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MAGAZINE

Entrepreneurs Wanted
Delegation explores business opportunities in Tanzania

Talking Diplomacy
Embassy speakers' program engages Slovenian youths

MONTENEGRO

Idyllic country an exemplar of stability in Balkan Peninsula



STATE MAGAZINE



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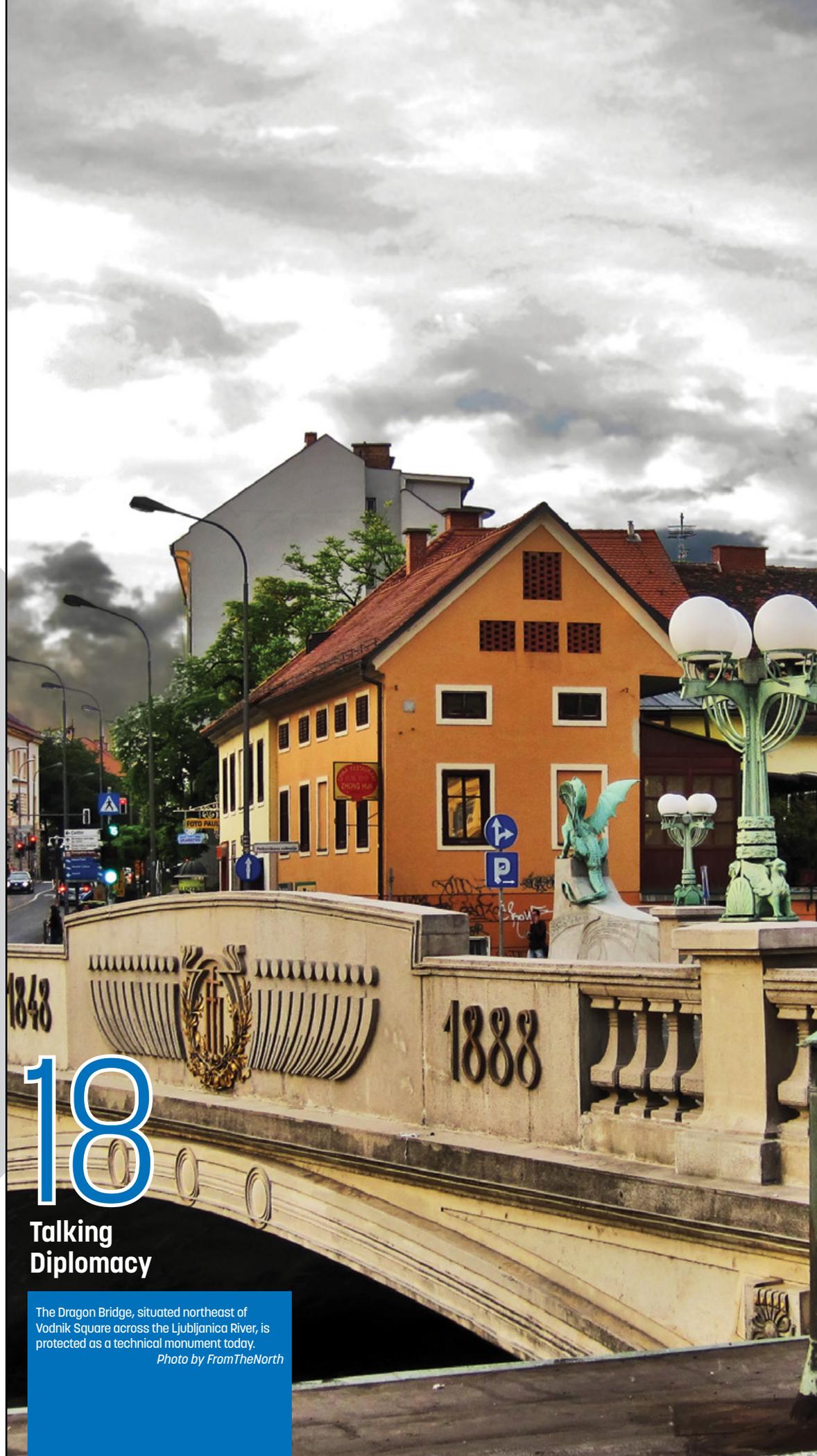
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Talking Diplomacy

The Dragon Bridge, situated northeast of Vodnik Square across the Ljubljanica River, is protected as a technical monument today.

Photo by FromTheNorth

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On The Cover

A lonely skiff rests atop the crystal waters of Crno Jezero (Black Lake), a glacial lake in Durmitor National Park.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



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Visitors Experience U.S. Disability Access

Recently, four Vietnamese disabilities rights advocates spent three weeks in the United States on an International Visitor Leadership Program, travelling around the country to share insights and see firsthand how U.S. laws facilitate access for the disabled.

At every stop, participants witnessed how the Americans with Disabilities Act, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, has improved quality of life. They travelled on the Philadelphia public transportation system, where every bus can accommodate wheelchair users, and attended a Special Olympics event in Minnesota, seeing how children with disabilities were introduced to sports. Also in Minnesota, participants observed a special education class for children with disabilities. (In Vietnam, some disabled children are prevented from completing school.) In San Francisco, they attended the World Institute on Disability's annual policy summit.

Three wheelchair-enabled participants, Anh Nguyen, Oanh Nguyen and Nghiem Truong, lauded the U.S. commitment to having an infrastructure for those who are physically and mentally disabled. Vietnam and the United States now have similar laws regarding access for the disabled, they said, adding they hope their country reaches some of the U.S. standards, but that implementation in Vietnam will require patience and commitment.

Since returning to Vietnam in October, Oanh has launched a photo



The Vietnamese Single Country Project group visits the nonprofit Community Organization for Mental Health and Rehabilitation Inc.

Photo by Quy Dao

exhibition at the Vietnam Women's Museum, celebrating the achievements of women with disabilities. She summed up the IVLP experience by saying: "I felt so free on my wheelchair in America."

The State Department continually undertakes exchange programs for individuals with disabilities, and for the advocates, educators, professionals and communities that support them. ■



Deputy Secretary Higginbottom congratulates the Department's 2014 class of retirees.

Photo by R. Marc Stewart

Deputy Secretary Praises Recent Retirees

At the Department's Nov. 18 retirement ceremony, Deputy Secretary of State Heather Higginbottom thanked the 2014 class of retirees for their service, which totaled more than 14,600 years. Forty-seven members of the class put in more than 40 years each with the Department.

The Deputy Secretary also praised their family members. Without their support, she said, "quite simply, the State Department's mission would be impossible to carry out."

She also recognized the contributions of some of the 150 honorees who attended the ceremony, including Maryruth Coleman, who watched the

Soviet flag come down over the Kremlin for the last time, and Daniel Delly, who rescued a drowning co-worker in El Salvador.

In closing, Higginbottom offered the Department's "deepest gratitude" to the retirees, noting that perhaps they "could have made more money in the private sector, or chosen professions where you got more sleep or had more time with your families." Instead, they dedicated themselves to advancing our nation's foreign policy through diplomacy.

"That's a heroic decision. And it is a great gift to your country," she observed. ■

Foreign Ambassadors Attend Thanksgiving Event

More than 60 foreign ambassadors serving in Washington, D.C., brought their families to celebrate a traditional American Thanksgiving at Blair House, the official guesthouse of the president. Hosted by the Chief of Protocol, Ambassador Peter Selfridge, the evening featured all the traditional fare, including a regional stuffing bar. Members of the University of Maryland Terrapins football team also attended and taught the ambassadors' children how to throw a football.

"Some of us had never experienced Thanksgiving before and it's nice for us to get to celebrate it with our friends from our host country, as well as with all of our colleagues in the international community," said Ambassador Neil Parsan of Trinidad and Tobago.

The ambassadors, who represented such countries as Italy, Israel, Kenya and Cambodia, learned about Thanksgiving from Smithsonian experts. Attendees prepared 100 bags stuffed with all the makings for a Thanksgiving dinner, donated by Wal-Mart, to be distributed to local families in need by DC Central Kitchen, a nationally recognized community organization. ■



At the Protocol event, the children of Ambassador Marme of Estonia play football with players from the University of Maryland football team. Photo by Adam Mason

Ambassador Promotes Shared Prosperity Agenda

Ambassador David Thorne, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State, recently appeared at FSI to discuss the Shared Prosperity Agenda. The agenda is a State Department initiative to advance U.S. commercial and economic interests worldwide, elevate the role of economics in U.S. foreign policy, and provide the Department's personnel with effective tools and training to carry out that mission.

Ambassador Thorne told attendees America's economic strength remains a fundamental source of power and influence, noting that during the past five years, U.S. exports have generated nearly one-third of the nation's economic growth and supported some 1.6 million new jobs. "The United States is poised to be the world's production platform of choice and the world's top destination for global investments," he said. "Leveraging this strength is a central aim of the Department's economic diplomacy, a mission embodied in our Shared Prosperity Agenda."

The agenda envisions a "rules-based, transparent, global economy that benefits people worldwide while serving the needs and aspirations of our own citizens," he observed. He said the agenda is a priority of Secretary of State John Kerry and called on the Department to "play from our strength, tapping into the Department's unique assets—our global embassy networks and resources here in Washington—to highlight our economic achievements and opportunities."

To help develop the needed advocacy tools, the Shared Prosperity Agenda Task Force has set up four department-wide working groups. The "Jobs Diplomacy" working group is about helping the Department advocate more effectively for U.S. companies, Ambassador Thorne explained.

The "Knowledge Platforms" working group, led by the Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing and Innovation, seeks to give all Department employees the information they need to deliver on the U.S. economic agenda, he continued. Ideas produced by this group



Ambassador Thorne speaks to an FSI class. Photo by Michael Morrison

were recently adopted for department-wide implementation by Deputy Secretary Higginbottom.

Ambassador Thorne said the "Human Capital" group, chaired by the Bureau of Human Resources, is revamping FSI training to include Shared Prosperity modules in classes and is "leading an effort to expand interagency detail opportunities for State officers as well as details to the private sector, state/local governments and NGOs, and vice versa."

"We are also working to ensure that more economic positions are available so these skills can be put to good use," he observed.

The fourth entity, the "Entrepreneurship" group, is working with public diplomacy and economic policy stakeholders cataloging and coordinating the Department's more than 80 entrepreneurship initiatives.

Ambassador Thorne said the Shared Prosperity Agenda is evolving and "reflects our strong belief that State Department professionals are critical actors in promoting broad-based, sustainable growth in an increasingly globalized world." More information on the agenda is on its Intranet site. ■

Embassy Fairs Promote Volunteerism

In October, the U.S. Embassy in Skopje organized its second volunteer fair, this time holding it in two of Macedonia's largest cities. Volunteerism is still somewhat new here, but by promoting altruistic community involvement, the embassy can advance its goal.

The Public Affairs Section organized the first volunteer fair in May, promoting it through an online video campaign in which embassy staff, including Ambassador Paul Wohlers and his wife Mary Jo, described their volunteer experiences. Additionally, public affairs staff held training sessions for local organizations on effective strategies to recruit and retain volunteers.

The May event featured more than 20 local organizations seeking volunteers for such projects as developing independent journalism, engaging in anti-domestic violence outreach and organizing a documentary film festival. More than 150 students attended, and many discovered opportunities previously unknown to them.

Electrical engineering student Ivana Avramovska said, "I didn't think this event was for me, but there was an organization working on environmental issues that exactly match what I'm interested in."

Organizations at the first fair found many new recruits; one gained 60 volunteers to help with its film festival.

The expanded event in October included not only Skopje but also the southern university town of Bitola. More than 500 people attended the two fairs, most connecting with at least one organization. Erika Pesik of Art Lab, an NGO that promotes the arts, said the event "opened my eyes to who in the community might be a good fit for our organization. I never thought to



Ambassador Paul Wohlers visits the Habitat for Humanity booth at the volunteer fair.

Photo by Zoran Jovanovski

work with high school students, but they were some of the most impressive people." She's looking forward to the next fair.

Embassy Skopje plans to hold the fairs annually and increase the number of participating cities. ■

OFM Seminar Aids Foreign Officials

To carry out the Department of State's mission to assist foreign diplomatic missions in the United States, the Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) does outreach to diplomatic communities across the United States. In September, the Miami Regional Office of OFM held its annual Consular Affairs Seminar in Coral Gables, Fla. The seminar aimed to assist the local foreign mission community "and thereby assure appropriate privileges, benefits and services on a reciprocal basis to our colleagues serving overseas," said Robin Haase, Regional Director of OFM Miami.

To help foreign officials better understand the mission, functions, and responsibilities of OFM and local agencies, the seminar hosted representatives from 10 government organizations critical to consular operations. These included the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Diplomatic Security Service. More than 50 consular officials attended, representing 30 offices from 28 different countries.

"As a new and young member of the Consular Corps in Miami, the information presented was extremely helpful and beneficial in continuing to carry out my duties," said Mia Ferguson, a newly arrived vice consul assigned to The Bahamas Consulate General in Miami. "The team gave relevant and timely tips and tools in an efficient and energetic manner." ■



A Department of Homeland Security representative makes a presentation to the consular community at the OFM event in Coral Gables, Fla.

Photo by Weldon Montgomery

With Fundraisers, CFC Nears End

By late November, the Department's 2014 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) was headed into the home stretch, and Department offices were holding fundraisers to help bureaus hit their 2014 goals. The Department's campaign, which was set to end Dec. 31, had by Dec. 16 raised more than \$1,085,000.

Of that, top contributors included the Department's overseas employees, which gave a total of more than \$64,000; FSI, giving more than \$54,000; and the bureaus of Consular Affairs and East Asian and Pacific Affairs, each giving in excess of \$53,000.

Most CFC funds are derived from individual pledging via Employee Express, but additional money came from such events as a chili cook-off, mini-golf game and a cupcake taste-off where more than 45 bakers from 17 bureaus competed, with their offerings sold to raise funds. HR also held a white elephant sale and, just before Halloween, an office decorating contest, won by Bonnie L. Weaver of the Director General's office. ■



Management Analyst Eliot Johnson poses with HR/RMA's mascot, JoJo, in preparation for RMA's mini-golf CFC fundraiser. In the mini-golf course, participants started out at an Express Mailbox before beginning a journey through a simulated Washington, D.C., Metro subway system.

Photo by Tyler Baker

IIP Optimizes Social Media Content

Global audiences often receive news through Internet feeds, social networks and smartphone apps. However, with the growing power of peer-to-peer communications, stories on issues vital to American interests often lose out to feeds on movie stars and selfie photos in the battle for reader attention.

To meet these challenges, the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) in late September launched ShareAmerica, an online platform that distributes high-quality digital content focused on U.S. foreign policy priorities. The Washington Post called it "bite-sized nuggets of video, photos and text, all optimized to be as shareable as possible on the Web."

The site and its content are optimized for mobile devices, the main way people access social networks and the medium that posts increasingly use to interact with local populations. "In traveling to posts all over the world, one thing is clear: they are using social platforms as the main way to publish information for their audiences," said IIP Coordinator Macon Phillips. "ShareAmerica is IIP's effort to take the issues that the United States cares about and present them in interesting ways so that our colleagues in the field can easily share the stories with their social media followers, who in turn share them with their own networks."

Visitors to the site can read and share content in eight languages. The language options, mobile optimization and design-oriented style contribute to a modern and ever-evolving platform. Initial figures indicate that ShareAmerica content is more successful at engaging with local online audiences on social media than traditional content.

Beyond usage data measured by the IIP Analytics team, the site's platform and content are also informed by qualitative feedback from people and posts. Feedback is welcome at ShareAmerica.gov. ■



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Democracy • Freedom of Expression • Innovation • Entrepreneurship • Education • Civil Society

IIP illustrator Doug Thompson created a ShareAmerica promotional poster for distribution at a coming comic book fair.

Photo by Doug Thompson



AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

A steady stream of traffic flows
down 9th Avenue on a winter day
in midtown Manhattan, New York.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco





DUNLOP

W 19 ST

NO RIGHT TURNS

NO LEFT TURNS

TRUCK ROUTE

ALL TRAFFIC

W 20 ST

BICYCLE ROUTE

ONE WAY

ONE WAY

W 19 ST

NYC DUBUFFET AND THE ART BRIT

LEARN FILMMAKING & ACTING IN A FILM NEW YORK FROM SCENE

BICYCLE ROUTE

Diversity Notes

JOHN M. ROBINSON
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS



Test Your Knowledge of EEO and Diversity

Often, it's good to see if one's understanding of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and diversity is correct. Therefore, this month, I'm offering readers a quiz, hoping you'll answer the following questions true or false and then check your answers with correct answers far below. Don't peek ahead until you have answered them all.

1. An employee who wishes to file an EEO complaint must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory action.

2. There is only one process for employees to report allegations of discriminatory or sexual harassment.

3. Supervisors or other responsible Department officials should only report harassment if they have witnessed it themselves.

4. Membership in the Department's Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs) is exclusive to those who identify with a particular race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, disability or sexual orientation.

5. By participating in EEO mediation, supervisors and "resolving officials," those who resolve complaints, are doing what is tantamount to admitting culpability for the accusation.

6. Reprisal is prohibited under EEO laws.

7. In an EEO proceeding, an individual may fail to prevail on his or her complaint of discrimination, but could prevail on a claim of reprisal arising after the complaint was made.

8. Collateral duty EEO counselors are qualified after they have successfully completed the 32 hour FSI course PT-171.

9. A person cannot pursue mediation if the person with whom he or she has a conflict has been posted overseas.

10. EEO laws provide reasonable accommodation on the basis of religion and disability.

Answers:

1. True. For ongoing hostile work environment claims, employees have 45 days from the most recent incident of discrimination.

2. False: Employees who believe they have been subjected to discriminatory or sexual harassment may file an EEO complaint within the required 45 day timeframe to pursue resolution. Additionally, in accordance with 3 FAM

1525/1526, allegations of harassment should be reported to the Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR). There are no time limitations as to when harassment may be reported to S/OCR under the FAM.

3. False: According to 3 FAM 1525/1526, supervisors and other responsible Department officials who observe, are informed of or reasonably suspect incidents of possible harassment must immediately report such incidents to S/OCR. Failure to report violates the policy and may result in disciplinary action.

4. False: Membership in any EAG is open to all employees.

5. False: Participation in mediation is never an admission of culpability or guilt.

6. True: Reprisal is a form of discrimination prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Reprisal occurs when a supervisor treats an employee negatively as a result of his/her involvement in the EEO process.

7. True: Although there may not be a finding of discrimination on an underlying complaint, it is possible for there to be a subsequent finding of reprisal if a supervisor treats the aggrieved negatively as a result of their engagement in the EEO process.

8. True: In order to receive certification as an EEO counselor, employees must take PT-171. Additionally, counselors must take a one-day refresher course annually to retain certification.

9. False: Mediators will utilize digital and/or telephone conferencing to conduct mediations when the individuals in conflict are not in the same location.

10. True. Under Title VII and the Rehabilitation Act, an agency has a duty to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with bona fide religious beliefs and practices and qualified individuals with disabilities, unless doing so would cause the agency undue hardship.

So, how did you do?

Regardless of your score, the questions above are by no means a comprehensive overview of EEO principles, but rather a sample of frequently asked questions to refresh your memory. We encourage you to visit the S/OCR website to stay informed of your EEO rights and responsibilities. And remember, S/OCR is always here to serve as a resource. ■

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

New American

Russian gains U.S. citizenship at 93

By Thomas Benz, vice consul, and Vasily Fedosov, consular assistant, U.S. Embassy in Moscow

Even during this difficult time in the U.S.-Russia relationship, there is still a deep connection between the two countries arising through personal family events. Recently, we were reminded of this connection when the U.S. Embassy in Moscow helped a 93-year-old Russian man achieve a dream, documenting his U.S. citizenship.

Interviewing an applicant about a claim to U.S. citizenship is always poignant, but especially so when the person is aged. When Maks Isidorovich Lopatnikov came to the Moscow consular section in December 2013, he was not only well on in years (a spry 92), but sought confirmation that he was a U.S. citizen.

It was clear from the first interview with Lopatnikov that this would not be a run-of-the-mill adjudication. Instead, consular officers had to trace a family history that spanned continents and centuries. Lopatnikov was born in Moscow in 1921 to Isidor Lopatnikov and Sofia Schwarz. He grew up in tandem with the construction of the Soviet state, served on the Finnish Front during World War II, and witnessed the USSR's middle-age and ultimate demise.

Lopatnikov spent summers conducting field research outside of Moscow as a geologist, and during one expedition in 1955, met his wife. Their son was born some years later and in the early 1990s left Russia to work in the United States, becoming a legal resident and eventually a naturalized citizen.

When visiting his son in the United States, Lopatnikov learned that he might have a claim to U.S. citizenship through his American-born father, Isidor Lopatnikov. A copy of Isidor's birth certificate showed Isidor was the child of Russian émigrés Pavel and Rebecca Lopatnikov and was born in New York City's Lower East Side in 1893.

Isidor's family lived in the New York area until his parents' marriage ended and his mother chose to leave the United States with Isidor and return to then imperial Russia. Isidor later married in the Russian city of Saratov in 1916, settling in Moscow, where Maks Lopatnikov was born five years later. In 1927, Isidor was arrested and convicted of activities against the Soviet state, not because of his U.S. birth (which the family concealed)

but because his frequent chess partner was an Estonian diplomat he had met years before.

He was sentenced to five years in a gulag, but released after three and forced to relocate to the Soviet Union's far north, where he started a new family. Maks only saw his father only a few times after his release from the gulag, before Isidor died.

Under a law dating to 1878, children born outside the limits of the United States, whose fathers were or may be at the time of their birth U.S. citizens, are themselves "declared to be citizens of the United States." Since Maks was born abroad to a father born in the United States in 1893, the ACS unit determined that Isidor transmitted U.S. citizenship to Maks at birth.

Maks' birth year was equally opportune because the same law didn't obligate "persons born abroad to a U.S. citizen parent before May 24, 1934," to live for any amount of time in the United States, to keep their U.S. citizenship. Maks returned to the consular section in February to clear up a few details. By the end of the month, he returned to pick up his first U.S. passport.

When asked about his strongest memories of life in the Soviet Union and Russian Federation, Maks remembered two dates, four years apart. The first was a June day in 1941 when, on his way to a bookstore inside the Hotel National, he saw two official vehicles drive past, traveling toward the Soviet Central Telegraph offices. In the first car sat Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov.

In minutes, Moscow's loudspeakers were blaring Molotov's news of Nazi Germany's invasion of the USSR. Maks served

on the Finnish front during World War II, which relates to his second strongest memory: standing in a large crowd on the Palace Bridge in Leningrad on May 9, 1945, celebrating the end of the war with fireworks.

Maks and his wife dined with Moscow's consular staff recently, and the conversation continued till well after 1:00 a.m. as the couple recounted their lifetime of experiences in Russia and the Soviet Union. The staff attending said they were amazed by the couple's enduring perspicacity and their hospitality, which they would soon take with them to begin a new life in another country.

Maks, who turned 93 last May, and his wife, whose immigrant visa was approved in September, departed Moscow in late December to join their son and his family in the United States. ■



Consul Tom Benz, right, stands with Maks Lopatnikov at the U.S. Embassy. Photo by Vasily Fedosov

Igniting Innovation

Office Leads IT Change, Service

By Robert Watts, foreign affairs officer, and Anup Shah, IRM desk officer, Office of eDiplomacy

Now more than ever, modern diplomacy depends on information technology. To promote the adoption of these new technologies, the Department established the Office of eDiplomacy in 2003 as part of the Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM). Today, eDiplomacy helps drive the Department's innovation and technological change while supporting IRM's customer service. "The office was created to give the customer a voice in IT investments and to promote tools for employees to collaborate, share ideas and manage knowledge," explained eDiplomacy Director Eric Nelson.

As an extension of its original mandate, the office develops programs for the Department to connect with key diplomatic partners globally and empower civil society groups. The office also works closely with other IRM units to meet employees' day-to-day IT needs.

The Knowledge Leadership Division (KLD) of eDiplomacy, headed by J. Danielle Garner, promotes knowledge management with tools for connecting people and information.

KLD manages the SearchState, the enterprise search engine on OpenNet; the Diplopedia wiki site that allows for retention and sharing of knowledge; the Corridor networking platform, which helps employees collaborate on shared interests and locate expertise in the Department; and the Communities@State blogs, which enable personnel to form online communities to publish information and spark discussions. These tools compose a global environment for users and interagency partners to share knowledge across organizational and geographic boundaries.

The latest KLD initiative is an internal crowdsourcing platform, CrowdWork, which facilitates worldwide collaboration. Using this tool, any office or mission will be able to post tasks online for any Department employee with the requisite skills to respond and complete the task.

Another eDiplomacy unit, the Diplomatic Innovation Division (DID), led by Dan Sheerin, uses technology to foster partnerships that support U.S. diplomacy. For instance, the Virtual Student Foreign Service (VSFS), launched in 2009, engages hundreds of

U.S. college students annually online, using their expertise to advance the work of the Department and 11 other agencies. Building on this networking capability, eDiplomacy recently created the Virtual Fellows Program (VFP), a public-private partnership that allows offices to tap into the expertise of U.S. professionals, who act as no-cost virtual consultants to the Department on specific short-term projects. In addition, the division is associated with more than 40 TechCamp



Office Director Eric Nelson takes note of a comment during a meeting.

Photo by Ed Warner



IRM's Office of eDiplomacy has Foreign Service Officers and Specialists, Civil Service employees, contractors and fellows. *Photo by Isaiah Joo*



Chief of the Diplomatic Innovation Division Dan Sheerin greets an office visitor.

Photo by Ed Warner

conferences, which bring together diplomats, technologists and representatives of 2,000 civil society organizations worldwide to help spread the word on effective use of tech-based tools in their work. Meanwhile, the Tech@State quarterly conference series brings together U.S. diplomats, technologists, academics and entrepreneurs to explore ways technology can address global diplomatic and development challenges.

The DID's GEO development services team uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to provide a centralized, fee-based mapmaking service to the Department and other agencies. Its map-based products include the Business Information Database System (BIDS) developed for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB). John Sillson, an EB special assistant, received the 2013 Sean Smith Technology and Innovation Award for his work on BIDS.

The IT Innovation Fund administered by DID promotes high-impact technology innovations. This year the fund distributed \$500,000 to 14 projects proposed by the field, particularly in mobile technologies. One creation was the Duty Officer app, developed in Singapore last year; this tablet-optimized application enables posts to implement a paperless duty officer book. It offers access to data such as contacts and emergency providers, as well as a Duty Log through which users can attach photos, audio and documents to log entries (which are synced to a cloud-based content management site). More than 80 posts have adopted it.

Other Innovation Fund-backed projects include Tegucigalpa's VisaGuide app, for which Consular Officer Zennia D. Paganini received the 2014 Sean Smith Award for her work.

DID and eDiplomacy in general depend on the diversity of eDiplomacy's staff. Speaking of

DID, VSFS Program Manager Bridget Roddy said: "Our office brings together employees from diverse backgrounds, including Foreign Service, Civil Service, contractors, WAEs, fellows and interns, creating opportunities to work with interesting people on various programs simultaneously." Roddy noted that she was hired to manage the VSFS, but has since also participated in TechCamps as a trainer and organizer, volunteered at Tech@State and collaborated across divisions on the launch of Corridor and in the planning of CrowdWork.

The Customer Liaison Division (CLD) of eDiplomacy is led by Perry Romeo, the 2014 recipient of the Thomas Morrison Information Management Award. CLD disseminates information on current IRM initiatives and helps IRM provide customer support. It also engages with customers through desk-side visits and seeks their feedback to improve the quality of service. As the IT customers' advocate, CLD will lead a new business relationship management group to help IRM better meet customers' business requirements.

Within the past year, CLD has managed communications for what the Department's Chief Information Officer, Steve Taylor, called a "huge undertaking," the migration of the unclassified desktop network from Windows XP to Windows 7. CLD also launched monthly webinars with the latest news on IRM activities, actively monitored crisis situations worldwide and advocated for improvements to the account transfer process. Lizzie Slater, information management officer at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, said the CLD team "has really ramped up their outreach and support to the field, and I know I've personally benefited from their timely guidance and insight into IRM initiatives, the Windows 7 migration and C-PKI implementation being the most memorable."

The chief information officer's top priorities for the future include development of an interagency Foreign Affairs Network (FAN), cyber security, new mobile technology and customer service. In response, eDiplomacy has worked to identify and prioritize innovations



Neeru Lal is a public affairs official in the office.

Photo by Ed Warner

in these areas and has gathered information on employees' requirements.

The office has also worked to shape the direction of the deployment of mobile technologies and several eDiplomacy tools are now mobile-ready, running on Blackberries, iPhones and iPads. Additionally, Diplopedia and Communities@State blogs, such as Econ@State and Corridor, are now mobile Web apps that offer easy access to data and increased information sharing—with less e-mailing.

eDiplomacy continues to improve IRM's effectiveness at communicating with stakeholders, customers and the Department's IT professionals. One tool it uses on this score is its Public Affairs, Communications and Synergy group (PACS), which provides a clear and consistent message about IRM's goals and accomplishments across the Department and manages the IRM Synergy Hub blog. (IRM hopes employees will follow the blog and share feedback.) eDiplomacy has its own mobile blog, eDiplomacy@State, for improved communications with colleagues about the office's latest developments. ■



Perry Romeo is chief of the Customer Liaison Division.

Photo by Ed Warner

VETERANS BENEFIT

Play Promotes Healing in Yerevan

By Sarah Genton, division chief, and Nancy Van Horn, cultural affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Yerevan, Armenia



“You train for your job and you do your best to stay alive and keep your brothers alive so you can all go home.”

- U.S. Marine Elliot Ruiz, the wounded veteran who inspired the play.

By helping stage the Armenian-language premiere in October of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama “Water by the Spoonful,” a play about the struggle of an Iraq war veteran to adapt to civilian life, the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan touched on a raw nerve among Armenian audiences. The societal impact of their nation’s conflict with Azerbaijan, especially on young men who return from military service with physical and psychological scars, is a live but taboo issue.

More than 20 years after Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to a cease fire in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, tension and occasional border clashes persist. To help promote reconciliation through the arts, the embassy sought the assistance of the American actor who held the lead role in the play’s U.S. premiere and the former U.S. Marine on whom the play is based. Embassy Yerevan’s public affairs section (PAS) used the play to connect with the public and military recruits, officers and representatives from the Ministry of Defense (MOD).

The performances and events associated with the play generated what some participants called the first public discussion in Armenia of the challenges veterans face and the toll Nagorno-Karabakh has taken on

soldiers and their families and friends. The play also helped move Armenian society closer to a clear assessment of the conflict’s costs and, hopefully, closer to peace with Azerbaijan.

The play’s performances were staged during the HighFest international arts festival, raised issues not generally addressed in Armenia and highlighted problems of post war trauma and disability. As part of the outreach, PAS also leveraged the presence and participation of its two special guests: Armando Riesco, the actor who held the lead role during the U.S. premiere, and U.S. Marine Elliot Ruiz, the wounded veteran who inspired the play. Both engaged with new audiences, including young military recruits, Armenian veterans and policy/planning contacts within the MOD. The performances and collateral programs were viewed as a great success by national media. Certainly, “Water by the Spoonful” brought the best of contemporary American theater to Armenia and helped the embassy broach a sensitive topic among Armenian society: the sense of abandonment felt by Nagorno-Karabakh war vets. To this end, PAS convened a roundtable discussion involving Ruiz, Nagorno-Karabakh veterans, MOD representatives and civil society leaders. Ruiz discussed his combat service, experiences reintegrating into “normal life” as a disabled

veteran and the support veterans now receive from the U.S. Department of Defense. The roundtable may have been the first time such disparate segments of Armenian society jointly discussed Armenian veterans’ struggles. “We say it’s not a problem, but that’s not true,” observed the nation’s former Human Rights Ombudsman, Larissa Alaverdyan.

A leader of the nation’s military, Major General Arkady Ter-Tadevosyan, used the roundtable event to note parallels between the plight of American veterans after the Vietnam War and Armenian veterans of Nagorno-Karabakh, citing what he termed the lack of appreciation demonstrated for veterans’ sacrifices.

“War scars people,” observed General Ter-Tadevosyan. “Imagine if veterans from a rich, powerful nation like the U.S. have reintegration problems. What can we expect of poor Armenian veterans?”

Following the discussion, MOD representatives asked PAS to cooperate on training for the MOD’s Staff College and on re-entry programs for soldiers coming out of combat. The projects, now in their early stages, are likely to influence defense policy and civil society.

On Oct. 3, Ruiz spoke with hundreds of cadets at the Central Military Institute, the Military Aviation Institute and the Military

Clockwise from left: Actors perform a scene during the play. *Photo by HighFest*; “Good Morning Armenia” hosts interpreter Tigranuhi Baghdasaryan, play director Tsolak Mike-Galstyan, Cultural Affairs Officer Nancy Van Horn, former U.S. Marine Elliot Ruiz and American actor Armando Riesco. *Photo by Evelina Arabyan*; Ambassador John A. Heffern opens the premiere of “Water by the Spoonful” with Elliot Ruiz and HighFest Director Artur Ghukasyan. *Photo by Tatevik Simonyan*; The play’s poster. *Photo by HighFest*



College, which sends its students to both defense institutes. There, he detailed his combat experiences, noting that he enlisted in the Marine Corps at 17, forging his parents’ signatures on the enlistment documents, and was sent to Iraq six months into his service—the youngest Marine in his division. The war ended for him in April 2004 when an Iraqi insurgent drove a car through barbed wire at a checkpoint, tearing apart Ruiz’s leg.

At each presentation, attendees asked Ruiz to describe his feelings about combat. He stressed that he and his fellow Marines saw combat as a job and experienced a range of emotions. “You train for your job and you do your best to stay alive and keep your brothers alive so you can all go home,” he said.

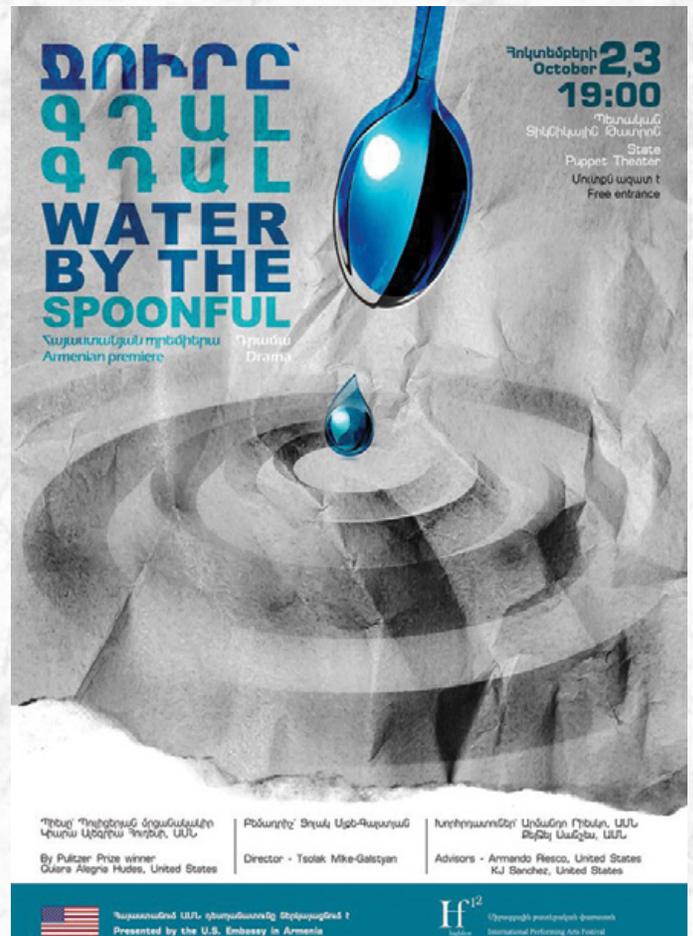
He also noted that a range of re-entry programs helps American combat veterans ease into civilian life. Cadets also asked about the training and preparation of Marines, and pressed him for his views on political topics, such as the current state of American engagement in Iraq. Ruiz used these questions to highlight the apolitical nature of the American military and the fact that the country’s service members are all volunteers, a stark contrast with Armenia’s mandatory conscription.

Before “Water by the Spoonful” debuted, the cast and crew visited the Marine House at the embassy to talk with our Marines about their experiences in combat and those of their friends. These candid discussions, in which the Marines spoke about the unique ethos of the Marine Corps and the impact of combat on service members and their families, deeply influenced how the actors approached their roles.

Thanks to the work of International Information Programs (IIP) Officer Mike Bandler, actor Armando Riesco was recruited to advise the play’s Armenian director and cast. He did so via Skype during the play’s initial readings and rehearsals, and then came to Armenia a week before the premiere to finalize the production. Riesco ensured that the play’s themes—including drug addiction, disability and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, issues rarely discussed or acknowledged in Armenia—shone on the stage; he conducted master classes with actors and students, working with them on their technique and advising them on staging new material.

Coming just two months after the worst violence in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 20 years, the “Water by the Spoonful” program used cultural diplomacy to spark Armenian discussion of how the conflict affects veterans, young soldiers and Armenian society. That, in turn, advanced the mission’s objective of encouraging Armenia to take meaningful steps toward reconciliation with Azerbaijan.

The program also led to collaboration between the embassy and MOD to help soldiers reintegrate into civilian life and engaged young military officers (a new PAS audience) in a no-holds-barred conversation about combat’s psychological impact. ■



PORTAL TO THE PAST

Partnership revitalizes former chancery

By Martin K. Thomen IV, vice consul, U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul

If form follows function in architecture, then as diplomacy changes over time, its buildings, too, transition from the places for private, closed-door meetings to places able to host multi channel conversations involving social media, intense press coverage and diverse public services.

Thus, Palazzo Corpi, the former chancery of the U.S. Embassy in Istanbul and later the site of the consulate general here, has undergone major physical changes but remains a tangible link to U.S. diplomatic history. Currently, the property is being converted into a luxury hotel complex in a public-private partnership with a local developer, a move that will preserve an historic structure but make it useful for new purposes. The complex is slated to open early this year.

Palazzo Corpi is an Italianate villa constructed in the 1870s in the historic Beyoğlu district of what was then the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople. The U.S. government leased the villa as a legation facility and residence and then purchased it from the Corpi family in 1906 for use as the embassy and official residence of the U.S. ambassador. With the move of the embassy to the new capital city, Ankara, in 1937, the villa became the U.S. Consulate General until its relocation to a new facility in 2003.

Tall tales surround Palazzo Corpi, which is said to have been built for a mistress of Ignazio Corpi, a Genoese shipowner, and to be haunted; its purchase by former U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire John G.A. Leishman may have been arranged during a poker game. Rumors aside, the building itself is impressive, a place of



A photo of Palazzo Corpi shows the chancery circa 1915. *State Department photo*



A restoration team member repairs gold-leaf crown modeling. *Photo by Scott Kilner*



A digital rendering of the project as it may appear upon completion. *Photo by Bilgi Holding*

beautiful woodwork, etched glass windows, a grand marble staircase and wall paintings of mythological scenes.

As one of the first real estate purchases by the U.S. government to house a diplomatic mission, the building is unquestionably imbued with history. That is why in 2004 the U.S. Congress required the government to maintain ownership of the property even after relocation of the consulate general. The site symbolizes the U.S.-Turkey relationship, from the fall of the Ottoman Empire and founding of the new republic to Turkey's accession to NATO.

But the building changed with modern-day demands for more consular services and space, security upgrades and new infrastructure requirements. Ornamental wall paintings and decorations were plastered over, and crown molding was cut to accommodate electrical lines. Working conditions in the building deteriorated over time, with employees squeezed into cramped quarters with poor infrastructure. To cope with the facility's space constraints, the processing of immigrant visas moved to the U.S. Embassy in Ankara in 1998, but the structure continued its decline.

The facility lacked setback from the street and thus failed to meet security standards. That problem was tragically underlined in the 2003 terrorist attack on the neighboring British Consulate, in which several of that consulate's employees were killed.

The preservation of the palazzo presented planners from the State Department's Office of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) with a challenge and an opportunity. Responding to the congressional mandate, OBO signed a 51-year lease with a development company in 2008 to restore and expand the complex as a luxury hotel. Once completed, the project will include more than 160,000 square feet of internal space and house a hotel with 84 rooms, conference facilities, a club bar and two restaurants. Recognizing the key role Senator Ernest F. Hollings played in ensuring the facility's preservation, the complex will also include office space for the Hollings Center for International Dialogue.

In its work, the development company preserved historic details of the palazzo, which is protected under Turkish historic preservation laws. Experts worked for months to restore and renew such unique characteristics as the hand-painted scenes on its ceilings and walls, and its intricate plaster moldings and woodwork.

Two other historic structures on the site, the former chancery and annex, are also being repurposed. The annex was built as an apartment building during the same era and was later the home of

the "Constantinople Club" until it was purchased by the U.S. in 1949 as consulate office space. It will now house the hotel's suites and a café.

The chancery, an extension of the palazzo built in 1910, was designed by a Washington, D.C., architect who also designed the Washington, D.C., mansion that became the Turkish Embassy in 1932. It is now the residence of the Turkish ambassador.

The developers worked closely with OBO's Architectural Design branch and the Cultural Heritage Program and Consulate General Istanbul, coordination that has allowed the CG Istanbul management team and front office to follow the work closely. CG Istanbul Management Officer Jonathan Mennuti said the Department had taken the time to find a developer "who shared the State Department's vision of making the space useful and available in a reasonable and economical way."

Department employees who worked in the palazzo remember it fondly. Former Consul General Scott Kilner, whose first and last postings were in Istanbul, recently led a small group on a tour of the building. Several Locally Employed Staff members accompanying Kilner photographed their old offices, now being converted into high-end hotel rooms, and reminisced.

As Consular LE Staff member Nuray Oktaybaş said, "The best part of working in the building was its location. You were close to everything, including schools, shopping and other foreign missions. Working in the building, you felt tied to history."

Because the lease allows the U.S. government to use the renovated complex for certain official functions, Palazzo Corpi will be given new life in the history of U.S. diplomacy, continuing to play a role in Mission Turkey's engagement with Turkish audiences. ■



From left, Istanbul Management Officer Jonathan Mennuti, OBO Cultural Heritage Program Manager James Wenzel and local project manager Mehmet Çelik admire Palazzo Corpi's main foyer from the marble staircase.

Photo by Aydan Yurdakul

COSTA RICA CALLS

ECA funds student environmentalism

By Bev Thacker, cultural affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in San Jose, Costa Rica

For three weeks, 16 students from the New School of Environmental Studies in Apple Valley, Minn., and 19 students from the English Access Microscholarship Program at Costa Rica's Poas High School shared information on global warming's impact with other students, senior citizens, and everyday people in parks, schools and through door-to-door campaigns.

The program was funded by the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and supported Mission San José's strategic goal to "partner with Costa Rica in its efforts to protect land and water resources to both preserve the country's world heritage biodiversity and provide viable economic opportunities for local residents."

In November 2013, students from the two schools began collaborating online to develop a community service program to educate the citizens of San Pedro de Poas, a small town on the slopes of Costa Rica's Poas Volcano, about the effects of climate change and how they could improve the health of their watershed.

After eight months of working together, the students from Minnesota arrived in Costa Rica in late July. For many, it was their first time outside the United States, or outside their home state, and several said their on-the-ground experience was eye opening.

The first surprise was the difference in living

standards. Students in the Access program come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and are selected based on academic achievement to receive two-year ECA-funded scholarships to study English. For example, some of the American teenagers were accustomed to larger homes and more privacy, but they soon adapted to the large extended family structure of their Costa Rican hosts.

For the Access students, hosting American students gave them an opportunity to practice English and learn more about U.S. culture, and the students' many similarities. "I was surprised at how easy it was to get to know them in person," said one Costa Rican girl. "We laugh at the same things and have a lot of the same experiences, ideas and questions."

During the first week the students traveled together to examine the impact of climate change in Costa Rica, visiting cloud forests, local dairies, strawberry farms and coffee plantations. At the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, they learned about rainforests and travelled on ziplines through the forest canopy. Only two of the Costa Rican students had visited Monteverde and none had ever been on a zipline.

Local farmers told how climate change is affecting the region, and one U.S. student said: "I thought we'd be teaching them about climate change. Instead they taught us."

During the second week, they finished the projects begun

online: designing a mural for a schoolyard wall, planning activities and presentations for students and senior citizens, and working with the local authorities to promote a community recycling program. They also visited Embassy San José for a briefing on the embassy's own environmental initiatives and toured historical and cultural sites in the capital. Then, they divided into groups to paint the mural, give presentations in classrooms and senior centers, and promote the recycling program.

The program promoted the inclusiveness for those with disabilities and half of the 32 U.S. students and a few of the Costa Rican students had physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Jane Tunseth, a teacher from Minnesota, said the students blossomed, learning they "had strengths they didn't know about and, for the first time, found things they could do better than their non-disabled counterparts."

She also said that students who were used to excelling sometimes found "they had to stand back and watch others take the spotlight. It was a great lesson in leadership."

Now that the U.S. students have returned home, they are raising funds so their new friends can visit Minnesota. Since Costa Ricans take their school vacation in winter, the climate shock of a trip to Minnesota will be bracing, but also a good bonding experience to renew explorations in climate change while strengthening the ties that exchange programs promote. ■



The author reviews a student-designed recycling brochure with a student from Poas High School. Photo by Jose Castro

Resisting Fear

Embassy fights Ebola worries with facts

By David Green, Community Liaison Office (CLO) coordinator, Conakry, Guinea

When I learned in March 2014 through an email that Ebola had arrived in Guinea, Hollywood portrayals of plagues and medical catastrophes came to mind. However, rather than dwelling on such dramatizations, I paid close attention to the communication from Mission Guinea's Foreign Service Health Practitioner (FSHP), Peter Lindland, as he reported there were 59 dead and six confirmed cases of Ebola.

In his note, Peter also described the specific nature of the virus, how it is contracted and its low threat to our community, explaining that it "is not spread through casual contact [but] requires clear exposure to bodily secretions such as providing close nursing care or preparing the deceased for burial." As the CLO Coordinator, I forwarded the email to the embassy community right away.

Due to Guinea's extraordinarily poor infrastructure, the affected region was a three-day drive away. Nonetheless, many of us at Mission Guinea were concerned. Ebola had heretofore never infected more than 450 people in a single outbreak. We were entering uncharted territory, and the unknown amplified our fears. Employees and families posted in Conakry are used to a certain level of difficulty and face such health risks as waterborne parasites, malaria and chaotic no-lane roads. Although Ebola was statistically less likely to affect mission staff, its horrendous symptoms and the knowledge gap on how to respond made it an intimidating threat.

On March 28, Lindland held the post's first all-hands Ebola meeting, reassuring us of our safety while fully acknowledging our visceral concern. Days later, the first four Ebola cases were confirmed in Conakry. Responding, the embassy held another town hall meeting the following day for all Americans under chief of mission authority. The filled-to-capacity meeting, led by Dr. Pierre Rollin of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was a tense gathering.

Speaking French-accented English, Dr. Rollin, an Ebola expert, reassured mission staff and answered questions, providing the uncensored access that was critical to making staff feel secure. Ambassador Alexander Laskaris, meanwhile, affirmed that he would follow the lead of "people with M.D., Ph.D.,

or FSHP after their names," making it clear that Embassy Conakry would be making responsible, science-based decisions rather than irrational ones based on perception.

In the days ahead, town hall meetings were also held with the local staff and local American community, Dr. Rollin leading both. Shortly after, weekly updates came pouring in from the mission's USAID Health Officer and FSHP Lindland on the number of Ebola cases in Guinea, city by city.

By May, Conakry was thought to be Ebola-free, but before the three-week watch period for symptoms ended, more cases appeared.

"If the U.S. government responds to emotional fears about Ebola that cannot be supported by the science then we set a precedent that others will feel they have to follow." - Peter Lindland

Meanwhile, Ebola outbreaks in Sierra Leone and Liberia were severe enough to force U.S. missions there to evacuate the posts' children. Mission Conakry family members began to worry that we might be next.

Following drawdowns in Freetown and Monrovia, Mission Guinea was briefed on Ebola by Dr. Greg Martin, the State Department's infectious disease expert and the man who appears in the Department's video about the dangers of malaria.

Dr. Martin said he had visited the local health clinic serving the expat community and concluded that Mission Conakry was still viable from a medical standpoint. This meeting, like the town hall with Dr. Rollin, was heavily attended by the embassy community and prompted a slew of questions, all of which were answered.

However, the difference between this town hall and the first was palpable. No one sought reassurance about the mission's safety or worried that one could catch Ebola by shaking hands. We had all been receiving emails and Facebook messages from friends and family



In his MED office, Dr. Gregory Martin stands alongside a tapestry reflecting the history of Peru, bought while he directed the U.S. Navy medical lab there.

Photo by Ed Warner

for some time, many saying they were worried that we had not evacuated. Those worrying for us back home may have thickened our resolve.

Attendees at the latest town hall wanted to know if the Department was going to force families to leave. None of us wanted this. In fact, one family member at the meeting begged that if the mission was evacuated, it be an authorized departure, not an ordered one, allowing those who desired to stay to do so. She said she didn't want to leave her husband (or her dogs).

The change in tone was remarkable and closed the door on one element of the crisis. Although medical and VIP visitors continue to arrive, and Lindland still sends out email updates, the post had by year's end become steadfast. We were now following Lindland's earlier advice to stick to recommendations that made scientific sense.

"If the U.S. government responds to emotional fears about Ebola that cannot be supported by the science," he had warned, "then we set a precedent that others will feel they have to follow."

It now appears the fight against Ebola was always a battle on two fronts, the medical one and the more difficult one of avoiding perceived danger or a sense of helplessness. While the medical aspect of the disease wreaked havoc on the region, the fear associated with Ebola was a more complex and insidious enemy.

As we continue the battle, those of us who have lived and worked in close proximity to the disease for nearly 10 months see what is going on in the States—the hysteria, the irrational fear, the nastiness—and understand these human impulses. As Ambassador Laskaris noted during the crisis, disease of any sort "awakens in us two of the deepest primordial reactions of our species: love and fear."

The actions of the embassy community in Conakry demonstrate that the cure for fear is information. We only need to disseminate it widely and with the right messengers. ■



Talking Diplomacy

Embassy speakers' program engages youth

By Cheryl Harris, deputy public affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana; Photos by Breda Popovič

Believe it or not, hockey's Stanley Cup, the IBM corporation and the movie "Pirates of the Caribbean" all have a connection to Slovenia.

Slovenian ice hockey star Anže Kopitar helped lead the Los Angeles Kings to a Stanley Cup victory last year; IBM has one of its headquarters in Ljubljana, the capital; and Slovenian actor Branko Grujcic was one of those who worked on the Hollywood blockbuster's visual effects. These facts were also a few of the answers in an "Embassy Jeopardy" game that Embassy Ljubljana's Marine Security Detachment recently played with 55 Slovenian ninth graders as a part of the mission speakers' program.

While Slovenia is an EU and NATO ally that frequently cooperates with the United States, the public often is skeptical about U.S.

policies. In response, the speakers' program recruits from across the mission and involves presentations to more than 3,000 students per year. The program reaches its target audience of youth with information about U.S. policy, culture and values, and helps provide an important counter-narrative to the sometimes critical views presented in the nation's media. Encouraging Slovenians to become more receptive to the United States on policy issues, the program taps into the unique experiences of Americans serving in Slovenia, letting them speak to a variety of youth and student groups throughout the country.

The speakers' program began in 2005 and since that time it has become one of the most popular embassy offerings for Americans and Slovenians alike. One reason is that Ambassador Joseph Mussomeli requires all American staff members to do at least one

outreach program per year. Embassy staff can boast that someone has spoken to a student audience in every Slovenian municipality.

Recently, a team of embassy speakers traveled to a middle school in Žalec, about an hour away from Ljubljana. Information Resource Assistant Breda Popovič equipped the volunteers with everything they needed, including information on the school and students, and outreach materials with the U.S. embassy logo and contact information. At the school, the principal and the English language teacher greeted the volunteers, escorting them to the gymnasium, which held colorful decorations and food to celebrate the school's "multicultural day." The speakers were there to offer an American perspective to a classroom of 90 fifth- and sixth-graders on the day before Halloween, so they came in costumes and passed out American candies. The students



Above: Management Officer Jon Selle talks about differences and similarities in lifestyle and culture in the United States and Slovenia at a middle school in Slovenska Bistrica.

Opposite: Ambassador Mussomeli meets with 40 high school students in Ljubljana to discuss Euro-skepticism towards the United States.

asked about life in the United States, including what Americans do on holidays and what a typical American family is like. The volunteers said there is no “typical” anymore—families come in a variety of shapes, including LGBT families. (The speakers always try to find an opportunity to promote U.S. values such as diversity.)

Building an embassy-sponsored speakers’ program is not easy. “I must say, there were some doubts and distrust at the schools when we introduced the program,” Popovič recalled. “Some were suspicious that we would try to brainwash the students and push political propaganda or something like that. However, the majority of schools now realize that they can only gain from our visits.”

Meanwhile, the invitations increase. The program, which began with 13 schools in 2005, comprises visits to more than 70 in the 2014–2015 school year. Sometimes, the same

speaker is invited back for additional visits.

The public affairs section amplifies the visits through its social media pages and promotes speaker events with local media outlets, including the high school press. One such paper lauded the presentation by Regional Security Officer Stephen Strickland, saying he explained his work as a diplomat in Slovenia and other countries. Then, with symbols, landmarks, and well-known personalities from music and film, he took students on a journey across the United States.

There are benefits for the speakers, too. For just a few hours of their time, mission staff can explore a new part of the country and talk about current events. After a visit to a middle school in the northeastern part of the country, Management Officer Jon Selle said, “I gained more cultural understanding from the event than did the Slovenian students. I was

graciously welcomed with Slovenian folk songs, a piano recital, a reading of a historical Slovenian poem, and homemade Slovenian kranjska klobasa (sausage) and cheese.”

The speakers’ program “is laying the foundation to achieve our long-term policy goals,” said Political-Economic Section Chief Joshua Harris. “In my experience, participants in our mission speakers’ program certainly haven’t shied away from hard issues—like U.S. policies in the Middle East, EU discussions over Ukraine, or Iraq and Syria. But even more important is that we’re getting students to think about American culture and values and allowing them to discuss issues with an American official, which will set the stage for us to sway perceptions of the United States and accomplish our policy goals here in the long term.” ■



Post of the Month

Montenegro

Idyllic country an exemplar of stability in Balkan Peninsula

Story and Photos by Isaac D. Pacheco







Nestled in the shadow of imposing limestone-faced cliffs that plunge dramatically into the turquoise Adriatic shallows lies the stunning Bay of Kotor. The dark mountains surrounding the fjord-like canyon create one of the Mediterranean coast's most breathtaking geological spectacles, and may have inspired the name of the country that now calls this shoreline its own.

Montenegro, or Crna Gora as it is known in the local variant of Serbo-Croat spoken in the region, literally means Black Mountain. Contrary to its monochromatic moniker, the country, a former constituent of the now-disbanded Yugoslav Republic, has a colorful history and vibrant cultural heritage. Despite changing hands over the centuries as conflict in the region spilled over its borders, Montenegro has retained a unique flair and emerged as a beacon of stability in the Balkans. With applications for European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership pending, Montenegro is poised to become an even more influential presence in the region.

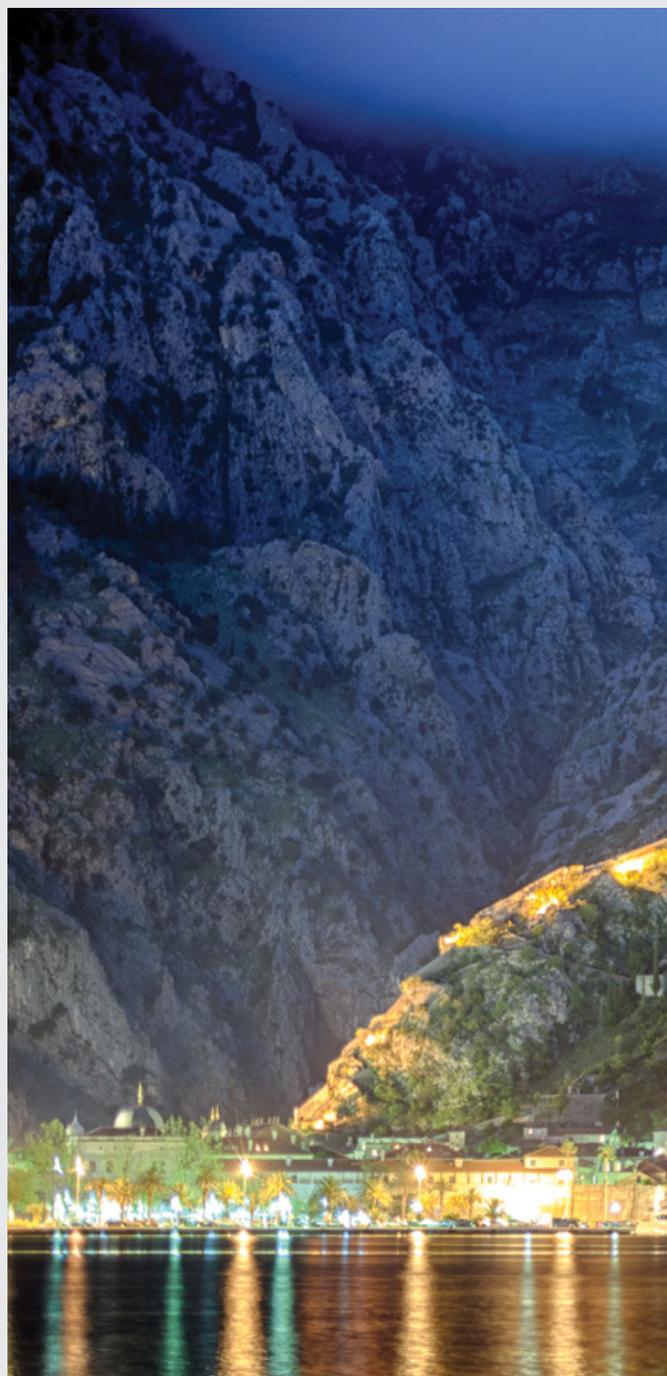
"Montenegrins have been a huge supporter of the United States and we have a good bilateral relationship with them," said Sue K. Brown, U.S. Ambassador to Montenegro. "We support Montenegro's goal of Euro/Atlantic integration, including membership in NATO. We are focused on the rule of law, democracy and economic prosperity."

Despite being one of Europe's smallest countries, Montenegro is a leader in the Balkan Peninsula, demonstrating a willingness to implement needed reforms and working diligently toward becoming a trusted partner in the region.

"Montenegro has an importance to the United States that is much larger than its size," said Douglas Jones, former deputy chief of mission at Embassy Podgorica. "Montenegro serves as a model right now in the region."

Because rule of law is such an important element of Montenegro's eligibility for membership in international organizations like NATO and the EU, Embassy Podgorica has placed a priority on working with the country's authorities to bolster its justice system and legal institutions. According to Embassy Podgorica's Resident Legal Advisor, Erik N. Larson, open and transparent governance is essential to the effectiveness of any democracy, but particularly important for Montenegro as it takes steps to become a respected player in the international community.

Previous page: Under Venetian rule throughout the 18th century, Perast was a strategic center for trade and shipping in the Adriatic Sea. Today the small town attracts tourists for its stunning scenery, historic architecture and its proximity to the nearby islets "Our Lady of the Rocks" and "Saint George."





Opposite left: Farmers tend to their tobacco crop in a field near Koštanjica.

Left: Biogradska Gora National Park shelters the largest old-growth forest in Europe and an awe-inspiring glacial lake.

Below: Lanterns illuminate the massive stone fortifications surrounding Kotor that have defended the city from numerous invasions since the Middle Ages.





Post of the Month

“We are busily assisting the Montenegrins with building their institutions and strengthening the rule of law.” Larson said. “We also do a lot of training. We bring in international and regional experts on best practices. It’s a work in progress.”

Increased adherence to rule of law is not only improving Montenegrins’ quality of life and their chances of being accepted into international organizations, but also making the country a more attractive location for international business and trade. Montenegro has already demonstrated a willingness to work with the United States on key policy issues and embassy officials are making strides to turn these successes into a prosperous economic partnership.

“We are trying to increase foreign investment in Montenegro and that really requires two things: one, to give U.S. investors the sense that they can be confident in the investment climate here and, two, to show them that it is a larger market than it may seem,” said John Cooney, former pol/econ chief at Embassy Podgorica. “It’s [a country with] 630,000 people, but it’s part of a larger region and has potential in some areas to become a regional hub. It has the coast; it has a major port; it is improving its infrastructure, so it could certainly be a bigger player than it is.”

Encompassing 13,812 square kilometers, the country is roughly equivalent in size to Connecticut, but features a stunning array of biomes and geologic features. In one day, an

adventurous person could spend a morning skiing on sub-alpine peaks in the mountainous northwest, grab a picnic lunch in the continent’s oldest primeval forest, go whitewater rafting in the massive river valley winding through the eastern highlands, and still be able to soak up the last rays of a Mediterranean sunset on the warm Adriatic coastline.

From the mountainous surroundings and Venetian-inspired architecture of towns encircling the Bay of Kotor to the warm water and sandy beaches that stretch south toward the Albanian border, Montenegro’s coast is one of the nation’s most treasured natural assets with numerous highlights to be found along the scenic drive from Perast in the Bay of Kotor to Ulcinj in the south.

“It’s lovely to be in a country that is so accessible on a number of levels. It’s easy to get to know very quickly. It’s easy to get around. Then, you’re surrounded by just incredible natural beauty, said Sunshine Ison, public affairs officer at Embassy Podgorica. “It’s so accessible in the fact that because it’s a small country, although the issues are often complex, learning the players and figuring out who the right contacts are is something that can happen. Thanks to our International Visitor Leadership Program and other exchange alumni, we have this fantastic national network.”

With only 35 American employees, Embassy Podgorica is one of the smaller

posts in the region. As a result, each employee plays a vital role in the embassy’s broad mission and must rely heavily on Locally Employed (LE) Staff members.

“It’s a small post so you get to do a lot,” said Jones. “You’re doing everything here. You have a lot of one-officer sections, so you’re managing a section, you’re doing everything that comes with that, you’re on country team and you’re called upon to do high-level visits and everything else, particularly our junior officers. You get a lot of experience.”

During her tenure, Ambassador Brown has made it one of her priorities to ensure that the embassy’s Foreign Service officers and LE Staff members recognize the importance and value of their work and have ample opportunities to tackle issues they are passionate about, both at work and outside of it.

Bottom left: A beekeeper in the mountains above Cetinje inspects a portion of his apiary before collecting honey for sale.

Below: Frigid glacial meltwater carves its way through the Tara River valley like a turquoise ribbon.

Right: Ambassador Brown speaks with students at an event organized by Montenegrin youth alumni.
Photo by Embassy Podgorica

Top right: A woman carries cut tree branches along the road near Gornja Briska.

Far right: The labyrinthine corridors of Stari Grad Kotor are lined with shops and restaurants that have helped make the town a magnet for locals and tourists alike.







Post of the Month



Above: Despite its cliffside redoubt, Ostrog monastery is one of the most popular destinations for Orthodox pilgrims, many of whom make the harrowing journey up the mountainside to the chapel barefoot to prove their piety and atone for sins.

Top right: Pork shoulders destined to be sliced into prosciutto cure in a smoking shed behind Pera Bukovicu Café. The Café, which first began operations in 1881, is one of several establishments near Njeguši that make regionally renowned charcuterie and cheeses.

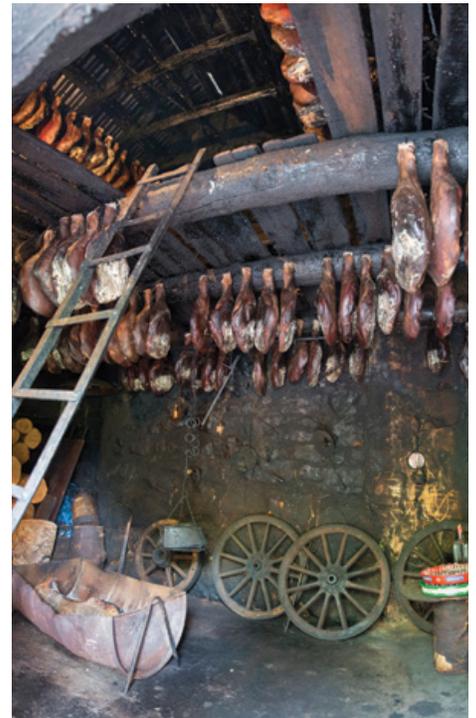
Below: Skadarsko Jezero, known alternately as Lake Scutari and Lake Skadar, stretches out toward Albania on the horizon as seen from Besac Castle in Virpazar.

“We are a team. We are a family. Our Locally Employed Staff are the backbone of our operations and they are engaged on all levels,” said Brown. “The advantage [of being at a small post] is that it gives officers an opportunity to assume ownership of a full portfolio of an activity. When you’re in a larger post, you may just have a piece of it; you don’t really get to see the big picture. Here, they’ve got it from inception through development to the final stage, which is very good in helping them to see how it’s linked to our broader goals and objectives. It’s theirs to own.”

Officers at post agree with the ambassador’s assessment, saying their leaders have cultivated an environment that encourages innovation and have demonstrated a keen understanding of the importance of work/life balance.

“Being alone in a small post is an invaluable experience because you’re much closer to everything, you’re much more accessible to everyone and you really just learn much more,” said Kyle Fielding, former vice consul. “Work/life balance does seem much easier here if you look for it.”

One nearby destination is especially popular with embassy employees. Situated on the Albanian border is the Balkan Peninsula’s largest lake, Scutari, also known as Lake Skadar. Covering 400 square kilometers, Lake Skadar is a cornucopian fishery, not only for locals who ply its waters in search of carp, trout and eel, but also for hundreds of species of birds that migrate annually to its protected shoreline. During migration season, Skadar plays host to one of the largest groups of birds in Europe. Waders, skimmers, gulls and numerous other species flock to the lake for its clean water and abundant aquatic life and for the biodiversity found in the surrounding marshland ecosystem.



The lake’s hinterlands are equally plenteous, with vineyards and farms dotting the surrounding hillsides. Montenegrins living around the lake share cultural similarities with their nearby Albanian neighbors, and road signs in the region are often written in the languages of both countries.

“[Montenegro] has great inter-ethnic relations within the country,” said Jones. “It also has good relations with all of its neighbors, which is unique in the Balkans.”

In general, there seems to be a slower pace of life for those who make their homes around Skadar rather than in one of Montenegro’s city centers. Residents there work the land and waterways for a living, but they don’t toil ceaselessly. Instead, they take time to savor the fruits of their labor, reveling in the natural beauty surrounding them and enjoying the rich bounty



that the lake and countryside have to offer.

“It’s a lovely country. Montenegro is fabulous and the people have a tradition of hospitality,” said Larson. “I love Montenegrins.”

For as undeniably beautiful as Lake Skadar and the Montenegrin coastline are, the country’s most scenic vistas may well be hidden away in the mountainous northwest and within the sweeping canyons of the eastern highlands. During the summer months, mist-shrouded peaks of the Durmitor Mountains overlook some of the most pristine countryside in the region, providing nature enthusiasts with breathtaking overlooks along hundreds of miles of hiking trails. In the winter, skiers can find a ready supply of outdoor activities and soft powder on the slopes near Zabljak and Kolasin.

The eastern highlands boast similarly enticing activities for adventurous souls. Within the Tara River Canyon (Europe’s deepest gorge) churns some of the continent’s most thrilling whitewater, making rafting a major draw for locals and tourists alike. Nearby, Biogradska Gora National Park shelters the largest old-growth forest in Europe and an awe-inspiring glacial lake.

The mountains’ numerous other offerings include cliffside monasteries, delicious artisanal cuisine, quaint historic villages and friendly locals that treat visitors like honored guests. Thus, in a country blessed with myriad natural marvels, the mountainous north stands out for its unspoiled magnificence and cultural treasures.

“Among the staff, we have a sense that it’s kind of a hidden gem here,” said Jones. “We realize our secret is slowly getting out. The country is just stunningly beautiful. It’s completely safe here; we have really almost no crime to speak of, and the people are very friendly and hospitable, generally pro-American. Life here is very good.” ■



At a Glance Montenegro

- Capital:** Podgorica
- Government type:** Republic
- Area:** 13,812 sq km
- Population:** 650,036
- Languages:** Serbian, Montenegrin (official), Bosnian, Albanian, Serbo-Croat, other, unspecified
- Religions:** Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic, none, other
- GDP per capita:** \$11,900
- Export partners:** Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia
- Import partners:** Serbia, Greece, China
- Currency:** Euro
- Internet country code:** .me

Sources: The World Factbook



Red, White and Blues

Ambassador's musical tour promotes understanding

By Jeff Weinschenker, information officer, U.S. Embassy in Quito, Ecuador

It's 8:00 p.m. on a Tuesday night and the Alfredo Mora Reyes Auditorium in Loja, Ecuador is filled to capacity. Loja is Ecuador's musical mecca—a city with music in its veins and home to many of the nation's finest performers. Its audiences have high cultural standards and discriminating tastes.

Facing just such an audience, the band takes the stage to open its "Blues Tour 2014," a two-week, six-city tour across the nation's highlands and coast. The drummer taps his sticks to cue the band, and they launch a fiery rendition of "Statesboro Blues." The audience thrills, and during the next hour and a half the band thunders through decades of hits from this quintessentially African-American musical genre.

Finally, the band brings the audience to its feet, launching into encores. This is not just any band. The keyboardist and singer is U.S. Ambassador to Ecuador Adam Namm.

An ambassador who moonlights as a musician is a recipe for public diplomacy success as Mission Ecuador has capitalized on Ambassador Namm's talents to connect with the Ecuadorian public via an American art form.

From Sept. 23 to Oct. 2, Ambassador Namm, an accomplished jazz/blues pianist and vocalist, headlined a nationwide musical tour with his Ecuadorian band, Samay Blues,

(Samay means "spirit" in Ecuador's Kichwa language.) The band played free concerts in Quito and the cities of Guayaquil, Cuenca, Loja, Ambato and Riobamba on a tour coordinated by U.S. Consulate General Guayaquil. Along the way, the Ambassador and his bandmates shared their passion for American blues and spoke of the genre's rich and evolving history.

Thanks to Mission Ecuador's media and online promotion efforts and word-of-mouth buzz, the band played to packed concert halls and garnered standing ovations in every city. Each performance attracted hundreds of people, and the Ambassador's message of cultural connectivity reached tens of thousands more through media engagements at every stop.

A musician since age five, Ambassador Namm has played music throughout his 27-year Foreign Service career, from Islamabad to Santo Domingo. "Music is a universal language that has allowed me to both share U.S. culture and, more importantly, learn and understand other cultures," he said.

Ambassador Namm lights up when talking about performing traditional bombas with Ecuadorian music legend Paco Godoy, and says he hopes to learn to play the leaf of the Capulí tree—a flora-turned-instrument

common to Ecuadorian indigenous and Afro-descendent cultures.

Blues Tour 2014 went beyond the novelty of an American ambassador performing music to promote goodwill. Ecuador has had tense relations with the United States in recent years, from the 2011 expulsion of then-Ambassador Heather Hodges to the government's more recent forced closure of USAID and the U.S. Military Group. Appearing in blue jeans and performing blues and rock standards, Ambassador Namm shattered the bureaucratic stereotype of American officialdom and made the U.S. government seem more approachable, showing that diplomacy is as much about creating cultural connections as talking hard policy.

"To me, music is one of the most powerful tools of diplomacy," says Ambassador Namm. "It builds mutual understanding that strengthens the bonds between people across the globe."

That message resonated locally and internationally, prompting CNN en Español to run a prime-time feature on Ambassador Namm as a musical diplomat. In a world rife with crises and controversies, Blues Tour 2014 was a powerful reminder of the power of music and culture to advance U.S. diplomacy. ■

Ambassador Namm performs with Samay Blues at the historic Teatro Sucre in Quito, Ecuador.

Photo by Mauricio Tufiño



Sniffing Out Trouble

With U.S. help, anti-drug dogs get training

By Javier Lopez Videla, law enforcement and counternarcotic advisor,
U.S. Embassy in La Paz

While technological advances have improved law enforcement and made it safer, for the last three decades at least one key player in South American law enforcement has remained unchanged: the drug-sniffing dog.

Back in 1978, the Bolivian Police established that nation's first academy to train dogs to detect cocaine and marijuana being illegally exported. The school originally had only two dog handlers and their dogs, Chicho and Zulu, worked at the El Alto International Airport.

Shortly thereafter, the counternarcotics unit within the Bolivian Police, in coordination with the U.S. Embassy in La Paz, sent two police officers to the United States for a 14-week counternarcotic dog-handler course. They returned with two trained dogs, Star and Cutie, who were so successful at El Alto and Santa Cruz airports that the Bolivian Police sent four more officers to the United States in the next two years (all returned with their own trained dogs).

Today, the K-9 academy trains Bolivian police to handle and train drug-detecting dogs, and breeds and raises its own dogs, including Belgian Malinois, Labradors, German Shepherds, Golden Retrievers and Cocker Spaniels. Graduates work in airports, bus terminals, post offices, traffic control points and prisons, and serve as support for special interdiction operations.

The school's 89-day course provides student-handlers with opportunities to experience the physical and psychological pressure needed to prepare for the high-stress nature of counternarcotics work. Police learn about human rights and professional ethics, veterinary techniques

and the handling and training of drug-detecting dogs. They also gain hands-on experience in search techniques and work with their canine partners to conduct practice drills at control points, airports and bus terminals.

The course is demanding for both man and dog, and is notable for its equal opportunity principles: During the 2012 and 2013 academic years, all courses included male and female trainees. Participation has grown steadily since 2000 when the U.S. Mission in Bolivia designed and funded the construction of the current training academy in El Paso, a 30-minute drive from the city of Cochabamba. The mission funded all operations of the K-9 program, including the academy, vehicles, equipment and medical supplies.

After four guides participated in a U.S. course for handlers of explosives-detecting dogs in 2003, the school began offering this specialized training. In 2004, the mission added new barracks to house female officers in training, more instructors, a larger classroom and new headquarters. Now, graduates of the academy can manage and run K-9 posts in all of Bolivia's commercial airports, bus terminals, border crossings and road checkpoints. In 2006, the mission went further, funding construction of a breeding section that included kennels for puppies and transition kennels for young dogs.

In 2012, Bolivian customs officers contacted the U.S. mission for advice on setting up a canine program of their own, one to address the relatively new problem of travelers taking large, undeclared amounts of cash to other countries in the region. The mission suggested establishing a relationship with the counternarcotics police, and a few months later both Bolivian government institutions signed an agreement under which trained dogs from the police will detect



currency for the customs agency. In a 12-month period, four trained dogs from the El Paso K-9 police program and their handlers helped Bolivian customs detect \$4.2 million in undeclared currency, plus 1.1 million euros and smaller amounts of currency from Brazil, Chile and Argentina.

The K-9 training academy is well regarded regionally and has trained police dog handlers from most countries in South and Central America over the years. Most received their training with funding from Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) offices in those countries, reflecting the U.S. commitment to help tackle this multinational problem. The Bolivian Police, working in tandem with the U.S. embassy, requires a dog be purchased whenever a handler from a neighboring country is trained in El Paso. Several important drug seizures in Ecuador can be attributed to the academy program.

In December 2013, the INL office at Embassy La Paz closed its operations, but the K-9 training program in Bolivia remains in operation, thanks to Bolivian government counternarcotics funding. The facility still trains participants from around the region, with the same great results. The school has thus become a source of pride for all the region's police officers who work alongside man's best friend. ■



A police canine unit poses at Viru Viru Airport in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Photo by Juan Cossio

Wanted: Entrepreneurs

S/GP leads delegation to Tanzania

By Abael Solomon, partnerships coordinator, Secretary's Office of Global Partnerships

From Oct. 27 to Nov. 1, the Secretary's Office of Global Partnerships (S/GP) led a unique group of 16 American investors, entrepreneurs and philanthropists to Tanzania as a Partnership Opportunity Delegation (POD). To organize the week-long trip, S/GP partnered with the Aspen Institute's Global Alliance Program, the International Trade Center (ITC) and the Dar Teknohama Business Incubator (DTBi). The delegation explored investment and trade opportunities with Tanzanian firms and startups, created collaboration opportunities among the participants, local companies and startups and, with an eye to the future, sought to bolster Tanzania's financial sector and strengthen regional economic ecosystems.

Since the launch of the POD initiative

last year, similar delegations have traveled to Colombia, Ireland and Burma to focus on entrepreneurship and investment, diaspora engagement, social entrepreneurship and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) topics. Each POD's mission is determined by the preferences of the local community visited, which creates local ownership and accountability.

PODs bring together individuals and organizations that may not have had the opportunity to meet, discuss ideas and collaborate. According to Mickey Bergman, executive director of Aspen Institute's Global Alliances Program, the aim is "to unleash the potential of businesses and investments in new markets and communities around the world. By lowering the costs of engagement and increasing access for small and social

enterprises and investors, we enhance economic empowerment and social change."

S/GP has worked with the Aspen Institute on several PODs and the partnerships they engender, Bergman said, take advantage of "the Aspen Institute's capacity as a leading nonprofit convener as well as the Department's credibility and access."

PODs are prime examples of public-private networking, drawing on each side's unique strengths so that they may achieve more together than they could separately. Joe Wozniak, an ITC program manager who took part in the Tanzania POD, agreed, noting that his organization, a joint UN-World Trade Organization agency, focuses on connecting small and medium-size enterprises with markets. "To make this work, partnerships are fundamental," he observed.



Above: A group photo brings together POD delegates, afriCoderDojo participants and teachers.

Photo by Kinsey Casey

Background: A lone tree is dwarfed by the surrounding hills near Mt. Meru in Tanzania.

Photo by Rogiro



The Tanzania POD focused on entrepreneurship and opportunities for startup enterprises for several reasons. According to Deputy Assistant Secretary for Outreach in the Bureau of Public Affairs, David Duckenfield, who helped lead the POD, “The African ecosystem is particularly ready for high-tech startups, and real startups are already being created in Africa on an impressive scale.”

The POD effort fits with other Department initiatives for Africa, such as the 2014 U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). “By supporting, inspiring and challenging African innovators and entrepreneurs through initiatives like these, we are cultivating an innovation ecosystem that enables growth and facilitates new investments,” Duckenfield said.

During the Tanzania POD, the delegation traveled to Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo and Zanzibar, where they discussed the investment climate with local leaders, helped mentor growing and high-impact Tanzanian enterprises, considered potential projects and partnerships with private sector leaders and visited with local communities, manufacturers and small business owners.

A highlight of the POD was the “Boomcamp” in Dar es Salaam, an effort undertaken by members of S/GP’s network of

volunteer entrepreneurship mentors worldwide. Boomcamps provide targeted mentoring and training for small businesses and startups, supply them with a range of tools and strategies to build confidence, and help expand their operations and enter new markets.

The delegation was also hosted by afriCoderDojo, a flagship initiative under S/GP’s LIONS@FRICA partnership that aims to strengthen the continent’s entrepreneurial environment. An offshoot of the global CoderDojo movement, afriCoderDojo introduces youth to computer skills by teaching them to code and develop websites and games. George Mulamula, CEO of DTBi and founder of afriCoderDojo Tanzania, said his group was involved in the project because its mission is “to catalyze and enable the tech entrepreneurship sector.”

S/GP’s afriCoderDojo project is expanding rapidly. With partners, DTBi has created a permanent afriCoderDojo presence at the Kijitonyama Primary School. Community volunteers will run the program, which will be open after school hours to all students in the city. “The afriCoderDojo program will go a long way towards ensuring young people, especially females, have the necessary computer skills, education and drive to compete in tomorrow’s integrated marketplace,” Mulamula added.

S/GP is proud of the success of this latest POD. The delegations are not one-time efforts, but always spawn follow-up conversations and events. S/GP recently learned that one startup enterprise at the Tanzania Boomcamp received \$30,000 in investment funding because the POD brought the right people together. The Department’s Special Representative for Global Partnerships, Andrew O’Brien, said his office excitedly awaits all the accomplishments that will come from the connections made and ideas discussed on the trip.

New PODs are already being scheduled for next year. S/GP’s partners are interested in potential trips to Ethiopia, Ghana, Cyprus and Armenia, and the office continues to seek new topics and countries of interest, all with the aim of promoting U.S. business connections and local economic development.

As Secretary of State John Kerry put it at the 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Kuala Lumpur: “We’re going to create an environment where people can easily form personal relationships and network with people from every background and every expertise.”

Partnership Opportunity Delegations will continue to do just that.

To learn more about PODs and S/GP, visit the office’s website or contact partnerships@state.gov. ■

Diplomacy Center Opens Exhibit



USDC director Kathy Johnson admires one of the photographs in the Faces of Diplomacy exhibit.
Photo by Gabriel Spiro

ACS Connects with Americans in Israel



Americans and embassy staff mingle in Beersheba.
Photo by Mark Gul

Department Honors Long-Serving OMS



Deputy Secretary William J. Burns poses with Mary L. Dubose during a farewell ceremony in the Treaty Room.
Photo by Mark Stewart

In November, the U.S. Diplomacy Center unveiled its first major preview exhibit, *Faces of Diplomacy*, as part of a Washington, D.C.-wide photography festival. Installed in Main State's Exhibit Hall, the exhibit featured life-size portraits and videos of 10 Foreign Service and Civil Service officers whose stories illustrate the range of functions required by American diplomacy.

A collaborative effort between the Department and students from the George Washington University's Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, the exhibit was made possible by a grant from Wallis Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation to the Diplomacy Center Foundation.

The exhibit closed in late November but will move to the U.S. Diplomacy Center, its permanent home, when the center opens in December 2015. The center, a state-of-the-art museum and education center, is now under construction at the 21st Street entrance of the Department's headquarters. ■

On Nov. 3, a team from the American Citizen Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv conducted a consular "roadshow" for the U.S. citizen community in Beersheba, the "Capital of the Negev." The city of approximately 200,000 inhabitants is home to thousands of U.S. citizens, including many students and retirees.

Braving heavy rain, dozens of U.S. citizens came to the community center, which houses an English-language library run by the Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel. The embassy team provided advice on absentee voting, processed passport renewal applications, took in applications to report the birth abroad of U.S. citizens and even shared stories about America. Those seeking assistance expressed their appreciation for the customer service and outreach initiative.

The "roadshow" was the latest in a cycle of ACS outreach events to communities in Israel, which has a high concentration of U.S. citizens. ■

In October, more than 60 family members, friends and colleagues honored Mary L. Dubose in a farewell ceremony in the Department's Treaty Room. Deputy Secretary William J. Burns chronicled Dubose's 41 years of federal service, 35 spent at the Department of State serving four deputy secretaries. She also served in Jordan, Sierra Leone, Haiti and Iraq, and at the National Security Council.

Burns said that to recognize Dubose's determination and commitment to excellence, the Department has renamed the Office Management Specialist of the Year and Civil Service Secretary of the Year awards in her honor. The awards, new for 2014, recognize the performance of office management specialists and Civil Service secretaries. She also received the Department's Civil Service Award in 1992. ■

Deputy Secretary Opens Second Diplotots



Cutting the ribbon to open the center are, from left, GSA Regional Administrator Julia Hudson, Diplotots Alumna Madison Cocchiaro, Diplotots enrollee Zoe DeGarmo, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom and Assistant Secretary of State for Administration Joyce Barr.

Photo by Hayley Green

At the ribbon-cutting for the second Diplotots child care center, Diplotots Too, Deputy Secretary Heather Higginbottom said access to convenient, high-quality child care is critical to meeting Department employees' needs. The center, which opened in June, has a capacity of 108 children ages six weeks through five years.

Assistant Secretary of State for Administration Joyce Barr and General Services Administration Regional Administrator Julia Hudson also attended, as did Diplotots alumna Madison Cocchiaro, daughter of Board President Annie Cocchiaro, and current Diplotots Too enrollee Zoe DeGarmo, daughter of Board Vice President Janice DeGarmo.

The ceremony capped October's work/life and wellness month, and included guided tours of the facility and a reception for guests. ■

Diplomacy Day Held in San Diego



Gathered at the event are, from left, John Ibarra, Fraud Prevention Manager; Whitney Westman, Supervisory Passport Specialist; Mike Decker, Supervisory Passport Specialist. Cyrille Castel Erickson and Andrew S.E. Erickson, both from the U.S. Consulate General in Tijuana; Michelle Kneeland, Senior Passport Specialist; GERALYNN Cortes, Assistant Director of Passport Services, San Diego; JOHANNY Fernandez, Senior Passport Specialist; and Jill Secard, Executive Director of the San Diego Diplomacy Council. *Photo by San Diego Passport Agency*

OCR Director Visits WPC



The center's director, Mark Strege, presents a certificate of appreciation to OCR Director Robinson.

Photo by Sara Nale.

The Western Passport Center (WPC) in Tucson observed Native American Heritage Month in November with a visit from John Robinson, director of the Office of Civil Rights and a speech by Raymond Buelna from the Pascua Yaqui Native American tribe. Buelna spoke on the past, present and future of the Pascua Yaquis, which included the tribe's presence in Arizona. A Native American display at the WPC featured the figure of a Native American woman that was hand carved by a member of the Eastern Banner Cherokees.

During his two-day visit, Robinson provided training to management and staff on decision making and working with co workers of differing generations. ■

The U.S. Passport Agency in San Diego teamed up with the U.S. Consulate General in Tijuana for San Diego's Diplomacy Day in October. Diplomacy Day is sponsored by the San Diego Diplomacy Council, the State Department's implementing partner for International Visitor Leadership Program grantees in Southern California. ■

Mission Ethiopia Celebrates Meskel



Ambassador Patricia Haslach welcomes to the event several of the U.S. Embassy Addis Ababa's contacts. Photo by Zelalem E. Befekadu

The Meskel celebration in September, one of the most widely celebrated Orthodox Christian holidays in Ethiopia, marks the end of the three-month-long rainy season. The central festivities take place in Meskel Square in Addis Ababa with the burning of an enormous bonfire as ornately robed priests and children dressed in traditional Ethiopian plain white cotton clothes dance around the fires and sing.

The management team at the U.S. Mission in Addis Ababa has held its own Meskel for key contacts for the past two years, aiming to thank governmental and non governmental personnel who were instrumental in ensuring smooth mission operations. This year, U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Patricia Haslach told celebrants the event "strengthens post's relationships with our contacts, and boosts morale on all sides."

At the event, Ministry of Foreign Affairs leaders thanked the post for bringing together an array of individuals to exchange stories of their experiences. ■

OIG Boosts Website's Appeal

The Office of Inspector General (OIG), working with the website management team in the Bureau of Public Affairs, recently launched a redesigned website featuring a user-friendly and visually appealing format. The site can be accessed via mobile phones, tablets and desktop computers and features an introductory video from Inspector General Steve A. Linick.

The "Find a Report" button atop any page leads to reports by categories, themes/topics, locations, bureaus and offices, and a search box can be used to find reports by name and/or numbers. There is also information on the OIG Hotline, including guidelines for reporting fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement, and examples of allegations that can be submitted. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) information includes instructions on how to submit FOIA requests.

The site (<http://oig.state.gov>) allows users to sign up to receive email alerts for reports, job opportunities or any other information OIG publishes; an "Alerts" link atop every page can be used to gain notification emails immediately after new information is posted on the site. ■

Retirements

Foreign Service

Anderson, Damon A.
Anstead, Philip
Barton, Robert Douglas
Boyd, Paul Lawrence
Dent, Malcolm
Dooley, Matthew J.
Gonzalez, Linda Thompson-Topping
Hogan, Daniel Barrett
Ludeke, Marc A.

McElhattan Jr., Dale E.
Myers, Honora L.
Noble, Aline Johnson
Paradise, David T.
Paradise, Stephanie B.
Reilly, Craig
Yu, Alan Kuan-Lun

Civil Service

Amoroso, William S.
Arthur, Michael J.
Austin, James A.
Barone, Camille Adele

Barton, Frederick D.
Bethany, Katherine Fisher
Brown, Susan Haynes
Cato, Kenneth L.
Crane, Cynthia E.
Daher, Nazih Y.
Daye, Charles B.
Dickens, Anna
Dubose, Mary Louise
Esporas, Evangeline C.
Farrell, Timothy P.
Friedman, Barry J.
Hawkins, Mary V.

John, Elaine C.
Kidd, Patricia E.
Lichtig, Karen
Light, Charles
Lucas, Patricia C.
Mitchell III, Samuel C.
O'Donoghue, Daniel W.
Quinn, David P.
Schwartz, Jonathan B.
Singh, Tejinder K.
Sloan, Linda A.
Sweeney, Annette M.

Ethics Answers

Q: My ambassador asked me to help her meet her ethics obligations by screening her schedule to avoid conflicts of interest. How do I do this?

A: Start by reviewing her most recent public financial disclosure reports (OGE 278 and 278-Ts). If she (or her spouse or minor child) owns more than \$15,000 worth of stock in a company traded on a U.S. exchange (or any amount of stock in a company not traded on a U.S. exchange), then keep her away from matters involving that company. For example, she shouldn't meet with officials of that company or engage in commercial advocacy for it. Keep an eye out for the underlying assets of funds that aren't exempted from the conflicts of interest rules, such as sector-based mutual funds in which her interest is more than \$50,000 or hedge funds. She's considered to have a financial interest in those underlying assets. In addition, if she owns more than \$50,000 in any particular sector, she shouldn't handle matters that would affect that sector. Finally, review the ethics undertaking letter she signed before her appointment. It will detail her recusal obligations regarding outside entities with which she or her spouse are or were affiliated, indicate which stocks she had to sell and tell you if she signed an ethics pledge agreeing to additional restrictions.

Ethics Answers presents hypothetical ethical scenarios Department employees might face. For help with real ethics questions, email ethicsattorneymailbox@state.gov.

Safety Considerations for Pet Owners

By Certified Industrial Hygienist Julie Plavka, Office of Safety, Health and Environmental Management (SHEM), Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

Traveling with pets is part of the fun of vacations, but it can be a major challenge for relocating a family overseas. According to the Travel Industry Association of America, about 30 million people travel with pets each year. For international travelers, there are a number of matters to consider, such as country restrictions, required documentation, mode of transport, possible quarantine times and out-of-pocket expenses—not to mention the cultural shock that animals, like humans, face in any new setting.

Pets frequently respond to the stress and tension around them, and an overseas move can be an easy adjustment or sometimes cause intense anxiety. Even before making the decision to transport an animal, you must consider how the animal will react to different surroundings and environments. An animal's irritability can manifest itself as growling, snarling and biting, a good indicator of post-trip disorientation. Your pet may show stress by gnawing on furniture, electrical wires or other household fixtures, which will ultimately become your responsibility.

To help nurture an obedient, stress-free pet, training and developing a daily routine for the pet are most important. Animals that lack routine or feel insecure are exponentially more likely to feel anxious or depressed and act accordingly. To ease the transition at post, quickly establish regular feeding times and walking schedules. A pet with proper obedience training will better adapt to a new environment. And, packing a familiar pet object in your luggage, such as a blanket or toy, is also a good idea.

From a safety perspective, remember that having a pet overseas is a privilege, not a right. As in the United States, owners are responsible for their pets and are held responsible for any injuries the animal might cause to anyone who enters your home.

Since 2004, there have been 64 reported cases of animal bites at overseas locations on

U.S. government property (see table). Of the reported animal attack cases, 79 percent were dog bites, of which more than two-thirds occurred in residential settings. The majority of people attacked were Locally Employed Staff who entered homes to perform maintenance.

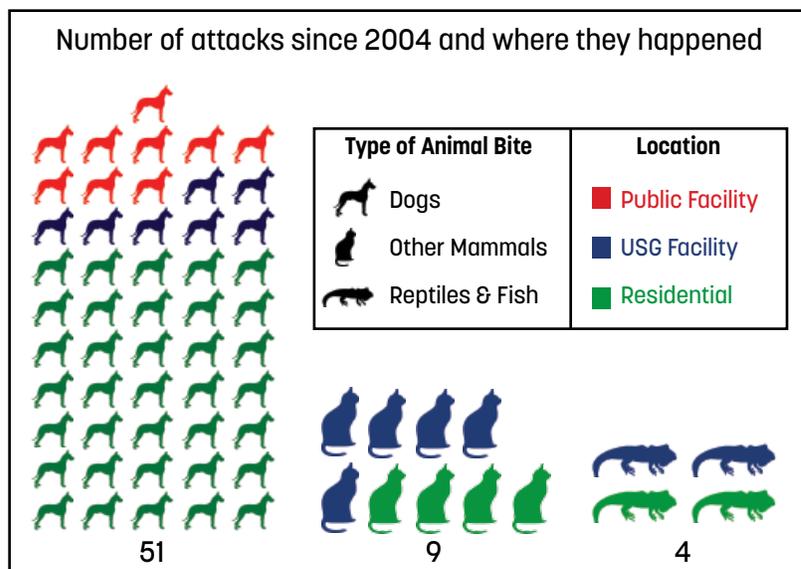
All pet owners should have a concrete plan to prevent pet-related injuries, such as a temporary crate or a dedicated safe room in which to secure the pet when an outsider visits the residence. Comprehensive communication is also key to preventing injury. For example, consider scheduling maintenance work when a household member is present, and always alert visitors to the presence of an animal.

Obedience and a daily routine are vital to keeping your pet healthy and safe; there are also some environmental concerns to think about while overseas. Numerous species of small beetles, moths, and other unwanted pests can infest food and non food items in the home. Pet food and bird seed can exacerbate pest problems when not handled according to the same health standards as human food. Pet food should never be left out and should be stored in a solid container with a tight-fitting lid.

A new environment can be a breeding ground for fleas and/or ticks. Pet owners are responsible for flea and tick control and should be armed with the necessary products, including special shampoos, collars and monthly medications, such as Program™, or monthly spot applications such as Advantage™. These are prescription veterinary products and may not be available in some countries, so plan ahead to ensure that you have adequate supplies.

In 2009, the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center handled more than 140,000 cases of pets exposed to toxic substances, many of them household products. Insecticides and household plants top the list. New hazards may exist in your pet's new country. Take the time to ensure that the pet is not exposed to something harmful and, if uncertain, ask a veterinary professional.

In short, when making the decision to relocate your pet, always consider his or her safety and the safety of those with whom he or she may come in contact. Preparation is the key to safety. Proper care, attention, affection and common sense can minimize risks and unwanted repercussions. ■



Appointments

Maureen Elizabeth Cormack
U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia
and Herzegovina



Earl Robert Miller
U.S. Ambassador
to Botswana



Luis G. Moreno
U.S. Ambassador
to Jamaica



Leslie Ann Bassett
U.S. Ambassador
to Paraguay



Noah Bryson Mamet
U.S. Ambassador
to Argentina



Leslie Ann Bassett (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay. Previously, she was DCM in Seoul, Korea. She has also served as DCM at U.S. embassies in the Philippines, Mexico and Botswana. Other overseas postings include Bogotá, Tel Aviv, San Salvador, Durban and Managua. In Washington, she worked as special assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and in the bureaus of Legislative Affairs, African Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Colleen Bell of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to Hungary. Previously, she was a producer for Bell-Phillip Television Productions, Inc. Appointed by President Obama in March 2010 to the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, she has served as chair since April 2011. Additionally, she was vice chair of the Children's Institute, Inc. and also served on the boards of directors of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Los Angeles Music Center.

Maureen Elizabeth Cormack (SFS) of Virginia is the new U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most recently, she was chief of staff for the special presidential envoy for the Global Coalition to Combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Previously, she served as the executive assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. She also was the director of the Office of Western European Affairs. Overseas, she held public diplomacy positions in Seoul, Paris, Gwangju and Warsaw.

Barbara A. Leaf (SFS) of Virginia is the new U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. She previously was the deputy assistant secretary for the Arabian Peninsula in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. Before that, she served as deputy assistant secretary for Iraq and as director of the U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team in Al Basrah. Prior to Iraq, she was political affairs minister-counselor in Rome. Other postings include Sarajevo, Cairo, Paris, Jerusalem and Port-au-Prince. She also served as director of the Office of Iranian Affairs.

Donald Lu (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Albania. He was DCM in New Delhi and, previously, chargé d'affaires and DCM in Baku. He was also DCM in Bishkek. Before that, he served as the deputy director for the Office of Central Asian and South Caucasus Affairs. Other overseas assignments include New Delhi, Tbilisi and Peshawar. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone.



Collen Bell

U.S. Ambassador to Hungary



Donald Lu

U.S. Ambassador to Albania



Allan P. Mustard

U.S. Ambassador to Turkmenistan



Ted Osius

U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam



Barbara A. Leaf

U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates



Noah Bryson Mamet of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Argentine Republic. He was founder and president of Noah Mamet and Associates. Prior to that, he served as senior advisor and national finance director for House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt. He has served as a member of the Pacific Council on International Policy and the American Council of Young Political Leaders. He also sat on the boards of the Los Angeles-based Green Dot Public Schools and Nature-Bridge. In 2007, he served on an international delegation for the National Democratic Institute to monitor elections in Sierra Leone.

Earl Robert Miller (SFS) of Michigan is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana. He previously was consul general in Johannesburg. He has served with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security in Washington, San Francisco, Miami and Boston, and was assistant regional security officer (ARSO) in San Salvador. He was senior RSO in Botswana, Malaysia, Indonesia, Iraq, and India. He is a former U.S. Marine Corps officer.

Luis G. Moreno (SFS) of Texas is the new U.S. Ambassador to Jamaica. Previously, he was DCM in Madrid. He also served as political-military affairs minister-counselor, as well as force strategic engagement cell director, in Baghdad. Before that, he was DCM in Tel Aviv, consul general in Monterrey and DCM in Port-au-Prince. His other postings include Bogotá and Lima as director and deputy director of the narcotics affairs sections, respectively.

Allan P. Mustard (SFS) of Washington is the new U.S. Ambassador to Turkmenistan. His prior positions were as agricultural minister-counselor at U.S. embassies in India, Mexico and Russia. He has also served as assistant deputy administrator for foreign agricultural affairs at the Foreign Agricultural Service. His earlier overseas postings include Vienna, Istanbul and Moscow. He was also deputy coordinator for the Eastern Europe and Soviet Secretariat of the FAS.

Ted Osius (SFS) of Maryland is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. He previously was an associate professor at the National War College and a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Before that, he served as DCM in Jakarta. He has been deputy director of the Office of Korean Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and senior advisor on international affairs in the Office of the Vice President. His overseas postings include New Delhi, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Holy See (Vatican City) and Manila.

Appointments



Michele J. Sison
U.S. Representative to
the United Nations



William V. Roebuck
U.S. Ambassador
to Bahrain



Robert T. Yamate
U.S. Ambassador
to Madagascar and
Comoros



James Peter Zumwalt
U.S. Ambassador to
Senegal and Guinea-Bissau



Karen Clark Stanton
U.S. Ambassador to
Timor-Leste



William V. Roebuck (SFS) of North Carolina is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain. He was deputy assistant secretary for Egypt and Maghreb Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. Before that, he served as chargé d'affaires in Tripoli. He has been director of the Office of Maghreb Affairs and deputy director in the Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs. His overseas postings include Baghdad, Damascus and Tel Aviv. Earlier in his career, he taught English in Saudi Arabia and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Côte D'Ivoire.

Michele J. Sison (SFS) of Maryland is the new U.S. Deputy Representative to the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador, and deputy representative in the U.N. Security Council. She has served as U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and, previously, to Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates. Other assignments include assistant chief of mission for law enforcement and rule of law assistance in Baghdad, principal deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of South Asian Affairs, DCM in Islamabad and consuls general in Chennai and Douala. Her overseas postings also include Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo and Haiti.

Karen Clark Stanton (SFS) of Michigan is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. She most recently served as executive director of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP). Previously, she was management counselor in Singapore and post management officer in EAP. Other overseas assignments include human resources officer in Beijing and consular officer in Islamabad, Beijing and Hong Kong.

Robert T. Yamate (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar and the Union of the Comoros. He previously served as an assessor at the Board of Examiners in the Bureau of Human Resources. Prior to this, he was DCM in Dakar and management counselor at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Geneva. His other overseas postings include Abidjan, Harare, Taipei, Tokyo, Montréal, Budapest and Apia, Western Samoa.

James Peter Zumwalt (SFS) of California is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. He most recently was deputy assistant secretary for Japan and Korea in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Before that, he served as DCM in Tokyo and director of the Office of Japanese Affairs. He also worked as special assistant in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. His other overseas assignments include Osaka-Kobe, Beijing, Tokyo (twice) and Kinshasa.

Obituaries



Marianne Collins Ahlgren, 77, wife of retired FSO Charles S. Ahlgren, died Oct. 8 in Providence, R.I., from amyloidosis. She graduated from St. Xavier College in Chicago, earned a master's degree in audiology from the University of Illinois and a Ph.D. in applied linguistics from Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand. She taught at Gallaudet University and worked with deaf communities abroad, accompanying her husband to postings in Singapore, South Africa, New Zealand, Thailand and Venezuela. In retirement, she worked at the Rhode Island School for the Deaf and volunteered for various charities.



Stephanie Mathews Bell, 90, widow of Ambassador James Dunbar Bell, died Aug. 8 in Davis, Calif.. Before her marriage, she was a Department employee from 1950–1960. She served in Munich with the High Commission for Occupied Germany and then in the U.S. Consulate General there. She accompanied her husband to the U.N. and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where he was ambassador from 1964 to 1969, and, in 1970, to the University of California at Santa Cruz, where he was diplomat in residence.



Edward Anthon Berg, 85, a retired FSO, died Sept. 12 in Venice, Fla. He served in the Air Force after World War II and trained to speak and interpret Russian. Before joining the Department, he worked for the Refugee Relief Program in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. His 32-year career included postings as a consular officer to Paris, Lagos, Tel Aviv, Hamburg, Zurich, Antwerp, Durban, Gothenburg and Monterrey. His lifelong interests included fishing, gardening and playing chess.



Jewel Yvonne Burrell, 77, a retired Civil Service employee, died Oct. 16 in Charlotte, N.C. After 29 years as a federal employee, she retired from USIA as a personnel assistant in 1988. She helped coordinate the assignments and travel of hundreds of employees going overseas. In retirement, she helped care for her grandchildren. Her passion was helping others in any way she could.



Michael J. Habib, 72, a retired FSO, died Oct. 22 in Alexandria, Va. He joined the Department in 1965 and was posted to Austria, Botswana, Germany, The Netherlands, Austria and the United Kingdom, retiring in 2001. He continued to pursue his passions, lecturing about the Foreign Service at the National Defense University and devoting himself to family and community service. He was an active member of the Mt. Vernon Civic Association and was instrumental in the the National Park Service's efforts to eradicate invasive species along the George Washington Memorial Parkway.



Helen V. Jakubowski, 78, wife of retired FSO Stanley Jakubowski, died Oct. 26 of pulmonary disease at her home in Arlington, Va. She accompanied her husband to overseas posts in Taipei, Beijing, Geneva, Brussels, Bamako, Rangoon and Singapore, in addition to assignments in Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in New York. She was an active member of each embassy or mission community, was deeply interested in special education and loved to travel and line and tap dance.



Todd A. Levett, 31, chief of staff in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), died Oct. 30 in Baltimore after a courageous battle with cancer. He committed his life to public service and cared deeply about international security affairs. A native of Cleveland, he joined the Department in 2010 as a presidential appointee after working for several years on Capitol Hill for the House Homeland Security Committee. During his time in INL, he provided unparalleled guidance on congressional and policy matters and is remembered as an energetic, creative and thoughtful colleague and friend.



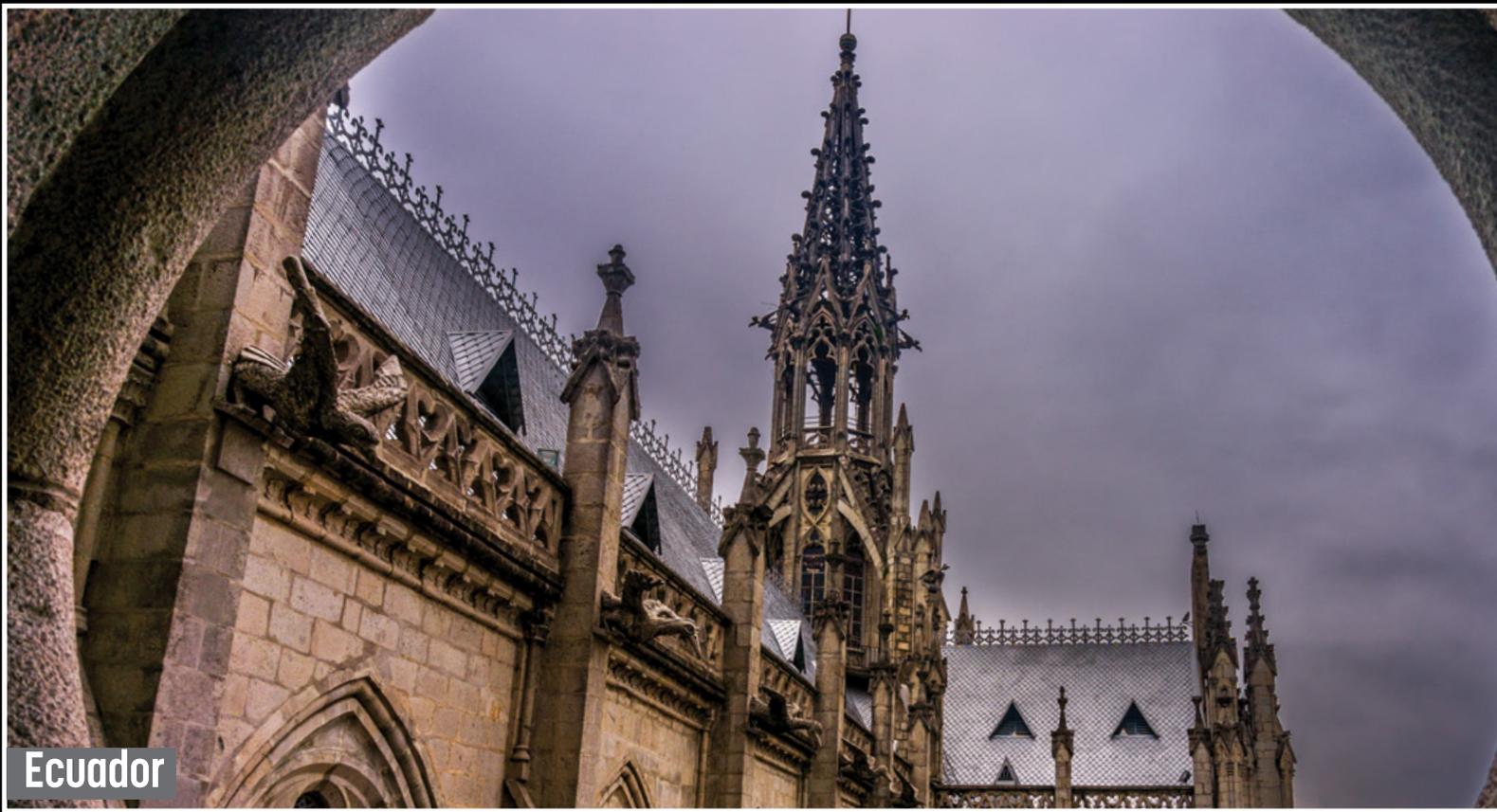
Kelly Paré, 53, a Foreign Service human resources specialist in the bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs, died Sept. 15. An inspiration to all who knew her, she joined the Department in 1996 after working as a contractor and eligible family member in Moscow, Prague, Nicosia, Niamey and Almaty. As an officer, she served in Manama, Nairobi, Cairo and Kabul. Born and raised in Colorado, she remained an avid outdoor enthusiast. Prior to her Foreign Service career, she worked as a governess and as a flight attendant for Pan American Airlines.



Barbara Cecelia Reed, 83, a retired State Department employee who served during the course of five decades, died peacefully in her home in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 18. She joined the Foreign Service in 1955 and was posted to Buenos Aires, Dhahran, Saigon and Rome. After marriage, she separated from the Foreign Service and raised four children. Returning as a Civil Service employee in 1985, she worked for the International Visitor Leadership Program until retirement in 2004. She continued to travel, read mystery novels, follow international politics and spend time with her family.



Robert Schmeding, 83, a retired USAID officer, died Nov. 14 in Daleville, Va. His expertise in international human resource development and agricultural education programs led to postings in Nigeria, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Cameroon and Yemen. Before his career abroad, he was pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church in London, Ohio. Many of his happiest moments were spent surrounded by family in the timber frame home he helped design at Smith Mountain Lake, Va.



Ecuador



Bolivia

End State

Ecuador Pg. 39

A circular window frames the Basilica del Voto Nacional, a Roman Catholic church located in the heart of Quito.



Photo by Boris G

Russia Pg. 9

The rising sun casts golden light on buildings lining the Moscow River as it flows through Russia's capital city.



Photo by Alexey Kijatov

Bolivia Pg. 29

Thousands of homes cling to one of the many hills that encircle La Paz, Bolivia's administrative capital.



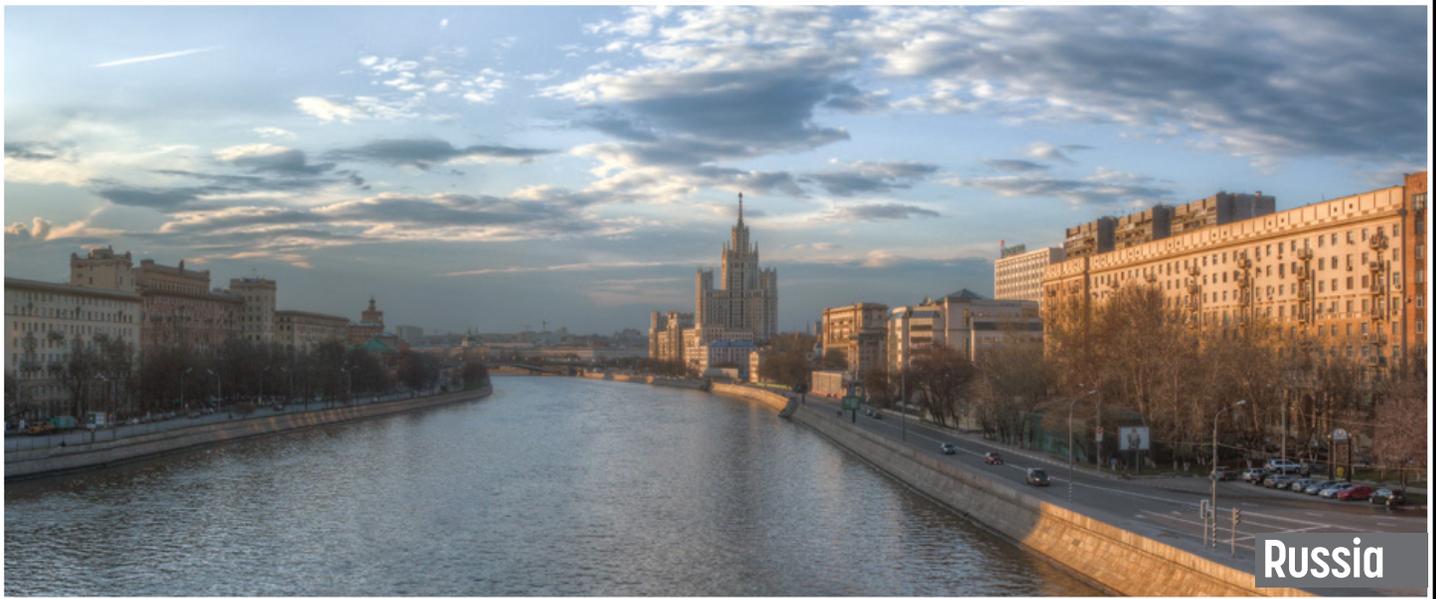
Photo by Alex E. Proimos

Vietnam Pg. 2

A woman take a break from carrying a heavy load by resting on a rock that overlooks terraced rice fields.



Photo by Paul Arion





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