U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STATE

MAGAZINE

STATE TECH

Blogs, Bytes and Notes: Diplomacy Meets the Web

APRIL 2008 >>>

CONTENTS | APRIL 2008

16

Red Sox Pitch In

Consulate General in Halifax celebrates 175 years.

36

Sea Life

Exploring Philippine waters with *National Geographic*.

POST OF THE MONTH

Bratislava

PAGE 22

FEATURES

07 A National Treasure
Great Seal links founding fathers to modern diplomacy.

SPECIAL REPORT: STATE ON THE WEB

11 Web Site Is America's 'Face' to the World

12 REE Uses Facebook to Recruit

13 Blog Fosters Informational Diplomacy

14 Question of the Week Sparks Lively Debate

15 ¡Viva El Blog!

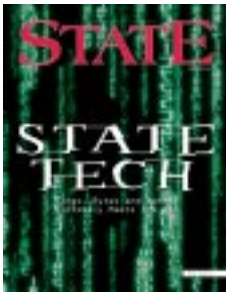
18 War-Zone Volunteers
Different factors attract Civil Service employees to Iraq duty.

20 Developing Relationships
USAID scholarships strengthen rural Mexico.

28 Data Analyzed
2007 promotion rates largely unchanged.

32 Office of the Month: War Crimes Issues
Office works to stop atrocities and war crimes.

07



ON THE COVER

The Department opens new doors by embracing the World Wide Web.
Artwork by David L. Johnston

COLUMNS

2 From the D.G.

3 In the News

38 Medical Report

40 Education & Training

41 Obituaries

43 Retirements

44 The Last Word

20

D.G. HARRY K.
THOMAS

Technology Better Serves Our Employees, Our Mission

When I began my tenure as Director General, I said that we would take advantage of brand new technologies in order to streamline our services in HR. Our dedicated personnel in HR/EX, under the able leadership of Ruben Torres, are helping us to do just that.

Ruben's team is identifying solutions to automate travel messaging and replace TM cables used to effect and complete the Permanent Change of Station process. With their help, we will broaden our pilot of remote access technology that supports the promotion and tenure board processes and implement new software that will enable our employees to better plan for their retirement.

This month, I would like to take the opportunity to highlight how we are using technology to provide innovative solutions to address our HR challenges.

Many of you are familiar with the Integrated Personnel Management System and its four primary components: HR Online, the Global Employee Management System, the Post Personnel System and the reporting features of the HR Knowledge Center. IPMS is a dynamic program that is constantly being enhanced to provide additional services and information to our customers. For instance, HR Online now provides single sign-on capability for nearly 40 self-service and business applications, including the electronic Foreign Service bidding tool, the Student Loan Repayment Program application, the electronic Official Personnel Folder and the Employee Profile, to name just a few.

The scope of IPMS has grown immensely, but innovation does not stop there. We are collaborating with other federal agencies in support of the President's e-Government initiatives, providing insight and sharing technology solutions. For example, we've shared our Post Personnel System software with the U.S. Agency for International Development to establish a common HR platform overseas. We're also providing 47 federal agencies with access to Post Personnel System data in support of the President's "Rightsizing" initiative, Capital Security Cost Sharing and other data calls.

Eliminating paper-intensive processes is an enormous undertaking. Although we have made great strides, more remains to be done. Our Executive Office serves as the corporate driver and partners with both internal and external stakeholders to identify technology solutions that meet their needs.

It is important to note that process and service improvements will not begin and end with technology. Successful personnel management relies on forward-thinking and responsive leaders. When you empower people, you unlock true human potential and capital. No successful enterprise—private sector or government—can compete and be successful without this formula.

We welcome your suggestions via unclassified e-mail at "DG Direct." ■

NEWS

General David Petraeus, left, and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, third from right, congratulate those who lent assistance.

To the Rescue

Embassy's Contract Security Staff Saves Polish Ambassador

On January 25, Poland's ambassador to Iraq, Edward Pietrzyk, honored the heroism of 18 members of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad's regional security office who helped rescue his motorcade when it came under attack in Baghdad in October.

The motorcade was struck by four roadside bombs and a barrage of small-arms fire from more than two dozen assailants. One member of the Polish Special Forces security detail was killed, several were wounded and Pietrzyk was severely burned.

During the midday attack, the Polish security detail contacted the RSO's tactical operation center, which dispatched two helicopters. The arriving personnel found the motorcade group sheltering in a residential compound and provided first aid while evacuating the wounded. Ambassador Pietrzyk was flown to a combat surgical hospital and later to Poland. After several months of treatment, he returned to Iraq.

In the award ceremony, with gloves still protecting his badly burned hands, the ambassador pinned on the shirts of his rescuers Poland's Silver and Bronze Star medals, the first time these awards had been given to foreigners since World War II.

Attending were U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and General David Petraeus, commander of the Multi-National Forces-Iraq. Ambassador Crocker noted the long history of Polish-U.S. mutual assistance.

The award recipients are employees of the contractor Blackwater and work with the RSO to protect Mission Iraq staff.

Presenting a CFC Merit award to the Bureau of Administration are, from left, Director General Harry K. Thomas; Susan Parker, a Department of Labor official who aided the Department's campaign; and bureau representatives Karen Smith-Morgan and Darrell Bowens.

Bureaus Top Expectations in CFC Campaign

More State Department bureaus met or exceeded their goals in the 2007 Combined Federal Campaign than ever before. In all, Department employees met the $2.15 million challenge made by the CFC National Capital Area, which raises funds for more than 3,600 philanthropic organizations.

Twenty bureaus and the offices of Inspector General and Medical Services met or exceeded their goals, several by big margins. Topping the list were the bureaus of South and Central Asian Affairs, International Organizations and Near Eastern Affairs. The bureaus that met or exceeded their goals and/or met other criteria were honored at a February awards celebration at Main State.

The greatest amount given by any one bureau was the $101,127 raised by Human Resources, followed by the $87,910 raised by Diplomatic Security. A full $862,292 was given by donors at the Department's overseas operations. Retirees gave $27,971, a significant sum for a campaign based in the workplace.

The highest per capita donation was the average of $412 donated by 19 employees in the Bureau of Population Refugees and Migration.

The campaign got a shot in the arm in January when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, the Department's campaign chairperson, issued a Department Notice saying, "Whether it's supplies for classrooms, better health care for infants or important and vital research to cure cancer, your donations make a difference each and every day."

January was also marked by the Department's first CFC walk/run-athon, held on an unseasonably warm day at Memorial Gardens on the National Mall. The HR-organized event raised several hundred dollars and involved 75 participants, including teams from HR, the Foreign Service Institute and PRM. Walkers covered a one-mile route, and runners covered three miles. At the event's end, participants received water, fruit and goodie bags and took part in a raffle of gift cards donated by the American Foreign Service Association.

Deputy Secretary Negroponte to Keynote Foreign Affairs Day

Foreign Affairs Day, the May 2 homecoming event for State Department retirees, will feature a welcome from Director General Harry K. Thomas, Jr. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium and the awarding of the Foreign Service Cup to a retired ambassador by the president of Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired. The keynote address will be given by Deputy Secretary John D. Negroponte, who will also preside over the annual American Foreign Service Association's Memorial Plaque ceremony honoring foreign affairs agency employees killed in the line of duty.

The day will also feature seminars on regional issues, sponsored by the geographic bureaus, on public diplomacy, on consular affairs and on retirement issues. The retirement seminar will be led by Patricia Nelson-Douvelis, director of the Office of Retirement.

The program concludes with a luncheon for 250 in the Benjamin Franklin Room, where Ambassador Thomas will award the Director General's Cups for the Civil and Foreign Services. Ambassador J. Stapleton Roy, former U.S. Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Singapore and Indonesia, and former Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, will deliver the luncheon address. Due to limited seating only the first 250 luncheon reservations can be accepted on a "first come, first served" basis.

Foreign Affairs Day, which began in 1965, includes Foreign and Civil Service retirees. More than 600 people registered for the 2007 event.

EMBASSY HOSTS CONSULAR LEADERSHIP DAY

The U.S. Embassy in Mexico City has a consular section of more than 20 entry-level officers and processes approximately 2,000 visas daily. In January, the section used one of the 10 leadership tenets of the Bureau of Consular Affairs as the theme for its Consular Leadership Day.

A team led by Consul General Sylvia Johnson, American citizen services chief Scott Cecil, nonimmigrant visa chief Joe Pomper and deputy NIV chiefs Melissa Bishop and Andrew McClearn chose the tenet "Learn Constantly." Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Maura Harty, who served her first Foreign Service tour in Mexico City in 1982, attended the event.

The January 29 event began with a role-reversal exercise in which each officer experienced what a Locally Employed staff member goes through every day and vice versa. All experienced what it's like to be a visa applicant. In the NIV section, LE staff members became both visa applicants and visa adjudicators, and officers took on LE staff responsibilities to enroll and process applicants. They later role-played applicants.

In ACS, LE staff served as officers, adjudicating passport applications and handling such portfolios as arrests and death notifications. They then became passport applicants, while the officers learned how to enroll and process applications. Participants were given questionnaires and encouraged to provide feedback.

Next, the group discussed what it had learned, what improvements could be made and how customer service could be enhanced. Each small group then presented its ideas to the entire section and acknowledged the need to offer applicants greater empathy. Suggestions put forth included simplifying the enrollment process, providing more information to applicants and rewording the refusal remarks given to unqualified applicants. LE staff and officers expressed appreciation for the difficulty of each other's work and a newfound understanding of the challenges each faces.

At lunch, Assistant Secretary Harty spoke about the lessons learned and her time in Mexico City, and then led a spirited game of Consular Jeopardy, with categories such as passports, NIVs and American citizen services.

Automating the Personnel Process

Just in time for their performance evaluation cycle, Foreign Service employees and managers may this spring use a new online self-service tool in the performance review process. Accessible through Human Resources Online, the ePerformance tool helps them plan, create, review and approve performance evaluations. The tool streamlines workflow and prevents erroneous information from entering a personnel file.

With ePerformance, Foreign Service employees have a desktop resource for entering planning notes, checking spelling and flagging sensitive language in performance narratives. They can also cut and paste previous performance appraisals and supporting documentation and, for the first time, create and route electronic performance records to their supervisors for review and approval. Supervisors can use the tool to communicate more effectively and constructively with employees, because of the tool's automation of this process and its notifications.

The ePerformance tool will not be available to Civil Service employees and managers until later. The Bureau of Human Resources is also gathering user requirements for Senior Executive Service employees and managers in preparation for their August 2008 performance evaluation cycle. For more information, go to http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/prd/hrweb/ex/sod/eperformance.

State Welcomes First Franklin Fellow

Paul F. Scott is the first Franklin Fellow under a new Department of State program in which mid-career and senior employees of universities, nongovernmental organizations and private corporations work as consultants for a year at the Department. Scott, an employee of the Lockheed Martin Corporation, will use his background in international business development to focus on arms transfers and regional security matters in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

Embassy Madrid Celebrates Wear Red Day

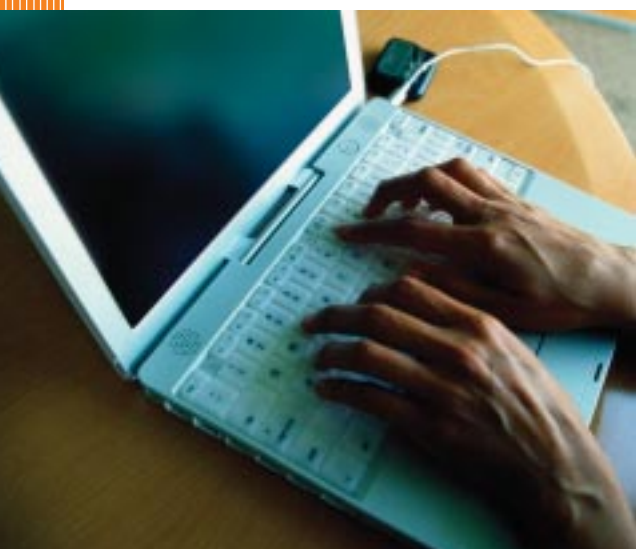
On February 1, U.S. Embassy in Madrid employees, shown at the ambassador's residence, wore red to celebrate National Wear Red Day, in support of women's heart-disease awareness. Female employees also were given name tags with the Heart Truth logo, and all staff received a wallet card from the Heart Truth Web site.

Software Tracks HR Processes

Working with the Bureau of Human Resources' Executive Office, the Office of Civil Service Personnel is automating several Civil Service processes. The Human Resources Workflow Automation Tracking System, formerly called HR Tracking, is currently being tested and piloted with several bureaus.

To bring HR processing into the 21st century, HR WATS is a customized resource for hiring managers, HR team leads, supervisors and HR specialists. Based on the Metastorm commercial off-the-shelf software, HR WATS tracks and measures business process performance. Its user-friendly features include highlighted mandatory form fields and prompts, areas for attachments and remarks or comments, a to-do list for outstanding actions, a watch list to view an action's progression through the process, an archive and automatically generated e-mail alerts and reminders.

HR now has a consolidated resource to track requests for classifications, vacancy announcements, superior qualifications, appointments, interagency details and other HR processes. Hiring managers and HR specialists, as well as upper management, will be able to initiate, track and view the status of activities from the moment the work is forwarded to the HR office to completion. HR WATS also has audit and reporting capabilities that enable process improvements.



Additional HR processes will be included in HR WATS as they are automated. HR welcomes volunteers for the pilot phase of HR WATS, which will run until December 2008. Offices or bureaus wishing to participate should contact Marcia Savoie at (202) 663-2129.

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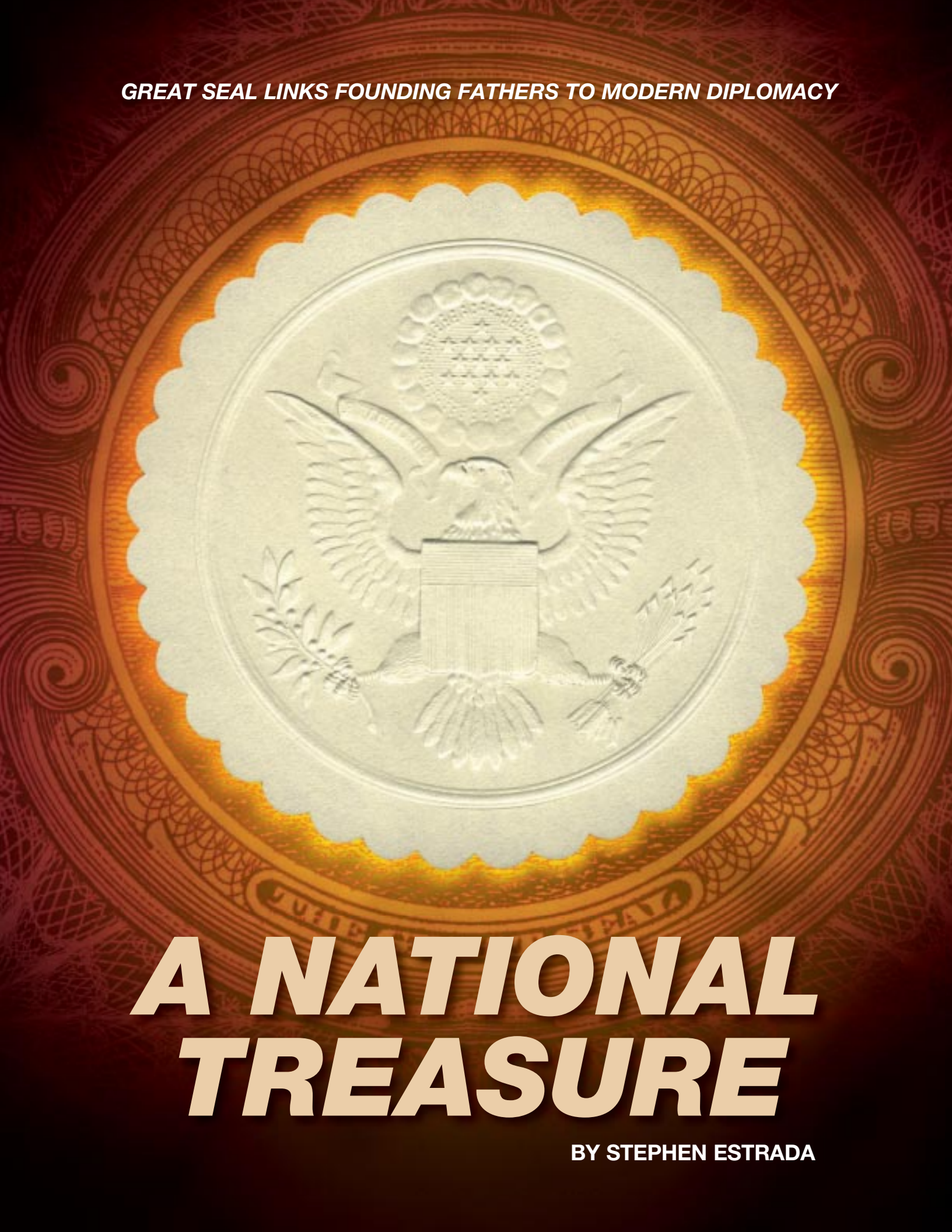
The submission deadline for the June issue is April 15. The deadline for the July/August issue is May 30.

GREAT SEAL LINKS FOUNDING FATHERS TO MODERN DIPLOMACY



A NATIONAL TREASURE

BY STEPHEN ESTRADA

The Great Seal of the United States is a small, engraved metal plate whose imprint is used—strictly by the Department of State—to make official a variety of federal documents, including treaties, diplomatic envelopes and Presidential commissions.

The eagle and shield, olive branch and arrows and array of 13 stars representing the 13 colonies on the Seal's front are powerful symbols reflecting the unity, resolve and independence of the United States. On the reverse, the watchful eye above an unfinished pyramid represents Providence looking kindly upon a new republic. Both of these images, from the back of the dollar bill, were highlighted in the 2004 film *National Treasure*.

The Great Seal is also the subject of a new exhibition at Main State marking its 225th anniversary. The exhibit was created by the Bureau of Public Affairs' U.S. Diplomacy Center, which increases awareness of diplomacy and the Department's work

Above: Sharon Hardy, chief of the Office of Presidential Appointments, uses the press in the exhibit hall to imprint the Great Seal on a document. **Right:** Exhibit curator Priscilla Linn points out details of the Great Seal at the entrance to the Great Seal exhibit.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ED WARNER

through exhibitions and education programs.

The exhibit consists of a refurbished glass enclosure housing the working 1903 press and a traveling component that will tour the country beginning this summer. Titled "Celebrating the 225th Anniversary of the Great Seal of the United States: Past, Present and Future," it includes the history of how seals came into use by nations and how the Great Seal is used today. It also features students' artistic interpretations of the Seal.

Using nearly the exact design the Continental Congress approved in 1782, the Seal has been entrusted to the Department's care since 1789. Included in the exhibit are early pendant seals, oversize versions of the Great Seal that were attached to treaties to give them more gravitas than its smaller version. It also shows a "Mediterranean passport," a document carried on American-flagged ships in the early years of our nation. Impressed with the Great Seal, these papers signified to curious Barbary Coast pirates that the carrier had signed treaties with and paid dues to the unwanted boarders' home nation.

Interactive displays are also featured. At one, sliding panels reveal the meanings of the Seal's symbols. Another allows visitors to rub a pendant seal replica. Yet another station has a matching game where sliding disks link the Great Seal to its ancient roots.

The Seal is used regularly by the staff of the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Presidential Appointments, which seals 2,000 to 3,000 documents annually. Impressed on the commission of each Foreign Service officer, the Great Seal is a link between today's diplomats and the founding fathers who commissioned its design in 1776.

Although the eagle and shield appear on important documents, it is the Seal's reverse that many recognize—it's on the back of every dollar bill. Inscribed there is the unfinished pyramid with 13 rows of granite, one for each of the new American states. Does it contain a hidden, possibly malevolent message or Masonic rune? Probably not. Though some founding fathers may have been Freemasons, these symbols were circulated throughout the literature of educated people at the time. The unfinished pyramid beneath a Providential eye represents a remarkably fortuitous notion: that the nation is blessed with liberty built on the strong foundation of democracy, and democracy is ever a work in progress.

The exhibit is also on the Diplomacy Center's Web site, http://diplomacy.state. gov. A Department publication on the Seal is available online at http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/27807.pdf. ■

The author is director of the U.S. Diplomacy Center.

Left: Secretary Rice makes a point during her inauguration of the Great Seal exhibit. **Below:** The 1782 die of the Great Seal, left, was loaned by the National Archives and guarded during its brief showing at the opening ceremony.

SECRETARY OPENS GREAT SEAL EXHIBIT

In February, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice inaugurated a new exhibit on the Great Seal of the United States at Main State by noting how the seal's motto "underlined what America would stand for through the course of history."

The founding fathers used the motto "novus ordo seclorum" (new order of the ages) to show the nation was "a new idea on the world scene," she said. A highlight of the opening ceremony, in the exhibit hall near the cafeteria, was a showing of the original 1782 die of the seal. Metal dies imprint a seal into paper.

The State Department places the seal on all official documents that require it, including the commissions of Cabinet secretaries. This caused Rice to joke that, on becoming Secretary, she had asked "Why am I signing these commissions for other people?" Rice is the 66th Keeper of the Seal, a duty that dates to Thomas Jefferson.

Over the years, the seal "has stood for this nation's determination," said U.S. National Archivist Dr. Allen Weinstein, who also spoke at the ceremony.

STATE TECH

America.gov

NEW WEB SITE IS AMERICA'S 'FACE' TO THE WORLD **BY LAUREN MONSEN**

The Department's latest public diplomacy tool, the Web site America.gov, doesn't look like a government Web site, which is just what the Bureau of International Information Programs intended.

America.gov uses the latest multimedia technologies to tell America's story to the world and is a platform for the Department, other agencies, the private sector and civil society to engage in dialogue with international audiences. It also helps embassy country teams reach out locally.

"America.gov highlights the people and institutions that make America a force for progress," IIP Coordinator Jeremy Curtin said.

The Web site provides graphics, short and long articles, fast facts and online publications on many topics.

"A student in India can click on the site and find something useful," Curtin said. "All at the same time, a student, diplomat or executive can get in-depth information."

The site is organized around five broad themes: American Life, Democracy, Foreign Policy, U.S. Politics, and Science and Health. Each theme has content to explain the core values underlying U.S. policies.

Unconventional Content

Much of the content defies expectations for a government Web site. There is a video of an American Muslim performing a stand-up routine at a comedy club and a short "action movie" that teams California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and actor Jackie Chan to speak out against video piracy. The 2008 U.S. Elections package has videos of campaign volunteers, a daily blog and regularly updated vignettes of campaigns in seven congressional districts.

In short, America.gov has the design and interactive features expected by younger Web-savvy users and the substantive material that attracts traditional opinion leaders. Since the site's launch, U.S. embassies in Malawi and Indonesia have asked for permission to use elections package audio files and video segments in their democracy-related programs.

Building the Web site's innovative architecture required IIP to reconceptualize how it engages, informs and influences people worldwide.

"We had to determine how to present material much more visually to meet the expectations of 21st-century Web users," IIP Deputy Coordinator Jonathan Margolis said. "I am proud that the initial feedback from users as well as Web and marketing firms indicates we hit the mark."

"The launch gave us a chance to try new products and concepts that we hadn't used before," Web editor Laura Potter said.

Compelling and Compliant

Barbara Long, who led the site's design and integration effort, said the team faced multiple challenges. In addition to building a completely new site while maintaining its predecessor, IIP needed to ensure that America.gov was both visually compelling and fully compliant with federal regulations.

The site is one of the few U.S.

government Web sites that provide video closed captioning for persons with disabilities. An added benefit is that captioning facilitates translations into IIP's core languages of Arabic, Chinese, French, Persian, Russian and Spanish.

America.gov is the latest of IIP's online initiatives. Members of IIP's Digital Outreach Team regularly join debates on blogs about the Middle East and Internet forums conducted in Arabic, Persian or Urdu.

"We regularly visit two or three dozen sites and post to them weekly," said Brent Blaschke, the Digital Outreach Team's director.

Digital Outreach Team employees—who identify themselves as State Department staffers—join these blogs to challenge erroneous assumptions about U.S. policy.

"Even if bloggers disagree with us, they usually appreciate the fact that we're trying to engage with them," Blaschke said. "We can't guarantee that we'll change anyone's mind, but we certainly won't influence anyone if we're not entering the debate."

Branding

IIP is also at the forefront of the Department's efforts to create a uniform look for all of its external Web sites. The linchpin of this effort is the IIP-developed Content Management System.

"We began using the CMS in 2002 and later offered it to posts on a voluntary basis," said Martha Chaconas, director of Web services. CMS "allows the branding of the Department's public sites and lets bureaus and embassies determine their own content."

Based on CMS's potential for financial and human resources savings and its ease of use, Patrick Kennedy, under secretary for Management, directed the entire Department to convert to CMS. This means all Department sites—including embassy sites—will have a consistent framework by the end of 2009.

America.gov, the Digital Outreach Team and CMS exemplify IIP's efforts to harness new technologies and link its programs more directly to policy objectives.

"We must embrace new technology if we're going to be heard in the clatter of cyberspace and span generational divides," IIP Coordinator Curtin said. "This is a very exciting time for us." ■

The author is an IIP staff writer.

REE Uses Facebook to Recruit

The terms "viral marketing," which encourages people to pass along a marketing message, and "social networking," which is associated with Web sites such as Facebook.com, reflect an individual's connection to the global community. A career in the Foreign Service can provide a similar connection, and the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment in the Bureau of Human Resources wants to communicate that message.

REE uses social networking. A social network is an association or gathering of people drawn together by family, work or hobby. It allows like-minded people to share common interests, goals and experiences. People tend to passionately communicate their most positive experiences with family, friends and colleagues.

To put social networking to use, REE has been building a presence on Facebook, a Web site where groups with common interests share ideas, perspectives and insights. REE developed a Department of State business page on Facebook and a "Careers in Foreign Affairs" interest group. As a result, it reached a new segment of its target audience, primarily those 18 to 34 years old, who may not have previously been aware of, or even considered, a career in foreign affairs. More importantly, it lets REE communicate with them on a more personal, one-to-one basis.

The initial feedback has been positive, and e-mails arrive daily praising the Department's efforts.

"I think it is an excellent way to reach new people who may not have considered the State Department as a career," said an Emory University student.

The Facebook initiative communicates about careers in the Foreign Service and Civil Service and various student programs. In fact, the Department's "employer brand" is based on expressing the uniqueness of this career by sharing real stories and experiences. Audiences become interested and want to learn more.

Soon, REE will replicate this concept on the Intranet, where employees can share their experiences with their peers.

Already, those who are passionate about global issues and/or foreign policy and want to connect with like-minded individuals are checking out the Careers in Foreign Affairs group at http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=10328646356&ref=share. They can also become fans of the Department of State at http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Department-of-State/21076301296.

PHOTOGRAPH: ED WARNER

DipNote Noted

DEPARTMENT'S NEW BLOG FOSTERS INFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY

BY AMANDA HAMILTON

Sean McCormack, assistant secretary for Public Affairs and the State Department spokesman, wanted an Internet-based blog, or online discussion site, that would offer a behind-the-scenes look at the Department and an official forum for exchanging ideas.

Mission accomplished: DipNote was born.

"With DipNote we hoped to start a dialogue with the public and give the public a chance to become active participants in a community focused on some of the world's great issues," McCormack said.

Heath Kern, director for digital media in the Bureau of Public Affairs, assembled a team, and teammates Jeff Jackson, senior technology adviser for new media, and Eric Jones, senior software developer, designed and developed the blog. The team named it after "diplomatic notes," or communications between governments. After three months of planning, DipNote came online in September without a glitch, unusual for a new Web service.

Critics Arrive

More than 50 comments were posted within three days of DipNote's launch. Blog team member Daniel Schaub began encouraging other blogs to link to DipNote, exponentially increasing DipNote's traffic and raising its prominence in online searches. But there were also critical posts about DipNote's name and color scheme, and many questioned whether the Department could produce a blog that was more than official talking points. Some criticisms faded with time, others were addressed right away and all comments were posted—DipNote wants honesty.

To combat the presumption that DipNote would be filled with just talking points, the blog recruited bloggers from inside the Department, encouraging them to tell their stories and share experiences. The blog's editor, Frederick Jones, also comes up with a Question of the Week to promote discussion. Having high-level officials submit blog entries set DipNote apart from other blogs, but the team wanted to hear from employees at all levels in the field and in Washington.

One of DipNote's first bloggers, Tara Foley, had been posted to Saudi Arabia and is now a foreign affairs officer in the Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction and

PA's digital media team includes, from left, Heath Kern, Jeff Jackson, Tamika Johnson and Daniel Schaub.

Terrorism. Foley began writing about her daily experiences in Saudi Arabia, including how she felt as a woman having to adapt to differing cultural customs. After her first post, the blog was inundated with comments and questions from the public.

"Blogging lets me share my thoughts on issues I'm passionate about," Foley said. "Beyond the press releases and headlines, there's a very personal side to our work. By sharing that with the public, we make the foreign policy process more human and more accessible, something that people can connect with."

Foley has become a regular blogger, and her posts are popular.

DipNote attracted more bloggers. Chief of Protocol Nancy Brinker regularly blogged about her experiences traveling with the Secretary and the President. On landing in the Middle East with President Bush, she immediately posted an entry about the situation on the ground.

Promoting Feedback

Other Department employees also began to see DipNote as an outlet for their voices. When Director General Harry K. Thomas announced that some Foreign Service officers could be directed to serve in Iraq, employees reacted on the blog. When Walter Braunohler lost two colleagues to violence in Sudan, he used the blog to express his grief, and received a flood of encouraging comments from Department employees and the public.

DipNote has been the subject of several news stories and is frequently cited by those posting on other blogs.

"There was genuine doubt that a cabinet-level agency could have a blog with unfiltered comments, but the interactive legitimacy of DipNote has piqued people's interest and given it credibility," Kern said.

DipNote is now a forum for sharing ideas, experiences and reactions. More than 60 employees have submitted postings, and the site has been visited more than 580,000 times. Employee postings have generated more than 2,015 public comments, and the site now has 600 subscribers.

Asserting that DipNote's success exceeds that of any federal government blog, Kern attributed the achievement in part to the number of comments on specific topics and the high caliber of these comments.

"It shows we have reached the foreign policy community very quickly, and it is coming to us for substantive information and dialogue," she said. "These readers are informed and want their voices heard, and they are exactly the audience we were hoping to reach."

DipNote's next challenge, she continued, is to keep up a steady stream of consistent bloggers.

"We want the public to hear from as many different Department voices as possible," she said.

DipNote is at http://blogs.state.gov. To post, call Amanda Hamilton at (202) 647-6345 or simply e-mail the post to blogs@state.gov. ■

Sean McCormack is the State Department spokesman and oversees the Bureau of Public Affairs.

The author is a personal assistant in the Bureau of Public Affairs.

Question of the Week Sparks Lively Debate

In February, one week's question on DipNote, "Do the Palestinians and Israelis Really Want Peace?" prompted some of the following responses, excerpted here with the blogger's "screen name."

Bilbo in Washington, D.C.:
No one is willing to take the risk of offering concessions to make peace because all are aware that there are too many radicals on both sides who will immediately set out to undermine any peace agreement

Zharkov:
It's a revolution, not an economic conference. Revolutions end when one side loses.

Rick in Florida:
I really wish they could live side by side, but there is just too much hatred and bitterness.

NB in Pakistan:
Respect for human life will definitely usher in the peaceful co-existence we all long to see in the Middle East.

Curtis in Singapore:
Not everyone wants peace, and that's why it is so difficult. Many elements in Palestine don't want peace, and to a much lesser extent radical right-wing Israelis refuse to give up any ground in the negotiating process.

James in Colorado:
So long as the Gaza Strip remains a hostile, poverty-stricken environment, there will be disenchanted members of the Palestinian people with few ways of expressing their dissatisfaction.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT): ED WARNER; (OPPOSITE PAGE): ENRIQUE GOMEZ

¡Viva El Blog!

MISSION MEXICO'S BOOMING BLOG **BY EDMUND GAGLIARDI**

When Deputy Chief of Mission Leslie Bassett posted the inaugural entry on the Mission Mexico Blog (http://www.intelink.gov/communities/state/mexico/) in 2006, few envisioned how the blog would transform the mission. Since then, the blog has become a content-rich, interactive forum for the 2,000 mission employees to speak out on a range of issues.

Since its early days (*State Magazine,* February 2007), the blog has also become a valuable knowledge-management resource. When Category-5 Hurricane Dean headed for the Yucatan Peninsula in August 2007, the mission used the blog to coordinate relief efforts and share emergency preparedness information. Disseminating information quickly to a large audience, including the operations center and consular affairs planners, was instrumental to the mission's effectiveness.

When Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Maura Harty visited Mexico, the blog chronicled her trip and sparked a dialog on consular issues. The blog has also enriched mission morale and been used to boost office cohesiveness, for instance by promoting a junior officers' outing to a Mexican-style wrestling match.

The "Notes from the DCM" section has evoked discussions on a range of topics, such as the mission's "Day in the Life" project and regional issues. The DCM's "Wild About Juarez" entry elicited a record 170 readers in a single day. Not even a broken arm stopped DCM Bassett from publishing the blog's Daily Factoid.

The blog has grown from its original four bloggers to more than 90 registered bloggers representing nine consulates general, the embassy, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and the Mexico desk. Many other mission employees contribute comments to blog topics. The blog's list of main topics also has grown, from six to 20, and there have been more than 12,000 page views of the blog since August 2007.

Those interested in starting a blog can reach the eDiplomacy team at KMTeam@state.gov. ■

The author is an information management officer at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City.

Mission Mexico's blog team includes, front row from left, Emily Fertik, Ana Maria Prieto-Danaher, Leslie Bassett, Eva Sibaja and Jason Seymour. Back row from left: Julia Tully, June Williamson, Janelle Guest, Sergio Moreno and the author.

Purdy's Wharf, location of the consulate general, is in the background, as the ship *Bluenose II* sails by.

PHOTOGRAPHS: NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

Red Sox Pitch In

CONSULATE GENERAL IN HALIFAX CELEBRATES 175 YEARS

BY MARCIA SEITZ-EHLER

This year is the 175th anniversary of the U.S. Consulate General in Halifax, the oldest U.S. diplomatic post in Canada. The earliest record of communication from the consulate is an April 1833 dispatch from Consul John Morrow to Secretary of State Edward Livingston acknowledging receipt of the Department's transmittal of the consul's commission.

When the consulate opened, it primarily documented exports to the United States. As the first U.S. consulate in British North America, it covered Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Upper Canada, Lower Canada and Newfoundland. Today, the consulate's district includes the four provinces of Atlantic Canada and the small French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

The U.S.-Canada diplomatic relationship is now one of the United States' largest. Approximately $1.6 billion in goods and 300,000 people cross the U.S.-Canada border every day.

The consulate has two Foreign Service officers and nine Locally Employed staff members who have 137 combined years of service. The consulate no longer documents exports but focuses instead on American citizen issues, non-immigrant visas, public affairs and political/economic relations between Atlantic Canada and the United States.

Hosting the Sox

The consulate kicked off its 175th season by hosting the Boston Red Sox and the 2007 World Series trophy. Although Halifax is in Toronto Blue Jays territory, many in Atlantic Canada are Red Sox fans, a tradition dating to the early live radio broadcasts of Red Sox games.

A local Red Sox fan club approached the consulate for assistance in convincing the team to visit. Consul General Harold Foster and Consul Elizabeth Schwefler, a native of Massachusetts whose daughter's middle name is Fenway, wrote the Red Sox in support of the idea, and the team accepted.

The early-January visit began with a welcome reception at the Nova Scotia Legislature hosted by the Premier of Nova Scotia and attended by the consul general and consul. Later that day, the consul general hosted a reception at his home, where fans, politicians and community leaders were photographed with the trophy and Wally, the Red Sox mascot. The next day, the Red Sox visited a childrens' hospital and elementary school, and then Wally and the trophy posed for hundreds of pictures with fans at a shopping mall.

Long Relationship

There has always been a strong connection between Atlantic Canada and New England. In 1917, the collision of two World War I supply ships in Halifax harbor caused a large explosion that leveled the city and killed more than 1,900 people. The people of Massachusetts responded quickly, sending supplies and medical personnel via train. As an annual expression of gratitude, Nova Scotia sends the city of Boston a giant Christmas tree, which is lit in a celebration at the Boston Common.

Almost 84 years after the explosion, Halifax repaid the kindness when it hosted more than 7,000 displaced passengers from 40 planes that had been diverted to Halifax after the United States closed its airspace on September 11, 2001. President Bush in 2004 and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in 2006 traveled to Halifax to thank the citizens in person for the hospitality shown to diverted passengers.

This year, the consular section is celebrating the anniversary by presenting each American child who receives a Consular Report of Birth Abroad with a special letter from the consul general and an American flag. All sections of the consulate are also planning a large July 4th party, multiple ship visits and a fall conference on the U.S.-Canada relationship. The consulate staff invites everyone to visit, either in person or via the Web site http://halifax.usconsulate.gov. ■

Consul General Foster addresses attendees to the Red Sox welcoming reception at the Nova Scotia Legislature. Wally, the Red Sox mascot, and the Premier of Nova Scotia, Rodney MacDonald, are in the background.

The author is the public affairs representative at the U.S. Consulate General in Halifax.

WAR-ZONE VOLUNTEERS

DIFFERENT FACTORS ATTRACT CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES TO IRAQ DUTY

BY ED WARNER

As Nick Sheldon worked on a laptop computer one day during his tour in Iraq, a bullet flew past, missing his head by inches.

"It was a miracle it didn't kill me," said Sheldon, one of the 39 State Department Civil Service employees who served in Iraq in the past two years.

The bullet, fired by local soccer fans celebrating a win, landed nearby and Sheldon kept it and extended his tour by three months.

"I liked it there," he said, noting that his father, a World War II veteran, would have marveled at how easy life is for Mission Iraq employees, compared to the hardships his dad suffered in combat.

A staff assistant in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Sheldon was a roving office management specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. He said he volunteered because his ultimate aim is to transfer to the Foreign Service. In fact, he's now pursuing postings in Africa via the Department's list of hard-to-fill posts.

MANY MOTIVES

It's not just the 70 percent temporary pay increase that motivates those volunteering for Iraq, according to Tony Spakauskas, coordinator of the Iraq Staffing Unit in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. "There are as many motivations as there are people" who chose to serve in Iraq, he said.

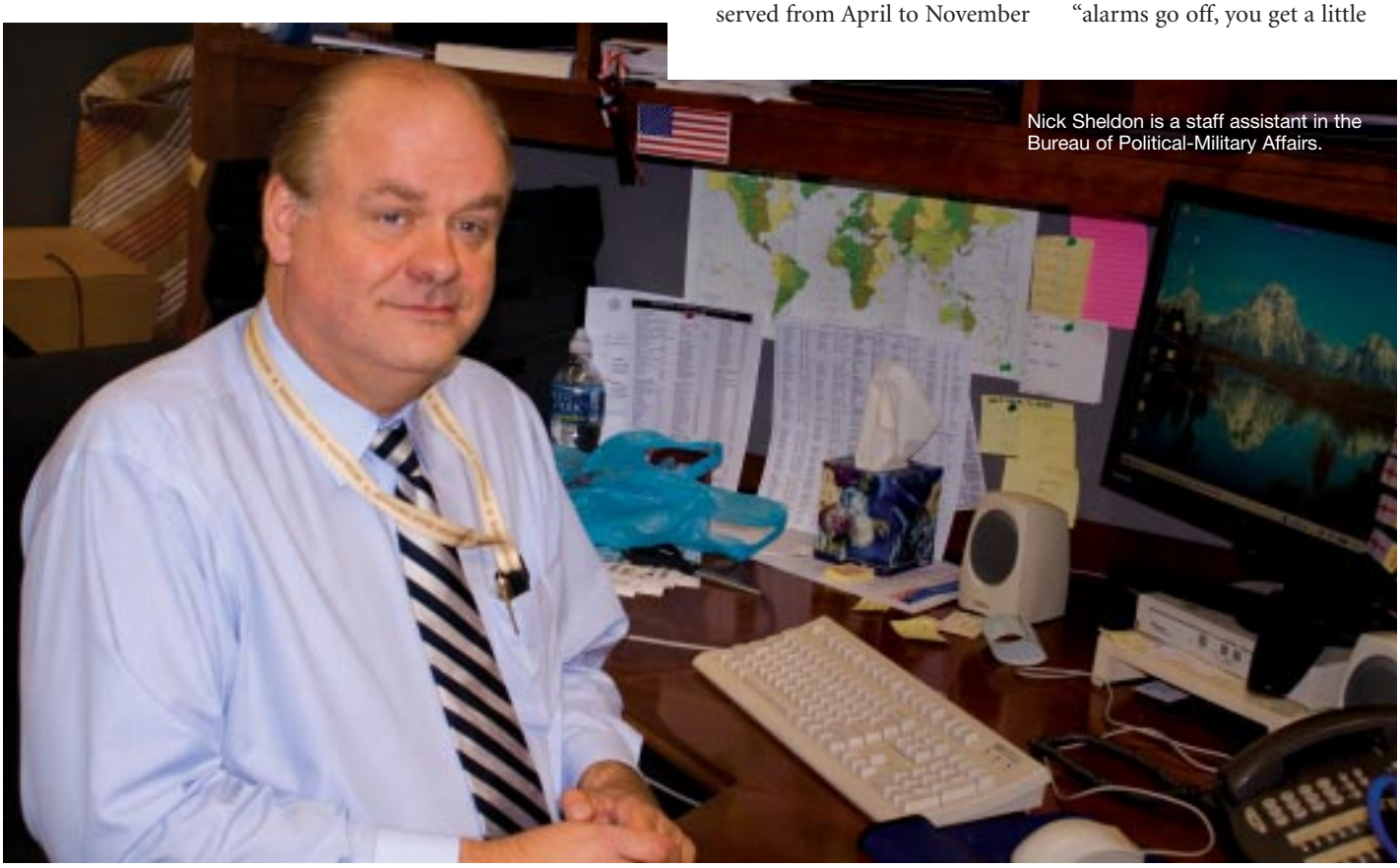
The pay is attractive—an additional 35 percent for a hardship post plus 35 percent for a danger-pay post—and, although they return to their original pay rate when they return to the United States, Civil Service employees do see a small permanent pay boost from their tour. According to Spakauskas, because Civil Service employees cannot fall below their previous pay rate, their pay is permanently boosted by at least one step after they return.

Wanda Washington, a program analyst in the Bureau of Resource Management who served from April to November 2007, said she was motivated by a "noble call to service." But she said her chief incentive was to prove she could handle it. As a surge operations officer at post, Washington managed the staffing, tracking, processing and training of Provincial Reconstruction Team surge personnel assigned to the Office of Provincial Affairs. She said the job was challenging and rewarding, and made her proud to have served.

"I'm a lot stronger and wiser" now, she said, having endured "duck-and-cover alarms every day" during the tour.

ROCKET ALARMS

The regular duck-and-cover alarms, which warn of incoming fire, also bugged Frank Cannon, who worked in the embassy's general services office from July 2006 to August 2007. When the "alarms go off, you get a little



Nick Sheldon is a staff assistant in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ED WARNER

Frank Cannon is a policy analyst with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. Wanda Washington is a program analyst in the Bureau of Resource Management.

nervous," he said, adding that he was glad the insurgents are notoriously bad shots.

He also said he was pleased when the regional security office moved his team's duck-and-cover bunker closer, so that he and his officemates could dive in the second they heard an alarm.

Both Cannon, who is married, and Sheldon, who is single, said a major challenge was being separated from family members while at this unaccompanied post. Cannon and his wife exchanged e-mails daily, he said—adding that his wife expected replies right away or she'd get worried. Because phone calls to and from the States were so easy, Cannon said, sometimes his daughter would call to ask him to overrule her mother, or his wife would call to inquire why something around the house wasn't working.

Offsetting the pain of separation were the friendships formed at post. Cannon said coworkers often socialized after work and that when he runs into returnees—whether Civil or Foreign Service—they always stop to chat. He still gets e-mails from those at post.

Cannon said the experience helped him appreciate life's small things, like how employees rely on fast and accurate delivery of their property. His goal is to make a sense of urgency a part of his daily work.

The Department's Civil Service employees in Iraq constitute a fraction of all of the Department's Civil Service employees who serve overseas. According to the Bureau of Human Resources, 284 Civil Service employees served overseas on excursion tours from 2006 through 2007—roughly seven times the number who served in Iraq. ■

The author is deputy editor of State Magazine.

WANT TO GO?

A PRIMER FOR IRAQ SERVICE

Because the Department can fill positions in Iraq as they come available, Civil Service employees who want to serve need only check under "employment" on the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' Intranet Web site. If they see a job that fits their skills, those seeking a one-year tour should notify their supervisor and send their résumé and references to NEA, said NEA's Tony Spakauskas. Those seeking a six-month tour must gain their supervisor's approval.

And don't assume there'll be plenty of openings. A mid-February check of the Web site showed no jobs available at the embassy in the current bidding cycle.

When an employee spots an opening and applies, the embassy will say whether it wants the applicant. His or her references will be checked, and the Director General's office will pass judgment on the appointment.

Successful applicants get a "limited noncareer appointment" to the Foreign Service, meaning they receive all Foreign Service benefits, including three rest-and-relaxation vacations during the typical one-year tour. They also get 20 days of administrative leave per year for use on R&Rs, or 10 days for a six-month tour.

Because Civil Service employees are essentially converted to the Foreign Service by the LNA, Spakauskas said, there are, technically speaking, no Civil Service employees in Iraq. It also means that a Civil Service employee who is about to be promoted should get the promotion before accepting the LNA, he added.

Another factor to consider when accepting an LNA for Iraq is whether to do the tour as a permanent change of station or a temporary duty assignment. According to Joann Alba, Civil Service LNA coordinator in the Bureau of Human Resources, PCS is generally best if you have a family, since you will be eligible for the separate maintenance allowance. Use TDY, she continued, if you'd rather retain your D.C.-area locality pay.

To give a sense of what life at post is like, the Foreign Service Institute's Destination Iraq Web site offers information on security, languages, culture and even on the type of eye protection useful for dusty helicopter flights.

Developing Relationships

USAID SCHOLARSHIPS STRENGTHEN RURAL MEXICO **BY MARÍA CRISTINA PRADO**

On a recent visit to Mexico, President Bush met with several students who, with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, had studied in the United States and returned to Mexico to improve their communities.

The youth and teachers with whom the President met had participated in the Training, Internships, Exchanges and Scholarships Program. TIES was created in 2001 as part of an initiative with Mexico to strengthen the bilateral relationship through increased competitiveness and promoting better living standards for Mexicans. The program supports scholarships for disadvantaged youth and teachers, and university partnerships that include faculty exchanges, development of new or improved curricula and joint research on innovative technologies for rural communities.

A Collaboration

TIES reflects a collaboration between the U.S. government and higher education institutions from both countries. The U.S. government has contributed $35 million to TIES, and other collaborating partners, including participating universities and their public and private allies, have contributed an additional $15 million. Over its six years, through 60 university partnerships and more than 975 long-term scholarships, TIES

Teacher Juan Salvador Díaz, a scholarship recipient, works with students.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT): MARÍA CRISTINA PRADO; (OPPOSITE PAGE): GUTBERTO GARCIA

Scholarship recipients Francisco Flores, left, and Evelia Hernández.

has enhanced Mexican higher education.

The TIES partnerships focus on increased productivity, water resource management, access to rural finance, improved rule of law for indigenous people and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. The wide range of partners includes businesses, nongovernmental organizations, government agencies and rural communities.

TIES has many success stories, including:

- San Diego State University and the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California in the city of Mexicali, Mexico, developed a joint master's degree program on transborder public administration and governance for the U.S.-Mexico border region, improving cross-border cooperation.
- The University of Texas at San Antonio, Universidad Veracruzana in the State of Veracruz and the Mexican Association of Small Business Development Centers are jointly helping small businesses grow by promoting job creation and will help more than 750,000 U.S. and Mexican small businesses capitalize on trade opportunities.
- Lamar University and Instituto Tecnológico de Saltillo developed a new technology to remove arsenic from water, resulting in a patent that is being commercialized by their private sector partners in Mexico and Central America.

Scholarships for Opportunity

Scholarships for youth and teachers address the lack of opportunity to pursue higher education in some of the poorest regions of Mexico. Talented students receive two-year scholarships to study at U.S. community colleges to improve their technical skills so they can better address development in their communities. The program also provides one-year scholarships to rural Mexican teachers to strengthen rural primary education for indigenous children, often in multi-grade, bilingual classrooms.

Scholarship recipients return to their communities to apply their technical skills and implement community service projects.

"This scholarship allowed me to continue my studies, an opportunity I did not have in my rural community, and to grow professionally and personally, and visualize myself as an agent of change for our families and communities," said Francisco Flores, of Mexico's San Luis Potosí state, who studied computer information technology at Kentucky State University.

Flores said the experience "completely changed my outlook and helped me become a community leader." Formerly a city treasurer, he now teaches at a university and directs a distance-learning institution.

TIES shows how the United States and Mexico can work together through the personal experiences of students and teachers, who strengthen their nations' personal and institutional ties and promote better understanding.

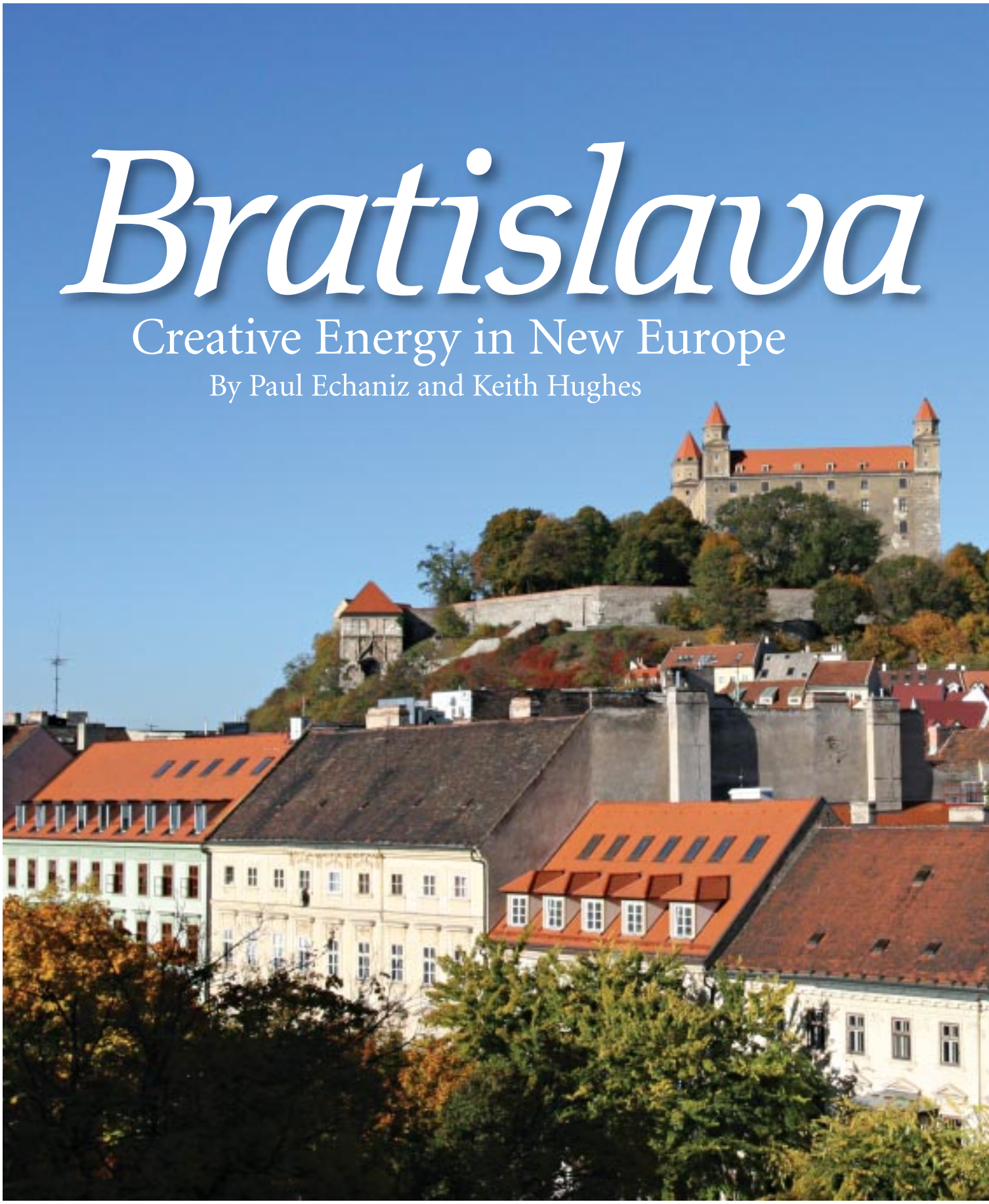
As President Bush said during his Mexico visit: "One of the best things America can do is help people realize their dreams. The best way to realize dreams is through education." ■

The author is USAID Mexico's public affairs specialist.

Bratislava

Creative Energy in New Europe

By Paul Echaniz and Keith Hughes



This scenic view of Old Town Bratislava features Bratislava Castle and St. Martin's Cathedral. *Photo by Igor Schneeweiss*

POST OF THE MONTH>>>

Bratislava

COUNTRY>>> Slovakia

CAPITAL>>> Bratislava

TOTAL AREA>>> 48,845 square kilometers

APPROXIMATE SIZE>>> About twice the size of New Hampshire

GOVERNMENT>>> parliamentary democracy

INDEPENDENCE>>> January 1, 1993 (Czechoslovakia split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia)

POPULATION>>> 4.5 million

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH>>> 74.9 years

LANGUAGES>>> Slovak (official), Hungarian, Roma and Ukrainian

CURRENCY>>> Slovak koruna (SKK)

PER CAPITA INCOME>>> $19,800

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE>>> 8.6 percent

IMPORT COMMODITIES>>> Machinery, transportation equipment and fuels

EXPORT COMMODITIES>>> Vehicles, machinery and electrical equipment

INTERNET COUNTRY CODE>>> .sk

This view from the embassy shows the Cathedral of St. Martin and Bratislava Castle. Eleven Austro-Hungarian monarchs were crowned in St. Martin's. Archaeologists have found remnants of Celtic, Roman and early Slav settlements in the castle.

A stroll down the streets of Bratislava—renowned as the coronation city of 11 Austro-Hungarian Empire monarchs between 1536 and 1830—is a visual lesson in the economic and cultural power traditionally centered in Slovakia's capital city. Historical landmarks abound, including the site of the six-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's first concert. Palaces and the U.S. Embassy are only steps from the Danube River, along which one can cycle, run or rollerblade into two other countries in the course of an afternoon.

PHOTOGRAPHS: IGOR SCHNEEWEISS

Although Slovaks do not always agree with U.S. policy, they almost universally admire the American higher educational system.

One of the factors making the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava an exciting and dynamic post is the entrepreneurial spirit of this 15-year-old country, which has pushed its economic growth rate into the "Asian tiger" range. Having built a democracy, strong civil society and vibrant, private-sector-led economy on the ashes of an authoritarian post-communist system, Slovaks have set their sights on being the first in their neighborhood to adopt the Euro—in early 2009.

The U.S. Embassy in Bratislava faces new challenges in gaining the support of the Slovak coalition government that came to power in June 2006. As memory fades regarding the U.S. contribution to the fall of communism and its support for Slovak membership in the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the embassy is gearing up to be more proactive in demonstrating the value of strong bilateral and transatlantic ties.

U.S. Investment

Facing a time of limited resources, recently arrived Ambassador Vincent Obsitnik brought a fresh pair of eyes to this challenge. Born in eastern Slovakia, he made bringing U.S. investment to that less-developed part of the country a mission priority. This is an issue on which the embassy could cooperate with the current government, improve the foundation for building educational exchanges and demonstrate U.S. commitment to a more prosperous and democratic Slovakia.

The country's emergence from a command economy and repressive regime gave the Slovaks unmatched, hands-on experience in developing democratic institutions and reforming the economy. The U.S. Embassy in Bratislava identified this Slovak strength and began to devote resources to support the many civil-society-building projects of Slovak nongovernmental organizations.

With the active help of the embassy, Slovaks are training Afghan journalists in the basics of journalism and Kazakh local officials in good governance. Other Slovak NGOs encourage and advise Cuban dissidents and guide Balkan governments toward Euro-Atlantic integration.

Although Slovaks do not always agree with U.S. policy, they almost universally admire the quality, innovativeness and openness of the American higher educational system. Part of the embassy's mission is to burnish that U.S. image by establishing new ties between U.S. and Slovak universities and helping bring the best practices of American universities to the Slovak institutions that are training future political, economic and scientific leaders.

Top: Just a stone's throw from the U.S. Embassy, the stately Slovak National Theater dominates one end of Bratislava's most prominent square. **Above:** After an awards ceremony in which six Slovak soldiers received American military citations for service in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Chief of Slovak Armed Forces General Lubomir Bulik and Ambassador Obsitnik talk to the press on U.S.-Slovak military cooperation. **Right:** Management Officer Charles Eaton and Office Management Specialist Dohna Hocevar volunteer time with Cub Scouts in Kamzik forest near Bratislava.

Right: Vice Consul Ann Meceda is a volunteer teacher at the Economics University of Bratislava. **Below:** Eva Salnerová and Zuzana Zat'ková act as masters of ceremony at the awards ceremony for the Foreign Service National Association's annual tennis tournament.

The High Tatras mountain range is a popular destination for hikers and skiers. It straddles the border between Slovakia and Poland. **Opposite page:** To highlight the embassy's work on integration of minorities in Slovakia, then-Under Secretary Karen Hughes greets participants in a soccer match between Roma from the countryside and Slovaks from Venglos Academy.

PHOTOGRAPHS: IGOR SCHNEEWEISS

Because many young Slovaks have left to seek educational opportunities abroad, university leaders are seeking ways to keep talented students at home. At the same time, U.S. universities are recognizing that Central Europe presents an opportunity for fruitful international programs.

Reaching Out

The embassy made educational cooperation a cornerstone of the mission's outreach. Money for large-scale education programs funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development had dried up, but for the price of a few plane tickets the public affairs section brought together representatives of five American universities and of the most promising universities in Slovakia. Three university representatives have made second trips to Slovakia and are interested in creating such programs as lecture swaps via digital video conference, a business incubator and even a U.S.-degree MBA program.

The U.S. Embassy in Bratislava also spurred the creation of a program that brings Slovak-American doctors to Slovakia to give professional lectures to medical students, doctors and hospital administrators, creating further exchange opportunities.

To promote U.S. interests, the embassy took to heart Edward R. Murrow's maxim that the most important part of diplomacy is "the last three feet." On several occasions, more than a third of the officers at post, including Ambassador Obsitnik, fanned out across Slovakia to answer tough questions and present an American point of view to students at 20 different Slovak high schools. Each of these initiatives reached more than 1,000 students who normally never see Americans.

Outreach was also a key to dealing with public displeasure regarding the security upgrades to embassy buildings, located on Bratislava's most famous historic square. To counteract the image of a fortress, the public affairs section welcomed Slovaks into its multipurpose room, which had been remade as a public gallery. All post sections have redefined how they do business and accommodated what is now a forum for fruitful exchanges with Slovaks. The security-upgrade issue has all but disappeared.

In response to the State Department's budget situation, the post's innovative management section mapped out a strategy to save significant resources. That strategy falls under three broad headings: improving collaboration at post, mainly through extensive use of SharePoint software; working with the U.S. Embassy in Vienna to regionalize services; and reducing the number of expensive American positions by empowering talented Foreign Service Nationals and contracting out low-value services.

Regionalizing Services

The embassy is working aggressively to reduce costs by regionalizing two significant services traditionally provided at post, its ClassNet servers and the warehouse. The embassies in Bratislava and Vienna are creating a regional information programs center in Vienna. Officers in Bratislava will log onto Vienna's servers and receive the same data as in Viennawith no difference in how they use ClassNet, which can accommodate additional posts as the cost savings compels them to join the IPC.

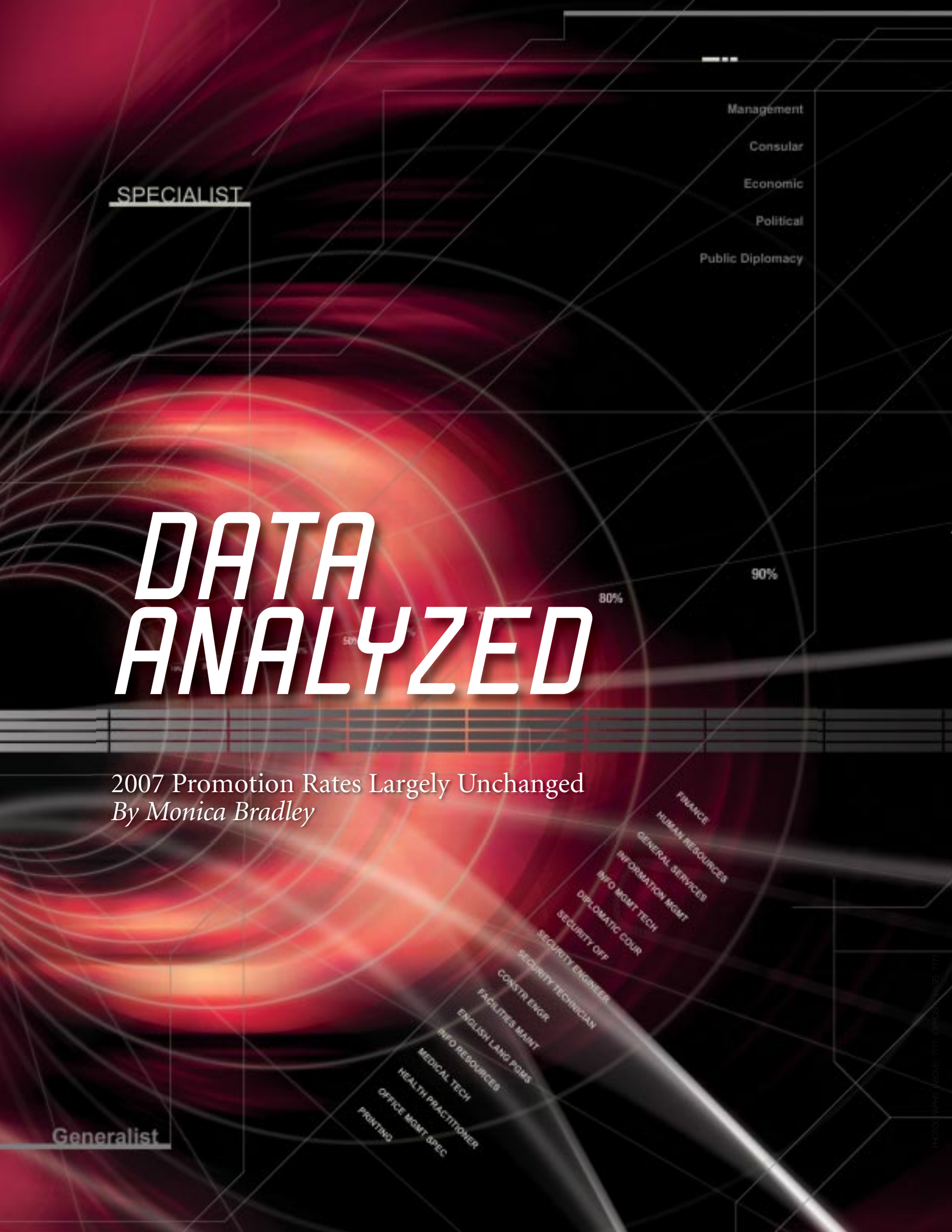
The management section has eliminated nearly 40 percent of its workforce, allowing the FSNs who remain to take more responsibility and work as managers rather than providers of services.

These re-engineered initiatives could save nearly $1 million over the next two fiscal years. The embassy hopes to turn some of the savings into additional programming resources.

In coming years, a more efficient U.S. Embassy in Bratislava will present opportunities for officers to advance Transformational Diplomacy efforts in a country with the experience to partner with the United States in spreading democracy and stability beyond Europe's borders. ■

Paul Echaniz is information management officer and Keith Hughes is information officer at the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava.

To counteract the image of a fortress, the public affairs section welcomed Slovaks into its multipurpose room, which had been remade as a public gallery.



DATA ANALYZED

2007 Promotion Rates Largely Unchanged

By Monica Bradley

PHOTOGRAPHS/GEOFF FYFE, OPCO, PAGE 77

The 2007 Foreign Service Selection Board has announced the 2007 Foreign Service promotion results by class and cone for generalists and specialists. The overall promotion rate for all Foreign Service employees eligible for promotion in 2007 was 26 percent, the same as the 2006 rate and the five-year average.

GENERALISTS

Overall, promotion rates for eligible FS generalists have increased from 29.3 to 32.3 percent since 2003. The 2007 promotion rate of 15.3 percent for FS01s being elevated into and within the Senior Foreign Service was slightly higher than the previous five-year average of 14.9 percent and 1 percentage point higher than in 2006. The number of promotions and promotion rates from FS02 to FS01 were 159 and 17.6 percent, respectively, in 2007. These figures were slightly higher than in 2006 (150 and 16.6 percent) and were about equal to the five-year average (155 and 17.4 percent).

The FS03 to FS02 promotion rate was 55.1 percent, higher than the 49.7 percent rate in 2006. It includes 40 more promotions. It is also higher than the five-year average promotion rate of 48.7 percent.

Generalist promotions from FS04 to FS03 decreased slightly from 372 in 2006 to 364 in 2007 but were higher than the five-year average of 309 promotions. The 2007 promotion rate was 63.1 percent, compared with 69.7 percent in 2006.

Classwide promotion numbers and rates increased in 2007 to 197 and 10 percent, respectively, up from 158 and 8 percent in 2006. Classwide promotion allocations are based on the percentage of positions for international relations officer-generalist at each class, but it is difficult to predict which employees or cones will be promoted classwide. Some cones did well one year but not the next and vice versa. Several more years of data are needed to show a trend.

Regarding the deficit in mid-level FS generalists, it will take a few more years to be eliminated, but it has begun to shrink. The 2007 promotions reduced a 9 percent mid-level deficit to just over 1 percent. Considering projected attrition for the remainder of 2008, HR estimates the deficit will be below 5 percent by September. If positions, hiring, promotions and attrition rates remain constant, the deficit will be eliminated by the end of the 2010 promotion cycle.

SPECIALISTS

As in previous years, FS specialist promotions varied by class and group. In 2007, 20 percent of eligible specialists were promoted—marginally lower than the 2006 rate and the five-year average of 21 percent. This was due in part to the 11 percent increase in eligibles at the FP03 level. Promotion numbers for many of the specialist groups remained similar to those of 2006 and were similar to or better than the five-year average.

Security engineers faced a large deficit at the FP02 level. Because of this gap, 71 percent of those eligible for promotion to FP02 were promoted in 2007, up from 56 percent in 2006. The overall promotion rate for all SEOs was 36.6 percent in 2007, 8 percent higher than in 2006 and 12 percent higher than the five-year average.

Facility managers had one less promotion than in 2006 and two more than the five-year average. At 34.4 percent overall, the promotion rate for facility managers was 1 percent higher than in 2006 but 11 percent higher than the five-year average—and more than double the 2003 rate of 16.1 percent.

The number of construction engineers promoted matched that of 2006 and was two more than the five-year average. Because there were fewer eligibles, the promotion rate increased by 5 percent over the 2006 rate and 10 percent over the five-year average. Construction engineers face a deficit at the FP02 level, which will take years to address given the shortage of employees eligible for promotion at the next lower grade.

GENERAL TRENDS

The rate of promotions has been affected by the hiring fluctuations over the past several years. Many skill groups (generalists and specialists alike) face deficits at several grade levels. In general, FS promotion opportunities will likely continue similar to the 2007 rate to help close the staffing gap, where there are sufficient numbers of eligibles at the lower grades. All members of the Foreign Service who would otherwise be eligible for promotion based on the TIC requirements alone should be sure to meet all requirements in the Career Development Program and Precepts so as not to further limit the number of eligibles in any grade or cone.

Ultimately, promotion opportunities are primarily determined by service needs and budgetary constraints. The model used to calculate promotion opportunities evaluates the number of current employees, positions, projected attrition, hiring and employees' time-in-class and time-in-service. The model simulates the movement of employees through the FS career system over a multi-year period and uses averages, typically five years, to create a smoothing effect. Because of this averaging, an employee promoted in one year does not automatically translate into a promotion opportunity to fill a perceived gap in the next year.

Reviewing statistics for an individual year can be misleading when used for career planning. Comparing the 2007 statistics to previous years, however, provides a reasonable idea of what promotion rates may look like over time by cone and class.

The author is a management analyst in the Bureau of Human Resources.

MC TO CM	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	29	1	3.4	6.0	6.5	28.4	26.5
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	14	0	0.0	6.3	0.0	30.7	0.0
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	36	0	0.0	6.0	0.0	29.0	0.0
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	52	3	5.8	6.3	6.2	29.1	28.6
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	27	1	3.7	6.2	7.9	27.4	31.7
CLASSWIDE INFO TECH MNGR	2	0	0.0	6.1	0.0	31.5	0.0
CLASSWIDE PSYCHIATRIST	2	0	0.0	12.7	0.0	21.9	0.0
CLASSWIDE MEDICAL OFFICERS	9	0	0.0	8.6	0.0	18.4	0.0
CLASSWIDE FINANCE	1	0	0.0	5.3	0.0	21.2	0.0
CLASSWIDE SECURITY OFFICER	1	0	0.0	4.6	0.0	31.7	0.0
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	173	5	2.9	6.4	6.6	28.2	28.8

GENERALIST FEOC TO FEMC	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	43	2	4.7	4.0	4.1	24.3	23.5
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	45	6	13.3	4.2	4.6	26.1	27.6
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	43	3	7.0	4.1	3.2	24.7	23.1
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	65	12	18.5	4.0	3.9	25.0	23.1
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	49	0	0.0	4.3	0.0	23.6	0.0
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	245	23	9.4	4.1	4.0	24.7	24.3
MANAGEMENT	41	8	19.5	4.0	4.4	24.4	26.9
CONSULAR	39	2	5.1	4.1	4.4	25.9	25.8
ECONOMIC	40	2	5.0	4.1	4.6	24.8	21.5
POLITICAL	53	2	3.8	4.1	3.9	25.4	21.9
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	49	7	14.3	4.3	3.8	23.6	22.2
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	222	21	9.5	4.1	4.2	24.8	24.2
COMBINED TOTALS	245	44	18.0	4.1	4.1	24.7	24.3

GENERALIST FS01 TO FEOC	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	63	2	3.2	5.3	5.2	20.7	19.9
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	71	7	9.9	5.8	6.7	21.9	22.3
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	75	7	9.3	5.7	6.4	21.5	21.4
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	140	14	10.0	5.7	5.6	22.2	20.6
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	72	2	2.8	6.2	4.7	20.5	17.4
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	421	32	7.6	5.7	5.9	21.5	20.9
MANAGEMENT	61	15	24.6	5.3	5.6	20.7	20.3
CONSULAR	64	8	12.5	5.7	6.1	21.9	22.8
ECONOMIC	68	6	8.8	5.6	6.7	21.5	22.7
POLITICAL	126	5	4.0	5.7	7.5	22.4	23.4
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	70	13	18.6	6.3	6.9	20.6	20.8
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	389	47	12.1	5.7	6.4	21.6	21.5
COMBINED TOTALS	421	79	18.8	5.7	6.2	21.5	21.3

GENERALIST CLASS 02 TO CLASS 01	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	149	9	6.0	5.6	7.3	15.7	17.2
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	159	8	5.0	5.0	6.8	16.5	19.5
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	222	11	5.0	5.2	6.6	16.2	17.6
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	276	26	9.4	5.2	5.8	15.8	15.5
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	99	3	3.0	5.7	5.7	15.5	16.3
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	905	57	6.3	5.3	6.3	16.0	16.8
MANAGEMENT	140	26	18.6	5.5	5.4	15.6	13.9
CONSULAR	151	12	7.9	4.9	5.3	16.3	15.1
ECONOMIC	211	26	12.3	5.1	6.2	16.1	16.4
POLITICAL	250	13	5.2	5.1	5.9	15.8	15.3
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	96	25	26.0	5.7	6.0	15.5	14.7
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	848	102	12.0	5.1	5.8	15.9	15.0
COMBINED TOTALS	905	159	17.6	5.3	6.0	16.0	15.7

GENERALIST CLASS 03 TO CLASS 02	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	61	16	26.2	3.2	3.0	8.2	7.8
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	121	34	28.1	4.1	3.8	9.3	8.5
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	116	17	14.7	3.8	4.0	8.3	8.2
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	90	12	13.3	3.6	3.4	8.3	8.1
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	44	6	13.6	3.6	2.7	8.5	7.5
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	432	85	19.7	3.7	3.5	8.6	8.2
MANAGEMENT	45	29	64.4	3.3	3.1	8.4	7.9
CONSULAR	87	28	32.2	4.2	4.1	9.6	8.7
ECONOMIC	99	33	33.3	3.8	4.4	8.3	8.6
POLITICAL	78	40	51.3	3.6	3.7	8.3	8.4
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	38	23	60.5	3.7	4.0	8.7	8.2
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	347	153	44.1	3.9	3.8	8.7	8.4
COMBINED TOTALS	432	238	55.1	3.7	3.7	8.6	8.3

GENERALIST CLASS 04 TO CLASS 03	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	124	79	63.7	3.1	3.0	4.7	4.8
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	85	51	60.0	2.7	2.9	4.7	4.9
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	116	70	60.3	2.9	2.6	4.2	4.2
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	127	85	66.9	2.8	2.9	4.0	4.1
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	125	79	63.2	2.7	2.8	4.3	4.4
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	577	364	63.1	2.8	2.8	4.3	4.4

SPECIALIST FEOC TO FEMC	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
FINANCE	4	1	25.0	4.7	4.6	21.8	21.8
INFO TECH MNGR	13	2	15.4	4.3	5.9	25.5	23.7
DIPLOMATIC COUR	1	0	0.0	2.5	0.0	20.7	0.0
PSYCHIATRIST	4	0	0.0	3.3	0.0	8.3	0.0
SECURITY OFF	15	3	20.0	3.0	3.2	22.6	22.8
CONSTR ENGR	4	0	0.0	4.7	0.0	20.8	0.0
MEDICAL OFFICERS	7	1	14.3	6.8	14.7	13.6	24.5
HEALTH PRACTITIONER	1	0	0.0	5.3	0.0	31.2	0.0
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	49	7	14.3	4.2	5.8	20.8	23.1

SPECIALIST 01 TO OC	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
FINANCE	16	1	6.3	6.6	4.7	19.1	14.5
HUMAN RESOURCES	7	0	0.0	5.7	0.0	25.6	0.0
GENERAL SERVICES	4	0	0.0	6.7	0.0	20.8	0.0
INFO TECH MNGR	17	4	23.5	4.2	4.7	23.6	25.4
DIPLOMATIC COUR	2	1	50.0	6.2	3.7	22.3	14.2
PSYCHIATRIST	2	2	100.0	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
SECURITY OFF	34	11	32.4	3.8	3.9	21.1	20.9
SECURITY ENGINEER	7	2	28.6	6.1	7.2	20.0	18.8
CONSTR ENGR	6	2	33.3	4.7	5.2	15.7	15.3
FACILITIES MAINT	4	0	0.0	5.2	0.0	14.5	0.0
ENGLISH LANG PGMS	2	0	0.0	12.8	0.0	24.2	0.0
INFO RESOURCES	2	0	0.0	6.2	0.0	13.4	0.0
MEDICAL OFFICERS	6	2	33.3	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9
HEALTH PRACTITIONER	3	0	0.0	7.4	0.0	19.5	0.0
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	112	25	22.3	5.2	4.5	19.6	17.9

SPECIALIST 02 TO 01	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
FINANCE	51	6	11.8	6.3	6.2	10.9	9.2
HUMAN RESOURCES	14	6	42.9	4.1	4.0	17.7	15.9
GENERAL SERVICES	20	4	20.0	5.8	5.5	19.3	16.0
INFO TECH MNGR	160	10	6.3	6.0	6.1	19.9	19.9
DIPLOMATIC COUR	5	0	0.0	6.3	0.0	17.7	0.0
SECURITY OFF	187	27	14.4	5.5	6.6	18.0	19.6
SECURITY ENGINEER	45	3	6.7	8.2	10.7	15.3	16.9
CONSTR ENGR	5	4	80.0	3.9	4.2	9.2	9.1
FACILITIES MAINT	5	2	40.0	6.5	9.3	13.7	14.0
ENGLISH LANG PGMS	3	0	0.0	4.4	0.0	10.1	0.0
INFO RESOURCES	7	0	0.0	3.7	0.0	9.0	0.0
MEDICAL TECH	2	0	0.0	7.7	0.0	27.3	0.0
HEALTH PRACTITIONER	21	1	4.8	5.0	4.7	11.5	7.9
PRINTING	1	1	100.0	3.7	3.7	7.2	7.2
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	526	64	12.2	5.9	6.2	17.2	16.8

SPECIALIST 03 TO 02	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
FINANCE	40	9	22.5	3.6	4.2	3.7	4.5
HUMAN RESOURCES	12	9	75.0	3.2	3.3	8.5	9.7
GENERAL SERVICES	53	9	17.0	5.2	4.8	10.4	11.2
INFORMATION MGMT	196	23	11.7	4.8	5.0	13.1	12.7
INFO MGMT TECH	47	6	12.8	4.9	5.5	10.2	10.7
DIPLOMATIC COUR	8	1	12.5	5.7	2.7	13.3	7.9
SECURITY OFF	223	50	22.4	4.4	4.1	9.7	9.2
SECURITY ENGINEER	17	12	70.6	3.8	3.3	7.5	7.4
SECURITY TECHNICIAN	5	0	0.0	3.1	0.0	7.8	0.0
CONSTR ENGR	6	4	66.7	3.0	3.0	5.8	5.0
FACILITIES MAINT	18	5	27.8	5.3	4.1	10.9	10.6
ENGLISH LANG PGMS	3	2	66.7	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.7
INFO RESOURCES	4	1	25.0	4.2	5.3	4.2	5.3
MEDICAL TECH	5	0	0.0	6.1	0.0	16.3	0.0
HEALTH PRACTITIONER	33	3	9.1	3.9	4.3	3.9	4.3
OFFICE MGMT SPEC	18	0	0.0	5.4	0.0	27.8	0.0
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	688	134	19.5	4.5	4.2	10.5	9.3

SPECIALIST 04 TO 03	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
HUMAN RESOURCES	18	10	55.6	2.8	2.7	7.2	5.0
GENERAL SERVICES	42	15	35.7	4.0	3.5	5.8	4.8
INFORMATION MGMT	303	43	14.2	3.7	4.5	6.2	7.2
INFO MGMT TECH	42	13	31.0	3.0	3.8	4.5	5.3
DIPLOMATIC COUR	39	2	5.1	6.0	8.7	10.9	11.2
SECURITY OFF	233	117	50.2	2.0	2.0	4.6	4.6
SECURITY ENGINEER	24	17	70.8	3.2	2.9	4.6	4.5
SECURITY TECHNICIAN	54	9	16.7	2.8	3.7	5.4	6.3
CONSTR ENGR	11	5	45.5	2.3	2.9	2.3	2.9
FACILITIES MAINT	34	14	41.2	4.0	4.7	4.0	4.7
OFFICE MGMT SPEC	101	8	7.9	5.2	6.7	21.0	23.4
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	901	253	28.1	3.4	3.1	7.4	5.8

SPECIALIST 05 TO 04	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
OFFICE MGMT SPEC	172	22	12.8	4.4	4.2	13.2	12.6
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	172	22	12.8	4.4	4.2	13.2	12.6

SPECIALIST 06 TO 05	Number Competed	Number Promoted	% Competed Promoted	Avg Time-in-Class of Competed	Avg Time-in-Class of Promotees	Avg Length of Service Competed	Avg Length of Service Promotees
OFFICE MGMT SPEC	280	47	16.8	3.8	5.7	6.1	8.8
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	280	47	16.8	3.8	5.7	6.1	8.8

Milbert Shin, left, WCI's deputy director, meets with WCI's director, Clint Williamson.

'Never Again'

OFFICE WORKS TO STOP ATROCITIES AND WAR CRIMES

BY JOSEPH MELLOTT

Sixty-three years ago this month, American troops liberated the Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald. The world said, "Never again," but war crimes, atrocities and crimes against humanity still occur.

In the 1970s, the Pol Pot regime murdered nearly 2 million Cambodians. After 30 years, Cambodia is now putting the key figures from the regime on trial. In the 1990s, there was "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, where 250,000 Rwandans were killed in 1994.

The Office of War Crimes Issues was set up in the mid-1990s in reaction to such atrocities. The office is unique in that the United States is the only government having a position at the ambassadorial/assistant secretary level focusing exclusively on war crimes. The office monitors atrocities globally and transitional justice mechanisms, such as international, hybrid and domestic war crimes tribunals.

For ongoing crises or accountability processes, WCI has lead responsibility for formulating U.S. policies in conjunction with other State Department and U.S. government entities. It also has a diplomatic role, engaging other governments on U.S. policies and advocating for greater accountability for atrocities.

The 2007 Advancing Democratic Values Act calls on the office to help collect information on incidents that may be crimes against humanity, genocide, slavery or other violations of international humanitarian law. The law also directs the

PHOTOGRAPHS: (ABOVE): ED WARNER; (OPPOSITE PAGE): OFFICE OF WAR CRIMES ISSUES

Department to help ensure that those "responsible for crimes against humanity, genocide, slavery or other violations of intentional humanitarian law are brought to account for such crimes in an appropriately constituted tribunal."

The office works with nearly every regional and functional bureau in the Department. The staff of 11 in Washington and one liaison officer in Zagreb engages directly with posts, desks, nongovernmental organizations and other interested parties. The work, though daunting, is rewarding because the staff helps prevent atrocities and helps societies deal with the past so they can move into the future. When WCI's staff is successful, it can see how it helped others.

The office monitors, advises and helps administer or report on international tribunals dealing with some of the most significant events of the past decade or more worldwide. It also works directly with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the Iraqi High Tribunal, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Lebanon Tribunal, and, indirectly, the Khmer Rouge tribunal.

WCI also monitors and works with interested parties to prevent or mitigate atrocities and war crimes in conflicts in Sudan, Uganda, the Great Lakes region of Africa, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Burma and elsewhere. It also works with the Office of the Legal Advisor

At a Glance

Office name
Office of War Crimes Issues

Symbol
WCI

Office director
Clint Williamson

Staff size
12

Office location
7419A Main State

Web site
www.state.gov/s/wci

WCI staffers, from left, Dubravko Bolšeć and Matthew Lavine pose with Anna Stinchcomb of EUR/SCE in the Vukovar County Court in Croatia.

and the Department of Defense on detainee issues, primarily negotiating and facilitating the transfer of detainees to their home countries.

The office helped create tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda and similar tribunals, and helps keep them running. That means building international coalitions, supporting the tribunals in their work and ensuring they have the needed resources and people. Now that the tribunals' mandates are coming to an end, WCI is seeking homes for their legacies.

In the Balkans, the office started out working with the tribunal for Yugoslavia but has broadened its efforts to include building resources to deal with the past in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. To do that, WCI works closely on rule-of-law issues with regional posts, the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, the Department of Justice and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

WCI has also funded a Foreign Service National position at the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb to work with law enforcement and judicial authorities and NGOs in the Balkans to increase cooperation and empower domestic courts to take on outstanding issues from the region's conflicts. For instance, bringing law-breakers to justice has been hampered because the issues often cross borders. The evidence can be in one country and the accused in another. Because extradition is not an option, the office's regional liaison in Zagreb works with area prosecutors to overcome such barriers. He has worked with Serbian and Montenegrin authorities in two separate cases to ensure evidence from Croatia could be used in each of those

PHOTOGRAPHS: (ABOVE): ED WARNER; (OPPOSITE PAGE): OFFICE OF WAR CRIMES ISSUES

Members of the WCI staff include, from left, Jeremy Snellen, Joe Mellott, Andrew Morrison, A.B. Sam Mubangu, Towana Vanzego and Brendan Doherty.

Top: WCI's Matthew Lavine signs the guest book at the Vukovar County Court in Croatia.
Above: WCI Special Adviser Andy Morrison heads to Baghdad International Airport after observing the war crimes trial of Saddam Hussein and Ali Hassan al-Majid.

countries. He has also helped Serbian authorities and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo work together to resolve legal issues on the gravesites that are important to cases on both sides.

The office also practices public diplomacy. In the Balkans, when the International Court of Justice confirmed that the army of the Republika Srpska had committed genocide in Srebrenica in 1995, the decision became the reactionaries' rallying point to challenge progress in the region. To respond, WCI Director Ambassador Clint Williamson traveled to Sarajevo in June 2007 and, in a widely covered speech, said, "Those who would manipulate this tragedy for their political benefit are not honoring the dead, but compounding the suffering of their loved ones. Reconciliation does not betray the past, it honors the future.

"It does not diminish the legitimacy of past suffering or the importance of memory."

His public efforts in the Balkans to explain the ICJ's decision helped ensure that the decision had a positive impact.

War crimes and how the international community deals with the past affect domestic and international politics and permeate political debates and decisions. WCI represents the interests of the United States in helping nations affected by such issues and can bring to bear the resources to monitor or mitigate war crimes, atrocities and crimes against humanity. The office engages in the process of reconciliation, builds bridges to see that justice is served and can be an important and powerful voice to ensure that the words "never again" have real meaning. ■

The author is a special adviser in WCI.

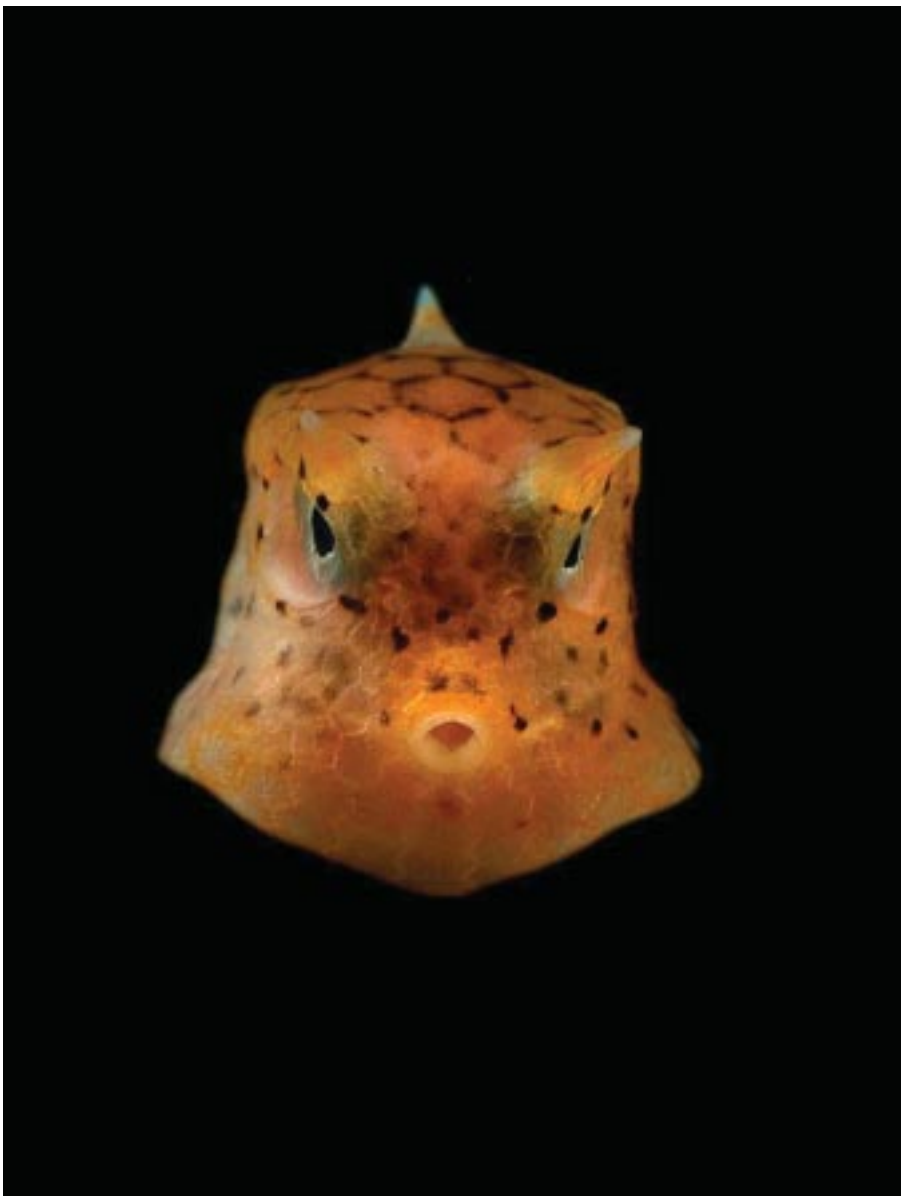
Sea Life

EXPLORING PHILIPPINE WATERS WITH NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC **BY CARON DE MARS**

Shortly after I joined the U.S. Embassy in Manila in 2006 as the environment, science and technology officer, I had a chance to "blue-water" dive for *National Geographic*.

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution scientist Larry Madin and *National Geographic* photographer Emory Kristof had contacted me about a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration–funded marine species discovery project, which needed a Philippine-flagged vessel and Philippine government permission.

They invited me along because I was also a scuba diver. Blue-water dives, or dives in the open ocean far from land, are used to collect fragile sea-life samples that might be harmed by other collection methods. A harness system ensures that divers do not drift off alone or lose their sense of depth, crucial because there are no points of reference such as the ocean floor or reefs.



I accepted the invitation and became involved in a flurry of paperwork. Economic Assistant Bimbi Villa and I sought clearances and permits from multiple Philippine agencies, identified Filipino scientists for participation and spoke to science high schools and civic organizations to highlight the embassy-facilitated cooperation arising from the project. NOAA featured the project on its Web site, and the State Department–funded GLOBE program (www.globe.gov) linked NOAA's Web site to schools in 110 countries.

Specialized Tools

The project's scientific team arrived in Manila in September 2007, and embassy Shipping Assistant Guiller Bueno expedited customs clearances so the equipment could be loaded onto the ship. Groups of high school students toured the ship, which carried a remotely operated submersible vehicle that could videotape sea creatures and suck specimens into its samplers.

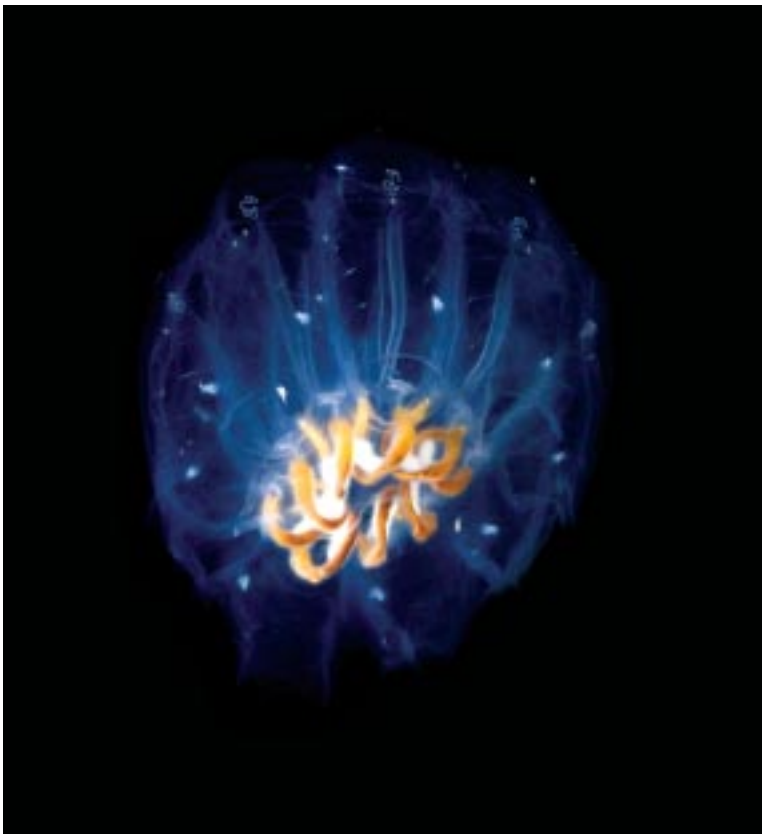
Two days later, we were in the crystalline waters of the Celebes Sea.

The scientists used multiple tools, including a high-resolution camera lowered to the ocean floor on nearly two miles of rope and aimed at adjoining bait. After a five-hour recording session, the polypropylene rope snapped during the camera's retrieval, releasing the $25,000 ropecam to a watery grave.

Photographer Kristof, the expedition's co-leader, remained unflustered. "Bring on the next act," he shouted.

The next act was the submersible vehicle, which one evening netted a fabulous haul

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT AND OPPOSITE PAGE LEFT): NOAA; (RIGHT): MICHAEL AW



Clockwise from far left: A box fish collected by the expedition. A colony of nine salps, free-floating sea creatures with gelatinous bodies. The author, left, and Bimbi Villa. Members of the expedition team.

of specimens that included an atolla, a large red jellyfish that looked like a flying saucer. In the early hours of that morning, photographers, scientists and cinematographers were crammed into the ship's 12- by 21-foot laboratory, recording, observing and preserving the catch.

During the voyage, the vessel was a hub of preparation, execution, retrieval and analysis. I wrote articles to be posted on the Web site, kept the event log and dove for samples.

Seals Watch

Some Celebes Sea islands harbor terrorist groups, including a group associated with al Qaeda. Therefore, the Philippine government provided five heavily armed Seals from its Navy, who kept a 24-hour watch over the ship.

At one point in the journey, the team brought on board Philippine officials, civic leaders and academics for tours and a project overview. Then, traditional Muslim dancers performed on the cramped deck, dancing on jars and balancing on bamboo sticks to the pulsing rhythms produced by musicians banging on copper bowls and beating coconut drums.

A small crisis occurred when a thruster on the submersible failed. The Seals and cinematographer Nick Caloyianis jumped into the ship's rubber dinghy, but the dinghy proved unable to tow the submersible. Caloyianis wrestled the submersible onto the winch's hook, and the crane hoisted it out of the water.

Once the submersible was on board, technicians liberated the critter-canisters and rushed the specimens to a whirling round tank where the jellyfish, sea cucumbers, sea worms and spiders somersaulted as the scientists and photographers recorded their behavior.

We'd excitedly meet on the deck after each dive to display our gelatinous captives. We recorded, described and preserved each specimen.

Jubilant Return

A marching band trumpeted our return to Manila, and Ambassador Kristie Kenney, officials, press and high school students filed on board to view our catches. We projected images of the beautiful and strange creatures onto a wall in the mess hall for them. Video of the sea life uncovered by the expedition's underwater cameras is at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGXz9efC0QI and includes images of bright red jellyfish and a creature that looks like a spiny caterpillar.

The expedition sent nearly 100 samples to the Marine Census of Life, an international inventory of more than 40,000 ocean species, and a *National Geographic* magazine article and television special are due in December 2008. I have since established an online community for the American and Filipino scientists to continue collaborating and have delivered marine biology textbooks donated by U.S. scientists to Southern Mindanao University.

In all, the project promoted U.S. funding of exploration, added to the world's knowledge of ocean biodiversity and increased students' appreciation of marine science. ■

The author is the environment, science and technology officer at the U.S. Embassy in Manila.

Jet Set

SEVERAL METHODS CAN OVERCOME JET LAG

BY CHRIS GAGE

PHOTOGRAPH: CORBIS

Jet lag is a well-known, unwelcome travel companion that can disrupt one's sense of well-being and performance.

Jet lag arises from disruption of the body's circadian rhythms. Each system of the body has its own "clock" that tells it when to perform certain functions, thus our cycles of waking and sleeping, eating, digestion and elimination, and the rhythms of heart rate, blood pressure and body temperature. These rhythms are controlled by external cues, such as sunlight or bright light or the time seen on clocks; internal cues, such as food, drugs and medications; and social cues, such as work, exercise and personal interaction. Disrupting these cues can disrupt one's sense of well-being, and air travel across time zones and the resultant jet lag is definitely a disruption.

Jet lag's symptoms include exhaustion, a disrupted sense of time and place, decreased mental acuity, decreased appetite, off-schedule bowel movements and sleep schedules that are out of synch with local time. It arises from rapid, long-distance east-to-west or west-to-east travel that requires a shift in the body's biochemical schedule. Persons who travel long distances north and south, but stay within the same time zone, may feel fatigue but will not experience jet lag.

Eventually the body's clocks adjust and the body's normal rhythms are re-established. How long it takes depends on the individual, length of the trip and the direction of the time-zone change. For reasons not yet understood, recovery from westbound travel is 30 to 50 percent faster than for eastbound travel.

Some people do nothing about jet lag and allow the recovery to happen on its own. A general rule is that it takes one day to adjust for every hour of time zone change.

Others use medications that induce sleep at the appropriate time. Over-the-counter sleep aids that contain diphenhydramine hydrochloride, also known as Benadryl, can help induce sleep but generally do not help people stay asleep. The hormone melatonin, sold as a dietary supplement in the United States, also can regulate wake and sleep cycles. After arrival, two to five milligrams of melatonin taken just before the local bedtime may help induce sleep. Studies suggest that melatonin use helps up to half of those who take it for jet lag.

Prescription sleeping medications such as Ambien (zolpidem), Lunesta (eszopiclone), Remeron (ramelteon) and Sonata (zaleplon) may also be used to induce sleep. Such medications should be used with caution because they may cause transient amnesia. In other words, affected individuals may say or do things without remembering what they said or did. Thus, travelers should not take these medications while flying or in transit but only on reaching their destinations and only as prescribed by their health care provider.

A third approach is the anti-jet-lag diet developed by Dr. Charles Ehret of the Argonne National Laboratory. Research shows the program can significantly reduce or eliminate jet lag.

The three-step program uses diet, caffeine and light combined with activity. The timing of eating and composition of diet strongly affect the biochemical pathways that induce wakefulness and sleep.

Four days before the flight, the traveler starts alternating high-calorie days with low-calorie days. Breakfast and lunch should be higher in protein, dinners higher in carbohydrates. So, for example, on a high-calorie day, have a high-calorie/high-protein breakfast, a high-calorie/high-protein lunch and a high-calorie/high-carbohydrate dinner. On low-calorie days, have a low-calorie/high-protein breakfast, a low-calorie/high-protein lunch and a low-calorie/high-protein dinner.

Caffeine can help reset the body's clock backward or forward, depending on the time of day it is consumed. Avoid caffeine for several days before travel and, on the travel day, consume caffeine in the morning if traveling westward. Consume it between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. if traveling eastward.

Sunlight or a bright light, combined with physical and mental activity, is also a powerful stimulant and can help the body adjust to a new time zone, even during travel.

More information about these ideas and other tips about jet lag are at www.antijetlagdiet.com and www.netlib.org/misc/jet-lag-diet. When traveling rapidly across time zones, jet lag is often unavoidable, but it is also manageable. ■

The author is a Foreign Service health practitioner in the Office of Medical Services.

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Student Records Available Online!

Need your class schedule or an unofficial transcript of training taken through FSI? Visit the FSI Registrar's Office Web page on the Department of State OpenNet at http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg.

American Presence Posts Tradecraft

FSI initially offered this course last year in response to the need for training for personnel assigned to American Presence Posts. The training focuses on the specific skills and knowledge APOs need to be effective in this multidimensional assignment. Through advanced sessions on leadership challenges, trade and economic issues, consular issues, management procedures, policy development, and public speaking and media training APOs will hone their skills for this new approach to transformational diplomacy. For further information contact SPAS, at (703) 302-6940 and for course information go to http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg/ default.asp?EventID=PD610.

National Security Executive Leadership Seminar

The Leadership and Management School launched a new course in FY2007, the National Security Executive Leadership Seminar. NSELS is a training and networking opportunity for State Department and interagency officials and is part of the Department's contribution to the broader training of National Security Professionals. The seminar's policy focus is the National Security Strategy of the United States. Participants explore critical challenges to American interests and the leadership skills needed for success in the interagency process. Participants are FO-1/GS-15 level or above and are nominated by their home bureau or agency for the spring or fall NSELS offerings. For more information, contact FSI's Leadership and Management School, Policy Leadership Division at (703) 302-7117 or FSILMS@state.gov.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams Training

FSI offers courses for members of the Iraq and Afghan Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The courses provide the basic professional skills and knowledge, including national and provincial government structure and U.S. policy needed to function in an interagency organization in a combat environment. For further information contact SPAS at (703) 302-6940 and for course information go to http://fsi.state.gov/admin/reg/default.asp?EventID=AR421.

Distance Learning

Learn at Your Own Pace, When and Where You Want! The FasTrac Distance Learning Program is available to all State Department employees, FSNs and EFMs. With your FasTrac password, you may access the entire catalog of more than 3,500 courses, from home or office. To view the complete catalog, visit the FasTrac Web site at http://fsi.state.gov/fastrac.

An extensive menu of FSI-developed distance learning courses is also available to eligible participants on the FSI LearnCenter. For more information, visit the FSI Web site at http://fsi.state.gov and click on "Distance Learning."

Dates for FSI Transition Center Courses are shown below. For information on all the courses available at FSI, visit the Schedule of Courses on OpenNet at http://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.

Security	May	June	Length
MQ911: Security Overseas Seminar	12	2,16,30	2D
MQ912: Advanced Security Overseas Seminar	6,20	10	1D
MQ914: Youth Security Overseas Seminar		17	1D
Foreign Service Life Skills	**May**	**June**	**Length**
MQ104: Regulations Allowances and Finances in the Foreign Service Context		26	2D
MQ110: Deputy Chief of Mission Spouse	16		3D
MQ115: Explaining America	3		1D
MQ116: Protocol and the U.S. Representation Abroad	17	7	1D
MQ200: Going Overseas for Singles and Couples Without Children	31		4H
MQ210: Going Overseas for Families	31		4H
MQ220: Going Overseas– Logistics for Adults	31		4H
MQ230: Going Overseas– Logistics for Children	31		4H
MQ250: Young Diplomats Day		30	1D
MQ703: Post Options for Employment and Training		5	1D
MQ802: Communicating Across Cultures	10		1D
MQ803: Realities of Foreign Service Life		13	1D
MQ854: Legal Considerations in the Foreign Service		21	2.5H
MQ916: A Safe Overseas Home	7		2.5H
MQ940: Pre-Deployment Preparation for High-Stress Assignments	16	20	2D
MQ950: High-Stress Assignment Outbriefing Program	9,23	6,20	2H
Career Transition Center	**May**	**June**	**Length**
RV101: Retirement Planning Seminar		9	4D
RV103: Financial Management and Estate Planning		10	1D
RV104: Annuities, Benefits and Social Security		11	1D
RV105: Mid-Career Retirement Planning	14	24	2D

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

Craig Baxter, 78, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Feb. 7 in Huntingdon, Pa. He joined the Department in 1956 and served overseas in Mumbai, New Delhi, Lahore, Accra and Dhaka. After retiring in 1981, he taught politics and history at Juniata College. He was the author, co-author or editor of 19 books on South Asia and was president of the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies.

Patricia M. Byrne, 82, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Nov. 23 in Washington, D.C. She served as ambassador to Mali and Burma and as deputy U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations. Her other overseas postings included Athens, Saigon, Izmir, Ankara, Vientiane, Paris and Colombo. After retiring in 1989, she returned to the Department to help establish procedures for declassifying documents. She was an active member of the Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired.

Catherine Virginia Conley, 85, a Civil Service employee of the Bureau of Information Resource Management, died Dec. 23 in Washington, D.C. She joined the Department in 1952 as a telephone assistant and for several years was the lead receptionist at the Diplomatic Entrance. She joined Information Resource Management in 1984 and had 55 years of service with the Department at the time of her death.

William L. Covey, 67, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 20 of lung cancer in Everett, Wash. He worked for the Bureau of Information Resource Management and served overseas in Stockholm, Addis Ababa, Brussels, Canberra, Bonn, Ottawa, London and San Jose. He retired in 1990.

Rebecca H. Davis, 77, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Lloyd Davis, died Jan. 13 of complications due to diabetes in Baltimore, Md. She accompanied her husband on overseas postings to Ghana, France, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, El Salvador and Chile. She worked at the embassy in several of those countries and the binational center in Santo Domingo. She and her husband retired to Baltimore in 1990.

Thomas "Harry" Dunlop, 73, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Feb. 1 in Alexandria, Va. Prior to joining the Department in 1962, he was a Fulbright Scholar in Berlin and served with the Air Force in France and Germany. His overseas postings included Belgrade, Zagreb, Saigon and Seoul. After retiring in 1993, he worked on the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and as a senior reviewer on the Systematic Declassification Review Program.

Irving D. Galutia, 82, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 12 in Bradenton, Fla. He served in the Army during World War II and joined the Department in 1951. His overseas postings included Teheran, Tokyo, Tunis, Phnom Penh, Bangkok, Rangoon and Abidjan. He retired in 1986 and moved to Florida in 1989.

George Merwin Humphrey, 72, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Sept. 11 of cardiac arrest in Berlin, Germany. He joined the Department in 1961 and served overseas in Port of Spain, Vienna, Moscow and Berlin. After retiring in 1986, he moved to Berlin. From 1988 to 1991, he directed the Allied Mediation Bureau.

Grace Elizabeth Mentag, 90, a retired Foreign Service employee, died Jan. 26 of cancer in Venice, Fla. During her 32-year career, she served overseas in San Jose, Guatemala City, Noumea, Suva, Kobe, Seoul, Madras, Damascus, Jakarta, Dublin, Buenos Aires and Mexico City. After retiring to Medina, Ohio, in 1976, she was an active volunteer with the hospital and historical society. She moved to Florida in 1994.

Edmund Berkeley Nance Jr., 72, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Oct. 20 of cancer in Franklin, Tenn. He served in the military in Korea before joining the Department in 1960. His overseas postings included Frankfurt, Isfahan, Kabul, Okinawa, Belgian Congo, Jakarta, Rangoon, Tokyo and Mexico City. After retiring in 1989, he owned a cruise company in Franklin and served as a docent at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage.

William C. Nenno, 80, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 10 in Methuen, Mass. He served in the Navy during World War II. He joined the Department in 1956 and served overseas in Frankfurt, Vienna, Madras, Canberra and East Berlin. He was the Department's representative to the Mercury Space Project. After retiring in 1982, he continued to work for the Department, as well as at the Pentagon and National Archives.

Max Robinson, 64, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 18 after a long, debilitating illness in Mount Vernon, Wash. After a tour in the Peace Corps, he joined the Department in 1974. His overseas postings included Dakar, London, Moscow and Helsinki. In Washington, he was deputy executive secretary. His son Joel serves at the U.S. Embassy in London.

Paul M. Rosol, 88, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 23, 2007. He lived in Punta Gorda, Fla. He served in the Army during World War II and the Korean War. His overseas postings included Vietnam, Laos and Africa. He retired to Florida in 1975. He loved classical music and traveling, especially to his native Slovakia.

William H. Tienken, 79, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Feb. 13 in Chula Vista, Calif. He served in the Army in Germany before joining the Department. His overseas postings included La Paz, Tijuana, Veracruz, Bangkok, Madrid, Vigo, San Salvador, Mexico City, Mazatlan, Sydney and Nassau. He enjoyed golf.

Richard F. Weitzel, 80, a retired Foreign Service specialist, died Jan. 3 in Columbus, Ga. He served in the Navy during World War II and joined the Department in 1955. His overseas postings included Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Freetown, Panama City, Cairo, Kabul and Nairobi. He retired in 1979 and settled in Columbus. His son Robert serves at the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest.

Viola "Billie" Wooton, 88, widow of retired Foreign Service officer Richard Wooton, died Dec. 31 in Alexandria, Va. She accompanied her husband, a U.S. Information Agency officer, on postings to Bremen, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, London, Rio de Janeiro and Asuncion. She mentored many Foreign Service wives.

John Hurd Willett, 66, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 20 in Paris, France. He served in the Peace Corps in Turkey before joining the Department in 1971. His overseas postings included Tunis, Bordeaux, Paris, Rome and Rabat. After retiring in 1995, he wrote a screenplay and books in Paris.

IN THE EVENT OF A DEATH

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960.

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Seal of Approval

It is among the most solemn and honored tasks entrusted to the Department and Secretary of State—safeguard the Great Seal of the United States. The Secretary has been the official custodian of the Great Seal since 1789, seven years after the first Seal was designed and approved by the Continental Congress. To celebrate its 225th anniversary, the U.S. Diplomacy Center refurbished the Seal's permanent home in the Exhibit Hall on the first floor of the Harry S Truman Building and prepared a traveling component that will tour the country this summer.

The Seal officially verifies the sovereignty of the United States when it is impressed on official documents such as those ratifying or proclaiming treaties and those appointing ambassadors, Foreign Service officers and Cabinet officers. Secretary Condoleezza Rice is the 66th Keeper of the Seal.

Meet the New Diplomacy—not quite the same as the Old Diplomacy. While traditional diplomacy still officially reigns, colleagues around the Department and the world are finding new ways to link their duties into the World Wide Web—and creating a new wired diplomacy in the process. For example, few of our colleagues in Mexico knew what to really expect in 2006 when they inaugurated the Mission Mexico Blog. What they got was a content-rich, interactive forum that allows the 2,000 mission employees—and guests—to speak out on a range of issues.

Noting Mission Mexico's success, the Bureau of Public Affairs built an Internet-based blog to offer a behind-the-scenes look at the Department and an official forum for exchanging thoughts and ideas. DipNote—text-message language for "diplomatic notes"—debuted in September, and the site already has 600 subscribers.

Not to be outdone, the Bureau of International Information Programs recently launched a new Web site, America.gov, to serve as one of the Department's public diplomacy tools to tell America's story to the world. IIP populates much of the site with unconventional content, and its innovative architecture features designs and interactive features demanded by younger Web-savvy users.

And to raise the Department's Web comfort level, the Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment boosted its recruiting efforts—on Facebook.com.

This isn't your dad's diplomacy.

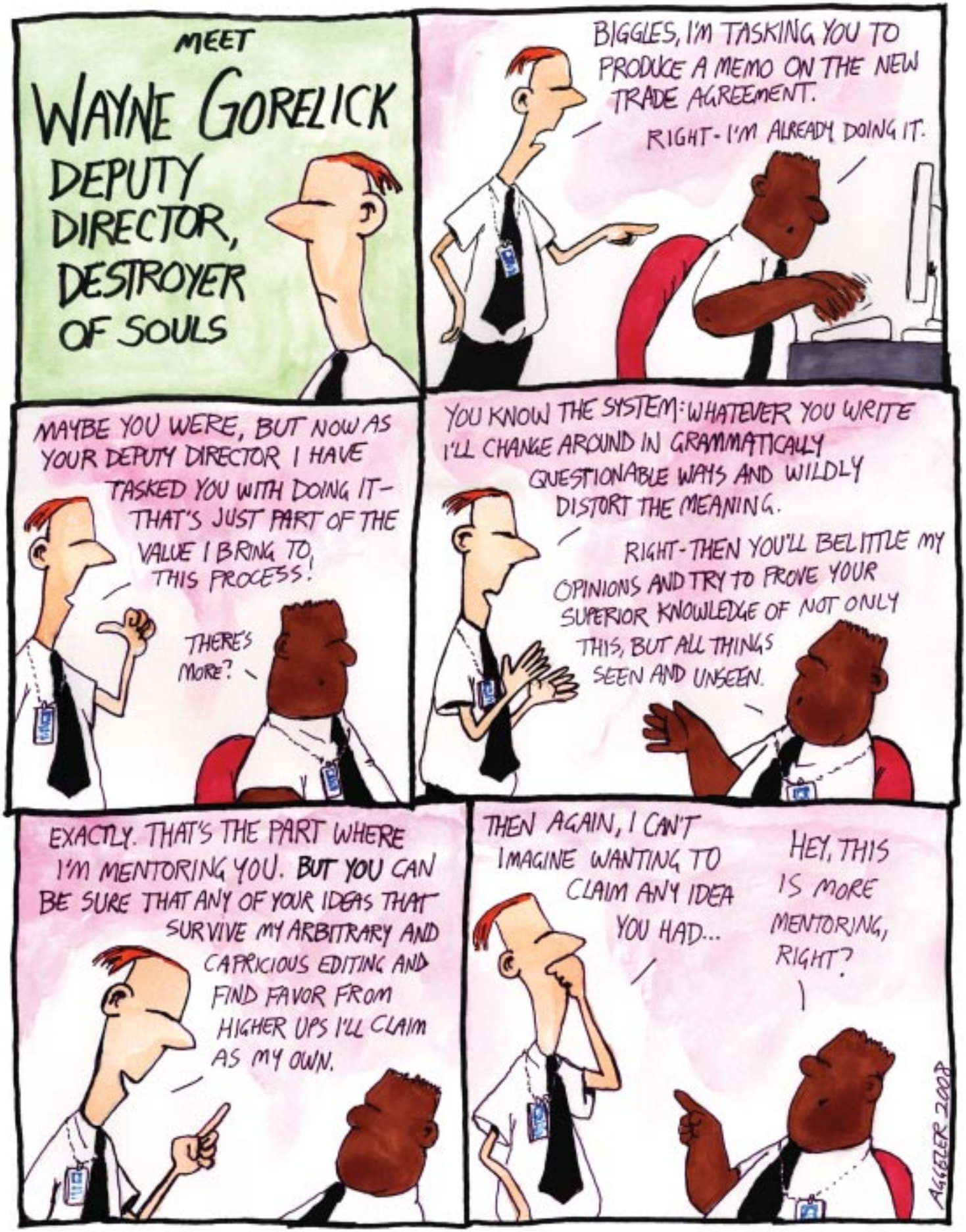
Last but never least, a final salute to our colleagues en route to their final posting: *Craig Baxter; Patricia M. Byrne; Catherine Virginia Conley; William L. Covey; Rebecca H. Davis; Thomas "Harry" Dunlop; Irving D. Galutia; George Merwin Humphrey; Grace Elizabeth Mentag; Edmund Berkeley Nance Jr.; William C. Nenno; Max Robinson; Paul M. Rosol; William H. Tienken; Richard F. Weitzel; John Hurd Willett; and Viola "Billie" Wooton.* ■

Rob Wiley
Editor-in-Chief

Coming in May

- ART Converges in Algiers
- Transcribing History: The Nixon Tapes
- Soccer Diplomacy in Jakarta

... and much more!


MEET
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DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DESTROYER OF SOULS
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RIGHT - I'M ALREADY DOING IT.
MAYBE YOU WERE, BUT NOW AS YOUR DEPUTY DIRECTOR I HAVE TASKED YOU WITH DOING IT - THAT'S JUST PART OF THE VALUE I BRING TO THIS PROCESS!
THERE'S MORE?
YOU KNOW THE SYSTEM: WHATEVER YOU WRITE I'LL CHANGE AROUND IN GRAMMATICALLY QUESTIONABLE WAYS AND WILDLY DISTORT THE MEANING.
RIGHT - THEN YOU'LL BELITTLE MY OPINIONS AND TRY TO PROVE YOUR SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE OF NOT ONLY THIS, BUT ALL THINGS SEEN AND UNSEEN.
EXACTLY. THAT'S THE PART WHERE I'M MENTORING YOU. BUT YOU CAN BE SURE THAT ANY OF YOUR IDEAS THAT SURVIVE MY ARBITRARY AND CAPRICIOUS EDITING AND FIND FAVOR FROM HIGHER UPS I'LL CLAIM AS MY OWN.
THEN AGAIN, I CAN'T IMAGINE WANTING TO CLAIM ANY IDEA YOU HAD...
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