

THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2014

A screenshot of a Twitter interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Home, Connect, Discover, Me, and a search bar. To the right of the search bar are icons for messaging, settings, and a compose button. The main content area shows a tweet from the official Twitter account of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. The tweet features a profile picture of the Statue of Liberty, the text "Посольство США в РФ" (U.S. Embassy) and "@USEmbRu", and links to the embassy's Twitter, Facebook, and website. Below this, there is a photograph of several people working at desks with multiple computer monitors in an office setting. A caption in Russian reads "на нашей планете. наследия".

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THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL

January-February 2014
Volume 91, No. 1-2

FOCUS SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE FOREIGN SERVICE

Using 'Social Diplomacy' to Reach Russians / 21

Utilizing new media in public diplomacy is vital in countries like Russia, where government control of most broadcast media often distorts the message from Washington.

BY ROBERT KOENIG

Success and Growing Pains: Official Use of Social Media at State / 27

Digital technology, incorporating the most recent developments in social media and mobile applications, is having a profound effect on diplomacy.

BY JESSE SMITH

AFSA's Social Media Roundup / 34

Changing times call for changing attitudes toward member engagement. Here is a report on AFSA's first four years of experience in the growing world of social media.

BY ÁSGEIR SIGFÚSSON

This Is How We Tweet / 39

Twitter meets the State Department bureaucracy.

BY BEN EAST

FEATURE

Side by Side by the Smithsonian / 42

The potential for cultural and scientific diplomacy via the State-Smithsonian partnership is, as the Smithsonian brand states, "Seriously Amazing."

BY BEATRICE CAMP

FS HERITAGE

J. Rives Childs in Wartime Tangier / 46

Despite the wealth of material generated by and about U.S. diplomat J. Rives Childs, he remains an enigma a quarter-century after his death.

BY GERALD LOFTUS

On the cover: U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul and Deputy Press Attaché Stacy Mactaggert discuss questions from Russian Twitter followers with other members of the social media team during a Twitter Q&A session at Embassy Moscow in late November. Photo by Stefan Mizra. Added to the photo is a screen shot of the embassy's Twitter page, @USEmbRu. Composition by Jeff Lau.

AFSA NEWS

- 2013 AFSA Tax Guide / 53
- VP Voice State: Occupy AFSA—Get Involved / 54
- VP Voice FCS: Off to a Strong and Healthy Start / 55
- VP Voice Retiree: Retirees Support Scholarship Program / 55
- FS Experts Address American University Students / 56
- Claiming Workers' Compensation / 56
- Nominate a Colleague for a Constructive Dissent Award / 57
- 2014 AFSA Dues Rates / 57
- AFSA President Speaks at Seton Hall University / 58
- Call for Performance Awards Nominations / 58
- What You Need to Know about Social Security / 59
- 2013-2014 AFSA Financial Aid Scholarship Winners / 60
- Recognizing Volunteers at Post / 63

COLUMNS

- President's Views / 7**
The Foreign Service at 90: Future-Oriented, with Traditional Strengths
BY ROBERT J. SILVERMAN
- Letter from the Editor / 8**
All Hail Mighty Janus!
BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

- Speaking Out / 18**
Protecting the Realm: The Past Must Be Prologue
BY TIMOTHY LAWSON

- Reflections / 97**
Jasmine and Lilacs
BY RAY PEPPERS

DEPARTMENTS

- Letters / 12**
- Talking Points / 14**
- Books / 51**
- In Memory / 86**
- Local Lens / 98**

MARKETPLACE

- Classifieds / 90, 91, 92**
- Real Estate / 93**
- Index to Advertisers / 96**

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The Foreign Service at 90: Future-Oriented, with Traditional Strengths

BY ROBERT J. SILVERMAN

The Foreign Service and AFSA have grown to record numbers to support the complex organizational needs of our country's foreign policy. I will highlight our new challenges and changing culture in coming issues. This month, however, as we begin celebrating the 90th anniversary of both institutions, I would like to celebrate a past Foreign Service great, George Kennan, whose career still holds relevance for all of us.

Please add to your New Year's resolutions: "Read John Gaddis' *George F. Kennan: An American Life*." Kennan came up in a very different Foreign Service (popularized by the book *A Pretty Good Club*) than today's, and he seems to have shared many of the prejudices of his day. But the Kennan of Gaddis' book transcends his times, beginning with the beauty and sanity of his writing.

Gaddis preserves several of Kennan's poems; here is the 22-year-old describing his A-100 class in 1926:

*The steady flow of words
Rises and falls with dull vacuity...
We sprawl in stolid patience on our chairs...
Read papers, surreptitiously...
We are a joint, slumbering animal,
And if you prod one part,
With a question,
It twitches, verbally,
Then it falls asleep again.*

Sound like he was sitting in the back of your class?

The most interesting part of the biography for me was the 20 years of Foreign Service that preceded Kennan's 1946

Long Telegram on "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." Early on, he chose to study Russian and serve in our Soviet listening posts in the Baltics, then got himself on the team sent to open Embassy Moscow in 1933. The adventure of young married life in a Soviet hotel, setting up a chancery and making initial contacts with Soviet officialdom will be instantly familiar to many of us who opened embassies in the former Soviet Union in 1992.

During Kennan's second tour in Moscow during World War II, Ambassador Averell Harriman edited out his anti-Soviet warnings. Once Harriman departed post in 1946, Kennan was free to pen the Long Telegram, which serendipitously hit Washington just as postwar concerns with Soviet behavior were surfacing. That cable and his later memos as policy planning chief defined U.S. strategy in the early Cold War.

Yet Foreign Service fame was transitory. As ambassador to Moscow in 1952, he was declared persona non grata for publicly comparing the Stalin regime unfavorably with the Nazis. He returned to State to await reassignment (colloquially known as walking the halls), then was asked to resign by incoming Secretary John Foster Dulles. As Kennan wrote his wife, Annalise: "There

has been a decision that I am not to be consulted or used in any way in this country, but am to be 'sent away' as a sort of punishment for my association with the Truman administration."

Kennan, of course, did not fade away in retirement. Rely-

ing as always on the bedrock of a lifelong partnership with Annalise, he remained influential over the next 50 years as a historian and public intellectual.

Here is my takeaway from Gaddis' book: The architect of our winning strategy in the Cold War developed that strategy after 20 years of language study and Foreign Service tours focused on understanding the other side. Our country will continue to need that type of expertise to meet current and future challenges.

Let me close with another example of Kennan's fine pen, the first stanza of his last memo to the Policy Planning staff.

*Friends, teachers, pupils; toilers
at the wheels;*

*Undaunted drones of the official hive,
In deep frustration doomed to strive,
To power and to action uncommitted,
Condemned (disconsolate, in world of
steel and glass confined)*

*To course the foggy bottom of the mind,
Unaided, unencouraged, to pursue,
The rarer bloom, the deeper hue,
The choicer fragrance—these to glean
And, having gleaned, to synthesize
And long in deepest reticence to hide...
Until some distant day—perhaps—
permitted,*

*Anonymous and unidentified
The Great White Queen
at last
to fertilize.*

Read Gaddis. And throughout 2014, be well, stay safe and keep in touch,

Bob

Silverman@afsa.org ■



Robert J. Silverman is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

All Hail Mighty Janus!

BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY



Happy New Year! And a happy 90th birthday to AFSA, *The Foreign Service Journal* and the Foreign Service itself, as all three institutions reach that milestone in 2014.

Reflecting on that auspicious confluence of anniversaries, I've come to the conclusion that the Roman god Janus would have made a fine patron for our celebration. Here's why.

First and foremost, Janus presided over the beginning and ending of conflict—and hence war and peace. The doors of his temple were open in times of war, and closed to mark the end of hostilities.

Second, as a god of transitions, Janus was in charge of all functions related to births, journeys and exchanges. (Perhaps he issued the original Consular Report of Births Abroad?) And in his association with Portunus, a less powerful harbor and gateway deity, he was also concerned with travel, trading and shipping. (Felicitations, ye muse of the Foreign Commercial Service and General Services Officers everywhere!)

In the spirit of full disclosure, I should acknowledge that Janus is traditionally depicted as having two faces, since he looks simultaneously to the future and to the past. (Insert your own joke here.) But notwithstanding that tendency to be duplicitous, indecisive or both, it's still fitting that the Romans named the month of January after him.

Time for a Change

Even in the unlikely event that I've won anyone over to my quixotic campaign to adopt Janus as a Foreign Service mascot, I suspect many of you are wondering why I've begun this column with an arcane exploration of ancient mythology.

On the most basic level, it's a natural outgrowth of my long-standing practice of using this space each January to unveil our new Editorial Calendar, and spark your interest in the many

opportunities to contribute to *The Foreign Service Journal*. I'll do that in a moment. But first, I'd like to claim personal privilege to make an announcement. To wit:

I have relished the opportunity this job has afforded me to promote discussion and debate of issues related to foreign affairs and the Foreign Service, an institution I've been privileged to be associated with in various capacities for nearly 30 years. Nevertheless, after a great deal of soul-searching, I have decided to step down from my position, effective Jan. 31.

Coincidentally or not, my 12½ years in the editor's chair is almost the same length as my Foreign Service career—which perhaps signifies that instead of a seven-year itch, I get a hankering to move on professionally every eighth of a century or so!

To say this was not an easy decision would be a massive understatement, but I truly believe it is the right one—and not just for me, but for the magazine and AFSA. Whether at work or pursuing an avocation, I've never been very good at pacing myself, and I can tell that it is taking more and more energy these days to do this job right.

In fact, there is no way I could have managed this long without the support and friendship of my amazing *Journal* colleagues: Senior Editor Susan Maitra, Associate Editor Shawn Dorman, and Advertising & Circulation Manager Ed Miltenberger. They are truly a dream team, and I will miss them personally and professionally. But the knowledge that I am leaving the magazine in their capable, experienced hands also eases my mind about the impending transition. (Unfortunately for them, it also illustrates the truth of one of my favorite quotes: No good deed goes unpunished!)

The Show Goes On

Speaking of change, many of you have undoubtedly already noticed that this issue says **January-February**. Though we have

There are many ways you can share your insights in our pages. Let us hear from you.

been putting out a combined July-August issue since the 1990s, merging two editions at the beginning of the year is a first for us.

That said, I've actually thought about instituting a parallel combined issue for several years now. While we do our best to make every issue of the *Journal* as lively and substantive as possible, I must admit that our January and February issues have generally been our least successful. This is largely due to timing. Our long lead time as a monthly magazine dictates that contributors to those issues get their drafts to us in November, and then work with us during the editing process at the height of the holiday season.

Understandably, that timing deters some potential authors from accepting our invitation to write. It also complicates consultations with them on revisions, as well as the production and printing process.

So, to put it bluntly, I've come to the conclusion that publishing 10 strong issues a year is better than 11 uneven ones. Just as the combined summer issue allows us to catch our breath and devote more time and thought to planning the fall issues, I believe a combined January-February edition will make our spring issues even better. That's particularly important this year, as we undertake extensive coverage of the many 90th-anniversary events in the works.

With that in mind, the Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board has adopted the 2014 Editorial Calendar you see here, listing the focus topics we'll be covering in the year ahead. Because our new and improved format (which celebrated its first anniversary this past October!) makes it possible for each issue to highlight a greater variety of subjects, these topics might best be thought of as "lead stories," though many of them will still be covered via a set of articles.

In case you haven't visited *The Foreign Service Journal* recently through the AFSA website, please do head over there

2014 EDITORIAL CALENDAR for *THE FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL*

JANUARY-FEBRUARY	The Foreign Service and Social Media (+ AFSA Tax Guide)
MARCH	Association for Diplomatic Studies & Training's Oral History Program
APRIL	"Greening" Diplomacy
MAY	90th Anniversary of AFSA and the Foreign Service
JUNE	Brazil (+ semiannual EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT)
JULY-AUGUST	Transatlantic Diplomatic Fellows/other diplomatic services
SEPTEMBER	AFSA's Dissent and Performance Awards Program
OCTOBER	Foreign Service Specialists
NOVEMBER	In Their Own Write (roundup of books by FS-affiliated authors)
DECEMBER	Afghanistan (+ semiannual EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT)

A Fond Farewell

Not long after you read these words, we will have to look our friend and longtime AFSA colleague, Steve Honley, square in the eye and warmly wish him a fond farewell. Reflecting on that sad task only reinforces our firm conviction that Steve's influence on this publication has been profound, and will be felt for many years to come.

Of the many positive attributes Steve possesses, we would spotlight two in particular: his commitment to the principle of stewardship, and the unique care he has demonstrated for the written word.

As a good steward of AFSA's flagship publication, *The Foreign Service Journal*, for nearly 15 years (12½ of them as its editor-in-chief), Steve has consistently been a responsible, highly detail-oriented planner and manager of resources. That same work ethic carries over to his care for the integrity of the written word, and his daily advocacy for the health, welfare, maintenance and protection of the *Journal*.

We have seen Steve's sincerity up close, and admire and respect that about him. As managers, we know that type of authenticity is indispensable in an employee.

In his final editor's note, Steve has graciously thanked his colleagues on the *Journal* staff for their support and hard work. As usual, he is the first to draw attention to the team and the roles each member plays. This team will continue to engage *The Foreign Service Journal's* readership and AFSA members.

With the able leadership of former FSO Shawn Dorman—now associate editor and director of FS Books, who is moving up to become editor-in-chief—and Senior Editor Susan Maitra, in a reconfigured publications group under the inspired guidance of Director of Communications Kristen Fernekes, the *Journal* will continue to break new ground.

Yet before that future arrives, we must pause to embrace our colleague and friend, and give him a heartfelt sendoff. There can be no doubt that AFSA and *The Foreign Service Journal* are losing one of the finest editors our organization has known, or will ever know.

And on a personal level, we will deeply miss Steve, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

—Executive Director Ian Houston and President Robert J. Silverman

and see for yourself the substantial improvements we are making to our online presentation. Lead articles are now much easier to copy and share, and we hope you'll do just that!

Unlike nearly all my AFSA colleagues, I'm a stubborn holdout on joining the Facebook generation. (Similarly, I've been accused of being a twit, but have yet to tweet.) But I am nonetheless pleased to invite you all to join the 5,250 others who (as of Dec. 15) have "liked" *The Foreign Service Journal* Facebook page, where you'll find links to timely new *Journal* articles.

We always welcome submissions from AFSA members, whether to fit a focus topic, serve as a standalone feature, or go into one of our regular departments. For more details, I invite you to consult the author guidelines on our website (www.afsa.org/fsj), which describe all the options and spell out the basic requirements (length, format, etc.) for each. Please note that all

submissions must be approved by our Editorial Board and are subject to editing for style, length and format.

If you have any questions about the submission process, need to change your mailing address, or want to give a subscription to a friend or family member, please contact us at journal@afsa.org. We will be delighted to respond.

Ave Atque Vale

Janus is being quite persnickety about revealing what lies ahead for me, but I can promise this much: I will always be an avid reader of the *Journal*, and a staunch supporter of AFSA and the Foreign Service.

And who knows? You just might see my byline somewhere in these pages at some point.

Happy trails!

Steve ■

AFSA

90



YEARS

Stay tuned for information on the numerous special programs and activities that will commemorate the 90th anniversary of AFSA and the Foreign Service in 2014.

www.afsa.org/90



A Disgraceful Situation

I was disgusted and infuriated to read about the Department of State's limp response to the distressing situation of FSO Juliet Wurr, which she describes in her Speaking Out column in your November issue ("Keeping Faith with State's Wounded Warriors").

During my own Foreign Service career(s) at the Department of State and U.S. Information Agency (1961-1999), I was aware of cases in which compassionate arrangements were made and extraordinary assistance provided to Foreign Service personnel who had experienced severe health problems in the course of their overseas assignments. In some cases, those illnesses may not have been due to health threats specific to the posts where those individuals had served, yet the department found ways to help the afflicted officers contend with the implications of their permanently damaged health.

Ms. Wurr is clearly a dedicated officer, who has put her own safety and health on the line in a series of extreme hardship posts. So it is outrageous that State cannot find a way to support her case more forcefully against the ignorant responses of the parochial bureaucrats in the Department of Labor.

It is also scandalous that, in a period when FSOs are increasingly being pressured—and not subtly—to prove their merit by opting for extreme hardship posts, the department has apparently not found it necessary to brief them on the need to purchase personal disability insurance.

State praises and sometimes even promotes officers like Ms. Wurr, conferring special awards on them for their service to our country. But it also sends them overseas without any warning that

they will have no long-term support if they lose their medical clearance, forcing them to leave the Service, due to a disabling illness that they would not have contracted in healthier parts of the world.

*Richard G. Brown
FSO, retired
San Miguel, Mexico*

Bring State Out of the Dark Ages

Juliet Wurr's Speaking Out column was painful enough to read for its own sake. But for me it also revives memories of the equally unacceptable and inexcusable mistreatment of a Foreign Service colleague in the late 1950s. I find it extraordinarily difficult to accept that the problem has not been addressed by AFSA—and resolved—many years ago.

Playing in the garden with his daughter during troubled times in Cyprus, an FSO opened the gate when the bell rang, and was shot four times. Rushed to a Navy hospital in Greece, he was slowly recovering, on sick leave, until that ran out. Then he used annual leave, until that ran out, and then was placed on leave without pay!

A newly minted junior officer, I met him after he was brought back to Washington, where an official car and driver took him to and from the State Department for a few hours a day so he could be paid. He told me he had patiently accepted the situation—until he learned that a Navy pilot who had broken his leg while skiing, and was not required to use any of his leave, would receive 30 days of convalescent leave when he was discharged.

The fact that similar outrages continue today, in gross violation of any reason-

able or fair personnel policy, is truly deplorable. Perhaps AFSA could use Juliet Wurr's compelling story to kick off an effort to bring HR out of the dark ages.

*Edward L. Peck
Ambassador, retired
Chevy Chase, Md.*

Metrics Can Help

In his November feature article, "The Tyranny of Numbers," Ambassador Charles Ray calls an overreliance on numbers naïve and disparages the view that "what gets measured gets done."

Amb. Ray is correct that developing smart metrics is hard. But we should not succumb to the belief that diplomacy is too difficult to measure.

There's no doubt that leaders must be able to manage a host of intangibles and that the State Department must frequently respond to unforeseen events. Those situations require flexibility and adaptability.

And it is precisely because we deal with so much uncertainty that a sound strategic plan with smart metrics is so important. In times of crisis, it can tell us where we have capacity to surge and help us prioritize. Over the long run, strategic plans and indicators give leaders visibility on how their organizations stack up against stated goals.

In my own experience working on the department's Economic Statecraft "stretch targets" established by Deputy Secretary Thomas Nides, I saw firsthand how metrics gave senior leadership insight into the breadth of the work economic officers carry out and its impact on the U.S. economy. The measurements weren't perfect, but they improved over time. We revised some queries to make them more precise, and dropped some categories that didn't reveal much.

Although we started off measuring

activity (e.g., how many times a post helped a U.S. firm or hosted a “Direct Line” call), we constantly looked for ways to measure impact (how helpful that “Direct Line” call was to the company). Of course, we must be mindful of the burdens such requests impose on posts, but these stretch targets were more than just an internal management exercise. In consultations with Capitol Hill and other stakeholders, we were able to back up our assertions of the importance of U.S. diplomacy with hard numbers.

President Barack Obama has spoken of the need for smarter government. For his part, Secretary of State John Kerry, in remarks at the University of Virginia, emphasized that the State Department must demonstrate its value to the American public.

Toward that end, performance metrics are not the only tool we use. But in these tight budgetary times, good statistical indicators can be more precise and persuasive than anecdotes.

Adam Murray
FSO
Arlington, Va.

U.S. Non-Membership in the UNWTO

I congratulate the *FSJ* for scooping the Nobel Peace Prize by granting the October “Site of the Month” designation (Talking Points) to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Back in September I walked around the OPCW building in The Hague, primarily in order to see the monument there that the government of Iran donated to commemorate the victims of Saddam Hussein’s chemical attacks. It’s the OPCW’s only monument, in fact. Ironic, I think, that the country whose weapons of mass destruction we worry about most today is itself the nation

which has been the most concerned (at least as evidenced by such monuments) with weapons of mass destruction of another kind.

My primary reason for writing, however, is to comment on your Talking Point item about President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, “Comrade Bob Moves to Rebrand Himself,” in the October issue. You write (no doubt correctly) that Britain and Canada would not attend the “global tourism summit” of the United Nations World Tourism Organization, held at Victoria Falls on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia, in protest of the UNWTO’s appointing the two presidents as “Global Leaders for Tourism.”

Having brought up the UNWTO and the non-attendance of our two closest allies, I would have liked to see the *FSJ* point out that the United States does not belong to the UNWTO in the first place. I honestly do not know why that is the case, and would be grateful to learn the answer in your pages.

And while you’re at it, how about reporting on the U.S. position on President Mugabe and Zambian President Sata being named Global Leaders for Tourism, despite sanctions over Zimbabwe’s human rights record? I recently learned this curious fact of U.S. diplomatic history when the UNWTO invited me to contribute a chapter to its forthcoming *International Handbook on Tourism and Peace*. (Any interested readers are welcome to find my draft chapter at www.peacepartnersintl.net.)

Edward W. Lollis
FSO, retired
Knoxville, Tenn.

Thanks for a Perceptive Review

I have seen many reviews of my latest

book, *The Road to War: Presidential Commitments Honored and Betrayed* (Brookings Institution Press, 2013). But none were better than the one Aury Fernandez did for your October issue. Too many book reviewers use their platform to write an essay about the subject that happens to absorb them that day, whether they’ve read the book or not.

In contrast, Mr. Fernandez hit every important point, most especially Chapter Nine on U.S.-Israeli relations, which seems always to get lost in the rush to discuss Vietnam or Korea. I am deeply grateful.

Marvin Kalb
Chevy Chase, Md.

ISO FSOs to Interview

As a historian of international relations and the author of a forthcoming book, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Harvard University Press, 2014), I am interested in interviewing Foreign Service officers who were involved in human rights issues during the 1970s and 1980s.

I am especially interested in hearing from FSOs who conducted public diplomacy relating to human rights during the Carter years, and those who handled issues relating to torture, Amnesty International and the United Nations’ efforts to ban torture from 1973 through 1984, when the Convention Against Torture was adopted. Material submitted may be used in academic articles or in a new book about human rights diplomacy.

I can be reached by e-mail at bkeys@unimelb.edu.au. Thank you for your assistance.

Barbara Keys
Senior Lecturer in History
University of Melbourne
Melbourne, Australia ■

Let's Get This Party Started!

Beginning this month and continuing throughout the year, AFSA and *The Foreign Service Journal* will be celebrating two anniversaries. In May 1924, President Calvin Coolidge signed the Rogers Act into law, combining the United States diplomatic and consular services to

create the U.S. Foreign Service. And in October 1924, the American Foreign Service Association was formed, and promptly published the premier issue of the *Journal*.

To mark the 90th anniversary of both institutions, AFSA is organizing a yearlong series of events and activities. These are being designed to deepen public understanding of diplomacy, development and foreign affairs; bring the Foreign Service community together to celebrate the many accomplishments of the men and women who serve, and have served, at U.S. foreign affairs agencies over the past nine decades; and encourage diversity in the Foreign Service to show the true face of America in all the countries where our officers, specialists and family members live and serve.

The festivities begin with a kickoff reception for the Foreign Service and AFSA's friends on Thursday, Jan. 16. Next will come an AFSA panel discussion and advocacy day to engage key stakeholders on Capitol Hill in February, a special issue of *The Foreign Service Journal* in May, and publication this fall of the first book to recount AFSA's history as a professional association and labor union.

Also in the works for our anniversary year are a speaker series, a policy conference and special editions of our annual awards and high school essay contests. And since any 90th birthday deserves



joyful celebration, we'll be hosting a gala event at the State Department in May.

Watch for information about these and other 90th-anniversary activities in upcoming issues of the *Journal*, or visit www.afsa.org/90. Questions? Please feel free to contact AFSA Executive Director Ian Houston at (202) 944-5505 or houston@afsa.org.

We look forward to celebrating with you!

—Kristen Fernekes, AFSA Director of Communications

A Crystal Ball for 2014

The Center for Strategic and International Studies has released its 2014 Global Forecast, an evaluation of the past year's events and an attempt to pinpoint hot issues that have potential to unfold in the upcoming year.

Part of CSIS's mission statement is to understand long-term trends and their implications, which this annual analysis accomplishes by featuring a wide array of information and viewpoints. The publication evaluates domestic policy, international policy and, most importantly, the United States' struggle to define its role as a global power.

This year's forecast is divided into four sections, each addressing an overarching theme. The first, "Getting Our House in Order," uses America's recent political paralysis as the basis for a warning that its credibility and legitimacy are at risk. "Changing Order in the Middle East," the second section, has a self-explanatory title. It makes the case that the world needs to stop ignoring the region's internal dynamics if it wishes to gain a better understanding of the troubles there.

"Sustaining the Rebalance" focuses primarily on Asia and the economic leverage the continent's powerful countries have on the United States. "Nontraditional Security Approaches" concludes the roundup by evaluating regional security, the importance of non-state actors and the role of technology as an inevitable tenet of change.

The 2014 Global Forecast features a wide array of interesting perspectives on almost any issue imaginable.

—Valerie Sanders, Editorial Intern

Policing Interpol

Those of us who enjoy spy stories and police procedurals are accustomed to laudatory references to the work of Interpol, the world's largest international police organization. Though the organization's roots date back a full century to the 1914 International Criminal Police Congress, held in Monaco, it took its current name in 1956.

Interpol's 190 member countries, including the United States, are famous for cooperating to track and capture all sorts of criminals, no matter where they may flee to escape justice. But as Kathy Lally reports in the Nov. 30 *Washington Post*, the picture isn't quite that clear-cut. The Fair Trials International advocacy group says Interpol has been used by Russia, Belarus, Turkey, Iran and Venezuela, among other countries, to persecute political opponents.

The case of Pyotr Silaev, a 28-year-old Russian who took part in a July 2010 protest in Moscow against the destruction of a suburban forest, illustrates how Interpol can be wrongly used, says Robert Jackman, a Fair Trials spokesman. When police began arresting the demonstrators for alleged hooliganism, Silaev fled to Finland, which accepted him as a political refugee.



Shortly after the activist traveled on to Spain, however, he was arrested in response to a Russian request issued through Interpol. Silaev spent eight days in prison, then had to surrender his passport and stay for six months while fighting extradition. Though a Spanish court eventually dismissed the Putin government's request, ruling that his arrest was politically motivated, Interpol has yet to remove

Silaev's name from its database.

Americans are also at risk, as a recent Heritage Foundation paper ("Necessary Reforms Can Keep Interpol Working in the U.S. Interest") warns.

In retaliation for his campaign to publicize Russian human rights abuses, Moscow police asked Interpol to arrest William Browder. The investment banker was instrumental in U.S. passage of the 2012

SITE OF THE MONTH: www.GreaterGood.com

Looking for a New Year's resolution that is easy and painless to keep, yet does real, tangible good? Bookmark *GreaterGood.com*!

We actually featured its precursor, *The Hunger Site.com*, as our Site of the Month in the March 2012 edition of Cybernotes (as this department was then known). Last year the site, which will celebrate its 15th anniversary in June, was expanded and rebranded as *GreaterGood.com*. But its purpose and setup remain the same: to focus the power of the Internet on advancing good causes.

Greater Good focuses on a specific project each month and also serves as a portal to *The Hunger Site* and seven sister sites, each with its own specialized mission. These range from fighting breast cancer and diabetes, treating children with autism and raising awareness of the issue, and promoting child health and literacy, to feeding and assisting homeless and hungry veterans, protecting rainforests and supporting animal rescue initiatives. (Icons for all nine sites are prominently displayed at the top of the *GreaterGood* homepage.)

Since the site's launch in June 1999, 300 million people from around the world have donated more than \$30 million simply by clicking on the button labeled "Click Here to Give—It's Free." That's it!

The donations are paid for by site sponsors and distributed to those in need by various charities and corporations. For *The Hunger Site*, these include Mercy Corps, Feeding America and Millennium Promise. As each site notes, 100 percent of sponsor advertising fees goes to the site's charitable partners.

Visitors can help even more by shopping for items displayed on each of the nine sites. Each online store offers a wide array of fair-traded, handcrafted items from around the world.

—Steven Alan Honley, Editor



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“A proud Hoosier, Dick Lugar has served America for more than half a century, from a young Navy lieutenant to a respected leader in the United States Senate. I'll always be thankful to Dick for taking me—a new, junior senator—under his wing, including travels together to review some of his visionary work, the destruction of Cold War arsenals in the former Soviet Union—something that doesn't get a lot of public notice, but was absolutely critical to making us safer in the wake of the Cold War.

Now, I should say, traveling with Dick you get close to unexploded landmines, mortar shells, test tubes filled with anthrax and the plague. (Laughter.) His legacy, though, is the thousands of missiles and bombers and submarines and warheads that no longer threaten us because of his extraordinary work. Our nation and our world are safer because of this statesman. And in a time of unrelenting partisanship, Dick Lugar's decency, his commitment to bipartisan problem-solving, stand as a model of what public service ought to be. ...

Representing the state of Indiana for over three decades in the United States Senate, Richard G. Lugar put country above party and self to forge bipartisan consensus. Throughout his time in the Senate, he offered effective solutions to our national and international problems, advocating for the control of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction.

Working with Senator Sam Nunn, Richard Lugar established the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, one of our country's most successful national security initiatives, helping to sustain American leadership and engage nations in collaboration after decades of confrontation. He remains a strong voice on foreign policy issues, and his informed perspective will have broad influence for years to come. (Applause.)

—Excerpted from President Barack Obama's remarks at the Nov. 20 White House ceremony where he presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former Senator Richard G. Lugar and 15 other recipients.

Magnitsky Act. Fortunately, he had the resources and connections to fight back, and Interpol soon dismissed the request as politically motivated, and deleted the entry from its database.

That outcome proves that Interpol shields individuals from procedural abuses, declares Ronald K. Noble, the agency's head. But Fair Trials says Browder got quick action only because he used the media to marshal political support. "Interpol tends to take countries' arrest warrants at face value," says

Jackman. "They don't look at whether the person is already recognized by another country as a refugee."

Fair Trials calls on Interpol to review preliminary notices before they are posted, noting that member countries currently have no way to verify that a listing has been removed from the database. It also urges Interpol to develop clearly defined procedures for appeals by listed individuals, be more transparent about how its database operates, and safeguard the right to appeal when initial requests to remove names

from wanted lists are denied.

Interpol officials deny any implication that high-profile cases get special treatment. But Billy Hawkes, chairman of the Commission for the Control of Interpol Files, said he supports many of the recommendations in the Fair Trials report.

—Steven Alan Honley, Editor

The Dangerous States of America?

In recent months the French, German and British governments have been urging their citizens to avoid, or at least be leery of visiting, 16 major American cities. The list includes Boston, New York, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Richmond, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Houston, St. Louis, Atlanta, New Orleans, Miami, Los Angeles and El Paso.

At first glance, these warnings seem to be mirror images of the travel advisories the Department of State issues to

protect Americans going overseas. But the European advisories are even broader. The French Foreign Ministry warns its citizens to avoid New York City landmarks like Times Square and the Statue of Liberty, but says it is only necessary to avoid of Harlem, the Bronx and Central Park at night. In Washington, D.C., travelers should avoid the northeastern and southeastern quadrants of the city altogether. And walking anywhere in Richmond is considered dangerous.

Germany doesn't warn its citizens about any specific cities, but it does caution against letting it all hang out: "Nude bathing and changing clothes at the beach stirs up public agitation and can lead to unpleasantnesses."

To read these government travel warnings for yourself, check out the *GovBeat* blog on the *Washington Post* website.

—Valerie Sanders, Editorial Intern ■

50 Years Ago

Last fall the chatelaine of this department [Washington Letter] asked us to move in and keep the shop swept out while she went off to Europe for a breather. Somewhat timidly, we consented, although we felt then and have continued to feel something of a trespasser.

Now Gwen Barrows writes from Mallorca that she is leaving the *Journal*. To readers this will be sad news indeed. For eight years they have watched the magazine develop under her guidance, broadening its range, deepening its significance. Month after month they have turned to this Letter for the special flavor of Washington gossip and shop talk, captured by the sensitive antennae of her faithful legman, the Exhausted Bureaucrat. (Stout fellow, he refuses to confide in any interloper.)

To us, as no doubt to other *Journal* contributors, Gwen Barrows was first a sympathetic, appreciative and stimulating editor, later—and happily, there we can substitute "is" for "was"—a valued friend. While selfishly we must regret her decision to seek release from the often-frustrating labors of editorship, we respect the motives that impel her to do so, and wish her every success in her new undertaking.

As Icelanders say at parting, "Bless."

—From *Washington Letter* by Ted Olson; FSJ, February 1964.



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Protecting the Realm: The Past Must Be Prologue

BY TIMOTHY LAWSON

Recent events, from the conviction of Bradley Manning for his role in WikiLeaks, credible allegations that the U.S. has been spying on top European leaders, and Edward Snowden's revelations regarding the National Security Agency's PRISM program, to the high-level focus on cybersecurity at last summer's U.S.-China summit, all call to mind a series of similar uncertainties America faced nearly 240 years ago.

As was true back in 1775, when Benjamin Franklin led a fledgling Committee of Secret Correspondence, today's Foreign Service still requires secrecy to function effectively. Transparency is important, but the key to protecting U.S. national interests is information security.

Secretary of State John Kerry has rightly acknowledged that while U.S. intelligence efforts have prevented many calamities, in some cases those information-gathering efforts have reached too far. As our national leadership tackles this important issue, those of us in the Foreign Service are, as always, bound by our own institutional responsibility to protect national security information.

While the Bureau of Information Resource Management's Communications Security and Information Assurance

programs are security mainstays, today's challenges are increasingly complex. For all the undisputed benefits new technology brings, real vulnerabilities remain. These weaknesses jeopardize our foreign policy, development initiatives, consular services and social media outreach, damaging U.S. strategic interests. They can also endanger lives.

From Security to Efficiency to Peril

Thirty years later, I still recall reporting for duty at my second post, Moscow, as a junior FS-8 Support Communications Officer in 1983. The first thing I gazed upon after entering the secure, highly restricted area of the Communications Programs Unit was a row of eight five-drawer Mosler safes, each with its own three-way combination lock that rigorously tested memorization skills.

As at other posts behind the Iron Curtain, Moscow's CPU safeguarded the embassy's crown jewels: classified files containing top-secret telegrams, special captioned materials, cryptographic materials, keys and ciphers. Centralized files were cumbersome, but provided a high level of information security.

Notorious U.S. Navy spy John Walker, convicted in 1985 for passing more than

a million secrets to the Soviets, was able to do incalculable damage to national security because the Navy's communications security system used a single key to encrypt communications between hundreds of ships. Moreover, each Navy command and unit maintained individual files, making the potential for even further information loss substantial.

In contrast, the State Department's "point-to-point" encryption practice, which employed unique encryption links between each post and Washington, coupled with centralized filing systems like the one in Moscow, limited potential damage from a security compromise. Yes, information was tightly locked up and difficult to access—but that was the tradeoff for virtual immunity to accidental loss or intentional release.

As new technology evolution morphed, however, security soon took a back seat to speed and accessibility. Centralized files gave way to computers, floppy disks, databases and local area networks.

The burden of traditional "communications and records" was replaced with new productivity. But those advances altered our culture for handling classified information, once the bedrock of Foreign Service tradecraft. The convenience of new technology trumped imprinted classification stamps, security markings and sealed envelopes.

Fast forward to today when information access has never been simpler. Given the priority assigned to information sharing since 9/11, and the spread of cellphones,

Timothy Lawson, a retired Senior Foreign Service officer, served in Amman, Moscow (twice), Beirut, Beijing, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Islamabad, Seoul and Washington between 1981 and 2007. Before joining the Foreign Service, he served in the Navy and was employed by the Army and Air Force supporting communications, intelligence and electronic warfare operations. Lawson now resides in Thailand, where he continues to follow U.S. national security issues.

tablets, Twitter and other social media systems, the possibilities for diplomacy seem boundless. Unfortunately, security remains relegated to the back burner, despite growing dangers.

Making Cybersecurity a Top Priority

Media reports describe construction of a new \$400 million headquarters to house a Department of Defense "Cyber Command" at Fort Meade in Maryland. The new entity will reportedly be staffed by 4,000 to 5,000 military and civilian personnel whose duties are to detect, defend against and stop penetration of DOD's computer systems.

State lacks the resources to construct such a capacity. But there are steps we can take—indeed, *must* take to restore information integrity and protection, thereby reassuring our friends and allies. Today, three years after the WikiLeaks episode, many foreign interlocutors remain reticent about sharing any sensitive information with our diplomats. This reluctance hampers relationships, causes friction and emboldens our enemies.

President Barack Obama's Executive Order 13636 offers a remedial starting point. This directive calls for improved protection of critical information infrastructure. With that in mind, I offer two recommendations to address pressing State Department deficiencies:

- **Increase security of existing classified networks.** Media reporting leaves no doubt that our nation's focus on information security, communications security and classified networks has seriously weakened. To counter this worrying trend within the Foreign Service, more resources must be directed toward supporting Information Programs Center operations.

This should include a renewed focus on emergency communications training

Today's technology offers boundless possibilities for diplomacy. But information security must not be relegated to the back burner in the process.

for handling vital reports, particularly now that the Bureau of Information Resource Management has abandoned its Warren-ton Training Center facility. Fortunately, the IPC structure remains central to the core reporting function of the Foreign Service, and chiefs of mission, deputy chiefs of mission and management counselors should all show strong support for this vital operation.

- **Make cybersecurity a management priority by setting performance metrics.** The process of prioritizing cybersecurity will necessarily be led by ambassadors and other Senior Foreign Service officers, but it is most critical for Chief Information Officers. Yet the last CIO to work inside one of State's Information Programs Centers, which handle so much of this critical responsibility, did so 13 years ago.

Since then, nearly all CIOs have come from unclassified Information Systems Centers. None have IPC experience. (While it may be purely coincidental, the WikiLeaks catastrophe and other data leaks all occurred during this period.) Clearly, State should require IRM personnel to acquire hybrid experience, through stints inside IPCs and ISCs, as a prerequisite to assume CIO leadership positions. This would promote senior cybersecurity awareness and crown a 27-year odyssey in search of a unified IRM organization that encompasses the classified and unclassified domains.

Other Initiatives to Consider

Strengthening IPC operations and building more security awareness into the senior IRM leadership are key requirements. But other initiatives deserve consideration, too.

Take, for example, the Russian Federal Guard Service's recent switch from digital systems to typewriters and paper (reportedly in response to the Snowden affair). That shift certainly does not mean that we should return to the best practices of a quarter-century ago, when those of us in Moscow issued "Mickey Mouse" magic slate erasable writing pads to Secretary of State George Shultz and other high-level visitors. But it is worth recalling that evidence of Soviet eavesdropping was first reported by an alert IPC officer.

The Diplomatic Courier Service, which proudly traces its origins as a secure communications system back to the days of the Committee of Secret Correspondence, might play a novel role in confronting today's security challenge. Especially sensitive, but not perishable, information could be sent via courier if selected cables are captioned "DCS CHANNEL." Creation of such a new telegraphic channel would result in slower delivery but enhanced protection. This envisions a kind of asymmetrical "mobile firewall" strategy.

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security also needs to urgently review the operational

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shift since 9/11 from “need to know” to “need to share.” Information collaboration certainly has value, but it must be smart—and regulated. Whether sharing information via social media or for joint strategic planning with other agencies, we must protect it.

A recent Office of the Inspector General report stated that without greater control and oversight of the Netcentric Diplomacy Application, which permits sharing classified cables via the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network, another WikiLeaks-like disaster is not just possible, but likely. Until that vulnerability is eliminated, information-sharing through that application should immediately cease.

The Past as Prologue

IRM officers are a proud group of professionals with the expertise and commitment to achieve all the technological objectives to make E.O. 13636 a reality—given the resources. An elite team of diplomatic couriers stands ready to do its part, as well. But implementing new approaches to IRM program strategy, along with a new CIO security focus, will demand resolve—and the courage to help divine the future.

A renewed State Department commitment to enhancing information security can be a microcosm for what's possible across America's increasingly digital landscape. In 1775 Benjamin Franklin recognized that the new nation would need to enshrine openness and trust among its values. But he also persuaded the Continental Congress to keep “secret journals” of his committee's actions to help secure America's liberty.

Our first diplomat knew that securing liberty would at times demand secret diplomacy. For today's Foreign Service, that past must be prologue. ■

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USING “SOCIAL DIPLOMACY” TO REACH RUSSIANS

Utilizing new media in public diplomacy is vital in countries like Russia, where government control of most broadcast media often distorts the message from Washington.

BY ROBERT KOENIG

A

lmost as soon as a Russian court convicted activist Alexei Navalny of embezzlement, on highly dubious grounds, in July 2013, U.S. Ambassador Michael McFaul tweeted his disappointment at the “apparent political motivations in this trial.” Within minutes that comment echoed across Russia’s social media landscape, eventually generating nearly 1,000 retweets and getting picked up by numerous media outlets. “Everyone was checking McFaul’s Twitter account and quoting what he said,” recalls Elena Chernenko, a foreign desk correspondent for *Kommersant*, one of Moscow’s major daily newspapers.

In recent years, Twitter and other social media have emerged as a lightning-fast, pointed alternative to traditional tactics of public diplomacy. Supplementing their usual portfolios, U.S.

Robert L. Koenig was a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information Agency from 1980 to 1981, serving in Germany. He then left the Service to return to journalism, covering various national and international events including the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. (The next year, the National Press Club honored him for his reporting on that seminal event.) He continued to work as a journalist during the posting of his FSO wife, Mary Ellen Koenig, in Germany, Switzerland and South Africa. Now an Eligible Family Member, he works as an assistant information officer in Moscow, where she is cultural affairs officer.



Vitaly Belogurkin

Ambassador Michael McFaul (center) talks with young Russian social media leaders and bloggers on the patio during a June 2013 session at his Moscow residence.

diplomats are being encouraged by the State Department to use both local and global social media tools, with hundreds of embassy Twitter feeds and Facebook accounts now attracting millions of followers worldwide.

"The role of new media in public diplomacy has gone from virtually non-existent to standard practice," says a State Department description of the "21st-Century Statecraft" initiative launched by former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The "social diplomacy" approach has proven to be especially important in countries like Russia, where government control of most broadcast media often distorts the message from Washington and news coverage about U.S. events and policies. Even though tweets are mere 140-character bursts of information—one might call them policy haikus—they can offer a platform for clear, concise messages that reach a target audience without passing through the restrictive and distorting filters of government-controlled media.

Amb. McFaul, who speaks Russian well, is mindful of how important it is to communicate primarily in a nation's own language.

Diplomats Join the "Twitterati"

When he became ambassador to Russia in January 2012, McFaul—a Stanford University professor who had never before tweeted or blogged—moved quickly

to adopt social media. Having served as the National Security Council's Russia specialist from 2009 to 2011, McFaul set out to implement cutting-edge White House communications techniques as part of the "21st-Century Statecraft" approach.

During his first country team meeting in Moscow, Amb. McFaul—only the second non-career diplomat in three decades to serve in that position—told the section heads gathered in the embassy's chancery that "this post is going to be focused on public diplomacy." With more and more Russians turning to social media for news and commentary, McFaul argues that social media offers "a fast way to get out information, correct the record and engage Russians."

In less than two years, he has attracted more than 55,000



Stefan Mizha

Members of Embassy Moscow's social media team discuss the embassy's Twitter page. They are: Assistant Information Officer Betsy Meyer (seated) and social media assistants Lada Krasilnikova (pointing) and Anna Romanenko (at right).

Twitter followers and 13,000 Facebook friends or subscribers. *Foreign Policy* included McFaul among the top-10 diplomats and politicians in its “Twitterati 100” list, putting him in the company of the pope and Hillary and Bill

Clinton, and describing his message as “live and occasionally uncensored.” A Russian rating agency ranked the American ambassador among the country’s most-quoted bloggers.

However, that high profile doesn’t necessarily translate into popularity. Amb. McFaul moved into Spaso House at about the same time that Vladimir Putin reoccupied the office of president—and U.S.-Russian relations got noticeably cooler. Even though McFaul had championed the Obama administration’s “reset” policy with Russia at the NSC, he was the subject of what the *Washington Post* described as “protracted harassment” when he first arrived in Moscow.

State-supported anti-Americanism has been on the rise in the Russian media, as part of what one U.S. analyst describes as

Social media are a supplement to, not a substitute for, face-to-face meetings and other aspects of traditional public diplomacy.

a “massive propaganda campaign” that has seen the 2012 expulsion of the U.S. Agency for International Development and major civil-society nongovernmental organizations; the Duma’s rush to pass a law banning U.S. adoptions

of Russian orphans; and claims that the State Department had helped organize protests against the alleged falsification of legislative election results in 2011.

That campaign has caused Russian attitudes toward the United States to deteriorate. A survey this past September found that the proportion of Russians who view the United States favorably was just 41 percent, compared with 61 percent a year before. Faced with that trend and the Kremlin’s tightening controls on the Russian media, Embassy Moscow has been seeking new ways to get out its message.

Surveys have indicated that more than two-thirds of Russians get most of their news from television reports, and the Kremlin keeps the national TV networks under strict supervi-



Amb. McFaul responds to a question (projected onto the screen) during a Twitter Q&A session at Embassy Moscow on Nov. 29. To his left is Deputy Press Attaché Stacy Mactaggert.

sion, including coverage of the United States that is frequently biased. While some newspapers and a few FM radio stations provide more balanced coverage, their audiences tend to be limited—reaching mainly young and educated readers, and listeners in large cities.

That leaves social media, whose use has grown tremendously in Russia over the last few years, as perhaps the best approach to avoid Kremlin distortions and communicate directly with the people. Russia has the largest digital audience in Europe, with one survey finding that the proportion of Russians using the Internet jumped from 5 percent in 2001 to 60 percent in 2013.

During that period, the Russian blogosphere mushroomed to more than 14 million blogs featuring a wide variety of viewpoints, including some from outspoken critics of the Kremlin. The vast social media audience is varied, but its most enthusi-

Nearly every section of Embassy Moscow produces regular social media content.

Engaging the Twitterverse

At Embassy Moscow, Amb. McFaul encouraged nearly every section to produce regular social media content, and the economic, cultural, consular, political, environment and science staff have all emerged as regular contributors to the embassy's blogs and Twitter feeds.

While Facebook tends to be reserved for a "soft diplomacy" approach, policy-related themes are often discussed in blogs linked to tweets. The public affairs staff wants to set up an embassy account with Russia's most popular social media network, *VKontakte*, but intellectual property issues have so far prevented that step.

"We try to respond quickly and get our voice into the first

astic participants are younger, well-educated Russians who enjoy platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and blogs.

round of news stories on major issues," says the embassy's press attaché, Joseph Kruzich. He leads a press staff of four Americans and nine Locally Engaged Staff members, several of whom focus on social media and messaging. They have re-energized the embassy's once-sleepy Twitter account, which now reaches more than 15,000 followers, and revamped its Facebook page to appeal more to younger Russians.

Some of the ambassador's tweets—most of which he drafts himself, others with the support of the social media staff—reach an estimated half-million people during a 24-hour news cycle, offering personal comments on his family, music, sports and Russian history. He also makes a point of responding to some tweets and, at times, correcting errors or questionable assertions.

"One of the things that makes Amb. McFaul's account stand out is that he responds regularly to his followers," observes Breton Boudreaux, the social media coordinator for the State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. "If someone says something controversial, he isn't afraid to weigh in. He also has a tough skin. Followers personally attack him, yet he keeps on doing what he is doing."

McFaul got plenty of positive and negative comments when he sent a tweet in 2012 criticizing the unusually harsh sentencing of the Pussy Riot punk-rock performers. His comments were picked up widely in the traditional media, as well.

Over the past year Embassy Moscow has used social media effectively to handle various public diplomacy challenges, including Russia's grant of asylum to Edward Snowden, the White House cancellation of a planned Moscow summit, U.S.-Russian disagreements over responding to the chemical weapons attack in Syria, and some prominent human rights cases in Russia.

A dependable lightning rod for social media commentary has been Moscow lawyer, corruption-fighter and political activist Alexei Navalny—once described by the *Wall Street Journal* as "the man Vladimir Putin fears most" in politics. So it was no surprise that the Russian Twitterverse exploded after McFaul's "apparent political motivations" critique. It became one of the most retweeted comments of the year and was widely quoted in traditional Russian media, as well.

Such tweets on news developments or controversial issues

Stagnation is a no-no in social diplomacy, so building the embassy's audience remains a priority in a country where there are millions of potential—but often fickle—followers.

are the most popular among Russian journalists and social-media followers. But by necessity, much of the embassy's social media tends to focus on drier policy issues.

While McFaul and the embassy often tweet links that can also be found on the State Department site, journalist

Elena Chernenko points out that the ambassador "also tweets lots of interesting insights or comments that are not found anywhere else." EUR's Breton Boudreaux speculates that the tweets' "mix of policy with some insights into his personal life makes him a real human being" for many Russians.

McFaul, who speaks Russian well, is mindful of how important it is to communicate primarily in a nation's own language. So he makes a point of sending out most of his tweets, many of his Facebook posts and all of his blog posts in Russian. The embassy's site has followed that example, as well, translating almost all tweets. While McFaul does occasionally make grammatical mistakes, followers have told him that those small errors actually lend authenticity to his posts.

A Supplement, Not a Substitute

Even though he is a strong believer in the effectiveness of social media platforms in public diplomacy, the ambassador acknowledges limits to their effectiveness. "Finding the correct balance between personal and professional matters is one of the toughest challenges to using these new tools effectively," he says.

The lines between public and private tend to blur in social media, and Amb. McFaul has found that personal information generates the most 'likes' on Facebook and questions from Twitter followers. This is especially evident when he mixes personal observations with wider public policy discussions on his blog (<http://m-mcfaul.livejournal.com/>).

After the Russian Duma adopted a law to ban U.S. adoptions of Russian orphans late in 2012, for example, the ambassador complained that the sensational and, at times, misleading news coverage of a Russian child's death in Texas had been an unfortunate factor in the legislative debate.

Recounting the positive experiences of more than 60,000 Russian children adopted over the years by American parents, McFaul wrote: "It is time for sensational exploitations of human tragedy to end and for professional work between our two



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countries to grow, on this issue and many others."

Both McFaul and Kruzich emphasize that social media are merely a supplement to, not a substitute for, face-to-face meetings and other aspects of traditional public diplomacy. But Kruzich views it as an advance over the slower, press-release/news conference strategy that often is ignored by, or takes longer to be mentioned in, the Russian media. For a February 2013 social media campaign to counter anti-U.S. coverage, the embassy sent tweets for 28 straight days emphasizing positive developments in bilateral relations, ranging from nuclear security to cultural exchanges.

Increasingly, Russian journalists are treating such rapid-fire Twitter exchanges among diplomats as fodder for stories. Still, as Chernenko cautions, social media are "not a replacement for traditional reporting. There is so much unproven information" that needs to be fact-checked.

This is particularly true when some of it comes from the Russian government's own social media sites, which have been trying to catch up to the global "social diplomacy" trend. One of the most aggressive practitioners has been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After Amb. McFaul highlighted the Russian role in pressing the Kyrgyz government to order U.S. forces out of an air base there, the MFA responded by launching a Twitter offensive accusing McFaul of "meddling" in Russian affairs.

In response, the ambassador used his LiveJournal blog to explain that his comments had been a side issue, and noted that he'd mainly intended his speech at Moscow's Higher School of Economics to highlight the progress made in U.S.-Russian relations on some key issues. That helped quiet the flap.

After that social-media exchange, Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt—another member of *Foreign Policy*'s "Twitterati 100"—sent a tweet saying the MFA had "launched a Twitter war" against McFaul. Wrote Bildt: "That's the new world: followers instead of nukes. Better."

The goal of most players in that new world is to recruit such virtual followers, and Embassy Moscow's public affairs staff is looking for new ways to build its audience in 2014. That will include public diplomacy initiatives focused on two major events at the Russian resort and conference center of Sochi: the Winter Olympics in February and the Group of Eight summit there in early June.

Stagnation is a no-no in social diplomacy, so building the embassy's audience remains a priority in a country where there are millions of potential—but often fickle—followers. A pundit once called Twitter "a human seismograph." The challenge is to move the needle in the desired direction. ■

SUCCESS AND GROWING PAINS: OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT STATE

Digital technology, incorporating the most recent developments in social media and mobile applications, is having a profound effect on diplomacy.

BY JESSE SMITH

Diplomacy is a practice as old as nation-states themselves, but the way in which it is performed has changed continuously with time. When the United States and the Soviet Union squared off in the latter half of the twentieth century, using a telephone hotline and imagining what life was like on the other side of the Iron Curtain, few envisioned that only a few decades later technology would make such a situation seem worlds away. It seemed similarly inconceivable that in 2013, social media and other digital technologies would give the Foreign Service and the public virtually limitless access to the lives of individuals and the actions of governments all over the world.

On an informal level, the “blogosphere” is very much a part of

the modern Foreign Service, particularly for those who joined the Service during the past decade and also for those serving in remote places, as *The Foreign Service Journal* has documented in past issues (March 2008, November 2009 and June 2011). The American Foreign Service Association’s website features a comprehensive list of blogs by members of the Foreign Service community that are updated regularly (see p. 30). This list is consistently one of the five most popular pages on the AFSA site.

But digital technology—including the most recent developments in social media and mobile applications, in particular—is having a profound effect on diplomacy at the formal, official level, as well. The new media technologies have already significantly altered how foreign affairs agencies represent themselves and publicize the policies they implement—to other governments and publics, as well as to potential employees. Social media allows more people in more places than ever before to access such messages, and this has permanently reshaped how the State Department and other foreign affairs agencies organize themselves and staff their offices.

While all six foreign affairs agencies represented by AFSA—and AFSA itself—maintain some form of social media presence,

Jesse Smith is a graduate student in national intelligence and security studies at the University of Pittsburgh. He was the Journal's summer 2013 editorial intern.

On an informal level, the “blogosphere” is very much a part of the modern Foreign Service.

the State Department is by far the most active, with hundreds of profiles for nearly all of its various bureaus, embassies, consulates and missions. The U.S. Agency for International Development also maintains a central profile, as well as a separate careers page and pages for most of its international projects.

The four smaller foreign affairs agencies (Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the International Broadcasting Bureau) are harder to locate online, and draw audiences proportionate to their much smaller size. Agencies like IBB and FCS are often simply referenced by profiles associated with their parent agencies (the Broadcasting Board of Governors and Department of Commerce, respectively). Some, like APHIS, have also released relatively simple mobile applications.

In contrast, because it is so much larger and has actively sought to enhance public diplomacy by embracing digital technologies, the State Department's new media network reaching out to foreign and domestic publics is wide. State maintains an array of social media profiles numbering in the hundreds, along with some cutting-edge mobile apps to meet the demand for ever-quicker responses to events.

These efforts bring attention to U.S. policy, to the department and to the Foreign Service, but their development and marketing require funds and personnel. Tight budgets can limit online activity. In addition, crafting workable guidelines for the use of social media has caused significant headaches for public diplomacy practitioners.

Social Media and Public Diplomacy

Before Facebook and Twitter made communicating with people around the world easy (and helped fuel historic events, as appears to have happened in the Arab world and elsewhere), diplomacy relied more exclusively on words and ideas exchanged in person between select individuals, wherever they were accessible. Today, thoughts can be exchanged between anyone with an Internet connection.

The State Department has leapt into engagement in public diplomacy, proliferating social media accounts and reorganizing the bureaus, such as International Information Programs, that manage them. There are more than 200 Facebook pages and 120 Twitter

accounts for U.S. embassies and consulates alone. Dozens of U.S. missions now have profiles on Flickr and Tumblr, and a growing number are creating profiles on YouTube, Instagram and even Pinterest. As of November, there were 20 official blogs (*DipNote* being the first) run out of the State Department in Washington, D.C.

A comprehensive list of the department's social media profiles can be found at www.state.gov/r/pa/ode/socialmedia. These foreign-focused pages based at posts around the world serve several purposes. Often relaying local news and policy, sometimes in the host-country language in addition to English, they enable foreign audiences to acquaint themselves with the United States and American officials who introduce themselves online. The social media profiles also enable locals to monitor U.S. policies as applied within their countries. While access to these pages, and thus the number of their fans or followers, vary from country to country, State has prided itself on giving local populations a window through which to appreciate the work of the U.S. Foreign Service.

As stations of assistance and resources for Americans living and working abroad, diplomatic posts also use social media to serve expatriates and Foreign Service employees in these countries. The usual content of their Facebook and Twitter pages ranges from daily updates on State policy and highlights of new programs and diplomatic visits—perhaps an address by #SecState @JohnKerry or #POTUS @BarackObama—to critical information disseminated during emergency situations.

On July 3, 2013, for instance, when the Muslim Brotherhood was deposed by Egyptian armed forces, Embassy Cairo regularly updated its Facebook and Twitter pages. Even after the embassy evacuation, day-to-day updates continued. Facebook and Twitter also provided an emergency number for American citizens who needed to speak with a duty officer, and kept their audience updated on all official announcements by the White House and the State Department regarding the coup and resulting incidents.

This points to another use of social media: for consular work. Through social media U.S. missions can reach out to the American community in most countries more quickly than ever before: the old phone trees could only spread the word one phone call at a time.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs is already quite active on social media. Travel.gov, CA's travel information service, has a Facebook page and a Twitter feed. The Smart Traveler app from CA was introduced in 2011, providing useful information by country including "Know before You Go," fact sheets on U.S. relations with the country and information on contacting the local U.S. embassy or consulate. The app was recently taken offline for "redevelopment," but will be relaunched in the coming months.

There are more than 200 Facebook pages and 120 Twitter accounts for U.S. embassies and consulates alone.

Now Hiring

Digital technology has its place in public diplomacy, but it also plays an important role in the Foreign Service agencies' domestic outreach and recruitment operations. Recruitment, in particular, has been drastically transformed in recent years with expansion of the use of social media and mobile applications to reach a broad audience of potential candidates with information about the Foreign Service career and hiring process.

The State Department's *DOS Careers* mobile application is the only federal government careers-focused app and one of a kind in promoting Foreign Service careers. In a review of the app, *Nextgov* says it "offers everything a prospective Foreign Service officer could want, from an overview of the department's roles and responsibilities to sample questions from the service's entrance exam."

DOS Careers provides multimedia information about all of the State Foreign Service career tracks, including videos of current employees talking about their jobs. It offers case studies that familiarize users with the day-to-day challenges of Foreign Service work. The app is free (and quite large at 50 MB) and available for both Apple and Android devices. (For more on the launch of this app, see the Talking Points item in the April 2013 *FSJ*.)

DOS Careers is a project of the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment. This office is also responsible for State's careers pages on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, which have greatly evolved since the office began its social media outreach in 2005.

HR/REE's Rachel Friedland stresses that social media represents only one of several communications channels the division utilizes to reach target audiences who may be interested in employment with the State Department. Various age groups can be reached, especially younger ones, and messages can be customized for specific groups and organizations. The recruitment division is particularly committed to attracting a diverse set of potential candidates for employment.

Diplomats in Residence, who serve under the HR/REE umbrella in universities around the country and are focused on conducting recruitment outreach, host their own regional Facebook pages. The DIRs engage with both those considering a Foreign Service career

Continued on page 32

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The Foreign Service Blogosphere in 2013

The American Foreign Service Association website features links to more than 150 active blogs of members of the Foreign Service community. The FS Blogs list ranks consistently among the top five most popular pages on the AFSA site.

The blogs are presented by the agency of the blogger. The list is further divided into sections for spouses, both spouses (where they share a single blog), families, opinion, resources, critical perspectives and other blogs. FS bloggers share stories, pictures, videos, articles and sometimes even opinions on matters relating to their service. While social media has become the standard means of online group interaction, blogging continues to expand as a way for members of the FS community to reach out to each other and to the public.

Personal journals remain the most popular types of blogs for FS members, likely due to the exciting places their careers take them and the unique sights and experiences that they encounter at each post. The journal is just what it sounds like: bloggers like *Rock Star in Dhaka* and *A Diplomat's Wife*, for example, chronicle their lives with the Foreign Service.

For members of the Foreign Service, reading through these blogs is like peering into the lives of colleagues who may share similar, as well as entirely different types of, experiences. For those outside of the Foreign Service, browsing the FS blogosphere offers an invaluable window into the lives of officers, specialists and family members. Some readers may simply be interested in what this lifestyle is like; perhaps more, however, use these blogs to investigate a prospective career path or prepare themselves for what lies ahead as part of a Foreign Service family.

Other active and retired FS members choose to use their blog space as a platform for publishing opinions on foreign policy and other current events. These critical blogs are often anonymous and are almost always marked by a disclaimer distinguishing the author's opinion from the official stance of the agency for which they work or worked. Active-duty FS employees, in particular, face challenges when writing about sensitive topics, especially in cases where their personal opinions conflict with official policy.

Despite such obstacles, these bloggers usually do an artful job of articulating their thoughts and provide insightful com-

mentary without undermining the institution or its agencies. For example, *Consul at Arms II* is a long-time anonymous blogger writing about current controversies in the Foreign Service community, and *The Will and the Wallet* takes an almost exclusively critical look at foreign policy issues from a budgetary perspective.

The depth of the Foreign Service blogosphere is provided by the wide range of stories and situations represented within it. For those contemplating joining the blogging community, getting started with a new blog is as easy as visiting one of the more popular blog-hosting sites, like Google's Blogger or WordPress, and signing up.

These sites allow users to customize their blog spaces and make it easy to socialize with other bloggers. The sites also outline their privacy settings so that individual users can choose the level of privacy that best suits them.

The Foreign Service blogosphere is a tight-knit, yet welcoming community. Joining your colleagues on the AFSA list is one more way to generate traffic on your blog and introduce yourself to active-duty, retired and prospective Foreign Service members and bloggers.

When you do set up your blog, be sure to let AFSA know so we can include it on the Foreign Service Blogs page. The State Department careers site, where all candidates must go to register for the FS exam, links directly to the AFSA FS blog list.

Here is a sampling of the more than 150 blogs linked from AFSA's Foreign Service Blogs page, at www.afsa.org/foreign_service_blogs.aspx.

DipNote

This is the official blog of the State Department, featuring stories from many authors regarding today's top issues facing the department and other topics related to foreign policy or employment in the Foreign Service. It serves as one of State's many social media outlets and provides wonderful images and thoughtful writing on many different subjects, albeit with little controversy.

Ambassador's Blog

Luis E. Arreaga, until last November U.S. ambassador to Iceland and previously head of the recruitment division, is one of several ambassadors maintaining a blog of their experiences. As heads of mission, they are extremely diplomatic in

their presentation but give readers access to their day-to-day activities. Photos and accounts of mountainous excursions and popular local festivities are among the interesting things that can be expected on an ambassadorial blog space.

Tabbies in Tow

One of the more unusual blogs around, this one chronicles a couple and their three tabby cats as they serve at a Mexican consulate. It is an archetypical example of the unique Foreign Service journal, this one by a traveling couple, who live not-so-average lives abroad and bring a familiar part of their domestic lives—their cats—along with them.

GlobeHoppers

Some spouses put up with more challenges than others. This wife of an FSO has travelled the world with her husband and four children for 10 years, having documented their adventures throughout. Her blog details the difficulties and rewards of being an FS spouse and raising a family in such a dynamic and demanding environment.

DiploPundit

Domani Spero, a pseudonym meaning “tomorrow, I hope,” is responsible for this extremely popular, critical blog pertaining to any and all dilemmas facing the Foreign Service. This former globe-trotter, self-proclaimed Foggy Bottom worrywart and now-full-time blogger calls on readers to submit their thoughtful rants for publication and is often cited and quoted by other, well-known blogs and websites.

The World According to Bill Fisher

Regrettably, William Fisher, a retired FSO who worked with the State Department, USAID and the United Nations, passed away in June. His blog, however, lives on as a wonderful source of stories by a man with a lifetime of experience with the Foreign Service and foreign relations of a past generation. More than 1,000 posts dating back to 2003 trace the life of this accomplished diplomat.

— Jesse Smith

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Continued from page 29

and those already well along in the selection and hiring process. Through social media, the DIRs (who number less than 20) have been able to expand their reach significantly.

The State Department can be found on nearly every major social media platform. But for now, the Bureau of Human Resources relies solely on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn for recruitment purposes. The outreach is targeted and done on a minimal budget (\$3,000 for Fiscal Year 2013). Friedland tells the *Journal* that the office's goal is to ensure that all those who recruit are fully engaged on these sites before moving on to other platforms. She adds, "We haven't reached that goal, yet, but are making great progress."

Buying "Likes"

Overall, the State Department has been a leader among federal agencies in use of social media. But a May 2013 report from State's Office of the Inspector General brought some unwelcome publicity and criticism of the Bureau of International Information Programs. IIP is one of three bureaus reporting to the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, along with the Bureau of Public Affairs and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

IIP is responsible for operating the "infrastructure for the State Department's 450 embassy and consulate websites that attract more than 340,000 visitors each day in 59 languages," according to the State Department website. IIP is the department's "foreign-facing public diplomacy communications bureau. It provides and supports the places, content and infrastructure needed for sustained conversations with foreign audiences to build America's reputation abroad."

The OIG report strongly criticized IIP for excessive spending on social media, a lack of strategic priorities and poor management. According to the report, which caused a stir in the press last summer, IIP spent approximately \$630,000 on advertising to harvest Facebook "likes" between 2011 and 2013.

Although the IIP Facebook campaign "succeeded" (the audiences of two of its Facebook pages increased from 100,000 to two million during that time), the spending raised questions about the broader aim of online public diplomacy. Do "likes" translate into true "engagement," and what kind of engagement is actually useful? Do more "likes" pay off in terms of influence on public opinion, or do they represent the ability to succeed in a more shallow online popularity contest? Does State wish to draw attention from the primarily youth audience of social media, or should it instead be investing in mediums that reach a smaller number of older, more influential individuals?

These questions are relevant not only for IIP, but for all the

Foreign Service offices and agencies establishing public identities online. They also cohere with the OIG's first recommendation—to develop a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy linking resources to priorities. Quoting the report:

"The absence of a departmentwide public diplomacy strategy tying resources to priorities directly affects IIP's work. Fundamental questions remain unresolved. What is the proper balance between engaging young people and marginalized groups versus elites and opinion leaders? Which programs and delivery mechanisms work best with which audiences? What proportion of PD resources should support policy goals, and what proportion should go to providing the context of American society and values?"

"How much should PD products be tailored for regions and individual countries, and how much should they be directed to a global audience? What kinds of materials should IIP translate and into which languages? Absent a departmentwide strategy, IIP decisions and priorities can be ad hoc, arbitrary and lack a frame of reference to evaluate the bureau's effectiveness."

While not all public diplomacy projects are oriented around the use of social media, the OIG report claims that these online projects contributed to inefficiencies in other areas. The OIG suggests that once State addresses the questions raised in its report, it will move one step closer to defining the mission of its digital diplomacy campaigns and thereby assisting IIP (and other) employees in developing concrete tasks and meaningful benchmarks of success.

Who's in Charge Here?

The staff of IIP must balance traditional forms of public diplomacy with constantly developing and shifting digital trends, the OIG found. At the same time, they suffer from "reorganization fatigue" and what some have described as a toxic atmosphere, with a management that is often unprofessional and intolerant of dissenting opinion, according to the report.

IIP is sometimes viewed as the "redheaded stepchild of public diplomacy," according to a source quoted by John Hudson in *The Cable* (foreignpolicy.com) on July 21. The bureau is overseen by the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, a position that has been vacant 30 percent of the time since 1999 and has never been filled by a career diplomat.

State publicly places a great deal of importance on its public outreach programs, including steadfastly defending IIP's social media projects following the release of the OIG report. So many wonder why the bureau has had only sporadic leadership, with the bureau coordinator often left without direction.

Jurisdictional issues also plague the bureau because its mandate has been so poorly defined. It faces competition in the field of pub-

lic diplomacy from external agencies, like the Broadcasting Board of Governors, as well as the public affairs divisions of other foreign affairs agencies. Internally, there is overlap between IIP and two other bureaus: Public Affairs and Educational and Cultural Affairs. It is worth noting that IIP is the only one of the three PD bureaus that is not headed by an assistant secretary; it is run by a coordinator.

IIP is supposed to have jurisdiction over presenting and explaining U.S. policy to foreign audiences through social media, and it runs a project designed to help embassies and consulates find and post material to their social media profiles. Yet in practice it has been confined to supplying innocuous material that does little to explain State's intentions abroad—"like videos of bald eagles in flight, National Donut Day in the U.S. or youth entrepreneurship," according to one IIP employee quoted by John Hudson.

In place of focusing on adding depth to the Foreign Service's social media domains, IIP utilizes resources for this and projects like its 20/100/100 program—helping 20 posts at a time increase their fan base by 100 percent in 100 days—which seems to contribute only superficially to public diplomacy.

Despite its questionable spending on advertisement, however, IIP is responsible for numerous social media outlets that have connected the Foreign Service with millions around the world. The value of digital public diplomacy cannot be quantified by Facebook "likes," but is evident in the department's enhanced foreign interaction and accessibility.

Moving in the Right Direction

Today's online technologies have inundated the Foreign Service, and they are here to stay. While the OIG report was scathing in its assessment of State's most tech-savvy bureau, it also offered practical recommendations for fixing problems and building on the real progress to date. It could help the bureau and the department shape the overall digital agenda.

A new coordinator, Macon Phillips, took over IIP in September 2013, but three of the seven top positions remained vacant as of December. Phillips comes to State from the White House, where he was director of digital strategy and a senior adviser to President Obama; and the other three senior officials in IIP are Foreign Service officers, two of them senior officers.

The State Department, along with every "social media functional bureau" within it, steadfastly views social media as the future of public diplomacy. After observing the advances the department has made in utilizing the technology—and after looking at the pace of digital trends outside of the Foreign Service, all over the world, it is hard to disagree. ■



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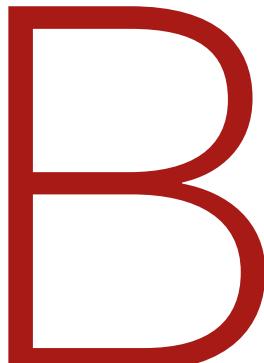


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AFSA'S SOCIAL MEDIA ROUNDUP

Changing times call for changing attitudes toward member engagement. Here is a report on AFSA's first four years of experience in the growing world of social media.

BY ÁSGEIR SIGFÚSSON



Both as a professional association and a labor union, AFSA has sought to communicate freely and regularly with members ever since its founding in 1924. Starting with telegrams, airgrams and letters in our earliest days, we have utilized many forms of communication over the past nine decades. (Who can forget the heyday of the Telex machine?)

Since the mid-1990s, AFSA has maintained a website and made extensive use of e-mail to reach members. While those are still our most important methods of reaching out to the membership—65 percent of which is abroad at any given time—changing times call for changing attitudes toward member engagement. That is why, in mid-2009, AFSA made the decision to join the growing world of social media.

Joining the Fray

Our first platform was Facebook, which at the time was by far the most dominant social network. Initially a favorite of teenagers and 20-somethings, Facebook has now matured significantly. Accord-

ing to April 2013 data from “computational knowledge engine” Wolfram Alpha, the average age of a Facebook user is now about 26 years, compared to about 20 at its inception.

Obviously, the original users have gotten older, which helps raise the average age, but there has also been a large influx of users over 50 who join Facebook to keep up with family, friends and co-workers, both near and far. As it has matured, its content has become somewhat more balanced between the frivolous and the more substantive information ranging from news to discussions.

For AFSA, Facebook has provided an excellent way to reinforce information disseminated through other means, as well as to provide an outlet for news and event information that may not fit into regular e-mail messages, on the AFSA website or in *The Foreign Service Journal*. This content includes news items of interest to the Foreign Service community, photos and videos from AFSA events, quick updates and reminders about our programs, and “human interest” stories from the Foreign Service world. Even without doing much publicity, we are closing in on 5,000 followers (equivalent to about 31 percent of the AFSA membership).

More than half of our followers are in the 25-44 age bracket; we have more female followers than the average Facebook page; and we do very well with users over the age of 65. We have been very pleased with the level of engagement Facebook affords us in connecting one-on-one with AFSA members from all over the United States and around the world.

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Facebook has also been crucial to our efforts to engage the public, specifically the high school and college student segments. We diligently post links to programs, events and information of interest to those audiences in order to encourage their interest in the Foreign Service. This includes our national high school essay contest, information on internships in foreign affairs, and often fairly general information on Foreign Service life. We plan to continue our outreach to those groups using Facebook as a primary outlet.

AFSA's Facebook pages for *The Foreign Service Journal* and for Foreign Service Books/*Inside a U.S. Embassy* have also proven to be popular with AFSA members and, more significantly, with non-Foreign Service Facebook users, who include students and others interested in the Foreign Service from around the world. As of mid-December, the *Journal* Facebook page had 5,251 likes, while the *Inside a U.S. Embassy* book page had 4,186. Although there is some overlap between the pages—and we do share postings from time to time—the audiences for each page vary quite a bit.

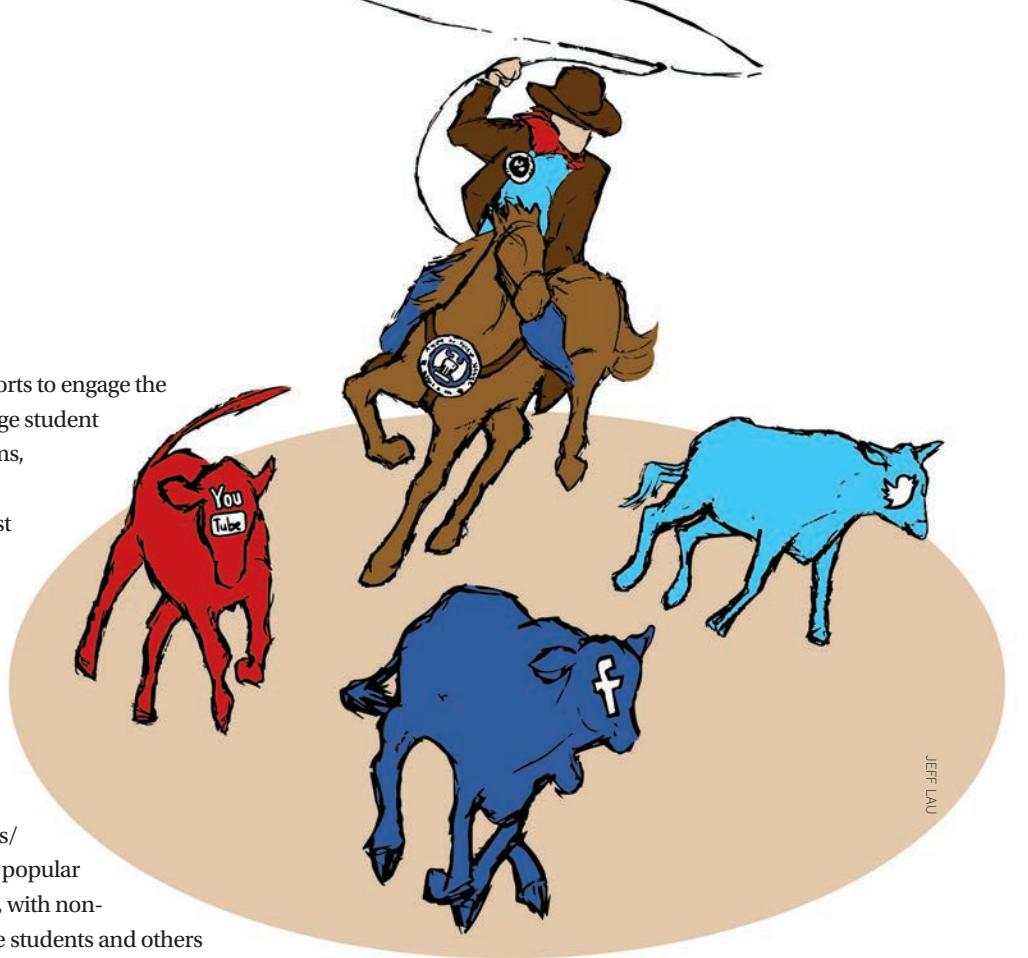
Following the Little Blue Bird

Our next venture was to join Twitter in early 2011, just as it began taking off. It has now overtaken Facebook in popularity among teens and those under 30. According to a study Pingdom conducted in 2012, the average age of Twitter users is 37—but even as the average age of Facebook users is rising, the average age of Twitter subscribers is going in the opposite direction. In fact, teens are flocking (pun intended!) to Twitter at record rates.

In addition, more women than men use Twitter; well over half of AFSA's nearly 700 Twitter followers are women, and the average age is just over 40. Among our followers, you'll also find a large number of organizations, agency offices and bureaus, embassies and consulates, and foreign affairs watchers. This network of connections has a multiplying effect that takes our message to an even wider audience.

Quite honestly, it took us a while to figure out the best way to make use of Twitter's strictly enforced 140-character limit and immediacy. The Foreign Service tends to rely on the written word fairly heavily, so the succinctness of this particular platform took some getting used to. Over time, though, it has become an important tool in our communications kit.

In addition to serving as reinforcement for messages from our website and e-mails to the membership, we are now using Twitter



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quite heavily to push the excellent content from the pages of *The Foreign Service Journal* out to various audiences. Each month, we tweet out every single feature article and column from the new issue, making use of hashtags and Twitter handles to catch the attention of those we think might appreciate the content.

For instance, our October issue featured an article about Togo by a retired USAID Foreign Service officer and returned Peace Corps Volunteer. Our tweet about it included the Twitter handles for USAID (@USAID) and the Peace Corps (@PeaceCorps), prompting both agencies to retweet the notice to their respective followers. This ensured that more than 850,000 individuals saw a link to that article appear in their Twitter feed.

This illustrates how AFSA can best use Twitter—as a means of engaging outside audiences by pushing our content directly to them. If you are on Twitter, we hope you will follow us @afsatweets.

Moving Pictures!

AFSA joined YouTube in 2011. Most Internet users are familiar with this site; in fact, you've probably viewed a video there without realizing it. But AFSA uses YouTube in a very specific way, which was well defined from the very beginning: making all AFSA events here in Washington available for online viewing by the general public and our members outside the Washington, D.C., area.

We have been very pleased with the results. With a minimal resource and time investment, our events have been viewed almost 10,000 times in two years. This expands the reach of our programming tenfold, at the very least. Our most popular YouTube video is still our April 2012 panel discussion on third-culture children in the

AFSA Guidance on Personal Use of Social Media

We are fortunate to live in a world where innovative technology allows us to communicate in new and wondrous ways. Social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs now allow us to communicate instantaneously with potentially thousands of “fans” and “followers.” Just as the State Department and the other foreign affairs agencies have embraced these new communication tools, many of our members are using innovative ways to connect with audiences in their private and professional capacities.

AFSA supports the use of social media. But any form of communication—social media, telephone, e-mail or just old-fashioned conversations—is governed by social norms and etiquette, and requires good judgment and common sense. Anyone who has ever said something they wish they hadn’t, tried to recall an e-mail sent in haste, or deleted a comment on Facebook understands the impact that the spoken and written word can have in our personal and professional lives. Electronic media—particularly anything broadcast over the Internet—present their own unique perils and challenges. As the saying goes, “What happens on the Internet, stays on the Internet.”

AFSA is currently examining the evolving issue of the use of social media by Foreign Service employees. In the meantime, we offer these words of advice to any of our members who are currently or planning to use social media, particularly blogs:

Read the Existing Regulations. The current regulations regarding the use of social media can be found in the Foreign Affairs Manual at 5 FAM 790, “Using Social Media.” See also 3 FAM 4170, “Official Clearance of Speaking, Writing and Teaching.” Although we understand that some of these rules, with their cross-references to other FAM citations, are confusing, we strongly recommend that any AFSA member using social media—especially where the lines between professional, personal and private use may be blurred—read them. And if you don’t understand something, ask.

Avoid Divulging Private and Confidential Information.

Here is where many people run afoul of the regulations. Be sure not to divulge any confidential or personally identifiable information. Examples of these include but are not limited to visa cases, information about other individuals or classified information (for example, linking to WikiLeaks.)

Remember That You Are a Foreign Service U.S. Government Employee.

Even though you may have the required disclaimer on your blog, be aware that the public still may not differentiate between your official and private views. You should be mindful of the weight of your expressed views as a U.S. government official, particularly when your blog uses the “hook” of your Foreign Service connections to attract readers.

Review Your Privacy Settings. Make sure you are aware of the privacy settings of the social media platform you are using and how to adjust them. Platforms such as Facebook often change these settings without informing users. Periodic review of these settings is important, and we recommend having them set to the highest levels. For blogs, you may even want to consider restricting access so that only your family, friends and colleagues have access.

Use Good Judgment. We can’t emphasize this enough. As we noted above, all forms of human communication require good judgment, tact, etc. And what happens on the Internet, stays on the Internet. When in doubt, leave it out.

Contact Us If You Have Problems. If you are an AFSA member and are approached by management or the Bureau of Diplomatic Security regarding your use of social media, be sure to contact us so that we can assist you.

We hope the above information is useful. We do want to hear from our members regarding this evolving issue. If you have a concern or opinion regarding the use of social media, please let us know via member@afsa.org or call us at (202) 338-4045. For assistance with issues related to social media, please contact our labor management office at (202) 647-8160 or e-mail AFSA’s lead attorney on the issue, Raeka Safai, at SafaiR@state.gov.

The September 2012 guidance from the Department of State, “Social Media Dos and Don’ts,” might also be helpful.

Facebook has been crucial to our efforts to engage the public, specifically the high school and college student segments.

Foreign Service, which has drawn more than 1,000 views thus far.

In addition to our YouTube channel (which you will find under "afsatube"), we also post our videos on Facebook and the AFSA website for even further outreach possibilities.

Word to the Wise: Join, but Use Caution

The Foreign Service is full of tech-savvy folks who are members of numerous social networks, ranging from the most popular to some of the more obscure ones. Overall, this is a highly positive development. Many of our members serve in remote places where phone connections are not always reliable, and social media are an efficient and easily available avenue for communicating with family and friends at home, as well as colleagues around the world.

While AFSA is a private entity and not governed by federal rules and regulations regarding the use of social media, our active-duty

members are completely bound by those rules. Because there is little if any separation between our members' private and public personas on social media, AFSA has noticed an increased scrutiny of individuals by the department as a result of their use of these platforms.

In response, AFSA has prepared comprehensive guidance (see p. 36 and the AFSA website), which we hope will assist our members in understanding what is acceptable and what is not on social media.

Relevant FAM sections for official and personal use of social media include: 5 FAM 770, "Federal Web Sites"; 5 FAM 790, "Using Social Media"; 3 FAM 4170, "Official Clearance of Speaking, Writing and Teaching"; and 10 FAM 130, "Remarks and Writings for the Media and General Public." The Department of State is currently working with AFSA to revamp 3 FAM 4170 to make it more "user friendly" and practical in light of the increased use of social media by department employees. In the meantime, the June 9, 2009, edition of 3 FAM 4170 is the version that is enforced.

Overall, social media outlets have been beneficial for the Foreign Service. They have made life overseas easier and separation from loved ones a bit more bearable. However, we encourage all members to acquaint themselves with the (regularly updated) regulations regarding this area.

Social Media for Dummies

The story of **Facebook** began in February 2004 in a Harvard University dorm room. Mark Zuckerberg and his roommates Eduardo Saverin, Chris Hughes and Dustin Moskovitz wanted to create a universal "face book" within Harvard. By March of that year, more than half of Harvard's undergraduate population was registered on www.thefacebook.com. After purchasing the URL, www.facebook.com, for \$200,000, the company expanded to many other American universities and on to Europe. In 2006 Facebook became available to the general public, allowing it to grow to 100 million users in 2008. Today, about 1.2 billion users are registered to Facebook, more than 720 million of whom log in on a daily basis, and 80 percent of its users reside outside of the U.S. and Canada.

YouTube was founded a year after Facebook, in February 2005, by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, who initially worked together for the online payment service PayPal. The first video on their page was *Me at the Zoo*, uploaded by Jawed Karim. (The video shows Karim at the San Diego Zoo and can still be viewed there.)

The website's popularity quickly rose, making it the fastest growing site on the Web by the summer of 2006. Just 20 months after its founding, YouTube was purchased by Google for \$1.65 billion in stock. Since then, the website has continued to grow: more than six billion videos are watched each month and its users upload 100 hours of video every minute.

Twitter started as an in-company communication service for the podcasting company Odeo. Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams and Biz Stone launched the service in March 2006. The first ever tweet was Dorsey's "just setting up my twttr" on March 21, 2006. In 2010, more than 70,000 users tweeted at least a hundred daily messages.

Today, Twitter has more than 200 million registered users, who tweet at least half a million times a day. The record for the most tweets per second was set on Jan. 1, 2013, in Japan: In the moment the New Year began there, the site registered 33,388 tweets per second.

—Compiled by Communications Intern Julian Steiner

Unexpected Benefits

Sometimes, unfolding events have a way of showing you a new benefit of a technology you've been using for a while. During the government shutdown this past October, AFSA was able to make use of our social media platforms to push information, guidance and resources to our members who were blocked from accessing their work e-mail.

While we diligently utilized e-mail to provide this same information to members, using Facebook and Twitter to amplify the message and ensure its reach to furloughed individuals allowed us to realize just how useful these new ways of communication can be. Based on feedback from members, AFSA was able to provide information that the foreign affairs agencies either could or would not provide. Social media will play an important role in any shutdowns or similar situations in the future.

Partly for that reason, we are constantly monitoring social media trends to understand which emerging platforms would fit within our communications toolkit. For us to add a new

medium, it will ideally hit that demographic sweet spot at which we joined Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The number of users is rising, the resources are globally available, and they attract more than just the eager, early-adopting pre-teen and teenage crowds.

We are also considering joining LinkedIn, as it fits the professional profile of our membership. For the time being, we have no plans to join Pinterest, but we expect to participate in a photo-sharing social network, such as Flickr, in the near future.

Another platform we have considered joining, but have rejected for the time being, is Instagram. While it is currently the fastest-growing social network, its average current user is a 16-year-old female. That's not exactly AFSA's target demographic!

We intend to keep our social media options open for the future so that we can engage our members wherever they are in significant numbers. For now, we hope you'll join the conversation online and follow AFSA on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. ■



THIS IS HOW WE TWEET

Twitter meets the State Department bureaucracy.

BY BEN EAST

A

ssistant Secretary Crickshaw wants to tweet. His request (order) reaches us in Electronic Media via the staff aides in the front office, setting in motion a whole series of actions that repeat the actions of the day before and the day before that, all the way back to the day we first tweeted, which nobody knows exactly when that was.

First, we initiate the Interagency Process to gather the Briefing Checklist, the Scene Setter, the Draft Remarks and all other documents related to the event the assistant secretary wants to have us tweet for him about. We then consult the lead office (in this case, Youth Rights/Worldwide Engagement/Sports Organizations/Diplomacy for Underserved Males—YR/WE/SO/DUM) for an analysis of the pros and cons of tweeting. The analysis is strictly pro forma, of course: we have our orders. So we will complete the process per the standard operating proce-



Kudos for USG @AmbCrickshaw supporting education. #Education #Girlchild #Boychild #BagofWind @GoUSA

dure, right down to tweeting at the exact second of the precise minute of the chosen hour, no sooner and no later, as presented in the Tweet Strategy Timeline, which we are about to draft.

While YR/WE/SO/DUM completes the analysis, there is time for a quick cup of coffee and lemon pound cake from one of the many Starbucks within acceptable range (7 minutes) of the office. Upon return, we open the requested documents, unless they haven't arrived, in which case we send a second (but not yet shrill) request, and then call the staff aides or drafters or clearers for bootleg copies that might be stuck somewhere in the process.

The Scene Setter tells us why the assistant secretary is involved in a particular program, and should contain the nuts and bolts on audience and message. Without reading the Scene Setter we have no idea when, where, why or how the assistant secretary is giving a speech, signing an accord, lobbying for war, etc., and therefore can make no logical recommendation about possible tweets in the Tweet Recommendation Package that has been requested (ordered).

Next we review the Draft Remarks, which are probably different from what will become the Cleared Remarks, which we will only get at the very last minute. But draft remarks will give us an idea of what the assistant secretary wants us to say for him about a particular issue, which we already probably know from previ-

Ben East is currently serving in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research. He joined the Foreign Service in 2002, and has also served as an assistant information officer in Mexico City, information officer in Accra, cultural affairs officer in Managua and consular officer in Jeddah. "This Is How We Tweet" is a work of fiction; Mr. East has never run the Twitter clearance process for an assistant secretary of any kind, real or imagined. His articles have appeared previously in The Foreign Service Journal, and his short stories have appeared in the online literary journals Atticus Review and Umbrella Factory Magazine.

For the clearances that haven't come in, it is time to send that shrill e-mail demanding clearance as soon as possible.

ous clearances, but want to confirm because of what happened to us the last time we made an assumption. Finally, we consult the timeline in the program and decide on a suitable point at which to tweet the key message.

Justification

Now we are ready to draft, in rank order, three to five proposed tweets of 140 characters or less each, using no symbols, slang, acronyms (except USA and USG), emoticons or other non-standard American English grammar constructions (contractions and ampersands are OK, but "OK" is not). For each proposed tweet, we assign a proposed time for the tweet to be sent, with a brief explanation in 50 words or fewer of how the order creates a holistic message consistent with other messaging—even though we know that only one tweet has been requested and that therefore only one tweet will be used. This document is called the Tweet Strategy Timeline.

The next part is tricky. In the next part we draft the Justification. We must justify this request from the assistant secretary through the staff aides to us, for him. It's not the assistant secretary's job to justify his own requests. Justification is necessary, however, in the event that someone else of significant rank asks about the tweet.

The tricky part is that the assistant secretary must approve all justifications done for him by others. Devising justifications requires guesswork and, in the absence of strategy, assumptions, which as we've noted can be hazardous. The danger exists that the rationale won't be strong enough to convince the assistant secretary (who had the idea in the first place) that it was a good one, which in principle is like saying it is a bad idea, which is a definite no-no.

Once we have a strong justification, we send the Tweet Recommendation Package around to every section and agency with a stake in the program, always including the regional bureaus for approval at the country desk level, since everything we do is scrutinized for potential insult to our partner nations; to the public affairs office; and to our colleagues in Print, YR/WE/SO/DUM and all the substantive principal deputy assistant secretaries and deputy assistant secretaries. We copy the staff aides so they can track the progress and not call us for updates while we wait.

There is no waiting in this office, even after we send around our Tweet Recommendation Packages for clearance. While the Package is out for clearance, we begin clearing the dozen or so other Packages that have come in from other sections and agencies, including Briefing Checklists, Scene Setters and the dreaded press releases from the guys in Print.

The Print Shop

Boy, do they have it rough over in Print! While our products are limited to 140 characters, the Print guys' pieces run between 500 and 1,000 *words*. This leaves more than enough room for criticism from everyone in the clearance process—from those already too busy with their own drafting of Packages to catch any errors all the way up to the assistant secretary himself, who isn't busy at all and therefore easily picks apart the 1,000-word press releases without even reading them, since he has his staff aides for that.

True, the folks in Print aren't doing Strategies, Timelines or Justifications. But in addition to their press releases (of which there can be half a dozen per day), they are creating Packages for op-eds, public remarks and advertisements soliciting funds to support our various public-private partnerships. The folks in Print spend hours on the telephone with staffers from our embassies and consulates and with host governments, gathering quotes, bilateral agreement, photos, and so on, for inclusion in their releases. As a rule we clear on all of Print's stuff first, since they are our brethren and we feel their pain most acutely. Sometimes we have to fill in for them.

Next we clear on Packages from Culture, since they are our next closest kin in public affairs, and we know their programs—youth exchanges such as the one we're working up this tweet for, visiting scholars, artists on tour and American thematic experts on core topics like the spread of democracy (tempered by a respect for the sovereignty of nations), the assurance of human rights (tempered by respect for animal and environmental rights) and prosperity for all (tempered by the understanding that prosperity is simply not possible for all). Then we take on the clearances from other sections and agencies in rank order by deadline, avoiding the most poorly written material for as long as we can.

The Afternoon Rush

By the time lunch is over (sandwich, apple and water at the desk), it is time to follow up with others for their clearance on our Tweet Recommendation Package. Hopefully we have most clearances by now and we can just send the Package forward, marked FOR EXECUTIVE CLEARANCE, for the staff aides to print and put on the assistant secretary's desk. The assistant secretary only



Good news @AmbCrickshaw
#Democracy #Jobs #Climate #Educ. #Etc. Hear
new reasons to #Love USA @#AmbCrickshaw
listening tour #AmericaSpeaks2Youth #BagofWind

clears on hard copy, which is then sent back down electronically as a PDF filled with scrawled notes that require us to squint and hold up the pages to the light for interpretation. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

For the clearances that haven't come in, it is time to send that shrill e-mail demanding clearance as soon as possible and putting a default clearance time in the subject of the e-mail, followed by a phone call. It can be useful to paste the contents of the package into the body of the e-mail. This is so the material can be read and cleared more easily via BlackBerry, or smartphone, in the unlikely event that someone in the clearance process actually managed to leave the building to interact with contractors, think-tank experts or foreign diplomats assigned to the embassies all around town.

Once the default hour has elapsed, we walk around our own office to confirm our internal clearances, saving the acting office director for last. The later we get to her, the more likely it is that she'll be lost at the bottom of a pile of other clearances from all her work as deputy director, in addition to the added responsibilities of being the acting head of office. Getting her clearance then will be as simple as looking through her office door to confirm that she is still alive.

With messages of 140 characters or less, we are usually the first in line at the front office suite when the staff aides invite us to review our Tweet Recommendation Package with the assistant secretary. If we have fallen behind, then by the time we get there, the assistant secretary's suite on the Sixth Floor is a maelstrom of nervous energy emitted by the other bureaucrats knocking the parquet floors with the heels of their patent-leather shoes as they wait their turn for review.

Nobody makes eye contact or shares more than a few innocuous words of greeting as they pace, until the office management specialist appears at the entrance and invites in the next victim. It can be tragic to watch successive officers emerge, increasingly sullen as the afternoon wears on—except, of course, for the political counselor approaching retirement who is already numb from a lifetime of criticism.

To the Inner Sanctum

But if, as usual, we are invited early, we cruise across the parquet floors past the staff aides' watchful eyes and enter the Inner

Sanctum of U.S. Policy Formulation and Implementation (as the assistant secretary himself refers to his office). The large, wood-lined room is filled with the evidence of a lifetime of schmoozing in foreign capitals.

Most prominent are the rusty spur of a Paraguayan general killed in the Chaco War, a copy of the Bible from the Vatican signed by the Pope, a folded Old Glory that once flew over the embassy in Berlin and is now retired to a tricorner case and, next to the sofas lining the informal seating area, the model trains and airplanes that clutter the surface of an end table built by the General Services Office for that express purpose. On the floor are Persian carpets and on the walls are plaques, portraits, framed news clips, photos of the assistant secretary with leaders of the world and other evidence of his grandeur.

Seated behind his desk, the man himself waits for the door to be pulled shut by the Office Management Specialist before clearing his throat. He says nothing, for it is our duty to begin.

"We liked your recommendations, sir," is a good place to start.

"On the contrary. You've written a very good Twitter."

We thank the assistant secretary. We are not smug, and we do not correct him on "tweet" vs. "Twitter." We are well aware that his satisfaction goes only so far, and we hold our breath in anticipation of qualifiers like "however" and "but."

"But, do you think there's room to include a democracy message?" he asks.

"If you want one, sir, there is room."

"What about economic growth and prosperity?"

"Yes, sir."

"Environment? Energy? Peace? Security?"

"All of them, sir."

"I see this tweet is limited to U.S. support for educating male youths. Do you think it's possible to work in something about educating the girl-child?" (The assistant secretary never says "boys" or "girls.")

"If you would like, sir, we can develop a master message that covers all of our top-line messages." We know from past experience, from just yesterday in fact, and the day before that and the day before that, that the assistant secretary is keen on jargon and enjoys knowing our team can create such things as top-line messages. We are pleased, though still not smug, to see him nod.

"Very well," he says. "For Twitter?"

"For such a lengthy message, we may need to use Facebook."

"Facebook?"

Tomorrow will be the first day in a long line of forgettable days in which the assistant secretary sends a "request" for us to use Facebook on his behalf. ■

SIDE BY SIDE BY THE SMITHSONIAN

The potential for cultural and scientific diplomacy via the State-Smithsonian partnership is, as the Smithsonian brand states, “Seriously Amazing.”

BY BEATRICE CAMP

A s I was hanging pictures in my office at the Smithsonian Institution at the beginning of my assignment there in 2011, a new colleague stopped by to welcome me. “Chiang Mai... Chiang Mai...” she pondered, as I placed photos from previous posts on the walls. “I think we have forest plots there.” And so I began to glimpse the extent of the Smithsonian Institution’s international reach, far beyond the familiar museums on the Mall.

Founded with a bequest from an Englishman, James Smithson, the Smithsonian has always had a global perspective and international reach in its mission to advance the “increase and diffusion of knowledge.” In the words of former Secretary S. Dillon Ripley, “The pathways followed by knowledge and culture do not observe national boundaries.”

Today, thanks to the establishment of a State Department detail position at the Smithsonian in 2009, State bureaus and posts are able to take greater advantage of its international presence to reach foreign audiences. Whether pursuing conservation in Burma, building a Spark!Lab in Kyiv or bringing Hungarian

musicians to the Folklife Festival, the Smithsonian’s international engagement complements the State Department’s work in education, culture, the environment and scientific cooperation.

I was fascinated to find that the position I held for two years has historical roots. Marc Pachter, who later became director of the National Portrait Gallery, served as the Smithsonian liaison to the U.S. Information Agency in the 1980s. And in 2002, the Bureau of International Information Programs detailed Martin Manning to the National Portrait Gallery to work with Smithsonian Institution staff on the American Rooms Project, envisioned by then-Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Charlotte Beers as an interactive exhibit highlighting American themes.

In my case, the detail provided lots of leeway, so I focused on helping State colleagues take advantage of Smithsonian resources for the benefit of overseas audiences. This mission set me on a path of discovery that ranged from jazz to mobile apps to wildlife conservation. From the Smithsonian side, I was regularly consulted on international issues, with my China experience proving especially welcome.

A Symbiotic Relationship

The goals of the two institutions are often symbiotic. As the world’s largest museum and research complex, the Smithsonian Institution is focusing on greater engagement with world audiences, particularly non-elite and youth groups, while the Department of State is eager to use the Smithsonian’s expertise to enhance the dissemination of information about the United States to overseas audiences. Here are just a few examples of such teamwork:

- After the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the Smithson-

Beatrice Camp, a Senior Foreign Service officer, was on detail from the Department of State to the Smithsonian Institution as senior adviser to the under secretary for history, art and culture from 2011 to 2013. Since joining the Foreign Service in 1983, she has served in Shanghai, Chiang Mai, Budapest, Stockholm, Bangkok, Beijing and Washington, D.C.



Ukrainian children learn by inventing at Spark!Lab, an installation from the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center for Invention and Innovation. The September 2012 project, in cooperation with Kyiv's Myseskyi Arsenal Gallery, was supported by funding from the U.S. embassy.

The sheer number of shared interests between State and the Smithsonian make the detail assignment I held an important investment for both sides.

ian worked with the U.S. Agency for International Development, State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and other partners to preserve the country's rich cultural heritage, an important component of national identity and stability.

- With funding from ECA's Cultural Heritage Center and the Department for Homeland Security, the Smithsonian hosts training for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers to prevent illicit trafficking of cultural heritage items—expertise that has led to the return of antiquities to China, Egypt, Italy and other countries.

- The National Museum of American History's Lemelson Center for Invention and Innovation worked with the U.S. embassy in Ukraine to install the first overseas Spark!Lab at Kyiv's Art Arsenal Gallery. There, Ukrainian children learned about creative problem-solving by inventing such contraptions as gliders, gyroscopes and hydroponic gardens.

- The Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra performs around the world, and the Jazz Appreciation Month program's wealth of resources gives diplomatic missions celebrating International Jazz Day access to the Smithsonian's trove of recordings, websites and activities.

- In a project with historical antecedents, Smithsonian staff members are helping the Bureau of International Information Programs reimagine and redesign model American Spaces, where foreign visitors can connect and learn about the United States. Drawing on the Smithsonian's exhibit expertise and content riches, this collaboration echoes the institution's earlier contributions to cultural diplomacy, introducing American life and institutions to foreign audiences.

International Exhibitions

The Smithsonian Institution has long been central to U.S. participation in international expos and world fairs, starting with its leading role in the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. According to Martin Manning, curator of the Public Diplomacy Historical Collection, the Department of State and U.S. Information Agency worked with the Smithsonian on international exhibitions dating back to the 1940s, organizing art exhibitions abroad and supporting American participation in international art shows:

- In 1952, with partial funding from the State Department,

the Smithsonian launched a traveling exhibition service that assembled exhibits to be sent to Germany and Austria, with 12 exhibits circulating the following year to foreign countries and U.S. embassies. One result of this USIA-Smithsonian collaboration was a paper show based on the Smithsonian's major quincentennial exhibition, "Seeds of Change."

- USIA provided funding to the Smithsonian for an international exchange program of art exhibits from 1965 to 1975, at which point the office handling these activities was transferred, along with three employees, into the Institution.

- In 1987, USIA worked with the National Portrait Gallery on an exhibit under the U.S.-China cultural-exchange agreement that was scheduled to tour Beijing, Shenyang, Nanyang and Chengdu; the agency contributed \$190,000 toward the cost of mounting and transporting the works. After the Chinese government demanded that portraits of General Douglas MacArthur and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir be removed because of "their potential for offending the sensitivities of the Chinese people," USIA cancelled the China tour; the exhibit went to Japan instead.

- "Smithsonian's America," featured in American Festival

Projects like the Global Tiger Initiative and the Deep Reef Observation Project unite Smithsonian scientists with State Department personnel from OES and other bureaus.

Japan '94, showcased 250 items from the Smithsonian collections, including Thomas Edison's light bulb, a Native American tepee, Dizzy Gillespie's trumpet and the Apollo 14 space capsule.

- Although budget cutbacks at USIA put an end to major overseas exhibits, the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service continues to field requests from abroad. SITES' first digital exhibit, "Green Revolution," is on display in Mexico, while its "Elvis at 21" paper show will open in Canberra in December.

Scientific Americans

Science and technology projects offer equally rich areas for cooperation, given the Smithsonian's extensive international scientific involvement and the department's pursuit of science diplomacy in more than 100 countries.

The Smithsonian's first sustained overseas operation, an observatory, started in Chile in 1918. Nearly a century later, in March 2012, Under Secretary for Science Eva Pell joined U.S. Ambassador to Chile Alejandro Wolff at the inaugural excavation blast at Las Campanas in the Atacama Desert, home of the future Giant Magellan Telescope. This 82-foot (24.5-meter) observatory is scanning the cosmos in unprecedented detail.

Scientists from the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute use their expertise in ecology, forestry, global change science, wildlife and other disciplines in 25 countries, including Panama, Peru, Gabon, Namibia, Botswana, Thailand, Malaysia, Mongolia, China, India and Jamaica. SCBI also plays a key role in major conservation partnerships like the Global Tiger Initia-



Courtesy of the Smithsonian

The U.S. consulate general in Shanghai assisted the Anacostia Community Museum in developing an exhibition called "Reclaiming the Edge: Urban Waterways and Civic Engagement." It opened in October 2012.



Restoring the wall murals at the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Port-au-Prince was part of a cultural recovery project organized by the Smithsonian after the devastating earthquake that struck Haiti in January 2010.

The Smithsonian Institution has long been central to U.S. participation in international expos and world fairs, starting with the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia.

tive. The institute's Gabon Biodiversity Program leverages a partnership with Shell Gabon to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, a model that is also being used in Peru and other biodiverse, resource-rich countries.

Projects like the Global Tiger Initiative and the Deep Reef Observation Project unite Smithsonian scientists with the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, while the National Zoo's pandas are a matter of high-level diplomatic, as well as public, interest. Officers training for environment, science, technology and health positions take a behind-the-scenes tour of the Natural History museum to see how historic collections can illuminate modern-day questions related to climate change, biodiversity, conservation and public health.

Kenya is another hot spot of past, current and future Smithsonian activity. Just three weeks after leaving the Oval Office in 1909, Theodore Roosevelt set out for British East Africa on an expedition co-sponsored by the Smithsonian. Many of the big-game specimens he bagged there were destined for the new

U.S. National Museum building, today known as the National Museum of Natural History. Roosevelt's expedition also collected live animals for the National Zoological Park, including a leopard, lions, cheetahs and gazelles.

Kenya's participation in the 2014 Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., will give the Smithsonian a chance to showcase its long involvement with the country, from historic photos and specimens to Folkways recordings, National Zoo animals and planetarium shows.

As for that forest plot in northern Thailand I mentioned at the beginning of this article, it turned out to be part of a global network of 48 locations researching tropical and temperate forests. By collecting consistent data over many years, scientists can make direct comparisons between sites. This is an unprecedented research program in climate and forest science that not only benefits conservation efforts, but builds long-term relationships whose value any diplomat can appreciate.

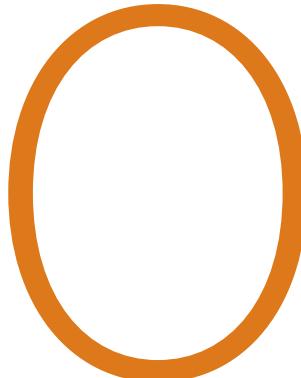
I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Smithsonian and the opportunity to work with colleagues dedicated to the increase and diffusion of knowledge. While Department of State details at other national institutions, such as the Library of Congress and the National Archives, have come and gone, the sheer number of shared interests between State and the Smithsonian make this position an important investment for both sides.

In fact, there is plenty of scope for even closer cooperation between the two entities. The potential for cultural and scientific diplomacy through this partnership is, as the Smithsonian's brand proclaims, "Seriously Amazing." ■

J. RIVES CHILDS IN WARTIME TANGIER

Despite the wealth of material generated by and about U.S. diplomat J. Rives Childs, he remains an enigma a quarter-century after his death.

BY GERALD LOFTUS



In July 16, 1987, the *New York Times* noted the passing of J. Rives Childs (1893-1987), a "former American diplomat and authority on Casanova."

Childs had led many lives: volunteer ambulance driver à la Hemingway and U.S. Army cryptographer in France during World War I (he later received the Medal of Freedom for

cracking German codes); postwar White House correspondent; American Relief Administration official (one of "Hoover's Boys") in the famine-stricken USSR of the 1920s; and a Foreign Service officer whose 30-year career culminated with ambassadorships to Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia after World War II.

He also wrote 14 books, ranging from definitive studies of Casanova and French writers of the 18th century (some written in French) to several works touching on his Foreign Service career. His final memoir, *Let the Credit Go* (1983), recounts his tenure as chargé d'affaires at the American Legation in Tangier, Morocco, between 1941 and 1945.

Despite the wealth of material generated by and about Childs,

Gerald Loftus, a State Department Foreign Service officer from 1979 to 2002, is director of the Tangier American Legation Institution for Moroccan Studies. The Tangier Legation, America's only overseas National Historic Landmark, is located in the medina of the city. He writes about the long history of Moroccan-American relations on permanent display at the institution's museum at www.TALIMblog.org.

For sheer complexity and strategic importance, Childs' service in World War II-era Tangier as chargé d'affaires overshadows his later ambassadorships.

he remains an enigma. Was it just luck that he came unscathed through the McCarthy-era witch hunts despite some unconventional views on the Soviet Union? Just how effective a diplomat was a man some called an “insufferable prig” for driving his staff up the wall—including agents from the wartime Office of Strategic Services who were just trying to do their job?

And is Childs an unsung hero of the Holocaust, whose name belongs among the “righteous gentiles” at Israel’s Yad Vashem memorial? Or all of the above?

Franco's Spain and Petain's France Meet in Morocco

For sheer complexity and strategic importance, Childs' service in Tangier as chargé d'affaires (1941-1945) overshadows his later assignments as ambassador.

Though he resided at the American legation in the city's International Zone, Childs was accredited to Morocco, which was divided into French and Spanish protectorates. The U.S. had never recognized the Spanish zone, and the situation was further complicated when the forces of General Francisco Franco, recently victorious in the Spanish Civil War, occupied the International Zone after France fell to German forces in June 1940.

The U.S. continued to recognize the Petain government in Vichy, and American policy was to cultivate relations with Vichy representatives in North Africa. Childs applied himself energetically to that task, cultivating officials favorable to the Allied cause and probing French and Spanish officials about their attitudes on a hypothetical Allied landing.

In particular, would Franco abandon his official neutrality and allow German forces to sweep down from Spain and through Morocco once American troops landed (as they did in November 1942's Operation Torch)? (Franco did maintain Spanish neutrality, angering Adolf Hitler.)

These concerns were shared by the new clandestine service set up in the wake of Pearl Harbor, the Office of Strategic Services. This precursor to the CIA chose the American legation in Tangier as its headquarters for Mediterranean operations, and recruited a Harvard anthropologist, Carleton Coon, who was given diplomatic cover as a vice consul. Coon's anthropological fieldwork in the northern Moroccan Rif Mountains in the 1920s and 1930s gave him an entrée with the Berber tribes who had rebelled against Spanish occupation.

The OSS plan was to furnish financial support and weapons so the Berbers would be ready to rise up in rebellion should Franco join the Axis and threaten the Allies (which, happily, he never did). Vice Consul Coon invented fanciful code names for his chief Moroccan contacts like “Tassels” and “Strings.” He later described his cloak-and-dagger work in *North Africa Story*, an entertaining compilation of his wartime reports.

Coon's exploits did not amuse Childs, however. Though he didn't name Coon, the chargé later wrote that one of his vice consuls had harbored delusions of becoming “a second Lawrence of Arabia.”

For his part, Coon paints a damning picture of Childs as so out of touch about the nature of clandestine work that he had the OSS communication operation moved out of the legation because the tapping of the telegraph kept his wife awake at night. Retired Ambassador Carleton Coon Jr. recalls: “This appeared treasonable to my father, and after I started on my own diplomatic career, my father swore he would never allow his son to serve under ‘that SOB.’

Whether this was “treasonable” conduct or just extreme micromanagement is a matter of opinion. What is less debatable is that many of Childs' colleagues saw him as priggish. For instance, he proudly recounted his success in prohibiting female American dependents from wearing slacks and shorts within the residential compound in Addis Ababa, his last diplomatic posting, in the early 1950s. When the women protested this vestige



J. Rives Childs' official portrait, which hangs in the legation next to the text of Renée Reichmann's Holocaust letter.

Courtesy of the Tangier Legation

One of Childs' vice consuls in Morocco, Carleton Coon, portrays him as woefully out of touch about the nature of clandestine work.

of Puritanism, Childs threatened to have any offenders and their husbands transferred out of Ethiopia.

Fascist Visas Save Jewish Lives

During his time in Spanish-occupied Tangier of the 1940s, Chargé Childs had initially approached the Spanish authorities with circumspection, assuming that High Commissioner General Luis Orgaz was a Franco fascist. But working contacts fostered warmer relations, which would lead to an important humanitarian action.

Tangier, like the Casablanca depicted in the film of that title, was an important hub for refugees fleeing both the war and the Holocaust. Renée Reichmann, herself a refugee from Hungary,

was a key figure in relief efforts from Tangier, and was affiliated with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Reichmann's efforts in sending tons of food parcels to occupied Europe were herculean, and she even performed the unimaginable: a trip back through fascist Europe to Hungary in 1942 to see her parents for what proved to be the last time. By early 1944, the Jewish community of Hungary was targeted for the Final Solution, and her focus shifted from relief to rescue.

She approached Childs to enlist his help in extricating hundreds of Jews in Budapest from the clutches of the Nazis. Reichmann's request came just after the Roosevelt administration created the War Refugee Board, a belated attempt to intervene on behalf of Jews and other threatened populations. Childs was therefore able to add official U.S. government weight to what was initially a personal, humanitarian gesture.

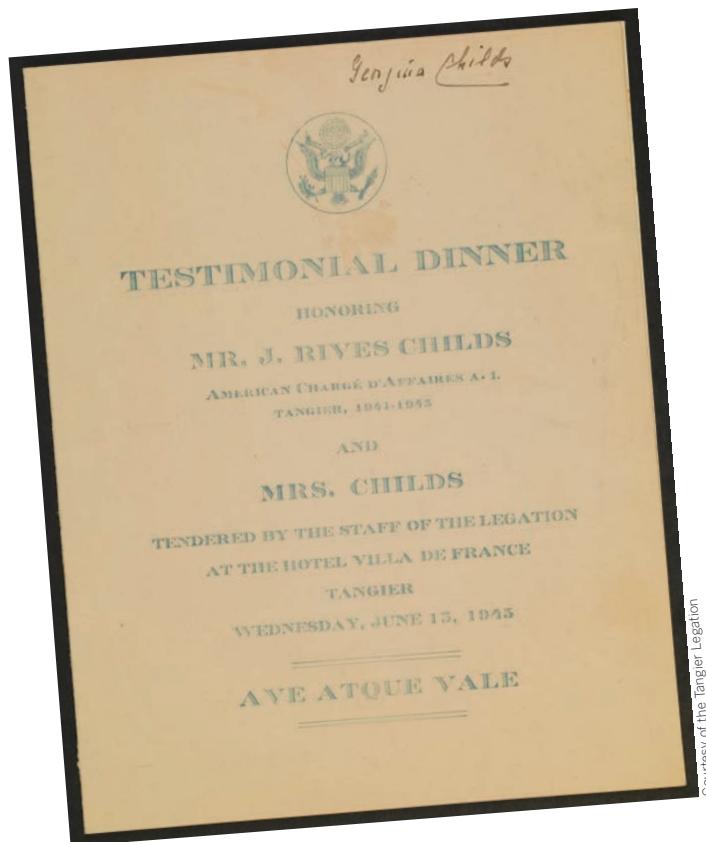
It turns out that Spanish High Commissioner General Orgaz was not the fascist that Childs had assumed him to be. He issued several tranches of visas for Tangier, which was sufficient for the Nazis to consider the threatened Jews to be protected by a friendly power. On the eve of Childs' departure from Tangier in June 1945, Reichmann wrote him to express thanks "for your extremely noble and generous assistance in the affair of the entry visas for Tangier. ... Thus, 1,200 innocent souls owe their survival to Your Excellency."

At the Tangier American Legation's museum, we display the full text of Reichmann's letter, and note the fact that J. Rives Childs kept the letter in his pocket for years afterwards. For this action, worthy of Raoul Wallenberg and other World War II diplomats who saved Jews by the thousand, Childs—as in the title of his autobiography—"let the credit go" to Reichmann for proposing the action and to Orgaz for issuing the visas.

An Arabist, but Not an Anti-Semite

The operation, however, clearly left its mark on the seemingly stiff diplomat. Responding to Reichmann, he wrote: "I do not know of any work which I have done in my whole career which has given me greater personal satisfaction than the efforts made on behalf of these friendless persons."

At the same time, Childs' motivation for keeping Reichmann's letter went beyond sentiment. In his mind, it refuted any



The cover of the invitation to Childs' farewell dinner in June 1945.

Childs, as in the title of his autobiography, “let the credit go” to others for saving 1,200 Jews in Budapest from the clutches of the Nazis.

potential accusations that he was sympathetic to the cause of anti-Semitism.

His sensitivity to such charges presumably grew over the course of a succession of assignments in the Arab world. He served as consul in Jerusalem during the 1920s and as a desk officer for the Palestine Mandate and mid-level diplomat in Cairo in the 1930s, followed by assignments to Tangier and Jeddah in the 1940s.

“There is not the least doubt in my mind,” he commented in reflecting on his 30 years’ experience in the Middle East, “that so long as our unconditional support of Israel continues, there will be no peace in that area.” In 1952, in what he called his “swan song” he sent a telegram responding to a question about Arab support for U.S. policy as follows: “United States support of Israel has undermined the confidence and trust which we once enjoyed in the Arab world.” He retired from the Foreign Service that same year.

Anti-Zionism, of course, does not equate to anti-Semitism, and there is no evidence at all that Childs was anti-Semitic. But we don’t have to take his own word for that. In his book, *The Reichmanns*, Anthony Bianco describes that family’s efforts to have Childs recognized at Yad Vashem as a “righteous gentile.”

The Reichmanns launched that campaign even though they understood full well how unlikely they were to succeed. Not only was Israel loath to give any credit to Franco’s Spain for issuing the Tangier visas, but Childs’ years spent conducting diplomacy in the Middle East were enough to disqualify him from such recognition. It also did not help that Robert Satloff, who devotes his book, *Among the Righteous*, to the search for “Arab Schindlers” in North Africa in the 1940s, makes no mention of the American diplomat’s role in saving 1,200 Jews.

“Unduly Interested” in Soviet Russia?

Childs had cause to fear political attacks on another front, as well. As early as 1931, Childs recalled, “I received a letter from the State Department saying that attention had been drawn to me for being unduly interested in Soviet Russia.”

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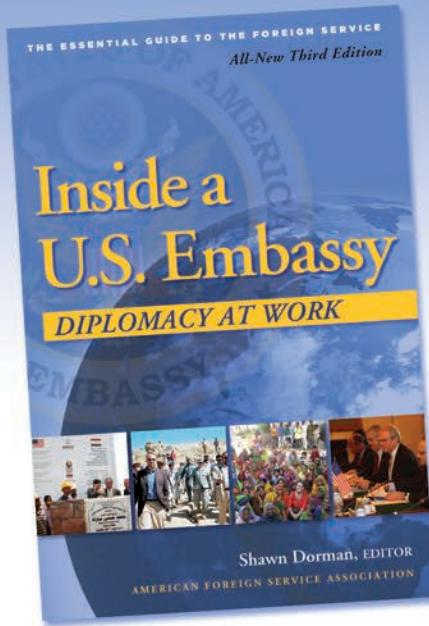
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Is Childs an unsung hero of the Holocaust, whose name belongs among the "righteous gentiles" at Israel's Yad Vashem memorial?



Courtesy of the Tangier Legation
The hilt of Childs' sword-cane, a gift from legation staff, was inscribed with his name in Arabic.

Presumably this criticism was based on the fact that Childs had spent two years in the Soviet Union as a relief worker a decade earlier, and had married a Russian woman. Even so, Childs always felt that his interest in the USSR was justified on an intellectual basis, as well as for personal reasons. At one point he commented: "One of the quirks of [the] American character is the pathological reaction, bordering on mental disorder, toward anything touching the Russian Revolution or communism."

In 1939, Childs learned that he had been recommended for promotion, but the move was later rescinded. He never learned exactly why, but assumed it was because "I was believed to entertain unorthodox opinions about Soviet Russia." Of course, he went on to become chargé in Tangier and a two-time ambassador, so the episode was clearly not a career-ender.

Jamie Cockfield, editor of Childs' memoir of the Russian famine years, *The Black Lebeda*, saw him as a "limousine socialist." Perhaps so. But in his intellectual embrace of Casanova and other 18th-century writers, Childs primarily seems a man from a bygone age, one who decried the end of the ancien régime in the wake of World War I.

Writing in 1983, he saw many of the modern world's troubles—World War II, the Arab-Israeli standoff—as rooted in that traumatic war in the trenches. "The end is not yet in sight, nor is it ever likely to be."

J. Rives Childs may well have been a flawed hero. But then again, so was Oskar Schindler. ■

A Noble Attempt

American Statecraft: The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service

J. Robert Moskin, Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, 2013, \$40, hardcover, 932 pages.

REVIEWED BY STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

If ever a book could be described as a labor of love, it would be this one. J. Robert Moskin, a historian, journalist and the author of nine previous books, clearly has great respect and affection for the U.S. Foreign Service as an institution and for its members. Nevertheless, despite the 15 years of research, interviews and travel Mr. Moskin has devoted to it, *American Statecraft: The Story of the U.S. Foreign Service* is—to put it diplomatically—extremely uneven.

Take his first chapter, which sets out to tell “the stories of two modern American diplomats who made a difference”: William A. Eddy and J. Hall Paxton. Both men did just that, but Eddy’s contribution dates from 1945, and J. Hall Paxton’s from 1949. Moreover, Eddy was a Marine, naval attaché and undercover agent with the Office of Strategic Services (the CIA’s precursor), never a career member of the Foreign Service.

Moskin does some things very well, to be sure. Most admirably, he traces the evolution and growth of the Foreign Service over the past 240 years with just the right mix of attention to detail and insight. In particular, Chapter 28, “A Single Unified Service,” contains the most lucid account of the 1924 Rogers Act that I’ve seen anywhere.

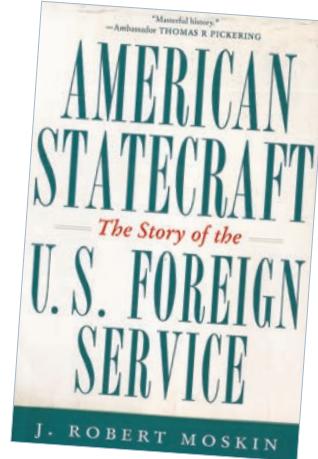
And speaking as a former FSO (1985–1997), I applaud the fact that Moskin doesn’t just talk about the Service in

theoretical or academic terms. He strives to bring it to life for the lay reader, primarily by letting diplomats and family members speak for themselves. In that sense, it really is “The Story of the Foreign Service.” But I would add that AFSA’s own book, *Inside a U.S. Embassy*, already accomplishes that task in a much more readable way—and at less than half the cost.

Throughout, Moskin strives to tell “The Story of the Foreign Service.”

In principle, I admire prodigious research, but my initial appreciation for Moskin’s industriousness wore off quickly. In the first two-thirds of the book, covering U.S. diplomatic history through World War II, it’s understandable that he draws heavily on secondary and tertiary sources, which tend to be less engaging than primary ones. But his penchant for telling us the height (!) and physical features of so many historical figures gets old quickly.

Moskin’s overall approach is, appropriately, chronological. But once he reaches the 20th century, most of the timespans indicated in each chapter heading bear only the most tenuous relationship to the period the content actually covers. (Some listings seem completely random, in fact.) Those who already know their U.S. history will not



be thrown off by such inconsistencies, but anyone coming to *American Statecraft* without a firm grounding in our country’s past will likely be confused.

Nor does it help that Moskin frequently references events and individuals as though he had already discussed their roles (or existence, for that matter), when he has not. Less often, he commits the related error of citing someone by their

last name many pages after the initial mention, as though one just had to look a few lines up the page to be reminded of whom he’s talking about. (Thankfully, the book’s indexing is thorough enough that a quick check there usually resolves the temporary confusion.)

Considering how much territory Moskin covers, he gets most of the history right. But he has a real weakness for gratuitous comments that are non sequiturs, or contradict what he’s just told us. His analysis of how slavery shaped early U.S. foreign policy is a prime example of this, but far from the only one. He also seems to have only the most superficial understanding of what AFSA is, though he does applaud its dissent awards program.

On balance, I cannot really recommend *American Statecraft* to Foreign Service members, though Moskin is a vivid stylist, and I did learn some things along the way. But lay readers may find its pluses outweigh the minuses. And if nothing else, the mere existence of the book has value. ■

Steven Alan Honley is the editor of The Foreign Service Journal.



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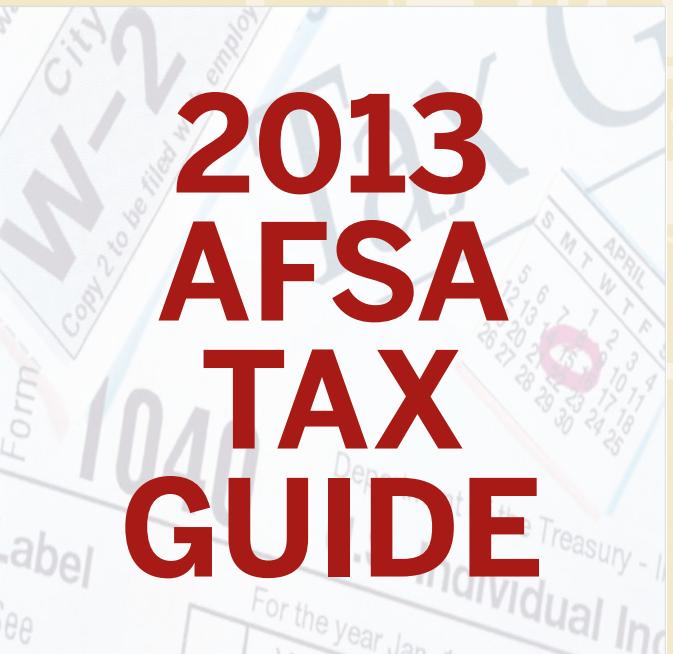
Federal and State Tax Provisions for the Foreign Service

AFSA's annual Tax Guide is designed as an informational and reference tool. Although we try to be accurate, many of the new provisions of the tax code and the implications of Internal Revenue Service regulations have not been fully tested. Therefore, use caution and consult with a tax adviser as soon as possible if you have specific questions or an unusual or complex situation.

Foreign Service employees most frequently ask AFSA about home ownership, tax liability upon sale of a residence and state of domicile. We have devoted special sections to these issues. James Yorke (YorkeJ@state.gov), who compiles the tax guide, would like to thank M. Bruce Hirshorn, Foreign Service tax counsel, for his help in its preparation.

FEDERAL TAX PROVISIONS

For 2013 the six tax rates for individuals remain at 10, 15, 25, 28, 33 and 35 percent, with a new 39.6-tax rate added. The 10-percent rate is for taxable income up to \$17,851 for married couples, \$8,126 for singles. The 15-percent rate is for income up to \$75,501 for married couples, \$38,251 for singles. The 25-percent rate is for income up to \$146,401 for married



couples, \$87,851 for singles. The 28-percent rate is for income up to \$223,051 for married couples and up to \$183,251 for singles. The 33-percent rate is for income up to \$398,351 for married couples and singles. Annual

income above \$398,351 is taxed at 35 percent. Income above \$450,000 for married couples and above \$400,000 for singles is taxed at 39.6 percent.

Although long-term capital gains are taxed at a maximum rate of up to 15 percent and are reported on Schedule D, married taxpayers with income greater than \$450,000 and singles greater than \$400,000 pay a capital gains rate of 20 percent. These rates are effective for all sales in 2013, except for those people who fall within the 10 to 15 percent tax bracket: their rate is either 0 or 5 percent. Long-term capital gain is defined

PLEASE NOTE

This guidance applies to the 2013 tax year, for returns due on April 15, 2014. We expect there will be a variety of changes to the tax code for the 2014 tax year, but at present, we are not aware of any possible changes that are likely to apply to 2013.

CALENDAR

1/1/2014
New Year's Day
AFSA Offices Closed

1/8/2014
12:00 - 2:00 PM
AFSA Governing Board
Meeting

1/16/2014
5:00 - 7:00 PM
AFSA Member
Happy Hour

1/20/2014
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
AFSA Offices Closed

2/5/2014
12:00 - 2:00 PM
AFSA Governing Board
Meeting

2/6/2014
Deadline for Academic/Art
Merit Awards

2/17/2014
President's Day
AFSA Offices Closed

2/26/2014
AFSA Advocacy Day
Hill Reception

2/28/2014
Deadline for Dissent and
Performance Awards
Nominations



Tax Guide continued on page 64



Occupy AFSA: Get Involved

In the summer of 2011 a small magazine issued a call to "Occupy Wall Street." The purpose was to highlight the growing income inequality in America. Demonstrators railed against the "1 percent," the financial elite, and its co-option of the financial system to the detriment of the working class. Members of the "99 percent" staged sit-ins in various cities around the world to highlight abuses and call for change.

ZUCOTTI PARK

In November of that year, I visited Zuccotti Park in New York City, ground zero of the Occupy movement. People from across the U.S. were there—some from labor movements, others independent actors—all motivated by a common cause.

I was impressed by the socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of those present and captivated by their conversations, amongst one another and with their Wall Street "foes." I returned to Washington, D.C., inspired by their conviction and action, and more conscious of their underlying message.

However, within the year, the protesters had dispersed and the leaderless movement had run aground. Occupy Wall Street had failed, proving that an idea and rallying call was not enough to elicit change; a social movement needed leaders and institutions to succeed. Occupy was

dead—or was it?

Two years later, I visited New York again. The city had just elected its new mayor Bill de Blasio, whose platform promised a more progressive and inclusive city. His campaign had tapped into the lingering discontent and concern about income inequality that OWS had articulated two years earlier.

George Packer had won the National Book Award for his exploration of the theme in *The Unwinding*, and Pope Francis had issued his own clarion call for economic justice. Occupy may have lost a name, but its spirit lived on, inspiring Americans who had never been political or social activists, to take action.

Personally, it challenged me to think more about what AFSA could do to get more people involved in improving the Foreign Service's professional standing and the working conditions of its members.

IMPROVING UNDERSTANDING/PARTICIPATION

Our Foreign Service culture is consensus-oriented and rarely has shown any activist tendencies—with one notable exception: the unionization of the Foreign Service 40 years ago (see my November 2013 column). However, today, there is a general lack of understanding about what AFSA is (yes, it is a "real" union), what it does

and why it matters. There is also a general apathy within its ranks, whether evidenced by the low voter numbers or the paucity of candidates for AFSA office (last summer, the State vice president position was the only one contested, the remaining positions ran unopposed).

Of the approximately 14,000 Foreign Service employees worldwide, less than 1 percent currently serve as AFSA elected officers, Governing Board representatives, post representatives or committee participants. This group represents the Foreign Service in a labor-management context, negotiating all Foreign Service terms of employment. They are democratically accountable to you through the election and appointment process.

WHAT DOES AFSA DO?

On your behalf, an AFSA post representative might meet with post management to discuss the mission's compliance with departmental regulation and federal law governing premium compensation for untenured employees. In Washington, an AFSA State representative might meet with colleagues to discuss concerns regarding career paths for the new Diplomacy 3.0 or Diplomatic Readiness Initiative generation. An AFSA Vice President might meet with

agency officials to negotiate new clearance procedures or advocate for employees' ability to write and speak in a private capacity.

Given the limited number of individuals involved, and the impact these people can have on negotiating employment policies, it is important that they are representative of the entire Foreign Service, knowledgeable about labor relations and human resources, and held in high regard by membership.

Simply put, AFSA needs a greater diversity of candidates (women, specialists and minorities) who have labor management and human resources expertise. AFSA needs the Foreign Service's best and brightest to represent it vis-à-vis department management, on the Hill or with the American public. It also needs its members to hold it to account.

THE CALL

As we begin 2014, I challenge you to think more about AFSA and how you can get involved with your union and professional association. Later this year, when AFSA solicits interest for State representatives, post representatives or committee volunteers, please think about stepping up, serving and "occupying" AFSA.

Next month: Improving the Quality of Work/Life. ■



FCS VP VOICE | BY STEVE MORRISON

AFSA NEWS

Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA FCS VP.
Contact: steve.morrison@trade.gov or (202) 482-9088

Off to a Strong and Healthy Start

I recently met one-on-one with John Anderson, the Foreign Commercial Service's new principal deputy assistant secretary for global markets. As many of you may not know John, I thought I would share a few insights I gleaned from the meeting. John sits in a new, mission-critical position overseeing our entire field structure in all five regions (and several staff offices). Nearly 1,500 Full-Time-Equivalent employees report, at least indirectly, to him.

John is a long-time International Trade Administration

executive who has worked his way up through the ranks from desk officer, Uruguay Round negotiator and office director to principal deputy assistant secretary. He knows the meaning of hard work and the important role advancement plays in a healthy organization.

John's oft-repeated use of terms such as "cooperation," "collaboration" and "teamwork" is a healthy and positive sign of things to come. Together, John and Acting Director General Judy Reinke have been convening multiple meetings in an effort to address the many needs

and desires of our stakeholders during this once-every-30-years transformation.

When I met John, he had just finished prepping for upcoming testimony on Capitol Hill, had been to the White House for an important briefing that afternoon and was heading to another meeting down the hall in the under secretary's office. I find it meaningful, that with all that he has on his plate, he made the time to meet with me on short notice.

As for the future, John is making a concerted effort to reach out to officers in the

field. He met some of you at the recent Select USA event and met others while in Los Angeles at the America's Business Forum. It is my understanding that during that event John went out of his way to spend quality time with a number of officers, sharing his insights into the new organization's mission, vision and value statement.

At the close of our meeting, John was careful to ask, "How's it (the reorganization) going?" and "What can I do to make things better?" With that kind of attitude, the reorg is off to a strong and healthy start. ■



RETIREE VP VOICE | BY LARRY COHEN

AFSA NEWS

Views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the AFSA Retiree VP.
Contact: lawrencecohenassociates@hotmail.com or (703) 437-7881

Retirees Support AFSA's Scholarship Program

As a group, AFSA retirees are the largest single constituency to donate to AFSA's scholarship fund. The AFSA financial aid scholarship program for undergraduate college study consists of 78 named perpetual scholarships and five named annual ones. In addition, through AFSA, DACOR provides \$40,000 in scholarship funding for students pursuing a foreign affairs career. This year AFSA will bestow more than \$190,000 on rising col-

lege freshmen, sophomores and juniors. One application allows students to be considered for all of the above scholarships.

High school seniors may compete for AFSA's one-time only merit awards that recognize academic accomplishment or artistic achievement. All of AFSA's scholarships require that the student be a child of an AFSA member.

AFSA's Fund for American Diplomacy has three mis-

sions: to inform Americans of the Foreign Service and what our diplomats do; encourage students to consider a career in the Foreign Service; and to honor constructive dissent and exemplary performance within the Foreign Service. The FAD also supports AFSA's memorial plaques, the Road Scholar program and speakers bureau, minority internships, AFSA's national high school essay contest, speaker series, book events and our own best-

selling book, *Inside a U.S. Embassy: Diplomacy at Work*.

AFSA membership dues do not support the AFSA Scholarship Fund or the Fund for American Diplomacy, which are solely dependent on your contributions. Applications for these awards are available online at AFSA's website. The deadline for merit award applications is Feb. 6 and March 6 for financial aid scholarships. ■

FS Experts Address American University Students on Trends Affecting U.S. Diplomacy

BY TOM SWITZER, SPEAKERS BUREAU DIRECTOR

On Nov. 7, AFSA presented two Senior Foreign Service officers speaking on current foreign affairs trends affecting American diplomacy.

With 35 American University international affairs students in attendance, Ambassador Barbara Bodine, former ambassador to Yemen and current senior lecturer at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, started off the lecture by addressing the implications of the "Arab Awakening" on the political evolution in the Middle East and on U.S. foreign policy.

Noting that the current generation of young Arabs is better educated than their parents and more urbanized, globalized and tech-savvy, Amb. Bodine pointed to the role social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, play in the ongoing Arab revolutions. People are connected in ways never thought possible under dictatorships.

Amb. Bodine warned that patience is required; history has shown that transformational change can take generations. "Sometimes decades pass and nothing happens; and sometimes weeks pass and decades happen," she said.

Marshall Adair, a former AFSA president, Senior For-

eign Service officer and son of Ambassador Charles W. Adair Jr., shared his perspectives on what diplomats do and what life is like for FS members and their families. He went on to explain the dual role AFSA plays as a professional association and union for the Foreign Service. While advocating for a strong professional Service, AFSA also advocates for employment policies and other work-life issues.

Adair believes that the

Foreign Service is being eroded by the ever-increasing "militarization of U.S. foreign policy." This has resulted in a smaller corps of approximately 12,000 members at a time when highly qualified and dedicated diplomats are needed.

While acknowledging that Foreign Service careers can be increasingly difficult—separations, isolation, disease, security, inadequate schools and lack of spousal employment opportunities are common hardships—they are

highly rewarding. Adair urged students to study hard, gain some "worldly experience," and then take the Foreign Service exam.

A lively question-and-answer period followed.

This event is made possible through AFSA's partnership with American University, intended to enlighten students about the role diplomacy and development play in advancing national interests around the world. ■

Claiming Workers' Compensation

BY JAMES YORKE, AFSA SENIOR LABOR MANAGEMENT ADVISER

In the November issue of *The Foreign Service Journal*, the "Speaking Out" column titled "Keeping Faith with State's Wounded Warriors," has generated a great deal of interest.

Over the past several years, many members have contacted AFSA's labor management office for advice on how to navigate the workers' compensation process. While each case is different, employees are generally required to follow the process described on the Department of Labor and State Departments' websites, and on AFSA's website at www.afsa.org/member_guidance.aspx.

Additionally, OWCP has an office that deals exclusively with claims resulting from service overseas.

The cost of long-term treatment of all civilian federal government employees—including members of the Foreign Service—who are injured in the line of duty or suffer from a medical or psychiatric condition that can be attributed to government service domestically or overseas, is reimbursed through the Office of Workers' Compensation, in the Department of Labor, and not through the foreign affairs agencies.

We can provide our mem-

bers with advice on the process and help in assembling the appropriate documentation. Our goal is to work with the department and other stakeholders to make the process more transparent.

If you have already gone through this process, we are most interested in hearing from you. AFSA's labor management staff can be reached at (202) 647-8160 or afsa@state.gov. Department of State constituents are also welcome to write directly to AFSA State Vice President Matthew Asada at asadam@state.gov with any concerns, suggestions or ideas for improvement. ■

Nominate a Colleague for a Constructive Dissent Award

BY PERRI GREEN, COORDINATOR FOR SPECIAL AWARDS AND OUTREACH

The American Foreign Service Association is seeking nominations for its Constructive Dissent Awards Program. For more than 40 years, these awards have recognized Foreign Service employees who work within the system to change policies or management regulations for the better.

AFSA's dissent awards are unique in the federal government. Foreign Service employees who have expressed dissent to effect change—without going public—through conversations, meetings, e-mails to superiors, memoranda, cables or other formats, are eligible.

While the Foreign Service values professionalism and consensus, these same intellectual and personal qualities have led some of our most qualified employees to dissent. Many of those who have been singled out for a dissent award have risen to the highest ranks.

We urge all members of the Foreign Service to now consider nominating a colleague who has shown intellectual and moral courage to improve policy or management in furthering United States diplomacy.

Recipients will be recognized at AFSA's annual awards ceremony held in

the department's Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room in June. This year the awards ceremony will also be part of our broader program to recognize the 90th anniversary of the U.S. Foreign Service.

Please help AFSA continue to honor and recognize honesty and independent thinking by nominating a Foreign Service employee for an AFSA dissent award.

There are four awards: The Christian A. Herter Award for senior officers; the William R. Rivkin Award for mid-level officers; the W. Averell Harriman Award for entry-level officers and the

F. Allen "Tex" Harris Award for specialists. Learn more at www.afsa.org/dissent. The deadline for nominations is Feb. 28.

We are pleased to announce that the Una Chapman Cox Foundation (www.uccoxfoundation.org) is the new sponsor of the W. Averell Harriman Award. We greatly appreciate their support to help to ensure the ongoing viability of our constructive dissent awards program.

AFSA is grateful for the continued sponsorship from the Rivkin family for the William R. Rivkin award, and the Delavan Foundation for the F. Allen "Tex" Harris award. ■

2014 AFSA Dues Rates Hike

BY JANET HEDRICK,
DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES

In accordance with AFSA's bylaws, AFSA has increased dues for 2014 by 1.5 percent for all individual membership categories. This increase will provide the association with a stable and predictable income source, which allows AFSA to continue offering excellent member services and benefits. This modest adjustment, just pennies per pay period, correlates to the 3rd-quarter Consumer Price Index increase published by the Department of Labor and used by the Social Security Administration to calculate the 2014 Cost-of-Living Adjustment increases.

Active-duty and retired members paying dues via payroll and annuity deduction will see a small, automatic increase in the amount deducted from their paychecks and annuities. Those paying annually will be billed the new rate on their regularly scheduled renewal date.

The new rates are as follows:

Active-Duty		
Foreign Service Grades	2014 Annual	2014 Biweekly
SFS	\$390.95	\$15.05
FS 1-3	\$302.25	\$11.65
FS 4-6	\$173.05	\$6.65
FS 7-9	\$91.50	\$3.50
Retiree		
Annuity Levels	2014 Annual	2014 Monthly
Under \$25,000	\$67.15	\$5.60
\$25,000-50,000	\$105.50	\$8.80
\$50,000-75,000	\$140.90	\$11.75
Over \$75,000	\$176.40	\$14.70
Retiree Spouse/Partner	\$52.75	\$4.40
Associate		
Category	2014 Annual	
Associate Membership	\$108.40	
Retired Associate	\$66.35	

AFSA President Speaks at Seton Hall University

BY TOM SWITZER, SPEAKERS BUREAU DIRECTOR

On Nov. 19, AFSA President Bob Silverman visited the School of Diplomacy and International Relations at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J. He spoke about Foreign Service careers and the role the Foreign Service plays in foreign policy.

During a luncheon, Department Chairman Dr. Benjamin Goldfrank outlined Seton Hall's ambitious goal of further developing their Washington, D.C. program, launched in fall 2012. The new D.C. campus and curriculum will focus entirely on U.S. diplomacy, with a strong emphasis on the Foreign Service.

Dr. Goldfrank expressed



AFSA President Robert J. Silverman (center) meets with Dr. Andrea Bartoli (left), dean of the school of diplomacy, and others at Seton Hall University.

hope that AFSA could collaborate with the university by providing experienced Senior Foreign Service officers as speakers for classes and special events. Silverman said AFSA would be willing to

collaborate with Seton Hall in this endeavor.

Bob delivered a presentation on the challenges and opportunities facing U.S. diplomacy and the Foreign

Service to more than 50 students. He provided his perspectives on a career in the Foreign Service, which generated numerous questions from the audience. He also met with Dean Andrea Bartoli, Ph.D., who facilitated the presentation to the students.

An important outreach goal for AFSA is to develop a number of strong and cost-effective speaker partnerships with various schools of international relations. Such a nationwide network could promise AFSA with a long-term presence for educating the American public on the critical role the Foreign Service plays in advancing our nation's vital interests. ■

Call for 2014 Performance Awards Nominations

BY PERRI GREEN, COORDINATOR SPECIAL AWARDS AND OUTREACH

Please consider nominating someone at your post for the excellent work they have done. AFSA offers three awards recognizing exemplary performance of assigned duties or voluntary activities at an overseas post:

The **Nelson B. Delavan Award** is awarded to an office management specialist whose work has made a significant contribution to post or office effectiveness

and morale, beyond the framework of his or her job responsibilities. The award has been generously funded through the Delavan Foundation.

The **M. Juanita Guess Award** is given to a community liaison office coordinator who demonstrates outstanding leadership, dedication, initiative and imagination in assisting official employees and their families serving at

an overseas post. The award was established in memory of M. Juanita Guess, and is funded by Clements Worldwide.

The **Avis Bohlen Award** honors a Foreign Service family member whose volunteer work with the American and foreign communities has advanced the interests of the United States. Beginning this year, the Una Chapman Cox Foundation will graciously

fund the award.

Each award recipient is invited to attend AFSA's award ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room in June and will receive a prize of \$2,500 and a certificate.

For information, see www.afsa.org/performance. The deadline for nominations is Feb. 28. ■

AFSA BENEFITS SERIES

What You Need to Know About Social Security

BY MATTHEW SUMRAK, ASSISTANT COORDINATOR FOR RETIREE COUNSELING AND LEGISLATION

On Nov. 14, AFSA hosted the seventh installment of its speaker series on federal benefits. Edward Zurndorfer, a certified financial planner, spoke on what you need to know about Social Security, a subject that brought many attendees to AFSA, our largest turnout to date.

Ed began with a history of the Social Security program, followed by a comprehensive overview of the program. Signed into law in 1935 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, he noted, Social Security was established as a government insurance program, not a welfare program. The benefits received by enrollees are in proportion to the amount of contributions they paid into the system through payroll taxes.

Social Security is meant to be a supplement to retirement savings, investments and pensions. Currently, 30 to 45 percent of income after retirement comes from Social Security. The lower your income, the higher likelihood you will rely on Social Security in retirement.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Social Security works when X number of individuals are paying into the system, while Y number are receiving payments. In 1940—when the first Social Security check was issued for \$25—the ratio of X to Y was 16 to 1. Today

the ratio is 2 to 1.

Zurndorfer discussed possible changes to the system (quickly allaying fears by saying that any changes would not pertain to anyone currently receiving Social Security). The most likely changes might be to raise the full retirement age to 69, increase the FICA tax (Social Security payroll taxes are collected under the authority of the *Federal Insurance Contributions Act*) or remove the cap on wages taxed. (This year, \$115,100 is the Social Security earnings limit; any wages earned above that amount will not be taxed for Social Security.)

Ed told the audience not to worry about the system going broke or being taken away because “If any Congress or administration tried to take away Social Security, there would be riots.”

HOW ARE BENEFITS EARNED?

Individuals are entitled to Social Security benefits after earning 40 work credits, sometimes known as “quarters of coverage” or QCs. Credits are earned when an individual pays Social Security taxes (FICA tax is currently 6.2 percent of salary/wages) on income that is subject to Social Security taxes (includes wages and self-employment income).

Since 1978, a credit of

coverage is earned any time a worker receives a QC amount in covered wages—no matter when the wages were earned, but no more than 4 QCs in any calendar year. In 2013, the amount of covered wages to earn a credit of coverage was \$1,160. QCs are never lost, even if one stops working.

Individuals are guaranteed a Social Security check at



Ed Zurndorfer fields questions from the audience during AFSA's benefits seminar on Social Security.

additional 8 percent. Under no circumstances does it make sense to wait past 70 to start taking your Social Security benefit.

Ed advised listeners to base their decision on health and career. If you are still working and relatively healthy, you should wait until 70 to take your benefit. If not, you should take your full benefit at your FRA.

HOW DO I FIGURE MY BENEFIT?

All retirement benefits are based on one's Primary Insurance Amount. To determine your PIA, you will need to know your Averaged Indexed Monthly Earnings, which is based on your lifetime earnings history. PIA is the amount payable at your FRA. If you start your benefits earlier, it will be less than the PIA. If you start your benefits later, it will be more than the PIA.

The Social Security Administration recomputes an individual's AIME every year by taking their 35 highest years of largest indexed earnings and adding them up. They call this total T₃₅. They then divide by 420 (35 years times 12 months per year equals 420 months). So AIME equals T₃₅ divided by 420.

Social Security continued on page 84

The AFSA Scholarship Program Presents the 2013-2014

BY LORI DEC, AFSA SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

The AFSA Scholarship Program is awarding \$198,000 in undergraduate college need-based financial aid scholarships in the 2013-2014 school year to 68 children of Foreign Service employees. Included under this program are the Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired/Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarships, which AFSA administers.

AFSA also awards scholarships through two other organizations: Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide and the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service. In addition to the organizations listed above, AFSA funds its scholarship program from the following sources: individual donors who have established annual and perpetual scholarships; through an annual withdraw from the AFSA Scholarship Fund Endowment; ad hoc and annual appeal donations, and work place contributions.

The AFSA Scholarship Fund also sponsors the AFSA Merit Awards Program. The list of winners, all high school seniors, is published in the July-August issue of *The Foreign Service Journal*. AFSA provided \$41,500 in academic and art merit awards to 26 students in May 2013. These one-time only awards recognize the academic and artistic accomplishments of

AFSA members' children. AFSA has provided aid to 94 students totaling \$239,500 this school year. The program are run under the oversight of the AFSA Scholarship Committee, comprised of volunteers from the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, Foreign Agricultural Service and the Foreign Commercial Service.

2014-2015 Scholarships and Awards

It's not too late to apply for a 2014-2015 AFSA Financial Aid Scholarship or a 2014 Merit Award. Applications are being accepted until Feb. 6 for academic and/or art merit awards and March 6 for financial aid scholarships. Merit awards range from \$1,000-\$2,500; need-based financial aid scholarships range from \$3,000-\$5,000. Please go to www.afsa.org/scholar for program details.

If you have any questions or would like information on how to establish a scholarship in your name or that of a loved one, please contact Lori Dec, AFSA scholarship director at (202) 944-5504 or dec@afsa.org.

The 2013-2014 Financial Aid Scholarship recipients are listed alphabetically and includes the names of the recipient's parents, AFSA scholarship(s) the student received and the college he or she is attending.



"I firmly believe that your generosity will only continue to open doors for me and the other students who benefit from AFSA's aid."

Patrick McGuire, Stanford University

Devante Agu

Son of Edward and Wanda Agu. Recipient of the Heywood G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending West Virginia University.

Najee Agu

Son of Edward and Wanda Agu. Recipient of the Gertrude Stewart Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Tennessee.

Sarajin Ali

Daughter of Karl and Nahid Fritz. Recipient of the Wilbur J. Carr Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Gertrude Stewart Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Virginia Tech.

Kristina Allen

Daughter of Clarissa and Clay Allen. Recipient of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Utah State University.

Anandan Amirthanayagam

Son of Indran and Ruth Amirthanayagam. Recipient of the Wilbur J. Carr Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Walter K. Schwinn Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Sheldon Whitehouse Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Brown University.

Barbara Armstrong

Daughter of Alina and John Armstrong. Recipient of the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Ernest V. Siracusa Memorial Financial Aid

Scholarship and the John M. and Anna B. Steeves Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending King's College London, United Kingdom.

Katherine Arriola

Daughter of Jacinta and Roinel Arriola. Recipient of the Harry A. Havens Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Julius C. Holmes Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending the State University of New York.

Jacob Bills

Son of Rebecca and Thomas Bills. Recipient of the Virginia Thurgood Bingham Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Brigham Young University.

Alexandra Bliss

Daughter of Kristin and Mark Bliss. Recipient of Arthur B. Emmons Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and Marcia M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Florida State College.

Natalie Bluhm

Daughter of Christina and Nathan Bluhm. Recipient of the Rose Marie Asch Financial Aid Scholarship and the George and Mattie Newman Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending the University of Colorado.

Niccolo Bluhm

Son of Christina and Nathan Bluhm. Recipient of the C. Montagu and Frances M. Pigott Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Lowell C. Pinkerton Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the George Shultz

AFSA Financial Aid Scholarship Recipients

Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Colorado.

James Chambers

Son of Hyong and James Chambers. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Tulsa.

Caleb Childers

Son of Julie and William Childers. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Liberty University.

Evan Cook

Son of Leslie and William Cook. Recipient of the Wilbur J. Carr Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Northern Virginia Community College.

Katherine Cooke-Caraway

Daughter of Robin Cooke. Recipient of the Adolph Dubs Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Vietnam Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Wesley College.

Erika Cummings

Daughter of Connie and David Cummings. Recipient of the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Turner C. Cameron Jr. Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Dorothy Osborne and Theodore Xanthaky Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending the University of Oklahoma.

Kristina Cummings

Daughter of Connie and David Cummings. Recipient of the Elizabeth M. and William E. Cole Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Robert and Evelyn Curtis Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship.

She is currently attending Colorado State University.

Zoe Daves-Brody

Daughter of Jonathan and Shirah Daves-Brody. Recipient of the Prabhi G. Kavaler Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Paris Financial Aid Scholarship and the William P. and Adele Langston Rogers Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending the University of New Mexico.

Allison Davis

Daughter of Charles and Elaine Davis. Recipient of the Barbara Bell Black Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Robert E. and Florence L. Macaulay Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Abilene Christian University.

John "Daniel" Davis

Son of Charles and Elaine Davis. Recipient of the Dalton V. Killion Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Wheaton College.

Duncan Donnay

Son of Gertrud and Timothy Donnay. Recipient of the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the James Bolard More Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Vermont.

Ame Fall

Daughter of Karen and Mamadou Fall. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Barnard College.

Jonathan Frahm

Son of Linda and Stephen Frahm. Recipient of the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the David D. Newsom Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Jefferson Patterson Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Brigham Young University.



"Receiving this scholarship helped me realize that many people simply do not have the means to attend college; this scholarship is an absolute privilege."

Katherine Cooke-Caraway, Wesley College

Lindsey Frahm

Daughter of Linda and Stephen Frahm. Recipient of the Robert Woods Bliss Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the William Leonhart Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Brigham Young University.

Alexandra Garcia

Daughter of Kathleen and Rudolph Garcia. Recipient of the Naomi Pekmezian Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and Jacq Bachman Siracusa Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Pikes Peak Community College.

Claire Gilbert

Daughter of Jeffrey and Terri Gilbert. Recipient of the Francesca Bufano Lapinski Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Tallahassee Community College.

Morgan Groth

Son of Gregory Groth and Wendy Medhurst. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Chandler Gilbert Community College.

Therese Guice

Daughter of Marie and Stephen Guice. Recipient of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Shepherd University.

Neretjo Hijarunguru

Son of Angela Simonson-Hijarunguru. Recipient of the Selden Chapin Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Bronx Community College.

Charles Holtrop

Son of Daniel and Julie Holtrop. Recipient of the Harriet C. Thurgood Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Calvin College.

Adriana Huff

Daughter of Deborah Paolini. Recipient of the Hope Rogers and John Bastek Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Norton Bell Financial Aid Scholarship and the Dorothy Osborne and Theodore Xanthaky Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Delaware County Community College.

Ryan Hull

Son of Robert and Sandra Hull. Recipient of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Financial Aid Scholarship, the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Dorothy Osborne and Theodore Xanthaky Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Florida.

Serina Hull

Daughter of Robert and Sandra Hull. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship.

2013-2014 AFSA Financial Aid Scholarship Recipients

She is currently attending Florida State University.

Onyinyechukwu Ijeh

Daughter of Nkemakonam and Wayne Sr. Guyse. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Franklin College Switzerland.



"Hard work and diligence in school are of the utmost importance in attaining my goals, but it is the generous contributions by donors such as you that allow me to pursue academic success in the first place."

Daniel Davis, Wheaton College

Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Ohio State University.

Kaleb Johnson

Son of Brian and Tiffney Johnson. Recipient of the Louis C. Boochever Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Albert E. Carter Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Hawaii Pacific University.

Alexander Julian

Son of Karen and Mark Julian. Recipient of the Everett K. and Clara C. Melby Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Charles C. and Janet K. Stelle Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Brigham Young University.

Vanessa Keverenge

Daughter of Winnifred Copeland and Wilson Keverenge. Recipient of the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Evelyn K. and Horace J. Nickels Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Mount Holyoke College.

Alexander Laney

Son of Bridget Tambe. Recipient of the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Jefferson Patterson Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Victoria Laney

Daughter of Bridget Tambe. Recipient of the Terence Flannery Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Johns Hopkins University.

Allison LaReau

Daughter of Cindy and Jeff LaReau. Recipient of the Colonel Richard R. Hallock Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Charles B. Hosmer

Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Gertrude Stewart Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Colorado Christian University.

Shuang Li

Daughter of Guiping and Patrick Sheard. Recipient of the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Clare H. Timberlake Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Christopher and Eliza Van Hollen Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending the University of Mary Washington.

Esubalew McCarthy

Son of Patricia McCarthy. Recipient of the Anthony G. Freeman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Landreth M. Harrison Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Prince George's Community College.

Christina McGuire

Daughter of John and Suzanne McGuire. Recipient of the Wilbur J. Carr Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Harriet Winsar Isom Financial Aid Scholarship and the Rozanne L. Ridgway Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Linn Benton Community College.

Patrick McGuire

Son of John and Suzanne McGuire. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Stanford University.

Kyle McNeill

Son of Anne and David McNeill. Recipient of the Wilbur J. Carr

Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Clarke Winship Slade Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Radford University.

Thomas McNeill

Son of Anne and David McNeill. Recipient of the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending James Madison University.

Paul Palmer

Son of Susan Baker and Paul Palmer. Recipient of the Beirut Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Howard Fyfe Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Dorothy Osborne and Theodore Xanthaky Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Texas.

Alvaro Pareja

Son of Javier and Lucy Pareja. Recipient of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Financial Aid Scholarship, the Wilbur J. Carr Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Florida International University.

Aidan Pazan

Son of Michele Castagna and Stephen Pazan. Recipient of the David K. E. Bruce Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Betty Carp Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Ruth Frost Hoyt Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Ohio University.

Kyra Pazan

Daughter of Michele Castagna and Stephen Pazan. Recipient of the Oliver Bishop Harriman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial

Andrea Salazar

Daughter of Wendy Berlioz and Jose Salazar. Recipient of the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending George Mason University.

Ryan Sandor

Son of Stephen and Yvonne Sandor. Recipient of the William Benton Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Philip C. Habib Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Louise Holscher Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Moorpark College.

Caitlin Sneff-Nuckles

Daughter of John Nuckles and Wendy Sneff. Recipient of the Public Members of the Foreign Service Association Scholarship. She is currently attending George Mason University.

Madeline Strandemo

Daughter of Guy and Kimberly Strandemo. Recipient of the Harriet C. Thurgood Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending the University of Minnesota.

Thomas Strandemo

Son of Guy and Kimberly Strandemo. Recipient of the Harriet C. Thurgood Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Louisiana.

Audrey Stuart

Daughter of Steven Stuart and Ellen Wilson. Recipient of the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Gertrude Stewart Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Longwood University.

David Stuart

Son of Steven Stuart and Ellen Wilson. Recipient of the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial

Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Lillian Stuart

Daughter of Steven Stuart and Ellen Wilson. Recipient of the Elbert G. and Naomi M. Mathews Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Wellesley College.

David Sydney

Son of Dawn Lewis-Johnson and Roger Sydney. Recipient of the John Foster Dulles Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Elizabeth N. Landau Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Texas.

Samuel Sydney

Son of Dawn Lewis-Johnson and Roger Sydney. Recipient of the Kiang Fund for Excellence Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Texas Tech University.

Antigone Valen

Daughter of Kelly and Stephen Valen. Recipient of the Alice and John Hubler Financial Aid Scholarship, the George and Mattie Newman Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Edward T. Wailes Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Princeton University.

Jared Vinnedge

Son of Charles and Farah Vinnedge. Recipient of the Virginia Thurgood Bingham Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending The College of William and Mary.

Christopher Volciak Jr.

Son of Sabrina and Christopher Volciak Sr. Recipient of the Fallen U.S. Diplomats in Libya Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Lehigh University.

Gareth Walsh

Son of Charles and Mary Walsh. Recipient of the John Campbell White Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending the University of Chicago.

Hannah Wolff

Daughter of Eric and Kathleen Wolff. Recipient of the Heyward G. Hill Memorial/DACOR Bacon House Foundation Financial Aid Scholarship. She is currently attending Hillsdale College.

Jonathan Wolff

Son of Eric and Kathleen Wolff. Recipient of the Wilbur J. Carr Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Suzanne Marie Collins Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Marc Grossman and Mildred Patterson Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Hillsdale College.

Timothy Wolff

Son of Eric and Kathleen Wolff. Recipient of the Victor H. Memorial and Ruth Nay Skiles Financial Aid Scholarship, the Gertrude Stewart Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the John C. Whitehead Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Columbia International University.

Christian Zehr

Son of Dora and Wilbur Zehr. Recipient of the Harriet P. Culley Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship, the Susan Lowe Modi Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship and the Brockman M. Moore Memorial Financial Aid Scholarship. He is currently attending Abilene Christian University.

Secretary of State Award Recognizes Volunteers at Post

BY LARA CENTER, AAFSW VICE PRESIDENT, SOSA CHAIR

On Dec. 3, the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide hosted its annual awards program. This year AAFSW honored four FS employees and two spouses with the 2013 Secretary of State Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad, one FS spouse with the Eleanor Dodson Tragen Award administered by DACOR and one FS spouse with the Lesley Dorman Award.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, SOSA has honored more than 100 winners chosen from over 130 diplomatic missions for their outstanding volunteer service. AAFSW is fortunate to have the continued support of former Secretary of State James Baker and his wife Susan, who helped establish the award in 1990.

This annual award is also supported by the ongoing donations of former Secretaries of State, including George Shultz, Colin Powell, Henry Kissinger and Mr. and Mrs. James Baker. The Green Family Foundation through Ambassador Stephen J. Green also makes a substantial contribution. SOSA is administered in perpetuity by AAFSW, a nonprofit organization supporting FS family members.



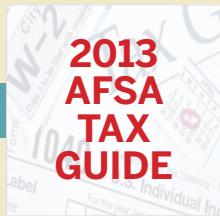
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

From left to right: Barbara Reiox, AAFSW volunteer and winner of the 2013 Lesley Dorman Award; Debbi Miller, AAFSW volunteer; Jameson DeBose, Bangkok; Marilyn Kott, Pristina; Megan Gallardo, La Paz; Amber Boyd-Eiholzer, Amman; Deputy Secretary of State William J. Burns; Bob Castro, winner of the 2013 Eleanor Dodson Tragen Award; Gretel Patch, Kathmandu; Elizabeth Orlando, Abuja.

Bureau of African Affairs: Elizabeth "Betsy" Orlando, Abuja

Ms. Orlando, a Foreign Service officer, spearheaded numerous projects and fundraisers in aid of the African School of Excellence, Hope for Survival Orphanage and the Abuja Children's Home. Serving as the Mission's "green queen," she partnered with other organizations to provide environmentally sustainable technologies to locals.

SOSA continued on page 83



Tax Guide continued from page 53
as gain from the sale of property held for 12 months or longer.

Also for 2013, since the Supreme Court decision on same-sex marriages, same-sex couples who were married before Dec. 31, 2013, in a state where it is legal *must* now file their federal tax return either as married filing separately or married filing jointly, *not single*.

Personal Exemption

For each taxpayer, spouse and dependent the personal exemption is \$3,900. There is a personal exemption phase-out for 2013.

Foreign Earned Income Exclusion

Many Foreign Service spouses and dependents work in the private sector overseas and thus are eligible for the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion.

American citizens and residents living and working overseas are eligible for the income exclusion, unless they are employees of the United States government. The first \$97,600 earned overseas as an employee or as self-employed may be exempt from income taxes.

To receive the exemption, the taxpayer must meet one of two tests: 1) the Physical Presence Test, which requires that the taxpayer be present in a foreign country for at least 330 full (midnight to midnight) days during any 12-month period (the period may be different from

the tax year); or 2) the Bona Fide Residence Test, which requires that the taxpayer has been a bona fide resident of a foreign country for an uninterrupted period that includes an entire tax year.

Most Foreign Service spouses and dependents qualify under the bona fide residence test, but they must wait until they have been overseas for a full calendar year before claiming it. Keep in mind that self-employed taxpayers must still pay self-employment (Social Security and Medicare) tax on their foreign-earned income. Only the income tax is excluded.

Note: The method for calculating the tax on non-excluded income in tax returns that include both excluded and non-excluded income was changed, beginning in 2006, so as to result in higher tax on the non-excluded portion. (See the box below for a full explanation.)

Extension for Taxpayers Abroad

Taxpayers whose tax home is outside the U.S. on April 15 are entitled to an automatic extension until June 15 to file their returns. When filing the return, these taxpayers should write "Taxpayer Abroad" at the top of the first page and attach a statement of explanation. There are no late filing or late payment penalties for returns filed and taxes paid by June 15, but the IRS does charge interest on any amount owed from April 15 until the date it receives payment.

Standard Deduction

The standard deduction is given to non-itemizers. For couples, the deduction is now \$12,200, and for singles, \$6,100. Married couples filing separately get a standard deduction of \$6,100 each, and head-of-household filers receive an \$8,950 deduction. An additional amount is

allowed for taxpayers over age 65 and for those who are blind.

Most unreimbursed employee business expenses must be reported as miscellaneous itemized deductions, which are subject to a threshold of 2 percent of Adjusted Gross Income. These include professional dues and subscriptions to publications; employment and educational expenses; home office, legal, accounting, custodial and tax preparation fees; home leave, representational and other employee business expenses; and contributions to AFSA's Legislative Action Fund. Unreimbursed moving expenses (including unreimbursed expenses incurred in moving pets) are an adjustment to income, which means that you may deduct them even if you are taking the standard deduction. However, the deduction includes only the unreimbursed transportation,

IMPORTANT NOTE: FOREIGN EARNED INCOME

The Foreign Earned Income Exclusion allows U.S. citizens who are not United States government employees and are living outside the U.S. to exclude up to \$97,600 of their 2013 foreign-source income if they meet certain requirements. Beginning in 2006, the IRS changed how the excluded amount must be calculated. This affects the tax liability for couples with one member employed on the local economy overseas. Previously, you subtracted your excluded income from your total income and paid tax on the remainder. The change now requires that you take your total income and figure what your tax would be, then deduct the tax that you would have paid on the excludable income.

For example: a Foreign Service employee earns \$80,000 and their teacher spouse earns \$30,000.

Before 2006: Tax on \$110,000 minus \$30,000 = tax on \$80,000 = tax bill of \$13,121.

Since 2006: Tax on \$110,000 = \$20,615; tax on \$30,000 = \$3,749; total tax = \$20,615 minus \$3,749 = tax bill of \$16,866.

storage and travel costs of moving your possessions and yourself and your family to the new location; it does not include meals.

Medical expenses (including health and long-term care insurance, but not health insurance premiums deducted from government salaries) are now subject to a threshold of 10 percent of Adjusted Gross Income, unless the taxpayer is over 65, in which case it remains at 7.5 percent. This means that to be deductible, the medical cost would have to exceed \$3,000 for a taxpayer with a \$30,000 AGI. There is a reduction of itemized deductions for higher income taxpayers for 2013.

State and local income taxes and real estate and personal property taxes remain fully deductible for itemizers, as are charitable contributions to U.S.-based charities for most taxpayers (donations to overseas charitable organizations such as local churches at post, are not deductible). Donations to the AFSA Scholarship Fund and the Fund for American Diplomacy are fully deductible as charitable contributions, as are donations to AFSA via the Combined Federal Campaign. Individuals may also dispose of any profit from the sale of personal property abroad in this manner.

For 2013 tax returns, any interest paid on auto or personal loans, credit cards, department stores and other personal interest will not be allowed as itemized

deductions. If such debts are consolidated, however, and paid with a home equity loan, interest on the home equity loan is allowable. Interest on educational loans will be allowed as an adjustment to gross income. Mortgage interest is still, for the most part, fully deductible. Interest on loans intended to finance investments is deductible up to the amount of net income from investments. Interest on loans intended to finance a business is 100-percent deductible. Passive-investment interest on investments in which the taxpayer is an inactive participant (i.e., a limited partnership) can be deducted only from the income produced by other passive activities. Interest on loans that do not fall into the above categories, such as money borrowed to buy tax-exempt securities, is not deductible.

Home Leave Expenses

Employee business expenses, such as home leave and representation, may be listed as miscellaneous itemized

deductions and claimed on Form 2106. In addition to the 2-percent floor, only 50 percent for meals and entertainment may be claimed (100 percent for unreimbursed travel and lodging). Only the employee's (not family members') home leave expenses are deductible. AFSA recommends maintaining a travel log and retaining a copy of home leave orders, which will help if the IRS ever questions claimed expenses.

It is important to save receipts: without receipts for food, a taxpayer may deduct only the federal meals-and-incidentals (M&IE) per diem rate at the home leave address, no matter how large the grocery or restaurant bill. Lodging is deductible, as long as it is not with friends or relatives, or in one's own home.

The IRS will disallow use of per diem rates and any expenses claimed for family members. If a hotel bill indicates double rates, the single room rate should be claimed; and, if possible, the hotel's rate sheet should be saved for IRS scrutiny.

CHILD CARE TAX CREDIT WHEN OVERSEAS

Bear in mind that in order to claim the Child Care Tax Credit while serving overseas, you must submit IRS Form 2441, for which the instructions say: "For U.S. citizens and resident aliens living abroad, your care provider may not have, and may not be required to get, a U.S. taxpayer identification number (for example, an SSN or EIN). If so, enter 'LACFP' (Living Abroad Foreign Care Provider) in the space for the care provider's taxpayer identification number."

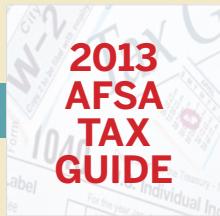
Car rental, mileage and other unreimbursed travel expenses, including parking fees and tolls, may be deducted. The rate for business miles driven is 56.5 cents for 2013. Those who use this optional mileage method need not keep detailed records of actual vehicle expenses. They must, however, keep a detailed odometer log to justify the business use of the vehicle and track the percentage of business use. This optional mileage method applies to leased vehicles, as well.

Official Residence Expenses

For ORE, the only expenses that are deductible are those above the 3.5 percent paid out of pocket. Since Oct. 1, 1990, employees who receive official residence expenses have not been allowed to reduce their reportable income by 3.5 percent. An IRS ruling in 1990 states that "usual expenses," defined as 3.5 percent of salary, are not deductible. These expenses can be deducted as miscellaneous business expenses.

Home Ownership

Individuals may deduct interest on up to \$1 million of acquisition debt for loans secured by a first home, second home or both. This also includes loans taken out for major home improvements. On home equity loans, interest is deductible on up to \$100,000, no matter how much the home cost, unless the loan is used for home



improvements, in which case the \$1 million limit applies. The \$100,000 ceiling applies to the total of all home equity loans you may have.

The same generally applies to refinancing a mortgage. Points paid to obtain a refinanced loan cannot be fully deducted the same year, but must be deducted over the life of the loan. It is advisable to save the settlement sheet (HUD-1 Form) for documentation in the event your tax return is selected by the IRS for audit.

Qualified residences are defined as the taxpayer's principal residence and one other residence. The second home can be a house, condo, co-op, mobile home or boat, as long as the structure includes basic living accommodations, including sleeping, bathroom and cooking facilities. If the second home is a vacation property that you rent out for fewer than 15 days during the year, the income need not be reported. Rental expenses cannot be claimed either, but all property taxes and mortgage interest may be deducted.

Rental of Home

Taxpayers who rented out their homes in 2013 can continue to deduct mortgage interest as a rental expense. Also deductible are property management fees, condo fees, depreciation costs, taxes and all other rental expenses. Losses up to \$25,000 may be offset against other income, as long as the Modified

Adjusted Gross Income does not exceed \$100,000 to \$150,000 and the taxpayer is actively managing the property.

Note that a taxpayer who retains a property manager does not lose this benefit, as this is still considered active management of the property. All passive losses that cannot be deducted currently are carried forward and deducted in the year the property is sold.

Sale of a Principal Residence

Current tax laws allow an exclusion of up to \$500,000 for couples filing jointly and up to \$250,000 for single taxpayers on the long-term gain from the sale of their principal residence. One need not purchase another residence to claim this exclusion. All depreciation taken after May 7, 1997, will, however, be recaptured (added to income) at the time of sale and taxed at 25 percent.

Since January 2009 gain from the sale of a home can no longer be excluded from gross income for periods when it was rented out before you occupied it as a principal residence for the first time. The only qualification for the capital-gains exclusion is that the house sold must have been owned and occupied by the taxpayer as his or her principal residence for at least two of the last five years prior to the date of the sale.

As a result of the Military Families Relief Act of 2003, the five-year period may

be extended for members of the Foreign Service by the five-year period may be extended by any period during which the taxpayer has been away from the area on Foreign Service assignment, up to a maximum of 15 years (including the five years). There are some exceptions to the two-year occupancy requirement, including a sale due to a "change in place of employment" (this would include foreign transfers). This exclusion is not limited to a once-in-a-lifetime sale, but may be taken once every two years.

When a principal residence is sold, capital gains realized above the exclusion amounts are subject to taxation. This exclusion replaces the earlier tax-law provision that allowed both the deferral of gain and a one-time exclusion of a principal residence sale.

Temporary rental of the home does not disqualify one from claiming the exclusion. The 2003 law requires only that you have occupied the house as your principal residence for the required period (two years out of five, extended). However, new legislation in 2009 requires that the "two years out of five (extended)" cannot start until the date the home is occupied as a principal residence for the first time.

Under Internal Revenue Code Section 1031, taxpayers whose U.S. home may no longer qualify for the principal residence exclusion may be eligible to replace

the property through a "tax-free exchange" (the so-called Starker Exchange). In essence, one property being rented out may be exchanged for another, as long as that one is also rented. In exchanging the properties, capital gains tax may be deferred. Technically, a simultaneous trade of investments occurs. Actually, owners first sign a contract with an intermediary to sell their property, hold the cash proceeds in escrow, identify in writing within 45 days the property they intend to acquire, and settle on the new property within 180 days, using the money held in escrow as part of the payment.

It is important to emphasize that the exchange is from one investment property to another investment property—the key factor in the IRS evaluation of an exchange transaction is the intent of the investor at the time the exchange was consummated. The IRS rules for these exchanges are complex and specific, with a number of pitfalls that can nullify the transaction. An exchange should never be attempted without assistance from a tax lawyer specializing in this field.

Calculating Your Adjusted Basis

Many Foreign Service employees ask what items can be added to the cost basis of their homes when they are ready to sell. Money spent on fixing up the home for sale may be added to the

basis. To qualify as legitimate fixing-up costs, the following conditions must be met: 1) the expenses must be for work performed during the 90-day period ending on the day on which the contract to sell the old residence was signed; 2) the expenses must be paid on or before the 30th day after sale of the house; and 3) the expenses must not be capital expenditures for permanent improvements or replacements (these can be added to the basis of the property, the original purchase price, thereby reducing the amount of profit). A new roof and kitchen counters are not "fix-up" items, but painting the house, cleaning up the garden and making minor repairs qualify.

New for 2013

The Affordable Care Act imposes two new tax increases beginning in 2013. There is a 3.8-percent net investment tax on net investment income to the extent it is in excess of modified adjusted gross income of \$250,000 for those married filing jointly, and \$200,000 for those filing single. Net investment income includes interest, dividends, rents, royalties, pensions and annuities, and gain from the sale of property. Secondly, the rate of the Medicare tax that is withheld from employees' paychecks is increased by 0.9 percent on salaries or self-employment earnings over the same thresholds.

STATE TAX PROVISIONS

Most Foreign Service employees have questions about their liability to pay state income taxes during periods when they are posted overseas or assigned to Washington.

Members of the Foreign Service are not treated as domiciled in their countries of assignment abroad. Every active-duty Foreign Service employee serving abroad must maintain a state of domicile in the United States, and the tax liability that the employee faces varies greatly from state to state. In addition, there are numerous regulations concerning the taxability of Foreign Service pensions and annuities that vary by state.

The "State Overviews" (see p. 68) briefly review the laws regarding income tax and tax on annuities and pensions as they affect Foreign Service personnel by state. Please note that while AFSA makes every attempt to provide the most up-to-date information, readers with specific questions should consult a tax expert in the state in question at the addresses given. We also encourage readers to visit the state's tax office website (also listed).

There are many criteria used in determining which state is a citizen's domicile. One of the strongest determinants is prolonged physical presence, a standard that Foreign Service personnel

frequently cannot meet due to overseas service. In such cases, the states will make a determination of the individual's income-tax status based on other factors, including where the individual has family ties, where he or she has been filing resident tax returns, where he or she is registered to vote or has a driver's license, where he or she owns property, or where the person has bank accounts or other financial holdings.

In the case of Foreign Service employees, the domicile might be the state from which the person joined the Service, where his or her home leave address is, or where he or she intends to return upon separation. For purposes of this article, the term "domicile" refers to legal residence; some states also define it as permanent residence. Residence refers to physical presence in the state. Foreign Service personnel must continue to pay taxes to the state of domicile (or to the District of Columbia) while residing outside of the state, including during assignments abroad, unless the state of residence does not require it.

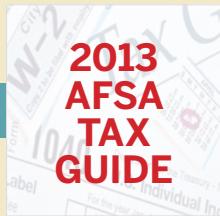
Members are encouraged to review the Overseas Briefing Center's guide to Residence and Domicile, available on AFSA's website at www.afsa.org/domicile.

A non-resident, according to most states' definitions, is an individual who earns income sourced within the specific state but does not

live there, or is living there for only part of the year (usually fewer than six months). Individuals are generally considered residents, and are thus fully liable for taxes, if they are domiciled in the state or if they are living in the state (usually at least six months of the year) but are not domiciled there.

Foreign Service employees residing in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area are required to pay income tax to the District of Columbia, Maryland or Virginia, in addition to paying tax to the state of their domicile. Most states allow a credit, however, so that the taxpayer pays the higher tax rate of the two states, with each state receiving a share. It is important to maintain ties with your state of domicile—by, for instance, continuing to file tax returns in that state if appropriate—so that when you leave the D.C. area for another overseas assignment, you can demonstrate to the District of Columbia, Virginia or Maryland your affiliation to your home state. Also, if possible, avoid using the D.C. pouch zip code as your return address on your federal return, since in some cases, the D.C. tax authorities have sought back taxes from those who have used this address.

There are currently seven states with no state income tax: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. In addition, New Hampshire and Tennessee have no tax on



personal income but do tax profits from the sale of bonds and property.

There are 10 states that, under certain conditions, do not tax income earned while the taxpayer is outside the state: California, Connecticut, Idaho, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania (see entry for Pennsylvania below) and West Virginia. The requirements for all except California, Idaho, Minnesota and Oregon are that the individual not have a permanent "place of abode" in the state, have a permanent "place of abode" outside the state, and not be physically present for more than 30 days during the tax year. California allows up to 45 days in the state during a tax year.

All these 10 states require the filing of non-resident returns for all income earned from in-state sources.

Foreign Service employees should also keep in mind that states could challenge

the status of government housing in the future.

The following list gives a state-by-state state overview of the latest information available on tax liability, with addresses provided to get further information or tax forms. Tax rates are provided where possible. For further information, please contact AFSA's Labor Management Office or the individual state tax authorities. As always, members are advised to double-check with their state's tax authorities.

To assist you in connecting with your state tax office, we provide the website address for each in the state-by-state guide, and an e-mail address or link where available. Some states do not offer e-mail customer service. The Federation of Tax Administrators' website, www.taxadmin.org, also provides much useful information on individual state income taxes.

E-mail: Link through the website, "About Us" then "Contacts," then "Income Tax"

Website: www.ador.state.al.us

ALASKA

Alaska does not tax individual income or intangible or personal property. It has no state sales and use, franchise or fiduciary tax. Some municipalities levy sales, property and use taxes.

Write: State Office Building, 333 West Willoughby Ave., 11th Floor, P.O. Box 110420, Juneau AK 99811-0420.

Phone: (907) 465-2320.

Website: www.tax.state.ak.us

ARIZONA

Individuals domiciled in Arizona are considered residents and are taxed on any income that is included in the Federal Adjusted Gross Income, regardless of their physical presence in the state. Arizona's tax rate ranges in five brackets from a minimum of 2.59 percent to a maximum of 4.54 percent of taxable income over \$300,000 for married filing jointly or \$150,000 for single filers.

Write: Arizona Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Information & Assistance, P.O. Box 29086, Phoenix AZ 85038-9086.

Phone: (602) 255-3381.

E-mail: For general questions: taxpayerassistance@azdor.gov

Website: www.azdor.gov

ARKANSAS

Individuals domiciled in Arkansas are considered residents and are taxed on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The Arkansas tax rate ranges in six brackets from a minimum of 2.5 percent to a maximum of 7 percent of net taxable income over \$34,000.

Write: Department of Finance and Administration, Income Tax Section, P.O. Box 3628, Little Rock AR 72203-3628.

Phone: (501) 682-1100.

E-mail: Individual.Income@dfa.arkansas.gov

Website: www.arkansas.gov/dfa

CALIFORNIA

Foreign Service employees domiciled in California must establish non-residency to avoid liability for California taxes (see FTB Publication 1031). However, a "safe harbor" provision allows anyone who is domiciled in state but is out of the state on an employment-related contract for at least 546 consecutive days to be considered a non-resident. This applies to most FS employees and their spouses, but members domiciled in California are advised to study FTB Publication 1031 for exceptions and exemptions. The California tax

STATE OVERVIEWS

ALABAMA

Individuals domiciled in Alabama are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Alabama's individual income tax rates range from 2 percent on taxable income over \$500 for single taxpayers and \$1,000 for married filing jointly, to 5 percent over \$3,000 for single taxpayers and \$6,000 for married filing jointly.

Write: Alabama Department of Revenue, 50 N. Ripley, Montgomery AL 36132.

Phone: (334) 242-1099.

rate for 2013 ranges in five brackets from 1 percent of taxable income to a maximum of \$4,309.66 plus 9.3 percent of the excess over \$99,584 for married filing jointly or over \$49,744 for singles. For taxable income over \$254,250 for singles and \$508,500 for joint filers, there are three further steps up to a maximum of 12.3 percent. Non-resident domiciliaries are advised to file on Form 540NR.

Write: Personal Income Taxes, Franchise Tax Board, P.O. Box 942840, Sacramento CA 94240-0040.

Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 852-5711 (inside the U.S.); (916) 845-6500 (outside the U.S.).

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.ftb.ca.gov

COLORADO

Individuals domiciled in Colorado are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Colorado's tax rate is a flat 4.63 percent of federal taxable income plus or minus allowable modifications.

Write: Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Service Division, State Capitol Annex, 1375 Sherman St., Denver CO 80261-0005.

Phone: (303) 238-7378.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab on the "Taxes" tab.

Website: www.colorado.gov/revenue

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut domiciliaries may qualify for non-resident tax treatment under either of two exceptions as follows: Group A: the domiciliary 1) did not maintain a permanent place of abode inside Connecticut for the entire tax year; and 2) maintains a permanent place of abode outside the state for the entire tax year; and 3) spends not more than 30 days in the aggregate in the state during the tax year. Group B: the domiciliary 1) In any period of 548 consecutive days, is present in a foreign country for at least 450 days; and 2) during the 548-day period, is not present in Connecticut for more than 90 days; and 3) does not maintain a permanent place of abode in the state at which the domiciliary's spouse or minor children are present for more than 90 days. Connecticut's tax rate for married filing jointly rises from 3 percent on the first \$20,000, in six steps to 6.7 percent of the excess over \$500,000. For singles it is 3 percent on the first \$10,000, rising in six steps to 6.7 percent of the excess over \$250,000.

Write: Department of Revenue Services, Taxpayer Services Division, 25 Sigourney St., Suite 2, Hartford CT 06106-5032. Phone: (860) 297-5962.

E-mail: drs@po.state.ct.us

Website: www.ct.gov/drs

DELAWARE

Individuals domiciled in Delaware are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Delaware's graduated tax rate rises in six steps from 2.2 percent of taxable income under \$5,000 to 6.75 percent of taxable income over \$60,000.

Write: Division of Revenue, Taxpayers Assistance Section, State Office Building, 820 N. French St., Wilmington DE 19801. Phone (302) 577-8200.

E-mail: personaltax@state.de.us

Website: www.revenue.delaware.gov

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Individuals domiciled in the District of Columbia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence there. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes

A TIME OF SERVICE...A TIME OF NEED

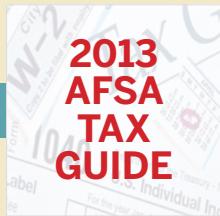
Make a worthwhile contribution to the Senior Living Foundation of the American Foreign Service today.



- ✓ Send a check to the Senior Living Foundation
- ✓ Make a credit card donation via our Web site
- ✓ Enter our CFC #40530 on your Combined Federal Campaign Pledge Card
- ✓ Remember us in your will or Charitable Remainder Trust

For more information, please contact the
SENIOR LIVING FOUNDATION
OF THE AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE
1716 N Street, NW • Washington, DC 20036-2902
PHONE: (202) 887-8170 • FAX: (202) 872-9320
E-MAIL: info@SLFoundation.org
WEB SITE: www.SLFoundation.org

The Senior Living Foundation is a tax deductible 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.



for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the District for 183 days or more. The District's tax rate is 4 percent if income is less than \$10,000; \$400 plus 6 percent of excess over \$10,000 if between \$10,000 and \$40,000; \$2,200 plus 8.5 percent of excess over \$40,000; and \$28,550 plus 8.95 percent of any excess above \$350,000. Write: Office of Tax and Revenue, Customer Service Center, 1101 4th St. SW, Suite W270, Washington DC 20024. Phone: (202) 727-4829 Email: taxhelp@dc.gov Website: cfo.washingondc.gov/cfo/site/default.asp

FLORIDA

Florida does not impose personal income, inheritance, gift or intangible personal property taxes. Sales and use tax is 6 percent, with local additions ranging from 0.25 to 2.5 percent. Write: Taxpayer Services, Florida Department of Revenue, 5050 W. Tennessee St., Bldg. L, Tallahassee FL 32399-0100. Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 352-3671, or (850) 488-6800. E-mail: Link through website. Go to "Taxes," then "Tax

Information," then "Questions?"

Website: dor.myflorida.com/dor/

GEORGIA

Individuals domiciled in Georgia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Georgia has a graduated tax rate rising in six steps to a maximum of 6 percent of taxable income of \$10,000 and above for joint married filers and \$7,000 for single filers.

Write: Georgia Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, 1800 Century Blvd.NE, Atlanta GA 30345-3205.

Phone: (877) 423-6711 Option #2.

E-mail for questions: taxpayer.services@dor.ga.gov

Website: etax.dor.ga.gov/

HAWAII

Individuals domiciled in Hawaii are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Hawaii's tax rate rises in 12 steps from 1.4 percent on taxable income below \$2,400 for single filers and \$4,800 for joint filers, to a maximum of 11 percent for taxable income above \$200,000 for single filers and \$400,000 for joint filers.

Write: Oahu District Office, Taxpayer Services Branch, P.O. Box 259, Honolulu HI 96809-0259.

Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 222-3229, or (808) 587-4242.

E-mail: Taxpayer.Services@hawaii.gov

Website: www.state.hi.us/tax

IDAHO

Individuals domiciled in Idaho for an entire tax year are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. However, you are considered a non-resident if: 1) you are an Idaho resident who lived outside of Idaho for at least 445 days in a 15-month period; and 2) after satisfying the 15-month period, you spent fewer than 60 days in Idaho during the year; and 3) you did not have a personal residence in Idaho for yourself or your family during any part of the calendar year; and 4) you did not claim Idaho as your federal tax home for deducting away-from home expenses on your federal return; and 5) you were not employed on the staff of a U.S. senator; and 6) you did not hold an elective or appointive office of the U.S. government other than the armed forces or a career appointment in the U.S. Foreign Service (see Idaho Code Sections 63-3013 and 63-3030). In 2013 Idaho's tax rate rises in eight steps from a minimum of 1.6 percent to a maximum 7.4 percent on the amount of Idaho taxable income over \$10,568 for singles and \$21,136 for married filers. A non-resident must file an Idaho income tax return if his or her

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Tel: (703) 743-0272 Fax: (202) 204-5199

E-mail: David@mytaxcpa.net

Web site: www.mytaxcpa.net

gross income from Idaho sources is \$2,500 or more. Write: Idaho State Tax Commission, P.O. Box 36, Boise ID 83722-0410. Phone: (208) 334-7660 or toll-free 1 (800) 972-7660. E-mail: taxrep@tax.idaho.gov Website: www.tax.idaho.gov

ILLINOIS

Individuals domiciled in Illinois are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. It appears that under some circumstances, however, domiciliaries absent from the state throughout the year may not be subject to tax, so they should check with the Illinois Department of Revenue in advance. The Illinois tax rate is a flat 5 percent of Illinois taxable income for 2013. Write: Illinois Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 19001, Springfield IL 62794-9001. Phone: toll-free (800) 732-8866, or (217) 782-3336. E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us," then "Taxpayer Answer Center." Website: www.revenue.state.il.us

INDIANA

Individuals domiciled in Indiana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Indiana's tax rate is a flat 3.4 percent of Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Several counties also charge a county income tax. Write: Indiana Department of Revenue, Individual Income Tax, P.O. Box 7207, Indianapolis IN 46207-7207. Phone: (317) 232-2240. E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab. Website: www.in.gov/dor

IOWA

Individuals domiciled in Iowa are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income to the extent that income is taxable on the person's federal income tax returns. Iowa's 2013 tax rate rises in nine steps from 0.36 percent to a maximum 8.98 percent of taxable income over \$67,230, depending on income and filing status. Write: Taxpayer Services, Iowa Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 10457, Des Moines IA 50306-0457. Phone: (515) 281-3114. E-mail: idr@iowa.gov Website: www.iowa.gov/tax

KANSAS

Individuals domiciled in Kansas are considered residents and

are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. In 2013 the Kansas tax rate is 3 percent on Kansas taxable income under \$15,000 for single filers and under \$30,000 for joint filers, and 4.9 percent on income over those amounts.

Write: Kansas Taxpayer Assistance Center, Room 150, 915 SW Harrison, Topeka KS 66612. Phone: (785) 368-8222. E-mail: tac@kdor.ks.gov Website: www.ksrevenue.org

KENTUCKY

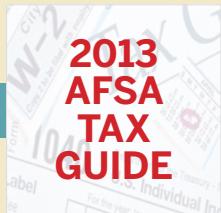
Individuals domiciled in Kentucky are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Kentucky's tax rate ranges from 2 percent on the first \$3,000 of taxable income to 6 percent on all taxable income over \$75,000. Write: Kentucky Department of Revenue, Frankfort KY 40602. Phone: (502) 564-4581. E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab. Website: www.revenue.ky.gov

LOUISIANA

Individuals domiciled in Louisiana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Louisiana's tax rate rises from 2 percent for the first \$12,500 for single filers or \$25,000 for joint filers; in three steps to 6 percent for over \$50,000 for single filers or \$100,000 for joint filers. Write: Taxpayer Services Division, Individual Income Tax Section, Louisiana Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 201, Baton Rouge LA 70821-0201. Phone: (225) 219-0102. E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab. Website: www.revenue.louisiana.gov

MAINE

Individuals domiciled in Maine are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. Since Jan. 1, 2007, however, there have been "safe harbor" provisions. Under the General Safe Harbor provision, Maine domiciliaries are treated as non-residents if they satisfy all three of the following conditions: 1) they did not maintain a permanent place of abode in Maine for the entire taxable year; 2) they maintained a permanent place of abode outside Maine for the entire taxable year; and 3) they spent no more than 30 days in the aggregate in Maine during the taxable year. Under the Foreign Safe Harbor provision, Maine domiciliaries are treated as non-residents if they are present in a foreign country for 450 days in a 548-day period and do not spend more than 90 days in Maine



during that period. Maine's tax rate in 2013 is 6.5 percent on Maine taxable income over \$5,200 for singles and \$10,450 for joint filers and 7.96 percent over \$20,900 for singles and \$41,850 for married filing jointly.

Write: Maine Revenue Services, Income Tax Assistance, PO Box 9107, Augusta ME 04332-9107.

Phone: (207) 626-8475.

E-mail: income.tax@maine.gov

Website: www.maine.gov/revenue

MARYLAND

Individuals domiciled in Maryland are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the state for an aggregated total of 183 days or more. Maryland's tax rate is \$90 plus 4.75 percent of taxable income over \$3,000 up to \$100,000 if filing singly and \$150,000 if filing jointly. It then rises in four steps to \$12,760 plus 5.75 percent of the excess of taxable income over \$250,000 for singles or \$15,072 plus 5.75 percent of the excess over \$300,000 for married filers. In addition, Baltimore City and the 23 Maryland counties impose a local income tax, which is a percentage of the Maryland taxable income, using Line 31 of Form 502 or Line 9 of Form 503. The local factor varies from 1.25 percent in Worcester County to 3.2 percent in Baltimore City, and in Montgomery, Prince George's and Howard counties (see website for details for all counties). Write: Comptroller of Maryland, Revenue Administration Center, Taxpayer Service Section, Annapolis MD 21411. Phone: toll-free (800) 638-2937 or (410) 260-7980. E-mail: taxhelp@comp.state.md.us Website: www.marylandtaxes.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Individuals domiciled in Massachusetts are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Salaries and most interest and dividend income are taxed at a flat rate of 5.25 percent. Some income (e.g., short-term capital gains) is taxed at 12 percent.

Write: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, P.O. Box 7010, Boston MA 02204.

Phone: (617) 887-6367.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.dor.state.ma.us

MICHIGAN

Individuals domiciled in Michigan are considered residents

and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. In 2013 and subsequent years, Michigan's tax is 4.25 percent. Some Michigan cities impose an additional 1-or 2-percent income tax. Detroit imposes an additional 2.5-percent tax.

Write: Michigan Department of Treasury, Lansing MI 48922.

Phone: toll-free (517) 373-3200.

E-mail: treasIndTax@michigan.gov

Website: www.michigan.gov/treasury

MINNESOTA

Individuals domiciled in Minnesota are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Minnesota's tax rate in 2013 is 5.35 percent on taxable income over \$24,270 for singles or \$35,480 for married joint filers, rising in three steps to a maximum of 9.85 percent on taxable income over \$150,000 for single filers or \$250,000 for married filing jointly. Write: Minnesota Department of Revenue, 600 North Robert St., St. Paul MN 55146-5510.

Phone: (651) 296-3781.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.taxes.state.mn.us

MISSISSIPPI

Individuals domiciled in Mississippi are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Mississippi's tax rate is 3 percent on the first \$5,000 of taxable income, 4 percent on the next \$5,000 and 5 percent on taxable income over \$10,000 for all taxpayers, whether filing singly or jointly.

Write: Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 1033, Jackson MS 39215-1033.

Phone: (601) 923-7000.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

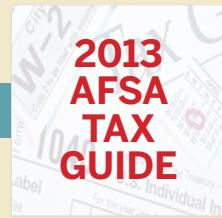
Website: www.dor.ms.gov

MISSOURI

An individual domiciled in Missouri is considered a non-resident, and is not liable for tax on Missouri income if the individual has no permanent residence in Missouri, has a permanent residence elsewhere and is not physically present in the state for more than 30 days during the tax year. Missouri calculates tax on a graduated scale up to \$9,000 of taxable income. Any taxable income over \$9,000 is taxed at a rate of \$315 plus 6 percent of the excess over \$9,000.

Write: Individual Income Tax, P.O. Box 2200, Jefferson City MO 65105-2200.

Phone: (573) 751-3505.



E-mail: income@dor.mo.gov

Website: www.dor.mo.gov

MONTANA

Individuals domiciled in Montana are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Montana's tax rate for 2013 rises in six steps from 1 percent of taxable income under \$2,800 rising in seven steps to a maximum of 6.9 percent of taxable income over \$16,700. See the website for various deductions and exemptions.

Write: Montana Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 5805, Helena MT 59604.

Phone: (406) 444-6900.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: revenue.mt.gov/default.mcpx

NEBRASKA

Individuals domiciled in Nebraska are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The 2013 individual income tax rates range in four steps from a minimum of 2.46 percent to a maximum of 6.84 percent of the excess over \$27,000 for singles and \$54,000 for joint filers. If AGI is over \$250,000 for single filers or \$300,000 for joint filers an additional tax of between 0.438 and 0.183 percent is imposed.

Write: Department of Revenue, 301 Centennial Mall South, P.O. Box 94818, Lincoln NE 68509-4818.

Phone: (402) 471-5729.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.revenue.state.ne.us

NEVADA

Nevada does not tax personal income. There is a sales-and-use tax that varies from 6.85 percent to 8.1 percent depending on local jurisdiction. Additional ad valorem personal and real property taxes are also levied.

Write: Nevada Department of Taxation, 1550 College Pkwy., Suite 115, Carson City NV 89706.

Phone: (775) 684-2000.

Website: www.tax.state.nv.us

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The state imposes no personal income tax on earned income and no general sales tax. The state does levy, among other taxes, a 5-percent tax on interest and dividend income of more than \$2,400 annually for single filers and \$4,800 annually for joint filers, and an 8.5-percent tax on business profits, including sale of rental property. The inheritance tax was repealed in 2003. Applicable taxes apply to part-year resi-

dents.

Write: Central Taxpayer Services, 109 Pleasant St., Concord NH 03301.

Phone: (603) 230-5920.

Website: www.revenue.nh.gov

NEW JERSEY

A New Jersey domiciliary is considered a non-resident for New Jersey tax purposes if the individual has no permanent residence in New Jersey, has a permanent residence elsewhere and is not physically in the state for more than 30 days during the tax year. Filing a return is not required (unless the non-resident has New Jersey-source income), but it is recommended in order to preserve domicile status. Filing is required on Form 1040-NR for revenue derived from in-state sources. Tax liability is calculated as a variable lump sum plus a percentage from a minimum of 1.4 percent of taxable gross income up to \$20,000, in three steps to 6.37 percent between \$75,000 and \$500,000, and a maximum of 8.97 percent on taxable gross income over \$500,000.

Write: State of New Jersey, New Jersey Division of Taxa-

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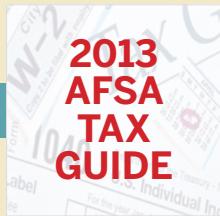
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tion, Technical Information Branch, P.O. Box 281, Trenton NJ

08695-0281.

Phone: (609) 292-6400.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation

NEW MEXICO

Individuals domiciled in New Mexico are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The basis for New Mexico's calculation is the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure. Rates rise from a minimum of 1.7 percent in four steps to a maximum of 4.9 percent on New Mexico taxable income over \$16,000 for single filers and \$24,000 for married filing jointly.

Write: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, Tax Information and Policy Office, P.O. Box 25122 Santa Fe NM 87504-5122

Phone: (505) 827-0700.

E-mail: Link through the website's "E-mail Us" tab.

Website: www.tax.state.nm.us

NEW YORK

There is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in New York, has a permanent residence elsewhere and is not present in the state more than 30 days during the tax year. Filing a return is not required, but it is recommended to preserve domicile status. The tax rate rises in six steps from a minimum of 4 percent to 6.45 percent of taxable income over \$20,000 for single filers and \$40,000 for married filing jointly; 6.65 percent on taxable income over \$75,000 for single filers and \$150,000 for joint filers; 6.85 percent on taxable income over \$200,000 for single filers or \$300,000 for joint filers; and at 8.82 percent over \$1,000,000 for single filers and over \$2,000,000 for joint filers. In New York City the maximum rate is 3.648 percent over \$90,000 and 3.876 percent over \$500,000. Filing is required on Form IT-203 for revenue derived from New York sources.

A 2001 opinion from the New York tax authorities stated that Foreign Service employees not domiciled in New York state but assigned to the U.S. United Nations office for a normal tour of duty would not be considered to be maintaining a permanent place of abode in New York state. Therefore, such individuals are not treated as resident individuals and are taxed as non-residents in New York state. AFSA can provide a copy of this opinion.

Write: New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, Personal Income Tax Information, W.A. Harriman Campus, Albany NY 12227.

Phone: (518) 457-5181.

E-Mail: Link through the website's "Answer Center" tab.

Website: www.tax.ny.gov

NORTH CAROLINA

Individuals domiciled in North Carolina are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. North Carolina's tax rate rises in three steps from 6 percent of taxable income up to \$12,750 for single or \$21,250 for joint filers, to 7.75 percent of North Carolina taxable income over \$60,000 for single filers and over \$100,000 for joint filers. Residents must also report and pay a "use tax" on purchases made outside the state for use in North Carolina.

Write: North Carolina Department of Revenue, P.O. Box 25000, Raleigh NC 27640-0640.

Phone: toll-free (877) 252-3052. From overseas, call 1 (252) 467-9000.

Website: www.dor.state.nc.us

NORTH DAKOTA

Individuals domiciled in North Dakota and serving outside the state are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income. For 2013 and later tax years, the tax rate ranges in five steps from 1.22 percent on North Dakota taxable income up to \$36,250 for singles and \$60,650 for joint filers; 2.52 percent over \$87,850 for singles and over \$146,600 for joint filers; to a maximum of 3.22 percent on taxable income over \$398,350 for singles and joint filers.

Write: Office of State Tax Commissioner, State Capitol, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 127, Bismarck ND 58505-0599.

Phone: (701) 328-1247.

E-mail: individualtax@nd.gov

Website: www.nd.gov/tax

OHIO

Individuals domiciled in Ohio are considered residents and their income is subject to tax, using the Federal Adjusted Gross Income figure as a starting base. Ohio's tax rate starts at a minimum of 0.587 percent on taxable income under \$5,200, rising in eight steps to a maximum of 5.925 percent on taxable income over \$208,500 for single and joint filers. Ohio also charges a school district income tax of between .5 and 2 percent, depending on jurisdiction.

Write: Ohio Department of Taxation, Taxpayer Services Center, P.O. Box 530, Columbus OH 43216-0530.

Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 282-1780 or (614) 387-0224.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.tax.ohio.gov

OKLAHOMA

Individuals domiciled in Oklahoma are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Oklahoma's tax rate rises in eight stages to a maximum of 5.25 percent on taxable income over \$8,700 for single filers and \$15,000 for married filing jointly.

Write: Oklahoma Tax Commission, Income Tax, P.O. Box 26800, Oklahoma City OK 73126-0800.

Phone: (405) 521-3160.

E-mail: otcmaster@tax.ok.gov

Website: www.tax.ok.gov

OREGON

Individuals domiciled in Oregon are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Under a 1999 law, however, Oregon exempts domiciliaries who meet the foreign residence requirement for the Foreign Earned Income Exclusion, even though they may be federal employees. For 2013, Oregon's tax rate rises from 5 percent on taxable income over \$3,150 for single filers and over \$6,300 for married filing jointly, in three steps to 9.9 percent on taxable income over \$125,000 for single filers and \$250,000 for joint filers. Contact the Oregon Department of Revenue for up-to-date information. Oregon has no sales tax.

Write: Oregon Department of Revenue, 955 Center St. NE, Salem OR 97301-2555.

Phone: (503) 378-4988.

E-mail: questions.dor@state.or.us

Website: www.oregon.gov/DOR

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania tax authorities have ruled that Pennsylvania residents in the U.S. Foreign Service are not on federal active duty for state tax purposes, and thus their income is taxable compensation. For non-Foreign Service state residents, there is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in the state, has a permanent residence elsewhere, and spends no more than 30 days in the state during the tax year. However, Pennsylvania does not consider government quarters overseas to be a "permanent residence elsewhere." Filing a return is not required, but it is recommended to preserve domicile status. File Form PA-40 for all income derived from Pennsylvania sources. Pennsylvania's tax rate is a flat 3.07 percent.

Write: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services Department, Harrisburg PA 17128-1061.

Phone: (717) 787-8201.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.revenue.state.pa.us

PUERTO RICO

Individuals who are domiciled in Puerto Rico are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the commonwealth. Normally, they may claim a credit with certain limitations for income taxes paid to the United States on income from sources outside Puerto Rico. Taxes range from 7 percent of taxable income up to \$22,000 to 33 percent of the taxable income over \$60,000 for all taxpayers.

Write: Departamento de Hacienda, P.O. Box 9024140, San Juan PR 00902-4140.

Phone: (787) 727-0216.

E-mail: infoserv@hacienda.gobierno.pr

Website: www.hacienda.gobierno.pr

RHODE ISLAND

Individuals domiciled in Rhode Island are considered resi-

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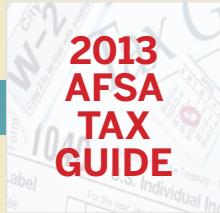
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dents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The Rhode Island tax rate is 3.75 percent of taxable income up to \$58,600 for all filers, 4.75 percent for income over \$58,600 and 5.99 percent of taxable income over \$133,250 for all filers. Also, a 2010 change treats capital gains as ordinary taxable income. Refer to the tax division's website for current information and handy filing hints, as well as for forms and regulations.

Write: Rhode Island Division of Taxation, Taxpayer Assistance Section, One Capitol Hill, Providence RI 02908-5801.

Phone (401) 574-8829, Option #3.

E-mail: txassist@tax.state.ri.us

Website: www.tax.state.ri.us

SOUTH CAROLINA

Individuals domiciled in South Carolina are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. South Carolina imposes a graduated tax rising in six steps from 3 percent on the first \$5,700 of South Carolina taxable income to a maximum of 7 percent of taxable income over \$14,350.

Write: South Carolina Tax Commission, P.O. Box 125, Columbia SC 29214.

Phone: (803) 898-5709.

E-mail: iitax@sctax.org or through the Contact Us tab.

Website: www.sctax.org

SOUTH DAKOTA

There is no state income tax and no state inheritance tax. State sales and use tax is 4 percent; municipalities may add up to an additional 2.75 percent.

Write: South Dakota Department of Revenue, 445 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre SD 57501-3185.

Phone: (605) 773-3311.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.dor.sd.gov

TENNESSEE

Salaries and wages are not subject to state income tax, but Tennessee imposes a 6-percent tax on most dividends and interest income of more than \$1,250 (single filers) or \$2,500 (joint filers) in the tax year.

Write: Tennessee Department of Revenue (Attention: Taxpayer Services), 500 Deaderick St., Nashville TN 37242.

Phone: (615) 532-6439.

E-mail: TN.Revenue@tn.gov

Website: www.state.tn.us/revenue

TEXAS

There is no state personal income tax.

Write: Texas Comptroller, P.O. Box 13528, Capitol Station Austin TX 78711-3528.

Phone: (800) 252-5555.

E-mail: comptroller.help@cpa.state.tx.us

Website: www.window.state.tx.us

UTAH

Individuals domiciled in Utah are considered residents and are subject to Utah state tax. Utah requires that all Federal Adjusted Gross Income reported on the federal return be reported on the state return regardless of the taxpayer's physical presence in the state. Utah has a flat tax of 5 percent on all income. Some taxpayers will be able to claim either a taxpayer tax credit or a retirement tax credit, or both (see website for explanation).

Write: Utah State Tax Commission, Taxpayer Services Division, 210 North 1950 West, Salt Lake City UT 84134.

Phone: toll-free (800) 662-4335, or (801) 297-2200.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.tax.utah.gov

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VERMONT

Individuals domiciled in Vermont are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. The 2013 tax rate ranges from 3.55 percent on taxable income under \$36,250 for singles and \$60,550 for joint filers to a maximum of 8.95 percent on taxable income over \$398,350 for singles and joint filers.

Write: Vermont Department of Taxes, Taxpayer Services Division, 133 State St., Montpelier VT 05633-1401.

Phone: (802) 828-2865.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.state.vt.us/tax

VIRGINIA

Individuals domiciled in Virginia are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of their physical presence in the state. Individuals domiciled elsewhere are also considered residents for tax purposes for the portion of any calendar year in which they are physically present in the state for 183 days or more. These individuals should file using Form 760. In addition, Virginia requires non-residents to file Form 763 if their Virginia Adjusted Gross Income (which includes any federal salary paid during time they are residing in Virginia) exceeds \$11,950 for single filers and married filing separately, or \$23,900 for married filing jointly. Individual tax rates are: 2 percent if taxable income is less than \$3,000; \$60 plus 3 percent of excess over \$3,000 if taxable income is between \$3,000 and \$5,000; \$120 plus 5 percent of excess over \$5,000 if taxable income is between \$5,000 and \$17,000; and \$720 plus 5.75 percent if taxable income is over \$17,000. In addition, using Form R-1H, Virginia allows employers of household help to elect to pay state unemployment tax annually instead of quarterly.

Write: Virginia Department of Taxation, Office of Customer Services, P.O. Box 1115, Richmond VA 23218-1115.

Phone: (804) 367-8031.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.tax.virginia.gov

WASHINGTON

There is no state income tax and no tax on intangibles such as bank accounts, stocks and bonds. Residents may deduct Washington sales tax on their federal tax returns if they itemize deductions. State tax rate is 6.5 percent and local additions can increase that to 9.6 percent in some areas.

Write: Washington State Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Services, P.O. Box 47478, Olympia WA 98504-7478.

Phone: toll-free (800) 647-7706.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.dor.wa.gov

WEST VIRGINIA

There is no tax liability for out-of-state income if the individual has no permanent residence in West Virginia, has a permanent residence elsewhere and spends no more than 30 days of the tax year in West Virginia. However, non-resident domiciliaries are required to file a return on Form IT-140 for all income derived from West Virginia sources. Tax rates rise in four steps from 4 percent of taxable income over \$10,000 for all filers, to 6.5 percent of taxable income for all filers over \$60,000.

Write: Department of Tax and Revenue, Taxpayer Services Division, P.O. Box 3784, Charleston WV 25337-3784.

Phone: toll-free 1 (800) 982-8297, or (304) 558-3333.

E-mail: TaxWVTaxAid@wv.gov.

Website: www.wvtax.gov

WISCONSIN

Individuals domiciled in Wisconsin are considered residents and are subject to tax on their entire income regardless of where the income is earned. Wisconsin's current tax rate ranges from 4.4 percent on income up to \$10,750 for single filers or \$14,330 for joint filers, rising in four steps to a maximum of 7.65 percent on income over \$236,660 for single filers or \$315,460 for joint filers.

Write: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Individual Income Tax Assistance, P.O. Box 8906, Madison WI 53708-8906.

Phone: (608) 266-2772.

E-mail: Link through the website's "Contact Us" tab.

Website: www.dor.state.wi.us

WYOMING

There is no state income tax and no tax on intangibles such as bank accounts, stocks or bonds. State sales tax is 4 percent. Local taxes may increase the total to 6 percent.

Write: Wyoming Department of Revenue, Herschler Building, 122 West 25th St., Cheyenne WY 82002-0110.

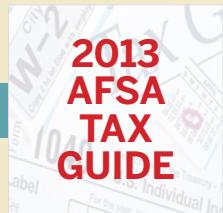
Phone: (307) 777-5200.

E-mail: dor@wyo.gov

Website: revenue.state.wyo.gov

STATE PENSION AND ANNUITY TAX

The laws regarding the taxation of Foreign Service annuities vary greatly from state to state. In addition to those states that have no income tax or no tax on personal income, there are several states that do not tax income derived from pen-



sions and annuities. Idaho taxes Foreign Service annuities while exempting certain categories of Civil Service employees. Several websites provide more information on individual state taxes for retirees, but the Retirement Living Information Center at www.retirementliving.com/taxes-by-state is one of the more comprehensive.

ALABAMA

Social Security and U.S. government pensions are not taxable. The combined state, county and city general sales and use tax rates range from 7 percent to as much as 10 percent. See also revenue.alabama.gov/taxpayerassist/retire.pdf.

ALASKA

No personal income tax. Most municipalities levy sales and/or use taxes of between 2 and 7 percent and/or a property tax.

ARIZONA

Up to \$2,500 of U.S. government pension income may be excluded for each taxpayer. There is also a \$2,100 exemption for each taxpayer age 65 or over. Arizona does not tax Social Security. Arizona state sales and use tax is 5.6 percent, with additions depending on the county and/or city.

ARKANSAS

The first \$6,000 of income from any retirement plan or IRA is exempt. Social Security is not taxed. There is no estate or inheritance tax. State sales and use tax is 6 percent; city and county taxes may add another 3 percent.

CALIFORNIA

Pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is not taxed. The sales and use tax rate varies from 7.25 percent (the statewide rate) to 10.5 percent in some areas.

COLORADO

Up to \$24,000 of pension income is exempt if individual is age 65 or over. Up to \$20,000 is exempt if age 55 to 64. State sales tax is 2.9 percent; local additions can increase the total to as much as 9.9 percent.

CONNECTICUT

Pensions and annuities are fully taxable for residents. Social Security is exempt if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$50,000 for singles or \$60,000 for joint filers. Statewide sales tax is 6.35 percent. No local additions.

DELAWARE

Pension exclusions per person: \$2,000 is exempt under age 60; \$12,500 if age 60 or over. There is an additional standard

deduction of \$2,500 if age 65 or over if you do not itemize. Social Security income is excluded from taxable income. Delaware does not impose a sales tax.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Pension or annuity exclusion of \$3,000 is applicable if 62 years or older. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales and use tax is 5.75 percent, with higher rates for some commodities (liquor, meals, etc.).

FLORIDA

There is no personal income, inheritance, gift tax or tax on intangible property. The state sales and use tax is 6 percent. Counties impose further taxes from 0.25 to 2.5 percent.

GEORGIA

\$35,000 of retirement income is excluded for those who are 62 years or older or totally disabled. Up to \$65,000 of retirement income is excludable for taxpayers that are 65 or older. Social Security is excluded from taxable income. Sales tax is 4 percent statewide, with additions of up to 3 percent depending on jurisdiction.

HAWAII

Pension and annuity distributions from a government pension plan are not taxed in Hawaii. Social Security is not taxed. Hawaii charges a general excise tax of 4 percent instead of sales tax.

IDAHO

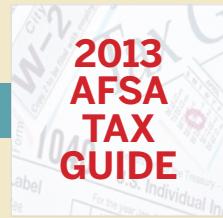
If the individual is age 65 or older, or age 62 and disabled, Civil Service Retirement System and Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System pensions only qualify for a deduction in 2013 of up to \$30,396 for a single return and up to \$45,594 for a joint return. Up to \$30,396 may be deducted by the unmarried survivor of the annuitant. Federal Employees' Retirement System or Foreign Service Pension System pensions do not qualify for this deduction. The deduction is reduced dollar for dollar by Social Security benefits. Social Security itself is not taxed. Idaho state sales tax is 6 percent; some local jurisdictions add as much as another 3 percent.

ILLINOIS

Illinois does not tax U.S. government pensions or Social Security. State sales tax is 6.25 percent. Local additions can raise sales tax to 10.5 percent in some jurisdictions.

INDIANA

If the individual is over age 62, the Adjusted Gross Income may be reduced by the first \$2,000 of any pension, reduced



dollar for dollar by Social Security benefits. There is also a \$1,000 exemption if over 65, or \$1,500 if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$40,000. There is no pension exclusion for survivor annuitants of federal annuities. Social Security is not taxed in Indiana. Sales tax and use tax in Indiana is 7 percent.

IOWA

Generally taxable. A married couple with an income for the year of less than \$32,000 may file for exemption, if at least one spouse or the head of household is 65 years or older on Dec. 31, and single persons who are 65 years or older on Dec. 31 may file for an exemption if their income is \$24,000 or less. The same income tax rates apply to annuities as to other incomes. Iowa is phasing out taxation of Social Security benefits (as of 2014, Social Security benefits will not be taxed), but a portion is still subject to tax in 2013. Statewide sales tax is 6 percent, with no more than 1 percent added in local jurisdictions.

KANSAS

U.S. government pensions are not taxed. Extra deduction of \$850 if over 65. Social Security is exempt if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is under \$75,000. State sales tax is 6.15 percent, with additions of between 1 and 4 percent depending on jurisdiction.

KENTUCKY

Government pension income is exempt if retired before Jan. 1, 1998. If retired after Dec. 31, 1997, pension/annuity income up to \$41,110 remains fully excludable for 2013. Social Security is exempt. Sales and use tax is 6 percent statewide, with no local sales or use taxes.

LOUISIANA

Federal retirement benefits are exempt from Louisiana state income tax. There is an exemption of \$6,000 of other annual retirement income received by any person age 65 or over. Married filing jointly may exclude \$12,000. State sales tax is 4 percent with local additions up to a possible total of 10.75 percent. Use tax is 8 percent regardless of the purchaser's location.

MAINE

Recipients of a government sponsored pension or annuity who are filing singly may deduct up to \$6,000 (\$12,000 for married filing jointly) on income that is included in their Federal Adjusted Gross Income, reduced by all Social Security and railroad benefits. For those age 65 and over, there is an additional standard deduction of \$1,400 (single), \$1,100 (mar-

ried filing singly) or \$2,200 (married filing jointly). General sales tax is now 5.5 percent, 8 percent on meals and liquor.

MARYLAND

Those over 65 or permanently disabled, or who have a spouse who is permanently disabled, may under certain conditions be eligible for Maryland's maximum pension exclusion of \$27,100. Also, all individuals 65 years or older are entitled to an extra \$1,000 personal exemption in addition to the regular \$3,200 personal exemption available to all taxpayers. Social Security is exempt. See the worksheet and instructions in the Maryland Resident Tax Booklet. General sales tax is 6 percent, 9 percent on liquor.

MASSACHUSETTS

Distributions made to a retiree from a federal employee contributory plan are excluded from Massachusetts gross income. Social Security is not included in Massachusetts gross income. Each taxpayer over age 65 is allowed an additional \$700 exemption on other income. Sales tax is 6.25 percent.

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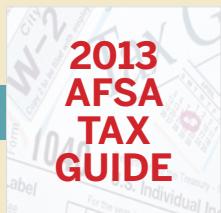
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MICHIGAN

In 2012 and subsequent years, pension benefits included in Adjusted Gross Income from a private pension system or an IRA are deductible, for those born before 1946, to a maximum of \$47,309 for a single filer, or \$94,618 for joint filers; public pensions are exempt. If born after 1946 and before 1952, the exemption for public and private pensions is limited to \$20,000 for singles and \$40,000 for married filers. If born after 1952, not eligible for any exemption until reaching age 67. Full details at: www.michigan.gov/documents/taxes/Tax_Change_Summaries_-_Retirement_Exemptions_359799_7.pdf. Social Security is exempt. Michigan has no city, local, or county sales tax. The state sales tax rate is 6 percent.

MINNESOTA

Social Security income is taxed by Minnesota to the same extent it is on your federal return. If your only income is Social Security, you would not be required to file an income tax return. All federal pensions are taxable, but single taxpayers who are over 65 or disabled may exclude some income if Fed-

eral Adjusted Gross Income is under \$33,700 and non-taxable Social Security is under \$9,600. For a couple, the limits are \$42,000 for Adjusted Gross Income and \$12,000 for non-taxable Social Security. Statewide sales and use tax is 6.875 percent; some local additions may increase the total to 9.53 per cent.

MISSISSIPPI

Social Security and qualified retirement income from federal, state and private retirement systems are exempt from Mississippi tax. There is an additional exemption of \$1,500 on other income if over 65. Statewide sales tax is 7 percent.

MISSOURI

Public pension income may be deducted if Missouri Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$100,000 when married filing jointly or \$85,000 for single filers, up to a limit of \$35,234 for each spouse. The maximum private pension deduction is \$6,000. You may also deduct 100 percent of Social Security income if over age 62 and Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than the limits above. Sales tax is 4.225 percent; local additions may add another 2 percent.

MONTANA

There is a \$3,900 pension income exclusion if Federal Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$32,480. Those over 65 can exempt an additional \$800 of interest income for single taxpayers and \$1,600 for married joint filers. Social Security is subject to tax. Montana has no general sales tax, but tax is levied on the sale of various commodities.

NEBRASKA

U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Social Security is taxable. State sales tax is 5.5 percent, with local additions of up to 2 percent.

NEVADA

No personal income tax. Sales and use tax varies from 6.85 to 8.1 percent, depending on local jurisdiction.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

No personal income tax. The inheritance tax was repealed in 2003. There is a 5-percent tax on interest/dividend income over \$2,400 for singles (\$4,800 married filing jointly). A \$1,200 exemption is available for those 65 or over. No general sales tax.

NEW JERSEY

Pensions and annuities from civilian government service are subject to state income tax, with exemptions for those

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who are age 62 or older or totally and permanently disabled. Singles and heads of households can exclude up to \$15,000 of retirement income; those married filing jointly up to \$20,000; those married filing separately up to \$10,000 each. These exclusions are eliminated for New Jersey gross incomes over \$100,000. Residents over 65 may be eligible for an additional \$1,000 personal exemption. Social Security is not taxed. State sales tax is 7 percent.

NEW MEXICO

All pensions and annuities are taxed as part of Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Taxpayers 65 and older may exempt up to \$8,000 (single) or \$16,000 (joint) from any income source if their income is under \$28,500 (individual filers) or \$51,000 (married filing jointly). The exemption is reduced as income increases, disappearing altogether at \$51,000. New Mexico has a gross receipts tax, instead of a sales tax, of 5.1375 percent; county and city taxes may raise this to 8.6875 percent in some jurisdictions.

NEW YORK

Social Security, U.S. government pensions and annuities are not taxed. For those over age 59½, up to \$20,000 of other annuity income (e.g., Thrift Savings Plan) may be excluded. See N.Y. Tax Publication 36 for details. Sales tax is 4 percent statewide. Other local taxes may add up to an additional 4.75 percent.

NORTH CAROLINA

Pursuant to the "Bailey" decision, government retirement benefits received by federal retirees who had five years of creditable service in a federal retirement system on Aug. 12, 1989, are exempt from North Carolina income tax. Those who do not have five years of creditable service on Aug. 12, 1989, must pay North Carolina tax on their federal annuities. In this case, up to \$4,000 (\$8,000 if filing jointly) of any federal annuity income is exempt, as is up to \$2,000 of other pension income. For those over 65, an extra \$750 (single) or \$1,200 (couple) may be deducted. Social Security is exempt. State sales tax is 4.75 percent; local taxes may increase this by up to 3 percent.

NORTH DAKOTA

All pensions and annuities are fully taxed, except for the first \$5,000, which is exempt minus any Social Security payments. General sales tax is 5 percent, 7 percent on liquor. Local jurisdictions impose up to 3 percent more.

OHIO

Taxpayers 65 and over may take a \$50 credit per return. In addition, Ohio gives a tax credit based on the amount of the

retirement income included in Ohio Adjusted Gross Income, reaching a maximum of \$200 for any retirement income over \$8,000. Social Security is exempt. State sales tax is 5.75 percent. Counties and regional transit authorities may add to this, but the total must not exceed 8.75 percent.

OKLAHOMA

Individuals receiving FERS/FSPS or private pensions may exempt up to \$10,000 if the Federal Adjusted Gross Income is under \$100,000 for single filers or \$200,000 for married filing jointly. Alternatively, beginning in 2011, 100 percent of a federal pension paid in lieu of Social Security (i.e., CSRS and FSRDS—"old system"—including the CSRS/FSRDS portion of an annuity paid under both systems) is exempt. Social Security included in FAGI is exempt. State sales tax is 4.5 percent. Local and other additions may bring the total up to 9.5 percent.

OREGON

Generally, all retirement income is subject to Oregon tax when received by an Oregon resident. However, federal retirees who retired on or before Oct. 1, 1991, may exempt their entire federal pension; those who worked both before and after Oct. 1, 1991, must prorate their exemption using the instructions in the tax booklet. A tax credit of up to 9 percent of taxable pension income is available to recipients of pension income, including most private pension income, whose household income was less than \$22,500 (single) and \$45,000 (joint), and who received less than \$7,500 (single)/\$15,000 (joint) in Social Security benefits. The credit is the lesser of the tax liability or 9 percent of taxable pension income. Oregon does not tax Social Security benefits. Oregon has no sales tax.

PENNSYLVANIA

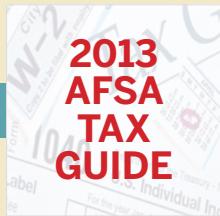
Government pensions and Social Security are not subject to personal income tax. Pennsylvania sales tax is 6 percent. Other taxing entities may add up to 2 percent.

PUERTO RICO

The first \$11,000 of income received from a federal pension can be excluded for individuals under 60. For those over 60, the exclusion is \$15,000. If the individual receives more than one federal pension, the exclusion applies to each pension or annuity separately. Social Security is not taxed.

RHODE ISLAND

U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Sales tax is 7 percent.



SOUTH CAROLINA

Individuals under age 65 can claim a \$3,000 deduction on qualified retirement income; those 65 years of age or over can claim a \$10,000 deduction on qualified retirement income. A resident of South Carolina who is 65 years or older may claim a \$15,000 deduction against any type of income (\$30,000 if both spouses are over 65), but must reduce this figure by any retirement deduction claimed. Social Security is not taxed. Sales tax is 6 percent plus 1 percent in some counties. Residents aged 85 and over pay 5 percent.

SOUTH DAKOTA

No personal income tax or inheritance tax. State sales and use tax is 4 percent; municipalities may add up to an additional 2 percent.

TENNESSEE

Social Security, pension income and income from IRAs and TSP are not subject to personal income tax. Most interest and dividend income is taxed at 6 percent if over \$1,250 (single

filers) or \$2,500 (married filing jointly). However, for tax year 2013 and subsequently, those over 65 with total income from all sources of less than \$33,000 for a single filer and \$59,000 for joint filers are completely exempt from all taxes on income. State sales tax is 5 percent on food, 7 percent on other goods, with between 1.5 and 2.75 percent added, depending on jurisdiction.

TEXAS

No personal income tax or inheritance tax. State sales tax is 6.25 percent. Local options can raise the rate to 8.25 percent.

UTAH

Utah has a flat tax rate of 5 percent of all income. For taxpayers over 65 there is a retirement tax credit of \$450 for single filers and \$900 for joint filers. This is reduced by 2.5 percent of income exceeding \$25,000 for single filers and \$32,000 for joint filers. See the state website for details. State sales tax is 4.7 percent; local option taxes may raise the total to as much as 7.95 percent.

VERMONT

U.S. government pensions and annuities are fully taxable. State general sales tax is 6 percent; local option taxes may raise the total to 7 percent (higher on some commodities).

VIRGINIA

Individuals over age 65 can take a \$12,000 deduction. The \$12,000 deduction is reduced by one dollar for each dollar by which Adjusted Gross Income exceeds \$50,000 for single, and \$75,000 for married, taxpayers. All taxpayers over 65 receive an additional personal exemption of \$800. Social Security income is exempt. The estate tax was repealed for all deaths after July 1, 2007. The general sales tax rate is 5.3 percent (4.3 percent state tax and 1 percent local tax, with an extra 0.7 percent in Northern Virginia).

WASHINGTON

No personal income tax. State sales tax is 6.5 percent; rates are updated quarterly. Local taxes may increase the total to 9.6 percent.

WEST VIRGINIA

\$2,000 of any civil or state pension is exempt. Social Security income is taxable only to the extent that the income is includable in Federal Adjusted Gross Income. Taxpayers 65 and older or surviving spouses of any age may exclude the first \$8,000 (individual filers) or \$16,000 (married filing jointly) of any retirement income. Out-of-state government pensions qualify for the \$8,000 exemption. State sales tax is

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6 percent with additions of between 0.5 and 1 percent in some jurisdictions.

WISCONSIN

Pensions and annuities are fully taxable. Those age 65 or over may take two personal deductions totaling \$950. Benefits received from a federal retirement system account established before Dec. 31, 1963, are not taxable. Wisconsin does not tax Social Security benefits included in Federal Adjusted Gross Income. For tax years after 2009, those over 65 and with an FAGI of less than \$15,000 (single filers) or \$30,000 (joint filers) may take a \$5,000 deduction on income from federal retirement systems or IRAs. State sales tax is 5 percent; most counties charge an extra 0.5 percent.

WYOMING

No personal income tax. State sales tax is 4 percent. Local taxes may increase the total to 6 percent. ■

SOSA continued from page 63

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs: Jameson DeBose, Bangkok

Jameson DeBose, a Foreign Service officer, provided effective support to the Ban Kru Noi Child Development Center in Bangkok, which helps disadvantaged children to attend school. Jameson spearheaded a project to renovate the center and was awarded a J. Kirby Simon grant for this expanded project. The center's staff and children were brought together with more than 40 volunteers from across the U.S. mission.

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs: Marilyn Kott, Pristina

Defense attaché spouse Marilyn Kott, a retired U.S. Air Force officer, co-founded and runs "Clothes for Kosovo," giving embassy personnel in Pristina an easy way to donate used items. Since 2012, the program has donated more than 1,200 pounds of clothes, along with furniture and food, to local charities. Marilyn also established and taught three levels of low-cost English courses for the nonprofit organization, AYA Pjeter Bogdani, and provided the NGO with funds for projects promoting cultural and ethnic diversity.

Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs: Amber Boyd-Eiholzer, Amman

Amber Boyd-Eiholzer, an office management specialist, coordinated an extremely successful series of events for Black History Month, culminating in the sold-out Black and White Ball. The event raised a record \$10,000 for support of local charities, including an NGO that assists Syrian refugees and an orphanage for Jordanian children. She also coordinated

the embassy's participation in the annual diplomatic holiday bazaar, benefitting the Al Hussein Society for the Habilitation/Rehabilitation of the Physically Challenged.

Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs: Gretel Patch, Kathmandu

Foreign Service spouse Gretel Patch used her professional training in the field of educational technology to bring 21st century skills to underprivileged and at-risk youth in Nepal. Teaming-up with an English language program for students aged 14-18, she broadened the curriculum by incorporating computer and technological skills that educate, engage and empower the students. Gretel designed lesson plans using slideshows, movies, presentations and interactive quizzes. She posted the resources online for the use of future instructors and students.

Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs: Megan Gallardo, La Paz

Office management specialist Megan Gallardo responded to a request for help with collecting blankets for a local cancer treatment clinic by launching a project to improve the facility. Through a J. Kirby Simon grant, Megan and a group of Americans and Bolivians made major repairs to the building. She also found the time to raise funds to have a security wall built around a shelter that helps young women victims rescued from sex trafficking. She organized a "girls-only" prom and a series of professional workshops and mentoring sessions for the girls.

The 2013 Eleanor Dodson Tragen Award

To Foreign Service spouse Bob Castro for his contributions to the professional well-being of FS family members through his organization PROPS: Professional Partners & Spouses of the Foreign Service. PROPS is a network of FS family members that convene through LinkedIn to support one another in seeking employment locally, telecommuting or engaging in civic and professional development activities while based abroad.

The 2013 Lesley Dorman Award

To FS spouse Barbara Reiox, for her outstanding service to AAFSW and the Foreign Service community. Barbara plays an important role in many AAFSW programs and initiatives. She is always willing to take on new responsibilities and is an enthusiastic volunteer at the Art and BookFair, Art and Small Business Fairs and other AAFSW events.

To learn more about AAFSW and the Secretary of State Awards please visit www.aafsw.org. ■

AFSA Welcomes New Staff Member John Long



AFSA welcomes John Long as our new labor management counselor, working out of our office at the Department of State. John was a member of the Foreign Service for 21 years and served in Washington, Guangzhou, New York, Tokyo and Geneva. He also held a Civil Service appointment at State after his retirement from the FS. He worked in that capacity in the Director General's office and on the professional staff of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. John can be reached at LongJD@state.gov or (202) 647-8160.

Omar Sykes Scholarship

AFSA is collecting tax-deductible contributions in memory of Omar Sykes, the son of Adam Sykes and Foreign Service officer Sherry Sykes. Omar was killed on July 4, 2013. The AFSA Scholarship Fund established an undergraduate financial aid scholarship in his name to benefit a child of a Foreign Service employee attending an Historically Black College or University.

Contributions can be made on AFSA's website at www.afsa.org/sykes or by sending a check payable to the "AFSA Scholarship Fund" (writing "Omar Sykes" in the memo field) to the American Foreign Service Association Scholarship Program, 2101 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20037. For additional information, please contact AFSA Scholarship Director Lori Dec, at (202) 944-5504 or dec@afsa.org.

Soc. Sec. continued from page 59

Ed urges you to visit www.socialsecurity.gov, where you can create a "My Social Security" account and get access to the retirement estimator. This tool will tell you what your benefit will be in current dollar amounts at age 62, at FRA and at age 70. He encourages you to do this every year.

Ed also suggests that you check your earnings history to make sure the amounts are correct. The SSA gets your information from your employer and your W-2, but since errors may occur, check to be sure all of the wages are correct on your Social Security statement.

The audience came with an abundance of questions and Ed was happy to stay well past the scheduled two hours. The video of the

presentation is available for viewing at www.afsa.org/AFSAvideos.aspx (it is three hours long). The PowerPoint slides and outline used during the seminar are also available on our website at www.afsa.org/retiree.

Ed is the owner of EZ Accounting and Financial Services, an accounting and financial services firm in Silver Spring, Md. He has written several publications for the *Federal Employees News Digest* and is the moderator of FEND's popular Federal Soup Question and Answer Forum. He spends most of his time teaching employees about retirement planning. You can reach Ed by visiting www.federalsoup.com or www.myfederalretirement.com. ■



PHOTOS BY ASGER SIGFUSSEN



On Dec. 16, AFSA Governing Board members, staff, friends and family enjoy the association's annual holiday party.

Above: Neera Parikh's daughter, Neera Parikh and Raeka Safai. Left: Shawn Dorman, Susan Maitra, Kristen Fernekes, Jody Billert and Steve Morrison.

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■ **Kathryn O. Clark-Bourne**, 88, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on Aug. 8 in Eugene, Ore.

Ms. Clark-Bourne was born in Fort Collins, Colo. After attending Colorado State University, she moved to Seattle during World War II and worked at the Boeing Corporation as a draftsman on B-29 bombers and other planes. She graduated with a degree in journalism from the University of Washington in 1947.

From 1947 to 1949, she served as a military intelligence analyst in the U.S. occupation administration in Tokyo. She then returned to the United States and earned a master's degree in mass communications from the University of Minnesota.

In 1952, Ms. Clark-Bourne joined the State Department, serving in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research until switching to the Foreign Service in 1956. She served overseas in Tehran, Rotterdam and Bombay.

In 1966, she married Kenneth Bourne and, because at that time married women were not allowed to serve, she was forced to leave the Foreign Service. The marriage later ended in divorce.

Ms. Clark-Bourne worked in the private sector in New York from 1967 to 1975, when she returned to the Foreign Service. Her Washington assignments included the Indo-Chinese Task Force, fisheries affairs and West African affairs in the department. Overseas, she served as political counselor in Lagos, as deputy chief of mission in Conakry and as consul general in Douala, Cameroon. She retired in 1989 after a tour in the Inspection Corps.

In retirement, Ms. Clark-Bourne served on the Board of Directors of DACOR and volunteered as an editor at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

She is survived by her brother, Andrew Clark, of Cottage Grove, Ore.

■ **Alma Simpson Gibson**, 99, wife of the late Wallace (Wally) Gibson, a Foreign Service officer with the U.S. Information Agency, died peacefully on Nov. 16 at her home in Alexandria, Va.

Mrs. Gibson was born on Oct. 31, 1914, and grew up in Falls River, Mass. During World War II, she served as a registered nurse in the Armed Forces, achieving the rank of first lieutenant. She was one of the oldest surviving army nurses at the time of her death.

As a Foreign Service spouse, she accompanied Mr. Gibson on assignments in Jakarta, Hong Kong and Taipei. She is survived by two sons, Scott, of London, England, and Steven, of Springfield, Va.

■ **Robert V. "Bob" Gildea**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on Nov. 25 at his home in Arlington, Va., following a prolonged battle with Parkinson's disease and related complications. His wife and friends were at his side.

Born on April 28, 1922, in Coaldale, Pa., Mr. Gildea was the son of former congressman and newspaper publisher, James H. Gildea. During World War II, he flew combat missions with the U. S. Army Air Corps' 100th Bomb Group, based in England, and later served with U.S. forces in Europe. He graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1948 and worked for several years as a reporter for local newspapers in the state.

Mr. Gildea joined the U.S. Information Agency in 1954. Following an initial assignment in Saigon, he had tours of duty in Dusseldorf and Frankfurt before returning to Washington in 1962 as a writer at the Voice of America. After Thai language training, he was assigned to Bangkok as director of the American Information Center in 1966. In 1969 he

returned to Vietnam as chief information officer in the Joint United States Public Affairs Office.

He was assigned to Vientiane in 1971 as chief information officer, and later deputy public affairs officer. Shortly before the Royal Lao government fell to communist forces in 1975, he was transferred to Bonn to manage the extensive network of American cultural and information centers in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Returning to Washington in 1983, Mr. Gildea worked with German diplomats to commemorate 300 years of German immigration to the United States. The resulting German-American Tricentennial celebration was authorized by Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, and legislation followed to establish a national German-American Day. The Federal Republic of Germany awarded Mr. Gildea a distinguished service medal on April 22, 1985. He retired later that year.

In retirement, Mr. Gildea maintained contact with friends and relatives, traveled widely and followed local politics closely. He was a loyal supporter of his alma mater, Pennsylvania State University, an active member of the 100th Bomb Group's alumni organization and the American Legion, and a participant in the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association.

His many close friends among former colleagues remember Mr. Gildea for his enjoyment of life, no matter how difficult the circumstances. They recall how his good humor and spirit of fun enriched their lives.

Mr. Gildea is survived by his wife, Kim Gildea of Arlington, Va., a daughter from an earlier marriage, two stepchildren, five grandchildren, an older brother and sister, a younger brother, and numerous

nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family welcomes donations in Mr. Gildea's name to Capital Caring, 2900 Telestar Court, Falls Church, VA 22042.

■ **Loretta Blanche Johnston**, 75, a retired member of the Foreign Service, died on July 11. She was a resident of Los Olivos and San Diego, Calif.

Ms. Johnston was born in Manhattan, N.Y., in 1938 to Lecia Pearl and Leroy Johnston. The family moved to Torrance, Calif., when she was 4 years old; after graduating from Torrance High School, Ms. Johnston attended El Camino Junior College.

In 1962 she joined the Foreign Service at the Department of State, and served overseas at 17 posts around the world, including Vienna, Dakar, Saigon, Jerusalem, Capetown, Paris, Moscow and Brussels. Ms. Johnston worked under Secretary of State Madeline Albright, among other senior State Department officials.

"I've had an unusual lifestyle, but I can't imagine it otherwise," she used to say.

Though a rather private person, Ms. Johnston consistently showed a very kind heart. While in Saigon in 1971, she sponsored Bai, whose husband was killed by the Viet Cong, and her baby Tran for immigration to the U.S. In Dakar, she paid for the burial of the seventh child of her houseboy, Moussa.

Family and friends remember Ms. Johnston as a determined and courageous woman.

Ms. Johnston was preceded in death by her mother and father. She is survived by her sisters, Marilyn Johnston Bowman and Bonnie Johnston; bothers Kenneth Johnston, Thomas Johnston, and her twin, Roy Johnston; and several nieces,

nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

■ **Karen J. Nurick**, 62, died on July 7, 2012, at her home in Bethesda, Md., after a two-year battle with cancer.

Ms. Nurick was born in Troy, N.Y., and graduated from the Emma Willard School in 1969. She had a passion for immersing herself in different cultures and always jumped at any opportunity to pursue change. While in high school, she completed a year abroad in Argentina, where she met her husband, Eduardo Sainz.

In 1976 Ms. Nurick earned a master's degree in international economics and in 1984 a master of public health degree, both from The Johns Hopkins University. She entered the Foreign Service in 1977 as a project development officer for the U.S. Agency for International Development in Paraguay. She later held postings in Guatemala, Mozambique, Nicaragua and Washington, retiring in 2004 after serving as a team leader in USAID's Global Health Bureau.

In retirement, Ms. Nurick worked as an independent consultant on international health and nutrition programs. She also volunteered as a court-appointed special advocate and at her local humane society. She loved animals, particularly dogs, and rescued several throughout her life.

Ms. Nurick is survived by her husband, Eduardo of Bethesda, Md.; her daughter, Susan Sainz Bond (and her husband, Doug) of Washington, D.C.; and a brother, Paul Nurick (and his wife, Jane) of Ellensburg, Wash.

■ **Eugene Sheldon ("Rocky") Staples**, 91, a retired Foreign Service officer, died on Oct. 4 at his beloved Snug Harbor, R.I., home, surrounded by his family.

Mr. Staples left his railroad and farming family in Kansas City, Mo., in 1942 to

become a Marine Corps fighter pilot in World War II. His combat missions flying Corsairs in the Pacific theater ended on March 19, 1945, when a Japanese dive-bomber attacked his aircraft carrier, the USS *Franklin*, off the coast of Kyushu, killing 924 aboard (the highest number of casualties for any surviving U.S. warship).

After the war, he worked as a United Press correspondent in Mexico. He joined the Foreign Service in 1951, serving with the State Department in Montevideo, Santiago, Washington and Moscow. He was first sent to Moscow in 1959 to help organize the great American National Exhibition, scene of the famous Nixon-Khrushchev "Kitchen Debate," and returned to Moscow in 1961 to serve as cultural counselor at the height of the Cold War.

Mr. Staples left State in 1964 to join the Ford Foundation, working in its policy and planning office and, later, in the Asia program. He served as the foundation's representative in both Southeast Asia and South Asia, and lived in Bangkok and New Delhi throughout the 1970s. He left the foundation in 1981.

Following his interest in the challenges of peacemaking and nationbuilding, Mr. Staples joined the U.S. Agency for International Development, serving as deputy assistant administrator in the Asia bureau and subsequently becoming USAID mission director in Islamabad during the Soviet conflict in Afghanistan.

In 1992, he was asked to help create and run the Eurasia Foundation, from which he retired as president in 1997. In his 2006 memoir, *Old Gods, New Nations*, Mr. Staples reflected on his long career: "Working with colleagues and local people in information and cultural diplomacy, and in a later stage on institution and nationbuilding, I enjoyed and puzzled over the endless varieties of the

human condition: how to understand it; how to try to improve it; and how we really mess up from time to time."

Fluent in Spanish and Russian, and an accomplished violinist, Staples was a graduate of Mexico City College. He did intensive postgraduate work in Russian at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute and the U.S. Army "Detachment R" in Oberammergau, Germany.

Staples received a number of presidential and other awards for his work, including the U.S. Agency for International Development Distinguished Honor Award. For his work in development as the USAID mission director in Islamabad, the Pakistan government awarded him its highest civil honor, the Quaid-e-Izam.

Family and friends remember Mr. Staples as a hero and mentor, whose steadfast character, quiet strength and generous spirit touched and guided all who knew and loved him.

Widowed in 1978 by the passing of his first wife, Charlotte, Staples is survived by his wife of 20 years, Judy; his three children, John Staples, Kathleen Staples and husband Darby Bannard, and Peter Staples and wife Paula; his grandchildren, Lt. Nathan Staples, Emily Staples, Andrew Staples and Trevor Bannard; his brother, Murray Staples (and sister-in-law Mary) of Riverside, Calif.; and his devoted nephews Richard, David, Gregory, and niece Marysue.

■ William Healy Sullivan, 90, a retired Foreign Service officer and the last American ambassador to Iran, died on Oct. 11 of unknown causes.

William Sullivan was born in Cranston, R.I., in 1922; his father was a dental surgeon and his mother was a schoolteacher. He attended Brown University, from which he graduated as salutatorian

and Class Orator, and joined the Navy in 1943.

During World War II, Mr. Sullivan's ship, the USS *Hambleton*, participated in the invasion of Normandy on D-Day and the siege of Okinawa, as well as the surrender of Japan in Yokohama Harbor. After the war, Mr. Sullivan received a joint graduate degree from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and Harvard University. He married a fellow Fletcher student, Marie Johnson, and joined the Foreign Service.

During a 32-year Foreign Service career, Mr. Sullivan served as ambassador to Laos and to the Philippines, and helped initiate and coordinate the Paris Peace talks that ended American involvement in the Vietnam War. His posts included Bangkok, Calcutta and Tokyo, where he served as political adviser to General Douglas MacArthur during the American occupation and in the embassy after the occupation ended.

Mr. Sullivan also served as liaison to the Sixth Fleet in Naples, and on the embassy staff in Rome and The Hague. During the Kennedy administration, he was Averell Harriman's aide in talks in Geneva on neutrality in Laos, as well as in later negotiations with the Soviet Union on the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In 1964, he served briefly as deputy chief of mission in Saigon.

In late 1964, at the age of 42, Mr. Sullivan was accredited as U.S. ambassador to Laos. In an effort to limit civilian casualties and the potential for armed conflict there, he took an active role in directing U.S. bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. This earned him the nickname "the Field Marshal," as well as some resentment from senior officers in the U.S. military command in South Vietnam.

Another aspect of his tenure in Laos

was the initiation of the Paris Peace talks that led to the U.S. military departure from South Vietnam. Vientiane was one of the few cities where both the United States and North Vietnam maintained diplomatic posts, and because of Ambassador Sullivan's prior contact with the Viet Cong in Thailand, he was able to open discussions that led to formal negotiations in Paris. While in Laos he also worked on negotiations that helped pave the way for diplomatic relations with China.

In 1969, Amb. Sullivan left Laos and returned to the United States, where he coordinated the Paris Peace talks from positions on the National Security Council and at the State Department. Speaking of the negotiations that ultimately led to agreement, Henry Kissinger recalls: "In that small group of talented colleagues who carried unconscionably difficult burdens with such skill and panache, Bill Sullivan will always remain in my mind as the best of the best," citing his "ability, cool competence and insights."

Amb. Sullivan served as chief of mission in the Philippines from 1973 to 1977. During the fall of Saigon in 1975, when tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees converged on the Philippines, he helped coordinate their reception and ultimate resettlement in other countries.

A significant number of the refugees came aboard ships of the former South Vietnamese navy, and the new Vietnamese government demanded that Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos refuse to receive the ships, because they belonged to the nation of Vietnam. Amb. Sullivan pointed out to Mr. Marcos that the ships were of American origin, and that the terms under which South Vietnam had acquired them dictated that should that government cease to exist, the ships reverted to U.S. ownership.

Pres. Marcos then permitted the ships, newly outfitted with American flags, to land at the U.S. Navy base at Subic Bay.

Mr. Sullivan's final ambassadorial assignment was in Iran, from 1977 to 1979. When he arrived in Tehran the country was already in turmoil. In 1979 the White House instructed Amb. Sullivan to inform the shah that the United States believed he should leave Iran. At that point, all dependents and nonessential U.S. personnel were also evacuated.

In February 1979, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned to Iran, and on Feb. 14, several groups of men stormed and took control of the U.S. embassy grounds. Amb. Sullivan and some 100 other Americans in the embassy compound were briefly held hostage, until a contingent from the interim government was able to escort them to safety. Mr. Sullivan left Iran shortly thereafter, and retired from the Foreign Service later that year.

Following his retirement from the Foreign Service in 1979, Amb. Sullivan served as president of the American Assembly at Columbia University until 1986, when he moved to Cuernavaca, Mexico. He also served on the boards of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, the International Center in Washington, D.C., and the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council.

Mr. Sullivan moved to the Washington area in 2000 due to failing health. He was predeceased by his wife, Marie Johnson Sullivan, and is survived by four children, Anne Sullivan of Washington, D.C., John Sullivan of Louisville, Ky., Mark Sullivan of Rochester Hills, Mich., and Peggy Sullivan of Bethesda, Md.; and six grandchildren.

Donations in Mr. Sullivan and his wife's memory can be made to The Fletcher Fund, 160 Packard Avenue, Medford MA 02155. ■

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Information on nomination procedures and guidelines can be found at www.afsa.org/awards. There, you can also find a list of previous dissent winners. The deadline for nominations is February 28, 2014.

Questions may be directed to Perri Green, Special Awards and Outreach Coordinator, at green@afsa.org, tel. (202) 719-9700, or fax (202) 338-6820.

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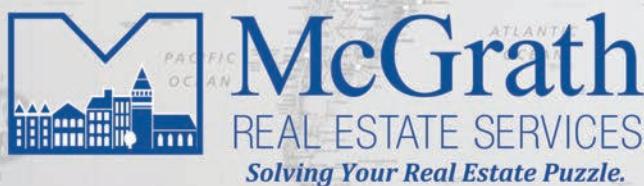


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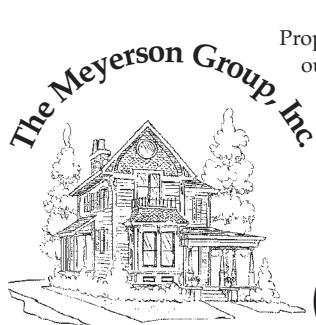
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David L. Mortimer, CPA / 70
Irving and Company / 79
James E Burgess, CPA / 75
Lucas/Horsfall Accountant + Advisors / 76
Luxenberg & Johnson, P.C. / 29
Mary Cornelia Ginn / 73
Shaw Bransford & Roth, P.C. / 80

HOUSING

AKA, Flexible Stay Hotel Residences / Inside Front Cover
Attaché Corporate Housing / 26
BOQ Lodging / 52
Capitol Hill Stay / 49
CAS—Corporate Apartment Specialists / 31
Pied-a-Terre Properties Ltd. / 31
Signature Properties / 29
SuiteAmerica / 33
TurnKey Housing Solutions / 33

INSURANCE

Clements Worldwide / 4
Embassy Risk Management / Inside Back Cover
Federal Employee Defense Services / 15
The Hirshorn Company / Back Cover

MISCELLANEOUS

AFSA Scholarship Fund / 85
AFSA Social Media / 38
Change of Address / 49
Diplomatic Automobile Sales / 3
Family Liaison Office, Dept. of State / 16
Fund for American Diplomacy / 26
Inside a U.S. Embassy / 50
Marketplace / 17
Senior Living Foundation / 20, 69

REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Cabell Reid, LLC / 93
Executive Housing Consultants, Inc. / 95
Mary Lowry Smith / 94
McGrath Real Estate Services / 94
Meyerson Group, Inc., The / 96
Promax / 93
Property Specialists, Inc. / 93
Stuart & Maury, Inc. / 96
Washington Management Services / 95
WJD Management / 95

ANNOUNCEMENTS

AFSA Dissent Awards 2014 / 89
Celebrate 90th Anniversary of AFSA and the Foreign Service / 11
Support AFSA Scholarships / 20

Jasmine and Lilacs

BY RAY PEPPERS

When my wife, infant son and I first arrived in Dhaka, in what was then known as East Pakistan, in 1967, I was determined to learn as much as I could about the culture of this mysterious place.

I told my Bengali staff that I wanted to hear local music and try to learn to like it. One of them said he would call a man who ran a music school to see what might be arranged, and I was invited to visit that afternoon.

to local music, when a young man came out with an electric guitar and proceeded to play "Never on Sunday." It was as far from what I wanted to hear as P. Diddy is from Placido Domingo. I politely applauded, and left as soon as I could.

It turned out all right, though, because I soon became acquainted with the Bulbul Academy. (In Bangla, "bulbul" means "nightingale.") My wife and I spent many magical evenings listening to the masters of South Asian music and their students discussing and playing the

that the death anniversary of a beloved Bengali poet named Nasrul was coming up. Because he had once claimed Walt Whitman as an influence, I decided to prepare a program called "Nasrul and Whitman." (In South Asia, all important poems are set to music; and in poetry recitals, the selections are not recited, but performed.)

My staff and I prepared guest lists and delivered invitations, and on the night every seat was filled. When the stage lights came on, we were all sitting crosslegged on a carpet, the musicians in their Bengali garb and me—in the American uniform of white short-sleeved shirt with tie and somewhat removed from the musicians.

The performance began with a Nasrul poem, beautifully performed. The audience gave it tumultuous approbation. When the noise abated, I began to intone, "When lilacs last in the courtyard bloomed..." But I was loudly interrupted by shouts of "Sing it!" Eventually the audience realized that I did not know how to deal with poetry, and cheerfully allowed me to carry on.

The evening was a colossal success, written up in the newspapers and talked of on radio. From that evening, we were able to engage the audiences we sought.

Subsequently I heard South Asian music in its great variety and in several countries—quwalli, Sufi songs of devotion, morning and evening ragas. But when I think of the music, my mind always returns to the Bulbul Academy.

Those jasmine-scented evenings remain among my fondest memories. ■

We spent many magical evenings listening to the masters of South Asian music discussing and playing the music that we soon came to love.

(At this point I must explain to everyone younger than I that a very popular film of the time, "Never on Sunday," starred the fine Greek actress Melina Mercouri as a religious prostitute who would not sell her body on Sunday. Its music was composed and performed on the bouzouki by a genius named Theodorakis. The score remained the most internationally popular music for several years. Now back to my story.)

The music school had a long side verandah used as a stage, and I was ushered to a comfortable chair on the lawn. There I was, awaiting my introduction

music we soon came to love.

My title then was Information Center Director. The center consisted of a well-used library and a little-used auditorium. We showed films supplied by the U.S. Information Agency to meager audiences largely made up of casual passersby taking a breather from the oppressive heat. My mission was to design programs to appeal to the opinion leaders whom we wanted to engage.

Bengalis, like all descendants of a pre-literate culture, love poetry, an important medium for transmitting history and culture through the generations. I read

Ray Peppers was an FSO with the U.S. Information Agency from 1967 to 1998, serving in Dhaka, Islamabad, Kabul, Lome, Kuwait City, Lahore and Washington, D.C. Since retiring from the Foreign Service, he has given more than 1,200 lectures to international relations classes, civic groups, corporate boardrooms and other audiences.

In the Kumartuli artist neighborhood in Kolkata, a worker puts the final touches on a handmade Ganesh statue. The clay-and-straw statues are immersed in the Hooghly River during the annual Ganesh Chaturthi festival in the fall. The neighborhood is a veritable assembly line for such statues, also providing likenesses of the goddesses Durga and Kali—some taller than 15 feet—for similar watery farewells.

Jeff Ellis joined the Foreign Service in March 2009 as a public diplomacy officer. His first assignment was Kabul, as an assistant cultural affairs officer. He next served in the Office of Russian Affairs in Washington, and since August 2012 has been a vice consul in Mumbai. His onward assignment is Kabul, where he will once again work in the public affairs section. This photo was taken with an Olympus E-PM1 micro four-thirds digital camera.

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