

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

December 2002

State

Magazine

*Winter Comes
to Romania*



In our next issue:
**Art in
Embassies**

Art in Embassies team poses with glass vessels by artist Dale Chihuly in the chancery in Moscow. Team members are, from left, artist-lender Mary Heebner, Rebecca Clark, Virginia Shore and Camille Benton.

State
Magazine

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State Magazine (ISSN 1099-4165) is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the U.S. Department of State, 2201 C St., N.W., Washington, DC. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing locations. POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to *State Magazine*, HR/ER/SMG, SA-1, Room H-236, Washington, DC 20522-0108. *State Magazine* is published to facilitate communication between management and employees at home and abroad and to acquaint employees with developments that may affect operations or personnel. The magazine is also available to persons interested in working for the Department of State and to the general public.

State Magazine is available by subscription through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 (telephone [202] 512-1800) or on the web at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>.

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request our guidelines, "Getting Your Story Told," by e-mail at statemagazine@state.gov; download them from our web site at www.state.gov/m/dghr/statemag; or send your request in writing to *State Magazine*, HR/ER/SMG, SA-1, Room H-236, Washington, DC 20522-0108. The magazine's phone number is (202) 663-1700.

**Deadlines: Dec. 15 for February issue.
Jan. 15 for March issue.**

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Department of State • United States of America



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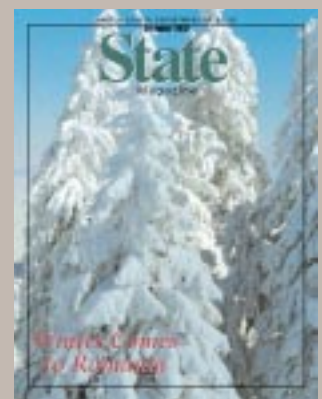
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On the Cover

Snow-covered fir trees in the Carpathian Mountains in Poiana Brasov, Romania.

Photo by Joy Salpini

FROM THE SECRETARY

SECRETARY COLIN L. POWELL

Building Hope for Democracy



This is the season when our thoughts turn to the people we cherish most and we pause to count our blessings.

As we give thanks for the joys of home and friends, we think also of the members of our extended State Department family serving in far-away places. We especially remember the colleagues we lost and our hearts go out to the Green and Foley families.

The perils and tragedies of the past year make us appreciate more than ever how precious life and liberty are. And we Americans, who are so fortunate, have an obligation to do all we can to help others around the world who yearn for the dignity, prosperity and peace that freedom brings.

Last month in Seoul, Korea, 120 delegations representing the world's democracies—new and old, developed and developing—gathered for the second ministerial meeting of the Community of Democracies. I was to have led the U.S. team, but to my regret, I had to cancel at the last minute due to the U.N. Security Council deliberations over Iraq.

The council's unanimous passage of Resolution 1441 was an important action in defense of international peace and security, and Baghdad's last chance to eliminate its weapons of mass destruction by peaceful means. Whether peacefully or by force, the world soon will be rid of the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

The greatest contribution to international peace and security, however, will come ultimately from helping democratic values and institutions flourish on every continent. In such a world, tyrants and terrorists cannot thrive.

As more and more countries adopt democratic practices, the evidence mounts: Democracy is not a foreign import or imposition, but an inspiration to men and women all around the globe who work for change within their own societies.

Some still regard democracy as a luxury that only the world's wealthy can afford. But people throughout the developing world increasingly see democracy as a necessity. They have discovered that only a combination of democratic and market freedoms can create conditions for well-being on the large scale needed to lift millions out of poverty.

Countries with closed societies, with centrally controlled economies and with no civil liberties, do a poor job of meeting their citizens' needs for food, shelter, education and health care. That is not ideology. It is fact.

It is also a fact that trade and investment don't tend to flow to countries—even democracies—that are rife with corruption, where civil society remains extremely weak or where leaders, once elected, fail to invest what resources they have in their people.

New democracies created with high hopes can founder if ordinary citizens do not see direct improvements in their lives. Transitions can be chaotic and wrenching. Democratic systems take time to develop and to deliver. Meanwhile, autocrats will sing siren songs of stability. Corruption will squander a nation's treasure and destroy public trust. Populists will make false promises of fairness. And extremists will feed on frustration and fears for the future.

New democracies conceived in hope are carried by hope until they are consolidated.

And so, of all the challenges to democracy in the world, the one that should worry us the most is the loss of hope.

That is why we must work intensively to promote democratic institution-building and the rule of law. That is why we must foster the development of civil societies and independent media. And why it is so important that we do all we can to support good governance and encourage sound economic management. These systemic efforts can help build confidence among citizens that staying democracy's course will be worth the struggle.

At Seoul, the U.S. delegation, headed by Under Secretary for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky, joined the other members of the Community of Democracies in adopting a Plan of Action. The plan identifies concrete steps that governments can take individually, collectively and in partnership with nongovernmental organizations to promote democratic change, consolidate democratic institutions and help democracies succeed. And I hope that our bureaus here in Washington and each and every mission overseas will do their part in helping to implement the plan.

As we number our blessings this holiday season, we, who work in the State Department, can count among them the many opportunities we have to keep democracy's hope strong and secure around the world.

For our part, Alma and I consider ourselves greatly blessed to have been given the opportunity to serve with all of you and your families. You have extended kindnesses to us well beyond the call of duty and wherever we go, you always make us feel welcome.

From the Powell family to yours, we wish you a happy, safe and prosperous New Year. ■

Customer Service Front and Center

I was so glad to see the Center for Administrative Innovation featured as Office of the Month in the October issue.

As part of its most recent “Good Ideas Workshop” held in Lima, Peru, in September, I can testify to the center’s commitment to finding better ways to improve customer service.

The staff’s energy, enthusiasm and knowledge influenced all the Lima participants. I believe that all of us who were there are now part of a select cadre of employees who share their enthusiasm for creating means

and developing innovative approaches to enhance improvements in all sectors of government service.

Ana-Maria C. de Miranda
Human Resources Assistant
U.S. Consulate General
Rio de Janeiro

Congratulations, Sofia

Your article in the October issue on “Sofia Breaks Ground for New Chancery” was welcome news for those of us who served in the old main chancery building downtown and the various annexes. The chancery building was both unsafe and insecure.

As deputy chief of mission from 1985 to 1988, my staff and I tried hard but without success to identify a suitable, available site for a new chancery. The embassy working environment can only have gotten much worse with the significant growth in staff since 1989.

So it is particularly gratifying to know that the U.S. Embassy in Sofia soon will have conditions that we could only have dreamed about back in the 1980s and that the transition from the old to the new is truly complete.

Jonathan B. Rickert
Retired FSO
Washington, D.C.

From the Editor

A Christmas Memory

The short story writer O. Henry once observed that every street in New York had a story to tell. And he told many, including “The Gift of the Magi,” the classic story of giving.

I first saw New York during Christmas of 1963. The trip was a gift from my college roommate, a New Yorker who had invited me to join him and his parents in their high-rise apartment near Greenwich Village. Southerners by birth, his parents were both successful professionals—his father a Wall Street lawyer, his mother a juvenile fiction editor at Doubleday.

We walked in the bitter cold along the Battery in lower Manhattan, gazing ahead at the river and back at the

skyline. It was much warmer in Radio City Music Hall, where the Rockettes lifted everyone’s spirit. The next day we lunched at Schrafft’s and had dinner at Luchow’s. In between, we browsed what seemed an endless supply of bookstores. One evening, we watched the skaters in Rockefeller Center. Lights reflected on the ice and the whole scene seemed surreal.

I devoted one evening to a college English assignment by interviewing the Rev. Harold Flye, an Episcopal priest who lived in Greenwich Village but earlier had taught at St. Andrew’s, a boys’ boarding school in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee near my home. There he had befriended novelist James Agee and recently had edited a collection of the late novelist’s letters—a primary source for a paper I was writing for an American literature course. Earlier in the day, I had interviewed the novelist’s widow, Mia Agee, by telephone. They met at *Fortune* magazine.

But most evenings, we wandered the city’s streets where vendors hawked everything from their carts. Most memorable were the giant pretzels and roasted chestnuts whose smell filled the cold air. We saw *Spoon River Anthology* at the Belasco Theater with a young actor named Hal Holbrook. Years later, I saw him portray Mark Twain at the Kennedy Center. My mother was with me. She liked everything but the cigar smoke.

I have visited New York many times since, but never with the same sense of mirth and magic of that first trip. It was a true gift. And I treasure it still.



Photo by Bill Bachmann/eStock Photography/PictureQuest



Holiday skaters at Rockefeller Center.

Department Presents Small Business Award



State Department photo.

Jolanda Janczewski, president of Consolidated Safety Services Inc. of Fairfax, Va., accepts the Department's Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year Award during a ceremony Sept. 17 in the Benjamin Franklin Room. Joining her are, from left, William Eaton, assistant secretary for Administration; Dennis Lauchner, vice president of the services company; and Charles E. Williams, director, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. Sponsored by the Bureau of Administration, the award recognizes small business contractors who have displayed exemplary performance, customer service, management and technical capabilities.

CFC Campaign Continues

The Department's Combined Federal Campaign continues through Dec. 13 with a goal of \$1.905 million.

The world's largest and most successful workplace fund-raising model, the CFC supports more than 3,000 nonprofit organizations in the area, across the country and overseas. The campaign dates from 1961, when John F. Kennedy was president.

By referring to the CFC's Catalogue of Caring, employees may select specific organizations to support or contribute to the general campaign. Whichever, employees are encouraged to use payroll deduction.

The Department is known for its strong tradition of giving and last year won the coveted Pacesetter Award by exceeding its assigned goal of \$1.8 million by more than 3.5 percent.



National Hispanic Heritage Month



Photo by Mark Stewart

Elizabeth Lisboa-Farrow, left, chair of the U.S.-Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Albert C. Zapanta, president of the U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce, received the Distinguished Public Service Award at the Secretary's Open Forum for outstanding contributions to international affairs. The forum was held during October's Hispanic Heritage Month in the Department. Their appearance was sponsored by State's Office of Civil Rights and the Hispanic Employment Council of Foreign Agencies.

Diplotots Expands

The first phase of an expanded Diplotots, the Department's on-site child care center in State Annex-1, Columbia Plaza, has been completed, creating space for up to eight additional infants, according to Patricia Pittarelli, program manager in the Office of Employee Relations.

Space for an additional 22 infants, Ms. Pittarelli said, will be completed by the end of calendar year 2003. Currently, there is a waiting list of about 80 infants.

Opened in May 1996, the center currently houses 70 children—infants through kindergarteners.

Artists and Their Art Go Abroad

The State Department recently sent artists to visit host countries along with their artworks—an original concept for the Department's Art in Embassies Program that for more than three decades has been placing original works of art by U.S. citizens in American diplomatic residences worldwide.

During September and October, five American artists and one art historian participated in the new initiative that staff would like to see a permanent part of the program.

The artists are Los Angeles ceramist Karen Koblitz, who visited Moscow; New York City painter Valentina DuBasky, who visited Riga, Latvia, and Tallinn, Estonia; painter Karen Gunderson, also of New York City, who traveled to Lomé, Togo; multimedia painter Johnny Johnson of Fredericksburg, Va., who went to Cotonou, Benin; and Brooklyn artist Eve Andree Laramee, who visited Ottawa and Montreal.

Art historian Nicholas Fox Weber, executive director of the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation in Bethany, Conn., traveled to The Hague in the Netherlands, where he discussed the late abstract expressionist artist Josef Albers.

The artists were selected by the U.S. ambassadors in each country in conjunction with program curators.



Heron, Warbler, & Milkweed; Valentina DuBasky.

Photo courtesy of the artist, New York

DACOR Announces Scholarships

Several scholarships and fellowships will be available in academic year 2003–2004 for children and grandchildren of active or retired U.S. Foreign Service officers to study at The Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Conn., and Yale University in New Haven, Conn., through DACOR Bacon House Foundation (Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired). Awards are made possible by a generous bequest from the late Ambassador Louis G. Dreyfus Jr.

Hotchkiss seeks one qualified enrolled student for a \$5,000 scholarship. Applicants should contact the Director of Financial Aid, The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, CT 06039-0800. Applicants must document their parents' or grandparents' Foreign Service status.

DACOR Bacon House Foundation will consult with Yale on the merit-based awards. The Yale Center for International and Area Studies, Henry R. Luce Hall, 34 Hillhouse Ave., New Haven, CT 06520, coordinates the fellowships. Awards will apply toward university-billed expenses only. Aspirants may apply for the Dreyfus awards at the time of their application for admission to Yale. Any Dreyfus award would be contingent upon Yale confirming that the student has been admitted or is in good standing.

- Awards to undergraduates may be up to \$5,000. It is Yale policy that no student offered admission will be unable to attend because of financial limitations. At present, undergraduate students may apply 100 percent of any scholarships awarded by outside organizations to reducing their Yale self-help requirements.
- Awards to graduate and professional students may be up to \$10,000 and any second-year award will be at half stipend. There is no restriction as to field of study, but if there are many applicants preference will be given to students in a field related to foreign affairs and for study toward a master's degree.
- All awards are subject to the availability of funds. To apply for Dreyfus awards at Yale University, please send the following items to the DACOR Bacon House Foundation at the address below. Applicants must complete all necessary admission and enrollment procedures with Yale University separately.
- A copy of the most recent appointment or promotion document of the applicant's parent or grandparent who is an active or retired U.S. Foreign Service officer.
- A brief letter of interest with full contact information, including full name, current and permanent addresses, and phone (and fax) numbers.
- Applicant's resume.
- Copies of the applicant's most recent transcript (if already enrolled at Yale, submit a Yale transcript; if

admitted but yet to begin classes, submit the most recent transcript).

- A one-page statement of academic goals, work experience, awards and nonacademic achievements. Applicants for graduate fellowships should add a second page outlining career goals. Please say how you learned about the Dreyfus awards.

Send application materials to:
 DACOR Bacon House Foundation
 Attn: William C. Hamilton
 1801 F St., NW
 Washington, DC 20006

The deadline for applications is March 15, 2003. For further information, contact Taushia Walker at (202) 682-0500 ext. 17, voice; (800) 344-9127; fax (202) 842-3295 or e-mail prog.coord@dacorbacon.org.

Open Season Draws to a Close

The special open season for federal employees to sign up for long-term care insurance ends Dec. 31.

By enrolling now, current federal employees answer a brief set of health-related questions and elect options for a range of services—from nursing home and home health care and assisted living facilities to adult day care, caregiver and respite care.

About 100,000 applications to purchase federal long-term care insurance have been filed, according to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Most applicants are active duty federal employees, and the acceptance rate is about 94 percent, OPM reported.

An estimated 20 million people are eligible for the program, including members of the uniformed services, annuitants, spouses of employees and annuitants, children 18 and older, parents, parents-in-law and stepparents of employees.

Enroll online at www.ltcfeds.com. To receive an information kit and application, call toll-free (800) 582-3337 (voice) or (800) 843-3557 (TDD). Until payroll deduction becomes available in January 2003, State employees should pay their premiums directly.

Applications are unavailable in the Department.

Applicants Sought for Outstanding Volunteerism Award

Nominations are being sought for the Secretary of State Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad to be presented to a U.S. government direct hire employee or family member from each of the six geographic bureaus during Foreign Affairs Day in May.

The award recognizes outstanding volunteers in exceptional service to the community, outstanding activities in the host country and exceptional service in emergencies.

The AAFSW selection panel will base the award on candidates having demonstrated extraordinary personal concern for, and contributed time and effort to, improv-

ing the environment or human condition in their community and their sensitivity to recognizing and developing better community life.

The nomination should not exceed three printed pages and should include the following information:

- Nominee's name, agency and position (if nominee is a family member, the name, relationship to the direct hire employee and the employee's position and agency).
- Nominator's name, agency, position (or family relationship) and description of association with the nominee.
- Justification for nomination. The narrative should discuss the actions and qualities that qualify the nominee for the award, citing specific examples of accomplishments that fulfill the criteria.

Nominations are due Feb. 1 and should be sent by e-mail, fax or mail to the AAFSW Office, 5125 MacArthur Blvd, NW, Suite 36, Washington, DC 20016; phone (202) 362-6514; fax (202) 362-6589; e-mail, AAFSW @ Erols.com.

Largest Foreign Service Specialist Class Sworn In



Photo by Dave Krecke

The largest Foreign Service specialist class ever was sworn in Oct. 11 at a ceremony in the Harry S Truman Building's Benjamin Franklin Room. A class of 93 technical security specialists, diplomatic couriers, security engineers, information management specialists, office management specialists, financial management officers and other specialists took the oath of office administered by Cecilia Herrera, assistant chief of the Office of Protocol. The specialists are reporting to their new worldwide assignments.

Reflection, Gratitude and Generosity

As we near the end of another year, it is once again an opportunity to engage in reflection, gratitude and generosity.

First the gratitude: Right off, I want to thank everyone on the “dream team” that comprises the Department of State. It has been another productive year, thanks to your hard work and dedication.

As for the reflection, in October, I had the pleasure of meeting with a large group of entry-level office management specialists in London. I was struck again by the singular role they play in the Department of State. Simply put, without them, our missions and offices would be unable to function.

So I want to take this public opportunity to single them out for their hard work and commitment to public service, the American people, the President and the Secretary of State. Each and every office management specialist is a vital member of our national security team.

I know that many of our overseas office management specialists have been putting in long hours because of staff shortages. I have some good news to report: help is on the way. Almost 1,200 people responded to our online OMS recruitment campaign this summer. Over 400 candidates have made it to the assessment stage of the evaluation, and we hope to have all of these candidates assessed by January, significantly shortening our OMS hiring process. So, sometime next year, you can expect an influx of new office management specialists to fill the vacant jobs overseas and provide relief to those of you putting in extra hours. I know this is something else to be grateful for.

Now, a word or two on generosity. I have been moved by the community service activities I have heard about from office management specialists at various posts. These are amazing stories, and I share them because they make me feel good about our cadre of office management specialists and demonstrate how each one of us, by our interactions with others, can truly affect the way America is seen abroad.

- Organizing fund-raising events for orphanages in Haiti.
- Teaching English to Moroccan businesswomen.
- Participating in the Minor Elementary tutoring program in Washington, D.C.
- Speaking to rural high schools about the Foreign Service during home leave.
- Teaching typing to teenage girls at a shelter in Panama.



- Participating in walkathons in support of childhood diabetes in Canberra and cancer research in Rome.

- Convincing a dentist back home to donate toothbrushes and toothpaste to an orphanage in Mexico City.

- Including kids from an orphanage in Montevideo in embassy children’s events—Christmas, Halloween, Easter egg hunt and trips to the beach and to the movies.

- Volunteering time at an AIDS day care center in Harare.

- Organizing a fund-raiser for a Romanian charity that supports medical care for children.

- Performing American songs on Russian television.
- Teaching English to Sierra Leonean refugees in Dakar, resulting in several students entering college.
- Organizing opera, dinner and other outings for the Pretoria embassy community.
- Transferring three weeks of annual leave to a friend in the Foreign Service who had been ill for some time, and then persuading others at the embassy to do the same, enabling this colleague to make a smooth transition into retirement.

Without exception, each person who shared a story mentioned how rewarding the experience was.

These remarkable stories of office management specialists reaching beyond the immediate job at hand to their communities are in no way unique. I know there are countless other stories out there and many more that will be written in coming months. May all of us find such inspiration to give back and share the best of ourselves. There is tremendous satisfaction to be gained from giving to communities throughout the world, within the United States and within our own Department of State community as well. It also happens to be diplomacy in action.

Finally, you can do something too. At this time of year, many of you may find yourselves with “use or lose” annual leave. Please do consider donating your leave to colleagues who have exhausted their sick leave and are in difficult circumstances. More information on the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program is available on the HR Intranet web site. This type of generosity directly helps your friends and colleagues in the State Department family.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the new year. ■

Sunday morning at Humorlui
Monastery in Bucovina.

Post of the Month:

Bucharest

By Joy Salpini and Ed Stafford

A tour in Romania is a dizzying trip through time—forward to the cutting edge of the information age and back to the rhythm of peasant dances and horse-drawn carts.

Since 1989, Romania has struggled to overcome the oppressive command economy legacy of its communist-era dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu. As it presses to join NATO and

the European Union, the country is stepping up to painful reform, making rapid changes that are long overdue.

The U.S. Embassy in Bucharest is leading the reform agenda, pressing successfully in the past year for concrete steps to tackle corruption, strengthen public administration, downsize the military and bring more transparency to the business climate. The embassy is helping to strengthen Romania's border controls to combat human trafficking and the trans-shipment of weapons of mass destruction. Privatization of state-owned enterprises is high on the mission's bilateral agenda. So is judicial reform to ensure that Romanians benefit from quicker and fairer justice. The embassy is also seeking continued progress in addressing the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities, including restitution issues. Romania's steps in each of these areas have captured international attention.

Last year's 5.3 percent GDP growth is helping to make Bucharest, where most official Americans live, a truly international city again. Ten years ago the airport—a small decrepit building—welcomed plucky tourists and cowboy investors. Now a modern facility with 10 international gates, the airport greets upscale travelers and business executives. The city now supports two five-star and three four-star hotels—a far cry from the one four-star hotel in town a half decade ago. And Bucharest plays host to a range of international conferences and visits. Last December, Secretary of State Colin Powell participated in the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe ministerial here. Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage attended a meeting of NATO aspirants last March, and Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill was present



Photo courtesy of Ms. Munshi

Public affairs officer Kiki Munshi with her Romanian horse, Hidalgo.



Photo by Joy Saipini

Administrative officer Gary Bagley and administrative assistant Andreea Crisan confer on an upcoming VIP visit.

in May for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's annual conference.

Bucharest is undergoing a startling renaissance. New restaurants—from French to fish to fusion—are opening, all featuring excellent, low-cost Romanian wines. Many offer dining alfresco from April through October at prices far lower than those in the United States. A new, multitier mall is now an American-style teenage hangout, complete with a 10-screen multiplex cinema. While still present, the number of street children is declining. New houses and apartments are being constructed continuously inside and outside the city.

Many embassy families now live in homes with yards beyond the city center, near the brand-new American International School of Bucharest. The school offers academic, artistic and athletic programs for a diverse international student body of more

than 400 in state-of-the-art facilities. Those who prefer to live downtown now have a range of new or renovated apartments in the city. And there are even a few Belle Époque houses for those who prefer architectural charm to modern utilities.

On long weekends and day trips, embassy employees can experience an amazingly beautiful country where Romanian farmers work the land with horses and hand plows and shepherds herd flocks across hillsides. In the northeast, the 600-year-old monasteries of Suceava and Bucovina, their exteriors painted with biblical scenes, have been declared UNESCO World Heritage treasures. Many offer rooms for rent along with a simple meal prepared by the nuns in residence. In the northwest, Romanian peasants still attend church in their colorful folk dress—a tradition carried out for hundreds of years. If you're lucky, you may see kitchen pots hanging from trees, declaring that a farmer's daughter is now of marrying age.

Over the past year, the embassy reopened an American Presence Post in Cluj, the historical capital of Transylvania. Across that storied region, Romania's history comes to life with traces of royalty, medieval citadels and Vlad Tepes—the historical basis for Bram Stoker's legendary Dracula. Saxon-fortified churches stand silent guard, while Roman, Greek and Dacian ruins dot both countryside and seacoast. Other getaways include mountain spas, mud baths and an always frozen "ice cave"



Ed Stafford, a political officer, standing, and Bogdon Sgarciu, political assistant, discuss Romania's possible entry into NATO.

buried deep in Romania's rugged mountains. Peasant arts and crafts are varied, simple and beautiful.

Romania is paradise for outdoor enthusiasts. The Carpathian and Fagaras mountains are filled with trails. Hiking, mountain biking or horseback riding tours are available from guides who know their homeland and are proud to tell their stories. The truly adventurous will find

Nurse practitioner Mari Sullivan, right, supervises her newest staff member, Christina Nitu, as she takes Deirdre Messick's blood pressure.



Photos by Joy Salpini

Assistant general services officer Elizabeth Thompson enjoys the sunshine in the mountains of Transylvania.



Photo by Laura Griesmer

plenty of opportunities to be guided toward Europe's largest concentration of bears, wild boar, lynx and wolves. Many hunters return home with their own bearskin rugs. Ski slopes, while not of Swiss Alp quality, are less than three hours from Bucharest. Not only is the skiing excellent but it costs less than half what it does elsewhere in Europe. Environmentalists and nature lovers flock to the Danube delta for Europe's largest variety of migrating birds and waterfowl. And newly privatized Black Sea beach resorts are getting a needed face-lift to compete for Scandinavian and German tourists.

Like tourism, the U.S. bilateral partnership with Romania is growing rapidly. Romania was the first country to sign an Article 98 agreement excluding U.S. nationals from the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction. Romanian "Red Scorpion Battalion" soldiers are now serving proudly in Afghanistan, at the side of America's finest soldiers. The United States is now Romania's third largest foreign investor, up two notches in barely a year. Growth has been particularly keen in the telecommunications sector, where Romania has introduced into Europe one of America's newest broadband technologies. And although a few words in Romanian bring a welcome smile from our hosts, English is by far the country's most widely spoken second language.

In Bucharest and in Cluj, the U.S. team is making a dramatic difference in Romanian lives and in the course of Romania's history. Romania is now at the forefront of

U.S. policy interest, forging a partnership for the century ahead. It has a lot of catching up to do. But with the changes under way, this once-forgotten country—hidden in Europe's wildest, most romantic corner—is proudly being remade into a dynamic and strong partner in the Euro-Atlantic community. ■

Ms. Salpini is the community liaison officer and Mr. Stafford a political officer in Bucharest.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Post of the Month is booked through January 2004. That's right, January 2004.

We appreciate your keen interest in this long-standing section of the magazine, and we welcome your continued support for a feature we have been trying to "grow" to mirror the ever-growing complexity and challenge of our overseas missions.

While the post feature is the most popular, it is only one section of the magazine where you can tell your story. There are others, especially our news and features sections, that we encourage you to support.

And, yes, we will continue taking "bookings" for Post of the Month.

Office of the Month:

Special Issuance Agency

By Kim B. Dula

Photos by Dave Krecke

What's so special about the Bureau of Consular Affairs' Special Issuance Agency?

When the White House requested a diplomatic passport and visa for travel to Russia in three days, the agency met the deadline although Russian visas normally take 15 days to process. But this type of special service is not uncommon for the agency, according to Barbara Chesman, director.

SIA, whose trademark is issuing passports and arranging for visas under short deadlines and challenging conditions, is among CA's 16 passport agencies. SIA's mission is unique. While the other passport agencies service the general public, SIA deals not only with domestic organizations but also with posts and U.S. military installations stateside and overseas.

The agency processes all U.S. diplomatic and official passports for all eligible

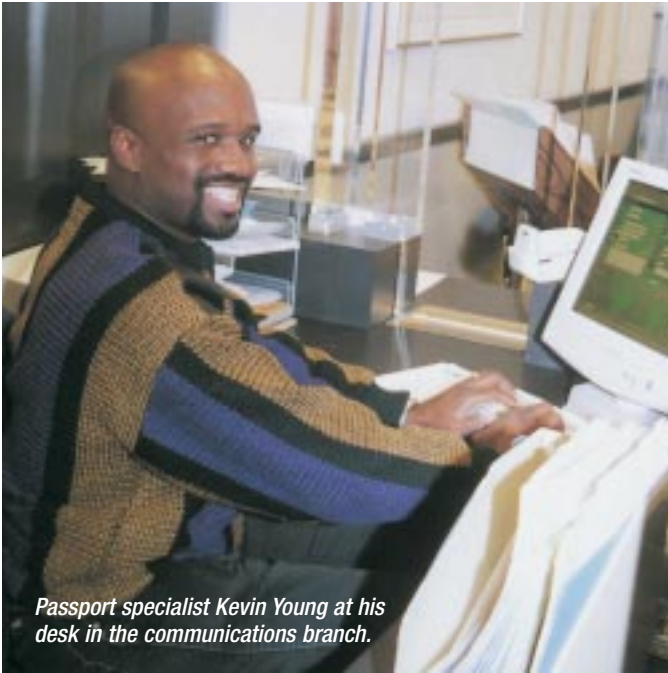
U.S. government employees and the military both stateside and overseas. The agency also processes military family member passports for all those who apply in the continental United States. Tourist passports are also processed at the agency for congressional referrals and those referred by the Department as well as other government agencies.

Additionally, SIA obtains foreign visas for the President, Vice President, cabinet secretaries, members of Congress and their staff and all Department personnel. SIA also obtains Russian visas for all federal agencies and the Secret Service. In FY 2001 alone, SIA obtained more than 15,000 foreign visas.

Prior to 1994, the agency was a 34-employee division of the larger Washington Passport Agency that then processed both tourist and no-fee passports. As the needs of the military for no-fee passports grew, Consular Affairs created a separate agency, PPT/SIA, to focus primarily on processing no-fee passports and other special needs. In 1994, the Washington Passport Agency and the newly



Department colleagues pick up their passports at SIA's window in the Employee Services Center in the Harry S Truman Building.



Passport specialist Kevin Young at his desk in the communications branch.

created Special Issuance Agency moved from K Street, N.W., to larger and separate offices at 1111 19th Street, N.W.

SIA now has a staff of 61, including 12 contract employees, who are organized into five branches: diplomatic travel, official travel, special assistance, communications and processing.

The diplomatic travel branch processes all diplomatic passports as well as some official passports worldwide. Some of the branch's clientele include members of Congress and their staff, all foreign affairs agencies and the Secret Service. Diplomatic travel also obtains foreign visas.

The official travel branch issues only official passports. The vast majority of official passports go to Defense per-



Michael Flynn handles congressional visas and passports.

sonnel. This branch also issues official passports to employees of those federal agencies that diplomatic travel does not handle.

The special assistance branch assists members of Congress with constituents who have difficult cases or urgent travel needs. This branch processes no-fee regular passports for organizations such as the Peace Corps and



Gloria J. Cross, senior passport specialist, joined the Department in 1969 and looks forward to her retirement in 2003.

the Red Cross. It also issues all no-fee military family member passports for the entire United States, except Hawaii.

SIA moved August 2001 into new quarters on the second floor to accommodate its extended staff and the new photodigitized system. Gloria Cross, a senior passport specialist, reminisces about when "photodig" was a hot topic back in 1969 when she began her career.

"It's been an amazing experience to witness the technological changes and advancements in passport services because we have truly come a long way," Ms. Cross said.

Since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, all diplomatic passports are being replaced with the new secure photodigitized version, which reduces fraud by making photo substitution in new passports far more difficult. Passport numbers doubled during FY02.

This increased demand and new procedures, however, are not the only causes of pressure on SIA employees. The real pressure, according to Randall Bevins, assistant director, comes "from the substance of what we do and what we do reflects deeply on the Department."

Despite the increase in U.S. government travel, SIA employees' commitment and spirits are high. "What I like most [about SIA] is feeling that we make a difference," smiled Carol Gonet, chief of diplomatic travel.

"I haven't gotten bored with the job," said Karl Person, senior passport specialist, "because just when you think you've seen everything, something new pops up."

To provide more convenient service and support for government business abroad, SIA conducts training in the Washington, D.C., area for federal agencies and the military. Since Defense is a special customer, SIA conducts training at military installations throughout the United States and overseas.

SIA also has a second passport acceptance facility in the Harry S Truman Building that the diplomatic travel branch manages. This satellite office is located in the newly renovated Employees Services Center and provides passport and visa services to Department employees.

The national duty officer program is also operated in SIA. The program employs staff from SIA, the Washington Passport Agency and other areas of Passport



Karl Person, senior passport specialist, likes his job because there's always something new.



Theresa Fichera, a passport specialist in the diplomatic travel branch, prepares to return passports.



Battie Stewart, chief of the official travel branch, finds work in SIA stimulating.

Services. Duty officers take emergency telephone calls and process passports during the weekend for those who must travel abroad immediately because of a life or death or national security situation.

Employees consider SIA full of challenges and opportunities. Amaise Robinson, passport specialist, enjoys the agency's diverse clientele. Some, like Terita Robinson, a passport specialist who started as an agency secretary, consider SIA a great place for growth and advancement. The complexity of work and customer service keeps employees like Battie Stewart, chief of official travel, happy to be a part of the SIA team.

"You see so many people. It's like watching a parade," said Michael Flynn, passport specialist.

So, what's so special about the Special Issuance Agency? Parade or not, SIA's bottom line is meeting the special needs of its customers around the clock. ■

The author is a passport specialist with the Special Issuance Agency.

For more information, contact or visit SIA at 1111 19th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: (202) 955-0200. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 8:15 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The passport office in the Employee Services Center is also available to Department and U.S. Agency for International Development employees in the Harry S Truman Building. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-2:45 p.m. For Department personnel, domestic and at post, contact the diplomatic travel branch at diplomatictravel@state.gov.

Gift of Leave

Story and Photos by Dave Krecke

When she joined the State Department in the summer of 2000, Patricia Huff began suffering from painful, persistent ulcers on her legs that refused to heal.

Aggravated by poor circulation, the ulcers were not life threatening, but they could have led to gangrene and, if unattended, amputation. Doctors told Ms. Huff that the best cure was for her to stop smoking and to immobilize and elevate her legs in a quiet environment. The program support assistant in the Bureau of Human Resources was too new to have accumulated enough leave to rest at home for the healing period. And going on leave without pay was not an option for the single parent supporting herself and her teenaged son.

A colleague in the Office of Employee Relations told Ms. Huff about the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program, a kind of clearinghouse for leave that receives unused

annual leave from voluntary donors and distributes it to qualified recipients. Each year, more than 150 employees who have exhausted their sick leave get the gift of leave from colleagues who donate more than 20,000 hours of their use-or-lose annual leave (sick leave cannot be transferred). Scores of recipients, who might otherwise be forced



Patricia Huff



Lora Williams

to go on leave without pay status, continue to receive paychecks through the generosity of their fellow employees.

Ms. Huff's story has a happy ending. She took the leave, rested her legs and stopped smoking, and the ulcers disappeared. Now she's back at work, accumulating leave on her own. Exceedingly grateful for the leave she was given, Patricia

Huff dreams of the day when she, too, will donate leave to others.

"Donated leave made it possible for me to heal," she says. "You wish you could go up to everyone who contributed and thank them."

Diabetes is a cruel disease. Lora Williams, a secretary in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, discovered just how cruel when she developed cataracts in both eyes after being hospitalized with a diabetes-related illness that depleted her leave the year before.

"The people who donated leave helped me have peace," she says. "I didn't have to worry about what I would do without a paycheck during my recovery."

Her surgery was successful and Ms. Williams is back on the job, comforted in knowing that when she needs an operation on the other eye, she will be able to count, if necessary, on donated leave.

Joyce Bruce, a budget analyst in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and also a single parent, had a life-threatening disorder requiring surgery and a lengthy convalescence. She knew employees who had

benefited from the leave transfer program, so she contacted her bureau's executive director.

"We never know when something will strike us," says Ms. Bruce, who missed nearly five months of work but not a single paycheck while she was recuperating. "This program really helps people in difficult situations." Echoing a view expressed by every beneficiary of the donated leave program, she commented, "I only



Joyce Bruce

hope I can reach the point where I can contribute leave, maybe not to those who gave to me, but to others in need."

Not every participant in the program is sick. When her mother needed 24-hour care during surgery and recovery, Linda Edelin's supervisor in the Public Affairs Bureau's press office suggested that she apply for the donated leave transfer pro-

gram. After filling out the application, Ms. Edelin discovered that she did, indeed, qualify.

"The program saved me a lot of worry," she says. "I didn't have to choose between my mom and my job."

Karla Williams learned about the donated leave program while working at the Justice Department for four years. She had even donated leave to some of her colleagues there. When she joined the Department in 2001, she had almost exhausted her leave caring for her new son during three months of maternity leave. Eighteen months later, Ms. Williams delivered another bouncing baby boy. But she had only about one month of leave left. The donated leave transfer program "topped off" that month with two more, and the busy mom was able to spend the critical first three months of her new son's life at home with him and his slightly older brother.

She calls it a hassle-free program. "The administrative people were patient



Linda Edelin



Karla Williams

years before when complications during a pregnancy required her to rest for a lengthy period. Now, a slipped disk in her neck required surgery, six weeks' bed rest and a total of nearly 10 months away from work to recuperate.

"I was very thankful for the gift from the donors," she says. She bravely tolerated pain, slept sitting up for weeks and wore a cervical collar "halo" around her head and neck for six weeks during the hot, humid summer months. But her greatest fear was not the physical discomfort but the psychological pain of falling into debt from the missing paycheck. Thanks to countless colleagues from the Department and other federal agencies, that was one pain Beverly Goldsmith was spared.

A few rules govern how much leave a donor can give. The maximum donation, for example, is half of the leave a donor may accumulate in a single leave year. And near the end of the leave year, donors need to move quickly because they cannot contribute more leave than there are work hours remaining in a given leave year.

Few gifts have such profound and lasting impact on the lives of recipients as the gift of leave.

For more information about the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program, contact your bureau's executive director.



Beverly Goldsmith

and friendly and answered all of my questions. Once I qualified, the leave flowed at a pretty steady rate."

Beverly Goldsmith, a public affairs specialist in the Office of Public Liaison, was no stranger to the donated leave program when she began to experience excruciating pain in her neck. She had received donated leave 10

The author is a writer/editor for State Magazine.

Being a Good Neighbor

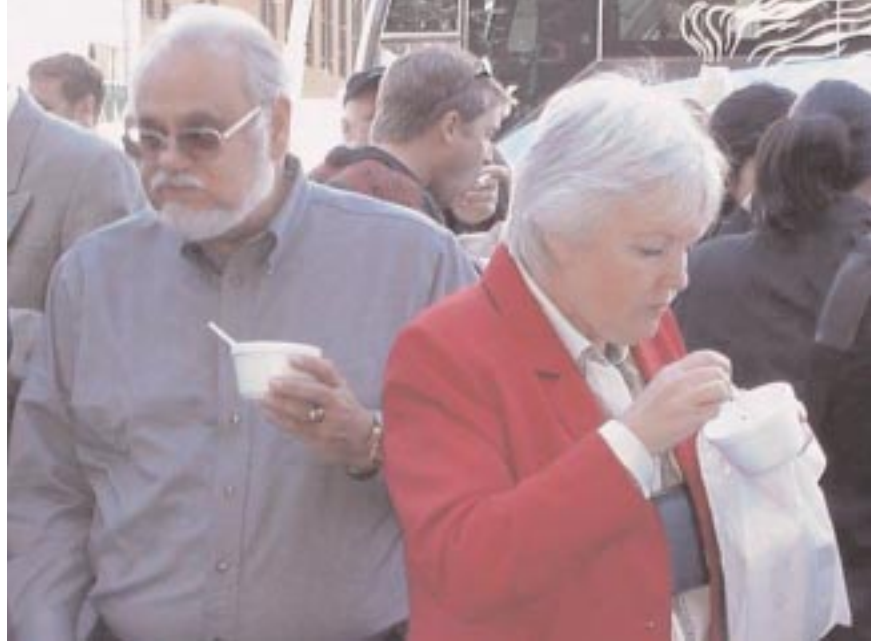
Story by Craig P. Bryant
Photos by Denise Toms

The U.S. Embassy in Ottawa is located in the historic heart of the city, between the bustling stalls of the Byward Market area and the spires of Parliament Hill. Behind the somewhat austere façade of the embassy building is a staff that cares about their community.

Just ask the Ottawa Salvation Army.

The Ottawa Salvation Army established its first soup kitchen more than a century ago and today offers a free soup line every day of the year to people in need. To raise money for its programs, the Salvation Army held a soup cook-off in the Byward Market in early September. At the “Soup with Sally Ann” event, chefs from 16 top restaurants offered big pots of their best house soup for the public to taste and judge.

Needing an additional sponsor for the cook-off, the Salvation Army contacted the embassy for assistance. Marilyn Fulcher, community liaison officer, and Donna Miller, Foreign Service National employee of the economic section, took the lead by informing embassy staff of the event and asking for small dona-



Embassy employees Christian Reed and Vanessa Warner sample the soups.

tions. They collected \$1,000 from embassy employees in just five days.

“Canadian and U.S. employees gave very willingly because they respect the good work the Salvation Army does not just in Ottawa but also nationwide,” according to Ms. Miller.

To recognize the embassy’s contribution, the single largest to the event, the Salvation Army named the trophy awarded to the top soup “The Staff of the U.S. Embassy/Sally Ann Souper Bowl Trophy.”

Claire Tremblay, a development officer for the Salvation Army, described the embassy’s response as “nothing short of amazing.” The effort was even more impressive, she said, considering the embassy staff only recently had participated in a drive to build eight houses in a week as part of a Habitat for Humanity project.

Just what you’d expect from a good neighbor. ■



A Salvation Army representative announces the winning chef from the Honest Lawyer Restaurant after Donna Miller, right, FSN committee chairperson, presented the trophy for the best soup.

The author is vice consul in Ottawa.

FSI Meets the Surge

By Laura Sells
Photos by Bob Kaiser

The George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center is buzzing with activity, thanks to the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative.

For the past year, the center, home of the Foreign Service Institute, has been moving to ensure that new Foreign Service employees acquire the knowledge and skills to successfully perform their duties, that new Civil Service employees learn what the State Department is all about and that locally employed staff (formally known as Foreign Service National employees) receive professional skills training. To accommodate the increases in students, faculty and staff, changes have been made to course schedules, curricula, facilities and operations.

Among the increased course offerings are orientation, languages, area studies, EEO and diversity awareness for managers, CableXpress, the security overseas seminar, general services operations, human resources, financial management and consular as well as political and economic trade craft courses. Additions include public diplomacy basics courses targeting junior officers, introducing them to public diplomacy practices early in their careers.

The School of Applied Information Technology has added more than 50,000 additional hours of training to accommodate the influx of new information management specialists and technical specialists. (The new hiring initiative has also created a greater demand for IT follow-on and refresher training. Check out the new Fiscal Year 2003–2004 Schedule of Courses now available on the FSI website at <http://fsiweb.fsi.state.gov/courses/default.asp>.)



Swearing in ceremony for new employees.

Working closely with the Bureaus of Human Resources and Information Resource Management, FSI in August implemented Auto-Scheduler. Based on Foreign Service new hire career paths, the innovative tool is now used at registration to create a training schedule and automatically register students in the appropriate courses for their career paths.

Undecided about what courses you should be taking at this stage of your career? Take heart—FSI has published training continua for Foreign Service generalists and Civil Service employees. A training continuum for Foreign Service specialists is currently in the works. Visit <http://fsiweb/fsi.state.gov/courses/contin.asp> for details.

The basic consular course now starts every second day instead of every third day to accommodate 765 students per year. The week-long A-100 orientation class for Foreign Service officers now has a Foundations of Leadership module, co-conducted by faculty from the School of Professional and Area Studies and the Leadership and Management School, with sessions on managing up and team building. Laptop computers are now issued to each junior officer with most of the class materials on a CD-ROM for the first time ever. Area Studies' two-week intensive



A basic leadership class in session. This class is now mandatory for FS-03 and GS-13 employees.

regional seminars now follow A-100 classes to reduce gaps in training. All new Foreign Service officers are also being encouraged to take the EEO/diversity awareness for managers course before their first overseas assignment. The Transition Center orientation programs for new-hire family members have been redesigned and lengthened. Initial



FSI director Kathy Peterson opens a new digital multimedia lab seating 38 students.

interaction with families begins with e-mail and phone dialogue months before their training begins. The center's DOSNET and Internet home pages also have expanded to help put information at the fingertips of new hires.

Personnel and families assigned to St. Petersburg, Moscow, Athens or Beijing can now use the new FSI language and orientation Out and About CD-ROMs to navigate in a very foreign environment. Out and Abouts for Tokyo, Kiev, Bangkok and Cairo will soon be available, and more are on the way.

Once at post or at domestic assignments, all employees may take advantage of FSI's distance learning courses as well as commercial, college and university courses through FasTrac and Smart Force programs. There are more than 2,000 offerings available on both the Internet and the Department's Intranet. They include courses in foreign languages, management and supervision, information technology and technical skills. IT courses can lead to 21 different industry-standard certifications. To obtain more information, visit <http://fsiweb.fsi.state.gov/courses/distlearn.asp>.

In Thailand they say, "You can be comfortable in small spaces as long as the mind has room to think." In response to the training demands of the DRI, the School of Language Studies continues to find new ways to give language students ample room for thinking. Last March, the number of language classes exceeded the number of language classrooms available. By scheduling classes to maximize room usage, the school was able to house 225 classes in 200 rooms.

Now, finding creative solutions to the space challenge is even more pressing. FSI is considering enhancing the use of technology and the web and looking for venues for local immersions and creative scheduling of rooms. At enrollment peaks, for example, the Portuguese and Icelandic sections use double sessions, having one group of Portuguese students in the classroom in the mornings and the Icelandic students in the afternoons. The Spanish section did "hot bunking" and "hopscotching," having several classes use the same room by coordinating start times, the multimedia lab and self-study hours. The Chinese section went "nomadic," changing classrooms every hour or two, taking advantage of hours when other groups are in the lab or having lunch.

A Slovak class went "hermit crabbing," changing rooms each day, filling in behind classes in other language sections while they were in area studies. Finally, a Korean class went "camping," moving into a Department chair's office while he was away for training. No longer is each class guaranteed its own room for the length of the training period. Since September, virtually all languages have done some double sessions. So students coming to language training should be aware they may have afternoon rather than morning classes. The arrangement doesn't diminish the promise,

however, of a rich learning experience in a variety of venues and lots of room for thinking in other tongues.

Don't be surprised if you see craftsmen at FSI redesigning classrooms and office space to accommodate more people. Downscaling classroom furniture, adding computer workstations and using modular furniture is creating more space. As a result, the A-100 classes now have approximately 98 students each and an average of 65 employees is scheduled for each Civil Service orientation. In July, there were 85 students in the Foreign Service specialist orientation class. A fourth multimedia lab has been added and other lab capacity increased to bring the total number of workstations to 120. In Warrenton, FSI is leasing trailers to accommodate the additional students and staff.

Since capacity will soon be reached at the Shultz Center, there are plans to construct several additional classrooms in State Annex 44 as a short-term solution. Classes will be scheduled there in early 2003. FSI has also received approval to expand the current training facilities and build a permanent child care center. FSI is working closely with the Bureau of Administration to plan the facility, scheduled for completion in about four years.

FSI has increased its hours of operation. The library and multimedia labs are now fully staffed from 7:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. During the bidding cycle, the Overseas Briefing Center remains open and fully staffed after regular weekday hours. The center is open until 8:30 p.m. on selected Wednesdays and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to support additional bid and post research.

With about two more years left in the DRI, don't be surprised if you see many more changes at FSI. The philosophy is to bring the new students in and make sure they all receive the top-quality training FSI is known for. ■

The author is a management analyst in FSI's Executive Office.



Students using one of FSI's state-of-the-art multimedia labs. The four labs can seat 120. Students study some 60 languages at FSI.

IF MOM NEEDS HELP NOW,



Photo courtesy of Natalie Wells

Natalie Wells with her mother in Texas.

WHERE DO I START?

By Sydnee Tyson

When Natalie Wells, the community liaison office coordinator at the U.S. Embassy in Kingston, learned that her mother had been hospitalized three times over two weeks in June, she immediately called to see how she was doing.

Widowed for more than 15 years, her mother, Katherine Klumbis, 81, suffers from severe diabetes and lives alone. While talking with her daughter by phone, she went into a diabetic coma. After a number of frantic calls to her mother's neighbors, Ms. Wells reached the high school son of one neighbor and persuaded him to immediately check on her mother's condition. He called an ambulance. The emergency medical technician that attended told Ms. Wells that he had never seen anyone with such low blood sugar levels. Later, the hospital advised her that her mother was going to be discharged soon and sent home—to an empty house.

In Jamaica, Ms. Wells found herself only one time zone away from her mother's home in Katy, Texas, near Houston—closer than her family's last posting in Mumbai, India, but still not close enough. Knowing she needed to act fast to assist her mother, she requested Eldercare Emergency Visitation Travel. While preparing for her trip, she learned about LifeCare, a free resource and referral service the Department provides to all permanent employees and family member appointees. She decided to call. Texas, where her mother lived, was not her home state. She had never lived in Texas and was unfamiliar with its agencies or local laws.

After Ms. Wells described her mother's situation, a LifeCare specialist explained what they could offer. Within 24 hours, she had received a 21-page fax with an extensively researched list of appropriate agencies, companies and services she could contact. LifeCare sent hard copies of this information to her mother's address along with their "Adult Care Kit." The kit features guides that

clarify caregiving issues, checklists and record-keeping forms, plus contact information for relevant health care, housing, legal and financial resources. The kit even comes with a few practical items such as a pill sorter box to simplify complicated medication regimes, a night-light, a jar opener to help those with arthritic or weak hands and a small flashlight that fits into a frail hand. Finally, LifeCare made follow-up calls to see if there was anything else they could do.

With this information, Ms. Wells says she saved hours of her own time, aggravation and "actually, lots of money." She used the listings of various state agencies to find the services she needed to help her mother. In two weeks, she was able to locate free legal help; obtain short-term nursing care for her mother that included a new glucose machine; arrange visits from two different teams of social workers; assist her mother in creating a legal advance health care directive and a durable power of attorney; and find a volunteer service that calls her mother twice daily to make sure she's okay.

Now back at post, Ms. Wells hears from her grateful mother that her blood sugar levels have stabilized, that she now is able to see her doctor monthly instead of every two weeks and, best of all, that she feels better. Ms. Wells, in turn, is grateful to LifeCare for providing the critical information just when she needed it most and she reports that she, too, can sleep a little easier at night knowing her mother has a care plan that is working. ■

The author is the dependent care coordinator in the Office of Employee Relations.

NEW NAME, SAME SERVICE

The Department continues to offer this useful resource and referral service. The current service provider, LifeCare, will continue to respond to Department employees, but the name of the service has changed. From now on, it will be called IQ:INFORMATION QUEST.

IQ:INFORMATION QUEST, in the same way that LifeCare helped Natalie Wells develop and implement a care plan for her mother, could help you solve dependent care problems. Need quick back-up child care because your sitter is ill? Looking for a math tutor for your eighth grader? Want to find out more about attention deficit disorder? Planning a move to another U.S. location and wondering about the local schools? IQ:INFORMATION QUEST can save you hours of getting passed from resource to resource until you finally reach the experts who have the answers you need.

IQ:INFORMATION QUEST also can help employees to plan ahead and to learn more about adoption,

educational opportunities, disabilities, understanding special education laws, staying healthy, having a baby, childproofing a home, Medicare, long-term care insurance and, yes, even pet care.

IQ:INFORMATION QUEST is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can access the service by telephone at (800) 222-0364 (if you are hearing-impaired at (888) 222-0364) or on the Internet at www.worklife4you.com.

New users must register. Enter Company Code: `statedepartment` (all lowercase). User ID is: First Name + Middle Initial + Last Name and MMDD (month and day from your birthdate); e.g. `JaneCStrider0524`.

For more information about IQ:INFORMATION QUEST, Eldercare Emergency Visitation Travel, or the Department's Eldercare Program, contact Dependent Care Coordinator Sydnee Tyson in the Office of Employee Relations at tysonsl@state.gov.

O U R T O W N

Stunning Storms and Sunsets

Jim and Carol Reeves are high and dry.

The retired couple lives in Albuquerque, N.M., whose climate is ideal for playing tennis in the morning and skiing in the afternoon. They love the bone-dry air, the wide-open skies and the “drop-dead sunsets.” They also savor the blistering hot Mexican food and get a lift from the city’s colorful balloon festival, an annual event.

The Reeves are not alone. About 600,000 residents live here, including many Foreign Service retirees. Bordered on the east by the Sandia Mountains, the city’s altitude ranges between 5,000 and 7,000 feet, which means it’s “all downhill to Denver” and about an hour uphill to historic Santa Fe. Mount Taylor towers 100

miles west of the city, and during the summer monsoons, multiple lightning storms crisscross the sky.

There are plenty of year-round flea markets and few flying insects to interrupt an evening outside without screens. On a slow day, you can take a cable car up to Sandia Crest and look down from more than two miles high over the Rio Grande Valley and see the volcano cones on the west side.

Editor’s note: This is the second in a series of occasional articles about retirees and their choice of retirement spots. If you wish to contribute a short piece about your town and why you chose to retire there, please write or e-mail the editor.



Steve Vidler/eStock Photography/PictureQuest

Up, up and away at Albuquerque’s annual balloon festival.

Taking Falls Seriously

By Daniel L. Harman

Have you ever fallen? Maybe you tripped over an uneven surface or slipped on a wet floor. Others may have laughed at your misfortune and perhaps you laughed with them after finding you were uninjured. But falls are not a laughing matter since they often cause serious injury.

Falls accounted for 28 percent of the injuries reported in the Department in FY02. While most falls result in sprains or contusions, many involve fractures, and some, usually from heights, cause death. Trips occur when walking across such surfaces as rough ground or uneven flooring. They can occur on slick or smooth surfaces as well, especially when one is wearing wet shoes.

Ladders account for many falls at work and home. Two Department fatalities in recent years have involved the routine use of ladders. A contractor decorating a Christmas tree at an overseas mission fell backward off the ladder he was using and struck his head. A gardener pruning grapevines fell from a ladder and landed headfirst. While these fatalities happened at work, similar incidents can also happen at home where most people have at least one ladder. Whether at home or work, basic safety guidelines apply.

When using a stepladder, never stand on the top two steps. You can lose your balance too easily and fall. And if you're using an extension ladder, set it at a 75-degree angle, measured between the ladder and the ground. Most ladders manufactured in the United States have a label on

the side to help you set this angle. If your ladder lacks this label, you can stand in front of the ladder with your toes touching its base. Stand straight and extend your arm to grasp the step that is the closest to your shoulder height. If your arm is fully extended, the ladder is at the correct angle. If your arm is bent, the

ladder is too steep and may tip backward as you climb. If you must bend forward to grasp the step, the ladder is too shallow and the base may slip as you climb.

Know your ladder's load capacity. You can find the load capacity label on the side of a U.S.-manufactured ladder. If you overload the ladder, it may fail while you're on it—causing you to fall. Remember to add the weight of your tools and supplies to your body weight when determining the ladder's load.

You should also consider electricity. Aluminum stepladders and extension ladders conduct electricity. If you contact an electrical power source working with a power tool, current can flow through you to the ladder. You may experience a shock and fall off the ladder. If the shock does not injure you, the fall could.

Another concern is children and falling, particularly in overseas residences. The most important safety device to prevent children from falls is parental supervision. Children can fall down stairwells, off porches or decks, or over low or poorly designed protective railings. Gates can be installed at stairwells to eliminate these falls. Adequate railings can help prevent children from falling off elevated decks. Be aware of low railings, horizontal baluster construction and too much separation (over 4 inches) between vertical balusters.

Railings should be 42 inches (107 centimeters) high to prevent children and adults from falling over them. Railings with horizontal balusters look like ladders to children, and every parent knows how children enjoy climbing anything that looks inviting. Railings with excessive separation between the balusters can allow children to fall through the railing or become stuck between the balusters. To prevent this from happening, install barriers—such as plastic mesh, window screening and plexiglas—over the railing to prevent access. These can be attached temporarily and removed once the child is old enough to understand the hazard.

The Residential Safety Checklist addresses these items in overseas housing. If you are unfamiliar with this publication, contact your post occupational safety and health officer. You are the greatest asset for eliminating fall hazards. Eliminate tripping hazards and modify slick surfaces where possible. Follow safety principles when using ladders. Safeguard your children by preventing access to fall hazards. ■

The author works in Safety, Health and Environmental Management.



Aluminum ladder at an electrical box in a residence is set at the proper angle.



Large openings in railings pose a threat to young children.

People Like You



Sarah and Tom Genton sing at their wedding.

Genton family photo

A Marriage With Strings Attached

Music has been at the center of Sarah Genton's life for as long as she can remember. Her father played jazz piano and her maternal grandmother was a concert pianist.

Ms. Genton, publications coordinator in the Family Liaison Office, learned the guitar at age 11, with the help of an extraordinarily gifted classmate. A teacher at her high school in Niskayuna, N.Y., a small community near Schenectady, nurtured Sarah's love of folk music in particular. As faculty sponsor of the school's folk culture group, Ms. Ward inspired student members to explore and preserve the rich musical traditions of the Adirondack Mountain region.

At Brown University, Sarah sang and played guitar with a bluegrass band dur-

ing her freshman year, then joined Johnny and the Luncheonettes, a more serious group that played two or three gigs a week at bars, coffee shops and special events in the greater Providence, R.I., area. Dragging herself to Friday morning classes after straggling home from 2 a.m. gigs, Sarah realized she would have to choose between performing with a band and getting a degree from a demanding Ivy League school. She chose the degree and left Johnny to find a female luncheonette to replace her.

After graduating, Ms. Genton remained at Brown to work in the medical school's public relations department. She continued to be deeply committed to music, however, and vowed to marry a musician. A close friend introduced her to



Sarah Genton manages FLO's publications and web site.

Photo by Dave Krecke

a guitar-playing colleague who was also looking for someone “musical.” Tom Genton was working for an insurance underwriter in New York City and about to make an important job shift. When they started dating in the spring of 1986, Tom had just taken the Foreign Service exam. That fall, he joined the U.S. Information Agency and began studying French for an African assignment.

The Gentons sang a duet at their wedding the following June and have been making music together ever since. Wherever they’ve been stationed—Harare, Ouagadougou, Yaounde, El Salvador or Washington, D.C.—they’ve formed groups with other musicians and played together. “Life can be stressful,” Sarah says. “Playing music is such a wonderful way of getting rid of that stress.” The Gentons have also discovered music is the perfect entrée into other cultures, even their own.

No sooner had they settled in for their current Washington, D.C., tour in 1999 than they bought a home in Arlington’s Madison Manor and linked up with three

other neighbors and former residents of the community to form The Bad Manors. Carefully scheduling practices and performances around their families and full-time jobs, the group often turns practice sessions into family potluck gatherings at one of the musicians’ homes. Each plays more than one instrument, so the instrumentation is fluid and depends on which style of music—Irish, folk or rock—they’re singing and playing. Tom plays lead guitar, while Sarah plays guitar, mandolin and piano. The fiddler also plays bass and guitar, the piano player switches occasionally to the accordion and another guitarist doubles as the percussionist.

Tom Genton, a member of this year’s National War College class, has submitted his bids for his next overseas assignment. The couple and their daughters, 8th grader Katharine and 7th grader Kristen, aren’t sure where they’ll be living in the fall of 2003, but they are sure they’ll be packing their guitars and joining yet another musical group wherever it happens to be. —*Dave Krecke*

George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center

Education & Training

Course	Jan.	Feb.	Length
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TRANSITION CENTER

Dates for FSI Transition Center Courses are shown below. For information on all the courses available at FSI, visit the FSI Schedule of Courses on the Department of State’s Intranet at <http://fsiweb.fsi.state.gov>. FY03/04 dates are now available in the online catalog. See Department Notices for announcements of new courses and new course dates and periodic announcements of external training opportunities sponsored by FSI.

Security

SOS: Security Overseas Seminar (MQ911)	6	3	2D
ASOS: Advanced Security Overseas Seminar (MQ912)	14	25	1D
TDY Security Overseas Seminar (MQ913)	6	3	1D
Security Overseas Seminar, Youth (MQ914)		22	1D

Foreign Service Life Skills

Regulations, Allowances and Finances (MQ104)		11	3D
Protocol and U.S. Representation Abroad (MQ116)		22	1D
Going Overseas—Logistics for Adults (MQ220)		26	2.5H
Post Options for Employment and Training (MQ703)	25		1D
Targeting the Job Market (MQ704)	23		2D
Managing Rental Property Overseas (MQ853)	15		2.5H
Emergency Medical Care and Trauma Workshop (MQ915)	29		1D

Course	Jan.	Feb.	Length
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Career Transition Center

Retirement Planning Seminar (RV101)	25		4D
Financial and Estate Planning (RV103)	27		1D
Annuities and Benefits and Social Security (RV104)	26		1D

School of Language Studies

Increased language enrollments due to the Secretary’s Diplomatic Readiness Initiative have required FSI’s School of Language Studies to change class schedules. Classes are being run in double sessions. The morning session may begin as early as 7:30 a.m. and the afternoon session may end as late as 5:30 p.m.

FasTrac Distance Learning Program, Learn at Your Own Pace, When and Where You Want

FSI is accepting applications for the FasTrac distance learning program. All State Department employees, FSNs and EFMs are eligible. FasTrac offers over 1,400 courses covering numerous subjects. Training is conducted online through the Internet and the Department’s Intranet. Students may complete courses for inclusion on their official FSI transcript or take the course module they need to “get the job done.” Course length varies from two to eight hours each and testing out of what you already know may shorten learning plans. To view the complete FasTrac catalog, visit the FasTrac web site at <http://fsi.state.gov/courses/distlern/fastrac/default.asp>.

Length: H = Hours, D = Days

For additional information, please contact the Office of the Registrar at (703) 302-7144.

STATE OF THE ARTS

Upcoming Calendar

- ◆ **Dec. 4** Soprano Cynthia Young and mezzo-soprano Barbara Schelstrate
- ◆ **Dec. 18** Christmas concert with Nick Greanias and Friends

Performances are on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium.

On the Silk Road



Soprano Cynthia Young and mezzo-soprano Barbara Schelstrate.

the culture being portrayed. And the audience reaffirmed the effort with its applause.

In another performance, Wenqing Zhang, winner of the first prize at the International Young Artist Piano Competition, performed works by Prokofiev and Ravel. The competition's founder, Li-Ly Chang, introduced the young artist to the series she has long supported. The artist has played piano since age five and continues to study at the Eastman School of Music.

Launching her concert with Ravel's *8 Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, she displayed deft phrasing and hand movements. She followed with a performance of Prokofiev's *Sonata no. 2 in d minor, op. 14*. The composition, barbaric and percussive in nature, formed a striking contrast with Ravel's impressionistic and romantic work. The artist received a standing ovation.

The author is a computer specialist in the Executive Secretariat.

By John Bentel

It was like peering inside a tent at last summer's Folklife Festival centered on the ancient Silk Road theme, watching a talented group of women perform for State employees recently in an indoor venue.

Like the festival, the Silk Road Dance Company takes its name from the network of caravan routes that linked China with the Mediterranean. Laurel Victoria Gray, artistic director, founded the ensemble in 1995. The dancers' costumes were a whirl of color, complementing their seductive, mysterious movements.

The performance affirmed the artistic director's careful research and effort to preserve the authenticity of



The Silk Road Dance Company performs at State.

APPOINTMENTS



U.S. Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. Richard L. Baltimore III of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. He was consul general in Jeddah from 1999 to 2002 and deputy chief of mission in San José from 1996 to 1999 and Budapest

from 1990 to 1994. Mr. Baltimore was previously assigned to Budapest from 1984 to 1987 and has also served in Portugal, South Africa, Egypt and Zambia. He and his wife Eszter have three daughters.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ethiopia. Aurelia E. Brazeal of Georgia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ethiopia. She was the first dean of the Department's Leadership and Management School from 1999 to 2002 and dean of the Senior

Seminar from 1998 to 1999. Ms. Brazeal was deputy assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from 1996 to 1998. She was U.S. Ambassador to Kenya from 1993 to 1996 and the first U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia from 1990 to 1993. She has also served two tours in Japan and another in Argentina.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia. Martin G. Brennan of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia. He was U.S. Ambassador to Uganda from 1999 to 2002. A Foreign Service officer since 1976, Mr. Brennan has also served in

Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Taiwan, Portugal, Thailand, Ethiopia, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland. James I. Gadsden of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland. He served as special negotiator for agricultural biotechnology in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs from 2001 to 2002.

He was deputy assistant secretary for European Affairs from 1997 to 2001. Mr. Gadsden served as deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Budapest from 1994 to 1997, his second tour there. He joined the Foreign Service in 1972 and has also served in Paris, Brussels and Taipei. Mr. Gadsden and his wife Sally have two sons.



U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso. J. Anthony "Tony" Holmes of California, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso. He directed the Africa Bureau's policy office from 1999 to 2002, combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and implementing the African Growth

and Opportunity Act. He was deputy director of the office of sanctions policy in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs from 1995 to 1996. He served abroad in Cairo, Damascus, Nairobi, Singapore, Harare and Stockholm. He and his wife Ingalill have two sons.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. Vicki Huddleston of Arizona, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. She was principal officer at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana from 1999 to 2002 and deputy assistant secretary for African Affairs from 1995 to

1997. She was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince from 1993 to 1995, during the deployment of the multinational force to Haiti. From 1989 to 1993, Ms. Huddleston was deputy and then coordinator of the office of the coordinator of Cuban Affairs. She has also served in Sierra Leone and Mali. She was a Peace Corps volunteer in Peru and worked in Peru and Brazil with the American Institute for Free Labor Development. She and her husband Robert, a retired Foreign Service officer, have two children.

APPOINTMENTS



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Albania. James F. Jeffrey of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Albania. He was deputy chief of mission in Ankara from 1999 to 2002 and in Kuwait from 1996 to 1999. Mr. Jeffrey served as officer in charge of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, as deputy director of the Office of Near Eastern Peace Process and Regional Affairs and as deputy presidential special adviser for Bosnia implementation. He served as an infantry officer in the U.S. Army in Germany and Vietnam. He and his wife have two children.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde. Donald C. Johnson of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cape Verde. He served as senior adviser to the Foreign Service Institute and to the Director General of the Foreign Service from

2000 to 2002. Previously, he was on loan to the British and Irish governments as part of the Irish peace process, serving as one of three members of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, overseeing the destruction of armaments. Before that, Mr. Johnson was head of mission for the international peace-keeping mission in Moldova, representing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. From 1993 to 1996, he was U.S. Ambassador to Mongolia. He joined the Foreign Service in 1974 and held assignments in Guatemala, Moscow, Taipei, Beijing, Madrid and Tegucigalpa. He served in the U.S. Army from 1971 to 1973. Mr. Johnson is married.



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda. Jimmy Kolker of Missouri, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda. He was U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso from 1999 to 2002. Mr. Kolker was deputy chief of mission in Botswana from 1990 to 1994 and Denmark from 1996 to 1999. He has also served in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Sweden and the United Kingdom. He is married and has two daughters.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Foreign Service Retirements

Bandler, Donald Keith	Gray, William Gary	Schoonover, James
Bartsiotas, George A.	Griffith, Wayne G.	Laurence
Becher, Anna Beth	Gross II, Bernard E.	Stevens, Sandra A.
Bennetch, Dorothy J.	Harkness, Edward Michael	Thielmann, A. Gregory
Boone, Rudolph Frederick	Holley, Robert Michael	Trites, William S.
Brattain, Steven M.	Hopkins, Irma J.	Tuck, John C.
Buck, Stephen W.	Kekich, Mary Ann	Turco, Robin Wallace
Cairns, Thomas E.	Lee, Katherine Inez	Twining Jr., Charles H.
De Pierre-Hollowell, Daria	McClure, Rachel G.	Wallach, Joel S.
Eisenbraun, Stephen E.	Menzies, John K.	Waller, Patricia L.
Finney Jr., John D.	Perdreux, Hinda	Wells, Sharon S.
Gannon, Richard M.	Pocus, Daniel John	
Gappa, Howard L.	Saloom III, Joseph A.	

Civil Service Retirements

Clements, Willie Eugene	Malkin, Joanne R.
Forster, Paul E.	Mastropieri, Carmen A.
Foss, Larry W.	Patterson, David S.
Mack, Bettie F.	Witter, Bruce Ralph
Mack, Karen Marie	Yancey, Mary S.

O B I T U A R I E S



Blanche M. Anderson, 71, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Donald M. Anderson, died Oct. 5 of complications from surgery for cancer at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C. She accompanied her husband on assignments in Taiwan, Hong Kong, New Delhi, Paris, Beijing and Shanghai, where she helped

with re-opening the Shanghai American School. Earlier, she taught history and economics at the Hong Kong International School.

Leo E. Crampsey, 77, a retired Diplomatic Security agent, died June 5 in Wilmington, Del. Mr. Crampsey joined the State Department in 1951 after a brief stint as a professional football player with the Richmond Rebels and San Francisco 49ers. He was the supervisory regional security officer at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon from 1967 to 1969. During the Tet Offensive of early 1968, he helped repulse a suicide squad of Viet Cong guerrillas who scaled the embassy walls, earning him the Department's award for heroism. He also served at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala, arriving shortly after the assassination of Ambassador John Gordon Mein by leftist guerrillas. He retired in 1978 as the special agent in charge of the dignitary protective division.



Barbara Ann Elbinger, 59, wife of Foreign Service officer Lewis Elbinger, died suddenly on June 13 in New York. She accompanied her husband to posts in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Germany, Kenya and India. She served as housing coordinator in Kenya and India and taught at the American School in Saudi Arabia.



Firminio Faria, 58, Foreign Service National employee at the U.S. Consulate General in Curacao, died Sept. 23 in Curacao from natural causes. Mr. Faria worked at the consulate for more than 28 years, starting as a gardener. He spent most of his career overseeing maintenance and as post driver. He was a native of Portugal.



Franklin S. Forsberg, 96, former ambassador to Sweden, died March 29 in Greenwich, Conn., from a fall in his home. He had returned from his office in New York City, where he commuted daily by train. Mr. Forsberg served four years, 1981 to 1985, as ambassador to Sweden, his parents' birthplace. He spoke Swedish fluently

*and was much loved by the royal family. The Forsbergs reciprocated by naming their three children Lars, Erik and Kristen. A publishing executive before entering the U.S. Army during World War II, Col. Forsberg helped to found *Yank* magazine, an Army weekly published in 21 countries. After the war, he directed the magazine division of Holt, Rinehart and Winston. He was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery.*



Ramon Garces, 76, a retired Foreign Service officer, died of cancer Sept. 14 at his home in Austin, Texas. He joined the U.S. Information Agency in 1967 and coordinated media for several heads of state and their appointees: President Johnson's visit to Central America; Vice President Bush's trip to Lagos; Secretary Kissinger's visit to Brasilia; and President Carter's trip to Rio de Janeiro. The former newspaper reporter-editor retired in 1988.

O B I T U A R I E S



Elizabeth "Betty" Kruse, 83, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Tom Kruse, died May 22 in Sarasota, Fla., of lung cancer. She followed her husband, an employee of the U.S. Information Agency, on tours in Rangoon, Colombo, Seoul, Lagos and Pakistan. Arriving by ship in 1946, she was among the first American wives allowed into

Korea after World War II.



Robert Henderson Munn, 76, retired Foreign Service officer, died Sept. 15 in Yuba City, Calif., after a long illness. He joined the State Department in 1956 and was posted to Tripoli, Baghdad, Jerusalem, Khartoum, Ankara and Pretoria. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1977. A veteran, he served in the U.S. Army from 1944 until 1953.

His daughter, Lynn Donovan, is a Foreign Service officer.



Astrid Maria McCormick, 77, wife of retired Foreign Service officer Francis P. McCormick, died Oct. 1 at her home in Orlando, Fla. She was an assistant attaché with the Swedish legation in Budapest when she met and married her husband, a member of the U.S. legation. She accompanied him on assignments to Nairobi, Beirut, Nicosia, Jeddah, Panama City, Ankara and Damascus before he retired in 1979. Suzanne McCormick, a daughter, is a Foreign Service officer.

She accompanied him on assignments to Nairobi, Beirut, Nicosia, Jeddah, Panama City, Ankara and Damascus before he retired in 1979. Suzanne McCormick, a daughter, is a Foreign Service officer.



Evelyn Mae Schwarztrauber, 92, a retired Foreign Service officer, died Aug. 13 at her home in Longboat Key, Fla., after suffering a stroke July 26. One of the country's first women Foreign Service officers, she served for 35 years with postings to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Ghana, Australia, Mexico, Japan and Panama. She retired in 1970.

During the Great Depression, she worked for the Departments of Commerce and War.

In the Event of Death

Questions concerning deaths in service should be directed to the Employee Services Center, the Department's contact office for all deaths in service: Harry S Truman Building, Room 1252, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520-1252; (202) 647-3432; fax: (202) 647-1429; e-mail: EmployeeServicesCenter@state.gov.

Questions concerning the deaths of retired Foreign Service employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960, Retirement@state.gov.

Questions concerning the deaths of retired Civil Service employees should be directed to the Office of Personnel Management at (202) 606-0500, <http://www.opm.gov>.

THE STAFF MEETING...



WELL, WE WERE WONDERING WHY WE HAVE TO FILL OUT LEAVE SLIPS TO USE THE RESTROOM.

BUT WE'VE ALWAYS DONE IT THAT WAY!



WE THOUGHT MAYBE WE COULD STREAMLINE THE CLEARANCE PROCESS...

SEE, WHEN YOU'VE BEEN IN THE SERVICE AS LONG AS I HAVE, YOU'LL KNOW WHY THAT WON'T WORK.

THE WAY THINGS ARE SET UP NOW, WE SPEND ALL OUR TIME ON POINTLESS INTERNAL PAPERWORK!

YOU THINK THIS IS BAD, LET ME TELL YOU HOW IT WAS IN KABINGASTAN...



RAY IN SYSTEMS HAD AN IDEA...

HEY, I THINK RAY IS A FEW CLOWNS SHORT OF A CIRCUS.

I FEEL SKK-I'LL FILL OUT A LEAVE SLIP FOR THE RESTROOM...

HOLD ON-I'M NOT DONE TEAM BUILDING!