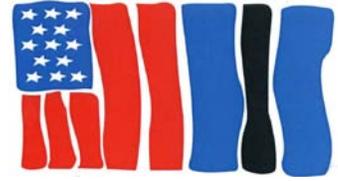


# BOTHO

October 2010, Volume 1, Issue 1



## Welcome to Botho

Welcome to our first issue of “Botho”, a Setswana word describing a person who has a well-rounded character, who is courteous and disciplined, and realizes his or her full potential both as an individual and as a part of the community to which he or she belongs. Botho is an example of a social contract of mutual respect, responsibility and accountability that members of society have toward each other and defines a process for earning respect by first giving it, and to gain empowerment by empowering others. “Botho” is intended for American citizens residing in or visiting Botswana. We hope you find this informative and encourage you to send us your feedback. While we can't accept advertising, please submit other pieces of interest to the community including events, meetings, church services or other activities. We also welcome your questions or suggestions on consular themes you would like us to address. To submit any contributions or to add or remove your name from our mailing list, just drop us an e-mail at: [ConsularGaborone@state.gov](mailto:ConsularGaborone@state.gov) and include “Botho” in the subject line.



Stephen Wilger is the new Consular Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Gaborone. Prior to this assignment, he served as a civilian peacekeeper with the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai, Egypt.

Steve joined the Foreign Service over eight years ago, and his previous assignments include the Consulates General in St. Petersburg, Russia and Johannesburg, South Africa, and the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



Mr. Wilger grew up in Ohio and received a Bachelor degree in Political Science from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He went to graduate school at the University of Dayton where he earned a Master's Degree in International Relations.

He and his dog Zoli are very happy to be back in Southern Africa.

## Useful Websites

Embassy website:

<http://botswana.usembassy.gov/index.html>

U.S. State Department: <http://www.state.gov>

Travel information: <http://www.travel.state.gov/>.

To order vital records:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>

## New American Citizen Services Hours

In order to better serve the American community living in or traveling through Botswana, we have decided to institute new hours for American Citizens Services. Starting November 1<sup>st</sup>, the Consular Section will be open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. On Tuesday and Thursday our hours will be from 1:30 p.m. through 4:30 p.m.

Please note that we will no longer be using the online appointment system. If you have an emergency, contact us directly to arrange a convenient time to come in.



## November General Elections

Voting for military members, their families and overseas citizens is easier now than ever before. In 2009, President Obama signed the Military and Overseas Voters Empowerment Act (MOVE Act) into law. MOVE Act requires all states to provide blank absentee ballots in at least one electronic format – email, an online ballot delivery system or fax – at least 45 days before an election. Additionally, voters from all 55 states and territories can use the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) online Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot automated assistant to vote for at least all federal candidates.

The following 25 states, or parts of these states, are participating in an Electronic Voting System project: Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho,

Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Washington, and West Virginia. If you vote in one of these states/counties, you should follow the instructions on the [FVAP website](#).

Remember, there are no provisions for in-person voting or on-site registration at the embassy. We are, however, happy to assist you in completing the Voter Registration/Absentee Ballot Request form, witness election materials (if required), provide other absentee voting information, and mail your completed election materials back to your state of residence

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### Quarterly Consular Topic: Visas

During your stay here, you have probably had at least one person ask you how they can go visit the United States. The short answer is most people need a visa. But what exactly is a visa? A non-immigrant visa allows a traveler permission to apply for entry to the United States for a temporary visit. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS - formerly INS, now part of the Dept. of Homeland Security) inspectors at the point of entry are responsible for authorizing a traveler's entry to the United States as well as the duration of their visit.



Visas come in many different types. Most travelers to the United States receive a visitor or 'B' visa. Students go to the United States on a J or F visa, and temporary workers receive H and L visas. The purpose of the visit determines the type of visa one will receive.

But what you *really* want to know is how your friend or colleague can get that visa to visit the United States. To apply for a visa they will need to fill out an electronic application form (DS-160) and schedule an appointment online. They can do both of these by visiting our [website](#).

When applicants arrive at the Consulate, they will need to present their non-immigrant confirmation page, a passport (valid at least six months after the intended date of travel), and one photograph (5 cm x 5 cm with a white background). Finally a \$140 (or Pula Equivalent) non-refundable application fee must be paid to the cashier at the time of the appointment. Interviews are conducted every Tuesday and Thursday morning.

U.S. Immigration law requires that Consular Officers assume each applicant is an intending immigrant. It is entirely up to the applicant to overcome that assumption. The applicant must demonstrate strong enough ties to their country of residence to assure their return after a temporary visit to the United States. There is no specific formula, and what works for one applicant may not necessarily be adequate for another. Some things that

help are: evidence of family ties, a good job, property, and adequate funds to not only support a trip to the United States, but cover any emergencies that may arise during the visit. Original documents will be returned to the applicant.

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### Upcoming Holidays/Events

November 11 – Veteran's Day (US Holiday)  
November 13 – Marine Ball (235<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the USMC)  
November 25 – Thanksgiving (U.S. Holiday)  
December 25 – Christmas (U.S. Holiday – Embassy closed on December 24)  
December 26 – Boxing Day (Botswana Holiday – Embassy closed on December 27))

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### TRAVEL WARNINGS: Check ahead before packing your bags

The State Department annually issues country specific Consular Information Sheets filled with important information for travelers. If necessary, the Department will also publish worldwide or regional public announcements or country specific travel warnings. The most recent Information sheets and warnings include a [Worldwide Caution](#) and a travel advisory for [Europe](#). If you haven't already, please take a few moments and register with the embassy [online](#). You can also choose to receive the latest travel warning directly to your email account. We urge you to check out all the latest information at <http://www.travel.state.gov>



### YOUR SAFETY IS IMPORTANT

- If you intend to travel in the region, please check with us for any travel warnings before you leave.
- Keeping a low profile makes you less of a target. Do not travel alone after dark and try to avoid large groups as well. Small groups offer protection without being overly conspicuous.
- Carry a photo copy of your passport with you at all times. Leave the original document in a secure location such as your hotel room safe.

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### Happy Holidays



The entire staff of the Consular Section wishes you and your family a happy and safe holiday season. We look forward to seeing you in



the New Year.



# Annual Marine Ball

Please join the Embassy Community in celebrating the 235<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States Marine Corps at their annual ball.

This year's event will take place at 6:00 p.m. on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Gaborone Sun.

Tickets are 400 Pula per person. The final day for ticket sales is October 22nd.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Staff Sergeant Brad Rentz at [rentzjb@state.gov](mailto:rentzjb@state.gov)

*“Since the early days of our republic, the US Navy-Marine Corps team has protected our shores and interests, and, demonstrating the compassion of all Americans, come to the aid of other countries in need of assistance. Through periods of war and peace, their performance has built a legacy of honor, courage, and devotion to duty.”*

*James T. Conway, General, U.S. Marine Corps, Commandant of the Marine Corps.*