



Consul General Dean Thompson hands out an award at the The Jungles' 5<sup>th</sup> Green Guard Award Ceremony at the Oberoi Grand.



# BULLETIN - APRIL 2013



## Events at a Glance

**April 8**  
**Spelling Bee**  
(Kolkata)

**April 19**  
**The All-New American Center**  
(Kolkata)

**April 22**  
**Earth Day workshop**  
(Kolkata)

**April 25 & 27**  
**Theater: A Delicate Balance**  
(Kolkata)

## Holiday

**April 15**  
Bengali New Year's Day

## Your Date With U.S. History

### THE FIRST ARBOR DAY

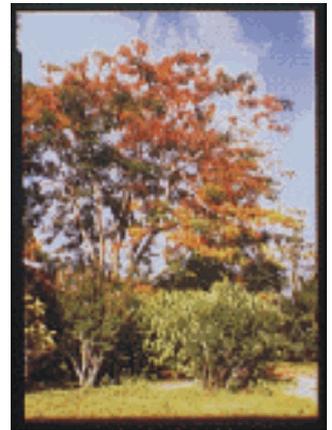
Nebraskans planted more than one million trees on April 10, 1872, in celebration of the first Arbor Day. The occasion fulfilled the dream of J. Sterling Morton, a newspaper editor and former governor of the Nebraska Territory. Morton, an ardent proponent of forestation, lobbied for a holiday to encourage the planting of trees. In 1885, thirteen years after Arbor Day was first celebrated, Nebraskans changed the date to April 22 in honor of Morton's birthday. Arbor Day is now officially celebrated worldwide, usually on the last Friday in April.

By 1907, Arbor Day was observed in every state in the Union, principally through school programs. Through these celebrations, schoolchildren were urged to consider the planting of a tree as a patriotic, even pious, act, as well as a sound investment and a contribution to community aesthetics.

In 1847, George Perkins Marsh, then a U.S. Congressman from Vermont, delivered a speech to the Agricultural Society of Rutland County, Vermont, calling attention to the destructive impact of human activity on the land, especially through deforestation, and advocating a conservationist approach to the management of forested lands.

Beginning around the middle of the eighteenth century, European and American literary figures had drawn increasing attention to the importance of nature; by the mid-nineteenth century, travel literature in periodicals and books joined with this Romantic literary legacy to stimulate a broad popular movement of "nature appreciation." Throughout the remaining decades of the century, the "nature essay" burgeoned as an American literary genre.

Source: [memory.loc.gov](http://memory.loc.gov)



### FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED



Frederick Law Olmsted, nineteenth-century America's foremost landscape architect, was born on April 26, 1822. Son of a well-to-do Hartford, Connecticut, merchant, Olmsted spent much of his childhood enjoying rural New England scenery. A tour of England and the Continent inspired *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (1852) and a new career in journalism. Later, he applied for the superintendency of New York City's nascent Central Park. Olmsted was engaged in clearing the 770-acre Manhattan site when architect Calvert Vaux suggested collaborating on a plan for the park's design competition. Their winning "Greensward" plan allowed New Yorkers to experience the beauty and benefits of the countryside without leaving the island city. Creating such a pastoral landscape required shifting nearly 5 million cubic yards of earth and stone, blasting rock with 260 tons of gunpowder, and planting 270,000 trees and shrubs. First opened to visitors in 1859, Central Park today still offers vistas across the Sheep Meadow, strolling along wooded paths, climbing The Ramble, and people-watching on the terraces and promenades.



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## YOUR TURN

The Bulletin wants to hear from you ... your thoughts, your opinions, your feedback. Write in with

--a report of an American Center event you attended

--your experiences in cross-cultural encounters

--a photo that brings out the joys and sorrows of human life

--a human interest anecdote.



Only email submissions will be considered for publication. The Bulletin reserves the right of submission selection, editing and publication.

Send your submissions by email to [kolkatapas@state.gov](mailto:kolkatapas@state.gov) by the 10th of each month.

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Hasina Kharbhih of Shillong, an alumna of the International Visitor program, traveled to the U.S. on an alumni exchange program. About her experience, she says: "This visit has opened up new opportunities for my organizations, Impulse Social Enterprises, and Impulse NGO Network. I have returned with the conviction that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever does."



The picture shows Hasina delivering the opening speech at the National Council of International Visitors meeting at Washington, DC.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Spelling Bee Grand Finale

April 8: South City International School



The American Center hosts the Spelling Bee Grand Finale in Kolkata. Students of Classes 9-11 will participate in the contest. Regional winners from Agartala, Shillong, Siliguri, and Jamshedpur will compete with the winners from Kolkata.

Contact: 3984-6397 or [sennx@state.gov](mailto:sennx@state.gov)

## Grand Opening of the All-New American Center

April 19, 6 p.m.

Come and participate in the grand opening of the all-new American Center! Experience the new look of the Lincoln Room auditorium, hang out with your favorite bands, enjoy a sip and a bite, win exciting prizes, and do lots more.... *Entry by invitation only.*

Contact: 3984-6392 or [dassx@state.gov](mailto:dassx@state.gov)



## Vertical Gardens and Green Spaces

April 22, ITC Sonar: 3 p.m.



To commemorate Earth Day, the American Center, in partnership with ITC Sonar, presents a workshop for students of city schools on creating vertical gardens and green spaces in crowded urban environments. *Entry is restricted.*

Contact: 3984-6392 or [dassx@state.gov](mailto:dassx@state.gov)

Theater Event: *A Delicate Balance*

April 25 & 27, American Center: 6.30 p.m.

FREE ENTRY!  
ALL ARE WELCOME!

The American Center hosts Jadavpur University's production of American playwright Edward Albee's play *A Delicate Balance*, which earned Albee his maiden Pulitzer Prize. The play is directed by Professor Ananda Lal, with a cast comprising students of Jadavpur University's Department of English. The production is dedicated to all victims of violence against women. *All are welcome! Seating is on first come first serve basis until capacity is reached.*



**All programs are subject to change. Please confirm closer to the date of the event.**



## Exchange Programs Corner

**Bipin Newar, CEO of Taaza TV**, traveled to the U.S. to participate in an International Visitor Leadership Program on "Social Media Influencers," February 25 - March 18. Bipin was joined in the program by three other journalists from India.



## FOCUS:

**ARINDAM SENGUPTA, ENGLISH TEACHER AND TRAINER, HARE SCHOOL, KOLKATA**

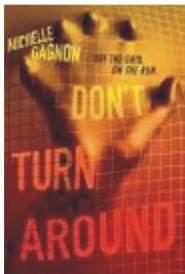
*Arindam Sengupta, an alumnus of the U.S. State Department sponsored Texas Intensive English Program, was in Kathmandu recently for the 18<sup>th</sup> International Nepal English Language Teachers Association Conference on "Integrating Technology in the ESL Classroom." He was one of five participants from India. Here he reports on his experience.*

Key speakers at the Conference included Dr. Richard Smith of the University of Warwick, UK; and Dr. JoAnn Crandall of the University of Maryland. Dr Smith spoke on how to manage large classes, how to effectively cope with the challenging task of teaching English as a second language, and ways of fostering inter-cultural communication skills in students, to prepare them to be effective users of English in global contexts. Presenters hailed from the USA, UK, Japan, Iran, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Poland, Kazakhstan, Australia and Nepal. On the whole, the Conference brought us up to date with recent, cutting-edge technologies in the field of English language teaching in order to prepare global citizens for the 21st century.



*The picture shows Arindam pausing in the midst of his presentation to allow participants to complete a task related to website evaluation techniques, a sub-topic of his presentation.*

### COMPELLING ADDITIONS TO THE AMERICAN LIBRARY'S YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION



**DON'T TURN AROUND** by Michelle Gagnon. Harper, 2012. Sixteen-year-old Noa has been a victim of the system ever since her parents died. Now living off the grid and trusting no one, she uses her computer-hacking skills to stay safely anonymous and alone. But when she wakes up on a table in an empty warehouse with an IV in her arm and no memory of how she got there, Noa starts to wish she had someone on her side.



**PALACE OF STONE** by Shannon Hale. Bloomsbury, 2012. This is a book that will appeal to a broad audience. It is written for the middle grade audience (10-14) but is interesting and deep enough for older readers if they can get past the title of the book. The romance is sweet and innocent, nothing that would turn off young readers.

### UNITED STATES - INDIA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION



United States India Educational Foundation (USIEF) announces its annual competition for the Fulbright-Nehru and other Fulbright Fellowships for Indian citizens for the academic year 2014-15. Open to students, academics, teachers and professionals, these fellowships are offered in a wide range of fields. **Application**

**due dates begin July 1, 2013.** Details about the fellowship programs, application procedures, guidelines, and selection process are posted on the USIEF website [www.usief.org.in](http://www.usief.org.in).

Contact: 3984-6309 or [shevanti@usief.org.in](mailto:shevanti@usief.org.in)

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**American Center Facebook Page**

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In an age of social media, the American Center is delighted to draw your attention to its Facebook Page. This page is designed not only to promote upcoming events, programs, interactive sessions, and releases of new books and articles at the American Center, but also to get feedback from our audiences through their active participation in online conversations and opinion polls.

To avail yourself of information about upcoming events or to interact with us, please join our over 20,000 fans by following the above-mentioned link and "Like" us!

**Surf On Our Turf**

The American Library invites you to blog at:



<http://blogs.usembassy.gov/kolkata/>

Join our online discussion forum to share your thoughts on what you have read, recommend books to read, and get information on the library's recent additions and events.

**JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH**

April 2013 marks the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History's Jazz Appreciation Month initiative, which aims to draw greater public attention globally to the extraordinary heritage and history of jazz as America's original music, a global cultural treasure. In the fall of 2011, UNESCO designated jazz a "universal music of freedom and creativity" and decreed that every April 30 is to be celebrated around the world as International Jazz Day. In 2013, Istanbul will be the official host city, with planned activities including concerts, educational events, jazz talks, master classes, and student workshops.



**EARTH DAY: THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

April 22 is Earth Day, the annual celebration of the environment and a time to assess the work needed to protect the natural gifts of our planet. Earth Day is observed around the world, although nowhere is it a national holiday. In the United States, it affirms that environmental awareness is part of the country's consciousness and that the idea of protecting the environment--once the province of a few conservationists --has moved from the extreme to the mainstream of American thought. The 2013 theme for Earth Day is "The Face of Climate Change."



**MARCH IN PICTURES**



*U.S. author Mitali Perkins conducts a workshop with school students at the American Center.*



*Asim Rehman, President of the Muslim Bar Association of New York, addresses students and faculty of Aliah University.*

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