

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MARCH 2006

State

MAGAZINE



Hanoi
City of Lakes

Fingerprint biometrics could mark the end of usernames and passwords.



IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:
Biometrics in Laos

State MAGAZINE

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DEPUTY EDITOR

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WRITER/EDITOR

David L. Johnston
ART DIRECTOR

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

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Kelly Clements

Pam Holliday

Pat Patierno

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ON THE COVER

The setting sun highlights Turtle Pagoda on the banks of Hoan Kiem Lake, one of Hanoi's more than 100 lakes. Vietnam boasts one of the world's fastest growing economies, and this former foe now sends 20 percent of all its exports to the U.S. *Photo by Karen Lantner.*

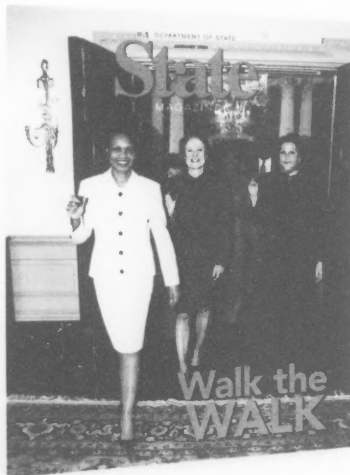
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Happy 300th Birthday To First U.S. Diplomat

Life and history being what they are, it is not always easy to keep track of those special anniversaries that a new year brings, but let us not forget that this year—2006—is the 300th anniversary of the birth of America's first diplomat, Benjamin Franklin, born January 17, 1706, in Boston. Scientist, diplomat, intellectual and statesman, Franklin certainly served during challenging times.

Perhaps a brief mention and commemoration of our diplomatic ancestor in *State Magazine* would be possible. If not, then maybe this short letter to the editor would serve.

Norman Barth
*U.S. Consulate General
Monterrey, Mexico*



Recognition for Retirees

I think the last paragraph of "In Appreciation: Department Announces New Retirement Career Recognition" by David B. Dlouhy (January, pp. 42–43) is as beautiful a "recognition gift" as I have ever read.

Warren A. Silver
Retired Foreign Service Officer

Correction

A January article on the Presidential Quality Awards referred to the "Malcolm Baldwin National Quality Improvement Awards" (p. 45). The awards are named for former Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige.

FROM THE EDITOR

When a disastrous earthquake struck remote parts of Pakistan in October, volunteers from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad jumped in to help. Sometimes living in and working from modified metal containers, embassy officers and locally employed staff coordinated efforts with the Pakistan government, international organizations and other volunteers from the Department of Defense and U.S. Agency for International Development to save lives. They put a human face on the U.S. government's \$510 million pledge.

In a city with 100 lakes but no Starbucks, the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi has grown by leaps and bounds, sparked by the Bilateral Trade Agreement between the United States and Vietnam that went into effect in 2001. Ties between the former foes have deepened since relations were normalized in 1995. The United States is now Vietnam's largest export market, and U.S. exports to Vietnam increased by 250 percent in the past three years.

Several years back, anyone who needed a security clearance to work for the federal government often had to wait six months or more to get that clearance and start their new job. Today, thanks to reforms initiated in the Office of Personnel Security and Suitability, the State Department can boast about its fast track clearance process. New employees can be cleared and on the job within 75 days, a full two weeks quicker than the time mandated by Congress. The process at many other federal agencies still takes months longer.

Co-hosted by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, the first U.S. University Presidents Summit on International Education drew university presidents and chancellors from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Among other things, they heard about plans to recruit more foreign students to U.S. colleges, send more low-income American students abroad and increase the number of exchange participants from abroad at U.S. community colleges. And special guest President George W. Bush announced the National Security Language Initiative, an interagency effort to significantly increase the number of Americans learning critically needed languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Turkish and Urdu. At least one university president was "dazzled" by the experience.

Reaching out to the Muslim community in Ghana often takes on literal meaning. While many of the country's Muslim citizens live in the cities of Accra and Kumasi, a good number also live in less accessible regions. Nonetheless, embassy teams of economic, political, security, consular and public affairs officers take the American message far and wide, often in partnership with a group of Ghanaian Muslims, Friends Against Global Terrorism. So far, the efforts have been fruitful and gratifying.

Rob Wiley

A Concrete Foundation

New Embassy Conveys U.S. Commitment to Cambodia

In the shadow of fabled Wat Phnom in the heart of Cambodia's capital city, the U.S. government dedicated its first-ever permanent embassy in Phnom Penh on Jan. 17.

Ever since the opening of the first U.S. Embassy in 1950, diplomats assigned to Phnom Penh had lived a nomadic existence, with the venue moving no fewer than five times and closing down completely during the dark days of the Khmer Rouge and decade of Vietnamese occupation that followed.

The new structure, solid and resolute, conveys permanence and commitment. Its striking facade of creamy Carrara marble and black and red granite served as a fitting backdrop for the colorful pageantry of the dedication, which featured Buddhist monks clad in saffron-colored robes, the presentation of the colors by the embassy's new Marine Security Guard detachment and a blues rendition of the U.S. national anthem by world-renowned jazz vocalist CoCo York.

Honored guests were Christopher Hill, assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and His Excellency Hor Namhong, Cambodian deputy

prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. More than 400 government officials and other guests attended, and scores of local and international journalists covered the event.

The new embassy's location next to Wat Phnom is prime real estate. Legend says that this Buddhist temple was built on the hill (phnom in the Khmer language) where "Grandma Penh" found five Buddha statues in the hollow of a Koki tree after a devastating flood. The city that grew up around the temple eventually became known as Phnom Penh and to this day Wat Phnom is the spiritual heart of the city.

"Phnom Penh is one of the most beautiful cities in Asia," said Ambassador Joseph Mussomeli, "and our goal has been to ensure that our new embassy adds to the beauty of this extraordinary city."

By all accounts, the designers succeeded. Local residents and the media have praised the new embassy for the way it harmonizes with the surrounding neighborhood.

During the reception following the ceremony, guests marveled at the embassy's light and airy interior, which features a soaring central atrium and



Guests mingle at the reception in the new embassy's spacious atrium.

more than 100 original works of art by American and Cambodian artists. One guest said, "I think Grandma Penh is looking down and smiling now, knowing that the American Embassy is her new neighbor."

MARINES BRING CHRISTMAS CHEER TO RWANDA ORPHANS

Not long after the Marines began to arrive in Kigali, they gauged interest in beginning a Toys 4 Tots program in Rwanda to benefit a deserving orphanage. After expressions of support, the Marines placed boxes at the Embassy, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the American Club for dropping off donated toys.

With assistance from the health unit and public affairs representative Moses Kamanzi, the Marines identified last year's recipient: El Shaddai Church/Orphanage.

With about 100 donated toys, the Marines arrived at El Shaddai after the Christmas morning service. The children were extremely happy to see the packages. As there were not nearly enough toys for all the kids present, the gifts were given to them communally, to be used by all.

Warmed by the smiles on the kids' grateful faces, the Marines look forward to an even more rewarding campaign this year. The number of needy children is tremendous; the Marines plan to deliver the collected toys to a different orphanage each year.



EMBASSY ALGIERS REACHES OUT WITH CHRISTMAS TOYS

The Marine Security Guard detachment at U.S. Embassy Algiers organized the local American community to collect toys and money to benefit the 42 children at the Bab El Oued Hospital's pediatric center in downtown Algiers. The Marines distributed the toys on Christmas Day.

Deputy Chief of Mission Marc Sievers, Amy Geddes, Pierre Belisle and Amanda Johnson helped distribute the gifts to the children.

The donations from the American Embassy community were supple-

mented by a generous contribution from the American oil company Anadarko, based in Algeria.

Beginning in early November, the Marines assessed the pediatric center's needs and solicited the children's holiday wish lists. In addition to soliciting contributions from their American and Algerian colleagues, they hosted a bar night where proceeds went to the pediatric center.

This year's holiday donation marked a continuing normalization process at post. Algeria's bloody

decade of domestic terrorism from 1992 to 2003 initiated a drawdown at the embassy in 1994. As the security situation has improved, the embassy gradually has relaxed its security posture and continues to slowly normalize operations.

As a result, the Marines have been able to assume more of their traditional community activities. Their hard work and the embassy community's contributions have helped promote a positive image of Americans by helping Algerian children in need.

Embassy Belgrade Hosts Soccer Tourney for LE Staff



In late January, U.S. Embassy Belgrade hosted teams of Locally Employed Staff from Budapest, Podgorica, Sarajevo, Sofia and Zagreb, along with their supporters, for the inaugural Danube Cup indoor soccer tournament.

At the end of the first day's round-robin matches, the top four seeds—Podgorica, Sarajevo, Zagreb and Sofia—moved on to a single-elimination tournament. But before that, the Marine Security Guard detachment hosted all players and supporters for a happy hour and pizza party at the Marine House.

On day two, Podgorica bested Sofia in the first semifinal and Sarajevo beat Zagreb in the second. The finals between the two winners ended tied after regulation play and moved to penalty kicks, with Podgorica winning 2-1.

In the awards banquet at Deputy Chief of Mission Rod Moore's residence, Podgorica was handed the cup and pledged to defend it in a follow-up event to be scheduled.

Embassy Belgrade thanks all the teams and their supporters for making this event an unqualified success.

IN THE NEWS



FSO CARRIES ON FAMILY FOUNDATION'S WORK

During the course of a routine morning press brief early last November, I suddenly looked up and asked our briefer, Khalid, to repeat what he had just said. A news item from the Philippines reported that our management officer, Vivian Lesh, was participating in an effort to provide voluntary

medical services to the underprivileged in a remote coastal village on the island of Negros Oriental in the Mindanao Sea. I knew Vivian was on leave, but she had said nothing about spending her time on volunteer work.

I approached Vivian when she returned to Oman and she modestly admitted that the article was true. That Nov. 6 morning was a special one for about 1,000 inhabitants of Dumaguete City and the village of Zamboanguita. The Lesh Family Foundation and the Rotary Club of Dumaguete-South had teamed up to provide a "hospital on wheels" of medical and dental services to the neediest of the locals, many for the first time in their lives.

What the volunteer workers did made a fundamental difference to those they served. An elderly woman was able to see her grandchildren for the first time, a man with an enormous boil on his back was able to sleep in comfort for the first time in decades, children had their teeth cared for and mothers received medicines for their infants.

Ellen and William Lesh founded the Lesh Family Foundation during the 1940s polio epidemic in the U.S. The tax-exempt foundation opened its center in the Philippines in 2005.

Calling All Retirees

Foreign Affairs Day is May 5. This year's theme is the "Foreign Affairs Family." Please return your registration cards by April 14.

Thank You! Department CFC Campaign Tops \$2 Million

The Department recently concluded the 2005 Combined Federal Campaign. As of Feb. 6, more than \$2 million had been contributed from employees and retirees to this annual charitable fundraising drive.

The CFC promotes and supports philanthropy through a program that is employee focused, cost-efficient and effective in providing federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. President Kennedy initiated a formal national giving program for federal workers in 1961. Since then, the CFC has evolved into the leading workplace giving program, raising more money for charity than any other.

The Secretary is the chairman of the Department's campaign, while the Director General serves as Vice Chair and the Office of Employee Relations in the Bureau of Human Resources manages the campaign. Recently, 40 hardworking campaign coordinators celebrated their success at the Ronald Reagan Building where the Department, again, was recognized with the Million Dollar Circle Award from the director of the CFC National Capital Area Campaign.

As soon as last year's campaign is wrapped up, the process for the 2006 campaign begins. This includes training for campaign managers, strategizing for building on last year's success (which raised more than \$56 million in the CFCNCA) and recruitment of loaned executives. Two LEs are detailed to work with the Department from other agencies and the Department reciprocates by releasing one or two people to serve as LEs elsewhere. They train for a week in August at a conference center in Potomac, Md.

The Department is challenged by the CFCNCA to accept a specific dollar amount as the goal. After some discussion, the Department establishes a goal and then assigns each bureau an individual goal based on prior years' campaigns. Despite talk of donor fatigue, the CFCNCA continues to be the channel through which many federal employees make their charitable gifts.

Thank you, Secretary Rice, Ambassador Pearson, bureau assistant secretaries, campaign coordinators, key workers and donors. You are all, truly, "everyday heroes."



Santa's beard tickles smiling Vietnamese orphans.

Sweltering Santa

Some laughed, some cried, but all were mesmerized. Whispers echoed throughout the courtyard: "I thought he wore green" or "Wasn't he seven feet tall?"

There he was, though, right before their eyes. Despite the 95-degree weather, he was dressed in full regalia, complete with an untrimmed beard and jolly belly. With shouts of "Ho, ho, ho, Merry Christmas," a new Santa had come to town.

JOLLY SAINT NICK
SURPRISES
VIETNAMESE
ORPHANS

BY
MY-LIEN T. LE

Sweltering in his red velvet suit, my dad, a Foreign Service officer assigned to our embassy in Seoul, Korea, had traveled from afar to deliver 500 Vietnamese orphans their Christmas gifts.

"This was an opportunity to give back to the community, to minister gifts to those with less, and possibly nothing," An Le said.

This modern Santa possessed no reindeer, sleigh or elves. He relied on an

Rather than tear the paper apart, she wanted the magic to last just a few more minutes. From the expression on her face, I knew that the contents themselves were irrelevant.

Asiana Airlines airplane, one 16-passenger van, three 7-passenger taxis and charitable families to accomplish his Christmas task.

Toys were gathered weeks in advance through generous donations and support from American and Korean friends and embassy colleagues in Seoul and individually wrapped by Mrs. Claus—my mother, Tam—and her friends Michiko, Sara, Trang and Marcelyn.

Through the generosity of Asiana Airlines, as arranged by Sharp Travel representatives, Santa was allotted 200 kilograms to transport 15 large boxes of Barbies, G.I. Joes, Legos, stuffed animals and games to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Local Vietnamese mer-

chants sold powdered and infant milk, rice, crackers and candy at cost to supplement the toys and games. The Nguyen, Yap, Vance and Le families served as elves, handing out presents to the smiling kids. Christmas for these orphans was indeed a community effort.

Rows and rows of children faced Santa. As the children came up to receive a gift, they put their hands across their chests and said "cam on" (thank you).

I watched the children's reactions. Surprisingly, wrapping paper confetti did not envelop us. Examining her package from every angle, a nameless girl was filled with curiosity. Rather than tear the paper apart, she wanted the magic to last just a few more minutes. From the expression on her face, I knew that the contents them-

selves were irrelevant. She was just satisfied that someone honored her with a gift. To her, Santa was not a commercial character, but a real person who acknowledged her existence with care.

We visited five orphanages over a three-day period and left each to a Vietnamese chorus of "We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year," the only way the orphans knew how to convey their appreciation. For those 500 excited orphans, Santa Claus represented more than colorfully wrapped gift boxes filled with toys and treats. He was their hero, and that day my dad was mine.

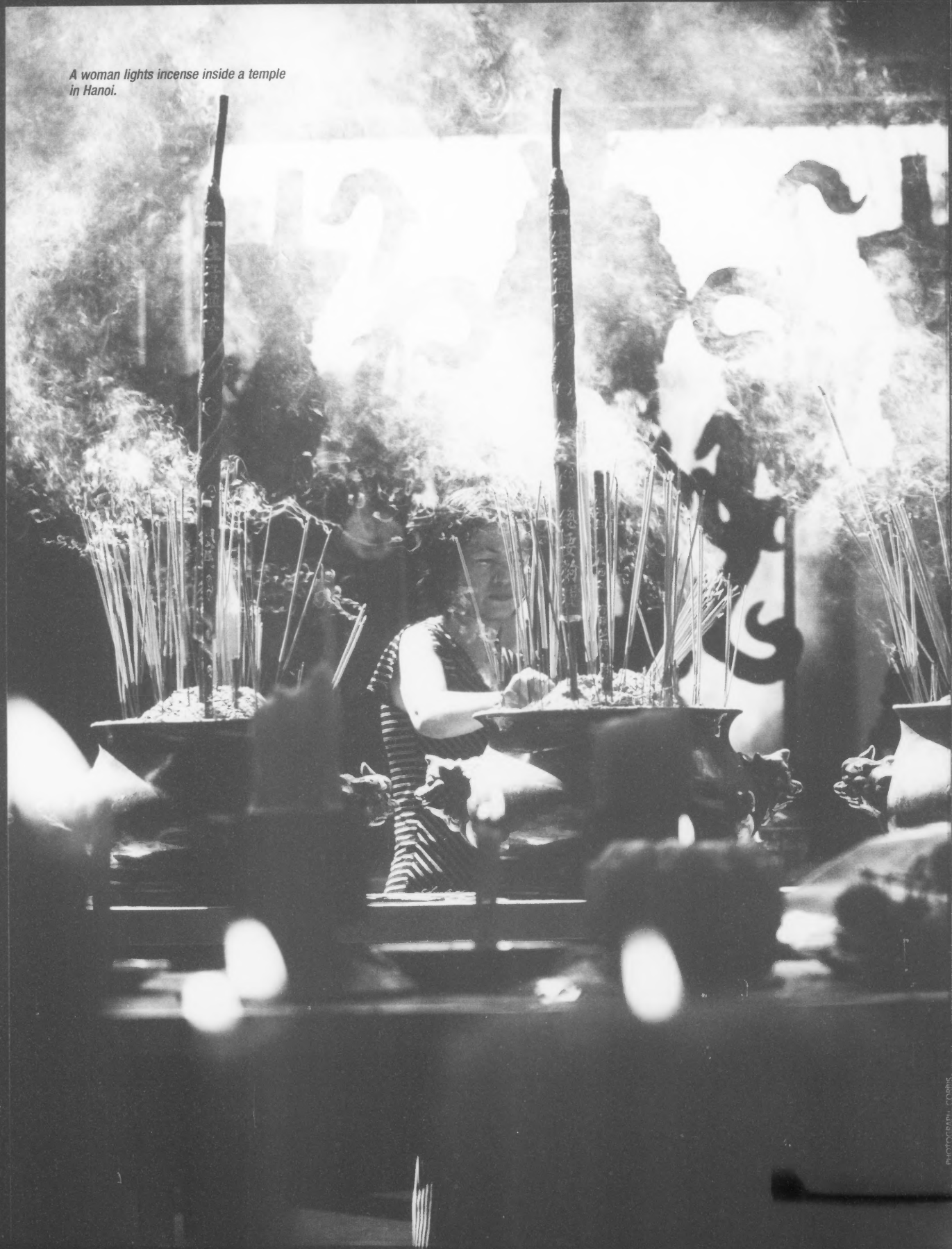
I believe in Santa Claus, and 500 Vietnamese orphans will vouch for his existence. ■

The author is a student at James Madison University in Virginia.

Below: Orphans holding their presents pose with Santa and his helpers.



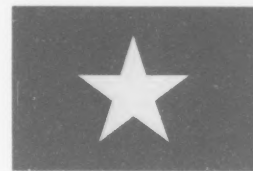
*A woman lights incense inside a temple
in Hanoi.*



*A woman lights incense inside a temple
in Hanoi.*



POST OF THE MONTH



HANOI

CITY ON THE MOVE MIXES OLD AND NEW

By Julie Chung

... HAI HUY TRUYỀN THỐNG NGÀN NĂM VĂN HIẾN VÀ ANH HÙNG
Y DUNG THỦ ĐÔ XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA NGÀY CÀNG GIÀU ĐẸP, VĂN MINH, I



Mornings in Hanoi begin early. The quiet streets awaken with the first honk of a motorbike around 5 a.m., the ringing of a cycle driver's bell and the swoosh and clatter of badminton shuttlecocks being whacked on sidewalk courts. Scores of the old and young take over every inch of open space to do calisthenics, fan dancing or tai chi. Then a few honks grow into thousands, as swarms of morning commuters pack the roads. Three or four people pile onto one motorbike, with an occasional pig or cage of squawking chickens or slithery snakes attached to the back.

In a capital city of more than 4 million people in a country where more than 60 percent of the population is under the age of 30, it seems everyone is on the go all the time. Their motorbikes whiz past red banners invoking the ideology of the Communist Party, while everywhere gleaming office towers and shopping centers under construction reach toward the sky. Cell phones ring on every corner, in every office and restaurant.

Since the government embarked on economic reforms in 1986, Vietnam has become one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, averaging around 8 percent annual gross domestic product growth during much of the 1990s and 8.4 percent last year.

There are still noticeable remnants of the French colonial presence: strong coffee, piles of baguettes sold on the street by women wearing conical hats, colonial homes and outdoor cafes, the beautifully constructed Opera House and the unmistakable style of the Metropole Hotel, where Graham Greene slept. Hanoi boasts more than 100 lakes, numerous parks, art galleries, museums and one water puppet theater. It still has no McDonald's or Starbucks.

GROWING PRESENCE

The U.S. Embassy staff includes 66 direct-hire Americans, a couple dozen personal services contractors and employed family members and 269 local employees. The staff continues to grow, and several annex buildings now supplement the chancery that was built 10 years ago. Construction of a new embassy is targeted for completion by 2010.

Represented at post, besides State, are the Foreign Commercial Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, Department of Defense (Defense Attaché Office, Marine Security Guards and the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command), Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease Control, Drug Enforcement Administration and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The U.S. Consulate

Opposite page: A Hanoi street filled with motorbikes and government posters. Below: Magical Halong bay, the jewel of Northern Vietnam.



AT A GLANCE



Country name: Vietnam

Capital: Hanoi

Government: Communist state

Independence: September 2, 1945
(from France)

Languages: Vietnamese, English, French, Chinese and Khmer

Religions: None (80.8 percent), Buddhist (9.3 percent) and Catholic (6.7 percent)

Population: 83.5 million

Total area: 329,560 square kilometers

Approximate size: Slightly larger than New Mexico

Currency: dong (VND)

Per capita income: \$3,000

Export partners: United States (20.2 percent), Japan (13.6 percent) and China (9 percent)

SOURCE: CIA World Factbook 2006

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SOURCE: CIA World Factbook 2006



Above: Women wearing traditional "non" hats going to market. Below: The writer and her FCS spouse John Simmons at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum.

General in Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam is an active element of the Vietnam Mission, with 45 Americans and 203 local employees.

Since the Bilateral Trade Agreement between the United States and Vietnam went into effect in 2001, two-way trade has quadrupled, totaling more than \$7 billion in 2005. The United States is now Vietnam's largest export market, purchasing one-fifth of all Vietnamese exports. U.S. exports to Vietnam have increased by 250 percent in the past three years. Nike, United Airlines and Ford are among the growing number of American firms that have established offices in the country.

The year 2005 marked the 10th anniversary of normalization of relations between the United States and Vietnam, as well as the 30th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and the first visit by a sitting prime minister to the White House. President Bush

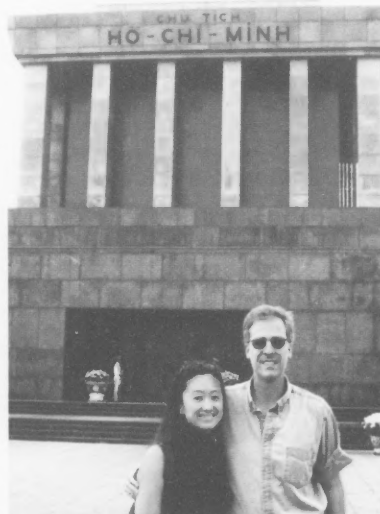
received Prime Minister Phan Văn Khải in June and is expected to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit hosted by Hanoi this November.

Even before relations were normalized, the work of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, engaged in accounting for missing personnel from the Indochina conflict, provided the impetus that enabled relations to move forward. This issue remains a top priority. Since 1992, U.S.-Vietnam joint humanitarian efforts have brought home more than 600 fallen service personnel, and with them answers and closure for their families.

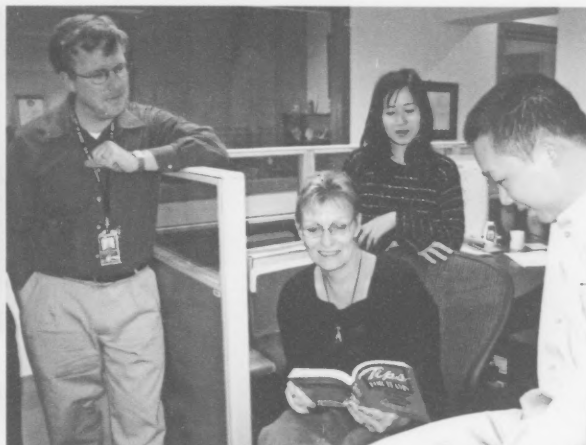
U.S. relations with Vietnam have become deeper and more diverse in the years since political normalization. The two countries have broadened their political exchanges through regular dialogue on human rights and regional security and through a wide range of

developmental assistance across many sectors.

In 2003, the two countries signed agreements on counternarcotics, civil



PHOTOGRAPHS: JULIE CHUNG; (OPPOSITE PAGE LEFT): KAREN JANTNER



Left: A snake wine vendor in Hanoi's Old Quarter. Right top: GSO supervisor Lilian Murphy encourages teambuilding with American and Vietnamese staff members. Bottom: Legendary jazz musician Herbie Hancock performing in Hanoi.

aviation and textiles. U.S. Navy ships regularly visit Vietnamese ports, fostering cross-cultural understanding. The U.S. military coordinates assistance to Vietnam's land mine removal efforts and engages in other humanitarian activities. Mission officers regularly urge Vietnam to abide by international human rights norms and expand the space for religious believers to practice their faith. Combating corruption, establishing rule of law and promoting democracy, human rights and freedom of the press all rank as key mission goals.

HEALTH INITIATIVES

Two health-related issues are now at the forefront of U.S. efforts in Vietnam: avian influenza and HIV/AIDS. The U.S. government is providing \$25 million to the Southeast Asian region, with Vietnam as one of the focus countries, to fight avian influenza. That assistance is directed at improving overall surveillance, launching farmer education programs, assisting the government's poultry vaccination program and strengthening research and diagnosis capacity.

The embassy is also committed to a strong partnership with Vietnam to help avert the growing threat of HIV/AIDS. In 2004, President Bush named Vietnam one of 15 priority countries to receive assistance from his Emergency Plan for

AIDS Relief. The President chose Vietnam as the 15th priority country—and the only one in Asia—because there is a very real chance that the epidemic can be controlled here with prompt action. Last year, the U.S. provided more than \$27 million and this year will contribute \$33 million.

Working closely with each section at the embassy, the public affairs section coordinates the public diplomacy message in Vietnam. Through the largest Department-funded Fulbright program in the world, the International Visitors program, cultural performances, educational outreach and speaker programs, the mission is committed to reaching out to a broad spectrum of the Vietnamese public and to increasing visibility of the U.S. presence here.

The year 2006 will be another important one as Hanoi hosts the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in November and Vietnam takes steps in hopes of entering the World Trade Organization.

Hanoi remains a city of contrasts: thriving energy and development, meditative poetry and the arts and an ever-optimistic view of the road ahead. Vietnam's future seems bright. ■

The author is assistant public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi.

Arlene Shechet's Other Eyes, a work in hydrocal, acrylic and paint skins, is currently on exhibit in the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi.



Currently on view at the embassy residence in Hanoi is an ART in Embassies Program exhibition featuring the work of seven U.S. artists from varied backgrounds and regions who, in the words of Ambassador Michael W. Marine, “both inspire and challenge viewers to evaluate their conceptions of creativity and vision, values cherished in American society.”

One of these artists, Arlene Shechet of New York City, will travel this month to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City through the ART in Embassies Program’s American Artists Abroad initiative. She will share her talents and expertise with Vietnamese artists, students, museum directors and gallery owners, thus extending the diplomatic reach of ART’s exhibition beyond the walls of the embassy residence.

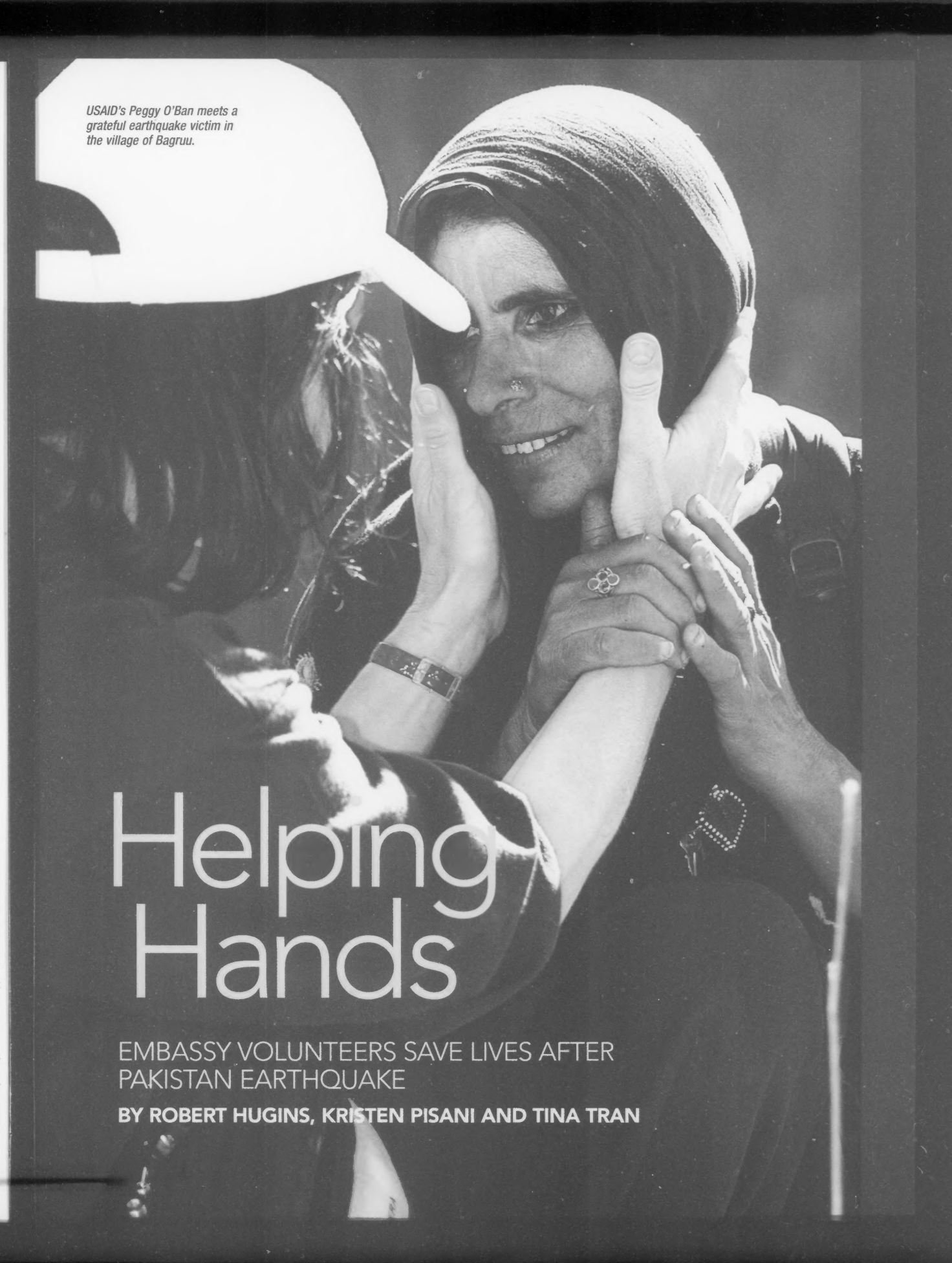
“Given its inherently diverse nature, art is a perfect catalyst for greater understanding, as it allows people to simultaneously recognize similarities while celebrating the differences that make every society unique,” Ambassador Marine says.

Established in 1964, the ART in Embassies Program is a global museum that exhibits more than 3,500 original works of art by U.S. citizens in the public rooms of approximately 180 embassy residences worldwide. These exhibitions provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope and diversity of American art and culture. ■

The author is program manager for the ART in Embassies Program.

ART in Embassies in Hanoi

BY ELIZABETH ASH

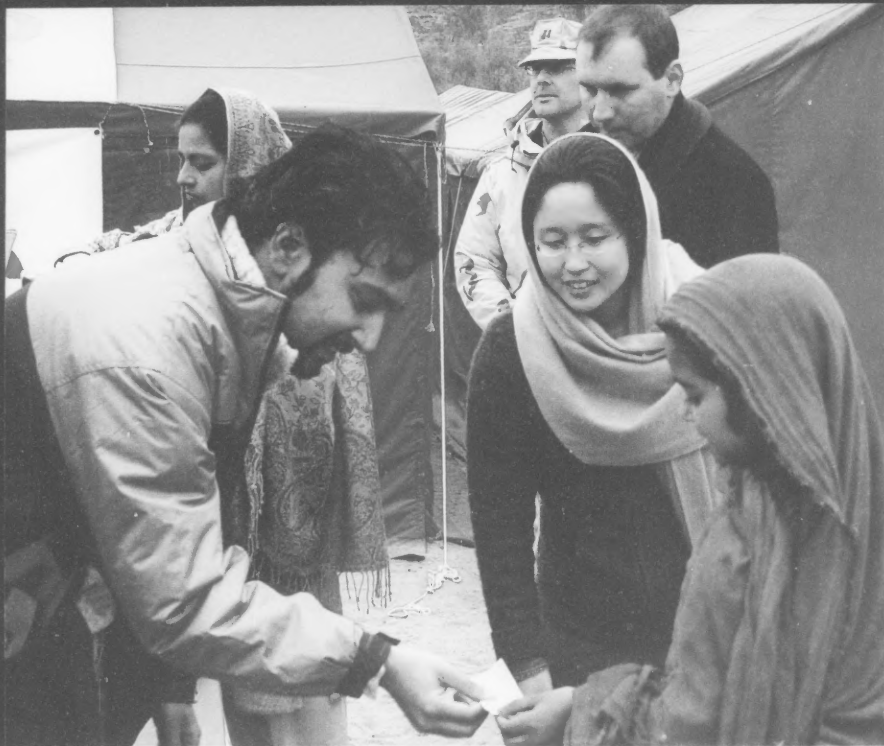


USAID's Peggy O'Ban meets a grateful earthquake victim in the village of Bagruu.

Helping Hands

EMBASSY VOLUNTEERS SAVE LIVES AFTER PAKISTAN EARTHQUAKE

BY ROBERT HUGINS, KRISTEN PISANI AND TINA TRAN



Above: Foreign Service Officer Rakesh Surampudi hands a young girl a number for her new school uniform at Maira tent camp. Below right: U.S. military and embassy employees, along with children at Jabba tent camp, help paint a new U.S.-Pakistan Community Center at the camp. Opposite page: A child sits on boxes of supplies donated by USAID and Nike in Hillkot, Hazara District. The supplies were distributed by Mercy Corps.

Small teams from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, some living and working in modified metal containers, have been supporting U.S. government humanitarian relief efforts in Kashmir and the North West Frontier Province following the massive earthquake that rocked Pakistan on Oct. 8, 2005.

The 7.6-magnitude earthquake took more than 73,000 lives and left 2.8 million people homeless. Nearly half of those who lost their lives were children. The U.S. has pledged \$510 million in relief and reconstruction assistance, making it the largest bilateral donor.

Two teams of 6-to-10 American officers and locally employed staff operate relief offices in Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan's Azad Jammu and Kashmir Province, and Mansehra, in the neighboring North West Frontier Province. Both cities, several hours' drive from Islamabad, are in or near the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains, areas hard-hit by the earthquake.

Teamwork Rules

The Forward Operating Bases, as the offices are called, are a real interagency

effort. Embassy personnel, including Department of Defense and U.S. Agency for International Development officers, rotate in and out, with a State officer-in-charge positioned for longer periods. They help coordinate U.S. assistance on the ground.

Life in the FOBs is often challenging, with frequent electricity shortages, heating problems and after-shock tremors. Personnel in Muzaffarabad sleep in two modified 20-foot-long metal containers and work another. Each container sleeps six in bunk-bed fashion. The first Muzaffarabad team worked and slept in offices in a slightly damaged state government building inside the prime minister's secretariat, a compound of government buildings in the battered city's downtown. They slept in sleeping bags on the floor or on couches.

The teams regularly eat military MREs—meals ready to eat. The initial Muzaffarabad team chipped in to contract with a local Pakistani Army officers' mess cook to provide evening meals. These typically consist of Kashmiri dishes—simple meat curries

with rice and chapati and Pakistani flatbread—which are eagerly consumed by the team members. The U.S. military hospitals operating in Muzaffarabad and in Shinkiar near Mansehra have also graciously welcomed embassy personnel to join them for meals.

The large and growing humanitarian relief effort can sometimes generate unusual requests. In Muzaffarabad, the embassy team was on hand to assist with the arrival of the Mobile Army Surgical Hospital unit. After setting up, the unit asked General Services Officer Debbie Esteves to find sufficient toilet paper to support the 130-person Army contingent. She went out into the local community and found and delivered the key supplies.

The teams also have been assisting a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team, arranging transportation and security for its travels in the region.

Working hours can begin at 6 a.m. and last well into the night, typically entailing meetings with the Pakistani military, international organizations and the local government.

Hearts and Minds

Embassy personnel have also surveyed remote areas, some only accessible by helicopter. They have worked with the Pakistan government and international organizations to provide shelter, health care, water and sanitation to earthquake victims. One group trekked an hour into the steep mountains of Kohistan to become the



PHOTOGRAPHS (ABOVE): TECH SGT IVEY McLEAN; (OPPOSITE PAGE): CASSANDRA NELSON

first Americans ever to visit the small village affected by the earthquake. The team arranged for delivery of shelter materials through a USAID implementing partner.

Over the Muslim Eid holiday, embassy personnel and some members of the U.S. military set up a U.S.-Pakistan Community Center in Jabba Camp, a tent camp for earthquake-displaced people. The young children of the camp taught the military personnel to play cricket and joined in painting the community center building. U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker personally donated sewing machines, helping women in the camp's sewing group learn a trade that will help improve their livelihoods.

Through activities such as these, the embassy teams have helped win hearts and minds. Pakistani attitudes toward the U.S. have dramatically improved after the earthquake, with a recent poll finding that the percentage of Pakistanis who view the United States favorably had doubled. The Chinook helicopter, in particular, has become a symbol of U.S.-Pakistan friendship.

Despite the discomforts, other embassy staffers are eager to join the effort. "It feels good to contribute," said Information Management Officer Mel Rollins, who supervises support for the Muzaffarabad and Mansehra teams. "We have plenty of volunteers who have offered to help." ■

Robert Hugins is public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu and a TDY press officer at the Forward Operating Base in Muzaffarabad; Kristen Pisani is officer-in-charge at the FOB in Mansehra; and Tina Tran is a vice consul at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad.



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Foreign Service

Promotion Statistics

BY MONICA BRADLEY AND CHARLES WALSH

The statistics on promotion by class and cone for both generalists and specialists as determined by the 2005 selection boards are now available. The adjacent tables show promotion numbers and rates, average time-in-class and average time-in-service for each competition group. When compared with statistics from earlier years, it is apparent that promotion rates through the FS-01 level have accelerated while promotion rates into and within the SFS have slowed marginally, though neither trend can be easily termed permanent or extraordinary.

What is notable is the sharp increase in promotions at the FS-03, FS-02 and FS-01 levels achieved through classwide (i.e., non-conal) competition. The Department is rewarding those employees who show the greatest breadth of experience and adaptability, regardless of cone or specialty.

These statistics provide information that can be useful in career planning, but with a caveat. Since promotion rates and time-in-class/time-in-service conal averages vary from year to year, statistics for any single year should be viewed with that in mind. These statistics and the ones from previous years do, though, provide a reasonable snapshot of promotion rates over time by both cone and class.

GOOD NEWS

The good news is that overall promotion rates for eligible generalists increased from 27 percent in 2001 to 32 percent in 2005. Eligible generalists are those who meet the criteria to compete for promotion to the next higher grade. Promotion numbers and rates into and within the Senior Foreign Service remained very similar to those for 2004, though the Senior promotion rate has fallen from 18 percent to 14 percent since 2001.

Looking at specific grades, the number of generalists promoted from FS-02 to FS-01 was slightly higher this year than in 2004. Examining earlier data, promotions and promotion rates from FS-02 to FS-01 increased from 129 and 15 percent in 2001, respectively, to 158 and 18 percent in 2005.

Similarly, although generalist promotion numbers from FS-03 to FS-02 declined from 209 in 2004 to 191 in 2005, the promotion rate at this grade has increased significantly from 30 percent in 2001 to 49 percent in 2005. The lower numbers this year may be due to the fact that there were fewer FS-03 employees eligible to compete this year for promotion. Generalist promotions from FS-04 to FS-03 have also increased significantly over the past five years, rising from 216

in 2001 to 357 in 2005, due in part to the expanded numbers of employees at this grade because of hiring under the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative (DRI) from 2002-2005.

The number of promotions granted each year at each grade is driven, of course, by the needs of the Department as determined by resource allocations and budgetary limitations. In examining the possible trends from this year's results, it is evident that generalist employees are moving faster through the low and middle grades, while slowing slightly at the Senior level. With Performance Pay and Presidential Awards now playing an important role at the Senior level, the slight slowing of the rate of promotion reflects the measured transition to a pay system more closely reliant on performance.

BEYOND CONAL BOUNDARIES

The real sea-change can be seen in the proportion of promotions that are competed beyond conal boundaries at the mid-level. In 2005, class-wide promotions replaced multifunctional promotions. Since these class-wide promotions are designed to expand the pool of broadly experienced employees prepared to assume future leadership positions, their number has expanded enormously, from 97 multifunctional promotions in 2004 to 195 classwide promotions this year.

While multifunctional competition was developed as a means to promote employees serving only in specific positions normally considered broader than a single cone, under class-wide competition all eligible employees at grade compete, regardless of their cone.

The numbers show the difference. While fully 18 percent of multifunctional employees at the mid level were promoted in 2004, only 10 percent achieved class-wide promotion in 2005. Because of the size of the larger competition group, though, this meant that 195 employees were promoted through class-wide competition this year compared to only 97 through multifunctionality in 2004. As a percentage of the total promotions for generalists by grade, classwide accounted for a group ranging from 24 percent of those promoted from 03 to 02 to a striking 52 percent of FS-01 generalists promoted across the threshold this year.

Given that this was the first year for classwide promotions, this trend may change for future selection boards. All employees, though, should pay very careful attention to the precepts and especially to those that deal with classwide competition. While excellent performance strictly in cone will still get you promoted, your chances improve greatly to the degree that you can show to the Boards solid performance that is competitive classwide.

SPECIALIST RATES STEADY

For specialists, promotion numbers fluctuated during the five-year period due in large part to identified deficits in each

skill group and changes in administrative promotion levels to meet the needs of the Department. Overall, promotion rates for all specialists over the five-year period remained at roughly 21 percent. Examining promotion rates by class and specialist group is not very productive, given the diversity of career paths among specialist skill groups and recent changes within some of them.

However, trends in two of our larger specialties are worth noting. The overall promotion rate for security officers has

“ As the Department reacts to the challenges we face in this new century, our selection process for leaders is changing. ”

increased from 25 percent in 2001 to 37 percent in 2005, with an even larger delta of promotions into and within the senior ranks (36 percent in 2005 compared to only 16 percent in 2001). Secondly, while the overall number of promotions across all grades for office management specialists remained the same at 67, the average time-in-class of those promoted across all grades has decreased from 5.6 years in 2001 to 4.2 years in 2005.

In conclusion, the results of this year's selection boards are worth pondering. As the Department reacts to the challenges we face in this new century, our selection process for leaders is changing. With the new Career Development Program, the emphasis on classwide competition and the generally sharper promotion precepts year-by-year, the conclusion must be drawn that the employee has prime responsibility to take ownership over his or her own career. You are how you appear to the selection boards made up of your peers. ■

Monica Bradley is a management analyst in HR/RMA; Charles Walsh is a Senior Foreign Service officer working in the Office of Performance Evaluation.

Foreign Service Promotion Statistics

Promotees' Average Length of Service
 Average Length of Service Competed
 Promotees' Average Time-in-Class
 Average Time-in-Class of Competed
 % Competed Promoted
 Number Promoted
 Number Competed

Promotees' Average Length of Service
 Average Length of Service Competed
 Promotees' Average Time-in-Class
 Average Time-in-Class of Competed
 % Competed Promoted
 Number Promoted
 Number Competed

Category: MC TO CM

CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	24	0	0.0	6.4	0.0	28.1	0.0
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	19	0	0.0	5.9	0.0	29.7	0.0
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	35	0	0.0	6.0	0.0	29.3	0.0
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	55	4	7.3	5.9	5.1	29.4	25.3
CLASSWIDE SCIENCE OFFICERS	2	0	0.0	5.6	0.0	23.6	0.0
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	24	0	0.0	6.1	0.0	27.5	0.0
CLASSWIDE INFO TECH MNGR	1	0	0.0	5.6	0.0	31.1	0.0
CLASSWIDE PSYCHIATRIST	3	0	0.0	8.6	0.0	18.2	0.0
CLASSWIDE MEDICAL OFFICERS	9	0	0.0	7.4	0.0	17.0	0.0
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	172	4	2.3	6.1	5.1	28.1	25.3

Category: GENERALIST FEOC TO FEMC

CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	56	3	5.4	3.9	4.8	24.3	24.5
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	45	8	17.8	3.7	3.8	24.1	24.4
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	47	3	6.4	4.0	4.0	23.7	21.4
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	58	8	13.8	3.9	4.0	25.0	22.8
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	50	1	2.0	4.1	5.9	23.9	22.1
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	256	23	9.0	3.9	4.1	24.2	23.4
MANAGEMENT	53	5	9.4	3.9	3.7	24.3	23.8
CONSULAR	37	2	5.4	3.6	3.9	24.0	25.0
ECONOMIC	44	4	9.1	4.1	5.1	23.8	22.2
POLITICAL	50	6	12.0	3.9	2.7	25.3	22.7
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	49	4	8.2	4.0	4.1	23.9	22.4
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	233	21	9.0	3.9	3.8	24.3	23.0
COMBINED TOTALS	256	44	17.2	3.9	4.0	24.2	23.2

Category: GENERALIST FS01 TO FE0C

CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	72	4	5.6	6.1	5.5	20.5	19.8
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	56	4	7.1	5.9	4.7	22.2	20.1
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	93	11	11.8	5.9	4.7	22.1	19.1
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	125	13	10.4	5.8	6.6	22.0	22.4
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	77	5	6.5	6.8	5.5	20.5	19.0
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	423	37	8.7	6.1	5.6	21.5	20.4
MANAGEMENT	68	10	14.7	6.1	7.0	20.6	19.4
CONSULAR	52	6	11.5	6.0	4.5	22.4	21.6
ECONOMIC	82	5	6.1	6.1	4.5	22.5	21.5
POLITICAL	112	6	5.4	5.8	6.2	22.0	22.1
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	72	9	12.5	6.9	6.9	20.6	20.0
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	386	36	9.3	6.2	6.1	21.6	20.7
COMBINED TOTALS	423	73	17.3	6.1	5.8	21.5	20.5

Category: GENERALIST CLASS 02 TO CLASS 01

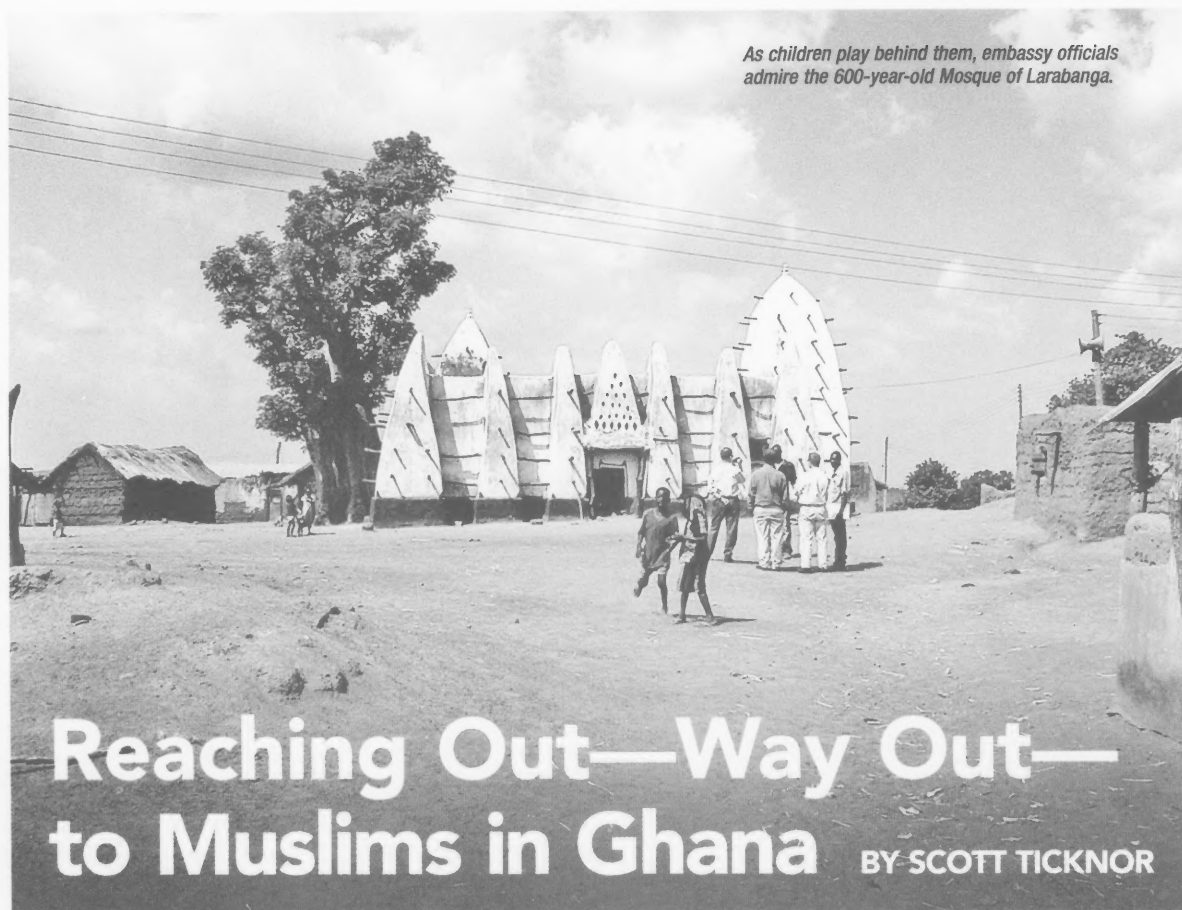
CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	166	10	6.0	5.7	7.6	16.9	18.0
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	153	23	15.0	5.3	7.5	16.5	17.5
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	200	11	5.5	5.3	8.1	16.2	19.2
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	256	20	7.8	5.2	6.3	16.3	17.2
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	117	4	3.4	5.7	6.4	15.5	18.1
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	892	68	7.6	5.4	7.2	16.3	17.8
MANAGEMENT	156	20	12.8	5.6	6.2	16.8	17.4
CONSULAR	130	14	10.8	5.0	6.1	16.3	16.3
ECONOMIC	189	19	10.1	5.2	5.6	16.1	15.8
POLITICAL	236	19	8.1	5.1	5.7	16.2	15.6
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	113	18	15.9	5.7	5.3	15.5	14.0
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	824	90	10.9	5.1	5.8	16.2	15.8
COMBINED TOTALS	892	158	17.7	5.4	6.4	16.3	16.7

Category: GENERALIST CLASS 03 TO CLASS 02

CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	45	8	17.8	3.8	3.2	8.1	8.7
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	130	23	17.7	4.3	4.1	9.6	8.8
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	103	13	12.6	3.9	3.7	8.6	8.1
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	89	21	23.6	3.8	3.9	8.5	8.2
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	27	2	7.4	3.6	4.2	7.7	9.5
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	394	67	17.0	4.0	3.9	8.8	8.5
MANAGEMENT	37	23	62.2	3.9	4.1	8.0	8.4
CONSULAR	107	28	26.2	4.4	5.7	9.7	11.5
ECONOMIC	90	29	32.2	4.0	3.7	8.6	8.4
POLITICAL	68	35	51.5	3.8	3.5	8.6	8.1
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	25	9	36.0	3.5	3.4	7.6	6.4
FUNCTIONAL TOTALS	327	124	37.9	4.1	4.2	8.8	8.9
COMBINED TOTALS	394	191	48.5	4.0	4.1	8.8	8.7

Category: GENERALIST FO CLASS 04 TO CLASS 03

CLASSWIDE MANAGEMENT	87	72	82.8	2.8	2.7	4.6	4.3
CLASSWIDE CONSULAR	88	68	77.3	2.6	2.6	5.4	5.4
CLASSWIDE ECONOMIC	91	71	78.0	2.6	2.6	4.0	3.9
CLASSWIDE POLITICAL	99	78	78.8	2.7	2.6	4.0	3.9
CLASSWIDE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY	82	68	82.9	2.5	2.5	4.2	4.1
CLASSWIDE TOTAL	447	357	79.9	2.6	2.6	4.4	4.3



As children play behind them, embassy officials admire the 600-year-old Mosque of Larabanga.

Reaching Out—Way Out— to Muslims in Ghana

BY SCOTT TICKNOR

We were looking for Wa, a small, remote, dusty city in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Our six-seater airplane circled above a vast expanse of uninhabited land, but there was no sign of Wa. We flew east, we flew west. It wasn't where the coordinates said it should be. Finally, the pilot pulled out a tourist map and tried one last time.

After the September 11, 2001, attacks, a group of Ghanaian Muslims got together to form Friends Against Global Terrorism (FAGLAT) and approached the embassy for support. We have been working as close partners ever since.

Most of Ghana's Muslims—15 to 20 percent of the total population—live in the cities of Accra and Kumasi and in the three remote northern regions of Ghana. Since 9/11, the post has been actively reaching out to the Muslim community in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale, capital of the Northern Region. Like many posts, we hosted Ramadan Iftaars, held dialogues with Muslim students and community leaders, participated in Muslim community antiterrorism events, launched Department of Defense-funded clinics and centers in Muslim areas and focused on Muslim audiences in our public diplomacy programs.

This year we expanded our Ramadan outreach in conjunction with FAGLAT, especially in the northern regions. Our first stop was Wa—our pilot did finally find it—where we were whisked off to a small mosque surrounded by bags of rice marked with American flags. We were each given “smocks”: large, traditional northern shirts worn over our shirts, which made us feel like polar bears in the hottest part of Ghana.

Our team of economic, political, security, consular and public affairs officers then flew to Bolgatanga in the remote Upper East Region. We met first with the regional minister and paid a call on the local chief, who sat on a throne surrounded by spokesmen chanting “Na!” The team addressed thousands in the Central Mosque, where the fasting audience jostled to get to the bags of rice we donated.

We joined the regional minister in a bone-jarring two-hour drive to Larabanga, home to a 600-year-old mud mosque, the oldest in Ghana, and a “mystic Koran,” believed to have been delivered from Allah.

At the end of a grueling day, our team addressed a large gathering at the Central Mosque of Tamale. The region's Catholic bishop also gave a speech of solidarity. We met with the conservative Alhasuna community of Tamale, hosting



Top: The author donates a clay oven and food at a Ramadan Iftaar in Larabanga. Middle: Embassy officials pose with Muslim leaders of Bolgatanga following an Iftaar food donation. Bottom: The author shakes hands with the Chief Imam of Wa while making an Iftaar food donation at the Central Mosque. Economic Officer Joseph Ellis is at right.

our first Iftaar with this sometimes anti-American group.

During Ramadan, the mission sponsored Iftaars that provided food for 15,000 to 20,000 Muslims throughout Ghana. We also sponsored a nationwide Koranic quiz and soccer tournaments for Muslim youth in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale. Ambassador Pamela Bridgewater played an active role, hosting an Iftaar at her residence and participating in food donations.

We received major press coverage during our Ramadan travels. For many people in the northern regions, we were the first U.S. citizens they had ever met. In Kumasi, we started a dialogue with some Muslim leaders who were strongly suspicious of the United States. Our reception was warm at almost every stop and audiences were surprised and impressed with the scope of U.S. assistance to Muslim communities in Ghana—about \$12 million a year.

The vice president of Ghana, a Muslim from the Northern Region, called mission officials to his office to express appreciation for our Muslim outreach efforts.

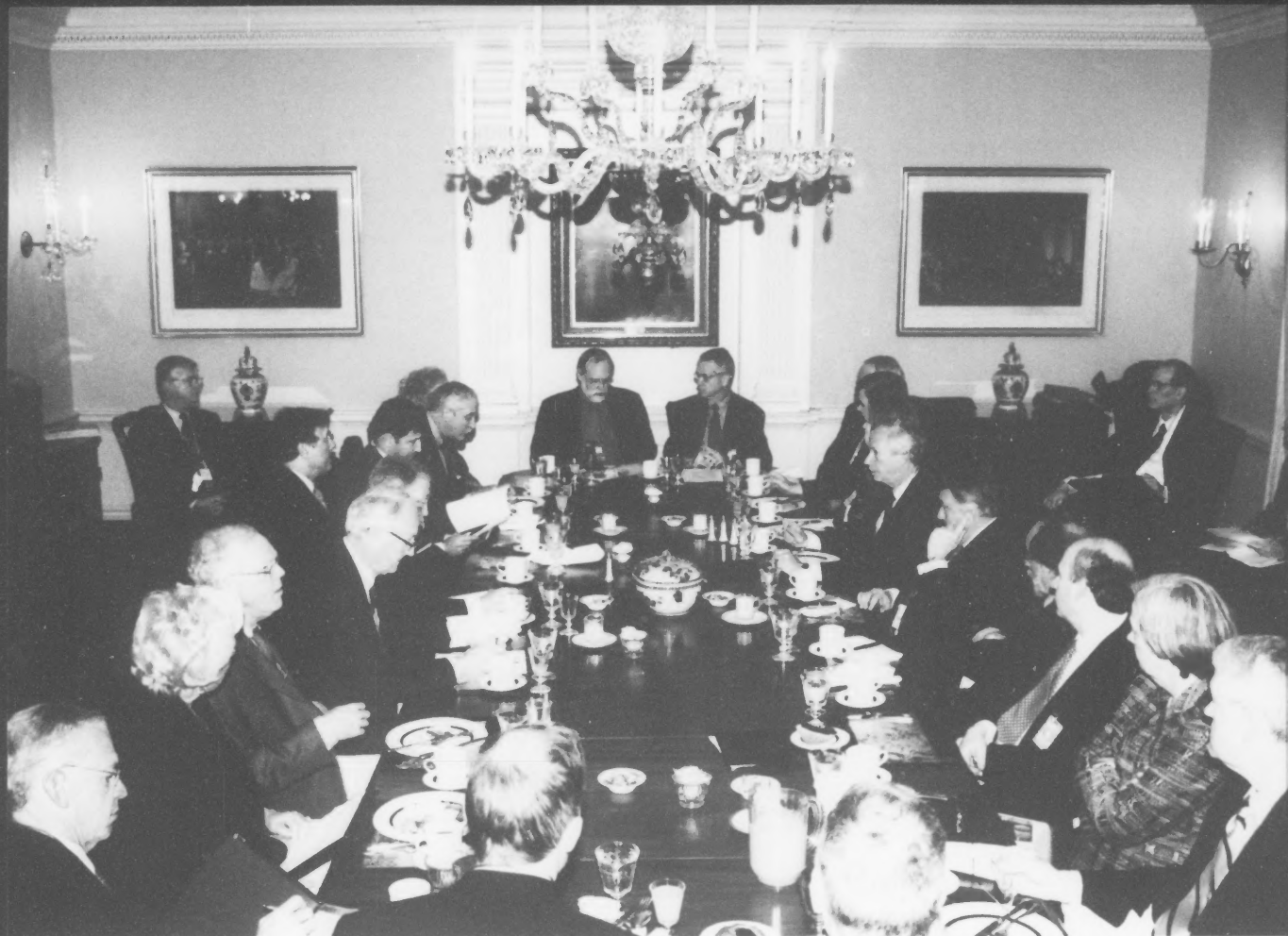
We believe our efforts have made a difference. Muslim leaders are much more positive about the United States than they were even two years ago. As evidenced by FAGLAT's partnership in outreach efforts, there are many Ghanaian Muslims who share our interest in strengthening the relationship between the U.S. and the Muslim community and in denouncing terrorism.

A February 2005 Office of Research opinion survey found that Muslims in Ghana had a higher opinion of the U.S. than the overall population and higher than the four other African countries surveyed. (Forty-two percent of Muslims had very favorable views of the United States.)

We still have a long way to go to change attitudes among some in the Muslim community. Many are still suspicious of the United States and its foreign policy. However, most Muslims here are moderate and open to new thinking. Our creative, interagency approach to Muslim outreach has helped build bridges that we will continue to strengthen.

And the next time we visit Wa, we will know where to go. ■

The author is chief of the political section at the U.S. Embassy in Accra.



U.S. academic leaders explore key issues during a working breakfast at the U.S. University Presidents Summit on International Education.

Breaking New Ground

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SUMMIT DAZZLES UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

BY CATHERINE L. STEARNS

"I am dazzled," said Seattle Pacific University President Philip W. Eaton, who spoke on behalf of his academic colleagues.

"Higher education in America is a place where the national icons of freedom, liberty and enterprise have been expressed at a level unrivaled in the nation," Massachusetts Institute of Technology President Susan Hockfield told her hosts. "It is a paradox that higher education and the government have not developed the partnership that you have set in place over the last few days. We welcome your invitation to collaboration and partnership. It is a natural alliance."

Eaton and Hockfield were among 123 presidents and chancellors of American colleges and universities attending the first U.S. University Presidents Summit on International

Education held in early January at the State Department. Co-hosted by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, the Summit was implemented by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Many academic leaders were struck by the emphasis on partnership between the higher education sector and the U.S. government, and encouraged by the government's commitment to tackling the most complex challenges facing U.S. international higher education today.

President George W. Bush set the tone in his remarks at the Summit opening when he said to Secretary Rice, "Madam Secretary, in front of these presidents, you and I vow that we'll find that proper balance between security and letting people come to our universities for the good of this country."

Meeting Critical Needs

President Bush launched the Summit with his announcement of the National Security Language Initiative, an interagency effort to significantly increase the number of Americans learning critically needed languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Turkish and Urdu. Secretary Rice, Secretary Spellings, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte joined him in his announcement.

Secretary Rice echoed the President in her keynote address later in the evening.

"America's mission in this new century must be to welcome more foreign students to our nation and send more of our citizens abroad to study," she said. "To be successful, our government and our universities must forge a new partnership for education exchange, a partnership that rests on new thinking and new action."

Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina Habib Powell noted that higher education and national security share many issues.

"The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs organized the Summit to be a dialogue with U.S. higher education on important topics such as understanding the visa and regulatory environment, marketing of U.S. higher education abroad, expanding diversity in international exchanges, promoting public-private partnerships and addressing the need for critical foreign language learning," she said. "These are not only issues of higher education but also issues of national security that require a shared commitment."

Commenting on the high level of commitment of U.S. higher education, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Academic Programs Thomas Farrell took note of the audience's scope.

"Hailing from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, these men and women from the nation's leading public and private research institutions, four-year colleges and community colleges represent the full richness and diversity of the American higher education system," he said.

At the Jan. 6 luncheon, Assistant Secretary Powell introduced First Lady Laura Bush, a longtime supporter of State ECA exchanges. Mrs. Bush thanked the university and college leaders for their existing partnership with the U.S. government on exchanges, noting the tangible benefit of programs such as Fulbright for both Americans and citizens of countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

Encouraging Student Exchange

Laying out U.S. government priorities and demonstrating commitment to the international education partnership, Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes announced a package of measures designed to attract foreign students to American institutions and to send more Americans to study abroad.

Among the initiatives announced were plans to organize a number of high-level delegations of U.S. university leaders, the first delegation to be led by Mrs. Bush, to recruit foreign students; closer collaboration between the State and



President Bush joins Secretary Rice in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the opening of the first U.S. University Presidents Summit on International Education.

Commerce Departments to market American higher education around the world; an international competition for a new Fulbright Award for Outstanding Foreign Students in Science and Technology; a 40 percent increase in funding for Benjamin A. Gilman scholarships to send more community college and low-income American students abroad; and an initiative to increase the number and placement of exchange participants from abroad, especially from underserved populations, at U.S. community colleges.

At the end of the day, the university and college presidents convened with Secretary Rice, Secretary Spellings, Under Secretary Hughes and Assistant Secretary Powell to summarize initiatives and discuss important next steps. The academic leaders offered a broad range of innovative suggestions and expressed their gratitude for the forum, their desire for continued dialogue and their commitment to both the seeds of partnership sown and the challenging work ahead.

Praising the government's actions, West Virginia University President David C. Hardesty Jr. encouraged the government leaders "to soar like eagles with your rhetoric over the next several years that you will have positions of such public trust. It would be wonderful for us to have a voice articulate the values that we embody in American higher education." ■

The author is a public affairs adviser in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

From left, Slovene Alpine Association President France Ekar, association Secretary General Danilo Sbrizaj, Prime Minister Janez Jansa and Ambassador Tom Robertson rest in front of Aljaz Tower on the summit of Triglav.



Climbing the Mountain

REAL SUMMIT DIPLOMACY IN SLOVENIA
BY ROBERT POST

Slovenians have a strong sense of national identity, and nothing embodies that identity more than their tallest mountain—Triglav (pronounced “Tree-glau,” meaning “three-headed mountain”). Triglav is featured prominently on the Slovene flag, adopted in 1991 from the World War II emblem of the Slovene Liberation Front used to rally patriotic fervor in fighting the Nazis.

The sight of the mountain rallies legions of hikers, who line up for the pilgrimage to the 8,854-foot summit. Slovenes all say that to be a “true” Slovene, one must climb Triglav. And that holds particularly true for politicians, for whom Triglav is the Slovene equivalent of apple pie and motherhood.

The call of the mountain has also been answered by eager climbers in the American embassy ever since Allan Wendt made the trek as our first ambassador to Slovenia in the early 1990s. Since then, three more ambassadors have reached the top, along with many American and Slovene staff members of the embassy.

The call for Ambassador Tom Robertson and me came this past August from the secretary general of the Alpine Association of Slovenia, Danilo Sbrizaj, who invited us to

join him for the celebration of the 110th anniversary of Aljazev Stolp. Without hesitating, we enthusiastically agreed, having only the vaguest idea of what Aljazev Stolp was.

We quickly learned that Aljaz’s Tower was a key nation-building event in Slovenia’s history. In 1895, Slovenia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Austrians dominated the mountaintops, and Slovenes chafed under rule that discouraged use of the Slovene language and displays of Slovene identity. This domination changed almost overnight when a village priest, Jakob Aljaz, outsmarted the Austrians and purchased the land on the peak of Triglav from the local village. In a period of five days, he designed, carried and assembled a metal rocket-shaped tower at the top of the mountain to replace the remains of the old Austrian marker, which had fallen into disrepair. Slovenes of all backgrounds converge on the mountain on August 6 to commemorate the event and honor the man who made Triglav Slovene.

Armed with this knowledge and appropriate gear, Ambassador Robertson and I set off for our starting point—the Kot Valley. Waving good-bye to the Ambassador’s intrepid driver, Milan, we set off after our guides—Danilo and his two friends, Zvone and Lojzka—on the 4,700-foot climb to



Prime Minister Janez Jansa, right, lends a hand to Ambassador Robertson after "baptizing" him with the traditional whack on the backside with a climbing rope.

our first day's goal, the Stanicev Hut. Danilo had specifically chosen this route to avoid the scores of climbers who would be going up the main route. We had the path mostly to ourselves, save for the occasional climber coming down and one herd of mountain goats. It was a warm, sunny day, but our northern route kept us cool in the shade.

We arrived just as the evening rays were painting the mountainsides gold. Spiritually recharged, we headed inside for physical replenishment. Used to an Adirondack lean-to, I was unprepared for a 65-bed hostel and restaurant serving hot food and cold drinks. After congratulatory shots of mountain-herb schnapps, we sat down for a home-cooked dinner. The hut sported the latest in technology, powered and heated by newly installed solar electric panels.

We were up early the next morning, but Slovenia's prime minister, Janez Jansa, was up even earlier, walking in the door shortly after we started breakfast. An avid climber who has notched an impressive record of scaling difficult technical routes, he had heard that Ambassador Robertson would be climbing Triglav and asked that we join him.

After sharing a warm pot of coffee, we set off for the celebrations at Kredarica, the main hostel perched on the saddle below the peak. The sun broke the morning chill as the prime minister greeted surprised Slovene hikers along the trail. Jansa and the ambassador talked diplomacy and mountains as we

picked our way over the rocks. Before being swept away at Kredarica into his official duties, Mr. Jansa invited the ambassador to join him and the chief of the Slovene Rescue Service in climbing the back face of Triglav following the church service. Roped in with the prime minister, our bilateral relations would literally be swinging in the balance. The beads of sweat started forming on the ambassador's forehead as he accepted the invitation.

The scene at Kredarica reminded us of the significance of the event. More than 500 Slovenes, including the president of the parliament and numerous parliamentarians, had made the grueling climb and were now joined by two opera singers and a church choir in celebration. Archbishop Uran (one of the few, along with the media, who chose to arrive by helicopter) celebrated a Catholic mass. At the final amen, with clouds cascading over from the south to obscure Triglav's peak, the crowd did not waste time, scurrying up the side of the rock pitch that constitutes the trail to the top.

Mr. Jansa apologetically said that, given the quickly changing weather, it was safer for him and the Rescue Service chief to do a tandem climb. So we took the "easy" route up, latching onto metal cables and hooks to make our way past overhanging rock ledges and along two-foot-wide rock paths with 1,000-foot precipices on either side. Mr. Jansa was waiting for the ambassador at the top...to "baptize" him! Triglav climbing ritual requires that novices submit their backsides to a beating with a climbing rope as they lean into the door of Aljaz's venerable tower. Having told us that he dared not hit too hard for fear of damaging U.S.-Slovene relations, Prime Minister Jansa proceeded to give the ambassador a good, solid whack.

After listening to Slovenia's leading opera star, Janez Lotric, serenade the crowd with odes to the Slovenian mountains, we high-tailed it back down to Kredarica, where we had to make a quick decision whether to stay the night and face the likelihood of returning in snow the next morning or try to beat the snow and the dark to the bottom that day.

On the advice of our friend and guide Danilo, we chose the descent and started at 5:00 p.m. on what turned out to be a bone-crushing five-hour descent. Rain held off until we had cleared the slippery stones on the upper slopes. Not long after, darkness joined the rain, making for slow going.

Turning on our one flashlight, I spotted what looked like three beach umbrellas abandoned in the wilderness. The ambassador laughed, knowing that the umbrellas were from his car and that Milan had come to meet us. Sure enough, there he was, in suit and tie, in the middle of the path. He welcomed us but said we still had another hour of slow progress along a forest path covered with wet and slippery roots.

Exhausted but safe, we returned home to Ljubljana by midnight and collapsed into deep sleep, knowing that we had now joined the club of "true" Slovenes and had completed a journey that would remain in our memories for a long time. ■

The author is public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana.

It's a dramatic turnaround. Just a few years ago, obtaining a security clearance at the Department was a major headache. It usually took 200 days or more to receive a clearance, which often meant that newly hired employees couldn't begin work for six months or more. The backlog was enormous. And the Department wasn't alone. Agencies across the federal government were experiencing similar delays—and worse—with backlogs of hundreds of thousands of cases and waits of 400 days or longer for contractors.

Now, thanks to a reform effort at the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Department has one of the fastest, most efficient security clearance processes in the federal government. Clearances are usually granted within 75 days. Not only is that about seven months faster than clearances obtained elsewhere in the government, it's also a full two weeks quicker than the time requirement Congress has said all agencies must meet by the end of 2006. And the faster times came during a period when DS took on thousands of extra cases so the Department could fill critical personnel needs in Baghdad, Kabul and Beijing.



The organization leading the security clearance reforms is the DS Office of Personnel Security and Suitability. The office, headed by Supervisory Security Specialist James C. Onusko, oversees the clearance process for Department employees and contractors. More than 160 headquarters employees, 600 field investigators in the United States and regional security officers at 260 posts around the world investigate and adjudicate security clearance cases.

Quicker Hires

The office has not only cut the security clearance delay, it also is now using interim, or temporary, clearances to bring new employees on board more quickly. A few years ago, employees had to wait until their full clearance was granted before they could begin working. In 2003, DS began using existing authorities in the law to grant interim clearances to people who met specific criteria. Now, employees can often start working within a few weeks, or even a few days, while their clearance is investigated and adjudicated. Since October 2003, DS has processed more than 9,100 requests for interim clearances.

Family members of overseas employees are benefiting from interim clearances, too. "In the past, it was not unusual for a family member who found an employment opportunity overseas to wait up to two years to get the security clearance they needed to start working," said DS Senior Coordinator for Security Infrastructure Don Reid. "DS is now able to grant many of these family members an interim clearance in a matter of days."

When Mr. Onusko and his staff began the latest reforms, they found that the entire clearance process was being slowed down because it was not yet computerized. That meant that when DS investigators had to check information in a case file with another agency, someone would often have to get in a car and drive there.

So DS brought technology into the process. The bureau put all case files on the computer. To improve transparency, it implemented a web-based system so that all users, including those at every overseas post, could access pending

A T A G L A N C E

Office name: Office of Personnel Security and Suitability

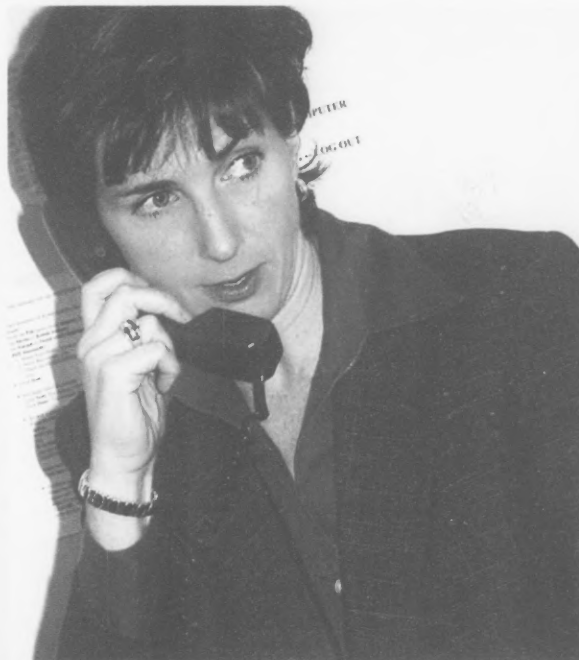
Symbol: DS/SI/PSS

Office Director: James C. Onusko

Staff size: 161 headquarters employees, assisted by 600 field investigators in the United States and regional security officers at 260 posts around the world who investigate and adjudicate cases.

Office location: SA-20

Web sites: www.state.gov/m/ds/clearances and <http://pss.ds.state.gov>



Executive assistant Margery Gehan responds to a clearance candidate's inquiry.

Clearing the Way

DS OFFICE SLASHES INVESTIGATION TIME **BY MARGERY GEHAN AND ANN SCHOLL**



Left: File clerks Cherron Roach, left, and Denise Mohamed retrieve an applicant's security file. Above: Executive assistant Margery Gehan and security assistant Peter Krohn review an electronic case file. Below: Roland Wilkes, regional background investigations coordinator for the Washington Regional Office, and personnel security specialist Christine Matthews discuss an applicant's security file.

investigations. And DS established electronic links to records systems maintained by the Bureau of Human Resources, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and others. This enabled DS to check information online, shaving months off investigations.

A New Age

In another time-saving move, DS, along with the Office of Personnel Management, did away with the old paper-based questionnaire that employees filled out to start the clearance process. Now the form is entirely electronic. Once a person enters information into the new form—called the Questionnaire for Investigations Processing, or e-QIP—all the information is saved under that person's name.

"The beauty of that," said Mr. Onusko, "is that in five years, when it's time for the renewal of one's security clearance, all the information is already there."

With the revitalized clearance process, DS can now help contractors start working more quickly, as well. Although the Department of Defense had been charged with granting clearances for nearly all federal agency contractors, DOD clearances often took 400 days. To meet the State Department's pressing need to hire contractors for critical missions in Iraq, Beijing, Kabul and elsewhere, DS began conducting the security clearances for its own contractors. Last year, DS cleared some 2,000 contractors, and in 2006 expects to clear up to 2,500 contractors. Most clearances were granted in less than 45 days.

To efficiently manage all the many different security clearance cases, the Office of Personnel Security and Suitability is broken into four divisions. The Applicant Investigations Division conducts security clearance investigations for newly hired applicants and some contractors. The Periodic



Reinvestigations Division handles security clearance renewals for current employees. If problems are found during an investigation, the Adjudications Division assesses the concerns and determines if a clearance should be granted. For cases involving suspected employee misconduct, criminal behavior or counterintelligence violations, the Adverse Actions Division investigates and determines whether or not a clearance should be suspended or revoked.

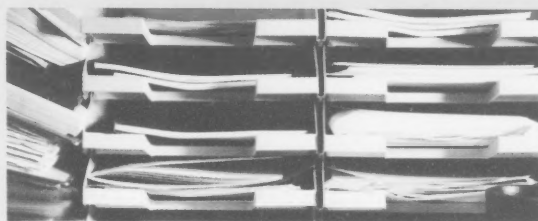
Since DS began implementing its security clearance reforms, other federal agencies have contacted DS to review the improvements. They plan to adopt some of the bureau's best practices in this area, said Mr. Onusko.

The Office of Personnel Security and Suitability has established a Customer Service Center to provide information to newly hired employees, current employees and contractors. The senior security specialists at the center also can provide technical support for those who experience difficulties with the e-QIP process. For more information, go to <http://www.state.gov/m/ds/clearances> or <http://pss.ds.state.gov>. These sites contain a three-minute video explaining the clearance process, answers to frequently asked questions and links to other clearance-related web sites. To contact the center, e-mail securityclearance@state.gov or call (571) 345-3186 or (866) 643-INFO (4636). ■

Margery Gehan is executive assistant in the Office of Personnel Security and Suitability. Ann Scholl, a writer/editor at State Magazine, was until recently a writer/editor in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.



The PSS management team, from left: Wanda Barnett, Clint Boushell, John Paul Antonetti, Kathy Hannon, Director James Onusko, Kim Reid, Margery Gehan, Sheri Sells and Carlos Yanez.



EASY DOES IT

Few Department employees can forget the arduous process of filling in the paper-based form required to begin the background investigation process. The form had row after row of information that had to be typed or filled in by hand. Now it has been replaced by an electronic form called the Questionnaire for Investigations Processing, or e-QIP.

Once an individual enters information into e-QIP, the information will be saved under the user's name. That means that when the person's periodic reinvestigation is due, the employee will need to enter only updated information.

In October 2003, the Department became one of the first federal agencies to participate in e-QIP through the Office of Personnel Management. Many employees have been using the e-QIP process securely and successfully for more than two years. New applicants have been using it exclusively for the last six months.

Starting April 1, 2006, all applications for security clearances must be submitted through e-QIP, per government mandate. This includes applications from

prospective employees, employees undergoing periodic reinvestigations and contractors. Those with questions can contact the DS Office of Personnel Security and Suitability's Customer Service Center via e-mail at securityclearance@state.gov or call (571) 345-3186 or (866) 643-INFO (4636).

AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ABUJA

ABUJA SCHOOL MOVES FROM DREAM TO REALITY **BY RON ACUFF**

Moving from dream to reality, a new American international school will soon open in Abuja. It will include, for the first time in Nigeria, a high school. Those who have not sought assignment to the most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa for lack of an American curriculum for their teenaged children can now reconsider.

The existing school, founded in 1993, is a nonprofit, coeducational international day school. Until now, it offered quality nursery through grade 9 education based on the American educational system and an independent-study high school program through the University of Nebraska for grades 10 through 12. The school is fully accredited by the Middle States Association, and many of the teaching and administrative staff are certified in the United States and United Kingdom. The more than 40 nationalities represented at the school learn tolerance, cooperation and respect for each other's culture and traditions.

The current school needed to be expanded as the expatriate community in Abuja continued to grow. But being in a filled-to-capacity facility on land that was too small and not owned by the school was a hindrance.

The new school is an ambitious endeavor by its board of directors and administration, supported by the local government, the embassy, the Office of Overseas Schools and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

Led by Director Amy Uzoewulu and the school board, a course was charted for design and construction that would be completed in the short span of two years. A project manager was hired, a master plan designed and the construction contract advertised, negotiated and awarded.

Construction includes 29 classrooms, 6 residential units, 8 offices, a library, 2 science laboratories, a computer laboratory, a multipurpose room to serve as an auditorium and meeting hall, and a school clinic. Construction is on schedule and the new school will open for classes in August.

Energetic Embassy officials worked closely with the school, serving on the board of directors and the construction committee. They spearheaded fundraising activities, netting \$80,000 in one night at a black-tie dinner attended by influential Nigerian and American officials and business leaders.

Regional Security Officer Jerald Barnes and I, with assistance from Dr. Joseph Carney of the Office of Overseas Schools, solicited and received a grant of \$529,500 from the Department's Soft Target Working Group to improve security for the new school.

OPIC, an independent agency of the U.S. government, approved a loan of \$3.25 million to finance the move to a new campus and construction of the school. Overall construction costs of \$4 million required \$750,000 from the



Ambassador John Campbell, left, and Federal Capital Territory Minister Malam Nasir el-Rufa'i discuss the new school at the foundation-laying ceremony.

school's reserves. OPIC required this equity contribution and a submission of documents, including a business plan, before the school could apply for the loan.

Last, but certainly not least, has been the contribution of the local government. Federal Capital Territory Minister Malam Nasir el-Rufa'i pledged the infrastructure of roads, electricity and water so necessary to establishing the school.

Recently, the school director and president of the board addressed the success of this fast-tracked construction project in Harare at the annual conference of the Association of International Schools of Africa to a group of very interested schools considering expanding their facilities and applying for an OPIC loan. ■

The author is the U.S. Embassy in Abuja's management officer and president of the American International School's board of directors.

STATE OF THE ARTS

Diplotots Add Holiday Flavor to Noontime Concerts

By John Bentel

The Foreign Affairs Recreation Association and the State of the Arts Cultural Series recently featured jazz and classical pianists and a soprano in its noontime concerts.

Pianist (and practicing psychiatrist) Harold Kaufman played a variety of jazz classics reflecting his innate style and interpretation. He did a slow and melodic *Day in the Life of a Fool*, followed by a fast and rhythmic *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*, which brought the audience to its feet.

Yvonne Chen, 15, winner of the 2003 Young Artists International Piano Competition, performed on very short notice and gave a phenomenal program. The ninth-grader at Westfield High School in Fairfax, Va., interpreted the music with great maturity and insight. Her performance of Bach's *Chaconne in D minor, BWV 1004*, a very difficult piece, earned resounding applause from the audience.

To close out the year, the Diplotots, Sam Brock and Wayne Dorsey joined forces to present a heartfelt holiday program. The children staged a wonderful play with a holiday moral. Wayne and Sam, both longtime performers and supporters of State of the Arts, played holiday selections and carols, which included an audience sing-along.

The talents of Dr. Jenni Cook, soprano, and Arlene Kies, piano, provided a wonderful segue into the New Year. They presented French, German and Spanish music of the 19th



The Diplotots give a colorful holiday performance.

century. Jenni's beautiful voice, sensitive interpretation and cultural insight were joined to Arlene's accomplished accompaniment. Both performers teach in the Department of Music at the University of New Hampshire. ■

The author is a computer specialist in the Executive Secretariat.

CALENDAR

March 8	TBD, Exhibit Hall
March 22	Vera Danchenko-Stern, piano; Natalie Conte, soprano; Mary Catherine Moroney, mezzo-soprano; and Kevin Wetzel, baritone, performing Russian music
April 5	Marquis Trio: clarinet, cello and piano
April 19	Wayne Dorsey, classical piano
Performances are on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium.	



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PEOPLE LIKE YOU



Shanghai Lights

PRESERVING WESTERN HISTORY IN A CHINESE BOOMTOWN **BY ELINA SARKISOVA**

Athens, Rome, Florence, Prague—these are focal points of Western civilization that are rarely overlooked by the eager student of art and architectural history. Where else can you find such a diverse assortment of architectural jewels, all in one place, all at your fingertips?

Tess Johnston will tell you—Shanghai.

Following a long and varied life as a Foreign Service office management specialist, which included service in both Berlins (West in 1954 and East in 1978), Tehran between the two hostage-takings and seven years in wartime Vietnam, Tess first arrived in Shanghai in 1981 to work at the American Consulate General. After a final tour there, she

retired at post in 1996 and remained to pursue a full-time career in writing, editing and lecturing—something she had been doing part-time for years.

Her work focuses on the Western presence in Shanghai from 1842 to 1949. This tumultuous period in Chinese history transformed Shanghai, as waves of foreign arrivals—mostly British, American, French, German and Russian—brought new languages, lifestyles and architecture.

Through her research and publications, Tess attempts to preserve the foreign contributions to the growth of the city, mostly concentrated in the areas that became known as the International Settlement and the French Concession. With

PEOPLE LIKE YOU

Along with a fellow preservationist, she co-founded the Shanghai Historic House Association, which she jokingly calls "an association of like-minded preservationists with no power to preserve."

architecture being the principal means of connecting contemporary Shanghai to its European past, Tess focuses on recreating it in words and photographs. Her co-author, Chinese photographer Deke Erh, photographs the buildings while Tess tells the stories of the people who lived in them.

"There is a growing interest in this kind of material, a wave of nostalgia that is generating new interest in lectures, seminars and, most especially, in literature," she says. "The mystique of Shanghai is attracting more and more people."

Along with a fellow preservationist, she co-founded the Shanghai Historic House Association, which she jokingly calls "an association of like-minded preservationists with no power to preserve."



Tess, second from right, enjoys a meal with her Chinese class.

Tess serves as a valuable research resource for visiting scholars and former residents who seek to trace their Shanghai roots. In addition to books on architecture, her published works include *Welcome to Shanghai*, an expatriate guidebook, and the *Emigranten Adressbuch*, a replica of a listing of the names, local addresses, cities of origin and previous occupations of thousands of German and Austrian Jews who fled to Shanghai before 1939. She has developed an extensive library of old books and historical documents, which has helped her piece together the broken past of Shanghai's international district. She plans to donate her collection to the Hoover Institution of Stanford University.

Upon her arrival in 1981, Tess found Shanghai in a state of recovery from the social and environmental impact of the Cultural Revolution, which ended in 1976. She was struck by the number of shabby but still preserved Western buildings

in a Chinese city. She could find no literature in Shanghai on the architects, builders or former tenants of these old buildings and had no access to any Chinese archives. A former history major at the University of Virginia, Tess decided to collect what materials she could get her hands on at local flea markets and from private book dealers.

Some barriers are beyond her power to overcome. For one thing, "we are looking at the past, while the Chinese look to the future," she says. Small neighborhoods and communities are being destroyed to make way for elaborate malls and apartment complexes better able to address the needs of a growing population. She adds that "power and money rule here in Shanghai, and we preservationists have neither." Not

many people in power have a vested interest in preserving China's cultural past, especially one that deals with a period of Western domination.

"But not all hope is lost," says Tess. "The real estate market has begun to realize that the historic past of the former concessions adds value to property. This has been a positive development for preservation efforts. Just a few years ago, it would have been difficult, if not unwise, for anyone to call these areas for what they were—international settlements. Now, people are promoting these terms in the interest of commercial activity."

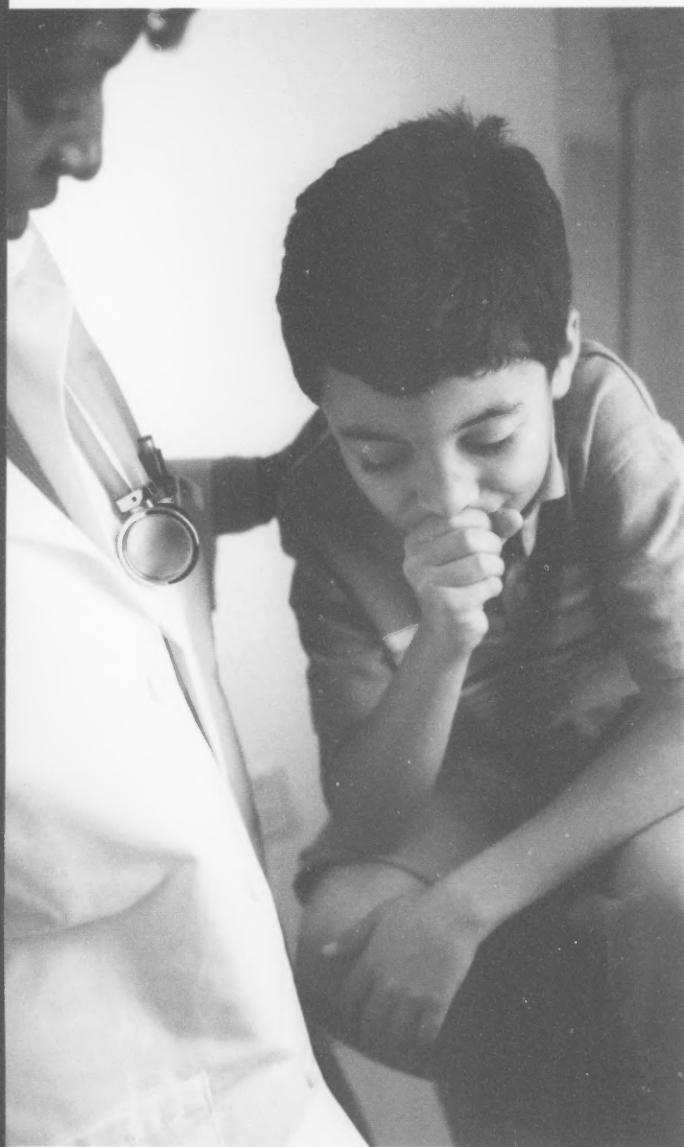
In an encouraging development, the Chinese have now designated more than 500 houses in the former concessions as "municipally protected buildings." Although this is a positive step forward, Tess knows of at least 30 old buildings on that list that have been destroyed.

"By 'destroyed' I mean they were razed to the ground, then rebuilt bigger and with new materials, but in keeping with their original style," she says. "These projects are then heralded in the press as evidence of the Chinese desire for 'preservation' of old buildings."

In reality, this preserves only a semblance of history. But real history is being preserved, too, thanks to Tess and others like her. ■

The author is a paralegal specialist in the Office of the Legal Advisor.

MEDICAL REPORT



Many people think tuberculosis is a disease of the past. But TB is still a leading killer of young adults worldwide. The Department medical program continues to diagnose tuberculosis infections in our Foreign Service employees and family members every year. Living and working in areas of the world with a high incidence of the disease put members of the Foreign Service community at higher risk than the average American.

MED works to prevent tuberculosis with screening programs and, equally important, education for groups at risk.

American employees and family members posted overseas should receive annual TB screening to determine if they have been exposed to tuberculosis during the previous year. The most common method of screening is a simple skin test. This purified protein derivative test, or PPD, helps identify people infected with TB who have no symptoms. It is done in Department health units worldwide and in many health care facilities in the U.S. In the first part of the test, a tiny injection into the skin on the forearm is made. The second phase requires the patient to return for a check of the injection in 48 hours. The health care provider examines the test site for inflammation, swelling or other changes.

If the test is positive, the next phase of testing includes chest X-rays to determine if there is active TB disease. There are also very accurate, but very slow, tests to confirm a diagnosis of active tuberculosis. Cultures of body fluids and a recently FDA-approved blood test called Quantiferon-Gold are two ways to confirm a diagnosis. These diagnostic methods can be slow or difficult to use. Therefore, for now, PPD skin testing is generally the best way to screen for the disease in our Foreign Service community.

Tuberculosis is a slowly developing bacterial infection that is caused by the bacterium *mycobacterium*. Streptomycin, the first antibiotic to fight TB, was introduced in 1946 and Isoniazid became available in 1956.

Other drugs used in the treatment of TB, including Rifampin, Ethambutol and Pyrazinamid, are called second-line drugs. They are used in cases of drug resistance and, very occasionally, when the use of the first-line drug is prevented by adverse drug reactions. In general, these second-line drugs are less effective, more toxic and more expensive than the first-line drugs.

TUBERCULOSIS: PERSISTENT BUT PREVENTABLE

BY DR. MANI SRINIVASAN

MEDICAL REPORT

The selection of the drug regimen depends on the nature and extent of the disease. Modern short-course medication regimens have the advantages of low toxicity and low cost. In most regimens, all the drugs are taken orally. In view of the increasing prevalence of resistance to one or more drugs, four drugs are routinely given in the intensive phase of the treatment of an active TB infection.

Due to increasing poverty in an overpopulated world, lack of attention to TB services and the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, there are more cases of tuberculosis today than at any previous time in human history. Although the incidence of tuberculosis declined greatly in the 20th century in industrialized nations, these nations are now experiencing an upsurge of tuberculosis. The World Health Organization estimates that a third of the world's population is infected with TB. In the United States, the incidence of TB cases has increased since 1985, most likely due to the increase in HIV/AIDS.

Each year about 8 million people develop the disease and up to 2.5 million people are killed by it. About 35 percent of new cases occur in Southeast Asia, 27 percent in Africa, 22 percent in the Western Pacific, 7 percent in the Eastern Mediterranean, 5 percent in Europe and 4 percent in the Americas. The highest mortality is in the sub-Saharan region of Africa, where HIV has led to a rapid increase in the incidence of TB and an increased likelihood of dying from TB.

Tuberculosis is transmitted by airborne droplets and commonly affects the lungs, but can affect almost any part of the body.

TB can spread when someone with an active infection coughs or sneezes and another person breathes in the bacteria. People who have inhaled the TB bacteria, but in whom the disease is controlled, are referred to as infected. These latent TB cases have no symptoms. These individuals frequently have a positive skin test for TB, but cannot yet transmit the disease to others. Without treatment, latent TB can become active TB at a later time.

With active TB disease, the body experiences the harmful effects from the disease and the infected person is infectious to others. Both latent and active TB cases can be successfully treated with medications.

In 2005, at a post with high prevalence of TB, a locally employed driver had symptoms of TB. When TB was diagnosed, others who may have been exposed to the driver in a closed car were screened for TB. Of the 80 Americans at the post who went through skin testing, 21 percent had newly positive screening tests. These individuals had latent infections. They were successfully treated and none of these cases have developed into active tuberculosis.

Risk factors for TB include any condition that weakens the immune system, such as HIV infection and alcoholism. The disease is also associated with low socioeconomic status, crowded living conditions and, of course, living in a place with a high incidence of the disease.

Initially there may be no symptoms. When symptoms develop, they commonly include a persistent cough for usually more than three weeks, unexplained weight loss, fever, fatigue and loss of appetite.

A combination of antibiotics for six to nine months usually successfully treats the infection. Multiple drugs are used to reduce the likelihood of resistant organisms. The dangerous contact time is before treatment. However, once



A patient is tested for TB in MED's Washington examination clinic.

treatment with drugs starts, the sick person becomes non-contagious within a few weeks. It is important to treat both latent TB and active TB. The health unit staff can give appropriate guidelines after assessing the individual situation.

To become infected with TB, one has to spend a relatively long time in a closed environment where a person with untreated TB contaminates the air. Dishes, linens and most food products pose virtually no danger of spreading TB. Nonetheless, household or mission employees can easily transmit TB to previously unexposed employees and their families. In high-prevalence countries, Foreign Service families should have their domestic employees screened. Anyone who may have been exposed to someone with TB should contact his or her post health unit or local health care provider.

More information on TB can be found at www.cdc.gov and www.who.int. ■

The author is chief of the Office of Domestic Programs in the Office of Medical Services.

APPOINTMENTS



Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs. Jeffrey T. Bergner of Virginia, a government relations and foreign affairs specialist, is the new Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs. Before joining the Department, he was a senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshall Fund. He also founded a government relations firm and served as staff director of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.



U.S. Ambassador to Portugal. Alfred Hoffman of Florida, a businessman and political activist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Portugal. He was founder and chairman of WCI Communities, a community developer, homebuilder and real estate services company. He was national co-chair and Florida state finance chairman for the George W. Bush for President campaign. He was also national finance chairman for the Republican National Committee. He is married and has five children.



Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Barry F. Lowenkron of Virginia, a foreign affairs and intelligence specialist, is the new Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Prior to his appointment, he was principal deputy director of Policy Planning for the Department. Before that, he was national intelligence officer for Europe, director of the National Intelligence Council's analytic staff and special assistant to the director of Central Intelligence. He is on leave from the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, where he has been an adjunct lecturer in American foreign policy since 1979.



U.S. Ambassador to Austria. Susan Rasinski McCaw of Washington, a businesswoman and political activist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Austria. Previously, she was president of COM Investments and managing partner of Eagle Creek Capital. She also worked as an investment banker and business analyst and served on Stanford University's board of trustees. She was

finance co-chair for Bush-Cheney '04 in Washington state and served on the Republican National Committee's Women's Coalition Advisory Board.



U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa. William P. McCormick of Oregon, a businessman and political activist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa. He is chairman emeritus of McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurants, which operate in 24 states. His civic and charitable involvement encompasses the disadvantaged, veterans and the arts, among other elements of society. He was Bush for President finance co-chair and Oregon chairman of the Republican National Committee Finance Committee. He is married and has six children.



U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. Francis Rooney of Florida, a businessman and civic activist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. He is the former chief executive officer of Rooney Holdings, Inc., an investment and holding company with operating subsidiaries in construction and electronics manufacturing. He was vice chairman of the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority and a member of the board of advisors of the Panama Canal Authority. He is married and has three children.



U.S. Ambassador to Norway. Benson K. Whitney of Minnesota, a businessman, lawyer and political activist, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway. After practicing law, he became managing general partner of a venture capital fund focused on technology and health care companies and chief executive officer of Whitney Management Company, a private investment advisory firm. He served as Minnesota executive director and finance chair for Bush-Cheney '04 as well as Minnesota finance chair for the Republican National Committee. He is married and has four children.

O B I T U A R I E S



Hugh G. Appling, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer who served as deputy chief of mission in Syria, Australia and Vietnam, died Jan. 18 in Arlington, Va., of pneumonia. He received the Secretary of State's Award for Heroism for his efforts to save the life of his deputy in Vietnam while he himself was injured in a Christmas Day helicopter crash in 1968. He entered the Foreign Service in 1947 and also served overseas in Vienna, London, Paris, Bonn and Manila. He retired in 1976. He served in the Army during World War II.



Edmund O. Barker, 86, a former Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 9 in Montgomery, Ala., after a short illness. He served as a diplomat in New Caledonia, Thailand and Ethiopia from 1942 to 1948. He served for 25 years as a civilian employee of Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and was an active sponsor of foreign students attending the War College there. He enjoyed international travel, art and fencing.

Alice Margaret Bass, 88, widow of retired Foreign Service officer Charles White Bass, died Oct. 25 in Lake City, Fla., following a long illness. She accompanied her husband on overseas postings to India, Switzerland, Africa, Japan, Thailand and Barbados. She became the oldest graduate of Rollins College, earning a B.A. degree at age 76. She was an accomplished artist and historian.

Charles E. Behrens, 80, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Jan. 10 of complications from Parkinson's disease in Levels, W.Va. His overseas postings included Rangoon, Surabaya, Dar es Salaam, Lagos, Khartoum and Stuttgart.



Yarber Lee "Speed" Black, 88, a retired Foreign Service employee, died Dec. 28 in Fort Myers, Fla. He served in the Army during World War II and with the Department from 1948 to 1971. His overseas postings included France, Iraq, Italy, India, Turkey, Germany and Greece. After retirement, he and his wife Josephine enjoyed traveling the world.

R E T I R E M E N T S

CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENTS

Collins, Dennis W.	O'Loughlin, Donna M.
Gaines, Robert R.	O'Loughlin, Thomas J.
Jackson, Ines M.	Padilla, Carlos
Kaupinen, Allan G.	Stephens, Harvey J.
Keys, Delores D.	Taylor, Karen L.
Lundstrom, Edward N.	Williams, Willella T.
Nieves, Noel	Wright, John L.

FOREIGN SERVICE RETIREMENTS

Alcantara, Ruben R.	Garcia, Rudolph R.	Nekoliczak, John P.
Arnett, David L.	Greenspan, Judith Rose	O'Connell, June M.
Berzins, Gunars	Hamilton, James Jay	Parker, Deane W.
Bonkowsky, Elizabeth L.	Horowitz, Arnold	Payne, Patricia
Brania, Patricia A.	Huggins, Carolyn Ruth	Pennebaker II, William K.
Brown, Madeleine M.	Huhtala, Marie T.	Pennell, Robert W.
Brown, Marvin S.	Jackson, Mark Hansley	Pepper, Raymond J.
Brown, Warrington Edwin	Johnson, Joel B.	Pergl, Gary B.
Chamberlain II, Harry	Kiehl, Pamela Francis	Perlow, Howard T.
Cohen, Kenneth A.	Kurtzer, Daniel Charles	Quackenbush, Alicia
Connors, Kevin J.	Lamson, Lelia L.	Render, Arlene
Cooper, Robert Hamilton	Law, Donna J.	Reynolds, Suzann E.
Copenhaver, Judy J.	Lief, Elliot R.	Robinson, Dianne M.
Corsbie, Janette M.	Livingston, Laura L.	Rodriguez, Roberto
Crane, Louise Kelleher	Long, Aila K.	Sheely, Alan L.
Cross, Kumiko I.	Lundberg, Richard C.	Shelton, Elizabeth W.
Daley, Paul Brennan	McPeak, Melissa A.	Shields, Jodell
Dietrich, Margaret L.	Melun, Margaret E.	Skarpentzos, George
Dolezal, Carole Ann	Melvin, Jean	Tyznik, Walter Edward
Drost, Richard J.	Molina, Robert J.	Walker, John L.
Englehart, Phyllis J.	Murillo, Saul	Walker, Ruth Rust
Gagnon, James Michael	Musser, Susan W.	Wilson, Jewellene E.

O B I T U A R I E S



Waldemar B. "Waldo" Campbell, 94, died Dec. 12 of a heart attack in Washington, D.C. He served with the Office of Strategic Services in World War II. After the war, he joined the Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and later joined the Foreign Service. He had two tours in South Africa, then served on the Africa desk until his retirement in 1971. He taught at Howard University in the 1970s and worked as a consultant. He enjoyed collecting books and doing research on Africa.

James F. Farrell, 61, a retired Foreign Service specialist, died Dec. 23 from a fall in his residence in San José, Costa Rica. He served in the Marine Corps before joining the Department. He retired in 1994 with 32 years of government service.



Gordon C. Fisher, 54, a security engineering officer, died Dec. 16 of heart failure in Falls Church, Va. He joined the Department in 1987 and served overseas with his family in Frankfurt, Cairo, Moscow and Ankara. He enjoyed flying, scuba diving, sailing and amateur radio.



Martin Kushinsky, 84, a retired Foreign Service officer, died June 18 of lymphoma in Alexandria, Va. He served in the Army in World War II. He managed cultural and educational programs while serving with the U.S. Information Agency overseas in Chile, Peru, Spain, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines. He retired in 1974. A life-long painter, he showed his work in exhibits in Mexico, Texas and the Philippines. He enjoyed ballroom dancing.



Marjorie Hart Ness, 68, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Donald L. Ness, died Jan. 4 of pulmonary fibrosis in Williamsburg, Va. She accompanied her husband on postings across the U.S. and in Belgium, Poland, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, England and Germany. Known for her culinary skills, she also worked as a nurse and family liaison officer. She volunteered in Colonial Williamsburg, where she honed a love of antique pottery and porcelain.

John Millard Powell, 87, died Jan. 8 in Alexandria, Va., following a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. He served in the Army and as a diplomatic courier during World War II. He later joined the Foreign Service and served overseas in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Iran and Laos. He retired in 1976.

Christine Shelly, 54, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 17 of ovarian cancer in Arlington, Va. She served overseas in Ottawa, Brussels, Lisbon and Cairo. She also served as political adviser to Army Chief of Staff Shinseki and deputy commandant of the Army War College. After retirement, she was a national security affairs consultant.

Clifford E. Southard, 80, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Dec. 17 in Silver Spring, Md. He served in the Navy in World War II. He joined the Department in 1952 and transferred to the U.S. Information Agency, where he served overseas in the Philippines, Japan, Burma and Nigeria. He retired in 1985 as director of Press and Publications.



Kathryn Thorley, 89, a retired Foreign Service specialist, died Dec. 18 of pancreatic cancer in Sacramento, Calif. She served overseas as secretary to the ambassador in Warsaw, Bern, Calcutta, Mexico, Bangkok, Geneva and Pretoria.

IN THE EVENT OF DEATH

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

LYING IN STATE: DELETE ALL?

Inbox

From	Subject
eDepartment Notices	Immediate Opening: Regional Necromancer – Senior Sorcerer or stretch
Flake, Glade	Press Guidance Taskings: Zombies Roaming Earth, Trade Quotas for Id
Dinkle, Minnie	Found in 5 th floor women's locker room: ring (not ear or finger), no quest
eDepartment Notices	Office of Bowling Outreach has been relocated to SA-857 (Hagersville)
Dangle, Fiona	Staff Meeting Note: Does Royce think that rug looks like real hair?
LaBarge, Fred	Attn All: Be warned - cafeteria out of gravy, still has scrapple
Flinger, Margo	For clearance: Annual Right to Party Report (ARPR) DUDE, CLEAR ON
Sligo, Farrell	RE: ARPR Clearance: Can we say "possibly" infected w/ dance fever?
Winkle, Tara	RE: Attn All: cafeteria scrapple is now gone, still some bacon - HURRY!
Fiszter, Royce	All: Lots of snickering in staff meeting today - is this about my ascot?!?!
Flan, McCoy	RE: Your Sick Leave Request - See tracked changes
Mangler, Joyce	I'M NOT SHOUTING! KEYBOARD STUCK ON ALL CAPS – HELP!
Blister, Myron	Mr. Fiszter, I for one think your ascot is a handsome touch, sets off your
Sivasubramanian, V.	RE: A/S Nether Testimony: Removed the word "bodacious" from introdu
Boggle, Winton	Out of Office AutoReply: I am stricken with ennui and general discontent
Squiggle, Wendy	Where's my bran? Just because it's in the fridge doesn't make it yours!
Binder, Myron	A/S Nether Q&A Cleared Response: "I know you are, but what am I?"
Lazenbee, Baxter	BUREAU ALL: Val, come to my hot cubicle lair - Grrrr! XOXO Bunnybear
Recall Message	Lazenbee, Baxter would like to recall the message: "Val, come to my ho
Staff-Assistants	Reminder: All Info Memo summaries MUST be in limerick form
eDepartment Notices	"Procrastinators Anonymous" Meeting Postponed
Benders, Dale Jr.	SHORT FUSE: Country Clearance for Funkytown
Bluestone, Spalding	Where are talking points for my dental appointment?!?!

WANG

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