

February, Issue 2 - 2011
AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER NEWSLETTER
U.S. Embassy Helsinki

LOOKING AHEAD

Book Donation to the Department of World Cultures at the University of Helsinki



Counselor for Cultural and Press Affairs Marjut Robinson presented a book collection consisting of themes relevant to the North American Studies Program at the University of Helsinki. Director of the Department of World Cultures, Lars-Folke Landgrén, and the representatives of the North American Studies, Professor Markku Henriksson and Dr. Mikko Saikku, emphasized the importance of the book donations received over the past years.

Professor Henriksson noted that the past book donations had provided a significant stimulus for the research and result-

ing publications by the scholars of the Department and that he was certain that this round of donations would similarly stimulate the work of the current crop of scholars.

Ms. Robinson also discussed the continuing successful cooperation of the Department of World Cultures and the U.S. Embassy. The Department's cooperation with the American Resource Center, in particular, has been very active and productive.

Joe Biden to visit Finland



The U.S. Embassy in Helsinki welcomes the visit of Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden. This visit will accentuate the close friendship and strong partnership between the United States and Finland. The Vice President will consult with our Finnish partners on our shared regional and global priorities.

We are looking forward to a full and robust program that highlights the close cooperation between the United States and Finland. We want to emphasize the partnership in terms of mutual democratic values and traditions, the goals of peace and prosperity, and the new challenges we must face: economic recovery, gender issues, energy security and climate change.

PEEK INTO THE ARC'S MAGAZINE SHELF

The New Yorker is an American magazine of reportage, commentary, criticism, essays, fiction, satire, cartoons and poetry published by Condé Nast Publications. Starting as a weekly in the mid-1920s, the magazine is now published 47 times per year, with five of these issues covering two-week spans.

Although its reviews and events listings often focus on the cultural life of New York City, *The New Yorker* has a wide audience outside of New York. It is well known for its commentaries on popular culture and eccentric Americana; its attention to modern fiction by the inclusion of short stories and literary reviews; its rigorous fact checking and copyediting; its journalism on world politics and social issues. (Source: Wikipedia)



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WEB PICKS

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American Life

American Education (Foreign Policy, March/April 2011)

Relax, America. Chinese math whizzes and Indian engineers aren't stealing your kids' future.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/22/think_again_education

Cities, Inequality, and Wages (The Atlantic, February 24, 2011)

Urban areas make us richer, but they enlarge the country's economic divide.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/02/cities-inequality-and-wages/71524/>

George Washington: The Reluctant President (The Smithsonian, February 2011)

It seemed as if everyone rejoiced at the election of our first chief executive except the man himself.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/George-Washington-The-Reluctant-President.html>

Forty Years of Philadelphia Sound (The Smithsonian, February 18, 2011)

Songwriters Leon Huff and Kenneth Gamble composed tunes with political messages for chart-toppers like the O'Jays and Billy Paul.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/Forty-Years-of-the-Philadelphia-Sound.html#ixzz1EyxWExFn>

How the Super Bowl Got Its Name: The Real Story (The Atlantic, January 27, 2011)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2011/01/how-the-super-bowl-got-its-name-the-real-story/70287/>

The Information (The New Yorker, February 14 & 21, 2011)

How the Internet gets inside us.

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2011/02/14/110214crat_atlarge_gopnik

Economy and Politics

Business Is Booming (American Prospect, March 2011)

As corporate profits skyrocket, even as the economy remains stalled in a deep recession, Americans confront a grim new reality:

Our corporations don't need us anymore. Half their revenues come from abroad. Their products, increasingly, come from abroad as well.

http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=business_is_booming

The Genius Dilemma (Newsweek, January 23, 2011)

Just how essential is a company's visionary founder? Apple and Google are about to find out.

<http://www.newsweek.com/2011/01/23/the-genius-dilemma.html>

Good for GE, Good for America? (Bloomberg Businessweek, January 27, 2011)

The interests of Obama and Immelt—the GE chief and new jobs adviser—increasingly overlap

http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/11_06/b4214025505152.htm

Promoting Economic Recovery and Job Creation: The Road Forward (Committee on Financial Services, U.S. House of Representatives)

On January 26, Donald Kohn testified before the House Committee on Financial Services on promoting economic recovery and job creation, offering monetary, fiscal and regulatory policy recommendations for the U.S. economy as it slowly recovers from a period of high unemployment.

http://www.brookings.edu/testimony/2011/0126_job_creation_kohn.aspx

The Regulator: Why Business Loves Rules (Really) (Bloomberg Businessweek, January 20, 2011)

From corn to chemicals, many industries are thriving under Obama's reign of rulemaking.

http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/content/jan2011/db20110119_358719.htm

Restructuring the U.S. Residential Mortgage Market (Brookings Institution, February 11, 2011)

While the reform of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac was not included in financial reform legislation last year, the Obama administration and congressional leaders are vowing action on these government-sponsored enterprises (GSEs) this year.

http://www.brookings.edu/events/2011/0211_mortgage_market.aspx

State and Local Finances: Where We're Going (The Brookings Institution)

Try a little party game in which you ask your friends and neighbors where their tax dollars come from and where they go. Most will probably know their federal tax bite. They may also be able to tick off major federal spending programs like Social Security, Medicare, and national defense. It is likely that few, however, will mention the nation's 50 states and nearly 90,000 counties, cities, towns, school districts, and other local agencies.

http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2011/0131_state_local_finances_gordon.aspx

Time Warner and the War Against Free (Bloomberg Businessweek, January 20, 2011)

CEO Jeff Bewkes is standing up for paid content in a world of cheap online video. Can he hold the line against iTunes, Netflix, Amazon, and Hulu?

http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/11_05/b4213080929775.htm

What Would Ronnie Do? (Newsweek, January 23, 2011)

Obama starts the second half of his term with a set of obstacles similar to those that bedeviled Ronald Reagan. On Reagan's centennial, the president is looking to the past for inspiration.

<http://www.newsweek.com/2011/01/23/what-would-ronnie-do.html>

When Should We Retire? Two Views by James K. Galbraith and Eugene Steuerle (American Prospect, March 2011)

With so much focus on the deficit, many assume entitlement programs should be cut. But there is a progressive argument for raising the retirement age, and one for lowering it.

http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=when_should_we_retire_two_views

Global Challenges

Battle Hymn of the Diplomats (The National Interest March/April 2011)

Awash in Wilsonian hubris, the State Department's meandering and militaristic QDDR will ensure Foggy Bottom remains second-rate—both inside the...

<http://nationalinterest.org/bookreview/battle-hymn-the-diplomats-4912>

From Innovation to Revolution (Foreign Affairs, March/April 2011)

Do the tools of social media make it possible for protesters to challenge their governments? Malcolm Gladwell argues that there is no evidence that they do; Clay Shirky disagrees.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67325/malcolm-gladwell-and-clay-shirky/from-innovation-to-revolution>

Green Movement 2.0: How U.S. Support Could Lead the Opposition to Victory (Foreign Affairs, March/April 2011)

Taking a cue from the Egyptian revolution, opposition activists in Iran reinvigorated their beleaguered protest movement on Monday. Could Washington's public support help Iranians face down their regime?

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67458/geneive-abdo/green-movement-20>

Twitter Can't Save You (New York Times, Sunday Book Review, February 4, 2011)

Just a few years ago, all anyone could talk about was how to make the Internet more free. Now all anyone can talk about is how to control it.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/06/books/review/Siegel-t.html>

International Relations

Dangers in U.S.-Pakistan Rift (Council on Foreign Relations, February 17, 2011)

The diplomatic spat between the United States and Pakistan over U.S. Embassy employee Raymond Davis's arrest by Pakistani authorities on murder charges has led to Washington postponing high-level talks with Pakistani and Afghan officials.

<http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/dangers-us-pakistan-rift/p24140>

Improving Afghan War Strategy (The Brookings Institution, Policy Brief #180)

The year 2010 in Afghanistan had some encouraging signs but on balance it was less positive than had been hoped. In 2011, therefore, it is important to do two things: first, look for further improvements in our strategy; and second, develop a backup plan, should the current approach not yield the kind of progress that is necessary and expected.

http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/02_afghanistan_ohanlon.aspx

Iraq's Last Patriot (New York Times Magazine, February 6, 2011)

Ayad Allawi represented a future that looked like what the United States imagined when it invaded: a secular democracy, free of ethnic and religious strife. But then his flaws – and America's endless mistakes – took that future away.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/06/magazine/06ALLAWI-t.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=%22iraq's%20last%20patriot%22&st=cse

A Plan for Peace That Still Could Be (New York Times Magazine, February 13, 2011)

The street demonstrations roiling the Arab world have riveted and moved many Americans, who have visions of democracy sweeping through northern Africa and the Middle East. As I write this, Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's president, has announced he will not stand for re-election, as has Yemen's longtime ruler, Ali Abdullah Saleh. Tunisia's ruler fled, and the nation has a new government; King Abdullah of Jordan replaced his own cabinet and now has a prime minister who promises reform. There are even stirrings in Syria.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/13/magazine/13Israel-t.html?scp=1&sq=a%20separate%20peace&st=cse>

ARCHIVE

Car Enthusiast Bruce Meyer Inspired Hot Rod Fans



California car collector and Petersen Automotive Museum board member Bruce Meyer gave a lecture at the American Resource Center Friday on February 4th on the American Hot Rod. The event was arranged in co-operation with the Finnish Hot Rod Association (FHRA). Hot Rods are American cars with large engines modified for speed. The term "hot rod" is generally known to be a contraction of "hot roadster," meaning a roadster that was modified for speed. Hot Rods were common in the 1930s or 1940s as the name of a car that had been "hopped up" by modifying the engine in various ways to achieve higher performance.

Bruce Meyer also talked about the various sectors of hot rodding including street rods and rat rods. In addition to talking about the history of hot rods in America and his own car collection, he discussed car culture in California and the United States.

New Graphics in Facebook and Twitter

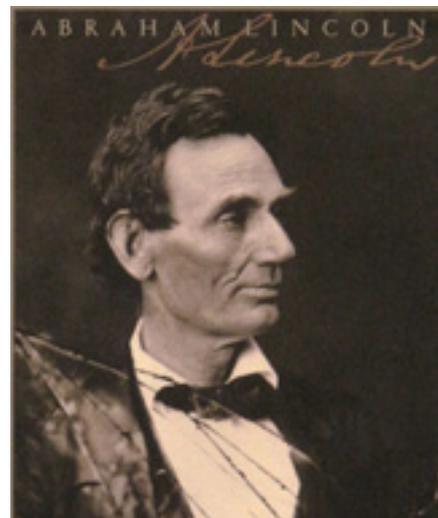
If you haven't yet Liked us on Facebook don't hesitate to do so now. We have just put up new graphics to our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

We hope to be able to give you more insightful news on America and help you better on all your questions about American literature, life, and culture.

See you online!



Abraham Lincoln: Race, Emancipation and President Obama



To commemorate the Black History Month, the American Resource Center arranged a lecture on the heritage of President Abraham Lincoln for contemporary African Americans. In the introduction Dr. Pirkka Kivenheimo gave insights into the background and personal life of Abraham Lincoln. He also discussed the historical events that led to the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, as the nation approached its third year of the bloody civil war.

Dr. Kivenheimo showed the audience excerpts of the speech which President Obama announced his candidacy for President of the United States at the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois, on February 10, 2007. That was the same exact location where Abraham Lincoln gave his "House Divided" speech against slavery.

After the presentation the audience engaged Dr. Kivenheimo in conversation on related topics, including the kind of support that other U.S. Presidents have received among African Americans.

The American Resource Center

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9-20, Sat 9-16; Reference service: Mon-Fri 9-17

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