



The U.S. Embassy Information Resource Center

IRC Yerevan Times

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On November 28, 2011, the Gyumri American Corner hosted Ambassador John Heffern and his wife, Libby. Ambassador Heffern visited the American Corner to inaugurate the new study room that was recently renovated thanks to funding from the U.S. Embassy.

Ambassador and Mrs. Heffern were warmly welcomed to the American Corner with applause and the traditional presentation of bread and salt. Many guests took part in the ceremony including representatives of Gyumri cultural and educational institutions, journalists, and school students as well as English language teachers from the Lord Byron School.

After Ambassador Heffern welcomed guests to the American Corner cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the new study room which will be used for various English-language clubs and as a children's reading room. Newly acquired collections of children's books and contemporary American fiction novels were also displayed at the Gyumri American Corner during the ceremony.

Later that day, Mrs. Heffern read "Waking Beauty" (illustrated by Lydia Monks and Leah Wilcox) and "Too Many Toys" (David Shannon) to the children from Lord Byron School. Mrs. Heffern engaged the curious children in the story, asking them questions about the characters and events. Following Mrs. Heffern's stories, the students and teachers were invited to enjoy some coffee and tea with cake.

The opening ceremony was a big success. Bright smiles gleamed throughout the American Corner, and the event was highlighted by local mass media including Tsayg, Shant, and Gala TV stations.



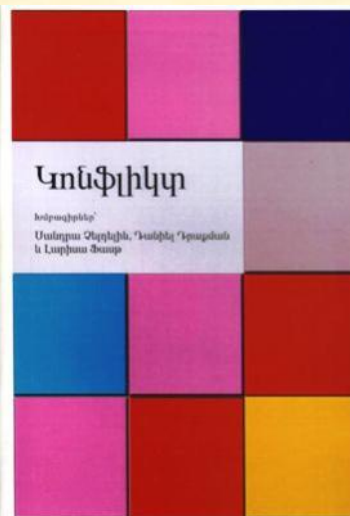
IRC ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS



IRC Roundtable on Conflict Resolution

Although people have been resolving conflicts as long as they have existed, conflict resolution as a unique field is relatively new.

On 20 October, 2011, the Information Resource Center hosted an alumni roundtable program on the topic of conflict resolution. Students from Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Linguistic University, the European Academy, and the Gladzor University participated in the discussion. The Embassy's three featured speakers for this roundtable were Sergey Minasyan, Head of Political Studies Department at the Caucasus Institute; Armen Martirosyan, Member of the National Assembly of Armenia and Head of the Board of the Heritage Party; and Gulnara Shahinyan, United Nations Special Reporter on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. Both Mr. Minasyan and Mr. Martirosyan are alumni of the International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) sponsored by U.S. government.



Conflict: From Analysis to Intervention by Sandra Cheldelin, Daniel Druckman, and Larissa Fast (editors). – Yerevan, 2007.

All educational establishments and NGOs', libraries that are interested in obtaining a

copy of this publication are welcome apply to IRC at: ircyerevan@usa.am

IRC ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

IRC Roundtable Discussion on Education



On 9 November, 2011, the Information Resource Center hosted alumni roundtable discussion on secondary school organization and administration. Students from the Armenian State Pedagogical University, Yerevan State Economic University, and Yerevan State Linguistic University met with two featured speakers: Artashes Torosyan, Director of High School N198 and Dr. Gayane Ghukasyan, faculty member of YSU. Mr. Torosyan is an alumnus of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Dr. Ghukasyan received her Master's Degree in Educational Administration and Supervision at University of Nebraska at Omaha through the Muskie graduate fellowship program. The IVLP and Muskie exchange programs are both sponsored by U.S. Government.

IRC Roundtable Discussion on Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy



On November 23, 2011, U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern welcomed 23 students from Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Linguistic University, and the American University of Armenia to the U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center for a roundtable discussion on human rights. Ambassador Heffern introduced the topic and then asked U.S. Embassy's Human Rights Officer, David Stephenson, to deliver his presentation, "Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy." The students engaged in a lively discussion after the presentation and enjoyed pumpkin pie, a traditional dessert associated with the upcoming American holiday, Thanksgiving Day.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE AMERICAN CORNERS?

AC YEREVAN

Public Lecture about the Criminal Procedure Code of Armenia



On Wednesday, October 28, 2011, the U.S. Embassy Legal Advisor Steve Kessler held a public lecture at AC Yerevan entitled 'The Proposed Changes to the Criminal Procedure Code of Armenia.'

Mr. Kessler talked about the new Criminal Procedure Code that is expected to be adopted in the next 6 months. He talked about two advantages of the new proposed Criminal Procedure Code. The first advantage is that Armenian judges would be required to hold a hearing before the trial to determine whether the prosecution's evidence had been legally obtained.

The second advantage of the new code is that police would be required to testify at trial, which would make Armenian trials fairer and in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights. Requiring police to testify at trial (and not just rely on their written police reports) would help hold police accountable for their conduct.

More than 20 young professionals, university and school students attended the lecture. Participants asked many questions and were actively engaged in a discussion of various aspects of Armenian jurisprudence. This was the 14th public lecture by Steve Kessler who has presented at all four American Corners Armenia.

Book Club at AC Yerevan

This summer Yerevan AC initiated a new Book Club for its patrons. This is a program for those interested in contemporary American literature. The program includes book reading, movie screening and is followed by a discussion of both of them.

The third book discussed at the Yerevan AC was "The Joy Luck Club" by Amy Tan. After 20 participants had watched *The Joy Luck Club* movie, USG exchange program alumna Marianna Vardanyan moderated the book discussion. Marianna asked the participants if they could see any differences between Chinese and American and Armenian cultures with respect to social class, family structure, marriage and divorce. Many of the participants have noted elements that give the novel its universal appeal: the book is read in more than 30 countries all around the world!

The next Book Club meeting is planned to take place in December. This time the selected book is "Snow Falling on Cedars" by David Guterson and the homonymic movie directed by Scott Hicks. The copies of the book are available at American Corner.

AC GYUMRI

MUSKIE Program Presentation by IREX

On October 19, 2011, the Gyumri American Corner in partnership with the U.S. Embassy organized a presentation of the Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program. Nearly 25 people were present at the presentation. Among them were Peace Corps volunteers, lecturers, students, and those who possess English language skills. The presentation included International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) representative who discussed the terms of participating in the Muskie Program. The attendees were very enthusiastic. Arina Zohrabian, IREX Armenia's Regional Director for Education Programs, mentioned that the Muskie Program looks for applicants from diverse regions as many areas of Armenia outside of Yerevan need experienced specialists in different fields. She noted that many politicians in Armenia are graduates of Muskie. Arina encouraged attendees to become leaders of tomorrow by bringing new ideas for the development of the economy, culture and trade of Armenia. The presentation was very successful and Arina Zohrabian promised that she will visit the American Corner Gyumri with another scholarship program in December.



Halloween Party

On October 31st 2011, the Gyumri American Corner organized a Halloween party. Many guests were invited including Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs), children of the "Deghcanik" song group, and American Corner patrons. Everyone brought sweets and candies while the American Corner Coordinator even made a pumpkin-shaped cake.

Children from the "Deghcanik" song group prepared a show for the American Corner as a special treat, which included songs and poems about Halloween. After the show, attendees observed a presentation on the holiday prepared by the American Corner Coordinator Lusine Nazaryan. The presentation included short information about the history of Halloween as well as its origin and customs. After the presentation, a pumpkin carving ceremony took place. PC volunteer Darryn



Glenn carved the pumpkin while the children sang a "Pumpkin Carving" song leading to Darryn turning the pumpkin into a Jack-O-Lantern. PC volunteer John Kelly told the children about the Halloween tradition of "Trick or Treat," followed by Halloween games with Marisa Valdes and PC volunteer Michel Braz playing the piano to accompany the singing volunteers.

During the party, children and adults smiled happily and their shining smile proved that the Halloween party, "All Hallows' Eve", was a success!

Public Lectures about Two American Universities

On Wednesday, October 26 at 1.30 p.m. the American Corner in Gyumri, in partnership with the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Alumni Association of Armenia, organized two public lectures entitled “University Life at George Washington University” and “Junior Faculty Development Program and Experience at the University of Wyoming”. Our guest speakers were U.S. Embassy Economic and Commercial Officer Megan Bouldin and JFDP Alumnus 2008 Gayane Grigoryan. Close to 25 people attended the lectures, among them were school teachers, students, lecturers and those who possess English language skills.

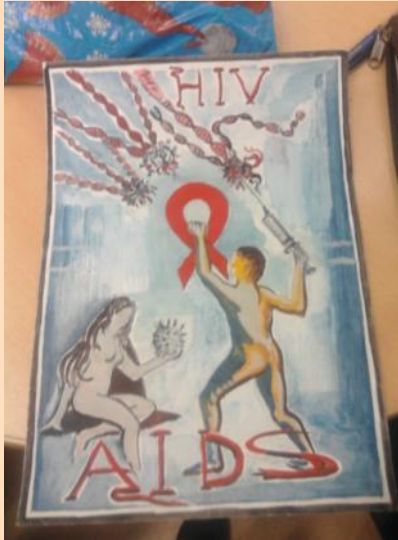
Megan Bouldin gave a vivid description of George Washington University including the buildings and the campus. Megan said that George Washington University is situated in the center of the city and you can occasionally see important politicians near the university. During her presentation, Megan explained how to apply to George Washington University, and talked about seminars held at the university by lecturers who work full time for the government. Megan also mentioned the importance of volunteer work at the university with student leaders who organize volunteer projects. At the end of her speech, Megan added that the university has a big international student committee and that she will find out whether there are some students from Armenia on the committee.

After Megan Bouldin’s presentation, Gayane Grigoryan began her lecture on “Junior Faculty Development Program and Experience at the University of Wyoming”. Gayane said that JFDP opens new horizons for university instructors, faculty and administrative staff. She mentioned that as a student, she was very interested in volunteer work and community involvement. Gayane said that during the time that she spent in the University of Wyoming, she gained knowledge of the U.S. Education System from attending Board of Trustees meetings. She also said that she cannot compare any other experiences with what she gained during her years at the University of Wyoming. At the end of her lecture, Gayane encouraged everybody to apply for the University of Wyoming or other universities in U.S. to gain knowledge in different educational fields.



AC KAPAN

HIV/AIDS Poster Contest 2011 in Kapan



On November 21 at 15:00, an HIV/ AIDS Poster Drawing was held at the Kapan American Corner which aimed to recognize AIDS as a worldwide problem through visuals. The contest was coordinated by Peace Corps Volunteers in Kapan for participants from local high schools including students in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

The project kicked off by teaching students how HIV/AIDS affects people globally and more specifically in Armenia. Participants learned about the importance of awareness, how one can become infected, as well as about Americans afflicted with the infection and how they keep on living and working like any healthy person.

After learning about the background of the issue, pupils began creating their posters. To inspire participants, a selection of the best posters from 2010 was displayed. However, students began their work at the Corner and will finish the posters at home.

Later, Peace Corps Volunteers will take the posters to Yerevan. The American Red Cross will display and choose the winning poster designs. We hope that the posters created by this year's participants in Kapan will impress the judges and be nominated for awards in Yerevan.

Education in the USA

On November 29, Kapan Peace Corps Volunteers, Lizzie and Margo presented a slideshow entitled "Education in the USA" at the Kapan American Corner.

Eight interested school students came to the presentation to learn about pre-school, elementary, middle school, high school, college and university education in the United States, allowing them to compare education in Armenia and the U.S. One difference between schools is the longer school day in America which includes a 45-minute lunch break as opposed to the Armenian lunch break of 15-20 minutes. Another difference is that it is very common for high school and college students in America to work while they are students. Colleges and universities are nearly the same, though university education is considered to be more prestigious. Students in America study for four years to get a Bachelor's degree, and if they want to do research work or earn a higher degree they pursue a Master's degree. If they want to become a university professor, they go on to receive a PhD. Participants were also informed of the differences between private and public schools.

The participants enjoyed the slide show and learning more about education in the U.S. Several of the Armenian students knew a lot about American education because they have had the chance to study in the USA through the FLEX high school exchange program.

EJOURNAL USA: CLIMATE CHANGE GOES LOCAL



As a global phenomenon, climate change is an issue that we usually look to the international community to address. Local communities, however, are increasingly taking the lead in developing innovative, grass-roots approaches to mitigating and combating the causes and effects of global warming.

This issue of *eJournal USA* examines what it means to think globally about climate change — and to act locally. *Climate Action Goes Local* shows how communities and non-profit groups worldwide are initiating programs that counter climate change, and why leadership from local officials and buy-in from local populations and businesses are necessary for such programs to be effective.

This volume also recounts how local governments, businesses and communities in Central America, East Asia, Middle East, Southeast Asia and the United States are partnering to leverage their resources, thereby multiplying the impact of their programs.

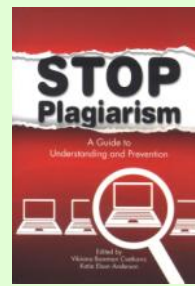
IRC NEW ARRIVALS



Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson, Simon & Schuster; First Edition, 656 pages.

Based on more than forty interviews with Jobs conducted over two years—as well as interviews with more than a hundred family members, friends, adversaries, competitors, and colleagues—Walter

Isaacson has written a riveting story of the roller-coaster life and searingly intense personality of a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing.



Stop Plagiarism: A Guide to Understanding and Prevention by Vibiana Bowman Cvetkovic and Katie Elson Anderson; Neal-Schuman, Publishers, Inc.; Book and CD-ROM edition, 220 pages.

Designed to be of use to all levels of educators working with students from high school to post-graduate this book addresses the problems and concerns facing librarians and educators involved in the process of teaching academic honesty. *Stop Plagiarism* contains background material, web resources, a collection of sample exercises, and an interactive CD that provides tools an educator can use to stop plagiarism. One of three videos on the CD features an animated interactive quiz that helps student understand when they must include a citation. The authors have also established an anti-plagiarism wiki where readers are encouraged to participate in the on-going conversation on plagiarism. This book is a one-stop source for anyone who wants to understand why students knowingly or unknowingly plagiarize, who needs materials for teaching academic integrity, and who will benefit from a current resource guide to tools for actively detecting plagiarism.

The U.S. Embassy Information Resource Center is open to the public Monday through Friday from 13:00 to 18:00.
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