

# JANUARY, ISSUE 1 - 2012

## AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER NEWSLETTER

### U.S. EMBASSY HELSINKI

## ELECTION YEAR 2012



President Barack Obama delivers his State of the Union address in the House Chamber at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., Jan. 25, 2011. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

The United States presidential election of 2012 is to be held on Tuesday, November 6, 2012. It will be the 57th quadrennial presidential election in which presidential electors, who will actually elect the President and the Vice President of the United States on December 17, 2012, will be chosen. Barack Obama, who is eligible for a second and final term as President, has announced that he will seek nomination to be the Democratic Party's candidate in this election.

The 2012 presidential election will coincide with the United States Senate elections where 33 races will be occurring as well as the United States House of Representatives elections to elect the members for the 113th Congress. The election will also encompass eleven gubernatorial races as well as many state legislature races.

This will be the first congressional election using the congressional districts that were apportioned based on the 2010 Census. Elections will be held for all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives. Elections will also be held for the delegates from the District of Columbia and five major U.S. territories. The winners of this election cycle will serve in the 113th United States Congress.

The 33 seats of Class I of the United States Senate will be up for election. Currently, Democrats are expected to have 23 seats up for election, including 2 independents who caucus with the Democrats, while Republicans are only expected to have 10 seats up for election. Additionally, special elections may be held to fill any vacancies that occur.  
*Source: Wikipedia*

## KEY DATES IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE

**February 6** - Iowa caucuses, first contest in presidential nominating race  
**March 6** - "Super Tuesday" primaries in 14 states  
**August 27-30** - Republican convention in Tampa  
**September 3-6** - Democratic convention in Charlotte, North Carolina  
**November 6** - Election Day

## HOW TO FOLLOW

The U.S. Elections will be one of the top news throughout the year in all of the biggest news outlets. Many newspapers and television channels have also created own subpages for the election coverage. Below are listed just a few of the many that the ARC staff have found being good and interesting sources.

**New York Times:**  
<http://goo.gl/vDXm>

**Wall Street Journal:**  
<http://goo.gl/Ylpii>

**Washington Post:**  
<http://goo.gl/ed7BB>

**CNN:**  
<http://goo.gl/tqSrP>

**Google:**  
<http://goo.gl/IYAt5>

In Finnish:

**USA-Vaalit** – Talous Sanomien blogi  
<http://blogit.taloussanomati.fi/usa-vaalit/>

**Kaksi Amerikkaa, yksi presidentti**  
– Helsingin Sanomien vuoden 2012 vaaliblogi  
<http://blogit.hs.fi/usavaalit/>

## POLLS

**Five Thirty Eight (NY Times):**  
<http://goo.gl/ixR2s>

**Gallup:**  
<http://www.gallup.com/>

**Rasmussen Reports:**  
<http://www.rasmussenreports.com/>

**Real Clear Politics:**  
<http://www.realclearpolitics.com/>

**Zogby International:**  
<http://zogby.com/news/>

## WEB PICKS

*Disclaimer: The views expressed on these websites are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. Government policies. These links are being provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or approval by the ARC or the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki, nor can we bear any responsibility for the accuracy, legality, functionality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links.*

### American Life

**Collaborations Welcome.** Metropolis Magazine, November 2011.

Two thriving design collectives—housed in a nondescript building in Brooklyn—may provide a model for a new way of working.  
<http://www.metropolismag.com/story/20111115/collaborations-welcome>

**God, Government and Roger Williams' Big Idea.** Smithsonian, January 2012.

Banished from Massachusetts, the Puritan minister originated a principle that remains contentious to this day—separation of church and state

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/God-Government-and-Roger-Williams-Big-Idea.html>

**Upheaval at the New York Public Library** The Nation, December 19, 2012.

Librarians speak out, deploring mega-million makeover of main library while branches beg.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/164881/upheaval-new-york-public-library?page=full>

### Economy and Politics

**Last Call: Can Nokia Compete With Apple And Android?** Forbes, December 5, 2011.

Stephen Elop joined Nokia as CEO in September 2010 with a clear mission: Save the once world-beating mobile phone company from oblivion.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/elizabethwoyke/2011/11/16/last-call-can-nokia-compete-with-apple-and-android/>

**Maintaining Financial Stability in an Open Economy: Sweden in the Global Crisis and Beyond** by Ralph C. Bryant, Dale Henderson, and Torbjörn Becker. The Brookings Institution, January 20, 2012.

Sweden is highly open to the rest of the world, dependent on extensive cross-border transactions in goods, services, and financial assets and liabilities. Exports are now around half the size of GDP. Cross-border financial assets and liabilities are each 2½ times GDP. The banking system is more than 4 times GDP. Even more than in past decades, Swedish financial institutions and markets are pervasively linked to the rest of the global financial system.

[http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2012/0119\\_sweden\\_finance\\_bryant.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2012/0119_sweden_finance_bryant.aspx)

**The New Populists** by Christopher Ketcham. The American Prospect, December 12, 2011, pp. 11-24.

The rise and fall of Zuccotti Park—and the future of the movement it birthed.

In the month before the destruction of the encampment in Zuccotti Park, I got in the habit of biking across the Brooklyn Bridge each night to talk with the Wall Street Occupiers and wander among the tents. There was always work to behold—bigger tents going up, new volunteers welcomed, the kitchen doling out free food, the media groups live-streaming, dishes being done, cops being teased—and always conversation to be had and heard.

<http://prospect.org/article/new-populists-o>

**Why Is Art So Damned Expensive?** Newsweek, December 5, 2011.

A pile of stools for \$575,000. A cabinet full of surgical instruments for a cool \$2.5 million. The global economy's in a tailspin, but among the world's elite collectors, works are selling for record prices.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/12/04/why-is-art-so-damned-expensive.html>

### Global Challenges

**Birdbrained: Why Twitter will regret its misguided flirtation with censorship** by Uri Friedman. Foreign Policy, January 27, 2012.

Outrage has predictably followed Twitter's announcement yesterday that it has developed a system to block (or, as the company euphemistically puts it, "withhold") specific tweets in specific countries if they violate local law, while keeping the content available for the rest of the world. The hashtag #TwitterBlackout is bursting with calls for a boycott of the microblogging service on Saturday, and headlines like "Twitter caves to global censorship" abound.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/27/twitters\\_puzzling\\_flirtation\\_with\\_censorship](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/27/twitters_puzzling_flirtation_with_censorship)

**The League of Extraordinarily Bureaucratic Gentlemen: Can DC Comic's new comic book series make the U.N. look cool -- or at least effective?** by Colum Lynch. Foreign Policy, January 26, 2012.

How life imitates art -- or graphic art, at least. In DC Comics' new series, Justice League International, governments are going bankrupt, the masses are out in the street protesting, terrorists are blowing up state institutions, and the United Nations' credibility is in tatters.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/26/the\\_league\\_of\\_extraordinary\\_bureaucratic\\_gentlemen](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/26/the_league_of_extraordinary_bureaucratic_gentlemen)

**Wind VS. Bird** by Todd Woody. Forbes, January 16, 2012.

The revival of the iconic California condor is colliding with the state's wind farm boom. How an environmentalists' nightmare has become a multibillion-dollar dilemma.

<http://www.forbes.com/forbes/2012/0116/feature-mark-tholke-wind-farm-california-tehachapi-mountains.html>

## International Relations

**Nuclear Arms Control in 2012** by Steven Pifer, The Brookings Institution, January 19, 2012.

Nuclear arms control has been a major element of the Obama administration's foreign policy. To help understand where the United States and Russia are on nuclear arms reductions, as well as possible next steps, Brookings Arms Control Initiative Director Steven Pifer has prepared a PowerPoint presentation that outlines the New START Treaty, next steps on strategic forces, non-strategic nuclear weapons and missile defense issues. This PowerPoint will be useful for anyone seeking a quick introduction to the intricate world of nuclear arms control.

[http://www.brookings.edu/speeches/2012/0119\\_arms\\_control\\_pifer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/speeches/2012/0119_arms_control_pifer.aspx)

**The Perils of Militarized Diplomacy** by Franz-Stefan Gady. The National Interest, January 27, 2012.

In a speech on U.S. foreign policy in October 2011, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney outlined an aggressive agenda for American leadership in the world. "In an American century, America has the strongest economy and the strongest military in the world. If you do not want America to be the strongest nation on Earth, I am not your president. You have that president today." Like Mitt Romney, many pundits lament the diminishing influence of the United States in the world. In international politics, influence is linked directly to power, the sum of components such as the threat of force, economic magnitude, cultural vibrancy and effective diplomacy. In the case of the United States, however, influence in international politics is especially dependent on military operations.

<http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/the-perils-militarized-diplomacy-6413>

## Elections 2012 Special

**Annotated State of the Union Speech** by James Fallows. The Atlantic, Jan. 27, 2012.

Mouse over the underlined passages to view annotations. All notes also appear in full at the end of the speech text.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/01/annotated-state-of-the-union-speech/251950/>

**How Obama's Long Game Will Outsmart His Critics** by Andrew Sullivan. Newsweek, Jan 16, 2012.

The right calls him a socialist, the left says he sucks up to Wall Street, and independents think he's a wimp. Andrew Sullivan on how the president may just end up outsmarting them all.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2012/01/15/andrew-sullivan-how-obama-s-long-game-will-outsmart-his-critics.html>

**In GOP contest, environmentalists see cause for alarm as candidates show signs of shift** by Associated Press. Washington Post National, January 23, 2012.

Four years after the GOP's rallying cry became "drill, baby, drill," environmental issues have barely registered a blip in this Republican presidential primary.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/environment/in-gop-contest-environmentalists-see-cause-for-alarm-as-candidates-show-signs-of-shift/2012/01/23/gIQAxPAMKQ\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/environment/in-gop-contest-environmentalists-see-cause-for-alarm-as-candidates-show-signs-of-shift/2012/01/23/gIQAxPAMKQ_story.html)

**The Man Behind Gingrich's Money** by Mike McIntire and Michael Luo. New York Times Magazine, January 28, 2012.

The trip to Jordan by a group of United States congressmen was supposed to be a chance for them to meet the newly crowned King Abdullah II. But their tour guide had a more complicated agenda. The guide was Sheldon Adelson, a Las Vegas casino magnate who helped underwrite trips to the Middle East to win support for Israel in Congress. On this occasion in 1999, as the lawmakers enjoyed a reception at the Royal Palace in Amman, Mr. Adelson and an aide retreated to a private room with the king.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/29/us/politics/the-man-behind-gingrichs-money.html?bl>

**The Meaning of Mitt** by Michael Kranish and Scott Helman. Vanity Fair, February 2012.

Mitt Romney has long been a front-runner for the G.O.P. nomination—even if no one really knows who he is. Digging into the candidate's record as a Mormon leader, his business deals at Bain Capital, and that infamous car trip with the family dog strapped to the roof, Michael Kranish and Scott Helman pierce the Mitt bubble in an adaptation from their new book, *The Real Romney*, to find that the contradictions, question marks, and ambivalence go deeper than his politics.

<http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/2012/02/mitt-romney-201202>

**The Mormons and the Presidency** by Lawrence Wright. New Yorker, January 27, 2012.

Mitt Romney is not the first Mormon to make a run for the Presidency. His father, George, was briefly the G.O.P. frontrunner in 1968, before losing the nomination to Richard Nixon. That same year, Eldridge Cleaver, one of the founders of the Black Panthers, ran for President as the Peace and Freedom Party candidate, but he didn't get baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints until 1983. Mo Udall, an Arizona congressman, narrowly lost the Democratic nomination to Jimmy Carter in 1976. One could say that Mormons have been a presence in Presidential politics for decades. (I wrote about the Church, and spoke to Mitt Romney about his faith, for *The New Yorker* in 2002.)

<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2012/01/the-mormons-and-the-presidency.html>

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Toni Morrison portrayed in graffiti in Spain (Wikimedia)

**Black History Month** is an annual celebration of achievements by black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. The event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month.

### Martin Luther King

Born in 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, Martin Luther King Jr. was the dominant force in the U.S. civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. An organizer of the Montgomery bus boycott that was triggered by Rosa Parks' arrest, King was himself arrested during that struggle, and his house was firebombed. King organized and led nonviolent protests to demand equal rights for African Americans and an end to all racial segregation. King will always be revered for his "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington in 1963. He remains the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate. He was assassinated in Tennessee in 1968.

### Toni Morrison

Toni Morrison was born in Ohio in 1931. She has had an illustrious career as a writer, editor, and teacher. She has won numerous awards for her writing, among them the Pulitzer Prize in 1988 for her novel *Beloved* and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994. Her novels contain richly expressive depictions of African American life. *Beloved* is a ghost story of sorts: the narrative relates how an African American woman who had fled slavery to Ohio killed her two-year-old daughter rather than see her forced to return to the slave state of Kentucky.

### Barack Obama

The election of Barack Obama as president reflects the possibilities open to people of all races and ethnic backgrounds in the United States. Obama defeated numerous rivals for the nomination as Democratic presidential candidate in 2008 and defeated Republican Senator John McCain in the general election that year. Even 150 years after the Civil War and 50 years after the peak of the civil rights movement, Obama's election as president offered a stunning achievement in African American history and American history.

## YLEISÖLUENTO: NAINEN JA BLUES

*Afroamerikkalaisen juurimusiikin syvät naistulkitsijat kautta aikojen*

Esa "Bluesministeri" Kuloniemen luento Kansalliskirjaston auditoriossa  
Tiistaina 7.2.2012 klo 17:30  
Yliopistonkatu 1 (2. kerros)



**TERVETULOA!**

Esa Kuloniemi on kitaristi ja YLEn pitkäaikainen bluesmusiikkitoimittaja sekä bluesin suurimpia henkisiä mesenaatteja Suomessa. Honey B and the T-Bones -yhtyeessään Esalla on takanaan keikkailua 1980-luvun alkupuolelta lähtien.

## ARC SCHOLARSHIP 2011 RECIPIENT

**ARC congratulates Ms. Paula Siltanen** of the Department of Political Science at the University of Tampere for being selected as the winner of the 2011 ARC Scholarship. The title of her Master's Thesis is "The concept of otherness / alterity in the foreign policy rhetorics of President Barack Obama."

A total of 24 applications were submitted for the 2011 ARC grant. The selection committee praised the excellent submissions and noted that their high academic quality and originality made it very difficult to select one winner from the entire group.

## The American Resource Center

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

Address: P.O. Box 15 (Unioninkatu 36), 00014 University of Helsinki

Tel. (09) 191 24048 Fax: (09) 652 940

E-mail: [arc@usembassy.fi](mailto:arc@usembassy.fi)

<http://finland.usembassy.gov/arc.html>

<http://www.facebook.com/AmericanResourceCenter>

<http://twitter.com/ARCHelsinki>

