attendee, Jud Barnes, an office director in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, said the financial planner's advice convinced him to be more aggressive with his TSP investments.

"I had a general sense that my conservative nature wasn't translating into the best earnings, but it helped greatly to hear the rationale for being more aggressive now," he said.

Barnes has made other financial changes and advised his son on how to handle his 401(k) plan when he enters the workforce after college.

For Ellen Dempsey, a Foreign Service health practitioner with the Office of Medical Services, "a big light bulb went off" when she realized she has time to make adjustment that will best to meet her needs. "Understanding how the annuity works has made me think twice about leaving the State Department before 65," she said. The seminar also

emphasizes paying attention to health. Sudden illness or disability can eat away at hard-earned retirement savings. Planning for an unexpected change in health means exploring long-term care insurance. Employees can calculate the average cost of assisted living, home health care and nursing home care in a specific geographical area by using the Federal Long Term Care Insurance website, www.ltcfeds.com. Course participants learn that the younger they are when buying long-term care insurance, the more affordable it is, given that costs are spread over a longer period.

Employees' pre-retirement checklists vary, but they should not wait until retirement to make crucial decisions on their future. As attendee Kimberly Krhounek, deputy director for Central European Affairs in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, put it: "If I hadn't taken the class, I might have waited another five years to do some of these things."

This year, Mid-Career Retirement Seminars will be held May 2-3, June 13-14 and November 13-14. Next year, a January 16-17 seminar marks the first time the course will be offered in that month. Registration information is on FSI's website at www.state.gov/m, or by emailing FSICTC@state.gov. ■



Retirement Readiness Tips

- Get familiar with EBIS, through HR Online.
- Create and maintain an emergency cash fund equal to at least three months of your usual expenses.
- Make sure you know your retirement system (CSRS/FERS/FSPS/FSRDS), listed under "deductions" in your earnings and leave statements.
- Investigate long-term care for your parents, you, your spouse or same-sex domestic partner at ltcfeds.com.

- Compile a list of important emergency information for family members, then let them know where it is.
- Create and regularly update legal documents for you and your spouse/partner, including a medical power of attorney, "living will," durable power of attorney and will or trust.
- Check your list of beneficiaries annually for your TSP, investments and life insurance, Official Personnel file (from your bureau HR specialist if created before 1999 and/or from HR Online if created since 1999), federal life insurance, accrued annual leave, unpaid compensation and retirement plan contributions.

- Check out online federal retirement resources such as:
 - The State Department's "eSeminars" on financial planning, insurance, Social Security and Flexible Spending Accounts at HR Online/EBIS.
 - A weekly retirement planning article at govexec.com.
 - The National Institute of Transition Planning's list of radio shows, webinars and other programs on retirement planning at nitpic.com.
 - The National Association of Retired and Federal Employees at narfe.org.



Ambassador James Entwistle speaks with a poll worker during his team's election observation mission.
 Photo by Millie Canter

New Bureau Helps Embassy Observe DRC Elections

By the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations and Embassy Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a country that has suffered tremendous instability and violence in the past two decades, held its first elections completely organized by the Congolese government since the end of the Mobutu era, on Nov. 28, 2011. The move represented a milestone and a challenge.

Monitoring the elections was also a challenge for the United States and international partners in a country as large as the United States east of the Mississippi River but with fewer paved roads than the District of Columbia.

In the run-up to the elections, the U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa realized it was the only diplomatic mission in the DRC able to muster a team of election observers large enough to offer widespread on-the-ground coverage. To supplement its staff, the post reached out to what would become the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), which stood up in November. A team from the future CSO helped develop and implement an election observation mission and reporting plan.

Starting in October, CSO deployed experts from the Department of State, USAID and departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to help the embassy plan and execute a two-phase election

reporting and observation mission. CSO experts also worked alongside the embassy's political section to develop a detailed reporting plan to ensure that field teams observed the technical aspects of the electoral



A voting official displays the list of registered voters in his bureau.
 Photo by Dorothee Bond

process and the stabilization issues and conflict dynamics at play.

Several weeks before the election, CSO conflict experts, embassy and USAID personnel and a political officer from the nearby U.S. Embassy in Brazzaville were paired with Locally Employed Staff members to form 15 teams that traveled to each of the DRC's 10 provinces. The teams reported on campaign activities, built relationships with key local officials, gained a deeper understanding of each area's issues and gauged the electoral commission's preparation for the polls.

As Kathryn Nash, a CSO member deployed to Bunia in the DRC's extreme northeast explained, "Our aim was to meet and create relationships with representatives from local political parties and organizations, the United Nations, local electoral commission workers, other observer missions and local officials."

The CSO team and the embassy worked together to accredit more than 100 American and Congolese embassy employees as U.S. government election observers, arranged itineraries on U.N. flights and organized ground transport for dozens of teams making multiple trips to field sites. The CSO team members also trained the field teams to observe and report. As a result, field teams were able to provide volumes of detailed reporting and analysis on election and stability issues for every region before the vote, giving the embassy and Washington a clearer understanding of the electoral situation and possible flashpoints.

The field teams stayed in hotels and Catholic missions, searching out local government and international partners with whom to build relationships. They also worked to establish a robust presence in places where the U.S. government had had little previous contact, earning the embassy valuable contacts for the election period and beyond.

Paul Sevier, a member of the CSO team from USAID, said his team's arrival marked the start of a relationship with the community where it worked. "On arriving in Kindu and depositing our bags at the local hotel," he said, "my LES counterpart, Mihigo Yamuhasha, and I walked down the main street, and after dropping in on the governor's office immediately started interacting with the local population—the beginning of a dynamic and varied engagement with the people of Maniema Province."

Well before dawn on election day, the teams began arriving at provincial voting centers, generating reports as soon as polls opened. An additional 17 teams, including one led by U.S. Ambassador James F. Entwistle, fanned out across the capital city of Kinshasa in the pre-dawn hours to bear witness to the tense, exciting atmosphere. By the time the polls closed and vote counting began late in the evening, the teams had provided firsthand observations from hundreds of polling stations nationwide. Once the vote counts were posted at each center, the teams gathered results from more than 500 polling stations.

To coordinate and promote communication between the observers and between the embassy and Washington, the embassy and CSO staff ran an Elections Command Center. Directed by Deputy Political Counselor Daniel M. Renna, the center operated without stop to monitor the teams' safety and consolidate their reporting.

"Amidst all the circling rumors, the Command Center provided the teams with a mechanism for distinguishing fact from fiction," said Jean-Pierre DeBarros, a team member from the Department of Health and Human Services. "This proved to be the linchpin to the success of our field operations."

In the days following the elections, it became evident that serious problems were developing in the vote-counting centers. U.S. government observers monitored regional vote-compilation centers and reported on the nation's security situation. Embassy Kinshasa used the teams' information to determine where significant flaws existed in the counting process and understand how the electoral process was evolving on the ground.

Thanks to its collaboration with CSO, the embassy was the only diplomatic mission in the DRC to have received information directly from staff at field sites. The embassy provided its findings to other



Congolese citizens line up outside a voting center. *Photo by Kathryn Nash*
Below: People in Mbuji-Mayi crowd the entrance to their polling station. *Photo by Jean Pierre DeBarros*



diplomatic missions in Kinshasa, none of which had a similar country-wide reach or understanding of what had transpired. That information will inform future policy and programmatic interventions, supporting democratic consolidation in the DRC and the aspirations of its people.

More information on Embassy Kinshasa's work in the DRC can be found on its website, kinshasa.usembassy.gov, and more information about the CSO is available at state.gov/j/cso or by emailing CSOpublic@state.gov. ■



Post of the Month



The Petronas Towers dominate the skyline, as seen from the Menara Kuala Lumpur telecommunication tower. At 451.9 meters, the towers are the tallest twin skyscrapers ever built.

Corbis photo

KUALA LUMPUR

Strategic Malaysia Seeks Broad U.S. Ties
By Adam Zerbinopoulos, vice consul, U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur



Right: Hindu faithful from around the world come to the temples in Malaysia's Batu Caves during the Thaipusam festival. *Photo by the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur*
Below: A proboscis monkey leaps from tree to tree. *Photo by Scott Rauland*



Above: Evening strollers sample Kuala Lumpur's famous street food. **Right:** Embassy staffers go jungle trekking in Kuala Lumpur's Bukit Gasing. *Photos by the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur*



Kuala Lumpur sits in a valley at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak rivers amid the Malay Peninsula's rolling jungles. The city began taking shape in the 1850s, when the discovery of tin drew immigrant miners from southern China. Like many boom-towns, Kuala Lumpur's early history was colorful: A gang war virtually depopulated the nascent town, and it once nearly burned to the ground. But the city was repopulated and rebuilt (this time in brick, by order of the British, to avoid future destruction) and grew rapidly in wealth and prominence, becoming in turn the capital of Selangor state, the Federated Malay States, independent Malaya and, finally, modern Malaysia.

Kuala Lumpur today is the economic and cultural engine that powers a flourishing country. The glittering skyline with its iconic Petronas Twin Towers offers visual testimony to the large strides Malaysia has made and provides a sense of the nation's ambitions. Senior U.S. officials visiting Malaysia have been struck by its astonishing economic development, a feat achieved by the energy of the Malaysian people in partnership with U.S. businesses.

That spirit of dynamism and progress is echoed in the work of the roughly 100 American and 200 local employees of the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur who are building a bilateral relationship that has never been stronger. The embassy's top priorities include expanding outreach to Malaysian communities, particularly Muslims and youth; increasing bilateral trade to generate U.S. jobs and economic growth; and developing closer counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation and security cooperation. Malaysian participation in bilateral and multilateral military exercises has increased dramatically, as have U.S. Navy ship visits and training opportunities for U.S. personnel at Malaysian facilities.

The current government has made improved U.S. relations a major foreign policy priority as Malaysia has emerged from a period of ambivalence toward the developed world with a strengthened appreciation of the benefits of engagement. Coinciding with renewed U.S. focus on Asia, and Southeast Asia in particular, recent years have seen enhanced cooperation in virtually every aspect of the relationship. That relationship has a long and sometimes eccentric history.

Joseph Balestier, one of the earliest U.S. diplomatic representatives to what is now Malaysia, arrived in Kuching in 1851 with orders to establish relations with James Brooke, a

British adventurer known as the "White Rajah of Sarawak" who was sovereign over a large part of Borneo. Among Balestier's successors was Charles Moses, a consul with an entrepreneurial bent whose plan to begin an American colony in Borneo received permission from local rulers. He neglected, however, to sound out either the interest of his government in the scheme or willingness of Americans to live in a place then considered the farthest end of the earth. The venture failed, but an official American presence continued. Consulate Kuala Lumpur was established in 1947 and upgraded to an embassy upon the country's independence from Britain in 1957.

Location alone gives Malaysia a key geo-strategic role. To the east, it overlooks the frequently disputed, resource-rich South China Sea, while on the west it overlooks the Straits of Malacca, the chokepoint through which roughly a quarter of the world's maritime trade passes. Trade has been a mainstay of the economy since traders—Malay, Indian, Arab, Chinese and eventually European—began frequenting the small ports dotting Malaysia's coast more than a thousand years ago.

Natural resources have also been a driver of economic growth: At one time Malaysia was the world's largest exporter of tin and leading producer of rubber; today, it is a major oil and natural gas exporter and the world's second largest producer of palm oil, found in everything from food to cosmetics. Malaysia is also an important manufacturing center, especially of electronic products.

Natural beauty is another bountiful resource, including otherworldly limestone caves, pristine beaches, brilliant coral reefs and the world's oldest tropical rain forest. Giant sea turtles, orangutans, hornbills, proboscis monkeys, the pygmy rhinoceros and elephants exemplify its rich biodiversity.

The country is investing in education to transform itself into a knowledge-based economy, encouraging entrepreneurship and fostering an information technology industry with the aim of becoming a high-income country by 2020.

The United States is the nation's top foreign investor. Malaysians welcomed 17 leading Silicon Valley entrepreneurs in a recent trip organized by a local alumnus of President Obama's Entrepreneurship Summit. Malaysia's high-tech trade ties include those with U.S. firms Intel, Hewlett-Packard, AMD, Western Digital and First Solar. The oil and gas industry is also a significant focus of strong economic links.



Clockwise from left: Visitors mount their ride at Kuala Gandah elephant sanctuary; a motorbike rider pauses for morning tea in George Town; the Petronas Twin Towers reach skyward. *Photos by the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. A green sea turtle swims off the coast of Tioman Island. Photo by Scott Rauland*



People-to-people ties are on the upswing, as the United States becomes an increasingly attractive destination for Malaysian tourists, business people and students. U.S. Navy ships frequently call at Malaysian ports, and the American community has responded by establishing an “adopt-a-sailor” program to welcome service members on shore leave. Cultural exchanges have been given a boost by the recent arrival of 50 Fulbright English teaching assistants, whom the prime minister personally welcomed before they headed to work in Malaysian schools.

Malaysia’s location astride one of the world’s great trading routes has brought generations of visitors, traders and immigrants to its shores, and each group has left its mark on the country’s rich history and culture. The nation’s indigenous Orang Asli or “original people” still live in their own villages and practice their traditional culture and lifestyle. Malays form a majority of the population, but many ethnic Chinese and Indian citizens have helped create a uniquely Malaysian culture, influencing everything from language to food and architecture. The British colonial presence can still be felt, as well, most prominently in the wide use of the English language. The Islamic influence is reflected in the fact that Malaysia’s federal states are built on the foundation of Islamic sultanates, which were themselves built atop ancient Malay kingdoms.

This layered history makes Malaysian culture a fascinating mixture that has been celebrated by such writers as Anthony Burgess, V.S. Naipaul, Paul Theroux and Somerset Maugham. UNESCO World Heritage sites in Malaysia include not only places of ecological significance, but also the beautifully preserved Straits Settlements cities of George Town and Melaka (Malacca).

In keeping with the nation’s multiculturalism, a range of religious holidays are officially celebrated. The embassy community embodies this spirit with a local staff-led rotating annual gala celebrating, in turn, religious holidays from the three major ethnic communities—Eid al-Fitr, Chinese New Year and Deepavali. American employees do their part for intercultural understanding with another annual tradition: hosting a traditional Thanksgiving meal for their Malaysian colleagues with agency and section heads and families doing much of the cooking and serving.

Life in Malaysia has much to offer the embassy community, with infrastructure, medical care and educational opportunities meeting developed-world standards. Jungle trekking, beach resorts, spelunking and unsurpassed scuba diving are within easy reach. Epicureans can enjoy the famous local flavors dished out by street-side hawkers. For getaways, there are homegrown, low-cost airlines affording safe and convenient access to destinations around the region and to Europe, India and Australia.

At a time of economic growth, efforts toward political change and a burgeoning bilateral partnership, there has never been a more exciting time to work at Embassy Kuala Lumpur. ■

Post of the Month



At a Glance Malaysia

Capital: Kuala Lumpur

Government type: Federal parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch

Area: 329,847 sq. km

Comparative area: Slightly larger than New Mexico

Population: 28.3 million

Languages: Bahasa Melayu (official), Chinese (various dialects), English, Tamil and indigenous

Ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese, indigenous, Indian and others

Religions: Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism

GDP—per capita: \$8,125

Export commodities: Electronic equipment, petroleum products, wood, palm oil and rubber

Export partners: Singapore, China, Japan, U.S. and Thailand

Import commodities: Electronics, machinery, petroleum products, plastics and vehicles

Import partners: China, Japan, Singapore, U.S. and Thailand

Currency: Ringgits (MYR)

Internet country code: .my

Source: Country Background Notes

Through a Lens, Boldly

Department photographer looks back at exciting career

Story by Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, deputy coordinator for Programs, Policy and Budget, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism

Photos by Ann Thomas

Ann Thomas, one of the State Department's long-time senior photographers, has during the past 33 years covered the commonplace—awards and retirement ceremonies and photo ops with the President or Secretary of State—and the historic.

On the latter score, she recalled how, when photographing the opening of the U.S.-hosted 1998 Israeli-Palestinian peace talks at Wye River, Md., Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was at the top of the stairs leading into a building, awaiting then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's arrival. Thomas was at the bottom of the stairs calculating the best arrival-shot angles among the many Secret Service officers and golf carts, which were used to move dignitaries around the resort, when Netanyahu and Israeli Defense

Minister Yitzhak Mordechai came down the stairs, jumped on a golf cart and took off, laughing. The Secret Service and delegation members scrambled after them on foot, in vehicles and in golf carts.

"I never learned why he did it," she said.

On another occasion, at the White House to cover the Queen of England, Thomas got lost, came through a door and ran into a large Secret Service agent. "He asked me where the heck I'd come from, and I stammered that I was from State and was there to cover the queen," she recalled. The agent said the queen was to enter right where Thomas stood, so she would have to go stand with the photographers at the other end of the room, where there were tripods, standing cameras and what looked like a hundred photographers.

"I only had my trusty hand-held without a telephoto lens; I told him I would never get a clear shot over all that equipment and from that distance," she said. The agent took pity and told her that when the queen entered, "you've got about one minute to get the shots you need. One minute. And when that minute is up I've got to grab you and hoist you out of here. It's going to be rough; do you think you can handle that?"

She agreed and thanked him and, "as the words were out of my mouth, the queen came through the door. I turned and started snapping as if my life depended on it. It seemed like only 30 seconds had passed when I felt two big hands grab me by the shoulders and literally lift me almost off the ground and chuck me out the door. I was shaken and a little disheveled, but I got the shot!"

Often, she had to take photos in crowded and awkward conditions, such as working in the rain or when a new secretary of state entered the C Street lobby for the first time. She received no preferential position among the other photographers, and so became adept at what she calls "one-handed blind shots," which involve holding the camera aloft and clicking away.

This rainy scene at a historic burial reflects the challenging conditions under which Thomas often worked.





State Department photo



Clockwise from above: Red Coats go piping by as Queen Elizabeth II of England and then-President George H.W. Bush stand in review; Shortly after her arrival at the Department 33 years ago, Thomas was photographed by a colleague; Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and Yitzhak Mordechai enjoy an impromptu golf cart ride—with a security team in pursuit.

She also said she sought to photograph her subjects in action.

“I wanted animation, not just the easiest shot,” she said. “Those off-the-cuff shots often told the best stories and, equally often, were the shots my subjects liked best. Sometimes I had to overstep protocol to get what was best.”

One photo subject she fondly recalls was former Secretary Lawrence Eagleburger, whom she often photographed and found “full of unexpected kindnesses.” She said once, while awaiting a meeting with a foreign dignitary, Eagleburger began grouching at her as she prepared to take photographs. Suddenly, she said, he “stuck his tongue out at me”—and she snapped the photo. A few days later, he asked for the photo and she said no.

“We went back and forth, with him insisting that he had to have the photograph,” she recalled. “Well, finally, I handed it over, and

as I left the room he chuckled and tore it up. Just outside the door I turned and said, ‘I don’t know why you’re laughing; I’ve still got the negative.’”

Thomas says official photos were the hardest shots to take since people were sometimes too solemn. She recalled how one ambassador came for his official photo, and nearly a hundred exposures later he had only smiled once. Another ambassador absolutely refused to smile for her shot, she said, so Thomas begged and teased and finally insulted her. That got a laugh and six smiling shots, all of which the ambassador loved. (The ambassador’s husband called later to thank Thomas for the beautiful shots of his wife.)

Thomas came to photography as a young girl when her uncle gave her a Polaroid camera. Photography took her from her family’s farm in tiny Appomattox, Va., to Washing-

ton D.C., and Howard University, where she earned a degree in fine arts, photography and business.

When Thomas started at the Department she developed film in a dark room. Later, she planned the Department’s move to digital photography. Another of her innovations was to take private, informal family photos before officials swore in.

In retirement, Thomas will return to Appomattox. She had hoped to simply look after her eight acres of land and travel the world, but she said she has identified a need in her community, and is working with a local church to raise money to provide after-school activities and training for youths.

After a career of recording many of the Department’s memorable moments, she is ready to give local children an opportunity to create memories of their own. ■



Albert Anderson shields his nine-year-old daughter Madison from tropical storm-force winds and rain as they make their way across a pier along the Potomac River in Old Town, Alexandria, Va., Aug. 27, 2011. D.C.-area residents were blasted with strong winds and heavy rainfall last year when Hurricane Irene swept past the U.S. East Coast.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco


Check out a video of Hurricane Irene sweeping through the U.S. Capital Region online at state.gov/statemag.

SIMON Helps Planners Prepare for Disasters

By Eric C. Vore, emergency planner, Office of Emergency Management

To help emergency planners better anticipate the impact of natural or man-made disasters on Department employees and facilities, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has worked with other Department offices to develop the State Incident Management Operating Nexus (SIMON) computer program.

SIMON is a geographic information system (GIS) that collects and displays information relevant to U.S. disaster planning and response. GIS software captures, stores, manipulates, analyzes, manages and presents geographically referenced data to support decision making. Typically, a GIS combines cartography, statistical analysis and database technology, allowing emergency planners to conduct interactive searches, analyze spatial information, edit maps and data, and present the results.

SIMON displays Department of State data in a Web-based viewer that's accessible from employees' workstations or via the Global OpenNet (GO) at simon.a.state.gov. The system can display satellite or street-map images from throughout the United States, including weather radar, severe weather alerts, hurricane and tropical storm-tracking information, United States Geological Survey earthquake data, Department domestic facility locations and other GIS tools.

There are two ways to view SIMON on OpenNet. One is the general Department of State Viewer, which has generic GIS tools and maps enhanced with basic Department baseline data for use by nonemergency Department personnel. The other is the OEM Viewer, a more robust site designed to provide the Department's Incident Management Team (IMT) and Mission Critical Team with the tools and information to make timely decisions during incidents that could endanger Department employees or facilities.

The DOS Viewer has an "identify" tool that lets users query the data for any Department domestic location, and a routing function that provides directions to the location.

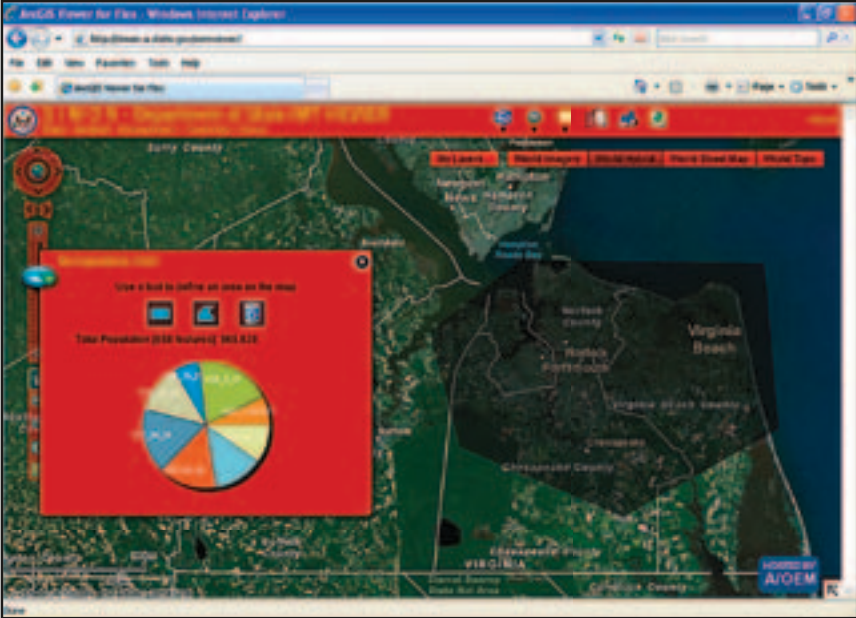
SIMON also lets users stay abreast of developing severe weather conditions through its "Severe Weather" and "Weather RADAR" map layers, which update automatically with the latest National Weather Service information. The Weather RADAR layer displays affected areas based on types of precipitation.

Users can bookmark Department facilities of interest, to quickly navigate from location to location, and can also customize SIMON and share maps they create with remote colleagues.

The SIMON OEM Viewer has been used by the Department's emergency personnel to:



Above: SIMON administrators Edward O'Neill, left, and John McDermott use SIMON to monitor Hurricane Irene's track from inside the Emergency Management Center. *Photo by the Office of Emergency Management* **Left:** OEM emergency planners can use SIMON's demographic tools to determine how many people live in specific geographic regions that may be affected by a disaster.



from Hurricanes model displays storm surge data from significant storms affecting the United States, allowing the IMT to advise Department facilities and employees on the best evacuation routes. OEM's Emergency Management Center uses SIMON screen shots for representing tropical storms, depressions and hurricanes in its reporting.

During Hurricane Irene, the IMT used SIMON to track the progress of the storm up the East Coast and identify areas at risk from storm surge and inland flooding so it could issue warnings to Department facilities and personnel, and confer with facility administrators on preparations.

- Monitor Japan's earthquake and tsunami warnings for Hawaii and the West Coast, and prepare for their impacts;
- Provide situational updates to Department leadership, employees and facilities during the 2011 tornadoes that struck the Midwest;
- Support Department participants in the National Level Exercise 2011 and Eagle Horizon 2011 exercise; and
- Provide situational awareness to Department leadership during the 2011 hurricane season, specifically regarding the more than 130 Department offices in the path of Hurricane Irene.

To enhance SIMON, OEM uses GIS applications and map services from the private sector and government organizations, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center, U.S. Geological Survey's National Earthquake Information Center and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's National Grid.

When activated, the IMT uses SIMON to help coordinate emergency responses. For example, FEMA's Sea, Lake and Overland Surges

"During the IMT's response to Hurricane Irene, SIMON played a vital role in providing the most current data and imagery available," said IMT Planning Section Chief Kristina Mattice. "Knowing that the trajectories displayed on the SIMON viewer were being fed directly from the National Hurricane Center and included all available forecast models was an invaluable tool and allowed us to make the most informed operational decisions possible."

SIMON also provides a comprehensive database on critical infrastructure and key resources that the IMT can use to expedite readiness, response and recovery after a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

Looking to SIMON's future, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations is hosting a working group that seeks to create an environment in which GIS services are shared and used throughout the Department. And OEM is working with Department bureaus to share lessons learned, GIS data and SIMON's tools and applications.

For more information, contact SIMON administrators John McDermott, (202) 776-8852, or Edward O'Neill, (202) 647-1853. A tutorial video and SIMON FAQ list is available at eprepare.a.state.gov. ■

Standing Up & Speaking Out

Office Promotes Human Rights Worldwide

By Amirah Ismail, Foreign Service officer, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor



The Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs within the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL/MLGA) promotes Internet freedom; defends the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons; opposes onerous NGO rules; prevents human rights abusers from receiving U.S. assistance or munitions; advances U.N. human rights policy; and engages the private sector to incorporate human rights in business practices.

“There’s probably no single office in the State Department that covers so wide a range of issues that span the entire globe,” said Deputy Assistant Secretary Daniel Baer, who oversees DRL/MLGA. “The office was a driving force behind the creation of a U.N. Special Rapporteur for Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and Association, represented the U.S. in negotiations for a new code of conduct for private security contractors, helped develop the Secretary’s speeches on civil society at Krakow and on human rights for LGBT people in Geneva, launched a world-wide vetting database to prevent us from giving assistance to human rights abusers—and those are just a few of the things that have been accomplished in the last two years.”

That broad mission could be spread over a number of bureaus, but it is, in fact, the job of a single office that was restructured last year after a reorganization of the bureau to address updated Department priorities. DAS Baer said his first impression of DRL/MLGA was that it was “a sprawling office of ‘cats and dogs’ because of the wide range of issues. I still see it that way, but that is part of what I like about it—there’s so much variety that it makes the whole office a very dynamic team.”

Headed by Director Scott Busby and Deputy Lynn Sicade, DRL/MLGA is comprised of five teams: Internet Freedom, Business and Human Rights, Political and Military Affairs, Multilateral Affairs and Global Issues. Each team works closely with counterparts in other bureaus on a range of issues.

For example, Sicade, along with Steve Moody and Dan Novinson from the Global Issues team, worked with partners across the Department to lay the groundwork for the Secretary of State’s landmark speech in Geneva on the rights of LGBT persons and to prepare the President’s Executive Order implementing this bold agenda. The team is now helping stand up a Department-wide task force to integrate the human rights of LGBT people into U.S. diplomacy and creating a tool kit for posts to use as they engage local governments and civil society on this issue. The team (Steve Moody, Amirah Ismail, Megan Wong and Sofija Korac) is also responding to threats against civil society worldwide and advancing the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and members of other vulnerable groups.

The story of human rights is increasingly unfolding online and through mobile technologies that people worldwide use to exercise their rights of expression, assembly and association. DRL/MLGA’s Internet Freedom team (John Tye, Katharine Kendrick and Seth Bouvier) has supported three of the Secretary’s major policy addresses on this topic in the past two years.

Most recently, the team worked closely with the government of the Netherlands to launch the Coalition for Freedom Online. The coalition is a group of 15 governments committed to actions to promote Internet freedom, which Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Michael H. Posner said is “a foundation for the 21st Century human rights agenda.” The Internet Freedom team also helped define the Department’s approach to key legislative and policy issues affecting Internet freedom. In partnership with DRL’s Global Programs Office, it helped direct \$70 million in programming to enable digital activists to safely exercise fundamental Internet freedoms.



Above: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delivers a landmark human rights address regarding LGBT persons at the U.N. office in Geneva in December. *Photo by U.S. Mission to the U.N., Geneva* Below: Melike Yetken, DRL Business and Human Rights section chief, speaks at a forum of USAID leaders regarding U.S. engagement on business and human rights. *USAID photo*





DRL/MLGA also helps to ensure that U.S. assistance does not fall into the hands of human rights abusers, by implementing Congress' Leahy Amendment and other legislative and policy commitments. So-called "Leahy vetting" involves assessing whether a foreign security force is guilty of gross human rights violations and therefore should not receive U.S. assistance. The Political-Military Affairs team (Winston Mann, Lana Salih, Asa Miller and Bob Zuehlke) conducts the Leahy vetting worldwide. The team worked with DRL's Information Management Division to develop and deploy the International Vetting and Security Tracking System, the first database to catalogue the thousands of cases submitted for vetting. The team also works with the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and regional bureaus to ensure that munitions are made available only to governments that comply with U.S. human rights law and policies.

Because 43 of the world's 100 largest economic actors are companies (Wal-Mart's 2011 revenues make it the world's 26th biggest economy), corporate decisions can have

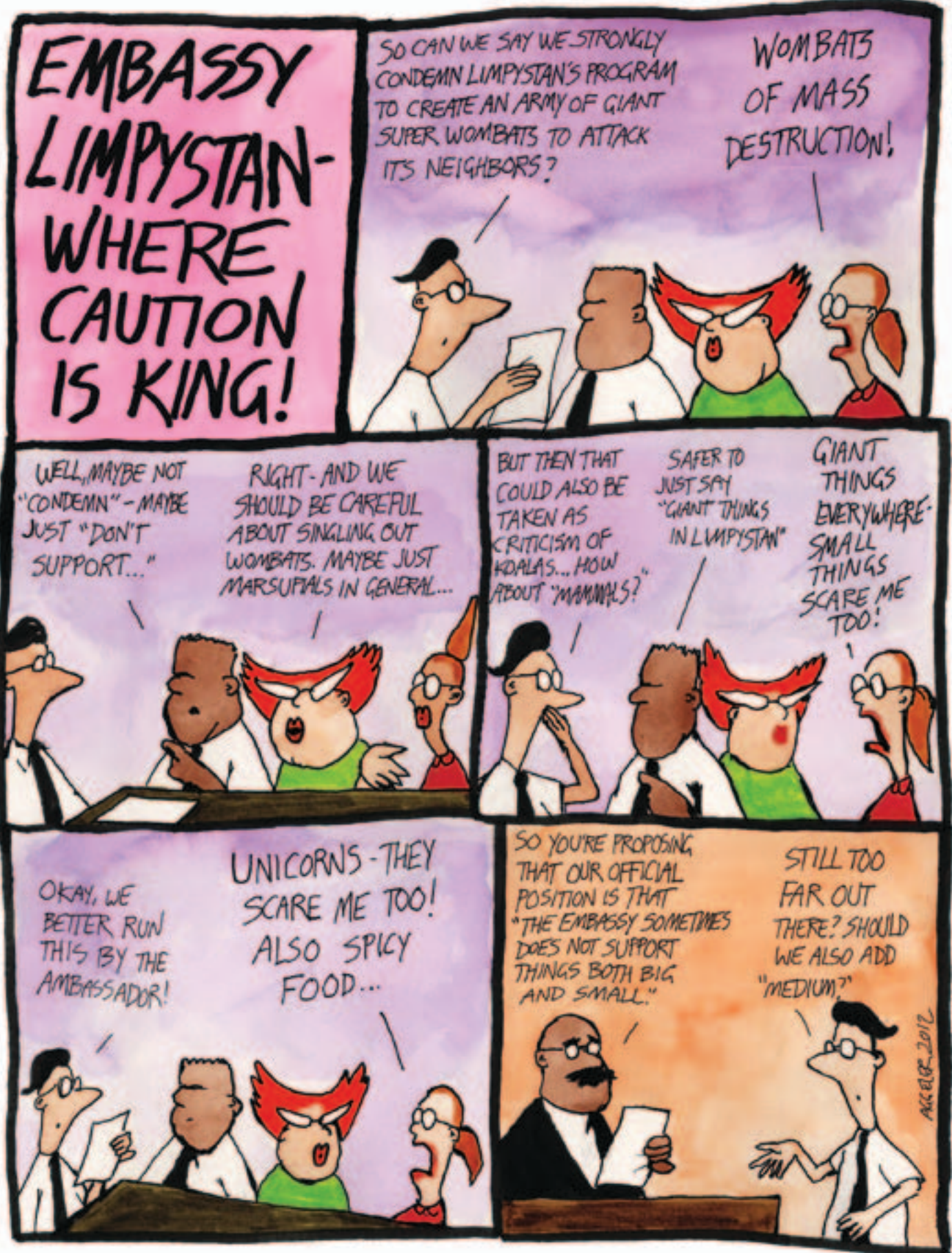
a significant impact on people's lives. DRL/MLGA's Business and Human Rights team (Melike Yetken, Alan Krill and Jenny Stein) works with companies around the globe to implement policies that respect human rights. The team also engages on a range of issues that affect producers and consumers, from the mining and selling of conflict minerals to the type of information companies publicly disclose.

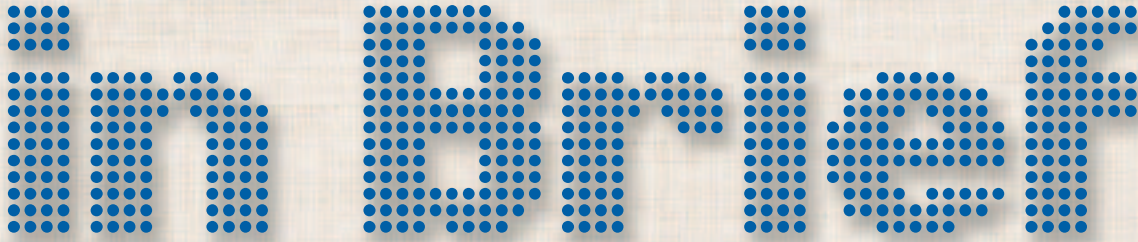
The team is working on a public-private partnership called the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, a multi-stakeholder initiative consisting of countries, companies and NGOs that aims to help companies in the extractive industries (oil, mining and gas) enhance respect for human rights. Last year, the team also worked to forward two other international agreements that guide corporations on respecting human rights: the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Contractors.

The United States has long been a leader in working with global partners to set standards and take action to protect human

rights in international law and practice. The Multilateral Affairs team (David Galindo, Arsalan Suleman and Kelly Landry) works closely with the Bureau of International Organizations (IO) and the Office of the Legal Advisor (L) to advance U.S. human rights policies in multilateral forums, including the U.N. Human Rights Council. Last year, the team worked to mobilize U.N. action on human rights crises, including those in Syria and Iran.

The team was also able to end the decade-long run of the "Defamation of Religions" resolution in the U.N., in partnership with IO, L and DRL's International Religious Freedom office. In its place, the U.N. Human Rights Council adopted U.S.-sponsored Resolution 16/18, which focuses on concrete measures other than restricting speech that countries can take to combat religious intolerance. To capitalize on this success, the team helped launch the Istanbul Process, a series of meetings where experts work to implement the actions called for by the resolution. The United States hosted the first meeting in December. ■





CG Dubai Dedicated

In November, Ambassador Michael H. Corbin, Consul General Justin Siberell and Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohamed al Maktoum, deputy ruler of Dubai, presided over the dedication of the new U.S. Consulate General in Dubai. Representatives of the government, academic, business and cultural sectors attended, along with the diplomatic corps and Leo Hession, operations manager for the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, which oversaw design and construction.

In August 2011, the Consulate General moved into the new facility, located near the consulates of Saudi Arabia and Qatar in Dubai's diplomatic quarter. The facility allows the Consulate General to increase the efficiency and accessibility of its services to the public and represents a commitment to preserving and protecting the environment as well. The complex was built using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) principles and incorporates environmentally friendly features in its water, environmental and lighting systems. More information is available online at dubai.usconsulate.gov.



Enjoying a tour of the new facility are, foreground from left, Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, Consul General Justin Siberell and Ambassador Michael Corbin.
Photo by Hamid Al Mansoori

HR Upgrades IPMS

The Bureau of Human Resources in January upgraded the Department's Integrated Personnel Management System (IPMS), an overarching program for all HR corporate and bureau applications. These include HR Online, the HR Knowledge Center, Post Personnel, the Executive Agency Personnel System and the Global Employment Management System (GEMS).

The IPMS upgrade involved standing up a new hardware infrastructure at the Department's Enterprise Server Operations Center in Virginia and upgrading underlying software

for approximately 55 applications, including GEMS. The upgrade resulted in increased online application performance and security access.

The upgrade positioned the Department to ensure utmost protection of employees' Personally Identifiable Information (PII). "Protecting access to employees' PII information is paramount," said Bill Schaal, HR's acting executive director.

Schaal also said the upgrade has optimized HR applications' performance and positioned the Department "to stay a step ahead in IT transformation and deliver state of the art applications to the customer."

More information is on the HR intranet homepage.

Program Boosts Bike Riders

Employees' increased use of the Department's bicycle loaner program has been matched by a new bike-related program that gives qualifying staff a subsidy for using a non-motorized bike to get to work.

Under the bicycle loaner program, which offers employees free use of 10 bicycles located in the parking garage of the Harry S Truman building, employees can borrow a bike to attend a meeting or take a short, lunchtime ride on the Mall. The 240 participants rode 929 miles during 2010 and 1,158 miles during 2011.

The Department's Bicycle Reimbursement Program, meanwhile, encourages use of non-motorized bicycles

for commuting by underwriting the purchase, repair and/or maintenance of such equipment if it's the employee's primary means of commuting. Eligible employees can receive a \$20-per-month reimbursement of those expenses. More information is available by searching for "bike subsidy" on the HR website.



Retirements

Foreign Service

Baker, Christopher A.
Charles, Margaret B.
Cooke, Donald J.
Davies, Glyn T.
Fleming, Martha D.
Giles, Timothy L.
Jennings, Monika Dietrich
Pauli-Widenhouse, Vera
Philpott, George K.
Wohlman, Jacob M.

Civil Service

Askman, Teresita Polanco
Graham, Russell Frost
Harrison, Sharon M.
Hoskings, Virginia A.
Reinckens, William B.
Sanders, James R.
Shotwell, Charles B.
Winslow, Sydney

Mentoring Program Celebrates Decennial

In February, the Bureau of Human Resources' Civil Service Mentoring Program celebrated program "graduates" and its 10th year of matching CS mentees with CS and Foreign Service mentors. At the event, mentees and mentors thanked program officials for providing such tools as an action plan and monthly workshops.

Speakers included mentor Mary E. Bati and her mentee, Sara E. Collins, accompanied by her sign language interpreter. Collins thanked Bati for encouraging her to take risks, such as speaking before the gathering. Jeffrey D. Miller and mentee Claudia N. Castro emphasized how they had learned from each other. Also speaking were Jacqueline Hill, director of CS Human Resource Management; HR Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda S. Taglialatela; and Ambassador Barry Wells, director of USAID's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity.



"By encouraging collaboration and self esteem, mentoring empowers mentees and sometimes their mentors to set audacious goals and take risks to achieve those goals," Taglialatela said.

Ambassador Wells, who served as a mentor, praised the program's growth from 24 to 250 mentor/mentee pairs per year and its addition of informal,

Sign language interpreter Jacob Berge sits at rear as Miriam Ganz interprets at the mentoring celebration. Photo by Juliet A. Rose

"situational" mentors and inclusion of USAID employees.

Kathy Wentworth Drahosz, chief executive officer of program supporter Mentoring Connection, presented her President's Award to program coordinator Sue Beffel.

Education & Training



FSI's Twitter Account!

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) has its own Twitter account. For late-breaking and new info, follow FSI at our Twitter feed @FSIUpdate.

PN435 - Department of State: History, Authorities and the Interagency Process

The course provides an understanding of the role of the State Department in foreign affairs, as well as the authorities designated to its overseas operations. It provides the background and history of the authorities of the Department, as well as the emergence of the authorities designated to other agencies. The course also provides an understanding of the basis for the chief of mission's authority as it relates to the affairs of the Department and other USG agencies overseas. Finally, the course helps the student understand the interagency process as it relates to foreign affairs and the Department's role as lead Foreign Affairs agency. State employees may enroll online at fsi.state.gov. Non-State employees may enroll by submitting a funded SF-182 (FY12 cost is \$65) to the Office of the Registrar by fax at (703) 302-7152.

Student Records Online

Located on the FSI Web page, Student Records Online is a secure, password-protected site that provides access to all FSI training information. Features include:

- Reviewing and printing your training schedule
- 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 (IDP)/Work and Development Plan for Locally Employed Staff (WDP)

For more information and to establish your logon, visit the website at fsi.state.gov.

FSI Web Page

Find everything you need to about FSI and its training opportunities at fsi.state.gov. This site is constantly updated to give you

just-in-time information on services such as:

- **Online Catalog:** Up-to-the-minute course schedules and offerings from live classroom training to distance learning
- **Online Registration System:** Submit your training application for classroom, distance learning and even external training, using the Online Registration link found on virtually every course description or the External Training webpage
- **Training Toolkits:** Roadmaps to help you 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 of 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."

FasTrac Distance Learning

Learn at your own pace, when and where you want! Most Department of State employees, including PSCs and EFM's, in a constant paid status for at least one year, are eligible. With your FasTrac password, you may access the entire FasTrac catalog of over 2,000 courses, from home or office. To view the complete catalog, visit the FasTrac website at fsi.state.gov/fastrac. For more information on all of our distance learning opportunities, visit the FSI website at fsi.state.gov and click on "Distance Learning." ■

Transition Center Courses

	May	June	Length
Security			
MQ911 Security Overseas Seminar	14	4,18,25	2D
MQ914 Security Overseas Seminar, Youth		19,26	1D
Foreign Service Life Skills			
MQ104 Regulations, Allowances & Finances in Foreign Service Context	31		2D
MQ115 Explaining America		7	1D
MQ116 Protocol and the U.S. Representation Abroad	5	9	1D
MQ118 Special Education Needs Overseas Seminar	9		1D
MQ200 Going Overseas for Singles & Couples w/o Children	19		4H
MQ203 Singles in the Foreign Service		13	4H
MQ210 Going Overseas for Families	19		3H
MQ220 Going Overseas - Logistics for Adults	19		2.5H
MQ230 Going Overseas - Logistics for Children	19		2.5H
MQ250 Young Diplomats Day		18,25	1D
MQ704 Targeting the Job Market	3		1D
MQ801 Maintaining Long Distance Relationships	30		4H
MQ802 Communicating Across Cultures		16	1D
MQ852 Personal Finances & Investments for Foreign Affairs Personnel	23		1D
MQ854 Legal Considerations in the Foreign Service	16		2.5H
MQ940 Pre-Deployment Preparation for High Stress Assignments	9	6	3H
MQ950 High Stress Assignment Outbriefing Program	4,18	1,15,29	4H
Career Transition Center			
RV101 Retirement Planning		25	4D
RV 103 Financial Management & Estate Planning Workshop		27	1D
RV104 Annuities, Benefits & Social Security Workshop		26	1D
RV105 Mid-Career Retirement Planning	2	13	2D

For information on all courses available at FSI, visit the FSI schedule of courses on OpenNet at fsi.state.gov. See Department Notices for announcements of new courses and new course dates and periodic announcements of external training opportunities sponsored by FSI. For additional information, please contact the Office of the Registrar at (703) 302-7144/7137.

Length: H = Hours, D = Days, W = Weeks

Obituaries



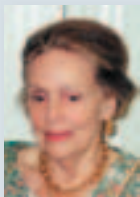
Edward H. Brown, 93, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Oct. 27. He lived in Brussels, Belgium. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Foreign Service in 1947. His postings included Brussels, Copenhagen, Reykjavik, Madrid, Algiers, The Hague, San Salvador and Abidjan. In the mid-1970s he retired to Brussels and became a substitute teacher in gym, music and history at the International School.



William F. DeMyer, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 10 at his home in Manila, Philippines. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. His postings, primarily as a cultural attaché, included Nice, Tokyo, Yokohama, Phnom Penh, Singapore, Saigon, Tehran and Manila. After retiring in 1985, he consulted with the U.S. International University in San Diego on opening campuses in Asia. He enjoyed reading and traveling.



Terry Clay Eakin, 80, a retired Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died Jan. 9 at his home in Mesa, Ariz., after a short illness. He joined USIA in 1967 and served in Bombay; London; Kano, Nigeria; Addis Ababa; Mogadishu; Mbabane, Swaziland; and Monrovia. After retiring in 1988, he taught at Quincy College in Illinois and worked with the Congressional Youth Leadership Council. His widow, Kay Eakin, worked for the State Department.



Hamilton Lee Horsey, 96, widow of retired Foreign Service officer Outerbridge Horsey, died Dec. 29 at her home in Bethesda, Md. She worked with the Office of Strategic Services before marrying Mr. Horsey in 1946, and accompanied him on postings to Italy, Japan and Czechoslovakia, where he was ambassador. After his retirement, she volunteered, taught English as a second language and enjoyed reading, traveling, urban gardens, archaeology and painting. Her daughter, Sarah Horsey-Barr, is a retired Foreign Service officer.



Edward Clarke Ingraham, 89, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 17 of natural causes. He lived in Bethesda, Md. He served in the Army Air Force during World War II. His postings included Bolivia, Hong Kong, Australia, India, Indonesia, Burma, Pakistan and Singapore, where he was deputy chief of mission. He was an avid photographer and writer for newspapers and magazines, including the *Foreign Service Journal*.



John F. Oakley, 69, husband of retired Foreign Service secretary Carol Oakley, died Jan. 25 at his home in Southport, Fla. He accompanied his wife on postings to Paramaribo, New Delhi, Stockholm, Accra and Skopje and worked as a Civil Service spouse. They retired in 2007. He served in the Navy and worked for Pitney Bowes for 32 years. He enjoyed baseball and genealogy.



Harold Franz Radday, 74, a retired Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died June 23 of cancer at his home in Arlington, Va. He joined USIA in 1962 and served in Nairobi, Zanzibar, Abidjan, Bangui, Brussels (NATO), Malta and Bonn. After retiring in 1989, he was director of communications at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a watch officer in the USIA Operations Center, an escort officer with the Foreign Visitors Program and a translator. He took up tai chi and enjoyed travel.



Martin H. Steiner, 62, a Foreign Service consular officer, died Nov. 8 of non-Hodgkins' lymphoma in Dublin, Calif. He joined the Department in 1991 and served in Mexico City, Havana, Taipei, Guangzhou, Vienna and Ciudad Juarez.

Roberta M.S. Bruce, 93, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 13 at her home in Massachusetts. She worked for the Chemical Warfare Service during World War II and joined the Foreign Service in 1952. Her postings included Baghdad, Berlin, Frankfurt, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. She was a real estate broker, studied gerontology and enjoyed traveling, taking courses and volunteering.

Marion V. Norris Jr., 84, a retired Foreign Service secretary, died March 26, 2011. Her first assignment was Berlin during the airlift. She was administrative assistant to Adlai Stevenson at the U.N. and served ambassadors in Romania, Bulgaria and the Belgian Congo. She served in Vietnam during the war; Pakistan, where she was cited for heroism; Brussels; Greece; Saudi Arabia; Chile; Paris; Rome; and Brunei. After retirement, she was called back to serve the U.S. ambassador to Venezuela. Her dogs were her constant companions.

End State



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DRC

Carrying a colorfully swaddled infant on her back, a young girl takes a stroll near Lake Albert, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The African continent's seventh largest body of water, Lake Albert is part of the complex system of rivers and tributaries that feeds the Victoria Nile.

UN Photo by Martine Perret

PG. 20





Dominican Republic



Gentle surf laps the shoreline in Puerto Plata as sunlight spills over the horizon at dawn. The idyllic resort community on the Dominican Republic side of Hispaniola is a sharp contrast to many areas in neighboring Haiti that are still affected by 2010's deadly earthquake.

Photo by Vishal Patel

PG.
4



Sweden



An ominous sky and a windmill's whirring blades seem to signal an impending storm in this high-dynamic-range photo taken in Brorslund, Skåne. Sweden is exploring a \$2.6 billion project that would increase annual wind power production from 3 terawatt hours to 12, nearly 3 percent of the country's total energy production.

Photo by Stefan Lins

PG.
15



Germany

Seeking relief from oppressive summer heat, a retriever leaps ebulliently in a fountain near Rathenauplatz in Frankfurt. Frankfurt is Germany's financial and transportation center and the largest financial center in continental Europe.

Photo by Andrea Diener

PG. 5





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Be an Inspiration!

Bring your children ages 9-15 to Take Your Child to Work Day on April 26! There will be fun activities and a chance for children to see where their parents work. Stay tuned for the upcoming Department Notice with registration details.

