



United States Mission in Turkmenistan

9 Pushkin Street, Ashgabat, 744000
Turkmenistan

Phone: 35 00 45; Fax: 39 26 14
Website: <http://turkmenistan.usembassy.gov>

Issue 35

Monthly Newsletter

September-October 2004

Inside This Issue:

- 2 U.S. Embassy Donates 80 Radiation Pagers to Turkmen Customs and Border Guard Services
- 2 U.S. TEA Teachers Visit Turkmen Counterparts
- 3 8th Annual Education Fair Meets the Packed House
- 3 U.S. Embassy Presents Exchange Programs
- 4 Speakers Discuss War on Terrorism and U.S. Presidential Elections
- 4 Visitors Watch and Discuss 1st U.S. Presidential Debate
- 4 Conference in Turkmenbashi Brings Leadership Skills to Alumni and Public
- 5 School for Mentally Challenged Children Benefits from Alumni Grant
- 5 Alumni Celebrate Halloween with Orphans
- 6 U.S. Speaker Jack Lengyel Introduces American Football to Turkmenistan
- 6 Sister Cities Visit Deepens U.S.-Turkmen Friendship
- 6 U.S. Speaker Benny Sherman Introduces Native American Culture to Turkmenistan

U.S. Embassy Commemorates September 11 Events with an Art Exhibition

On September 10, 2004 an exhibition dedicated to commemorating the 3rd anniversary of the events of September 11, 2001 was opened in Ashgabat. The exhibition, jointly organized by the U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan and the Ministry of Culture and TV and Radio Broadcasting of Turkmenistan, features paintings and sculptures, a photo show, a slide show and film showings. Representatives from the Government of Turkmenistan, diplomatic missions, international organizations and Turkmenistan's cultural community attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition. The exhibit is on display at the Exhibition Hall of the Union of Artists of Turkmenistan and is open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every day until September 25.

"The art works that our two countries chose to display in this two-week exhibition represent some of the most important principles of humanity – courage and triumph over adversity", United States Charge d'Affaires Jennifer Brush said, addressing the guests in Turkmen. "Each different form of art will engage you in a unique conversation about the values that unite us all across cultural and linguistic differences".

Over 100 art works have been lent by local artists, museums and the Ministry of Culture to this exhibition. Some of the works displayed portray



Galereýa gelen 100-den gowrak adamyň gatnaşmagynda açylan sergi uly üstünlige ýete boldy

the grief of tragedy, while others depict the strength of the human spirit in the face of suffering caused by war and terrorism, or natural disaster, such as the 1948 earthquake that rocked Ashgabat.

The U.S. Department of State and other American Embassies throughout the world also commemorated the 3rd anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. President George Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell and other Secretaries delivered addresses dedicated to the commemoration. During the third commemoration of September 11 the American Government and people focused on the future and rebuilding of structures and lives.

U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan and U.S. Department of Justice Conduct Conference on Criminal Procedure Code Reform

A two-day conference on Criminal Procedure Code Reform, jointly organized by the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Department of Justice, began on October 19, 2004 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The forum focused on basic international standards applicable to the operation of criminal justice systems, and provided comparative information on the U.S. and recently reformed Russian systems of criminal procedure. Speakers at the conference included representatives of law enforcement and legislative bodies of Turkmenistan, the United States, and Russia, including several principal authors of the recent Russian reforms.

Addressing participants of the conference, including Turkmen legislators and law enforcement officers, U.S. Ambassador Tracey Ann Jacobson said, "The subject of this conference—criminal procedure reform—is one of great importance as Turkmenistan considers its new draft Criminal Procedure Code. That document is the cornerstone of the criminal justice system, and is critical to protecting the rights of all Turkmen citizens."

(continued on page 2)

U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan and U.S. Department of Justice Conduct Conference on Criminal Procedure Code Reform

(continued from page 1)

Conference themes were designed to be of current relevance to participating Turkmen government institutions and agencies, as Turkmenistan is in the process of considering adoption of a new Code of Criminal Procedure. Organizers placed special emphasis on the requirements of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), of which Turkmenistan is a signatory. Conference topics included legality and judicial review of detention and arrest, the adversarial process, access to defense counsel, exclusion of illegally obtained evidence, and double jeopardy.

The conference was funded by the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Project (INL), which is implemented by the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Justice, and administered by the U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat. One of the goals of the INL project is to reinforce partner governments' domestic efforts to promote rule of law.



A group of representatives from Turkmen Government and institutions

U.S. Embassy Donates 80 Radiation Pagers to Turkmen Customs and Border Guard Services

Turkmenistan's State Customs and Border Guard Services each received 40 radiation pagers from the U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan in the beginning of October 2004. The Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program donated the Radiation Pagers to increase the capacity of Turkmen customs inspectors and border guards to identify and interdict nuclear materials.

The Radiation Pager is a personal gamma-ray radiation detector, which is hundreds of times more sensitive than traditional Geiger counter type detectors. It is

approximately the size of a message pager and is designed for easy use.

EXBS is an ongoing U.S. Government program, which aims to deter the spread of weapons of mass destruction through joint training exercises and equipment transfers to customs and border security agencies. Previous EXBS assistance to the State Border Guards and State Customs Service of Turkmenistan includes transfers of UAZ jeeps, ZIL water trucks, X-ray equipment, binoculars, GPSs, contraband detection kits and training in detecting weapons of mass destruction and smuggler tracking.

U.S. TEA Teachers Visit Turkmen Counterparts

U.S. Teaching Excellence Awards (TEA) program participants Lorilee Lynn, Loraine Durham and Darren Hornbeck exchanged experiences with their Turkmen counterparts during their tour of Turkmenistan from October 6-19, 2004. During their program, the teachers stayed with host families and visited local schools throughout the country. The teachers conducted several workshops for TEA and Junior Faculty Development Program alumni, as well as for the Professional Organization of English Teachers and other civil society groups.

Turkmen TEA alumni also introduced Lorilee, Loraine, and Darren to Turkmen culture. The U.S. Embassy held a reception in honor of the teachers on October 18, 2004 to emphasize the importance of educators, especially in the face of Turkmenistan's deteriorating education system. The TEA reverse exchange program strengthened the relationships created by TEA participants during their program in the United States, and exposed Turkmen students and education officials firsthand to U.S. teaching standards and methodologies.

8th Annual Education Fair Meets a Packed House

Approximately 1,000 people from throughout Turkmenistan attended the Embassy's eighth annual Education and Research Fair at the National Library of Turkmenistan, on October 17, 2004. Embassy partner organizations - the American Councils for International Education (ACCELS) and the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) - co-hosted the event, which drew participation from the U.K. Embassy in Ashgabat, Pragma Organization, and several private education resources centers. PAS distributed more than 1,000 information resource publications, and sold over \$1,500 worth of books under the auspices of Education and Cultural Affairs' English Book Recycling Program. After the Ambassador's opening remarks, Embassy officers delivered lectures on "Women's Educational Advances in the United States," "U.S. University Programs," and "The U.S. Student Visa Process." The event received widespread media coverage: Turkmen Press printed an opinion-editorial piece from the Ambassador about studying in the United States; and Turkmen Television broadcast footage of the event, which featured several interviews with Embassy officers and partner organization staff. For the eighth year in a row, the Embassy's Education Fair has provided locals with valuable educational

resources in their native languages, accurate information about U.S. student visa regulations, and information about the many resources offered by educational and resource centers in Turkmenistan.



The U.S. Embassy booth was of the most popular ones during the Education Fair.

U.S. Embassy Presents Exchange Programs for 2005-2006 Academic Year

The U.S. Embassy announced the opening of recruitment season for four of ten U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs in Turkmenistan for the 2005-2006 academic year. Deputy Chief of Mission Jennifer Brush, along with representatives of the American Councils for International Education (ACCELS), the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) and the Embassy's Public Affairs Section, presented the programs during a press conference at the National Library of Turkmenistan on October 4, 2004.

Deputy Chief of U.S. Mission Ms. Brush emphasized the importance of exchange programs, both for U.S.-Turkmenistan relations and for greater stability and international development: "Increasing international awareness in matters of education, knowledge, and research creates a more informed and stable world community. The opportunity to study abroad, to learn other languages, and to experience other cultures and perspectives is increasingly important in many fields today." All U.S. Government-sponsored exchange

programs are designed to increase mutual understanding and to expand relationships between the people of the United States and Turkmenistan.

Recruitment for six more exchange programs will begin later this year. The U.S. Department of State has designated ACCELS and IREX with the responsibility for administering eight U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs in Turkmenistan. The Embassy's Public Affairs Section will directly administer two programs. Competition for all programs is merit-based and open to all citizens of Turkmenistan. Independent Commissions will select finalists on the basis of academic excellence, leadership potential, knowledge of English and designated fields of study, and other criteria. During the past eleven years, more than 1,400 Turkmen citizens have participated in U.S. Government-sponsored educational and professional exchange programs.

U.S. Presidential Elections Program

Speakers Discuss War on Terrorism and U.S. Presidential Elections

On September 9, 2004 U.S. Embassy Cultural Affairs Officer Natalie Ashton-Baker and General Services Officer Joshua Baker led a presentation on the war against terrorism and its reflection on this year's Presidential Election in the USA, as part of PAS Ashgabat's U.S. Presidential Election Campaign programming. Over 30 people learned about the war on terrorism, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and campaign strategies and messages of major presidential candidates. The presentation was followed by a discussion and participants had the opportunity to ask questions and participate in a mock election.

This event allowed participants to learn more about different views on world events and how those events affect local politics in America. They also got to experience democracy in action first-hand by participating in a mock election.

Visitors Watch and Discuss the 1st Presidential Debate

On October 5, 2004 U.S. Government-funded exchange program alumni and American Center visitors watched the first televised debate between 2004 Presidential Candidates George W. Bush and John Kerry. Brad Camp, USAID Country Director, led a presentation of the debate and facilitated a discussion about the candidates and their performances. Camp gave a brief historical overview of televised debates and their role in voter decision-making in the run-up to Presidential elections. Participants in mock votes at the beginning and end of the presentation, with a resulting decrease in the number of "undecided voters."

Over 25 participants viewed the first televised U.S. Presidential debate - an important feature of U.S. elections - and had the opportunity to discuss the messages and styles of each candidate as mock participants of a democratic electoral process.

Alumni Beat

Conference in Turkmenbashi Brings Leadership Skills to Alumni and Public

The Leadership Conference took a place in City of Turkmenbashi on August 23, 2004 to share alumni experiences with the general public and to teach them how to use leadership skills in positive ways for future. The conference demonstrated the opportunities available to the youth of Turkmenistan and around the world. Regional alumni were encouraged to take an active part in the event, showing the examples of their work, how to develop their professional and personal abilities and how to execute them within the local community.

2004 FLEX alumna Alina Penjiyeva shared her knowledge about National Conventions, which she gained at the Presidential Youth Leadership Conference during the Republican National Convention in New York City. Participants received the chance to experience and compare political systems of Turkmenistan and United States of America. Guest speaker, Peace Corps Volunteer, Alex Minier followed the program talking about the elections. He explained the general structure of the presidential election and why this system works in the United States of America. Attendees participated in a discussion of issues involved with 2004 Elections, such as health care, immigration, international relations etc. It raised awareness of the citizens of Turkmenistan and taught them what is necessary in order to create and maintain a good working relationship with other countries.

The second part of the conference consisted of a speech given by Azat Myradov, a guest speaker from the U.S. Embassy/Public Affairs Section. His speech was on the topic of "Debates 2004". Azat Myradov showed a clip of the 3rd debate between George W. Bush and John Kerry, where they discussed "Immigration in the United States of



A team of bright students share their ideas about the perfect leadership skills

America". This was followed by a discussion where the participants had the opportunity speak up sharing their opinions about the candidates. Then, to change to a more relaxing atmosphere, participants played some games to learn how to work together and how to be a leader in their community.

Regional FLEX Alumni Assistant, Kristina Razahova presented on the topic "Leadership and How to Be a Good Leader". The presentation helped attendees discover their own leadership skills to reach out their full potential.

(continued on page 4)

Conference in Turkmenbashi Brings Leadership Skills to Alumni and Public

(continued from page 3)

The regional alumni and representatives shared their experiences on their current projects both locally and regionally in Turkmenistan. After the presentation we turned to the most interesting part of the event, a group project called "City Improving in order to Attract". 2 groups of participants had to create and present their own town to attract the attention of others, developing education, environment and using the natural resources. The best group was announced at the end of the day. It was exciting

to observe how participants put into the words their ideas and wishes for the future of each town and community.

All this illustrated the knowledge that both the group gained during the Leadership Conference to start work in their own communities. We hope that the young generation in Turkmenistan will do their best to make the future of the world better.

School for Mentally Challenged Children Benefits from Alumni Grant

On September 16, 2004 U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer and Alumni Coordinator visited a school for mentally challenged children to present two refrigerators that were purchased from funds raised through the Art Therapy Project. Valentina Hairova, the organizer of the PAS grant project has been involved in many activities related to teaching art to disabled children. The goal of the Art Therapy Project was to involve more than hundred mentally challenged children in creating works with dry leaves. The best works were selected, framed and exhibited. From those works Valentina published a calendar of which 200 copies were sold and the profits went to purchase two refrigerators needed by the school.

The project showed that these children could have a positive impact on their environment. It raised their self-confidence and helped to develop their communication skills. It proved that their creativity and talent could help them become independent and not isolated from the world.



Children are applauding while PAO presents gifts to the school

Alumni Celebrate Halloween with Orphans



Turkmenbashi Alumni and winners of "Best Costume" contest enjoying Halloween

On October 31, 2004 exchange alumni transformed an orphanage, located in a small town Abadan, into a haunted castle, during their annual Public Affairs Section sponsored

Halloween Party for orphans. Alumni designed costumes with the children, led games and other fun activities, and read stories about Halloween history and traditions.

Exchange program alumni devoted their time to improving the quality of life of orphan children, through an activity that encouraged their reading skills and creative and artistic abilities. The event also gave Public Affairs Section an opportunity to expose a group of at-risk youth to U.S. culture.

On October 30, FLEX alumni in close cooperation with Peace Corps Volunteers organized a Halloween Celebration for children in Turkmenbashi City. FLEX 2004 alumna Alina Penjiyeva described the history of the holiday and its role in American culture. The students sang songs that they wrote for the occasion, and participated in "Best Costume" and "Best Make-up" contests. The children excitedly participated in haunted house, bobbing for apples, pin-the-heart on the skeleton, and chairs and socks relay games.

U.S. Speaker Jack Lengyel Introduces American Football to Turkmenistan

From October 4-7, 2004 U.S. Speaker Jack Lengyel, of the United States Sports Academy, spoke with Turkmen audiences about the Role of Sports in U.S. Culture and Society. Mr. Lengyel visited the National Institute of Sports and Tourism, the Special Olympics and Paralympics Team of Turkmenistan, and local NGOs, introducing audiences to American football and other popular American sports. Mr. Lengyel also spoke with sports journalists about the importance of free press, even in sports media.

Local educators and government advisors on sports were exposed to the importance of sports to leadership, childhood development, and community stability. The program also created relationships between the U.S. Sports Academy and local groups in need of international sponsors.

Sister Cities Visit Deepens U.S.-Turkmen Friendship

From October 26-31, 2004 representatives from Ashgabat's Sister City of Albuquerque, New Mexico explored the life and culture of Turkmenistan. Six members of Albuquerque's Sister City group stayed with local host families, met with students, and promoted the Sister City relationship with Turkmen Government officials. The Ambassador hosted a reception for the group on October 26, during which Ashgabat's Deputy Mayor welcomed the Sister Cities group to Ashgabat. The visit culminated in the planting of a "Tree of Friendship" in Ashgabat's Independence Park. The U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Acting Public Affairs Officer, and members of Ashgabat's Mayor's Office, planted the tree together with the Albuquerque guests. Turkmen Press covered the event, highlighting the expanding friendship between people of the United States and Turkmenistan. The visit advanced U.S.-Turkmen engagement on a person-to-person level.

U.S. Speaker Benny Sherman Introduces Native American Culture to Turkmenistan

From October 13-17, 2004 U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section and International Information Programs organized a U.S. Speaker Program featuring Mr. Benny Sherman, president of the Western American Indian Chamber. Mr. Sherman led a series of discussions on Native American cultural preservation and the Native American experience, speaking to nearly 1,000 students, teachers, community activists, and business people, during his time in Turkmenistan. Mr. Sherman's visit to two regions of the country opened new avenues for cooperation between Public Affairs Section (PAS) and Turkmen institutions of higher education. School administrators invited both PAS and Mr. Sherman to host more lectures at their institutions in the future.

U.S. Speaker Programs themed on diverse explorations of American history and culture have engaged Turkmen higher education institutions as well as the program outreached people in the regions.



Group of alumni and visitors of American Center after Ben Sherman's presentation