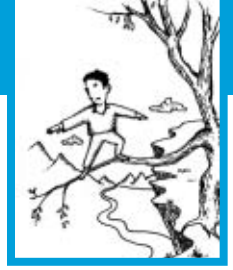

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# CONTENTS

*July-August 2010 Volume 87, No. 7-8*

*Cover illustration by Shannon DeJong. This batik print, "The Three," was among her entries to AFSA's 2010 Art Merit Award Competition.*



## *FOCUS ON*
## *FS Reflections*



## *FS FICTION*



## *FEATURES*

# Contents






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# President's Views
## *A Midterm Report Card*

*By Susan R. Johnson*

July marks the halfway point for the 2009-2011 AFSA Governing Board. Our overarching goal, as described in my first President's Views column last September, continues to be making AFSA a "stronger, more effective and more credible voice of the Foreign Service, better able to represent, protect and advance our professional interests."

Toward that end, the board approved four key objectives: securing resources and protecting benefits, increasing AFSA's voice in policy development, improving the image of the Foreign Service, and improving AFSA's internal operations. In addition, as your president I remain committed to ensuring that AFSA supports and represents all five of our member agencies. We are one team in word and action.

As our first year draws to a close, we have made measurable progress on several of these fronts. For instance, I am proud that we are implementing overseas comparability pay in a very tough fiscal and economic environment.

Election reform is a top priority and must be in place before next year's process begins. We are working with the Department of Labor to ensure that all candidates have equal access to voters and to clarify the responsibilities and authorities of the AFSA Elections Committee. Our goal is electronic voting, but we are not yet in a position to adopt it. At a minimum, we hope to gain approval for sending ballots to members electronically even if they have to be mailed back.

The Governing Board has approved a major investment in upgrading our IT capabilities, starting with a more user-friendly, functional Web site that improves our access to the business world and projects a more professional image. The new AFSA Facebook page already has nearly 2,000 fans and continues to grow.

To enhance AFSA's public profile, we have launched two new initiatives. The AFSA Book Notes program spotlights authors who have recently published books on topics related to diplomacy. The AFSA-Lockheed Martin lecture series on promoting excellence in diplomacy has already featured former Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte, State Department Senior Adviser for Innovation Alec Ross and Representative Nita Lowey, D-N.Y. All these programs are being recorded by WETA and posted on its Web site.

To ensure that AFSA has a voice in ongoing discussion of professional education and training requirements for 21st-century diplomats, AFSA has provided a grant to the American Academy of Diplomacy's project on diplomatic professional education and training, participates in the project's advisory group and has formed its own focus group to gather active-duty input.

We still have work to do to revitalize dissent, gain a greater voice on policy issues and review the current structure of labor-management relations. We are also moving to revitalize our post representative system, strengthen our domestic retiree network and support sister organizations such as AAFSW, ADST and DACOR, among others, as well as affinity groups within our member agencies.

Above all, we are building a more open and sustained dialogue with our members on issues such as linked assignments, incentives, implementation of up-or-out policies, support for families, unaccompanied tours, balancing security and the diplomatic mission, expeditionary diplomacy, professional education and training needs, mid-level staffing gaps, and policies governing post-retirement federal employment for Foreign Service members.

Please join us by contributing your ideas on the issues that you think are important for our diplomatic and development services. I look forward to hearing from you at President@afsa.org. ■

---

*Susan R. Johnson is the president of the American Foreign Service Association.*


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# LETTERS

### Seeing Both Sides

I was thrilled to read Chas Freeman's article on the Middle East ("The Middle East: Forks in the Way Forward," March *FSJ*). During 35 years in the Foreign Service, I served in five Arabic-speaking countries. When I returned to the United States, I was appalled at the slanted reporting that is done on that area. I realize that we have a special relationship with Israel, but that should not keep us from seeing both sides of the issue more clearly.

*Judy Chidester*
*FSO, retired*
*Las Cruces, N.M.*

### Check the Balance Sheet

In his February article on senior living ("Should We Move to a Senior Living Facility?"), Ambassador Bill Harrop suggests a useful list of factors to check before selecting a retirement community. I'd like to add a vital one: financial stability of the care facility.

Falling ill and questioning my ability to cope alone, I reluctantly entered the only continuing care facility in my small Southwestern town a few years ago. After I regained my health 15 months later, I began to doubt the company's finances. I asked for a financial statement and got a "compilation" the accountant had put together. However, this was based on partial information selected by the management, which had not been independently audited. It therefore was not reliable.

Later, I learned that the company had successfully lobbied the state legislature a few years earlier to exempt CCFs from having to produce independently audited financial statements.

In October 2008 the company started to admit the truth to residents. In March 2009 it filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Five months later the federal bankruptcy judge, citing malfeasance, deception, incompetence and dishonesty, ousted the management. Outside managers took over and are trying to sell the establishment.

We now know the CCF was the equivalent of a Ponzi scheme. Entrance fees largely vanished rather than being invested for the future. The owners had kept the place afloat with monthly fees and borrowing.

Many residents, in their 80s or 90s, are in poor health. They wait, hoping for better news. My story is happier: I got married and packed out, though I did forfeit my investment.

I strongly recommend that retirees insist on recent, independently audited financial statements from a CCF and have a certified public accountant analyze them. They should also contact state agencies that monitor such facilities to check for complaints, especially on finances and health. ■

*George T. Eaton*
*USAID FSO, retired*
*Nanterre, France*

*Send Letters to the Editor to journal@afsa.org.*


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# CYBERNOTES

## State Gets SMARTer

After contract delays and the inevitable bugs in early versions, the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset is beginning to live up to its promise. SMART is now up and running at 155 posts and is also operational in several department bureaus, reports retired FSO Barry Fulton, a longtime consultant to the project.

Ever since Secretary of State Colin Powell launched the initiative to upgrade the department's technology in 2001, SMART's vision has remained unchanged: creation of a simple, secure and user-driven system to support the conduct of diplomacy through modern messaging, dynamic archiving and information sharing.

The effort began with a survey of industry, other government agencies and several foreign ministries. None had a system that would allow the efficient merger of existing State Department systems with a searchable archive, satisfaction of records management requirements, and presentation of an intuitive user interface.

After a two-year effort by a major defense contractor failed to meet State's requirements, the department took over management of SMART, with somewhat skeptical agreement from the Office of Management and Budget. The goal was not to upgrade State's existing system, but to move the department from a vertical culture of *need-to-know* to a more collaborative culture of *need-to-share*.

> We must build the sources of America's strength and influence and shape a world that's more peaceful and more prosperous [through] comprehensive engagement … building and integrating the capabilities we need to succeed, capabilities that span the military, diplomatic, development, intelligence, law enforcement and homeland security fronts. [This effort] includes strengthening multilateral institutions and norms so that shared challenges can be met through collective action.
>
> — John Brennan, assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism, speaking about the administration's new National Security Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., May 26, www.csis.org

The core team of about a dozen Civil Service and Foreign Service managers grew tenfold as contractors were recruited and additional State Department specialists were assigned. If the mantra of SMART was "user-driven," the requirement for success was to build, test and pilot — over and over — as the program adopted a methodology know as agile development.

Early users were patient but candid in their feedback, so developers went back to the drawing board. The second pilot round was more successful, but still revealed some flaws. As user feedback became more positive during the third phase, the program manager got the green light to begin worldwide deployment.

With 16 deployment teams in the field and the cooperation of a host of players at every post — ranging from chiefs of mission to systems managers and office management specialists — SMART is now available to more than 20,000 State Department employees. While the system is not perfect, the great majority of overseas employees adapted quickly and have expressed satisfaction with it.

The pace of deployment in Washington has been more measured, as most resources were initially directed at overseas posts and regional bureaus. Attention is now being focused on the functional bureaus, with a scheduled completion date of February 2011.

What next? SMART 2.0, of course. Technology will not stand still, and incoming employees expect robust technology to support their work.

For more information on the development of SMART, see Fulton's article, "State Gets Smart," online at the Amer-

ican Diplomacy e-zine (**www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat**).

### Honoring Public Diplomacy Practitioners

The Public Diplomacy Alumni Association (formerly known as the U.S. Information Agency Alumni Association) annually recognizes individuals or teams who conduct imaginative and successful outreach. This year, 20 nominations by senior State PD officers, both overseas and in the department, produced four winners, who were honored at a May 16 dinner in Washington, D.C.

Seven locally engaged staff of the public diplomacy section in N'Djamena were collectively honored for pursuing the embassy's outreach to the local Muslim/Arab community under dire conditions. Their contacts revealed an incipient uprising within the Muslim community against moderates, which the Chadian government was able to neutralize. During a May 2009 invasion by Sudanese rebels, American employees were evacuated, but the Chadian staff successfully put on a journalism workshop, processed International Visitor Leadership Program applications, and advanced the Fulbright and other exchange programs.

The PDAA recognized Alistair Baskey, assistant cultural affairs officer and director of America House in East Jerusalem, for significantly advancing exchange programs in the diplomatic minefield of Israel and the Palestine Territories. Using fluent Arabic and basic Hebrew, Baskey won the respect of the Israelis controlling the border crossing at the Gaza Strip as he arranged for, and escorted, exchange students to get their U.S. visas and then cross the Allenby Bridge en route to the U.S.

Baskey interviews all candidates and initiates the difficult vetting procedures. Last year 200 Palestinians participated in U.S. government exchanges, with more expected this year. He has also pursued efforts to promote amity between Israeli and Palestinian institutions. His "A-Plus" program will enable dozens of Gazans, funded by the U.S., to study at Palestinian universities.

Shanghai Public Affairs Officer Tom Cooney drew praise for being the "main engine" of American participation in Shanghai Expo 2010, an unparalleled public diplomacy opportunity to reach more Chinese citizens than the entire U.S. China mission will see in 10 years. Although a 1994 law prohibiting the use of U.S. government funds for world expos has made the U.S. a no-show in past decades, Cooney successfully argued the case for U.S. participation, encouraging the department to authorize a private-sector organization to manage it.

After Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's personal commitment galvanized the private sector, Cooney guided the project through ground breaking to a successful launch. More than 200,000 visitors a week are now enjoying the spirit of America portrayed in the U.S. pavilion. (For more background, see the February edition of Cybernotes.)

Aaron David Snipe, public diplomacy officer for the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Muthanna province, Iraq, was honored for reaching out to the area's most inaccessible audience: women. Coordinating with a local nongovernmental organization, he organized an art exhibit by local female artists, which he then arranged for U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker to attend, generating national media coverage.

"Colors of Warka" toured three

## 50 Years Ago…

When will the State Department recognize the new possibilities and start spending at least 1 percent of its impressive budget for basic research in its own field? The department always seems to know all the answers and to have them instantly ready for the press. Answers to the world's problems come quickly to those who have prejudices, but we need answers that result from deep thinking.

— Oskar Morgenstern, "Brass Hats and Striped Pants," *FSJ*, July 1960.

### Site of the Month: http://globalspouses.blogspot.com

How do Foreign Service spouses posted overseas find work when there's no bilateral work agreement between the U.S. and the host country? Or if there are no jobs in the spouse's field — or no jobs, period? To get around such obstacles, more and more family members are working for themselves, creating such portable careers as tutoring, freelance writing and editing, computer repair, photography and even dog grooming. And now there's a new blogspot, *Global Spouses: An Online Guide to "Trailing Spouse"–Owned Businesses*, where you can advertise your spouse-based business free of charge.

The blog's founder, Amy Pratt, was already used to the nomadic life, having followed her husband, a former journalist, to Florida, Georgia, South Dakota and Pennsylvania before he joined the Foreign Service. Her response to being regularly uprooted was to create a portable job in journalism and marketing, including her latest venture: Sweet Wee Bairn nursing covers.

"My mission is to facilitate spouse-owned businesses within the Foreign Service by building a business network," Pratt says. "This blog showcases spouses who have created their own job opportunities and gives Foreign Service members easy access to these businesses."

For more information, visit the blog or e-mail Amy at m.amypratt@gmail.com.

cities in the province, producing a highly favorable impact. Snipe then wrote articles to publicize the exhibit, resulting in the artists joining Women's History Month in Washington, D.C.

For more information about the awards and the work of the PDAA, visit the organization's Web site (**www.publicdiplomacy.org**).

## Lowering Risks for Mexican Journalists

The U.S. Mission in Mexico has been working with local reporters on improving their security and news coverage. Five Mexican reporters have been killed this year alone, and Mexico has been singled out by several nongovernmental organizations as one of the most dangerous places to practice journalism.

In response, the State Department recently funded an online training program for a group of 30 Mexican beat reporters,"Guidelines for Journalists in High-Risk Situations," at the Digital Journalism Center, located at the University of Guadalajara. During the workshop, participants considered ways to reduce risks while covering stories on drug trafficking, corruption and organized crime.

This led to creation of a Spanish-language Wiki page, **www.coberturasegura.wikispaces.com**, as a means to promote further discussion and a resource for other Mexican and Latin American journalists. The page contains information about the tools and protocols to reduce risk, including such topics as ethics and professionalism, safely cultivating sources, and risk-reduction strategy and security protocols.

For more details on the situation in Mexico, see this month's Speaking Out column, "Latin America's Latest Victim: The Free Press," by Christopher Teal and Silvio Gonzalez (p. 13). ■

*This edition of Cybernotes was compiled by Editor Steven Alan Honley and Senior Editor Susan Brady Maitra.*

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# SPEAKING OUT

## *Latin America's Latest Victim: The Free Press*

*BY CHRISTOPHER TEAL AND SILVIO GONZALEZ*

This year several Latin American countries are celebrating the bicentennial anniversary of their independence from Spain. But the region as a whole is experiencing growing signs of social strain, fueling restrictions on freedom of expression. Pressure from government officials, direct censorship and even threats by criminal organizations all pose a severe menace to citizens' right to know — a threat not obviated by the rise of Internet-based outlets.

This attack on a fundamental right across the hemisphere poses a host of public diplomacy challenges for the United States. In particular, a lack of public knowledge about what is happening in their local communities, let alone anywhere else, has left the region less secure, with direct spillover across our border.

This trend should be of as much concern to the United States as to Latin America — not simply from a human rights perspective, vital as that is, but because an informed populace makes for a stronger democracy and stronger partners in the region.

### "Justice Has Been Kidnapped in Venezuela"

Perhaps the best known of these attacks are the efforts by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's administration to suppress views contrary to those he claims represent the "Bolivarian Revolution." In 2007, for instance, the government refused to renew the broadcasting license of Radio Caracas Television, a cable network headquartered in the capital, claiming RCTV had promoted the 2002 coup attempt that briefly overthrew Chavez.

*Efforts to weaken media freedom across the hemisphere pose a host of public diplomacy challenges for the United States.*

After the Venezuelan Supreme Court upheld that decision, the station continued to broadcast via satellite and cable as RCTV International. It rejected the Venezuelan media regulator's finding that it was a domestic media provider, and refused to broadcast speeches by Chavez. This January, RCTV was "temporarily" closed for allegedly failing to respect Venezuelan media law.

Many smaller media outlets in Venezuela have faced similar harassment and outright closure for not hewing to a more "positive" editorial line. This crackdown has not completely squelched dissent, but it has led some journalists to leave the country in order to report what is occurring in their own communities.

A February report by the Organization of American States' Inter-American Commission on Human Rights states: "The commission believes that conditions do not exist for human rights defenders and journalists to be able to freely carry out their work. [It] also detects the existence of a pattern of impunity in cases of violence, which particularly affects media workers, human rights defenders, trade unionists, participants in public demonstrations, people held in custody, campesinos (small-scale and subsistence farmers), indigenous people and women."

This scathing report, which Caracas attempted to head off by withholding access to official sources, also makes eight recommendations ranging from depoliticizing broadcasting laws to having government officials publicly condemn acts of violence against journalists. To date, there has been no positive action on any of these issues.

As one Venezuelan journalist recently put it when referring to freedom of expression: "The exercise of a right cannot be subject to any previous censorship. I believe that is the sensitive issue in Venezuela. The rules are not clear." This exiled reporter, who has unfortunately been hampered in practicing his profession, has not given up hope. But he does not see change

coming anytime soon: "Justice in Venezuela has been kidnapped by the executive."

Remarkably, independent polls conducted by the Pew Foundation and other organizations confirm that Venezuelans still hold positive views of America. But unfortunately, attempts to restrict freedom of expression continue to grow.

### Mexico: A Bad Place to Be a Journalist

Similar threats are evident in Bolivia, Argentina and Nicaragua, among other places. But the Latin American country currently facing the gravest challenge to free expression is Mexico, where a normally vibrant press must walk on eggshells due to the drug cartels' violent response to President Felipe Calderon's ongoing crackdown against them. The nongovernmental organization Reporters Without Borders recently labeled the country as the most dangerous in the hemisphere in which to practice journalism.

In its 2009 report the group noted: "The National Human Rights Commission has recorded 46 killings of journalists since 2000, and a further eight have disappeared since 2003, either because of their work or, most often, for an unknown motive. The existence of the drug cartels goes a long way to explain this terrible toll."

Threats to reporters just for covering a news story are growing at alarming rates, particularly along the U.S.-Mexican border. (In general, regional and local media face much greater risks than those in the capital or other major metropolitan areas.) One Mexican organization, the Center for Journalism and Public Ethics, has documented 128 assaults on reporters and editors.

***An informed populace makes for a stronger democracy and stronger partners in the region.***

Unlike threats against police or politicians, there is little price to pay for intimidating reporters. In a May publication, "Press Freedom in an Environment of Impunity," the Woodrow Wilson Center presented research that indicates the failure to prosecute has resulted in an "89-percent level of impunity in murder cases against reporters."

The Inter-American Press Association agrees: "Impunity continues to be the common denominator in most of these attacks." It adds: "The climate of violence has fostered a dangerous pattern of self-censorship in the media when it comes to investigating and reporting on issues related to organized crime."

This self-censorship plays out in different ways throughout the country. In the scarred state of Sinaloa, for example, grenades are increasingly being used against newspapers, as happened in November 2008 to the leading daily newspaper, *El Debate*. The midnight attack did not injure anyone but caused considerable damage to the building. Similar grenade attacks occurred in Monterrey in January 2009 against Televisa; in September 2009, again in Sinaloa, at the weekly newspaper *Rio Doce;* and, most recently, against Televisa in Nayarit in May 2010. No one was hurt in these attacks, but the message rings loud and clear — stop covering narcotics trafficking.

Despite hopes of a reprieve, 2010 started off badly in Mexico. In January, local reporter Jose Luis Romera was kidnapped and shot to death; a few days later, the corpse of a second reporter, Valentin Valdes Espinosa, was found with a "narco-message" warning others not to probe drug trafficking. As of May, there have been five confirmed deaths of journalists, and several others are missing. Meanwhile, clashes over jurisdiction between federal and state authorities have stonewalled some investigations.

In response, beat reporters have begun using local journalism organizations to verify information via phone before they travel to a location, carrying extra cell phones and traveling in pairs for added security. In some instances, foreign journalists are briefed so they can report the stories for an international audience, basing them on the contacts of local reporters who are afraid or unable to publish. The situation has deteriorated in so many newsrooms that papers will often not run bylines with their reports for fear of reprisals.

The fact that such attacks are not an abstraction was made painfully clear to the United States on March 13, when three members of the Consulate Ciudad Juarez community were murdered. Lesley Enriquez, Arthur Redelfs and Jorge Salcido were gunned down in two separate incidents, victims of the violence affecting families along the border.

The White House, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Carlos Pascual all vowed that such lethal acts would not stand, and asserted a shared responsibility to stop such brutality. To

date, numerous arrests have been made, but the cases are still pending and the investigation is ongoing.

The horrific nature of the killings — victims gunned down in the middle of the day in front of their children — has brought media attention to the larger crisis. But it will continue to fester without sustained efforts by local media, and an outcry by the local population.

### Filling the Information Gap

Though threats to expression differ greatly from country to country, the overall trends in our hemisphere are not favorable. The erosion of that fundamental right — whether through direct government coercion or via threats by powerful and illegal groups in society — will inevitably slow the movement toward justice, endangering democracy itself.

This puts the United States in a difficult position, one reminiscent of the Cold War. In those days, when Soviet-bloc governments suppressed raw news, it was up to the U.S. Information Agency to explain to local populations what was happening in their own communities.

Through massive media campaigns providing alternative sources of information, publications, libraries and binational centers throughout the world, Washington spent billions of dollars over decades to inform and engage local populations. The advent of new technologies has made it less necessary for the U.S. to fill in these gaps. However, we do still have a role to play in giving local reporters more and better tools.

One such solution has been developed right here in Mexico. The U.S. government and international foundations have partnered with local organizations, like the Digital Journalism Center at the University of Guadalajara, to teach reporters better ways to cover dangerous stories while remaining safe. The center's staff have also worked to promote investigative journalism, conducting research to expose cartel infiltration of local institutions and the role of narcotraffickers in the wave of murders and violence that is plaguing countries like Mexico. They have even created an online resource in Spanish that could be useful elsewhere in the hemisphere: www.coberturasegura.wikispaces.com.

It is vital for groups like the DJC to thrive, particularly because many Mexican news organizations are highly dependent on advertising revenue from state and municipal governments, and so few local nongovernmental organizations can fill the financial gap. Through their virtual network of reporters, contacts and ongoing programs, the impact of such organizations extends far beyond Mexico.

In remembering the 200th anniversary of the region's fight for independence, let us recall a warning from one of our own revolutionary figures, James Madison: "A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both."

Though not a remedy in and of itself, the power of the pen in Latin America is irreplaceable. It must be reinforced, both locally and internationally. ■

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*Christopher Teal, a Foreign Service officer since 1999 and a former member of the Foreign Service Journal Editorial Board, is currently public affairs officer in Guadalajara. Silvio Gonzalez, an FSO since 2001, is PAO in Ciudad Juarez. His previous postings include Islamabad, Ljubljana and Bogota.*

# TAI TAI: A DIPLOMAT'S WIFE IN THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

THE EFFORT TO KEEP ONE'S BALANCE ON FOREIGN SOIL CAN BE A COMPLEX AND TRICKY BUSINESS.

BY DONNA SCARAMASTRA GORMAN

I lead a double life here in China.

In one life, I'm a stay-at-home mom, wife of a government worker, payer of bills, packer of lunches, master of all things domestic. But in my other life, I'm a tai tai. That means "wife" in Chinese, but it implies much more — privilege, position and wealth. The term marks me as an important person, well-to-do, even sophisticated.

Imagine that. *Me*: well-to-do and sophisticated. I own a couple of pairs of jeans and a pile of T-shirts, most of which are marked with baby spit-up. I've been known to take the garbage out in my pajamas. And sometimes (sssshhh, don't tell), I eat my kids' leftover mac-n-cheese over the kitchen sink.

But none of that matters in China. Here, I'm no ordinary housewife. I'm not a soccer mom. When I walk out my front door, I'm not the middle-aged wife of a government bureaucrat. I'm a tai tai.

I wasn't prepared for this aspect of Foreign Service life back when we signed on the dotted line and left for our first overseas post. I pictured adventures aplenty. I imagined laughing at dinner parties with exotic friends, haggling in foreign languages at vegetable markets, maybe even riding a camel or hiking on the Great Wall of China.

I've done those things, and more. What I didn't understand, though, was the isolation I would sometimes face as the wife of a diplomat in foreign, not-always-friendly cities. I thought I would learn to blend in on any continent. I never stopped to think that I might spend my life sticking out, marked as different in ways both good and bad. But that's how it is.

With each new assignment, I've found new ways that I simply don't fit in. In China, I'm a tai tai, a foreign woman, the privileged wife of a diplomat. Try as I might, I will never blend in here in Beijing.

### A Gated Community

I live in a gated, guarded community on the outskirts of the city, in a house that was assigned to me by the U.S. government. There are guards, young Chinese men from the countryside, stationed around the clock. The houses, occupied mostly by foreigners, have garages with automatic door openers, balconies, guest bathrooms and American appliances. Our own house is spacious, if somewhat shoddily constructed. You wouldn't give it a second glance if I plunked it down in the middle of Fairfax, Va. But here,

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when compared with housing for the local Chinese, it's a veritable palace.

The guards live in a nearby barracks. Stroll past, peek through their gate, and you'll see clotheslines strung between squat brick buildings, hung with T-shirts and blankets. Bicycles are propped near dormitory doors, where the guards sleep several to a room. You might see one of the guards in his shirtsleeves, rocking back on his heels and smoking, waiting for his shift to start. Every four hours or so, the guards all line up, one behind the next in their crisp olive uniforms, and march across the street from their barracks to our villas.

*Even my four children serve to set me apart: they're the ultimate status symbol in a country with a one-child policy.*

On our side of the wall, the streets are tidy, swept as they are by an army of workers; hedges are clipped neatly and trash cans are emptied. I can't tell you where these workers live, exactly. Probably in the nearby hutong, a collection of ramshackle houses clustered together in cramped, dirty alleyways just down the road from our compound. That's where many of the ayis live — the women who cycle onto the grounds daily to help us clean our houses, iron our clothes and mind our children.

And I wonder: What do they think of us? Their little hutong houses seldom have running water, so they have to pay to use a communal shower. I've seen many of them cooking outdoors, stirring noodles in pots over Bunsen burner contraptions just outside their front doors. How did I ever imagine I was going to fit in here, with my microwave oven and my hot water heater?

Back in the States, I'm solidly middle-class, an everyday wife and mother of four. Back home, we struggle to make the payments on our tiny townhouse, to fill the car with gas, to buy an occasional meal out. But here, because I have a house and a car, people assume I'm rich. I'm a foreigner, a laowai, driving my car past their columns of bicycles, spending obnoxious sums of money on imported cereal, butchering their language every time I open my mouth. Even my four children serve to set me apart: they're the ultimate status symbol in a country with a one-child policy.

### The English-Language Bubble

My world is almost entirely separate from that of my Chinese neighbors; not just because my house has a heater and a microwave oven, but because I live in an English-language bubble. I struggle to speak the local language and to pick up on cultural cues. There's no such thing as a casual conversation: every word out of my mouth has to be planned in advance, plotted grammatically, finished in my head before I can toss it off my tongue.

"Ni hao," I say to the guards as I pass, "ni hao ma?" Even now, after almost three years, many of them stare at the ground when I greet them. Am I somehow insulting them by addressing them? Am I being overly friendly? Is the fact that I even acknowledge them — many of my neighbors don't — simply too odd? I don't know. Still, I keep at it, greeting them daily, and some have finally begun to respond.

"Xie xie," I say when someone holds a door for me, and I instruct my children to say thank you, too. "Chinese people really don't say 'thank you' as often as Americans," my Chinese teacher tells me, but still I keep at it, a habit ingrained since childhood. Better to err on the side of courtesy than to make a bad impression, after all.

I'm polite; I'm friendly. I want people to like me, despite the linguistic, economic and cultural barriers between us. They see a tai tai, but I want to be a regular person, just as I am back home in the States. I want to blend in. I've gotten to know the manager at the little shop down the road, and we struggle to chat in Chinese. In talking with him, I feel as though I'm carving out a place for myself within this community as an ordinary shopper, there to buy milk and bread like everyone else. That's the image I strive to project — ordinariness.

I don't want to live and work in one unheated room like the old tailor down the road, but neither do I want to give the impression that my air-conditioning unit somehow makes me more important than that tailor. How, then, to strike that balance, to make people understand that while I consider myself extraordinarily fortunate, I'm not in any way extraordinary?

### A Tricky Balance

The Foreign Service attracts adaptable people, but it can't create chameleons. I've learned to adapt in so many different ways, to laugh at the strange events unfolding around me, to swallow my fear and leap feet-first into new situations. But I haven't yet learned to blend in. Instead, I'm struggling to stand out with grace: to smile for the pic-

ture-taking locals; to converse with strangers about my family size; to admit, during nearly every conversation I start on any given day, that I simply don't understand what I'm hearing.

I haggle at the local markets, and I do it in the local language when I can. But I've come to expect that no matter what I do or say, I won't be getting the local price. I'm a tai tai, after all, which to them means I have money to spare and no real sense of how much something should cost. No matter how polite I am, no matter how insistent that I live here, I'm one of you — I'll still be charged a markup.

It's a tricky balance, this tai tai business, and every time I think I've figured it out, some new strangeness bumps up against me. The last time I was at the store, I stood in line behind three Chinese women. I had just a few things in my basket, while the woman in front of me, an ayi, was loaded down with two overflowing baskets. As I stood in line, trying to decipher the chatter around me, the manager approached. He greeted me as he reached past the ayi, who was struggling with her heavy baskets, and took my small basket from me. She didn't complain, and neither did I: I didn't have the words to explain that I did not need help, to point out that she might.

So I stood, silently, a tai tai once again, too delicate to hold my own loaf of bread. Wealthy, but weak. Is that what I am here? I don't know; I can't know. I can't make them understand that I'm used to hauling my own groceries up the stairs, pumping my own gas, scrubbing my own toilets. How can I possibly tell someone without running water that I, too, know what it is to live a hand-to-mouth existence? They wouldn't believe me, anyway. I'm a tai tai. I'm different.

### Comfortable Being Uncomfortable

It's taken years in the Foreign Service to finally understand that I'm never going to fit in — that maybe I'm not *supposed* to fit in.

When we started down this path so many years ago, I thought I would grow to be the kind of person who could navigate through any city with ease, effortlessly reading the faces of passers-by in countries across the globe. Instead, my life as a diplomatic spouse has turned me into the kind of person who is comfortable being uncomfortable; who can accept the fact that in any given situation, I'll miss something important and possibly come off looking like a snob, or even an idiot. Instead of becoming a global citizen, fitting in on any continent, I'm turning into someone who never quite fits in anywhere.

Here I am, about to finish up a three-year tour in China; yet the idea of life here still frightens me sometimes. I'm still an outsider, and many of my everyday interactions are fraught with confusion. How to tell the taxi driver he's made a wrong turn? How to ask the tailor to shorten a hem? How to understand what the ayi is telling me about how my daughters spent their morning while I was away at work? I'm learning to accept the fragments of comprehension that come my way. I'm learning to laugh at myself. I'm learning to accept the fact that others will misread me, just as I have trouble figuring them out.

I have to hold on to what I know is true about myself, even if those around me seldom see me the way I see myself. Inside of my house, here in Beijing, I'm just your average American mom, helping my kids with their homework as I prepare dinner, and that's how it should be.

But out in the wide world, I'm a tai tai, floating above the crowd, somehow assumed to be worthy of respect. And I suppose that's okay, too. ■

# A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP: THE FSN-FSO BOND

BEING A FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONAL EMPLOYEE BRINGS LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES. THE TRICK IS TO ACCEPT THE FORMER AND EXPLORE THE LATTER.

BY GALINA SABEVA

When I left my job as a correspondent for Reuters in 2003 to join the U.S. embassy in Sofia as a political assistant, I had only a vague idea of what to expect. A glossy job description in the local newspaper, coupled with my own misperceptions about embassy work, led me to believe that I had landed an important, if not glamorous, job at the heart of international diplomacy. I knew very little then about the ups and downs of working as a Foreign Service National (also known as Locally Employed Staff), a term used for the local employees working for U.S. missions abroad.

I was given a tiny desk in the embassy basement, with no access to the classified area. A set of complex security instructions and a long list of acronyms added to my confusion. An FSN colleague, who had worked at the embassy for more than 10 years, offered what was meant as soothing advice: "Once you get over the strange rules, it can actually be quite interesting."

It was the deputy chief of mission, an energetic former journalist for *USA Today*, who gave me a clear perspective of what working as an FSN in an American embassy would be like. I'd probably have a hard time getting used to the protocol-conscious environment, he said, and I would have neither the visibility nor the access of my previous job.

"These limitations aside, the job is rather exciting," he added. His comments capture the essence of the FSN job. There are certain limitations, but also opportunities — it's up to each individual employee to accept the former and explore the latter.

### Why the U.S. Embassy?

Strange as it may sound, not all locally employed staff join the embassy out of concern for competitive pay, work benefits and job security.

Consecutive post–World War II American administrations have pursued policies aimed at spreading democracy, and the U.S. diplomatic service has played a key role in advancing these policies. As a locally hired employee in an American embassy, one has the unique chance to observe the inner workings of the diplomatic machine of this global superpower. FSNs get to observe how U.S. bilateral diplomacy is conducted on a day-to-day basis and, albeit largely in supporting functions, to be part of this system.

I joined the U.S. embassy at a time when working for America wasn't exactly prestigious. Washington was involved in a highly unpopular war in Iraq, and anti-Americanism was peaking in Europe and around the world.

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Americans' trust in their own administration stood at a record low.

My service allowed me to observe experienced career diplomats having to uphold policies with which they did not necessarily agree, and doing so with professionalism and loyalty to their government. Despite the widespread perception that the U.S. serves as the world's policeman, I have seen very little arrogance, if any, in my daily interaction with the men and women who actually conduct U.S. diplomacy.

*Interpersonal communication between the local staff and FSOs is also a challenge.*

At the same time, I have often been surprised at how my otherwise amiable American colleagues have difficulty taking "no" for an answer when pursuing foreign policy goals. I have also had the opportunity to directly observe American idealism and pragmatism — two interwoven, but also often contradictory, strands in U.S. diplomacy.

As someone born and raised in Europe, where diplomacy is primarily a behind-the-scenes occupation, I've also been repeatedly amazed by the U.S. Foreign Service's strong emphasis on public diplomacy. As a global superpower, America feels confident in speaking up, and it has been fascinating — if not at times disconcerting to my European eyes — to see how our mission has so boldly used public diplomacy as a key policy tool.

### Not Just an Ordinary Job

I am often asked by former journalist colleagues how it feels to be a foreigner at a U.S. embassy. Doesn't the protocol-conscious, bureaucratic environment feel restrictive compared to the more casual and relatively free media world? The honest answer is that working at an American embassy is not always easy. All the challenges of an ordinary job, such as communication with co-workers, career development, motivation and workplace safety, are amplified by intercultural differences, political sensitivities, security issues and the specifics of diplomatic work.

When passing through the embassy gate, local employees give their loyalty, in effect, to a foreign government, and this especially applies to political and public affairs FSNs with advisory functions. Some local employees pay a high price for working for America; at some high-threat posts, they literally risk their lives. So it is important that loyalty work both ways, and that the local staff know their advice and effort are valued by their American colleagues.

Interpersonal communication between the local staff and FSOs is also a challenge. This is a delicate area that requires tact and patience on both sides. Because of the classified nature of diplomatic assignments, FSNs often work on projects with no corresponding access to the final product or feedback on their input. For the local employee, there is no full information cycle. In most political sections, FSNs and FSOs are physically separated due to concerns related to information security.

Yet in some cases, being an FSN is an advantage. Sometimes FSOs prefer to stick to the safest approach to a sensitive political issue, telling mission leaders what they want to hear. I have often seen ambassadors look to FSNs for an unvarnished view.

### Trust and Loyalty

The formula for a successful relationship between FSN and FSO is, in a word, "trust." Although the work standards and the nature of the FSN-FSO relationship may vary from post to post depending on political and cultural issues, there should be a clear understanding of each other's functions. Some (in my experience, most) diplomats see the local staff as an inseparable part of embassy operations, while others regard FSNs as second-class employees. It is vital, however, for diplomats arriving at a new post to approach their local colleagues with open minds. It is also up to the FSNs to prove they are full-fledged members of the embassy team, performing up to the highest American standards of excellence and professional ethics.

The relationship between FSNs and junior officers is trickier. It is delicate to have to educate your supervisor, yet this is what many FSNs are required to do. "Managing up" requires tact on the part of the FSN and the right attitude on the part of the officer, who sometimes comes to post with little idea about the local staff's role.

Career advancement is another challenge. It is a key element of diplomatic service and a vital motivating factor for FSOs. For FSNs, however, there is an "iron" ceiling beyond which they cannot advance. There must be strong motivation and a concerted effort on both sides to keep the local staff challenged.

I have had bosses who, aware of this, have gone out of their way to assist the local staff's professional development, at times resorting to innovation. For example, one of my political-economic chiefs permitted FSNs to accompany high-level delegations to the United States on U.S. gov-

ernment-funded Voluntary Visitor Programs. This not only raises the local staff's profile but also achieves mission goals.

While FSOs come and go, local staff are at the embassy for the long term, serving as institutional memory, providing valuable knowledge about the domestic scene and acting as liaison between the mission and host-country representatives. Every three to four years, the FSNs have to prove themselves anew and get accustomed to a different leadership style. They never know what to expect of the new batch of officers, and vice versa; this poses another major challenge for both groups.

### The Human Factor

Though it may sound like a cliché, working alongside American colleagues and watching them in action have been among the greatest benefits of my job. It is amazing to me how many of them have actually joined the Foreign Service to work for their country, believing in an ideal.

I have worked with very interesting people, such as a former financier for the New York office of Armani who left the fashion house to serve at the State Department, and a brilliant economic officer who used to act in movies and probably could have been a star if he hadn't chosen to pursue a diplomatic career.

There was also the deputy chief of mission who would stop by the FSN area "for a quick question" and end up giving us an hourlong lecture on politics — which we dreaded at first, but now actually miss. I have had the chance to work for career and political ambassadors who had radically different styles, yet actively sought local employees' opinions and were willing to listen. "There is hardly a better adviser on what is happening on local soil than the local staff," one ambassador used to say.

Local employees also become unwitting witnesses to FSOs' ups and downs, their occasional frustrations with the State Department bureaucracy and their career advancement. The American employees and local staff are united by high professional standards and common values, but there are also human bonds, which sometimes last long after the FSO has moved on. The numerous cases of such collegial solidarity are institutionalized in the FSN Relief Fund, supported by American colleagues.

### A Special Relationship

There are some 42,300 local employees working in more than 250 overseas U.S. missions. What makes embassy work unique, from the local staff perspective, is the special relationship between the FSN and the FSO.

Over the past several years, we FSNs have seen growing appreciation of our work, along with an increased focus on local staff training and long-term development. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell deserves special recognition for acknowledging the locally employed staff's contribution to American overseas missions and encouraging American employees to have positive attitudes toward us. But while the institutional framework is important, it is ultimately up to individual FSNs and FSOs to take up the challenge and make their relationship work.

A lot has changed since my first day in Embassy Sofia's political-economic section. Over the past seven years, its local staff has doubled, and the Bulgarian employees like myself have taken on increasingly greater responsibilities. Being a foreigner working at an American embassy has not gotten easier, and the same limitations are still in place. But so are the growing opportunities.

I haven't for a minute regretted taking up the challenge. ■

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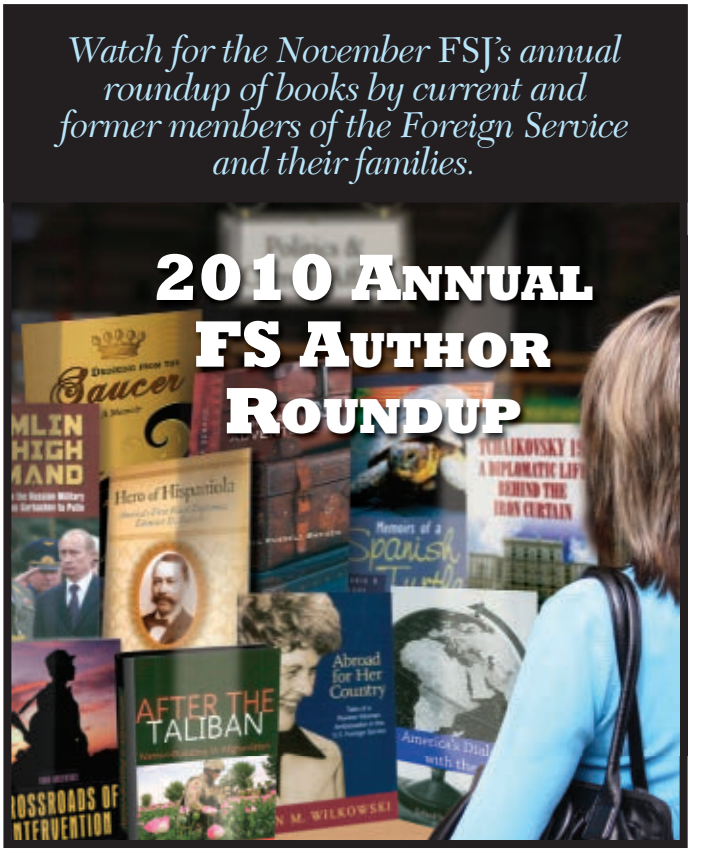
*Watch for the November* FSJ*'s annual roundup of books by current and former members of the Foreign Service and their families.*



# RETURNING TO DACHAU, 65 YEARS LATER

A RETIRED AMBASSADOR'S WARTIME EXPERIENCE WAS ONE OF THE MAIN FACTORS THAT PROPELLED HIM TOWARD THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

BY ALAN W. LUKENS

This past April, I traveled to Dachau, Germany, as the representative of all the American troops who had liberated the prisoners from the concentration camp there exactly 65 years before. As president of the 20th Armored Division, one of the three units that had entered the camp, I was privileged to deliver a message from President Barack Obama to an audience of about 1,000 survivors and their families.

When our unit approached Dachau on April 29, 1945, very few of us, even our commanders, had any clue that we were about to enter a concentration camp. The facility just happened to be on our direct route to capture Munich.

Intelligence in those days did not benefit from today's communication techniques. But the poor, starving inmates knew that we were nearby, because they listened clandestinely to the British Broadcasting Corporation's radio broadcasts.

We were moving south quickly after taking Frankfurt, heading full steam for Munich, when we suddenly arrived at a gigantic prison camp surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence. We broke through the fence with our tanks, with the 42nd Infantry Division riding on them, ready to occupy the camp. Unfortunately, a few German snipers killed several of our men, including our colonel, before we were able to take out their nest with an artillery barrage.

As soon as we arrived at the gates, we were surrounded by hundreds of deportees, all thrilled to see us. We learned later that the French prisoners, under General André Delpeche (later president of all the deportees), had planned a mutiny and the killing of the guards. But by the time we got there, most of the guards had fled.

What we found was shocking and horrifying beyond words. We counted 37 carloads of bodies, shipped hastily from other concentration camps. The survivors were in a pitiful state, resembling skeletons; most only weighed 75 or 80 pounds. We wanted to feed them but were warned that a sudden intake of food might kill them. We saw the crematorium, the dreadful barracks and the Schutzstaffel officers' quarters before being pulled away and sent off toward Munich.

### Renewing Old Ties

After concluding my U.S. Army service, I joined the

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Foreign Service in 1951. Over the next 36 years, I had several diplomatic assignments in France and Francophone countries. (It was my high school French that had enabled me to become my battery's interpreter in 1945 and speak with the prisoners at Dachau.)

*We counted 37 carloads of bodies, shipped hastily from other concentration camps.*

In 1995, I revisited the village of Vieux-Manor near Rouen, where my division had been billeted 50 years earlier. The warmth of that reunion was remarkable. A 12-year-old girl to whom I had given candy in 1945 was now a 62-year-old matron, who took us all to a gala dinner.

I then continued on to Dachau for the first time since 1945, representing my unit (along with two other members) at a large memorial ceremony organized by the Bavarian government. We joined 100 veterans from the 42nd Rainbow Division, as well as several thousand survivors from all over Europe.

At the 2005 commemoration, I was one of only about a dozen U.S. veterans present, but we met two special French survivors. And in October 2009, my wife, Susie, and I traveled to France as their guests. It was in this informal, very personal setting that we were privileged to take the measure of their heroism.

### Marcel's Story

At the 1995 ceremony, I had met Marcel Fonfréde, an extremely bright and active veteran of the French Resistance who now lives in St. Ismier, a suburb of Grenoble in the French Alps. His story is remarkable.

During the Christmas holiday in 1943, he went home from his school to see his family. His father was a well-known Resistance leader sought by the SS. Unfortunately, the Germans picked up Marcel instead; his father escaped and later became an important cog in the underground, helping Allied pilots escape to Portugal.

Marcel himself was a key link in that same chain, though the Nazis never figured that out even after interrogating him. Klaus Barbie, now imprisoned for life after having been discovered and extradited from Argentina in the 1990s, presided over the torture. Marcel's trick was to give up the names of Resistance fighters who had already been executed, so there could be no reprisals.

For the next two years Marcel was moved from prison to prison (the worst was Buchenwald), forced to perform hard labor along the way amid unbelievable conditions. He finally arrived in Dachau on the "death train." As defeat approached, the Nazis had two overarching goals in mind: to erase all traces of their bestial treatment of prisoners in other camps in Germany, and to fight to the end defending Bavaria.

Many of Marcel's friends had died along the way, and their SS guards would not even bury their bodies. After arriving at the Dachau train station, the prisoners proceeded on foot the five miles to the camp, chased there by dogs who bit those who fell along the way.

Once there, Marcel was admitted to the infirmary, which saved him from the death march in which the few remaining ambulatory prisoners were forced to walk toward Munich and thence to the Alps. Fortunately, several American units caught up with the death march three days after Dachau's liberation and took care of the poor, wretched prisoners.

A friend of Marcel's whom I met during my 1995 trip had had a similar, but happier, experience. He was on one of the trains en route to Dachau when it came to a stop in a gully between two tunnels. While Allied and German artillery units exchanged fire over the train, the French prisoners, all in the same cattle car, fashioned a tricolor flag out of old clothes and laid it on top of their freight car for American pilots to spot.

Later, the friend and a Polish prisoner walked back along the tracks, evading enemy lines until they came to the American camp. They persuaded the Americans to take a Sherman tank, hook it to the car holding the French prisoners and pull it back to their camp. There they all rested for a month or so, slowly returning to health before French authorities came to rescue them.

### Two Massacres

You can imagine what a wonderful reception we had from Marcel's family after 14 years of correspondence. They took us to a beautiful mountain restaurant above Grenoble.

During the lunch, they told us about the activities of the French Resistance in the Vercor, an isolated mountain about 3,000 feet high that can only be reached through three narrow roads, complete with dangerous hairpin turns. The Germans tried many times to go up

these passes and failed each time, fueling their fury and frustration.

As the Allies advanced in southern France in July 1944, the plan was for the 7th Army to join up with the Resistance at Vercor. On a certain day British planes were to land, carrying arms to the French holed up there. Fog in London prevented the planes from flying, but somehow the Germans learned about the plan and painted their own planes in British colors. When they arrived to French cheers, the Nazis jumped out of their planes and massacred everyone in sight, women and children included. We visited the site and the village ruins, including the memorial museum and the graves of those killed, a grisly reminder of what happened that tragic day.

***As the only American veteran from the liberation of Dachau my hosts had ever met, I was treated royally.***

Another close friend I'd met at the 60th-anniversary ceremony, Jean-Claude Cottet, had a similarly dramatic story to tell about his father, Joachim, who had died in 2002. Joachim lived in the village of Habere-Poche, now a beautiful ski resort an hour east of Geneva.

In 1943, 40 youngsters, almost all in their teens, were working in the Resistance. Figuring that the Germans were 25 miles away in Annemasse, the group decided to get together on Christmas Eve for a party in the village chateau. Tragically, a Vichy traitor had infiltrated their ranks and tipped off the Germans, who murdered 35 of the young men, then burned down the chateau. The remaining five feigned death and escaped, but were arrested the next day. I was asked to lay a wreath on the beautiful memorial built on the ruins of the house, where the victims' names and ages were engraved.

Joachim Cottet was one of the five survivors who was captured the next day. He was sent to a series of concentration camps, performing hard labor under atrocious conditions. All four of his comrades died there, leaving him the sole survivor of the Habere-Poche massacre to make it to Dachau.

At a ceremony held in my honor at the mayor's office, I met several other veterans with equally grim stories. Among them was Fernand Klein, who had been decorated for his role in the Resistance. He had escaped five times from the Nazis before ending up in Dachau.

We also met Mme. Néplaz-Bouvet, an impressive lady who is president of a French foundation that preserves the memories of those who were deported. I spoke to the group about our liberation of Dachau, which was a very moving event.

One of the former Dachau internees at the ceremony, Walter Bassen, gave me a book by another former detainee, Paul Bermond, describing the final death march toward the Tyrol region. The French prisoners huddled together as the remaining Nazis tried to hide the evidence of their atrocities by driving them past Munich into the Alps.

As the Allies approached, the German guards began to discard their uniforms and put on civilian clothes, which the prisoners had been pushing in rude carts. As soon as most of the guards disappeared, the French prisoners all left the march and occupied local homes until the Americans arrived the next day.

Later, the Cottets arranged for me to speak to 50

teenagers in Boége, a town about 10 miles away. I spoke to them for an hour about Dachau alone, answering many questions. That was followed by another speech and reception in Poublier, a small town on Lake Geneva. The young mayor of that town had been so interested in what had happened during the war that he had visited seven concentration camps in Germany, collecting handfuls of dirt from each, which he buried in a marble monument next to his city hall. Once again, I was asked to lay a wreath and make brief remarks.

***In 1995, I visited Dachau for the first time since 1945, representing my unit at a large memorial ceremony organized by the Bavarian government.***

**Never Again**

Our visits to Habere-Poche and St. Ismier were extremely memorable. As the only American veteran from the liberation of Dachau whom they had ever met, I was treated royally. While I pleaded that I was just a former private first class, I was deeply honored to have such a unique opportunity.

The return visit to Dachau for the 65th anniversary of its liberation, where I saw old friends and made new ones among the French survivors, was also an inspiring experience. To hear these men recount their stories and to see the contrast between their situation in 1945 and in 2010 — revealing what that famous Liberation Day meant in their lives, and mine — is something I will never forget.

It also serves as a fresh reminder that my wartime experience was one of the main factors that propelled me toward the Foreign Service. In that capacity, I like to think that I played my small part to prevent a scourge like Nazism from ever appearing again. ■

# THE AMERICAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

PROVING THAT WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY, SPIRITUALITY TRUMPS CONSULAR PROCEDURES IN 1970S INDIA.

BY GINNY YOUNG

Back in 2004, Tom Hanks starred in "The Terminal," a movie about a man forced by immigration requirements to live, against his will, in the transit lounge of a major airport.

The following story is equally implausible, but real.

I was a consular officer in New Delhi. It was the 1970s, when all sorts of people — Mia Farrow, the Beatles — were discovering Indian spirituality.

Eric Cameron Smith was older than the usual hippie — in his late 30s, maybe even 40 years old. He was a balding, articulate former Hollywood studio executive who had, he said, given up the rat race, searched for peace in an Oregon mountain cabin and finally found salvation with an unknown (to me, anyway) guru who lived in a cave in Rishikesh, a holy city on the Ganges River.

"The man is a saint," Smith told me. "The first time I heard him speak, I fell on the floor, moaning."

I asked gently if perhaps he'd been chewing something. (Like, maybe, opium? It was a common practice in this part of the world, after all.)

"No, no," he said. He'd tried that, back in Hollywood and, later, in Oregon. Drugs didn't work. What he had found in Rishikesh was different. "It was pure ecstasy," he recalled, describing emotion, not today's narcotic.

But Indian authorities determined that Smith had overstayed his visa and must leave immediately. He had come to the embassy to investigate his options. I sighed.

"You really don't have a choice."

~

The American was given 10 days in which to prepare for departure. He took no action, however, so Indian police went to the cave and took him away in handcuffs. The embassy was informed that Eric Cameron Smith was in detention and would be deported the following day.

I went to Palam Airport the next morning and found the tall Californian being processed through Indian immigration. He was alone, no police in evidence.

The man nodded briefly in my direction and turned, seemingly in resignation, toward the counter, where an officer examined his papers.

Suddenly, Smith lunged forward, a pleased smile on his face. He grabbed his passport from the Indian official and

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dramatically ripped it into four segments.

"You can't deport me," he cried triumphantly. "I have no passport. I am stateless! I have no place to go!"

Indian officials pressed pieces of the torn book into his hands and pushed him toward a U.S.-bound plane waiting on the tarmac.

The Pan Am pilot, however, decided this man was clearly deranged and a danger to other passengers. In addition, he had an invalid travel document. He was denied entry onto the plane.

In the eyes of Indian authorities, Mr. Smith had officially left the country. He could not be permitted to "return to India," but must instead remain in the transit lounge until things were sorted out.

Pan Am agreed to provide sustenance while their erstwhile passenger was detained. Every day, on the airline's round-the-world return schedule, a representative delivered vegetarian meals to the American who lived in the New Delhi transit lounge.

Smith set up housekeeping, washing his Indian kurta and pajama pants in the restroom, then sitting on the floor in his underwear while they dried. (At night, the procedure was reversed: underwear washed and drying as he stretched out on the floor to sleep.) He prayed, in the evening and at sunrise, in the curtained cubicle where Indian security, lacking metal detectors, physically patted down departing passengers.

I visited my fellow citizen every week and found him in generally good spirits. Smith looked at the situation pragmatically: he was still nearer his guru than if he'd been forced to return to Pasadena.

At one point, the Pan Am manager suggested the airline might be able to transport this hotheaded and dangerous fellow, if the embassy could provide them with a straitjacket. (Did he know that we actually had several in various sizes, all issued by the U.S. government, in the consular closet?) I said I didn't think it was possible.

One day, however, I found Smith in a foul mood, visibly upset. There had been a chicken bone in his lunch. He was, he said, no longer able to trust Pan Am to follow his vegetarian regimen. He was going on a hunger strike.

This bizarre state of affairs caught the attention of New Delhi's American press corps; feature stories about Smith appeared in several U.S. publications. His celebrity status caused travelers, noting the tall American in the transit lounge, to call out, "Right on, Eric!" They gave him money for food; a guard brought in a charcoal brazier so he could cook.

***With his last few rupees, the American bought me a cup of tea.***

Finally, the Indians came up with a court-approved deportation order that authorized escorts to travel with Smith to New York, and to subdue him by force if need be.

The State Department advised that, under the circumstances, I could glue his old passport together.

After seven weeks, I was at the airport on Eric Cameron Smith's behalf for the last time. Authorities introduced me to the pair of men selected by the Indian government to travel with, as they said, "the mad American."

One was a frail, elderly doctor who carried a large hypodermic needle and tranquilizers in his physician's black bag.

The other was a burly Indian immigration officer who told me he had a sibling in New York. He was all but dancing around the room as he described the glad surprise with which his brother would greet him on arrival.

I doubted that either of these two fellows — one fragile and hesitant, the other enormously distracted — was going to be of much help if Smith resisted, once again, being forced onto a plane.

"Today's the day, isn't it?" he asked morosely when I was admitted into the transit lounge. I told him that it was.

"What are you going to do?" I asked.

"Don't know."

He looked sideways at me, his expression mournful.

"In the movie of my life, will I be played by Jack Palance?"

"No," I rejoined. "Probably Fred MacMurray."

We both smiled at the thought of gentle Fred cast as the "American tiger resisting deportation" described in the press.

With his last few rupees, the American bought me a cup of tea. Then he left peaceably — no sedatives, no straitjacket. I saw pictures of my former consular client in the *International Herald Tribune*, waving to TV cameras on his arrival in New York.

A year later, Eric Cameron Smith walked into my office in New Delhi wearing a coat and tie. His hairline had receded even further, but he was the same quiet, whimsical

man. He told me he had circumvented a governmental blacklisting by dressing conservatively and crossing via the land border from Pakistan, rather than coming in at the airport. He was headed back to Rishikesh.

I shook my head, no.

They found him in the cave a couple of weeks later and gave him another "Quit India" notice. For the second time, he had only 10 days left in the country.

"Are we going through the whole thing again?" I asked wearily.

"Haven't made up my mind," he admitted. He was smarter now, he said. If he headed south and kept out of the way of the immigration folks, he was sure he could stay in his adopted country indefinitely.

I reminded him of the folly of crossing Indian officials a second time. He smiled enigmatically and headed toward the door, then paused, looking back.

"Pretty," Smith said, referring to a small bouquet of wilting wild flowers in a vase on my desk.

"Let me know what happens," I said, as my guest turned once again to leave.

"I'll send you a postcard," he promised. "The Taj Mahal if I stay here. The Statue of Liberty if I don't."

~

A few weeks later, I received a card (no date or message) from New York, and concluded that Smith had ultimately acceded to authority. His time in India was over.

I was wrong.

In a very odd coincidence, I recently met his brother Paul in California. He told me that Eric did, in fact, return for a third time — it was after I had been transferred to my next post — and that he had died in India, presumably following a severe bout of hepatitis. His ashes were placed in the Ganges River.

You know what? I was sorry to learn the man was gone. But to end his days in India seemed so fitting. Eric Cameron Smith was an obsessed but sweet man who loved this ancient land.

I am sure his spirit is still hovering over that cave in Rishikesh. ■

# THE INTERVIEW

FATE PLAYS A ROLE IN A GHANAIAN GIRL'S QUEST FOR PASSAGE TO AMERICA.

BY AMANDA S. JACOBSEN

Joyce came home that evening at 1 a.m., her hair smelling like someone else's perfume and her sandals dusty from walking in the beach sand. I was up feeding the baby corn porridge when I felt her presence behind me.

"Did you eat?" I asked her. Joyce came home on weekend nights usually starved.

"No," she told me quietly. "I was fed tonight." Something in her expression warned me not to ask more, so I busied myself putting our baby brother, Bana, back on the mattress and patting his stomach gently with my fingers so he would sleep. Joyce sat down on the floor, and I could tell she was exhausted.

"I was downtown with Lydia and Kafui when we met some guys, university students from Ghana. They told us they wanted to talk with us and learn more about the city. They spoke good French." Joyce and I were both Ghanaian but had lived in Togo with our mother since my birth. I was intrigued. I had about as much direct experience speaking with boys not from my school or neighborhood as I did with elephants. And there were no more elephants left in Togo.

"What did you talk about?"

Joyce sighed. "Football. Lydia knows enough about the local teams to keep them occupied. When it was time to leave, the boys insisted on accompanying us home. The streets are not safe at night, they said." Her face grew taut again, and a pinch of worry skittered behind my ribs.

Knowing I would ask more, Joyce shot me an angry look and then laid down next to the sleeping baby on the mattress. "Go away," she said. She rolled away from me, putting her hands over her ears. I could tell then that there was more to her story, and that it probably involved me.

Joyce was my older sister by three years. We both had the same irregular-shaped dimple, like a question mark, below our left eye when we smiled. I smiled more than Joyce did. She had graduated from high school one year earlier and decided to work instead of going to the local university because of the political strikes. "What? Pay money and not go to class?" Auntie, our father's sister who had no children of her own, promptly hired her to keep an

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eye on the 10 apprentices in her seamstress shop.

Auntie had started her shop, "God Knows Best," more than a decade ago. One side held 10 giggling neighborhood girls no older than myself hunched over clacking Singer machines or sewing patches of cloth two centimeters in front of their eyes, frowning and hissing at the needle between their teeth in concentration. The other side of her store sold long bolts of pagne cloth that she bought in the port from large containers originating in Holland or China. "A one-stop shop for your clothing satisfaction," read the handmade sign in Auntie's neat, slanted script over the front door.

*One of the problems she discovered early on was that we'd both been born in a now-defunct birthing center in central Ghana, and our births were never registered.*

Her best customers were Ghanaian and Nigerian businesswomen who spoke English, so she never bothered translating her sign into French or Ewe, one of the main dialects in southern Togo. Auntie spent her mornings teaching Joyce how to keep inventory records, track sales, and record salary payments in the green ledger. She'd then oversee the apprentices that she hired for three years, teaching them all the ins and outs of the seamstress trade in exchange for free labor. "Your sister is a real businesswoman," she told me more than once.

Joyce spent the next day sleeping. I swept the house, washed my school uniform and made rice from the irregular, tooth-shaped pellets our mother had brought home from the market the day before. Mother came home and flopped on the mattress as soon as Joyce emerged in the kitchen in the late afternoon, sweaty and restless from the heat and lack of sleep. The electricity was off again, so the one fan we kept in the back room remained silent.

I sat at the table and watched my sister get ready to go out with her friends. Joyce was beautiful, with short hair and luminous eyes. She scoffed at the girls from Auntie's store who would spend their money on shiny extensions or wigs. Of the 25,000 CFA (approximately $50) she earned at Auntie's store monthly, she kept roughly half for herself and never told me where she hid it.

"You don't have plans tonight?" Joyce asked me finally, while I flipped through an outdated fashion magazine from the U.K.

"What do you want me to do?" I asked interestedly. Joyce rarely asked me to accompany her downtown with her friends, saying I walked too slowly and giggled too loudly.

"I told them you would come with me tonight," she said finally. "That was part of the deal." That's when I was able to get more details about her meeting with the Ghanaian students, and how it related to Joyce's long quest to reach America.

We had two cousins who were granted asylum three years ago and now lived in Jamaica, N.Y. Joyce planned to live with them until she could support herself independently. She just needed to figure out how to get there.

She talked with everyone, from the grandmothers at our church to the boys who loaded the cargo ships at the port to the gendarmes at the Ghanaian border. Regardless of the route, she had to buy identity cards. One of the problems she discovered early on was that we'd both been born in a now-defunct birthing center in central Ghana, and our births were never registered.

Joyce shared only the necessary bits with me as we walked down the sandy road toward the sea. "Philip is the oldest," she informed me. "Stubborn, honest, but has a temper. Kevin is his brother. I'll tell you more later."

We spent the evening at one of the small cafés on Le Boulevard, sipping Cokes and beers. I could tell that Kevin was watching me, which made me nervous. After an hour of idle chitchat, Joyce stood up and told the boys that we had to go home. Philip immediately stood up and said he'd accompany us. Joyce's smile grew tense, but she grabbed his hand and started teasing him, motioning me with her hand to walk ahead. "Come on," I could hear Philip cajoling at one point. "We're legal now, right? I told you this was also part of the deal." When we got home Joyce told me to sit out front. She disappeared inside with Philip, who smiled at me as he followed my sister.

The next morning Joyce woke me up at 5 so we could be among the first at the port. A ship was unloading, and we could buy shoes wholesale for my mother from the bales of used clothing. "Why doesn't she go herself?" I grumbled unkindly as we fumbled in the dark for our sandals. Joyce fastened Bana to her back with a bolt of pagne cloth, and we were off. It was a long walk, but we could be there

in about an hour. And if we were lucky, we could take a taxi home with our purchases and still be at church by 10.

Joyce hummed as we walked along the beach road, the sun's early reflection taut over the water. "How did you like Kevin?" she asked me, carefully avoiding my eyes.

"He's okay. Why?" I asked.

Joyce was a horrible liar, and I could see her eyes skittering somewhere above my forehead trying to decide what genre of lie she was hoping I'd swallow.

"Tell me, or I'm going home," I said. "You can get the shoes yourself."

Joyce stopped and stared at me. "Kevin and Philip are not brothers," she told me. "I found them on the Internet. They won the green card lottery and are willing to take us with them to America."

*Auntie arranged for the visa fixer to come to our house while our mother was at the market and coach us on the upcoming interview.*

"How?" I asked breathlessly.

Joyce snorted. "As their wives, stupid. How else?"

She quickly gave me the details. She'd been concocting this plan for the past year but had only recently found someone willing to marry us. Auntie had paid a visa fixer to obtain our passports and the marriage certificates. The interviews at the U.S. embassy would take place in one month.

"But why me?" I asked finally. "You're the one who wants to go to America, not me. I'm only 16."

Joyce eyed me critically. "Yes, but you could pass as 20 if we fix you up a bit. I don't want to go to America alone, and this way we could go together, save money, and start over. Trust me." So I did.

The next few weeks passed in a blur. Auntie arranged for the visa fixer to come to our house while our mother

was at the market to coach us for the upcoming interview. The man told us to call him Jean-Luc. He was in his mid-20s, overwhelmingly confident, and grew testy when Joyce asked him questions.

"Look, it's easy," he insisted. "You'll go to the embassy, get your fingerprints taken, and have one of the yovo" (a term, usually pejorative, commonly used to refer to foreigners in Togo) "consular officers ask you about your marriage. Both Philip and Kevin played the lottery as single guys, so you need to prove that your relationship is legitimate, and not just contracted to get a green card."

He seemed to find this predicament funny. After a moment, he stood up and unfurled a long sheet of paper with handwritten questions scrawled on it.

"Joyce, where was Philip born? Where was his maternal grandmother buried? What items were exchanged for your dowry? Where did you get your wedding ring?" She stared at him, openmouthed.

Jean-Luc laughed again. "These are questions the yovos are going to ask you, and you need to be prepared." He turned and looked at me, where I was staring at the floor nervously. He made me very uncomfortable, and I could tell he didn't really think much of me. "Your sister needs to look older," he told Joyce, "or this isn't going to work."

He left after 20 minutes for his next "immigration consultation." Following Jean-Luc's advice, we went to a local photographer who took informal pictures of us as couples in front of the Palm Beach Hotel. Next we went to a local Catholic church, where we took turns posing in the same wedding gown, squinting into the sun.

I grew to like Kevin. I found out early on that he was Auntie's neighbor's grandson, and from the same village where we were born. He had studied psychology and worked as an intern at an international relief agency in Lomé the previous summer. He had a cousin in Nebraska who had promised to find him work at a local meat factory. He started picking me up at school, which made my friends whisper.

On the day of the interview there were throngs of other hopefuls inside the waiting room of the U.S. embassy. My stomach hurt because I'd been too nervous to eat anything the night before. But I didn't want to let my sister down.

*Kevin tried to hold the baby at one point, and he screamed so loud that the other women waiting with us turned and glared at me ferociously.*

Kevin and I sat together limply in plastic chairs lined up in front of the interview windows. When his name was called, Kevin went up to the cashier window and paid in American dollars. I knew that my aunt had given him the cash the day before and was overwhelmed almost to tears by the amount that he counted carefully, then handed over — more than 1,500 American dollars.

I bounced Bana on my knee miserably. Bringing the baby along had been a last-minute decision. The visa fixer had been so unimpressed with my performance responding to questions about Kevin and his family that he suggested we pass off Bana as our child. Horrified, I had rejected the idea; but, ultimately, Joyce had convinced me that it would help. Jean-Luc was able to procure a fake birth certificate and passport for Bana the night before the interview. We decided not to tell Mother.

Bana howled and wept. The baby had not napped all morning, and I certainly couldn't nurse him. Kevin tried to hold the baby at one point, and he screamed so loud that the other women waiting with us turned and glared at me ferociously. They knew he wasn't mine.

I stared glumly at my passport. My picture smiled back at me stiffly, and there was a new name and birth date. My birthplace was listed as Accra, not Kumasi.

Joyce and Philip came in about 15 minutes later. They paid, deposited their paperwork, and then sat one row ahead of us. I could see that Joyce was shaking.

Philip was called first. He walked coolly up to the window and started talking with the American officer behind the glass, a short woman with brown hair and glasses. We could only hear his part of the conversation. "Awute, Philip. 27 years old. Graduate student." The woman listened attentively and then skimmed his paperwork, frowning in concentration. She asked him something else, and Philip laughed lightly.

"Oh, that's my wife. We were married two months ago. Our parents only agreed to our wedding recently, so that's why I didn't list her on the original petition." He pushed their carefully choreographed wedding album under the consular windowsill; however, the woman only opened it to the first page, frowned more deeply, and pushed it back.

She held up his passport to the light, compared it with the other one in the file, presumably Joyce's, and then left the window. Philip stood there alone, tapping his foot loudly.

The woman returned about five minutes later and asked Philip something. He shrugged, and then went to go sit down again.

"She wants to speak with you," he told Joyce. The woman smiled at my sister quietly and then spoke with her for about five minutes. She never asked Joyce a single question. At one point, she gestured toward one of the passports and shook her head slowly. By the way Joyce's shoulders sagged, I could tell it was all over. Kevin grabbed my arm, knowing I wanted to run to her. The woman finally gave Joyce the two passports and turned away from the window. Joyce walked away, ignoring me fully.

*By the way Joyce's shoulders sagged, I could tell it was all over. Kevin grabbed my arm, knowing I wanted to run to her.*

Philip collected his and Joyce's things and followed her out, his face impassive. "Whatever you do," the visa fixer had told us over and over again, "maintain your character until you're a kilometer away from the U.S. embassy, regardless of the visa decision. Go home, and call me."

Before I had time to process what had just happened, Kevin's name was called.

"Omaha. We'll live with my uncle."

"Twenty-six."

"Psychology."

"I moved here when I was 20. My parents are Togolese."

"My wife was born in Accra. She has no formal education beyond secondary school."

"We got married when we found out she got pregnant. Our baby is four months old. He has no brothers or sisters."

I stared at the floor. I pictured Joyce slowly walking away from the embassy, her feet making desolate prints in the fine red sand. I could see Auntie clutching her cell phone in fierce anxiety, waiting for her to call. She wanted Joyce to make it to America almost as much as Joyce did herself.

Suddenly Kevin was back at my side, poking me. "Go up there! That man wants to speak with you!" I struggled to my feet, adjusted Bana in my arms, and went forward.

The white man beyond the glass was tall and thin. I smiled at him nervously. "Don't be nervous!" he said in heavily accented French.

"You can speak English," I told him. "I'm Ghanaian."

The man perused the paperwork quickly. "Oh, oh yes. Well, Gloria, where do you work?"

"I stay home with my baby," I told him quietly. The man peered over the window. "Your baby is very beautiful," he told me. "Your first?" I nodded.

"What's his name?"

"Bana," I said quickly. I held the baby up to the window so the man could see his features better, and Bana started crying. The man held up his hands in surrender. "Tell him not to worry!" I could tell he liked kids.

"How old is he?"

"Four months."

"How did you decide to name him Bana?" I hadn't discussed that with Kevin, and couldn't be sure if the man had asked him the same question. I decided to tell the truth, based on what my mother had told me. "My father left my mother when I was a small baby, and that was his name. I grew up never knowing him, and I wanted to maintain a small part of him in my life."

The man smiled. "Well, Gloria. Let me be the first to congratulate you, your husband and beautiful baby boy for qualifying for the U.S. Diversity Visa program. You can come and pick up your passports next Tuesday at 10 a.m. Good luck to you in the United States of America."

I was stupefied. I had expected to leave the waiting room sobbing or painfully stoic. I looked back at Kevin, and he eyed me nervously, his foot tapping like Philip's. He stood up and guided me outside. By that time Bana was exhausted after his experience with American bureaucracy.

"Well?" Kevin demanded. I pushed the wrinkled ticket with the date and time when our visas would be ready into his hands. His eyes widened, and he kissed Bana and then me.

The others in the waiting room who hadn't interviewed yet stared at the three of us. I couldn't tell what they were thinking.

We continued walking outside. Kevin jabbered away on his cell phone in a dialect I didn't understand, and Bana snored comfortably on my left shoulder. By the time we reached the street, Joyce was nowhere to be seen. ■

# WHOLE LADA LOVE

AN IMPROBABLE BIRTHDAY GIFT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE FOR A TEENAGE BOY FEELING STRANDED IN CENTRAL ASIA.

BY JOHN MAHER

"He seemed to like the presents," Paula said. Cake plates, torn wrapping paper and a greasy cardboard box from Pizzastan, the favorite expat hangout, cluttered the dining table.

"Yeah," said Mike. "I thought he'd want to have some other kids over, though."

"Says he's getting too old for birthday parties."

"See?" Mike said. "Our boy is growing up. He'll be nuts about this little surprise."

"Little surprise, huh?" Paula gave him her look. "Pretty extravagant for a 14-year-old, if you ask me."

"We'll get some use out of it, too. And it's very educational. Plus he'll love it, trust me."

"Hmm, I don't hear him listening to those downloads you gave him at Christmas."

"That's just a matter of time," Mike said. "Any boy with my DNA in him will get into Led Zeppelin before long. But this one's on a whole different level. For a guy his age, it ranks right next to girls."

"Still," said Paula, "I'm not so sure this was the best choice."

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Mike's eyebrows shot up. "You think I should've gotten him a girl?"

Paula beaned him with a wad of gift wrap. Todd, sporting his new jeans, appeared in the doorway just in time to witness the violence. He glanced between the two of them with a puzzled grin. "What?"

"Oh, nothing," chirped Paula. "Just a little discussion. So, are those the kind you like?"

"Yeah, thanks. And they fit just right," Todd said, kicking his foot out to show how the cuff fell.

"Well, for the next few months anyway," said Paula, and kissed his cheek. "Happy birthday, honey."

"Hey Todd, come here," Mike said, and opened the front door. "I want to show you something."

In the driveway sat a beat-up old car, as square as a shoebox and not much bigger. It looked like a toy next to the family's SUV.

"Whose car is that?" Todd asked.

"Yours," Mike said. He dropped a key into his son's hand. "Happy birthday."

Todd stared.

"A car?" He stared some more. "Um, Dad? I can't drive."

"I'll teach you. By the time we move back to the States, you'll be way ahead of the other guys."

"It's mine?"

Mike clapped him on the back. "It's yours. Of course, I had to register it in my name. And I might need to use it once in a while, like if our car is in the shop."

Paula leaned in and whispered, "Or if he feels too lazy to walk five blocks to the embassy."

"Will we take it to Washington when we move?" Todd asked.

Mike shook his head. "No, the department will only ship one car for us, and anyway it would never pass inspection into the U.S. That's too bad."

"So … how is it mine?"

"Well, you get to take care of it, learn how to change the oil and tires, maybe fix it up a little …"

Todd eyed his father. "That's supposed to be fun?"

"It's actually pretty cool. But then comes the really good part: you get to drive it."

"Dad, I'll get kicked out of the country. The driving age here is even higher than back home."

"I know, but we'll hit the farm roads outside the city where you can practice. There's no traffic out there. No one will care."

Todd circled the car warily. The body was a sickly beige, like old soap, spotted here and there with battleship gray and rust. "Is this thing gonna fall apart?"

Mike shrugged. "Probably. After all, it's about twice as old as you. But the mechanics here work cheap, and the parts are easy to get."

"What are these two holes on the back?"

"Huh? Oh, I guess that's where the bumper used to be attached. Go on; hop in."

Todd slid into the driver's seat and took hold of the wheel, his arms locked in a Speed Racer grip. Mike got in on the passenger side. The boy looked over all the controls and tested the pedals. The unfamiliar logo on the steering wheel caught his eye. "What kind is it?"

"It's a Lada 1300, made in Russia. A real workhorse. It's amazing how they can load these little things up."

Todd glanced over at the SUV. "I guess you didn't want me trashing your car."

"That wasn't really it. Out in the boonies, there's not much to run into. But there's another reason it's better for you to learn on this one."

Paula leaned against the Lada and rolled her eyes. "This you've gotta hear."

Mike went on. "The Toyota may look big, but it's actually kind of wussy because it's an automatic. This car has a manual transmission. It's much more demanding, but a stick shift puts you in charge; gives you real mastery over your vehicle."

"Okaaay," said Paula. "I think we get the symbolism."

"Wha... oh please, get your mind out of the raunchy romance rack, would you? Our innocent son is sitting right here, in case you didn't notice. Anyway, Todd, as I was saying before your mother's inappropriate comment: once you can drive this car you'll be a *real* driver, unlike some people I could name."

Todd lay back against the seat. "Wow! Thanks. I mean, I didn't expect a car."

Mike ruffled his son's hair. "We'll take it out on Saturday for your first lesson."

~

The Lada sat on a ribbon of dusty pavement a short drive outside the capital. Farm plots and scattered houses stretched toward the oil refineries on the horizon. The putter of the engine revved up to a whine; the car jumped forward a few meters and then lurched to a stop. The engine coughed and died.

The starter screeched, and the motor chugged to life again. Once more the car began to move and just as quickly jerked to a stop. The serene Central Asian sky arced impossibly high overhead. A third time the car started, staggered and died.

"Damn it!" Todd slammed his fist against the steering wheel. "I can never do it right."

"No, you were getting the hang of it for a while there. Take it easy and try to do it the way you did before."

"I get worse every time!"

"Don't be so hard on yourself," Mike said. "It just takes a little practice. Remember when you learned to ride a bike? It seemed impossible, right? And the next thing you know, you're zooming along without even thinking."

"Well at least with the bike I got to have some fun after I learned to ride. What's the point of me learning to drive this car? Even if I ever do, I can't use it."

"Tell you what: Once you get good at driving, you can invite some of your friends along, and we'll head up into the mountains for a hike or something. As soon as we get outside of town, you can drive the rest of the way."

"Yeah, right," muttered Todd. "Oh wait, I forgot. I don't *have* any friends, not since we moved to this stupid hellhole. My whole class is three eurochicks who think they're so much more mature than any boy their age, one guy who's a total dork, and another one who can barely say hello in English. My friends back home have forgotten I even exist.

There's nothing to do here and …"

Todd turned his face to the window.

Mike sat silently, his fingertips poised on his knees, and pretended not to hear the halting breaths. Finally he said, "Todd, man, I know this move was tough on you, much more than on me and Mom. Two years is a long time at your age. That's part of why I got the car. I … I thought it would be something fun for you, something we could do together."

"Look, can we just go home now?" Todd said, his voice still stretched thin. He slung the seatbelt off and pushed open the door.

~

A few weeks later, the Lada cruised down the same farm road, occasionally passing a truck or another rickety old car. Todd shifted smoothly and stayed in his lane, signaling his turns and checking his blind spot even when there were no other cars around.

"You're getting to be an old pro at this."

"Yep, now I can drive around in circles in the middle of nowhere," Todd said, easing into fourth as the car built up speed on a straight stretch.

Mike scanned the horizon from the refineries to the high-rises to the hills.

"Let's turn left up ahead."

"Dad, we tried that way last week, remember? The road dead-ended at a farm just over the hill."

"I know, but I want to show you something."

"What?"

"You'll see."

Todd turned onto the bumpy dirt road and started up the hill.

"Stop here for a second."

As the car jounced to a halt, Todd asked, "What's there to see?"

"Sorry, this isn't it. Go on a little further."

Todd gripped the wheel. His heel pinned the brake to the floor while his toe pivoted to press the gas. He stepped off the brake and quickly released the clutch. The car sagged backwards, then reconsidered and strained up the slope. Todd pressed the revs up before snapping into second.

"That was it," said Mike.

Todd looked around. "Where?"

"Not where; *how*. Starting off uphill. It's the hardest thing to do with a stick shift, and you nailed it. That was perfect. Um, not so fast on the turn."

Back at the little crossroad at the bottom of the hill, Todd said, "Which way now?"

"Up to you."

"How about over there?" Todd pointed down a road that wound into a residential area.

"I don't know. That's getting into traffic."

"Not much. I'll be really careful. If it gets too crowded I'll just come back this way."

Mike smiled. He heard an eagerness in his son's voice that hadn't been there before. "Sure, why not?"

It wasn't just any residential street. This was a new, exclusive suburb. High walls shielded the grand facades of houses for rich locals and foreign oil executives.

"Let's not scratch any BMWs, shall we?" Mike suggested. But Todd was right. There was little traffic, and the residents rated the only unbroken pavement in the city.

Two drivers stood smoking next to their bosses' gleaming cars. Their faces panned in unison as Todd and Mike rolled by. A decrepit Lada was a common sight, but not with diplomatic plates and a 14-year-old at the wheel. The car disappeared down the block, and without a word the two men went back to their cigarettes.

Todd cautiously dodged parked cars and the few pedestrians on the street: construction workers unloading bricks, a girl walking a German shepherd, an old woman sweeping litter to the curb.

When they stopped at an intersection near the end of the street, Mike said, "Good job. Now hang a right, and let's head back toward the farms. You can practice some parallel parking with the cones, and then I'll drive us home."

Todd hesitated. "Is it okay if we go back the way we came?"

"Back down this street? Yeah, if you want. You can practice a three-point turn." Mike watched with approval as Todd made the turn in the middle of the quiet street.

Again they passed the construction guys and the woman with the broom. The girl and the dog were walking toward them. When they got close, Todd gave a little wave.

The girl stopped in her tracks, straining against the pull of the leash as the car rolled to a halt next to her. The dog reared up with its paws against the door and sniffed at Todd through the open window.

Todd said, "Hi, Anna."

"Todd, what are you doing? Are you supposed to be driving zis?"

Mike couldn't quite place the accent. French? German?

"Well, my dad got the car for me to practice on, so I'm just kind of messing around."

"But you can't have a license. Don't you get arrested?"

Dutch, maybe.

"Not yet."

As Mike sat motionless, trying to blend with the upholstery, the girl looked in and asked, "Is he a good driver, or should I stay off ze street?"

"Oh, Todd?" Mike said with a flick of his hand. "Yeah, he can drive fine. No problem. I just have to ride along, you know, to talk our way out in case the police stop us."

"So, Todd, do you start driving to school soon?" she teased.

"No, all the teachers would totally get jealous of my cool car."

Anna laughed. "Yeah, it's really … incredible."

"Hey, I think your dog wants to go for a ride. Right, puppy?"

"Oh yes, she loves cars."

Todd scratched the dog behind the ears.

"Todd, did you finish Mr. McKnight's assignment yet?"

"Yeah, it wasn't as hard as it looked."

"Maybe for you. I still have to do it."

"Well, um, let me know if you have a question."

"Okay, if I get stuck I might call you."

"Yeah, sure." The truck that delivered the bricks rumbled away. The dog went on sampling every vapor Todd and the Lada had to offer.

"Anyway, we gotta go," Todd said.

"All right, see you Monday," Anna said, dragging her dog away from the car.

Todd drove in silence, retreating from Millionaires' Row to the regular potholed roads. As they jolted along, he fiddled with the knobs on the car's crappy little radio. Every station seemed to be the same: Disco. In Russian. Todd turned it off. He followed a lane winding along a river back toward the farms.

"Hey, Dad?"

"Yeah?"

"You think we could hook my iPod up to this thing?" ■

# A Determined Optimist: L. Bruce Laingen

In June AFSA recognized the retired ambassador's many contributions to American diplomacy and his lifetime of public service.

*By Steven Alan Honley*

On June 24, Ambassador Lowell Bruce Laingen received the American Foreign Service Association's Award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy, in recognition of a distinguished 38-year Foreign Service career and a lifetime of public service. Past recipients of the award include U. Alexis Johnson, Frank Carlucci, George H.W. Bush, Lawrence Eagleburger, Cyrus Vance, David Newsom, Lee Hamilton, Thomas Pickering, George Shultz, Richard Parker, Richard Lugar, Morton Abramowitz, Joan Clark, Tom Boyatt and Sam Nunn.

Born on a farm near Odin, Minn., on Aug. 6, 1922, Bruce Laingen graduated from St. Olaf College with a B.A. in history and economics, cum laude, in 1947, and was the recipient of the college's Harold Stassen Award. He went on to earn an M.A. in international relations from the University of Minnesota in 1949, and later attended the National War College.

During World War II, Laingen served in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1946, joining the Foreign Service in 1949. His overseas postings included Germany, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Malta, where he was U.S. ambassador from 1977 to 1979.

Later that year, Ambassador Laingen returned to Tehran as chargé d'affaires for what was supposed to be just six to eight weeks. But when student protestors overran the U.S. embassy on Nov. 4, 1979, he and two other American officials were at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, where they were detained for the next 14 months.

For his leadership and courage during that ordeal, Amb. Laingen received the State Department's Award for Valor. He has also received the Distinguished Public Service medal from the Department of Defense, the Distinguished Alumnus Award from St. Olaf College, the Golden Plate Award from the American Academy of Achievement, a Presidential Meritorious Award and the Foreign Service Cup, among many other honors.

From 1981 to 1987, Amb. Laingen served as vice president of the National Defense University, a post traditionally held by a senior diplomat. After retiring from the Foreign Service in 1987, he served as executive director of the National Commission on the Public Service (the Volcker Commission) until the commission completed its work in 1990.

Also in 1987, the ambassador was elected as a retiree member of the AFSA Governing Board and was appointed chairman of the AFSA Awards Committee (which later became the Awards and Plaques Committee), a post he held for two decades. In gratitude for Amb. Laingen's distinguished, dedicated service to AFSA, the association conferred a special award of appreciation on him at the June 22, 2006, awards ceremony.

As a *Foreign Service Journal* report on the ceremony noted, "During his tenure, he succeeded in greatly improving the standing of the AFSA awards and consistently provided wise guidance in the important task of honoring members of the Foreign Service who have lost their lives overseas in the line of duty. … In his modest and understated way, he also made a tremendous contribution to the awards program, helping the association continue to honor dissent through the only such program for U.S. government employees."

From 1991 to 2006, Amb. Laingen rendered similarly exemplary service as president of the American Academy of

*Steven Alan Honley is the editor of the* Journal.

Diplomacy, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to fostering the highest standards in the conduct of diplomacy.

During the fall semester of 1998, Amb. Laingen held the Sol Linowitz Chair in International Relations at Hamilton College in New York, where he taught a seminar on the Iranian Revolution. He has received honorary degrees from Columbia College in Missouri, Hahneman University in Philadelphia, the Western University of Health Sciences and the University of Dubuque. And he serves on the boards of A Presidential Classroom for Young Americans, the Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, No Greater Love and the National Defense University Foundation.

Amb. Laingen is the author of three books: *Yellow Ribbon: The Secret Journal of Bruce Laingen* (Brassey's, 1992), *Growing Up: Life on a Minnesota Farm, 1922-1940* (self-published, 2000), and *Life in the U.S. Navy During World War II: The Philippines Campaign, 1943-1946* (self-published, 2005). He also has written articles and commentaries for various publications, including the *Foreign Service Journal.*

Amb. Laingen and his wife, Penelope (Penne), reside in Bethesda, Md. They are the parents of three sons: Bill, Chip and Jim.

*Foreign Service Journal* Editor Steve Honley interviewed Amb. Laingen on April 26.

***FSJ:*** *First of all, Ambassador Laingen, congratulations on your award for lifetime contributions to American diplomacy. What would you say were your chief strengths as a diplomat?*

***LBL:*** It all adds up to one simple word: durability; that saw me through 38 years of proud service. My spouse, Penelope — the Yellow Ribbon Lady — was my partner during much of that. And I don't underestimate her role in my career; she played a big part in whatever success I can claim.

By the way, have you ever seen the original Yellow Ribbon, the one Penne hung up while the Iranians held me and my colleagues hostage? It's at the Library of Congress, in the American Folklife Center, and you can go down there and see it anytime. When Penne presented it to them in July 1991 at the end of the Persian Gulf War, in which two of our sons took part, she told them, "Here it is. I present it to you, from my attic to yours." By then, hanging a yellow ribbon had become what it is today: a national symbol of caring for a fellow citizen in distress.

I would also say that I showed leadership as a diplomat by caring for those under my responsibility — not just my fellow hostages in Tehran, but my colleagues wherever I've served. Patience and optimism were required over and over again throughout my career, as well.

Like a lot of folks from Minnesota, my home state, I've always been an optimist. I like to quote Colin Powell, who says "Optimism is a force multiplier." He speaks as a military man, of course, but the same is true for diplomacy. In my view, optimism is an essential quality for tackling any issue, because it is indeed a force multiplier. It can be disastrous if you don't have some realism with it, true, but I've done pretty well with an optimistic spirit, a can-do attitude.

Patience is also critical. While I was being held hostage, the Spanish ambassador to Iran managed to get a note to me that said: "Patience is a bitter cup that only the strong can drink." That quality is essential for all of us dealing with unstable situations.

***"Like a lot of folks from Minnesota, my home state, I've always been an optimist."***

***— Amb. Bruce Laingen***

Finally, I have a personal faith that has worked for me. I allude to that every time I talk about my time in Tehran, because the old saying is true: "There are no atheists in foxholes." Eventually, you come around to the possibility of a little help from a higher quarter. Or to put it another way, "Faith is what you find when you're alone — and know you're not."

***FSJ:*** *From your perspective, how has diplomacy changed since you entered the Foreign Service some 60 years ago?*

***LBL:*** Certainly a lot has changed, as in any healthy institution. But there are some fundamentals that remain valid. All of us in the Foreign Service are engaged in "winning friends and influencing people," to quote Dale Carnegie. That's as true today as it was when I joined the Service. Diplomacy is all about conveying U.S. interests abroad, and pursuing our policy objectives, in a way that looks like you're enjoying it.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice began important changes with her emphasis on "transformational diplomacy." Defense Secretary Robert Gates continues to warn of State's inadequate budget allocations. And Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton speaks of funding "Development" with a capital D, as a sometimes neglected but essential element in the practice of diplomacy. She has also called for adopting a "National Security Budget" approach encompassing all of its components, including military force, effective intelligence and adequate resources.

And I'm encouraged that the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development are currently engaged in the first-ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review process — not unlike the way DOD has used that process to set strategy for a long time.

Let me also take this opportunity to express my great respect for our Civil Service colleagues and for the intelligence arm in diplomatic practice. They do vital work.

***FSJ:*** *Are you optimistic about the future of the profession? And when you talk to bright young people, do you recommend the Foreign Service as a career?*

***LBL:*** Yes, I am. DACOR holds receptions for each A-100 class of new Foreign Service officers, and as a member of its Board of Governors I like to attend those when I can. I see what the new classes look like and try to size them up.

I was at one of those receptions last night, and I asked several attendees to name the main things they've learned so far in their orientation. What do they think will stick with them during their careers? They came up with three basic things: Foreign Service members *represent* their government all the time, not just during office hours; they *negotiate* with foreign governments on behalf of it; and they *report* back home on local developments.

I never miss an opportunity to recommend the Foreign Service, reminding young people what an FS career provides: a sense of service and, not least, a spirit of adventure.

***"Diplomacy is all about conveying U.S. interests abroad, and pursuing our policy objectives, in a way that looks like you're enjoying it."***

***FSJ:*** *There has been much talk lately of differences between traditional and expeditionary diplomacy. Do you see a real conflict between the two concepts, or is that a false choice?*

***LBL:*** I'm not convinced there is any basic conflict between those two approaches. The Foreign Service has always been a diplomatic *instrument* representing U.S. interests abroad. Take the deployment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams, in which American diplomats are either participants or leaders. Advocates of an expeditionary approach often cite those as an example of what the Foreign Service should be doing. But it's really not a new concept.

When I joined the State Department in 1949, my first overseas assignment was as a Kreis Resident Officer in Hamburg. I arrived in Hamburg in November 1950 along with others to facilitate the transfer of authority from the U.S. Army in occupied areas of Germany and Eastern Europe back to local governments. ("Kreis" is a local district.)

The idea was that when we finished our training course, my KRO classmates and I would serve in those areas and participate in exercises intended to remind them of the kind of Nazi-dominated local councils they'd had, and remind them of the costs of continuing to follow that model. However, several of us in that class were later transferred because another need had developed: for visa-issuing officers in displaced person camps.

Being a KRO is not an exact analogy for anything today, of course, but there are similarities. I envy FSOs serving on Provincial Reconstruction Teams today in Afghanistan and Iraq, because they have that opportunity to help local governance develop, working with our allies.

One of my favorite examples is a Lithuanian-led PRT exercise in the Bamiyan area of Afghanistan. I can tell you that it never occurred to those of us posted in Kabul a good many years before that one day NATO would be promoting peace and effective local governments in distant and often-insecure Afghanistan, working through Provincial Reconstruction Teams. But there they are today.

***FSJ:*** *Let me ask you some questions about your life before joining the Foreign Service. You wrote a memoir titled* Growing Up: Life on a Minnesota Farm, 1922-1940. *How did that background shape you?*

***LBL:*** I was born in 1922, on a small

Photos courtesy of Bruce Laingen

*The Laingen family in front of their house on Amb. Laingen's return from Iran, Jan. 28, 1981. Left to right: Chip, Penne, Bruce, Bill and Jim.*

farm my family still owns and occupies, two miles west of Odin, Minn. We are the descendants of Norwegian farmers, and there is a Laingen Farm in Norway, too. Sometimes when I'm asked why I joined the Foreign Service, I joke: "Because we couldn't *all* be farmers!"

I attended a one-room school in Butterfield, Minn., with 20 other students. At the time, I didn't have any specific ambitions other than to get through it and go on to college. But while I was a junior at St. Olaf College, the war came along, and I had to decide whether to enlist or what I would do.

My home state is known as "the Land of 10,000 Lakes," so we have lots of water. Maybe that's why I joined the U.S. Navy. In any event, when the Navy sent me to the University of Dubuque, in Iowa, that was the first time I'd ever left Minnesota. I was there as part of the V-12 program, which took young men from colleges and sent them to intensive training at universities so we could be commissioned as naval officers, while also earning a bachelor's degree from our original college. One of my colleagues in that program — not in Iowa, but at the University of North Dakota — was Warren Christopher, who, of course, later became Secretary of State.

During my time in Dubuque, I was transferred to the U.S. Navy Supply Corps School at Wellesley College in Massachusetts for additional training. As a result, I'm one of the few men who can say, "I'm a graduate of Wellesley!"

***FSJ:*** *Where did you serve in the Navy during World War II?*

***LBL:*** I was commissioned as an officer in the Navy Supply Corps, and served in the Pacific theater for more than two years. After receiving my commission as an ensign in June 1944, I was transferred in August to the amphibious training base in Little Rock, Va. Then, in October 1944, I was the Supply Corps officer for one of the squadrons of landing ships, medium, in the invasion forces being sent to the Philippines the next month. I was stationed there through February 1946, when I was promoted to lieutenant junior grade. I completed my military service in Newport, R.I., and was discharged in August 1946.

*Bruce Laingen with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, 1956.*

While I didn't stay in the Navy, I'm very proud of being a former naval officer. All three of my sons, Bill, Chip and Jim, and one of my daughters-in-law became naval officers, as well. One son is a captain in the U.S. Navy today, and the other two are retired commanders. I even have a stepgreat-granddaughter whose name is Navy — we feel that strongly about our experience and respect for the United States Navy.

***FSJ:*** *At what point did you know you wanted to join the Foreign Service? I assume your time in the military was a factor.*

***LBL:*** Yes, I had joined the Navy to see the world. The more I saw, the more I wanted to see.

Long before that, however, I re-

*Ambassador Tom Pickering, chairman of the American Academy of Diplomacy, confers the Excellence in Diplomacy Award on Amb. Laingen upon his retirement as AAD president in 1996.*

member walking home from school as a boy and hearing on the radio that the Japanese had just invaded Manchuria. I remember wondering why they would do that, and feeling it was wrong. So I guess my interest in foreign affairs dates as far back as 1931.

***FSJ:*** *You were 9 years old then, right?*

***LBL:*** Right. Later, as a Norwegian-American, I got very interested in the fact that the Nazis had invaded Norway. As you can imagine, that was a very hot topic in my heavily Norwegian-American community.

After I earned a B.A. in history and economics from St. Olaf College in 1947, and was discharged from the Navy, I began my graduate studies in international relations at the University of Minnesota. There I was a charter member of an organization known as SPAN: "A Student Project for Amity among Nations."

Like many young Americans who had fought in World War II, I'd developed an intense idealism. We saw that experience as wrong, painful, costly and corrosive to international peace. So we were eager to construct a foundation, a basis, for cooperation among nations.

Our motto was taken from the preamble to the UNESCO Charter: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." I still think that is a very good creed for any internationally oriented organization.

***"My wife urged me not to go [to Tehran], but as I told her, I always wanted to be where the action is."***

SPAN is Minnesota's oldest study abroad program, and still exists today. More than 2,500 SPANners, as participants are known, have visited 93 countries on six continents since the program began.

In my case, I went to Sweden as part of a group of nine students, carefully chaperoned. While there, I crossed over the Baltic Sea to Helsinki, where I took the Foreign Service entrance exam at the American legation in the summer of 1947. It was a two-and-a-half-day affair in those days.

*Amb. Laingen at the White House with Vice President George H.W. Bush, First Lady Nancy Reagan and President Ronald Reagan, Jan. 27, 1981.*

***FSJ:*** *Did you pass?*

***LBL:*** Unfortunately, no. There was then a requirement to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language in order to become a member of the Foreign Service, and I failed the Spanish exam. If you failed any part of the process, you had to start all over. So that's what I did when I got back to Minneapolis. I eventually passed — after being held over for yet another year by the Board of Examiners — and joined the Foreign Service in 1949.

By the way, over the next 38 years, I was never assigned anywhere that required me to use my Spanish. So much, you might say, for the personnel policies of the Department of State!

I did learn German during my training as a KRO officer, but that was my only other language, apart from the Norwegian I'd learned growing up and a smattering of Farsi, Urdu and Pindi at posts along the way.

***FSJ:*** *After leaving Hamburg in 1953, what was your next assignment?*

***LBL:*** I was assigned to be a consular officer in Kobe, Japan, but I never got there. After the 1953 coup in Iran, which we and the Brits staged to overthrow Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq and put the shah back on the throne, our presence in Iran expanded dramatically. Loy Henderson, the U.S. ambassador at the time, urgently requested more staff to manage the changed situation. So half a dozen other young FSOs and I saw fate intervene: we were suddenly jerked out of our assignments and sent instead to Iran.

I served in Tehran from 1953 to 1955, and also spent some time as acting principal officer in Mashhad, a small but sensitive listening post vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. At that time I was a youngster, still wet behind the ears, but I enjoyed that rare opportunity for young officers to demonstrate leadership at a very early stage of their careers. That's the ultimate in our line of

work, after all; you want to be where the action is and are eager to lead.

***FSJ:*** *Besides Iran, do any of your other overseas postings stand out in your memory?*

***LBL:*** For me, professionally, the Indo-Pakistani issues always made life interesting. Still, I did not care for Karachi when I was there in the 1960s. It's not an attractive place to live, and even then it was violent. But my whole family loved Afghanistan, where I was deputy chief of mission from 1968 to 1971. The ambassador then was Robert Neumann, whose oldest son, Ron, would later become the ambassador there — setting a record unequaled to this day by having a father and son serve as ambassadors in the same post.

At one point while I was in Kabul, Vice President Spiro Agnew was coming for a visit. The Peace Corps Volunteers in the country made it clear that they wanted to stage a demonstration rather than meet with him. As DCM, I was assigned to meet with and calm them down; they showed up for the meeting.

***FSJ:*** *You were ambassador to Malta from 1977 to 1979. What were some of the challenges you faced there as chief of mission, and how did you handle them?*

***LBL:*** While Valletta was a very small post, at least in those days, my role there was pretty much what it would have been anywhere else: to win friends and influence people, and keep the mission running smoothly. That wasn't hard, fortunately, because the Maltese are pro-American and pro-European. But we did have concerns about the Libyan presence there: Muammar Gaddafi had his eyes on Malta, and the embassy later got a Marine security guard contingent when things became a bit sensitive.

In addition, the Maltese prime minister, Dom Mintoff, didn't like our having any naval presence and famously banned visits by ships of the Sixth Fleet. But I got along just fine with him; in fact, he used to invite me to his cottage by the sea for his special soup. Incidentally, my three sons are active sailors, and while we lived in Malta they had an 18-foot dinghy, painted with the colors of the Stars and Stripes, pretending to be the absent Sixth Fleet.

***"While I was being held hostage, the Spanish ambassador to Iran managed to get a note to me that said: 'Patience is a bitter cup that only the strong can drink.'"***

All in all, I enjoyed my time in Malta; how could one not? I've been back twice, once as part of a presidential delegation for the 25th anniversary of the country's independence.

***FSJ:*** *How did you end up returning to Iran in 1979?*

***LBL:*** The February 1979 Iranian Revolution had touched off a hot policy debate in Washington. Some people advocated pulling out of the country, but the consensus was that we had too many vital national interests in that part of the world not to maintain a high-level diplomatic presence in Tehran. So to replace William Sullivan, the U.S. government nominated Walter L. Cutler, our former ambassador to Zaire, to be chief of mission in Tehran.

The new Iranian government granted agrément. But then the U.S. Senate passed a resolution by Sen. Jacob Javits, R-N.Y., denouncing Tehran for its human rights record, focusing especially on treatment of the Jewish minority. In response, Tehran withdrew its agrément.

By this point I had completed my tour in Valletta, and was enjoying home leave on that family farm in Minnesota. I had been assigned to the Office of the Inspector General and was getting ready to lead an inspection team to Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. But I never made it. Once again, as had happened in 1953, I was diverted from a totally different part of the world to Tehran, this time as chargé d'affaires.

My wife urged me not to go, but as I told her, I always wanted to be where the action is. And I assured her, as the State Department had earlier assured me, that it would only be for six to eight weeks, until a permanent ambassador was assigned. And the rest is history.

***FSJ:*** *Over the years, you've been interviewed repeatedly about your experience as a hostage. Rather than ask you to go over that painful ground again, perhaps you could comment on what you learned from that experience.*

***LBL:*** First, it gave me an enormous respect for the role of my staff, including a sizable Marine detachment, representing the United States on the front lines in a very stressful situation. And I gained a new appreciation of the role of the family in the Foreign Service, both in making possible the work that we do and in the lives that we lead.

I feel particularly strongly about my wife, Penne, who did so much to lead back in the U.S. She organized a group called FLAG (Family Liaison Action Group) and stayed in touch with all the family members of the U.S. hostages, keeping up their spirits — and ours. In the process, she showed true leadership; her idea of hanging yellow ribbons until we came home has been transformed into a concrete, universal symbol of caring.

On a political level, I would have to say that the hostage experience symbol-

ized an utter failure in our understanding of what was going on in Iran. (I'm not sure we are doing any better in that regard now, three decades later, either.) The Iranians are tough-minded bargainers, obsessed with intrigue and generally suspicious of the intent of others.

I'm often asked what policy lessons we learned in the hostage experience, and at the top of my list is that we should have applied better a fundamental lesson in diplomatic practice: always challenge conventional wisdom. Our policy during the shah's reign in Iran is a classic example of our failure to do that.

***FSJ:*** *Shortly after your release from captivity in Tehran, the* Foreign Service Journal *interviewed you. In that article, which ran in the April 1981 issue, you made the following prediction about Iran's future: "The hard-line clerics are unrealistic and impractical. Their system, as conceived by [Ayatollah Ruhollah] Khomeini, cannot last. … There will be a growing influence of pragmatism coming to bear on the revolutionary zeal of the clerics." Nearly three decades later, are you still sanguine about prospects for change in Tehran?*

***LBL:*** Well, not quite as much as I used to be, but I am still a determined optimist about the place. I have never been back to Iran; nor have any of my fellow hostages. I came close on one occasion, accepting a speaking assignment in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, so — like Sarah Palin and her view of Russia from her kitchen window — I can say I've seen Iran from my hotel balcony!

I have consistently advocated dialogue with that regime; 30 years later that has not yet happened, but in time it must. Our interests in that part of the world are not served without it — not least in the area of nuclear energy and the long-term purposes of the regime there concerning nuclear weapons.

My own judgment remains that

***"I have consistently advocated dialogue with Iran; 30 years later that has not yet happened, but in time it must."***

while, in the final analysis, they will not become an open nuclear-weapons state, they will also not be denied the right to continue nuclear enrichment, purportedly for peaceful purposes. So I don't see how we can go on not talking to the Iranians.

We also need to keep in mind that the Iranian Revolution happened just a little more than three decades ago. So their society is going to keep evolving, and our diplomacy needs to evolve, too. I am encouraged that one of my fellow hostages, Ambassador John Limbert, is now our deputy assistant secretary for Iranian affairs. He certainly has the right perspective and the experience for the job.

***FSJ:*** *At the end of that same interview, you said, "I'm a Foreign Service officer on active duty and I expect to be assigned to some productive work." That work turned out to be six years as vice president of the National Defense University. What were some of your achievements in that capacity?*

***LBL:*** I've always believed in the value of the political-military function; along with intelligence, it is an essential element in the practice of diplomacy. So I did my best, both at NDU and elsewhere, in active public speaking to promote closer cooperation between Defense and State.

Many people don't know that Foreign Service officers serve as the chief civilian leaders at all military schools, which has proved to benefit both DOD and us.

***FSJ:*** *When you resigned from the Foreign Service in 1987, upon reaching age 65, what came next? Was the transition to retirement difficult?*

***LBL:*** No, I've kept plenty busy! I spent the next three years as executive director of the National Commission on Public Service, also known as the Volcker Commission. I also wrote three books: *Yellow Ribbon: The Secret Journal of Bruce Laingen*; *Growing Up: Life on a Minnesota Farm, 1922-1940;* and *Life in the U.S. Navy During World War II: The Philippines Campaign, 1943-1946*.

I have done some teaching and serve on several public service boards. And I've continued public speaking. And in 1991, I became president of the American Academy of Diplomacy, serving in that capacity until 2006.

One more reminiscence: In 1983, I had the special honor of being asked to speak for the Foreign Service at the centennial celebration of the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act. There I saluted our Civil Service colleagues as "partners in the noble profession of public life, unsung heroes in the business of government." I feel that sense of partnership even more strongly today.

***FSJ:*** *Any final thoughts, Ambassador Laingen?*

***LBL:*** It's been a long journey since growing up on that Minnesota farm. But it's been an adventure all the way, and I don't regret a moment of it. And that includes those long days and nights as a hostage in Tehran — a learning experience above all.

I could not be more honored than I am to be accepting this lifetime achievement award from my colleagues at the American Foreign Service Association.

***FSJ:*** *Thank you very much.* ■

# A Year after Iran: The Role of International Election Standards

Last summer's Iranian elections have highlighted the fact that people want their votes honestly counted in a transparent process.

*By Elizabeth Spiro Clark*

The value of international election standards as signifiers of political legitimacy on the world stage was strengthened by two recent challenges: Iran (June 2009) and Afghanistan (August 2009). In the former instance, a seven-month series of massive demonstrations focused the world's attention on how fatally flawed procedures had violated basic rules. In the latter case, the global community has not backed off its insistence on evaluating provincial elections to be held there this fall.

On the other side of the ledger, Lebanon's June 2009 elections marked genuine democratic progress in that country, while Iraq held credible parliamentary elections this past March (notwithstanding difficulties in forming a government). And next year's presidential elections in Egypt could see a significant democratic opening.

This heightened focus on meaningful standards is an opportunity for election monitoring organizations to expand and refine the core standards they apply. These guidelines are laid out in the 2005 "Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation" signed by 35 organizations, including the Carter Center, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organization of American States.

Its key section reads: "The will of the people of a country is the basis for the authority of governments, and that will must be determined through genuine, periodic elections, which guarantee the rights and opportunity to vote freely and to be elected fairly through universal and equal suffrage by secret balloting or equivalent free voting procedures, the results of which are accurately counted, announced and respected. A significant number of rights, freedoms, processes, laws and institutions are therefore involved in achieving genuine democratic elections."

### Turmoil in Tehran

The June 12, 2009, Iranian elections fell far short of those standards. No independent body oversaw election administration; nor were there any independent observers. The results duly "returned" President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to power, which he has maintained through brutal suppression of the opposition and the rejection of well-documented allegations of fraud. (By the government's own count, 50 districts reported more ballots cast than voters.) While some members of the opposition have mounted a broader challenge to the nature of the regime, the main focus remains on abuses connected to the elections.

During Friday prayer services on July 17, 2009, former President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani accused governing authorities of breaking the trust of the Iranian people. Three days later reformist clerics, led by former President Mohammad Khatami, called for a referendum on the election, with

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independent monitors to verify the results. As Iranian democracy and human rights advocate Mariam Memarsadeghi told a Washington, D.C., audience on July 29, 2009: "We want to focus on the unfree election; that is what is galvanizing us." The opposition clearly understood that its performance at the ballot box had undermined the regime's legitimacy.

The Iranian authorities tried to stop the erosion of their legitimacy early on by offering to set up a committee to conduct a limited review of the election. Mir Hossein Moussavi and the other opposition presidential candidates, along with the former speaker of Parliament, Mehdi Karroubi, all rejected the offer on the grounds that the government was not trustworthy; no one would believe its investigation of irregularities without independent monitoring. That is why, when Iranian human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi demanded an election rerun, she coupled it with a demand that it be done under the supervision of the United Nations.

Though public discussion of the election is no longer tolerated, Khamenei has kept the focus on the process by accusing foreigners of trying to manipulate the election's outcome in order to mobilize support. The opposition has responded bravely to dire warnings from the regime, taking to the streets on Nov. 4, 2009, the 30th anniversary of the takeover of the U.S. embassy in Tehran. (Instead of "Death to America" banners, the protesters held up anti-Russian placards because Moscow had recognized Ahmadinejad's re-election.) Tens of thousands of Iranians also turned out for the funeral of dissident cleric Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montezeri on Dec. 21, and at least four demonstrators were killed six days later, on the religious holiday of Ashura.

In January, Mehdi Karroubi said, "The more we go ahead, the more I'm convinced the election was massively rigged." In a meeting with supporters

***When Iranian human rights activist Shirin Ebadi demanded an election rerun, she stipulated that it be done under the supervision of the United Nations.***

that was reported in the Jan. 26 *Los Angeles Times*, he added: "I say it firmly that I'll never compromise on the nation's rights, notably the votes they cast in the ballot boxes. I'll stand by the nation up to the end, and I'll try my best to remove the hurdles to a free and fair election."

On March 20, in an Iranian New Year message, Mir Hossein Moussavi praised those who had died in post-election unrest. "We lack free elections, where candidates are not cherry-picked, and fair competition." But he also broadened his criticism to economic issues, promising that "the coming year will be known as the year of persistence."

It is already impossible to imagine Khamenei and Ahmadinejad even attempting to portray a future election as entitled to international recognition as an expression of Islamic virtue. Indeed, it is hard to overestimate how far downhill the Iranian regime has slid in terms of democratic expectations. Before the June elections, Tehran was seen as attempting to incorporate democratic elements into the process; the campaign even saw an American-style TV debate between candidates Ahmadinejad and Moussavi.

Now Washington's judgment on the situation matches that of opposition forces within Iran. Speaking to university students in Qatar in February, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton warned that Iran's Revolutionary Guard wielded so much power that it was effectively supplanting the government, "moving toward a military dictatorship." The regime is increasingly isolated.

Most dramatically, Beijing can no longer be counted on to remain in Iran's camp. On May 18 China joined Russia, the U.S. and Europe in calling for sanctions against Iran. Beijing's decision concerns Tehran's nuclear program, but that does not detract from its significance for Iran's overall international legitimacy.

### Grounds for Hope

Despite the success of the regime in silencing nighttime shouts of "death to the dictator," the Iranian elections have highlighted the fact that people want their votes honestly counted in a process that meets international standards. Credible elections are a part of the universal striving for dignity President Barack Obama talks about; as such, they constitute the opposite of "imposing democracy."

Supporting international standards, it turns out, is a way to get around the problem of dictators blaming foreigners for threats to their power. It is not imperialism if prominent Iranians like Shirin Ebadi demand that any rerun of the Iranian elections occur under United Nations supervision.

Dodging the imperialist label will still be difficult, to be sure, especially when the West seeks to reverse democratic backsliding in former colonies, such as in Africa. But if cases of difficult elections where the international community perseveres in pushing local governments to meet international standards multiply — the trend will accelerate.

In his 2007 book, *Second Chance*, former National Security Adviser Zbig-

niew Brzezinski describes a new force in international politics: a massive "global political awakening" with publics who are no longer passive, but willing to force governments to deal with their passions. Although this "awakening" carries a potential for violent extremism when fueled by anti-Western and anti-American hatreds, it can also lead to genuine reform.

In Iran, the public's fierce desire was for elections where their vote was fairly and honestly counted. Like it or not, elections are a battleground for the global political awakening. This is an arena in which violent extremism can lose, under the pressure for neutral electoral administration and international monitoring.

Evidence that this is happening is accumulating. Earlier this year in Togo, the government took steps to increase the credibility of the electoral process and reassure the international community that the election would be free and fair. It made it a priority to avert the violence that marred the 2005 election. Toward that end, a massive contingent of foreign monitors observed the elections.

*The 2009 presidential elections in Afghanistan raised issues, including neutral monitoring and administration of the entire process.*

Following the vote count, opposition parties that had refused to unite behind one candidate, thus lessening their chances of winning, did hold demonstrations, but there was no violence or challenge to the results. Observers characterized the March elections in deeply divided Ukraine as a major improvement over the 2004 process, even as Viktor Yanukovich won a very narrow victory over Yulia Tymoshenko. After a tense period, Tymoshenko dropped her legal challenge, enabling the results to be peacefully accepted.

Even though, as of this writing, Kyrgyzstan appears embroiled in tribal violence, political events could yet have a positive outcome in a resetting of the agenda of the coup leaders for a referendum on a new constitution and subsequent elections, undertaken with expert assistance from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

## Afghanistan: Going Public with Problems

The August 2009 presidential elections in Afghanistan dramatically raised some important issues for international monitoring, such as ensuring neutral monitoring and administration of the entire process — particularly in terms of security.

After all, for an election to be credible, all voters must be able to participate under universal and equal suffrage. It is impossible to meet this standard if there is no way to assess whether a bad security situation kept voters away from the polls or, alternatively, whether they were intimidated.

An independent commission ran the August 2009 presidential elections in Afghanistan. The United Nations appointed a special representative, Kai Eide, to monitor the campaign and the voting, and it also appointed outside members of the Elections Complaint Commission.

But a highly public dispute between Eide and his deputy, Peter Galbraith, resulted in the firing of the latter for his insistence that the commission recognize that the vote count for President Hamid Karzai had been vastly inflated, with large numbers of his "votes" coming from nonexistent polling stations. Eide maintained that even discussing the subject would inflame tension in the country and that, in any case, the U.N. had no mandate to "interfere" in the election.

In Galbraith's view, that position ignored the fact that the U.N. special representative's mission was to support Afghanistan's own political institutions in holding a free, fair and transparent election, according to international standards. So by refusing to acknowledge the extent of the fraud, the United Nations would lose all credibility.

Eide looked narrowly at Afghan electoral law and its implementation, ignoring the fact that the government could not provide security in large areas of the country. In these districts, even if the polling station actually existed and opened, the ability of voters to cast their vote freely was not something that outside monitors could assess.

*Security was a key issue in the elections Lebanon held on June 7, 2009, just one week prior to the Iranian vote.*

Under heavy Western pressure, the Elections Complaints Commission carried out a recount that brought Karzai under the 50-percent mark — which, under the Afghan Constitution, necessitated a runoff. Despite the great logistical difficulties in holding a rerun, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's position remained the same: the democratic process should proceed.

The withdrawal of Karzai's opponent, Abdullah Abdullah, and the cancellation of the runoff changed neither Clinton's position that sticking to the process would increase the legitimacy of the resulting government, nor the idea that clean elections are an international value.

Fixing a deal — at least publicly — that would have put Karzai in office before these procedures had run their course was no longer the conventional answer to the problem of stability, as it might well have been before the Iranian elections. Once Abdullah withdrew from the runoff, Washington could declare that Pres. Karzai had been legitimately installed.

But the story has not yet run its course. Against Karzai's wishes, the international community has succeeded in obtaining veto power for international members of the Electoral Commission that will oversee this fall's provincial balloting. And that determination may well reflect a post-Iran spotlight effect.

The fraud in last year's elections was an important element in the hardest of hard power decisions: setting a strategy to justify increasing U.S. troop deployment to Afghanistan. The corruption of the Karzai government has been a continuing issue, as Washington looks for competent partners not only in the capital but at the provincial and local levels, bypassing Kabul.

Overall U.S. strategy in Afghanistan explicitly connects the government's ability to be a partner with its level of public support. That, in turn, is connected to its degree of accountability to its own people through honest elections.

## Lebanon: Dealing with Hezbollah

Security was a key issue in the elections Lebanon held on June 7, 2009, just one week prior to the Iranian vote. The Lebanese process unfolded under a new electoral law that took giant steps toward meeting international standards. The legislation set up a commission to oversee new regulations of the media and campaign finance and a constitutional court to hear election-related complaints, among other reforms.

In marked contrast to what happened in Iran, no significant doubts have been cast on the accuracy of the country's vote count, which saw a surprise victory by a pro-Western electoral bloc and the acceptance of that result by the Iranian-allied Hezbollah Party.

This is true even though the elections took place in the shadow of political events of enormous consequence. Syrian troops had begun withdrawing from Lebanon as a result of "Cedar Revolution" demonstrations in the wake of the 2005 assassination of

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. And in May 2008, Hezbollah forces battled Lebanese government troops to retain its right to keep an independent militia.

Hezbollah has been called a "state within a state" in Lebanon. It wanted a violence-free election and, for its own tactical reasons, gave government officials and international monitors free access to the areas it controlled. But since the election, Hezbollah has ignored calls by the international community, including Washington, to abide by U.N. Resolution 1701 and disarm.

The 2005 Lebanese elections were observed by the European Union but not by other international monitoring organizations. The E.U. report nowhere made reference to the existence of Hezbollah's independent military force and its relevance to the climate of security in which the elections took place.

*Any government's trustworthiness in international negotiations depends on the transparency of its institutions.*

In contrast, the report of the National Democratic Institute (of which I was a member) on last year's process acknowledges that "every step toward better governance in Lebanon is tentative, and the existence of weapons and armed groups outside the control of the state gives rise to a fear that achievements could be quickly overridden or reversed."

The omissions in the E.U. report are very significant, for they appear to represent the dominant trend in international monitoring, which is to narrow the focus to election administration. In light of the increasing importance of universal standards, we need to ask what international observor reports are meant to do. Is their purpose to analyze the state of democracy in a given country or praise how well election administration went?

On the technical side, the "Principles and Code of Conduct for International Observation" emphasizes the importance of verifiable and quantifiable data in reports by observer missions. Its excellent guidelines were used successfully in Lebanon, as in many other elections monitored by international observers.

***This renewed focus on meaningful voting is an opportunity for election monitoring organizations to expand and refine the core standards they apply.***

However, the fear that such reports will be used to validate flawed elections has pushed the evaluation process in an increasingly technical direction. In a January presentation to the National Endowment for Democracy, the secretary general of the European Network of Monitoring Organizations listed as a concern for the future of monitoring organizations that they would be reduced to certifying voting machines.

### Focusing on Core Standards

Another trend encourages international monitoring organizations to make common-sense assessments that take account of political realities and the context in which elections take place, as NDI did in Lebanon. Recent proposals to categorize elections as "fails to meet most international standards," "meets most international standards" and "meets international standards" constitute a useful way to relieve pressure to define each country's process as either "free and fair" or "not free and fair."

This approach also recognizes that elections that do not meet international standards can still represent a step forward (however small) in the democratization process. In that spirit, getting back to a focus on core standards, rather than best practices, strengthens international standards just when they have never been more important.

These standards are best expressed in the 1991 Copenhagen Document, signed by the 56 members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (also summarized in the "Principles" referenced above). These declarations focus on the core human rights to stand for election, form a party, speak and campaign free of coercion, have equal access to the media, cast a ballot secretly and see one's duly elected representatives take office.

Such documents attest to the fact that the international community is increasingly recognizing the management of elections by an independent domestic election authority as a core standard, alongside the willingness of governments to invite international observers and accredit domestic observers. Such monitoring is one strategy for attacking the problem of security, a requirement for meeting other election standards.

Pres. Obama has rightly called on the Iranian government (and all others) to respect the universal rights of freedom of assembly and speech, urging it to "choose the path of international norms and principles." Those norms and principles increasingly encompass electoral standards, though they are not limited to them.

Any government's trustworthiness in international negotiations depends on the transparency of its institutions, as the history of the Iranian nuclear issue makes clear. That transparency and trust are closely linked to the trust it enjoys with its own people, most sharply revealed in elections whose results are generally accepted.

A year after the Iranian elections, there is enormous potential to turn this internationally accepted value into an effective instrument to enhance global peace and stability. ■

# FS Heritage

# Garibaldi in Blue?

Several U.S. consuls serving in Europe in the 1860s were willing to bend the truth to recruit the Italian general.

*By Luciano Mangiafico*

Next year marks the 150th anniversary of the U.S. Civil War's first shots. As the United States prepares to commemorate that bloody conflict, it is worth recalling the fact that several U.S. diplomats attempted to shorten the war by recruiting Italian independence hero Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) to lead the Union Army.

For a variety of reasons, Garibaldi did not accept two separate offers of a major-general commission. But it is nevertheless interesting to speculate whether the course of the Civil War would have been affected if he had taken a major command in the Union armies.

### Desperate Times Call for Desperate Remedies

How had the Union arrived at the point where it felt that it had to recruit a foreign general to lead a sizable contingent of U.S. troops?

Not long after taking office in March 1861, President Abraham Lincoln began fighting to restore the Union. But the First Battle of Bull Run, fought in July of that year, had ended in unmitigated disaster for the federal forces.

So it is not surprising that both Pres. Lincoln and Secretary of State William Henry Seward would look favorably upon (if not explicitly authorize) efforts already under way to recruit a proven fighting general, one whose boldness and élan could provide the spark needed to spur the Union army to victory.

***Negotiating with Garibaldi was a difficult undertaking.***

Giuseppe Garibaldi was an obvious choice. The most effective and popular figure in the struggle for Italian independence, he was known as the "Hero of the Two Worlds" because he had fought not only for Italy and for France, but also for the independence of Uruguay from Argentina. His common touch, cordiality and unselfish, seemingly unpretentious ways, coupled with his savvy in tactics and timing and his air of command and authority, made him a natural leader.

In January 1861, the American writer Henry T. Tuckerman published an article in the *North American Review* praising Garibaldi. When news of the article reached the general in Italy, he asked a friend, Colonel Augusto Vecchi, to write a thank-you letter to the author.

Vecchi did so and enclosed his own letter to Tuckerman, broaching the idea that Garibaldi be invited to take up a command in the Union armies. He then discussed the proposal with the general, who did not reject it out of hand.

Shortly thereafter, **James W. Quiggle** (1820-1878), the

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U.S. consul in Antwerp, decided to pursue the matter. Quiggle, who had met Garibaldi during a tour of Italy, had previously been a Pennsylvania lawyer, state deputy attorney general and a former state senator. A Democrat who had been appointed to the consular post by President James Buchanan, Quiggle was then in the process of unwillingly vacating the position for a potential Lincoln appointee.

### The "Washington of Italy"

Quiggle wrote to Garibaldi on June 8, 1861, saying that if the plan to join the Union armies was true, his fame would surpass that of the Marquis de Lafayette. He also assured him that many would join him to fight under the leadership of the "Washington of Italy."

The idea of a foreigner being given a command in the Union army was not far-fetched. About a quarter of Union soldiers were foreigners, and Irish, French, German and Italian soldiers had already risen to the rank of general officer in the Union Army.

Furthermore, Garibaldi had lived in Staten Island, New York, in 1850, returning there from time to time until 1853 from his job as a sea captain. He had made many important contacts, including New York City Mayor Ambrose Kingsland, who in 1851 was instrumental, together with prominent Masons, in having a U.S. passport issued to Garibaldi on the basis of his "intent to become a citizen." The passport has survived and is preserved in the Museo del Risorgimento (Museum of the Unification) in Milan.

Horace Greeley, the influential editor of the *New York Tribune* and a founder of the Republican Party, was another American friend of Garibaldi's. He wrote: "Garibaldi (is) known the world over … He will be received by all who know him in a befitting manner as a man of character, and for his service in behalf of liberty."

On June 27, 1861, Garibaldi answered Quiggle, declaring that he would accept an invitation to fight in the Union army from Pres. Lincoln — if the president intended to abolish slavery. Quiggle answered that although the end of slavery was not an American aim, it could be an outcome of the conflict. He followed this with another letter, intimating falsely that Garibaldi would receive a formal invitation to go to the United States, where the president would offer him the "highest Army commission."

***Both President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of State William Seward favored efforts to recruit a seasoned foreign leader.***

Quiggle, who had been operating without instructions from Washington, now deemed it wise to inform his superiors of his activities. He sent copies of the correspondence to Secretary of State Seward, who almost certainly discussed the matter with President Lincoln.

### A Tale of Two Ministers

Convinced that the recruitment of Garibaldi could not be left to a consul, Seward entrusted the task to two senior diplomats: U.S. Minister to Belgium **Henry Shelton Sanford** (1823-1891) and U.S. Minister to Italy **George Perkins Marsh** (1801-1882).

Sanford, a native of Connecticut, had joined the Foreign Service in 1847, serving in St. Petersburg, Frankfurt and Paris (where he was chargé d'affaires in 1853). In March 1861 President Lincoln named him minister to Belgium, his first major diplomatic appointment. Sanford would remain in Brussels until 1869, when he moved to Florida and founded the city of Sanford.

Because Garibaldi lived in Italy, he came under the jurisdiction of Marsh. The Vermonter had been a congressman from 1842 to 1848 and was instrumental in passage of the bill establishing the Smithsonian Institution. Upon his return from service as U.S. minister to the Ottoman Empire (1849-1854), he had pushed the U.S. Army to use camels in the deserts of the Southwest. Once Secretary of War Jefferson Davis signed off on the idea, Congress appropriated $30,000, and the U.S. Army in the West was soon riding 74 camels.

Sent to Rome as minister in 1861, Marsh held his post for 21 years, longer than anyone else there, before or since. In addition to his remarkable political skills, Marsh was one of the first environmentalists (along with Henry David Thoreau), as well as an acknowledged expert on Renaissance art and the English and Old Icelandic languages.

Sanford was authorized to offer Garibaldi the rank of major general (the highest Army rank until Ulysses S. Grant received a third star in 1864). Sec. Seward's instructions were to "Tell [Garibaldi] that he will receive a major-general's commission in the Army of the United States, with its appointments, with the hearty welcome of the American people. Tell him that we have abundant resources, and numbers unlimited at our command, and a nation resolved to remain united and free."

Though Sanford's instructions did not name Pres. Lincoln, Seward sent a separate personal message to Sanford, saying in part, "It has been a source of sincere satisfaction to the president that circumstances have rendered him able to extend to him if desired an invitation which would enable him to add the glory of aiding in the preservation of the American Union to the many honors which the general of Italy has already won in the cause of human freedom."

*Sent to Rome as minister in 1861, George Perkins Marsh held his post for 21 years, longer than anyone else there, before or since.*

### A Cautious Approach

In August 1861 Sanford traveled to Turin, then the capital of the Kingdom of Italy, to confer with Marsh, who was not yet convinced that his diplomatic mission was appropriate. He had already politely dismissed several Italians who had volunteered to organize units to join the Union forces. Negotiating with Garibaldi, who was likely to set impossible conditions, was sure to be a difficult undertaking.

Accordingly, the two decided to approach the matter cautiously and chose Marsh's Italian-American secretary, Giuseppe Artomi, to sound out Garibaldi before making any formal proposal.

But once Garibaldi responded positively to Artomi's exploratory approach, Sanford chartered a ship in Genoa and went to Caprera. There he offered Garibaldi a major-general commission in the U.S. Army and the payment of travel expenses for the general and his staff.

But just as Marsh had feared, Garibaldi upped the ante, demanding to be appointed commander-in-chief of all Union armies and given the authority to abolish slavery. These conditions obviously could not be met. For one thing, the slavery question was a political one, which Lincoln would decide on his own time and schedule. Moreover, appointing a foreigner with authority over all other U.S. generals

would not have been smart politics or conducive to good morale. As a result, the negotiations ended.

Marsh was actually relieved by this turn of events and wrote Seward that, although he had cooperated in the mission, he'd had serious reservations about the wisdom of enlisting Garibaldi's services. It is likely that such reservations concerned the general's single-mindedness and independence once he set himself an objective.

On Sept. 18, 1861, Sanford sent his own report to Seward, noting that Garibaldi had said that the only way in which he could render service "was as commander-in-chief of its forces, that he would only go as such, and with the additional contingent power — to be governed by events — of declaring the abolition of slavery."

### One More Try

Almost exactly one year later, **Theodore Canisius** (1826-1885), the U.S. consul in Vienna, would make a similar approach to Garibaldi — again without the knowledge of Lincoln or Seward.

Canisius, who had been born in Germany, was a naturalized U.S. citizen and the publisher of a German-language newspaper, *Illinois Staatz-Anzeiger*, in Springfield, Ill. A secret business partner of Lincoln, he had supported his presidential candidacy by printing campaign literature in German.

In September 1862, Canisius sent a letter to Garibaldi seeking to ascertain whether the general would move to the U.S. to fight for the Union. When news of this unauthorized move reached Washington, Canisius was briefly fired, only to be reinstated at the request of the Italian government. The misstep did not hurt his career: after remaining in Vienna until 1866, he later served as consul in Gustemunde, Germany; Bristol, England; and the Samoan Islands.

Canisius' letter reached the general at Varignano, near La Spezia, in a jail where the Italian government was detaining him for organizing an expeditionary corps to liberate Rome. Just a few days before, Italian army troops had confronted and stopped Garibaldi's group at Aspromonte, Calabria. In the skirmish, Garibaldi was wounded by a shot to the foot.

*Even after the Emancipation Proclamation, Garibaldi continued to press the U.S. for the complete abolition of slavery.*

Garibaldi answered Canisius, saying that he was willing to go when he was well and was freed. Garibaldi also informed Minister Marsh of the new approach. Marsh not only interceded for Garibaldi's freedom (which occurred on Oct. 5, 1862) but changed his mind about recruiting the general, adding his own pitch to that of Canisius.

It is possible that Garibaldi, had he been in better health, would have accepted a subordinate U.S. command. But the sticking point was his demand that the president declare that the principle animating the fight was the freedom of all slaves. In fact, Lincoln was already moving to accomplish that objective by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863. Marsh, however, was not aware of Lincoln's intentions and could not offer any assurances to Garibaldi.

Even after the Emancipation Proclamation, Garibaldi continued to press the U.S. for the complete abolition of slavery. On Aug. 6, 1863, he wrote Lincoln to assure him that "Posterity will call you the great emancipator, a more enviable title than any crown could be, and greater than any merely mundane treasure."

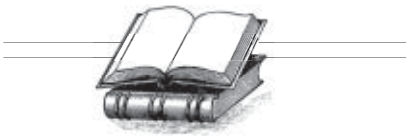
### What Might Have Been…

Even if Garibaldi had accepted the U.S. consuls' proposal, we can only speculate as to whether his highly personal generalship, quick adaptation to changed conditions on the battlefield and superior leadership skills could have shortened the Civil War.

He was a master campaigner who eschewed the doctrinal tactics of the time (massing troops shoulder-to-shoulder for direct frontal charges), preferring night attacks, swift movements and the disruption of the enemy's lines of communications and supply.

At the same time, Garibaldi had no experience with planning and carrying out campaigns involving hundreds of thousands of soldiers, and his strategic abilities were mostly unproven. In fact, the largest army he ever commanded was the approximately 30,000 men who, on Sept. 7, 1860, peacefully entered Naples after King Francesco II had evacuated it.

Fortunately, Lincoln would soon find his own Garibaldi in Ulysses S. Grant. ■



# Books

## Pyrrhic Victory

**The Cold War and the U.S. Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989**
*Nicholas J. Cull, Cambridge University Press, 2009, $36.99, paperback, 533 pages.*

Reviewed by Allen C. Hansen

Nicholas J. Cull's comprehensive, yet lively, history of the United States Information Agency was first published in hardcover in 2008. This new paperback edition of that tour de force, based on 12 years of painstaking research, should find an even wider audience, one it richly deserves.

Cull's tenure as a professor of public diplomacy at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California, where he directs the master's degree program in public diplomacy, ably equips him to analyze the many different points of view about USIA's mission that vied with each other within the agency throughout the Cold War. He gives eloquent voice to the concerns and aspirations of field officers, Voice of America staff and top USIA officials, as well as their colleagues at State and elsewhere in the federal government.

*Cull depicts USIA as generally successful in giving foreign governments and individuals highly effective explanations of U.S. policies and culture.*

His sources, all scrupulously documented, include the National Archives, various presidential libraries and the Oral History Project of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. He also conducted more than 100 interviews with veteran public diplomacy practitioners at USIA and State, and cites numerous books, articles and other materials, including several USIA-produced films. (I found some of his footnotes as enlightening as the text.)

Taking the Cold War as a whole, Cull depicts USIA as generally successful in giving foreign governments and individuals highly effective explanations of U.S. policies and culture. Yet he doesn't mince words where the agency fell short. And when it comes to the perennial debate about whether it is fair to use the term "propaganda" to describe USIA's programs, he calls a spade a spade, describing the very reason for the agency's existence as the perceived need for government propaganda.

One theme that pervades this account is how often history has repeated itself: most notably, through the debate about whether informational and cultural programs should be managed inside or outside of the State Department. He also usefully reminds those who complain about the establishment of the "Broadcasting Board of Governors" — the entity that succeeded USIA as responsible for all U.S. international broadcasts — that it is not a new term at all.

USIA employees will relish seeing the names of old friends and acquaintances in these pages. And those FSOs who spent most of their careers overseas may find especially interesting the tensions and debates about the agency that swirled back in Washington. These arguments were fueled by numerous commissions that regularly issued detailed recommendations about how to organize what we now call public diplomacy.

Cull usefully summarizes and assesses most of these efforts, including the 1975 report of the United States Advisory Commission on Information

***USIA employees will relish seeing the names of old friends and acquaintances in these pages.***

(popularly known as the Stanton Report). That panel recommended the fate that would ultimately befall the U.S. Information Agency nearly 25 years later: absorption into the State Department.

Picking up on that theme, Cull titles his penultimate chapter "Epilogue, Victory and the Strange Death of USIA, 1989-1999," and comments: "U.S. public diplomacy had been an important tool for minimizing disasters like Watergate, managing relationships with allies, blocking the enemy's ability to win, and holding the imagination of the developing and nonaligned world until the American system had decisively passed the Soviet." He then concludes the book with a set of seven useful lessons for those who practice public diplomacy today.

Cull is now completing a sequel to bring the story up to the present. Readers of this account will surely look forward to that volume.

---

*Allen C. Hansen, a 32-year Foreign Service veteran of the U.S. Information Agency, is the author of* USIA: Public Diplomacy in the Computer Age *(Praeger, 1989) and* Nine Lives: A Foreign Service Odyssey *(New Academia, 2007).*

# Only Connect!

**Encounters: A Lifetime Spent Crossing Cultural Frontiers**
*Nancy Keeney Forster, Wind Shadow Press, 2009, $15.95, paperback, 380 pages.*

REVIEWED BY DAVID I. HITCHCOCK

A carefree child of expatriate parents at age 10, a prisoner of the Japanese at 17, and a valued source of intelligence to the U.S. military at 19, Clifton Forster became a fervent advocate of public diplomacy in his 34-year career in the Foreign Service (nearly half of it in Japan).

His wife, Nancy, shared Clifton's adventures and absorbed his stories for nearly six decades, while pursuing her own career as an educator who helped to launch the widely respected International Baccalaureate program.

In 2007, a year after her husband's death at 82, she began to sort through the papers Clifton had tucked away in a Japanese tea chest. She also re-examined her own memories and writings to compose this delightful memoir. It is pleasantly written and well-organized (though a few more dates would have helped).

She eloquently expounds her husband's views of what United States Information Agency programs should accomplish; how policy-loaded they should be; and what the proper mix was between short-term public affairs and longer-range educational exchanges. But this memoir is neither a dry history of public diplomacy nor merely a set of entertaining travel stories from her husband's postings. Rather, she uses his activities and notes to illuminate these larger professional debates.

The author begins by describing Japan's 1942 takeover of the Philippines, and tells us what happened when — much later — her husband met the daughter of the Japanese general who had defeated Douglas MacArthur, but failed to catch him. She paints a grim portrait of all that this young son of the American Red Cross representative in Manila endured alongside other interned civilians, and recounts how his painfully acquired knowledge of detention camps, the Mindanao and Luzon coastlines, and key local personalities earned him a personal commendation from Navy Secretary James Forrestal.

Here are just a few of the many stories Mrs. Forster cites from her husband's Foreign Service career:

Back in the Philippines for his first Foreign Service assignment in 1949, Forster brought American books and movies to Davao, achieving good will in a poor region of communist-led Huk rebels. Soon his mobile units were showing slides to help farmers fight the disease that was infesting their hemp crop.

Five years later, protests in Fukuoka against U.S.-Japan security cooperation turned him from traditional cultural programming to cultivating contacts with socialist professors and left-leaning unionists, many of whom he invited to visit the "imperialist" United States.

In 1957, while running a cultural center in Rangoon, Forster encouraged neutral Burma to resist Soviet blandishments — a task made easier when his Russian counterpart defected in the center's library!

Growing American public criticism of Israeli actions toward the Palestinians in 1971 led Tel Aviv journalists to suspect that the U.S. commitment to

***The professional issues that concerned Clifton Forster are still not resolved.***

Israel might be flagging. To deepen their understanding and reassure them, Forster invited a group to tour our country and hear those concerns for themselves.

While posted to Japan in the late 1970s, Forster finally seemed to find the program balance he had been seeking throughout his career. He not only promoted Japanese trade liberalization but built a network of Japanese and American educational and cultural exchanges for the longer term.

Using such examples, the author not only spins a yarn Foreign Service families will enjoy, but helps the general reader (and perhaps some career diplomats) understand more fully the workings of U.S. information and cultural programs abroad.

A final note: The professional issues that concerned Clifton Forster are still, in the view of some knowledgeable observers, not resolved. For one thing, the overseas programs and personnel of the now-merged Public Diplomacy Bureau could be more fully recognized and utilized by a not-always understanding or sympathetic Department of State. ■

*David I. Hitchcock is a retired Foreign Service career minister and a former senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.*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# AFSA NEWS

American Foreign Service Association • July-August 2010

AFSA MEMORIAL PLAQUE CEREMONY HELD ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAY

## Sec. Clinton Pays Tribute to Those Fallen in the Line of Duty

BY FRANCESCA KELLY

Every year, the Foreign Service community hopes there will be no need to add names to the AFSA Memorial Plaques. Unfortunately, every year the ceremony takes place. This somber tradition, held on Foreign Affairs Day, honors Foreign Service personnel who have lost their lives while serving their country abroad.

MICHAEL LAVACONA

AFSA President Susan Johnson speaks while Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton looks on, AFSA Memorial Plaque Ceremony, State Department, May 7.

On Fri., May 7, in the lobby of the State Department, AFSA President Susan R. Johnson opened the ceremony with a brief welcome, then turned the proceedings over to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Behind them, a black shroud covered the West Plaque and its three newly engraved names.

The Secretary read a message from President Barack Obama and spoke warmly about the three individuals being honored: Terrence L. Barnich, Victoria J. DeLong and Dale J. Gredler. Looking out at their relatives assembled in front of her, she said, "When someone goes overseas to serve, the family serves as well."

### TERRENCE L. BARNICH

Terrence L. Barnich, 56, was on a limited non-career Civil Service appointment as deputy director of the Iraq Transition Assistance Office in Baghdad, Iraq, when he was killed by an improvised explosive device on Memorial Day, May 25, 2009. At the time, he was returning from a waste-

Continued on page 73

CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AND OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE HONORED

## AFSA Award Winners Announced

BY ASGEIR SIGFUSSON, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND OUTREACH

The American Foreign Service Association is proud to announce the winners of the 2010 AFSA Constructive Dissent Awards and Outstanding Performance Awards. The awards ceremony was held on June 24 in the Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room at the Department of State. Each award winner received a certificate of recognition and a prize of $2,500.

### Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award

This year's winner of the award for Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy is Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen. (See p. 38 for an interview with Amb. Laingen.)

After serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Amb. Laingen joined the Foreign Service in 1949. He was posted to Germany, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Washington, D.C., before being appointed ambassador to Malta in 1977. In 1979, Amb. Laingen returned to Tehran as chargé d'affaires; but within months of his arrival, student protestors overran the U.S. embassy. He and two other American officials were at the Iranian Foreign Ministry at the time of the assault, and were detained there for the next 14 months.

Amb. Laingen subsequently received the State Department's Award for Valor, along with several other honors, in 1981. His next position was that of vice president of the National Defense University. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1987 and later served as president of the American Academy of Diplomacy.

### Constructive Dissent Awards

AFSA's Constructive Dissent Awards are

Continued on page 73

# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS

## AFSA Expands Social Media Presence

In early May, AFSA established its own Twitter account (www.twitter.com/afsatweets), where we are now "tweeting" away on matters having to do with AFSA and the Foreign Service. In addition to our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/afsapage, at 1,700 fans and counting), the Twitter account will help AFSA broadcast its message across a variety of new platforms to keep members abreast of news, events, updates and other important issues. We will also "retweet" important messages from other sources that are of relevance to the Foreign Service community.

## Life in the Foreign Service

BY BRIAN AGGELER


## AFSA Signs Agreement with WETA

AFSA is pleased to announce a new agreement with the Washington, D.C.-based Public Broadcasting Service station, WETA. This agreement incorporates AFSA as a partner in WETA Forum, a new aggregator Web site that collects recordings of interesting events in the Washington area. WETA Forum has been made possible through grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS, National Public Radio and the Boston-area PBS affiliate WGBH. Recordings of AFSA's events, such as our Lockheed Martin-sponsored speaker series and our Book Notes programs, are now available for viewing to anyone.

To visit WETA Forum, simply go to www.weta.org/video/forum. AFSA is listed as a partner on that page, and you can access our videos from there.

## Ambassador J. Stapleton Roy to be Adair Lecturer

J. Stapleton Roy, former ambassador to China, Singapore and Indonesia, and currently vice chairman of Kissinger Associates, is this year's speaker for AFSA's Adair Lecture at American University's School of International Service. His topic will be "U.S.-China Relations: Opportunities and Challenges Ahead." The program is tentatively scheduled for Sept. 1 at 4 p.m. in the Kaye Memorial Chapel on the main A.U. campus.

Amb. Roy will be the fourth AFSA speaker in the Adair Family Memorial Series, generously funded by a grant from the Adair family to AFSA's Fund for American Diplomacy. Prior speakers have been Ambassadors Wendy Chamberlin, Thomas Pickering and Marc Grossman. All AFSA members and friends are cordially invited to attend. Check with AFSA Communications Director Tom Switzer in late August for final program details via e-mail to switzer@afsa.org.

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# ePerformance: A Great Idea Whose Time Has Not Yet Come

One of the hottest issues of the past several months has been ePerformance, a new application automating the processes of counseling and performance review, which the department plans to make mandatory. AFSA's Labor Management Office has received more complaints about this than about any other issue this year.

In theory, ePerformance is an excellent idea, one whose appeal is evident to me as a management officer. Theoretically, it makes writing Employee Evaluation Reports easier and more standardized, by populating certain fields automatically. It eliminates delays in transmitting EERs, makes it possible for posts and Washington offices to monitor compliance with deadlines and, when a problem occurs, makes it easy to identify the person responsible. It also serves as a management control to ensure that employees receive the counseling to which they are entitled, which is essential to fair evaluations of performance. Because it addresses a number of long-standing human resources concerns, Washington is understandably excited about implementing it as soon as possible.

> Your chances for promotion are better if you act as if your future were entirely in your hands.

However, in practice, like many new applications, it was released to the field riddled with bugs. Some were built into the application: for instance, the absence of a mechanism alerting the writer when a space restriction is reached, and a discrepancy between e-forms and ePerformance with regard to the number of lines of characters that can be entered.

Other glitches resulted from problems in the general human resources environment: for example, the auto-populated fields drew information from the Global Employee Management System, and many GEMS entries were not up to date.

Still other problems resulted from discrepancies between the real-world process of performance evaluation and HR's need to standardize and manage an enormous work force. For example, positions are listed in GEMS with the greatest standardization possible, meaning that every political officer is a political officer, and every information management officer is an information management officer. In the real world, most positions are assigned a working title, but a division chief, office director or section head is not referred to by the same title as his or her subordinates. While the department has expressed openness to enabling working titles to be used, that has not yet happened.

Additionally, in response to AFSA's request to delay worldwide implementation, the department compromised by implementing the application only domestically this year. In theory, that meant that the application was to be used by those with the easiest access to assistance. In practice, it meant that domestic employees (as well as those who worked overseas but had a domestic rater) felt disadvantaged.

To be fair, some of the bugs were related simply to the newness of the application. The department invested heavily in teaching people to use the new application, providing online training, short courses, help desks and built-in tutorials; but the application was sufficiently different from previous systems to make the transition difficult.

Through the entire phase-in, AFSA regularly conveyed member complaints to the Bureau of Human Resources, and HR did take steps to address them, though not, in most cases, during the past rating cycle.

AFSA therefore pushed the department to recognize, in the promotion precepts, the transitional nature of this rating season. As a result, the precepts negotiated between AFSA and the department admonish selection board members to take into account both the flaws in the application and the effect of the new process on components such as position titles. We will continue to request the inclusion of similar phrasing for the next three years, so that future boards will be aware that this issue occurred in 2010 EERs.

AFSA is aware that the department is currently making improvements to ePerformance, and we are collaborating with management to ensure that FS member concerns are addressed. We will also continue to urge the department to delay making the new process mandatory until all deficiencies are corrected.

In a system as competitive as ours, even very small discrepancies can be the difference between a promotion and no promotion, or even serve as the basis for selection out. With that in mind, it is absolutely essential that all employees are rated on equal terms, in equal ways, and on a level playing field. While recognizing the many potential benefits of this new rating and management tool, AFSA will do everything it can to ensure that this good idea is not made mandatory before its time. ❑

V.P. VOICE: **USAID** ■ BY FRANCISCO ZAMORA

# A Place for Everyone

If it weren't for the synergistic relationship between our Civil and Foreign Service staffs, the U.S. Agency for International Development just would not function. Together, the Civil Service in Washington and the Foreign Service in more than 80 missions overseas deliver development assistance from the American people worldwide. Like a body's left and right hands, we create a product that would be impossible to do "one-handed."

It is a disservice to our country to send unprepared representatives who must learn "on the job" what requires a lifetime of training.

Although FSOs experience firsthand the results of this labor, our GS colleagues deserve to share the accolades, rewards and credit for our good work. Still, each of us is a specialist in his or her own field due to training, education and, mostly, experience. It is important to remember that we are not easily interchangeable.

The Foreign Service is a structured career profession that was codified in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and goes back almost a century. The "up-or-out" component is modeled on the U.S. Navy practice started in 1916 and brought into the FS in the late 1940s. It involves a progression from the entry-level to the senior ranks, where one is required to retire if benchmarks are not met. In order to climb the career ladder, FSOs spend most of their careers competing with each other in a series of increasingly challenging assignments. In addition, they take their families along to share in the joys and sacrifices foreign assignments offer. Toward the end of their careers some may achieve positions as high as mission director.

It is understandable, then, that FSOs are upset whenever a Civil Service employee with no substantial overseas experience is placed in a Foreign Service assignment. Regrettably, the current regulations allow the Secretary of State or her designee to do just that on an exceptional basis. However, lately there have been a string of these assignments to high-level overseas positions. Windhoek and Manila both have non-FSOs as mission directors, and Rome has a senior adviser from outside the Service. This is not because qualified candidates were unavailable, but is instead due to political expediency and the preferences of the USAID Administrator.

Apart from the resulting morale problems, these actions do not bode well for the Foreign Service. Experience in our dealings with foreign counterparts is honed over the span of a career. It is a disservice to our country to send unprepared representatives who must learn "on the job" what requires a lifetime of training. We were expecting our new Administrator to operate differently and strengthen the Foreign Service, but this is not what seems to be happening. If the trend continues, our career Foreign Service will be negatively affected.

Again, our GS colleagues are the sine qua non for a successful Foreign Service. But we all have a role, and there is a place for everyone to contribute. Favoritism in overseas assignments is not the answer. ❑

## TRANSITION CENTER SCHEDULE OF COURSES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| July 12 | MQ250 | Young Diplomats Day |
| July 12-13 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| July 13 | MQ914 | Youth Security Overseas Seminar |
| July 17 | MQ116 | Protocol |
| July 19-20 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| July 22-23 | MQ104 | Regulations, Allowances and Finances |
| July 26 | MQ250 | Young Diplomats Day |
| July 26-27 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| July 27 | MQ914 | Youth Security Overseas Seminar |
| July 31 | MQ802 | Communicating Across Cultures |
| Aug. 9 | MQ250 | Young Diplomats Day |
| Aug. 9-10 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| Aug. 10 | MQ914 | Youth Security Overseas Seminar |
| Aug. 14 | MQ116 | Protocol |
| Aug. 16 | MQ250 | Young Diplomats Day |
| Aug. 16-17 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| Aug. 17 | MQ914 | Youth Security Overseas Seminar |
| Aug. 23-24 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| Aug. 30-31 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| Aug. 31 | MQ115 | Explaining America |
| Sept. 9 | MQ302 | Transition to Washington for Foreign-Born Spouses/Partners |
| Sept. 13-14 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| Sept. 16 | MQ703 | Post Options for Employment and Training |
| Sept. 18 | MQ116 | Protocol |
| Sept. 20-21 | MQ911 | Security Overseas Seminar |
| Sept. 24 | MQ803 | Realities of Foreign Service Life |

To register or for further information, e-mail the FSI Transition Center at FSITCTraining@state.gov.

V.P. VOICE: **FAS** ■ BY HENRY SCHMICK

# Up or Out, Part III: Back to the Future

In Part I (see April *AFSA News*) we recalled that in the recovery after World War II, as the five-star generals and admirals imposed the Navy's "up or out" system on all the armed forces, civilian leaders extended the up-or-out system to the Foreign Service, as well. In Part II, we discussed the "youth and vigor" argument for the up-or-out system, and noted that organizational theorists classify promotional systems into various types (up-or-out, merit-based, seniority-based and random). Academics define the goals of a promotional system as (a) selecting the most able employees for positions of greater responsibility, and (b) motivating employees at one level to strive harder to reach the next one. Corporate leaders define the goals in more profit-oriented terms: does the system get me the employees I need at the lowest possible cost?

Inherent in an up-or-out system — one with a mandatory churn of employees forced out by relative performance, promotion and age — is a continuous training of employees. The military has made training an integral part of its up-or-out system. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell noted that he spent 15-20 percent of his military service in training. Meanwhile, as former AFSA President John Naland stressed in his president's column in the Jan. 2009 *Foreign Service Journal*, "chronic underinvestment in training has long shortchanged Foreign Service members on careerlong professional education. Colin Powell is said to have remarked that Foreign Service officers start their careers better educated that U.S. Army officers, but that Army officers end their careers better educated than FSOs."

It appears our foreign affairs agency administrators and Congress have focused on the last part of the corporate profit-oriented terms — employees at the lowest possible cost — and not cared about securing the most able employees for positions of greater responsibility. Various internal and external reports have criticized the Foreign Service as lacking able leaders and managers. Well, you get what you pay for.

Back in 1946, Congress realized the importance of training. In the discussion of the Foreign Service Act on July 20 of that year, Representative John Vorys, R-Ohio, summarized the bill:

*It makes the Foreign Service hard to get in, and hard to stay in. It provides salaries, allowances, and retirements that should attract and hold good men ... It provides for the continuous training of these officers during their service by a Foreign Service Institute.*

In addition to FSI training, the 1946 Foreign Service Act encouraged FSOs to enroll in outside institutions. In September 1946, 10 FSOs were assigned to a yearlong course at the National War College; and by October 1947, State had detailed 18 FSOs to various universities. It is worth noting, however, that pressure caused by limited personnel necessitated the withdrawal of most of the Foreign Service officers from the school after January 1947. So the sensible approach outlined in the 1946 Foreign Service Act was discarded by the next year. Some things never change in Washington.

To successfully implement an up-or-out system, sufficient resources must be allocated to continuous training. We did not do it in 1946, and despite periodic attempts to fix the system since, the Foreign Service is still trying to implement a distorted, cracked-mirror image of the military's up-or-out system.

To answer the question posed by P.J. O'Rourke (see Part II, May *AFSA News*): in the Foreign Service, youth, innocence, an untrained mind and a bad haircut do beat age, guile and (experience-related) hair loss.

Note: The author would like to acknowledge AFSA Staff Assistant Patrick Bradley for researching the congressional history of the Foreign Service Act of 1946. ❑

# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS

## Femi Oshobukola Joins AFSA as Director of Finance

Femi Oshobukola has joined AFSA as director of finance. Originally from Nigeria, Oshobukola attended London Guildhall University (now London Metropolitan University). He has served as director of finance for DeVry University and as senior director of finance for the Points of Light Foundation. Oshobukola lives in Bowie, Md., with his wife, Tola, and their children, Samuel and Marian.

## Hail and Farewell to AFSA Interns

AFSA bids a fond farewell to Public Affairs Intern Jennifer Durina, a student at The George Washington University who departed AFSA in May; *FSJ* Advertising Intern (and Curacao native) Joserelda "Josie" Boon, who returned to her studies in the Netherlands in early June; and *FSJ* Editorial Intern Jennifer Thompson, who is a senior at GW. Legislative Affairs Intern John Gargula was here with us for just a few weeks through Marquette University's Les Aspin Center.

We welcome Jeffrey Rauch, AFSA's first marketing, outreach and Web intern. From the Chicago area, Jeff is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, with a degree in political science and communication. Laura Caton, a senior at the University of Pittsburgh, has joined us for the summer as editorial intern. And our new public affairs intern is Regine Baus, a Tennessee native who attends GW, majoring in political science.

# 2010 AFSA CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT AWARD WINNERS

*Profiles of award winners written by Francesca Kelly*

## The W. Averell Harriman Award

FOR AN ENTRY-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

## *Kathryn A. Kiser*

What happens when an American citizen needs to renew a passport overseas? The process might go smoothly — or it might leave that American in a foreign country without a passport for days, even weeks. Kathryn Kiser, an FS-4 working in the American Citizen Services section in Amman, Jordan, decided that the current policy was not acceptable, and took action.

In her daily consular work, Kiser adjudicated applications from U.S. citizens seeking to renew or add pages to their passports, or to document newborn U.S. citizens born in Jordan. Part of this process requires that applicants' names be run through a database and compared against law enforcement information. If a match cannot be ruled out, the department guidance is to suspend consular services and confiscate the U.S. passport until the possible match is resolved by the Legal Hits U.S. office in the Bureau of Consular Affairs. This clearance process typically takes from one to four weeks.

In nominating Kiser, Deanna Hanek Abdeen, chief of consular services in Amman, says, "The policy not only is an inconvenience to those it affects, but also leaves them extremely vulnerable by essentially making them undocumented aliens." She goes on to explain, "During this interim period, the U.S. citizen is trapped in a foreign country with no internationally recognizable identity documentation and no means of returning to the United States."

JOHN WARD

Kiser in Petra, Jordan, Apr. 23, 2009. Below: In Wadi Rum, Jordan, April 24, 2009.

JOHN WARD

Without a passport, an American citizen faces potential disaster in an emergency. If arrested or even just questioned by foreign police for any reason, the individual would have no means of proving U.S. citizenship. This process also affects those traveling overseas on business or tourism, as well as school staff members expecting to travel during a school vacation. Even checking into a hotel requires a passport in some countries.

Kiser began by speaking with consular management at post. She then raised the issue with the Bureau of Consular Affairs to ascertain that post procedure was in line with department policy. She briefed both the ambassador and the deputy chief of mission on her concerns.

When department and post policy did not change, Kiser made the decision to draft and submit a dissent cable. She not only detailed the problem, but outlined solutions and recommendations for the name check process, a mechanism to deal with emergency cases, and a request to streamline the system so that hits that are not a match would not be reviewed again each time the U.S. citizen renews or applies for a passport.

Abdeen points out that Kiser "could have easily done what the vast majority of officers do: follow department guidance without question. But her overwhelming concern was for the welfare of U.S. citizens placed at risk due to U.S. government actions, and she believed that our process could be improved without compromising law enforcement interests."

State Department management has been open to change. As a result of Kiser's Dissent Channel message, management is reviewing policies with the idea of changing certain aspects of the passport renewal process for American citizens abroad, and revising the Foreign Affairs Manual accordingly.

Kiser herself is simply glad that the department appears to be poised to take action. "While I appreciate the recognition, seeing the department take the matter seriously is more gratifying to me than any award. The thoroughness and earnestness of State's response — and the concrete follow-through on promised action — were far beyond my expectations." ❑

# William R. Rivkin Award

FOR A MID-LEVEL FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

## *Dr. Diana Briton Putman*

LTC STEVE PARKER.

General William "Kip" Ward, Commander U.S. Africa Command, and Diana B. Putman at the Kelley Club in Stuttgart, May 6.

You could say that Dr. Diana Briton Putman grew up in the African bush. The daughter of a development worker specializing in livestock, Putman spent her childhood with the Tuareg people in what is now Burkina Faso and Niger, and later with the Maasai in Tanzania. Her early curiosity about how societies live, and how they can be improved, has never left her. As director for humanitarian and health activities for the U.S. Africa Command in Stuttgart, Putman is able to put her considerable talents to good use toward a region she understands well.

It was for the people of that region, particularly for the many women who have been the victims of violent sexual crimes, that Putman challenged the entire hierarchy at the U.S. African Command last year over its proposed interventions in the area of sexual and gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Putman had greeted the news of Hillary Rodham Clinton's appointment as Secretary of State with elation. Long a proponent of women's rights, she knew that the new Secretary had global women's issues very much at heart. Indeed, at his initial meeting with AFRICOM Commander General William "Kip" Ward in June 2009, State Department Assistant Secretary for Africa Jonnie Carson announced that Sec. Clinton was committed to finding solutions to the problems of SGBV in the DRC. As a result of this meeting, Gen. Ward, before returning to Stuttgart, suggested that AFRICOM and Special Forces Africa come up with some sort of arrangement that would provide medical treatment interventions.

LTC STEVE PARKER.

Putman with her husband, Dr. Adam Messer, Stuttgart, May 6.

As Ambassador Anthony Holmes, who nominated Putman for the Rivkin Award, explains, "A request 'to look into the matter' from a four-star general at a U.S. military joint command translates as 'do something' in the minds of his subordinates." The result was a proposal to undertake several short medical engagements in the DRC to provide fistula repairs for SGBV survivors." (A fistula is a permanent abnormal passageway in the body. In the DRC, reproductive fistulas occur due to complications in childbirth or violent sexual assault. Women or girls suffering this affliction are usually ostracized.) Another proposal tasked military with providing psychosocial counseling for SGBV survivors.

Dr. Putman, the only USAID development professional at AFRICOM at the time, was approached to see if she could provide funding.

"There was no capability anywhere within the U.S. armed forces to do fistula repair," Putman remembers. "And several of us made the case that psychosocial counseling across linguistic and cultural barriers, and for one or two weeks at a time — by people who understood nothing about Africa — was not sensible."

When Putman moved higher up in the ranks to make her arguments, she continued to meet with resistance. She wondered how "to turn around a system that had understood medical engagements to be what Amb. Carson requested."

She convinced the Defense Security Cooperation Agency to allocate additional funds to allow her to propose an alternative: humanitarian assistance to construct or rehabilitate infrastructure used by the government of the DRC or nongovernmental organizations to provide health, legal, psychosocial counseling or vocational training to SGBV survivors.

Although her superiors at post could see the merit of her ideas, they still did not want to go against what they took to be a directive from the AFRICOM commander.

Putman saw only one course left: to go all the way up the hierarchy to Gen. Ward himself. At the next senior staff meeting at which he was present, she stood up and explained her position. The general asked a lot of questions about her proposal, but ultimately appeared satisfied with the alternative plan.

Commander Bob "Major" Barbee lauds Putman for her "unique perspective ... that comes from her extensive field work of more than 20 years." Richard "Carl" Paschall, foreign policy adviser to the Commander, Special Operations Command – Africa, points to Putman's ability "to bridge the differences between the military and the development/diplomatic cultures."

"Dr. Putman was willing to go public with her dissent and offer a constructive alternative," says Holmes. "The peer and cultural pressures in a military context against doing this are formidable, indeed." ❑

# The F. Allen "Tex" Harris Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALIST

## *David Zwach*

Zwach at Camp Stryker in Baghdad, Iraq, November 2008. As Officer in Charge of the Engineering Service Center-Embassy Abu Dhabi, he managed technical security operations in much of the Middle East.

David Zwach, a Foreign Service security engineering officer who is chief of the Information Assurance Branch at the Diplomatic Security Training Center in Dunn Loring, Va., does not give up easily. When management pushed back on his proposal to provide Foreign Service specialists tenuring certificates signed by the Secretary of State (similar to the commissioning certificates issued to generalists), he redoubled his efforts. Over six years, he lobbied the department at all levels until his proposal was approved.

In 2003, Zwach inherited an original Civil War commissioning certificate signed by Abraham Lincoln and undersigned by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. The design, wording and seal were similar to those of current Foreign Service generalist commissioning certificates, with text pointing to the president's "special trust and confidence" in the recipient's "patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities."

Zwach, who has served in the Foreign Service for 23 years, including in the Middle East, was inspired. He researched the history and significance of appointment certificates. He studied the wording of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, which states that FS specialists are all appointed by the Secretary of State. And he realized that recognizing specialist appointments with a certificate would serve the public interest and raise morale.

Chief Information Officer Susan Swart, who works with Zwach and nominated him for the Harris Award, points out that Zwach "correctly understood the sentiment of the specialist corps and appreciated that such a certificate would 1) recognize the value of the specialist to the department; 2) reinforce the concept that all members of the Foreign Service are part of a team and share the same commitment and sacrifice; and 3) provide a lasting record of the specialist's achievement in gaining tenure."

In 2004, Zwach submitted a proposal to State's Bureau of Human Resources to create an appointment certificate for FS specialists, but HR did not adopt it. Zwach then turned to AFSA, who also lobbied the department, sent several letters to the director general and even drafted a design for the certificate. It took several years — as well as correspondence and/or meetings with HR, the director general, the Secretary's suggestion box, the Executive Secretariat staff, the Sounding Board, office directors and the Bureau of Information Resources Management — before HR made a counterproposal in 2006. This counterproposal was an abbreviated version of the generalist commissioning certificate. Zwach pressed for a specialist certificate that was equal in inspirational value to the generalist version.

When the administration approved what at first appeared to be a satisfactory specialist certificate in 2008, there was one catch: the Secretary of State would not sign this certificate. Instead, the director general would.

"David recognized the value of the Secretary's signature," says Swart, "and understood this was a key factor for all specialists. Accordingly, in 2009, he submitted a proposal to the Sounding Board that garnered an unprecedented number of comments."

It took until this year — six years after Zwach began his campaign — to achieve success. In March, Secretary Clinton agreed that all specialists would receive a certificate with her signature.

"This initiative will help us more fully acknowledge the contributions by Foreign Service specialists and offer them a measure of recognition that has been long overdue," says Jeffrey W. Culver, principal deputy assistant secretary and director of the Diplomatic Security Service.

Swart lauds Zwach's "remarkable perseverance," adding: "He has lobbied many senior officers in the department, exchanged over 400 e-mails, reviewed dozens of designs and, ultimately, gained agreement on an impressive final format."

Zwach was able to renew his efforts with the change of administration, and, Swart says, "he grasped the opportunity offered by the Sounding Board and orchestrated the specialist campaign that persuaded department management that such a certificate, signed by the Secretary, was a proposal whose time had come." ❑

# The Nelson B. Delavan Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

## *Allie Loraine Almero*

About a year ago, Ambassador E. Anthony Wayne established the Office of the Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs, bringing all U.S. government foreign assistance to Afghanistan under one section at Embassy Kabul. This new office had to be integrated into the embassy structure, with new clearance procedures developed.

Enter Allie Almero.

Almero came in two months after the office was established and took charge. Explains Amb. Wayne, "Allie worked tirelessly, establishing an efficient tracking system and paper-flow process." Her system was so effective that "the executive secretary recently asked for her input to create a new task management system for the embassy."

AMBASSADOR TONY WAYNE

Allie Almero, right, with U.S. Army Major Ty Short, in Sayadebad, Afghanistan, April 6.

Almero is never content to work just a 9-5 job. She volunteered to serve as the deputy control officer for the visit of Deputy Secretary of State Jacob Lew, revising schedules, keeping tabs on tasks from Washington and working shifts in the control room. She assisted Dep. Sec. Lew's chief of staff in editing and transmitting documents, and continued with follow-up after the visit. Says Amb. Wayne, "Allie did all of this without missing a stitch in supporting me and my office, and she won written kudos from the deputy secretary and a wide range of others working on the visit."

Almero again volunteered to help when Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Ambassador Richard Holbrooke visited. She attended all countdown meetings, revised schedules, worked in the control room and served as site officer for Amb. Holbrooke's meetings with embassy staff. She also facilitated the Secretary's meeting with civilian and military officers from around Afghanistan, preparing the meeting room and working with the management team to set up the equipment needed. Not surprisingly, Almero is now the "go-to" person for all senior-level official visits. Colleague Robyn Davis says, "Allie is someone who inspires us all to do the best job possible every minute of every hour of every day!"

DANIEL WILKINSON

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton greets Almero and other staffers in Afghanistan, November 2009. Left to right: Almero, Robyn Davis, Linda Landers, Ixta Gonzalez and Karen Trimble.

Deputy Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs Katherine Hadda agrees. "Allie's ability to organize us and keep our spirits up represents the best of the Foreign Service, and makes working in this hardest of posts a lot easier for everyone."

Says Wayne, "In making these and many other outstanding contributions, Allie has worked 14-hour days, six-and-a-half days a week, demonstrating great dedication and the highest commitment to excellence." ❑

# The Avis Bohlen Award

FOR A FOREIGN SERVICE FAMILY MEMBER

## *Anne Bridgman*

Foreign Service spouses often face a difficult choice: play the role of "diplomat's spouse," or find their own identity outside of the embassy.

Anne Bridgman, the spouse of the chargé d'affaires in Bratislava, doesn't waste time with this paradox. Her purpose at post is simply to help others.

"I've always believed in giving back to the community in which I live," she explains, "and being the spouse of a Foreign Service officer doesn't change that view."

In Bratislava, the volunteer work that Bridgman, who is departing Slovakia this month, has carried out is multifaceted. One of her main activities has been organizing donations and visits to the DePaul-Slovensko shelter for the homeless, including asking the Slovak military to donate surplus blankets.

She also has fond memories of a Christmas Eve dinner there. "I got holiday CDs out of my car and the director put them on a boombox, and the environment turned merry," Bridgman recalls. "Embassy and expatriate children stuffed clothing and sundries into individual bags for each resident, and then we served a traditional Slovak dinner. The residents were very touched."

On several occasions, Bridgman organized groups to spend a day doing physical work with the volunteer initiative "Our Bratislava." One Saturday, embassy staff worked alongside Slovak citizens landscaping and painting a group home south of the city.

Bridgman and her daughter Laurel spent hours walking and playing with abandoned dogs at the city animal shelter. She helped in the classroom at her daughter's school, reading weekly with non-English speaking children. She and a teacher organized volunteer outings and purchased gifts with fundraiser monies for children in orphanages. She also put together a garden-planting afternoon at a homeless shelter. "The children loved doing something very hands-on, while the shelter benefited from having a supply of fresh vegetables for the summer," she reports.

PETRA GAJDOSIKOVA

Anne Bridgman and her daughter Laurel Eddins at Sloboda Zvierat animal shelter near Bratislava May 14.

Bridgman "treats everyone with respect, kindness and genuine warmth, exhibiting the best face of America overseas without condescension," says Consul Simon Hankinson.

It's not surprising that this is the second time that Bridgman has won the Avis Bohlen award. The first time was for volunteer work that she carried out in Moscow in 1995.

Adds Hankinson: "When you see someone like Anne, who just stops worrying about why and pitches in where she sees someone hurting, it makes you realize that you could really do just a little bit more." ❑

# M. Juanita Guess Award

FOR A COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER

## *Sarah Genton*

Experts say multitasking is impossible. They apparently have not met Sarah Genton. Not only has she begun and managed more innovative programs than most embassies see in a decade, but she has also gone above and beyond the usual role of a Community Liaison Officer to provide compassionate support to several families beset by crisis or tragedy during her tenure in Madrid.

Her first task was to focus on welcoming new families. Genton explains, "If employees and family members arrive on a positive note, and feel supported, they are likely to make a better transition to their new home." She launched a sponsors program, trained sponsors at a brown-bag lunch session, and followed through with support for incoming families, including a weeklong orientation program and a touring schedule that took groups to an olive farm, an archaeological dig and a winery.

Last October, she founded Embassy Madrid's first Volunteers in Action group. This group has held a blood donation drive, a holiday food drive and charity fundraisers such as a burrito breakfast and "Taco Tuesday."

That and the usual holiday parties would be enough for any

MONIQUE KOVACS NATHAN

Genton at the CLO sponsored Egg Hunt on April 11, sharing candy prizes with Clara Nathan, as Jack Roll looks on.

CLO, but Genton also organized evening patio events "to help people forge new friendships," she explains. "We invited diplomatic colleagues from other missions, who joined in our embassy's first Trivia Night, a yearly flamenco show, and themed karaoke evenings, including 'Madrid Idol.'"

Yet in the midst of these popular community events, some embassy families have faced tough challenges in the past year. When a family had to curtail unexpectedly due to illness while in the States, Genton managed their complete packout, including selling their car and holding a yard sale to shed excess household effects. To help offset the cost of shipping their pets back to the United States, she raised funds through a "sangria mix-off." Says the FSO whose tour was cut short, "Quite literally, we don't know what we would have done without her."

Genton also handled the heartbreaking arrangements and support for an officer whose baby died suddenly.

Ambassador Alan Solomint describes Genton as "not only knowledgeable, but approachable and discreet." He praises the many programs she has designed, particularly a popular re-entry workshop for families returning to live and work in the U.S. adding, "She has fostered a great spirit of camaraderie." ❑

# AFSA Post Representative of the Year

## *James A. Fox*

Foreign Service Information Technology Manager James Fox is on a mission at a mission — the U.S. Mission to NATO, to be precise. In just a short time, Fox, as AFSA post representative there, has made a difference in employee morale and conditions at post, and has even saved his American colleagues some money.

Not content to sit by when community life can be improved, Fox has met regularly with post management, including the ambassador and deputy chief of mission, to address community concerns. He has managed at the same time to advance more equal treatment of specialists and generalists: for example, he questioned why the much-sought-after parking spaces at USNATO were given automatically to FS-1 generalists and their deputies, but not immediately to FP-1 specialists and their deputies. Thanks to Fox, the parking space assignment process has been made more transparent.

He also realized that by paying for very expensive, specially marked trash bags — the only ones that can be used for official waste pickup in the city of Brussels — U.S. employees were, in effect, paying for waste disposal service, from which they are usually exempt while overseas. He was able to get this policy adjusted so that employees receive a refund on trash bags.

Says Information Management Specialist David Jesser, "Since Jim became the USNATO AFSA rep in 2009, he has been the go-to person on labor issues that [pertain to] not only AFSA members, but [to] our Department of Defense colleagues, as well."

Working with management on community concerns has been rewarding for Fox. Especially satisfying, he says, has been "to see how eager Ambassador Ivo Daalder and DCM John Heffern have been to address issues of fairness in the way generalists and specialists are treated by the host nation government."

Fox, who served in Libreville, Pretoria and Kabul before his current assignment in Brussels, is particularly proud of what he accomplished in Kabul, where he implemented a secure video link between the presidents of the United States and Afghanistan. "This link is still playing a major role in the rebuilding of Afghanistan and the effort to rid the country of dangerous insurgents," he says.

CARL HALE

AFSA Post Rep James Fox in an AFSA and post management meeting. Left to right: Management Officer Robert Glacel, Deputy Chief of Mission John Heffern, Fox, and Amb. Ivo Daalder (permanent representative to the North Atlantic Council, U.S. mission to NATO), May 10, at NATO headquarters.

"I have seldom seen an AFSA representative approach this responsibility with as much zest and zeal as Jim," says Jesser. "He will not hesitate to engage the front office, the Joint Administrative Services section or the management officer on labor issues. When he felt morale was sinking, he had no hesitation in being frank with the front office." ❑

THE AFSA-LOCKHEED MARTIN SPEAKER SERIES

# Alec Ross Discusses Technology and Diplomacy

BY JENNIFER THOMPSON, EDITORIAL INTERN

Alec Ross, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's senior adviser for innovation, was the featured speaker at the second AFSA-Lockheed Martin Speaker Series event on May 12. Ruth Whiteside, director of the Foreign Service Institute, acted as moderator.


MICHAEL LAIACONA

Alec Ross, right, and Ruth Whiteside at AFSA HQ on May 12.

Ross provided a thorough picture of the increasingly vital role technology holds in today's diplomatic and advocacy efforts. He noted the borderless quality of global communications and pointed to the potential of technological innovation to improve diplomacy, augment international security and advance U.S. interests abroad in a mutually beneficial relationship with other countries.

Contrary to what he'd heard prior to signing on as Sec. Clinton's adviser for innovation, Ross found the State Departmemt to be a tech-friendly place, with a lively demand for creative IT solutions and dynamic centers of innovation.

The Office of eDiplomacy, for instance, which was established in 2003, has pioneered programs to improve internal communications and knowledge-sharing among State Department employees overseas and at home.

Ross saluted the developers of the new State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset (known by its nickname, SMART), begun in 2001 and now up and running at 155 overseas posts to provide a simple, secure and user-driven system for modern messaging, dynamic archiving and information sharing.

He also pointed to the program to tap college students' knowledge of technology through specially vetted State Department internships. As of last fall, students were assisting 37 posts abroad with IT issues in the "virtual student Foreign Service."

Ross emphasized his particular goal as senior adviser for innovation, namely to bring technology to bear to solve foreign policy problems and advance priorities. As an example, he cited the introduction of text messaging to combat narco-fueled violence in Mexico. This program, the product of immersing prominent American innovators in the problems of Mexico, allows citizens to use their mobile phones to alert police of criminal activity yet retain anonymity, as personally identifiable information is wiped out.

This restores a certain amount of transparency in the fight against Mexico's drug cartels, Ross pointed out, and at the same time raises the number of reported crimes because citizens' fears of the consequences of reporting are reduced.

Ross also pointed to a new program using radios to battle ethnic violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, noting that traditional methods of technology can also be employed in social crises.

Though enthusiastic about the growing technological efficiency within the State Department, Ross acknowledged that modernization of technology comes with significant security issues, such as frequent hacks, especially in a target as significant as the State Department. He stressed the difficulty of maintaining the tenuous balance between attending to security concerns while simultaneously providing 21st-century technology.

Other areas Ross touched upon included Secretary Clinton's emphasis on Internet freedom and the technological implications of President Barack Obama's June 4, 2009, speech in Cairo. Ross's lecture was both informative and hopeful, as it emphasized another avenue through which diplomacy can develop both internally and abroad.

Ross finished by taking questions from both audience members and online participants.

This new speaker series continued on June 15 with Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., and NBC Correspondent Andrea Mitchell as moderator. Please check the AFSA Web site (www.afsa.org/events.cfm) for upcoming programs of interest to the foreign affairs community. ❑

# AFSA NEWS BRIEFS

## Coming in October: AAFSW Annual Art and Book Fair

In 2010, the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide is celebrating its 50th anniversary. For a half-century, AAFSW has worked to safeguard and improve the quality of life of Foreign Service employees and families. Its annual Art and Book Fair scholarship fundraiser has always been part of the AAFSW effort. It will take place Oct. 15-24 in the Diplomatic Exhibit Hall on the first floor of Main State. The event will feature secondhand books, an extensive display of art and collectible objects from all over the world, a Collectors' Corner of rare books and an assortment of stamps and coins.

# 2010 AFSA Merit Award Winners

BY LORI DEC, SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

AFSA is proud to feature the 26 Foreign Service high school seniors selected as the 2010 AFSA Merit Award winners, who collectively received a total of $35,700 in scholarships. On Foreign Affairs Day, May 7, those winners in the area took part in the annual merit awards ceremony.

AFSA congratulates all the winners and runners-up for their academic and artistic achievements. Winners received $1,800 awards, and honorable mention winners received $800 awards. The best-essay winner and the community-service winner each received $250. Judges were members of AFSA's Committee on Education and individuals from the Foreign Service community.

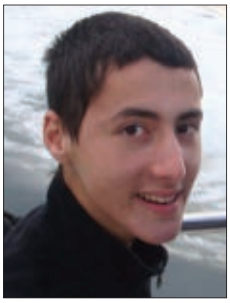
This year, 70 students competed for the 15 Academic Merit Awards. They were judged on grade-point averages, SAT scores, essays, letters of recommendation, extracurricular activities and other factors. From the Academic Merit Award applicants, a best-essay winner (Marlene Haggblade) and a community-service winner (Abigail Einhorn) were selected.

Fourteen students submitted art merit applications under one of the following categories: visual arts, musical arts, drama and creative writing. Each art applicant was judged on his or her art submission, two letters of recommendation and an essay. Cynthia Miller was selected as the Art Merit Award winner for her poetry submissions, and she was also an Academic Merit Honorable Mention Award winner. Lorrayne Dever and Katrina Ternus were selected as the Art Merit Honorable Mention Award winners. Both students submitted drawings and/or paintings under the Visual Arts category.

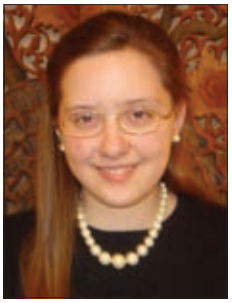
Eight Academic Merit named scholarships have been established to date, and these awards were bestowed to the highest-scoring students. The recipients of these scholarships were: Stephen Kwong, receiving the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Scholarship; Marlene Haggblade, receiving the John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholarship; Abraham Chaibi and Michael Fogarasi, receiving the Turner C. Cameron Memorial Scholarships; Ana Olson, receiving the John C. Leary Memorial Scholarship; Alexander Koenig and Patrick McGuire, receiving the Joanna and Robert Martin Scholarships; and Lindsey Hunt, receiving the Donald S. Memorial and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholarship.

For more information on the AFSA Merit Awards, the AFSA Scholarship Program, or how to establish or apply for a scholarship, contact Lori Dec at (202) 944-5504, at dec@afsa.org, or visit our Web site at **www.afsa.org/scholar/**. All Merit Award winner information is posted there.

## Academic Merit Winners



**Abraham Chaibi –** son of Lora Berg (State) and Karim Chaibi; graduate of the American School of Paris; attending Princeton University, majoring in physics; designated a Turner C. Cameron Memorial Scholar.



**Abigail Einhorn** – daughter of Joy and Norman Einhorn (State); graduate of Seton High School, Front Royal, Va.; attending Purdue University, majoring in engineering; designated the AFSA Merit Awards "Community Service" winner.

**Michael Fogarasi** – son of Mariya and John Fogarasi (FCS); graduate of Seoul Foreign School; attending Boston College, majoring in environmental studies/Asian studies; designated a Turner C. Cameron Memorial Scholar.

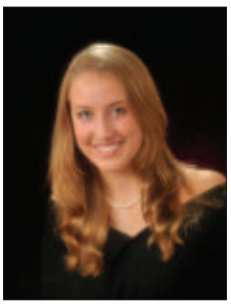
**Marlene Haggblade** – daughter of Helen Gunther (USAID) and Steven Haggblade; graduate of Poolesville High School, Poolesville, Md.; attending Pomona College, majoring in biology; designated the John and Priscilla Becker Family Scholar and the AFSA Merit Awards Best Essay winner.

**Fiona Hogan** – daughter of Abby and James Hogan (State); graduate of the International School of Curacao; attending the University of Florida, majoring in biomedical engineering.

**Stephen Kwong** – son of Marsha and Ralph Kwong (State); graduate of St. Mary's High School, Crofton, Md.; attending the College of William and Mary, majoring in biology; designated the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Scholar.

**Reuben Luoma-Overstreet** – son of Kristine and Charles Luoma-Overstreet (State); graduate of Washington-Lee High School, Arlington, Va.; attending the U.S. Air Force Academy, majoring in engineering.

**Patrick McGuire** – son of Suzanne (State) and Patrick (State) McGuire; graduate of the International School of Manila; attending Stanford University, majoring in physics or comparative literature; designated a Joanna and Robert Martin Scholar.



**Caryl Merten** – daughter of Susan and Ambassador Kenneth Merten (State); graduate of McLean High School, McLean, Va.; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in foreign affairs.

**Ana Olson** – daughter of Ambassador Deborah Jones (State) and Ambassador Richard Olson (State); graduate of the Madiera School, McLean, Va.; attending Brown University, majoring in sociology or anthropology; designated the John C. Leary Memorial Scholar.

MICHAEL LAIACONA

## Scholarship Winners Honored

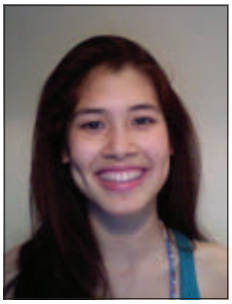
AFSA Executive Director Ian Houston and AFSA President Susan Johnson pose with four local Academic Merit Award winners who attended the May 7 reception at AFSA. Top row: Stephen Kwong; bottom row from left to right, Lindsey Hunt, Reuben Luoma-Overstreet and Marlene Haggblade.

## PMA Funds AFSA Scholarship Winner

AFSA President Susan Johnson accepts a $3,300 financial scholarship check from Scholarship Coordinator Nick Frankhouser and President Trellis Wright of the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service, on May 6.

LORI DEC

**Lindsey Hunt** – daughter of Deborah Derrick and Baxter Hunt (State); graduate of Yorktown High School, Arlington, Va.; attending Middlebury College, majoring in French or psychology; designated the Donald S. Memorial and Maria Giuseppa Spigler Scholar.



**Leah Jarrett** – daughter of Ann Yen and Kenneth H. Jarrett (State); graduate of Shanghai American School; attending Cornell University, majoring in comparative literature.

**Alexander Koenig** – son of Natalie and John Koenig (State); graduate of Naples American High School; attending Harvard College, majoring in government/public policy; designated a Joanna and Robert Martin Scholar.

**Mary Rank** – daughter of Mary and David Rank (State); graduate of the Taipei American School; attending the University of Virginia, majoring in sociology.

**Morgan Russell** – daughter of Susan Shirley and John Speaks (State); graduate of Cairo American College; attending Columbia University, majoring in English.

### Academic Merit Honorable Mention Award Winners

**Emma Benjaminson** – daughter of Paula and Eric Benjaminson (State); graduate of Ashbury College, Ottawa; attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, majoring in mechanical engineering.

**Richard Hinman** – son of Josephine (State) and Richard (State) Hinman; graduate of the American Community School, Amman; attending The George Washington University, majoring in mechanical engineering.

**Camille McCarthy** – daughter of Elizabeth O'Brien (State) and Michael McCarthy (State); graduate of the American Embassy School, New Delhi; attending Clemson University, majoring in chemical engineering.

**James Merz-Ramirez** – son of Ana Maria Ramirez and James Merz (State); graduate of Greengates School, Mexico City; attending Princeton University, majoring in international relations.

**Cynthia Miller** – daughter of Ai Chin and Daniel Miller (State); graduate of the American Embassy School, New Delhi; attending the University of East Anglia in Norwich, United Kingdom, majoring in English literature; designated the AFSA Art Merit Award winner for her poetry submission in the creative writing category.

**Lillian Stuart** – daughter of Ellen Wilson (State) and Steven Stuart (State); graduate of the International School of Kenya; attending Wellesley College, majoring in international studies or theater.

### Art Merit Award Winner

**Cynthia Miller** – see Cynthia's biographical information under the Academic Merit Honorable Mention Winners.

### Art Merit Honorable-Mention Award Winners

**Lorrayne Dever** – daughter of Lottie Erickson and James Dever (FAS); graduate of St. Stephen's School, Rome; attending Maryland Institute College of Art, majoring in illustration.

**Katrina Ternus** – daughter of Mary and Scott (State) Ternus; graduate of Biddeford High School in Biddeford, Maine; attending the University of Miami, majoring in marine biology/environmental science.

2010 AFSA MERIT AWARDS "BEST ESSAY"

# Joyce's Umbrella

BY MARLENE HAGGBLADE

For a middle-aged Zambian woman, Joyce moved with surprising agility as she chased my friend Mildred around the yard with an umbrella. I had always thought of Joyce as a kind person with a gentle soul. But at that moment, she appeared to have lost her mind. As I later learned, that was exactly the case. The macrophages in her brain were secreting deadly toxins and slowly destroying her neural tissue. AIDS dementia had taken over. During the 12 years I lived in sub-Saharan Africa, this image stands out in my mind as a moment that transformed my perception of Africa, medicine and disease.

That afternoon, at 11 years of age, I was involuntarily drafted into medical service. My brother was nowhere to be found, who was our domestic employee, and my mother was out. So my father asked me to help take Joyce to the hospital. I agreed, on the condition that we disarm her. Joyce and I sat in the back of the car as my father drove to the clinic. She stared at me blankly, and I realized that although I had known her for five years, she no longer recognized me. Suddenly, out of nowhere, she hit me! Shocked, I didn't know how to react, so I simply pretended it hadn't happened.

When we arrived at the clinic, she became even more agitated and wouldn't sit down. Instead, she sang and danced uncontrollably. The baby next to me started to cry as Joyce continued her chaotic routine. After calming Joyce down, a kind nurse took her blood sample and filled out a card. She placed the card on top of a pile of hundreds of similar cards. In that instant, Joyce became another horrifying statistic: she was HIV-positive.

Since Joyce could no longer care for herself, she moved in with her brother, who also cared for the four children of their deceased sister. As I said goodbye to the shell of a woman I once knew, I doubted I would ever see her again.

From that day forward, I began to see my surroundings in a new light. The gravity of Joyce's situation flooded my world. Before, on my daily bus ride to and from school, I had passed a graveyard without noticing. Now, almost every day of the week, I noticed a funeral commemorating yet another AIDS victim. In time, the graveyard ran out of space, and the funeral processions proceeded a half mile further up the road to the cemetery extension.

As our family prepared to leave Zambia in the summer of 2006, I was astonished to see Joyce return, seemingly from the dead, to wish us goodbye. Her transformation was unfathomable. She had returned to her old gentle self. The antiretroviral drugs that the clinic had given her after our visit worked phenomenally. I consider Joyce's recovery a miracle of modern medicine. Science provided Joyce an umbrella.

Academically, this experience has motivated me to explore the broad interactions among humans, disease, the natural environment and public health. When I entered my new U.S. high school, I selected the global ecology magnet program in order to look at the links between human actions, science and the environment. This past summer, I took a course at Brown University studying the epidemiology of exotic diseases, including AIDS. For three periods a day during my senior year, I interned at a veterinary clinic in order to explore animal diseases, their responses and available cures.

My experience growing up overseas has definitely shaped my priorities and my interests. It has presented me with some fascinating encounters, as well as some very unsettling and desperate situations. Through Joyce, in particular, I learned about the power of science, of human support systems, and of the will to fight back.

When most people see an umbrella, they see gloomy weather and despair. But for me, an umbrella symbolizes hope and the power of human ingenuity and compassion. ❑

*Marlene Haggblade will be attending Pomona College in the fall, and plans to major in biology with the intention of becoming a veterinarian. She has lived in Bangladesh, Madagascar, Zambia and Maryland, and enjoys playing soccer and lacrosse.*

# FY 2009 AFSA-PAC Treasurer's Report

Dear Colleagues:

The American Foreign Service Association Political Action Committee, created in 2002, continues to raise AFSA's profile on Capitol Hill. It is one of the legislative tools used to advance our agenda, helping to solve the overseas comparability pay issue and to secure important funding for our foreign affairs budgets. AFSA-PAC ensures that we have a "seat at the table" and allows us to draw greater attention to our issues.

In 2009, AFSA-PAC raised $24,575, down from the $29,000 mark we reached in both 2008 and 2007. Of our 405 donors, over 80 percent were retired members, and 13 percent donated from overseas posts. Unfortunately, the average donation, $60.70, was down a full dollar from 2008. We understand the fiscal realities faced by all of our colleagues; and we will, as always, utilize the resources you donate as effectively as possible. All donations to the PAC are voluntary, and no AFSA dues are used for political contributions. We continue to ensure strict compliance with federal and local election laws governing our activities.

During 2009, AFSA-PAC contributed $18,000 to our congressional supporters' re-election efforts. Our focus continues to remain on the appropriating and authorizing committees with jurisdiction over Foreign Service management issues, Foreign Service staffing and general foreign affairs matters. We enjoy good relations with key decision-makers at the highest levels in both parties, and we also look to expand our cultivation effort to include new faces.

As we implement AFSA's legislative agenda in 2010, we are confident that AFSA-PAC will continue to give the Foreign Service a greater voice. We are one of the precious few mechanisms solely focused on issues affecting our active-duty and retired colleagues. Our impact has been cumulative, and we continue striving on your behalf.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Boyatt, Treasurer ❑

Memorial Ceremony • Continued from page 59

water treatment facility in Fallujah. Originally scheduled to work in Iraq for 11 months following his placement there in 2007, he decided to stay longer to help with Iraq in its reconstruction efforts.

Earlier, Barnich served as general counsel to the governor of Illinois and chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission, and was the co-founder of New Paradigm Resources Group, Inc.

His friend of 25 years, Phil O'Connor, who also served with him in Iraq, recalls a time in Baghdad a couple of years ago when a newly arrived officer was asked why she came to Iraq, and she stumbled a bit, not wanting to sound overly noble. Says O'Connor: "Terry stopped her and said, 'From now on, if someone asks you why you went off to Iraq, you tell them: I heard America was in a tight spot over there, so I saddled up and rode to the sound of the guns.' That was very much his attitude."

## VICTORIA J. DELONG

Victoria J. DeLong, 57, a 27-year veteran of the Foreign Service who served as the cultural affairs officer for Embassy Port-au-Prince, was killed when her home collapsed during the Jan. 12 earthquake. Posted in Haiti since February 2009, she had fallen in love with the country's people and culture and called this tour the highlight of her diplomatic career. A colleague, FSO Katherine Nichols, was also serving in Haiti at the time and remembers DeLong as "courageous and warm, someone with whom one felt centered when serving in dangerous posts."

Before coming to Haiti, DeLong had served in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Papua New Guinea, Germany, Australia, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mauritius.

## DALE J. GREDLER

Dale J. Gredler, 43, a Foreign Service officer at the United States Agency for International Development, passed away on Jan. 17 after suffering from cardiac arrest en route from his post in Kazakhstan to receive medical treatment in the United States. He served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines in the 1990s and then worked for the Federal Emergency Management Agency before transferring to USAID in 2001. Gredler served in Jakarta, where he was instrumental in reconstruction efforts following the devastating December 2004 tsunami, as well as at the USAID Central Asian Republics mission in Almaty.

Braden "Buzz" Enroth, the deputy director for procurement at USAID who supervised Gredler, praised his dedication to his work: "Dale was a motivated and dedicated officer who had a very bright future with USAID. He was willing to serve in whatever capacity needed and accepted challenging assignments, where he excelled. He will be sorely missed by his colleagues and friends."

Barnich, DeLong and Gredler all led lives defined by action and service. Their families have asked those who choose to participate to make a charitable donation of any amount directly to one of the charities below:


MICHAEL LAIACONA

The AFSA Memorial Plaque, newly inscribed with the names of Terrence Barnich, Victoria DeLong and Dale Gredler.

• In memory of Terrence L. Barnich, please send donations through Marivell Dominguez at the Chicago office of the Catholic Charities USA (Tel: (312) 655-7000) or make a donation online at www.catholiccharities.net.

• In memory of Victoria J. DeLong, donations should go to the Little Flower/Rosa Mina Orphanage, where DeLong volunteered. Online donations can be made through the Partners in Progress Web site (www.piphaiti.org). There, click on "make a donation" to get to the donations page. Where it asks "How should we use your donation?" use the drop-down menu to specify Little Flower/Rosa Mina.

• In memory of Dale J. Gredler, please send donations to Assosiasi Koperasi Wanita Putroe Phang in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The street address is: Jl. Tgk Di Lhong II, Lr Tgk M Saidi No. 24 A, Lhong Raya, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, 23239. Phone/Fax: (011) (62) 651-26937; or e-mail Devi Puspa at dephie75@yahoo.com. ❑

AFSA Awards • Continued from page 59

unique in the U.S. government. For more than 40 years, AFSA has been honoring individuals in the Foreign Service who have displayed the courage to speak out and challenge the system from within. Three of the four constructive dissent categories had winners this year.

The winner of the F. Allen "Tex" Harris Award for constructive dissent by a Foreign Service Specialist is David M. Zwach, a security engineering officer who persuaded the department to approve a specialist commission certificate commensurate with the generalist version.

The William R. Rivkin Award for constructive dissent by a mid-level Foreign Service officer has been conferred on Dr. Diana Putman for challenging the U.S. Africa Command's proposed interventions in the area of sexual and gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally, Kathryn A. Kiser has received the W. Averell Harriman Award for constructive dissent by an entry-level Foreign Service officer. While stationed in the consular section of Embassy Amman, Ms. Kiser dissented from a State Department policy that confiscates passports from some U.S. citizens resident in foreign countries until a security check, which can take weeks, is completed.

There was no winner this year of the Christian A. Herter Award for constructive dissent by a Senior Foreign Service officer.

## Outstanding Performance Awards

These awards recognize exemplary performance and extraordinary contribu-

Continued on page 74

**AFSA Awards • Continued from page 73**

tions to professionalism, morale and effectiveness.

Anne Bridgman of Embassy Bratislava received the Avis Bohlen Award, presented to a Foreign Service family member whose relations with the American and foreign communities at a Foreign Service post have done the most to advance American interests.

The Nelson B. Delavan Award, which recognizes extraordinary contributions to effectiveness, professionalism and morale by an Office Management Specialist, was won by Allie L. Almero of Embassy Kabul. The runner-up was Alicia N. Gale of Embassy Phnom Penh.

This year's winner of the M. Juanita Guess Award, given in recognition of outstanding service by a Community Liaison Officer who has demonstrated leadership, dedication, initiative or imagination in assisting families serving at an overseas post, was Sarah Genton of Embassy Madrid. The runner-up was Stephanie Diamond of Embassy Bujumbura.

These awards serve to recognize the intellectual courage and outstanding achievements of our Foreign Service colleagues.

## AFSA Post Rep of the Year

James (Jim) Fox was chosen as the AFSA post representative of the year. The post rep at the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels, Fox was nominated by his colleagues for his tireless efforts in advocating for the mission staff with management.

The AFSA Awards and Plaques Committee selects the F. Allen "Tex" Harris, W. Averell Harriman and Christian A. Herter Constructive Dissent Awards. The committee also nominates the recipient of the annual Lifetime Contributions to American Diplomacy Award, who is ultimately chosen by the AFSA Governing Board. The Rivkin Award winner is selected by the family of the late Ambassador William R. Rivkin and other prominent individuals connected to the Rivkin family. The winners of the three awards for outstanding performance are selected by separate panels of judges. The Governing Board chooses the post representative of the year.

AFSA appreciates the efforts of all those who sent in nominations or served as panel members this year. We place great importance on these awards, which serve to recognize the intellectual courage and outstanding achievements of our Foreign Service colleagues.

AFSA also thanks the director general for co-sponsoring the annual awards ceremony, which is open to any employee wishing to attend. Congratulations to all winners and runners-up for this well-deserved recognition. (Please see the September issue of *AFSA News* for full coverage of the June 24 awards ceremony.) ❑

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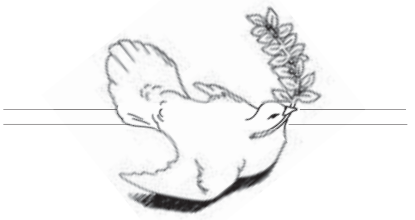

# In Memory

**John George Bacon**, 89, a retired FSO, died peacefully at his home in Destin, Fla., on April 25.

Mr. Bacon was born in Spokane, Wash. During World War II he served in the United States Army with the 80th Division in Europe and was awarded four battle stars, before resigning his commission at the rank of captain to return to school.

Mr. Bacon attended Washington State College and Whitman University before graduating from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He later earned an advanced, specialized degree from the National War College in Washington, D.C.

During a 30-year diplomatic career, Mr. Bacon served in London, Rome, New York (at the United Nations), Khartoum, Saigon, Bonn and Jakarta. He also served the Department of State in Washington, D.C., as the executive director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and was a member of the delegation to the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty talks in Helsinki and Vienna.

After retiring as a minister counselor, he accompanied his wife, Maureen, to her Foreign Service posts in Accra, Tel Aviv and Bridgetown.

Mr. Bacon was a resident of Destin, Fla., for more than 15 years. An active member of the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of the Emerald Coast, he served as president and treasurer. He also served as an advocate for children in the Okaloosa County Courts and played tennis four times a week through the age of 85. One of his favorite downtime activities was contemplating the view of "his lake" from his back deck with Yoffi, his dog, by his side. Friends and family remember Mr. Bacon as a quiet, introspective individual with a quick wit and wry sense of humor.

He is survived by his wife, Maureen Bacon of Destin, five children and eight grandchildren.

**Thomas J. Barnes**, 80, a retired FSO, died on April 4.

Born in St. Paul, Minn., in 1930, he escaped the rigors of northern winters by joining the U.S. Army in 1951, shortly after obtaining a master's degree in English literature from the University of Minnesota. Service in Korea and Japan instilled in him an enduring affection for Asia, but fear of a lifetime of bivouacs in the snow led him to resign his regular Army commission in late 1956. He entered the Foreign Service in 1957, serving until 1980.

During his 23-year diplomatic career, Mr. Barnes spent six years in Thailand, five in Vietnam and three in Laos. He was consul in Jue and Udorn, consul general in Can Tho and Tangier, an associate USAID director covering Vietnam's Military Region II from Nhatrang, and political counselor in Bangkok. Other assignments included tours as a senior staff member for East Asia on the National Security Council, diplomat-in-residence at the University of Hawaii, regional refugee coordinator for Southeast Asia and director of the Interagency Humanitarian Working Group on Kampuchea in Washington.

Those last two assignments led to his October 1980 entry into the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. He initially served in Somalia as UNHCR deputy representative and later in Geneva as, successively, chief of the Southwest Asia section, head of the Supplies and Food Aid Service, and head of Organization and Management. Turning 60 brought on mandatory U.N. retirement at the end of 1990.

From early 1991 through mid-1995, Mr. Barnes served as coordinator for operations and program development for the International Catholic Migration Commission at its Geneva headquarters.

After settling in Austin, Texas, in 1996, he wrote five books, including two historical novels, *Tay Son: Rebellion in 18th-Century Vietnam* (2000) and *Vietnam When the Tanks Were Elephants* (2005); a memoir, *Anecdotes of a Vagabond: The Foreign Service, the*

*U.N., and a Volag* (2000); a novella and related short stories, *Coping with Lust and the Colonel: Wartime Korea from Sokchang-ni* (2000, expanded and updated in 2005); and an art photo book, *Southeast Asian Portraits* (2002).

Mr. Barnes is survived by his wife, Mai Tang Barnes, and their three children, An, Kim and Kevin; four children by a previous marriage, Christopher, Ross, Karen and Shannon; and seven grandchildren, Thanasi and Niko Pantazides, Mina and Aylin Cakirkaya, Bailey and Ana Marie Ostrowski and Kai Barnes.

**Malcolm Perry Hallam**, 90, a retired FSO, died on Dec. 21, 2009, at his residence in Auburndale, Fla., after an extended illness from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Mr. Hallam was born in Fort Pierre, S.D., on Dec. 15, 1919, to Paul Lorenzo and Rose Swanson Hallam. He graduated from Pierre High School in 1937 and attended the University of Michigan for three years. He joined the State Department in 1943.

During a 30-year Foreign Service career, he served in Baghdad, Athens, Durban, Cardiff, Rio de Janeiro, Ponta Delgarda, Sao Paulo, Saigon and Washington, D.C. While posted in Greece, he met and married Marjorie Whiting, who also worked at Embassy Athens. Following his retirement in 1973, the couple settled in Auburndale, Fla.

In 1983, Marjorie passed away. Mr. Hallam married Eileen Huntington in 1997.

In retirement, he enjoyed writing his memoirs, playing cards, and traveling (to Alaska, Europe and South Africa), as well as watching Michigan, Florida and Mizzou football.

Mr. Hallam was preceded in death by his parents, his first wife and three stepsons: Sam, Richard and Raymond.

He is survived by his wife, Eileen, of Auburndale; children, Kitty and Steve; a sister, Marge, of Oklahoma City, Okla.; stepdaughters Rita (and her husband, David) Redditt of Dade City, Fla., Darcy Wheatley of Dothan, Ala., and Cindy Parker of Tallahassee, Fla.; granddaughters Michelle Wilson and Laura Grossman of Carollton, Mo.; grandsons Dallas Hallam of Los Angeles, Calif., and Forrest Hallam of Des Moines, Iowa; as well as many nieces, nephews and great-grandchildren.

**Mary Hance Owen**, 89, wife of the late FSO Bob Owen, died on April 18 at Navesink Harbor in Red Bank, N.J.

Born in Long Branch, N.J., on June 8, 1920, Mrs. Owen attended Freehold High School and then went to Douglass College, where she majored in journalism, graduating in 1941. In college, she made many lifelong friends, among them Robert I. Owen, an athlete, engineering student at Rutgers and a good dancer, whom she married in a military ceremony at Rutgers Chapel in August 1942.

While her husband was an engineering officer in the Navy stationed in the South Pacific, Mary worked at Fort Monmouth, N.J., as a training coordinator. When he returned from the war, Mr. Owen joined the Foreign Service. Mrs. Owen traveled along with him, learning multiple languages, adapting to life in one foreign culture after another, and raising their family.

She raised four children, each of whom was born in a different country. Jim, the eldest, was born in the Dominican Republic; Ellen was born in Germany; John was born in the United States; and Jeff, the youngest, was born in Russia.

Upon Mr. Owen's retirement from the Foreign Service in 1971, the couple moved to West Long Branch, N.J., settling into an old Victorian farm where Mrs. Owen's uncle, Owen Woolley, and her mother, May Hance, had lived before their deaths.

Ready to make her own mark on the world, Mrs. Owen became deeply involved in the community, investing countless hours in her church, the First United Methodist Church in West Long Branch, and in service to environmental organizations and causes. She was a pioneer in promoting recycling in Monmouth County and began the first such program in West Long Branch. After farming the land for a time, Mr. Owen joined in her conservation efforts.

Mrs. Owen developed close relationships with people in numerous environmental groups and got to know local and state politicians on a first-name basis. Passionate about green spaces and gardening, the couple obtained a conservation easement on the fields adjoining their farmhouse and donated these eight acres to the town of West Long Branch for use as community gardens.

In their 80s, when the farm became too much for them to manage, Mr. and Mrs. Owen moved to Navesink Harbor. Mr. Owen died in 2003, after 51 years of marriage.

On her own, Mrs. Owen continued to support her favorite environmental and political causes to the extent she could. Family and friends remember her affection and support for her chil-

dren in foreign lands and at home; and her love of birds, animals and the beautiful, fragile environment we all share. Her family recalls that for the past several years, right until her death, every conversation with Mrs. Owen included details about the weather, the state of the Navesink River, what she had heard on the news about the environment and what wildlife she had seen.

She is survived by her children, Jim Owen of Belfast, Maine; Ellen McNaughton of Grand Rapids, Mich.; John Owen of St. Petersburg, Fla.; and Jeff Owen of Marshall, N.C.; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. In her memory, friends and family are encouraged to make donations to a local environmental organization of their choice or to Douglass College.

**John Theodore (J.T.) Rosenquist**, 66, a retired FSO, died of esophageal cancer on Sept. 16, 2009, in Milroy, Pa.

An engineer, beloved husband and father, iconoclast and former Voice of America Power Plant Supervisor, Mr. Rosenquist was born on June 12, 1943, in San Rafael, Calif., the oldest child of Newton and Blanche Rosenquist.

After enlisting in the U.S. Air Force and serving in Vietnam, Cambodia and Japan, he attended Parks College in St. Louis, Mo., receiving his B.Sc. in aeronautical engineering. He worked for some years as a testing engineer for Lockheed Martin and Boeing, and was eventually offered a position with the Voice of America.

As a member of the U.S. Information Agency's Foreign Service, Mr. Rosenquist supervised as many as 300 locally employed staff and managed million-dollar budgets for fuel and equipment in places as varied as Liberia, Morocco and Greece. His work on the generator plants in the Philippines after the Pinatubo eruption enabled their continued functioning, for which he was recognized with a Superior Honor award.

He was also nominated for and accepted a study year at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, where he concentrated on the "nuke" stuff.

As his family and friends recall, he occasionally despaired of ever bringing the "Voice" into the 20th century.

During his Washington assignments, he fielded questions and solved problems from many governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including one memorable long-distance call from a barge in Alaska. In Liberia, his charitable work with the local village and his upward-mobility initiative and training program resulted in his being "gowned" as a paramount chief of the local tribe, something he always insisted was both honorary and overstated (he felt rather silly in a full-length dress, he always said).

Mr. Rosenquist retired from the Voice of America in 1993 and proceeded to follow his wife, Chris, also a member of the Foreign Service, as her dependent spouse — or as he put it, "a kept man." During these years he variously taught a senior-level physics class in Montevideo — including the formulas for ensuring both sufficient pressure and adequate cooling for a working whiskey still; worked at the U.N. Climate Change Conference of Parties VI in The Hague; and acted as a surveillance detection supervisor in both The Hague and Almaty.

In his free time he also managed to be a great father to two sons, ski the Alps and the Himalayas, pilot multi-engine flights between Morocco and Spain, and hunt wolves on the Chinese border.

Finally, in 2004, Mr. Rosenquist bought his "fixer-upper," and he and his wife retired to central Pennsylvania, where he joined the Senatorial Circle of the Republican Party, opened a forge for "one-off" pieces, refined his "secret steak sauce," and enjoyed rebuilding his almost-200-year-old house from the ground up. Family and friends recall fondly his sense of humor and trenchant political commentary.

Mr. Rosenquist is survived by his wife, Chris, of Milroy; their sons, Benjamin and Stephan; his brothers, David and Paul, and their wives and children; several great-nieces and great-nephews; his mother, Blanche; and, last (but not least), his daily companion, L.D. the dachshund.

**Theresa Alison Smyth**, 21, the daughter of FSO Richard H. Smyth and retired FSO Janice S. Smyth, died on Feb. 28 in Carlisle, Pa., following a long illness.

Born in Copenhagen, Alison grew up in Denmark, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Jamaica and Northern Virginia. An AFSA scholarship winner and a valedictorian of Reston's South Lakes High School, she was a student at the University of Virginia pursuing a dual major in biology and psychology.

A skilled observer of animal — and human — behavior, she was a talented mimic who enjoyed the theater, literature, aquatics, needle arts and trekking.

In "I Am a Girl," an essay she wrote in 2005, Alison described her life as a "Third Culture Kid." That essay, which was read at her memorial service, is this month's Reflections column (see p. 88).

Besides her parents, Alison leaves behind her beloved sister, Caitlin Smyth of Newport News, Va.; her grandparents, Ronald and Alyce Smyth of Bend, Ore.; her grandmother Kathleen Sullivan of Atlanta, Ga.; and many loving friends around the globe.

**James C. Suma**, 79, a retired FSO with USAID, died of heart failure at his home in McLean, Va., on Nov. 30, 2009.

Born in Hamilton, Ohio, Mr. Suma first came to Washington in the mid-1940s, when he served as a Capitol page. He attended the Capitol Page School on Capitol Hill, graduating in June 1948.

He attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, graduating in June 1952, and then was commissioned as a lieutenant (junior grade) in the U.S. Navy. He served in the Navy until July 1954. After his discharge, he attended the Wharton Business School of the University of Pennsylvania, receiving an MBA in June 1958.

Mr. Suma joined the Foreign Service in 1958, and served with the U.S. Agency for International Development for 31 years. Shortly after arriving at his first posting, Athens, Mr. Suma met his wife of 49 years, the former Becky Daskalakis. They were married on Dec. 29, 1960.

In 1960, Mr. Suma was posted to Jakarta. In 1963, he was assigned to Amman, where the Sumas remained until 1964. From 1965 until 1968, Mr. Suma served as an industrial development officer in Kabul. (In his McLean home, he kept a photo of the two Afghan hounds he had received as a gift from the Afghan king.) In 1968, Mr. Suma returned to Washington, D.C., where he served as a finance officer in the East Asia Bureau.

In 1970, he was assigned to the USAID mission in the Dominican Republic, where he served as a project development officer and an adviser on financial markets and institutions. The couple enjoyed the country's beautiful beaches, and Mr. Suma became an avid sailor. In 1976,

he was assigned as the chief of USAID's Capital Development Office in Bogota.

In 1978, Mr. Suma took up a challenging assignment in Managua. During his two-year tour of duty, a period of national political turmoil which included the last year of the Somoza dynasty and the first year of the Sandinista regime, he oversaw the implementation of a $100 million project to reconstruct facilities destroyed by the civil war.

Mr. Suma was subsequently posted to Cairo, where he served as the director of the Office of Finance and Investment from 1980 to 1986. During this period, he managed USAID's largest overseas private sector development program and played an important role in increasing funding for private-sector projects in Egypt.

In 1987, he was assigned as chief of the Office of Private Sector Development in Panama. This posting was cut short by Panamanian President Manuel Noriega's termination of the USAID program. Upon his return to Washington, Mr. Suma served in the Bureau of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs until his retirement from the Foreign Service in 1989. He received numerous citations and merit awards during his career.

In retirement, Mr. Suma remained active. He worked as a consultant with various companies until 1995. A fanatical BMW owner, he collected cars. He also enjoyed gardening, investing, participating in Virginia politics and boating on the Chesapeake.

Mr. Suma is survived by his wife, P. Becky Suma, of McLean, Va., and two grown children, who reside in Sao Paulo and Washington, D.C.

**Rush Walker Taylor Jr.**, 75, a retired FSO and former ambassador, died on March 7 at the Capital Hospice in Arlington, Va.

Mr. Taylor was born in Little Rock, Ark. His family moved to Crockett, Texas, when he was 9 years old. He attended Harvard University, where he received his bachelor's degree, and the University of Virginia, where he earned his J.D.

Mr. Taylor served in the U.S. Army

for two years with the Special Forces in Heidelberg, and was a courier for the Laos Conferences in Geneva in 1962, the same year he joined the Foreign Service.

Mr. Taylor's overseas posts included Yaoundé, Libreville, Rome, Florence, Oporto, Nassau and Bissau. His final posting was as ambassador to Togo from 1988 to 1990. There he was instrumental in establishing a free trade zone. He also planned the Togolese president's successful first official visit to the United States. Mr. Taylor received that country's highest award for exceptional contributions to U.S.-Togolese relations.

His stateside tours included service on the Italy desk from 1967 to 1969, as special assistant to Secretary of State William Rogers from 1970 to 1972, as senior management analyst in the Office of the Inspector General from 1979 to 1981, as director of the Office of Press Relations from 1981 to 1983, and as deputy U.S. coordinator for international communications and information policy from 1983 to 1988.

Ambassador Taylor retired from the Foreign Service in 1990 with the rank of minister counselor. He then entered the private sector, serving first as president of Cie. Des Bauxites de Guinea in Guinea, West Africa; then as executive director of the United States–Angola Chamber of Commerce; and, finally, as vice president of HSBC Equator Bank.

Amb. Taylor is survived by his wife of 45 years, Joanna Bellows of Arlington, Va.; three daughters, Ann Taylor of Alkmaar, Netherlands, Charlotte Taylor of Providence, R.I., and Emily Taylor of New York City; one son, Patrick Mensah of Woodbridge, Va.; and nine grandchildren.

**Hildegard Elisabet Wachob**, 81, wife of retired FSO James Wachob, of Chevy Chase, Md., died on Feb. 14 at Clark House in Westwood, Mass., after a long battle with Parkinson's disease and spinal cancer.

Mrs. Wachob was born in Breitenau, in 1928, to Pastor Ernst Henn and his wife, Caroline Schellhorn Henn. She was the second-oldest of eight children; five of her siblings survive her. Her youth included the hard work of caring for younger brothers and sisters. She enjoyed hiking with her father in the German countryside, playing the organ at church and attending hotel management school.

She married James Wachob in 1955, and for the next 35 years they lived in six foreign countries: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, the Central African Republic, Swaziland and West Germany. She was employed as an administrative assistant at the American embassy in Prague and as a teacher of German in the American consulate general in Frankfurt. She was engaged in local community welfare activities during her family's residence in the Central African Republic and in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Mrs. Wachob loved caring for her husband, their children and their grandchildren. Her home and garden were an inspiration to many. Hundreds of houseguests were privileged to enjoy her hospitality. She enjoyed reading, walking and praying. She was an ardently faithful woman, serving in several capacities at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in Bethesda, Md.; she regularly spoke of the joy it would be to meet her Maker.

Family members recall how she taught by example with her quiet dignity, her stoicism and her complete selflessness.

Mrs. Wachob is survived by her husband, James, of Chevy Chase, Md.; her daughter, Juanita Allen Kingsley, of Dedham, Mass.; her son, Richard, and his wife, Mary, of Westwood, Mass.; and three adoring grandchildren, Ursula, Colin and Aaron.

**Jim Wilkinson**, 72, a retired FSO, died on April 1, at his home in Santa Rosa, Calif., of an apparent heart attack.

A native of New York, Mr. Wilkinson graduated from the California Institute of Technology as a math major in 1959. He later pursued Russian studies at the Australian National University from 1962 to 1963.

He joined the Foreign Service in 1962 and, during the next decade, served in Canberra, Munich, Bangkok and Washington, D.C. In 1973, he was assigned to the Soviet desk. He was posted to Moscow from 1974 to 1976, returning to the Soviet desk until 1979, when he was assigned to Bangkok as political counselor. From 1983 to 1985, he served as deputy chief of mission at Embassy Berlin (East). He then returned to Washington as deputy assistant secretary of State for European affairs and U.S. special Cyprus coordinator from 1985 to 1989.

In 1989, Mr. Wilkinson was named deputy U.S. representative on the U.N. Security Council, with the rank of ambassador. He served concurrently as deputy for management of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, head of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Trusteeship Council and alternate U.S. representative to the U.N. General Assembly.

From 1991 to 1993, Mr. Wilkinson served as foreign policy adviser to the

commander-in-chief of U.S. Pacific forces in Honolulu. His last posting was as interim chargé d'affaires in Vientiane from October through December 1993.

In 1993, Mr. Wilkinson married Ellen Boneparth, a retired FSO.

In retirement, Mr. Wilkinson wrote and taught. His publications include monographs on Greek-Turkish relations and the Cyprus dispute and two books on the United Nations, *The Third Try: Can the U.N. Work?* (with Alison Broinowski, Scribe Publications, Melbourne, 2005) and *"Our Last Best Hope": Why the United Nations Stumbles and What the United States Should Do About It* (with Alison Broinowski, iUniverse, Inc., 2007).

He was a visiting lecturer in political science at the University of Hawaii at Hilo from 1993 to 1994 and a member of the faculty of the Hellenic Institute for Foreign and European Policy annual seminars of Halki, Greece, from 1995 to 1997. From 2007 to 2010, he taught a Model United Nations course with his wife, Ellen, at Roseland University Prep in Santa Rosa.

Following his retirement, the couple settled in Santa Rosa, where he became involved in local politics. Mr. Wilkinson had just completed a book, *Who Rules Santa Rosa and Why It Matters*, and wrote a blog by the same name. His co-founding of Neighborhood Alliance and other forms of activism brought him the city's Award for Community Service in 2008.

"Jim was a force for positive change in our community — one with great wit, a ready smile and a glib pointed pen," Mayor Susan Gorin wrote in an e-mail that notified many Santa Rosans of his death. Close friend, ally and former councilman Steve Rabinowitsh called Wilkinson a community treasure.

Mr. Wilkinson is survived by his wife, Ellen Boneparth, of Santa Rosa; two daughters from an earlier marriage, Pamela Wilkinson of New York City, and Hilary Wilkinson (and her husband, Barth Grant) of Belle Mead, N.J.; a grandson, Theodore Wilkinson-Grant of Belle Mead; and a sister, Beth Cutting of Connecticut. ■

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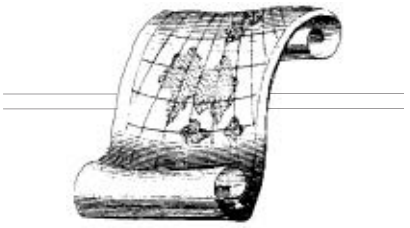

# REFLECTIONS

## *I Am a Girl*

*BY THERESA ALISON SMYTH*

I am a girl, a girl named Al. I like cream cheese, but I am not carved from it.

I was born in Copenhagen but lived the longest part of my life in Peshawar, sometimes traveling through tribal areas in Afghanistan. I remember Pakistan through brief images.

When I arrived, I was covered in flower garlands. Layers of pink and white flowers surrounded my face, burying me so that all I could see was a patch of blue sky. I was awakened each day by the loud speaker of a mosque announcing the call to prayer, and rode to school in a bulletproof car next to men driving horsecarts while dust motes danced around me.

I continued my travels, moving to Sri Lanka and Jamaica, visiting surrounding countries, changing airplanes like I changed my clothes. I've walked the clean streets of Singapore, the outback of Australia, the wet canal pathways of rural England and the bustling avenues of Paris.

I've seen wild elephants and elephant orphans, hog deer and rhinos, and walked through the territory of a tiger at night with my sister to get to my hotel room with nothing but a flashlight. I've watched Caribbean sunsets and Welsh sunrises, the colors blending like an artist's palette.

I have been in the palace of the Living Goddess in Nepal and in the Temple of the Buddha's Tooth in Sri Lanka,

*Layers of pink and white flowers surrounded my face, burying me so that all I could see was a patch of blue sky.*

and experienced the grandeur of the Taj Mahal in India. I've seen countless temples and forts amid the aroma of dust and heat, watching mischievous monkeys steal cameras from unsuspecting tourists.

I've seen multiple distant mountain ranges that seemed familiar to me, and tasted sweet oranges on the mountain passes of Pakistan along the Grand Trunk Road. I've swerved to miss goats and cowherding donkeys on the roads of Jamaica. I've held turtle hatchlings and set them free in the Indian Ocean under a banner of stars.

I learned to scuba-dive in an Austrian duchess's pool at Blue Lagoon in Jamaica, and to ride a horse on a tiny farm in a rainforest. I have trekked across the Himalayas on paths that are now unsafe for Americans to traverse, swimming in a pool at the summit of one on Christmas Eve.

I've ridden elephants in Sri Lanka, through jungles teaming with life unordinary. I have stayed at the residences of royalty, enjoying tea and spending nights under the roof of a princess in the snowcapped mountains of Swat.

I have touched the coarse fur of a camel as I rode it, and swayed upon the undulating back of a water buffalo. I played upon the real Little Mermaid at age 2, and knew the Khyber Pass at age 4.

I've snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef, seen the Eiffel Tower by moonlight and witnessed the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. I met the Jamaican bobsled team, and had an Olympic swim coach. I swam at a beach where there were signs posted warning of the possibility of land mines and once had a bomb explode a block from my house.

As a mentor for my school, I have been trained to recognize that diversity is not just skin color or a person's heritage, but also the sum of one's activities and experiences. I don't know how many Swedish-Irish-Scottish-Austrian-Native Americans there are, but I do know that no one grocery store sells all my favorite foods.

I am a Third Culture Kid. ■

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*Theresa Alison Smyth, 21, daughter of Foreign Service parents Richard H. Smyth and Janice S. Smyth (retired), died on Feb. 28 after a long illness. This essay, which she wrote in 2005, was read at her memorial service.*


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