



Consul General Beth Payne interacts with women agriculturalists at Zubza village, Nagaland.



BULLETIN - JANUARY 2011



Events at a Glance

January 12-13:

Program: Wellness Workshop (Kolkata)

January 25-February 6:

Kolkata Book Fair

January 25:

Program: Mask performance and workshop (Kolkata)

January 28:

Film Show: *The Great Gatsby* (Kolkata)

Holidays:

January 17

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

January 26

Republic Day

Your Date With U.S. History

THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH

On January 24, 1848, James W. Marshall discovered gold at a sawmill in Coloma that he was constructing for John Sutter, a wealthy land developer from the Sacramento Valley. Although Spanish explorers brushed the edge of California in the mid-1500s and claimed it as part of Spain's large North American holdings, they basically ignored it for the next two centuries. Not until concern arose over British and Russian expansion in western North America in the late 18th century did Spanish missionaries establish a string of missions from San Diego to Sonoma, near San Francisco. These mission settlements were joined by presidios (forts) and a few pueblos (towns). During the next few decades, the Spanish and Mexican governments granted a series of large landholdings (ranchos) to immigrants. Still, the area remained peripheral; the towns were small and ramshackle, and hides and tallow were the ranchos' most important exports.



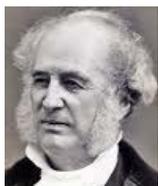
Following U.S. seizure of California in 1846, a great gold strike in the foothills of the central Sierra Nevada in 1848 brought the first significant change in the region's settlement fortunes. Within a year, 40,000 people had come to the gold fields by sea, passing through San Francisco harbor. Perhaps as many more came overland. By 1850, California was a state. The frantic period of the gold rush lasted only a few years, but it succeeded in breaking the state's isolation from the rest of the country.

Southern California, the center of Spanish occupation in the state, did not share in the early population expansion, but the completion of railroads going west in the 1880s brought a sudden end to the area's quiet existence. In an effort to create a demand for their facilities, the railroads advertised widely for settlers, aided new arrivals in finding housing and jobs, and lowered fares. During the first southern California land boom, between 1881 and 1887, the population of Los Angeles grew from 10,000 to 70,000.

[Source: <http://www.america.gov>]

THE AMERICAN CENTER WISHES ALL ITS PATRONS A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT



January 4, 1877, marks the death anniversary of shipping and railroad magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt, whose name is synonymous with Vanderbilt University. He endowed this top-ranking Middle Tennessee university in 1873 with a grant that totaled one million dollars. In 1871, Cornelius Vanderbilt built Grand Central Terminal, one of New York City's most famous landmarks, which most New York residents have passed through on their way to a weekend outing in Connecticut or Westchester.

US4U 92430-00111



American Center's brand new SMS service. Details inside.

The American Center, 38A Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Kolkata 700 071
Telephone: 3984-6300; Fax: 2288-1616; E-Mail: kolkatapas@state.gov
Web site: <http://kolkata.usconsulate.gov>
Offices are open from 8 am - 5 pm; Monday - Friday
The American Library is open from 10 am - 6 pm, Monday - Saturday

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 by the 10th of each month.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Supriti Mishra, Professor in HDF School of Management in Bhubaneswar, has just returned from the U.S. on an exchange program and has this to say, "I stayed in Jersey City in New Jersey which is a mini India. I interacted with many women from Pakistan and other Muslim countries in the middle-east who manage grocery shops. Travel in the local trains and subways served as a window to watch U.S. life from close quarters. In New York City there are musicians, magicians, cartoonists, and face readers in streets, parks and train stations. I'd sometimes walk from the 42nd Street station to my office in 4th Street to have a glimpse of this wonderful city."



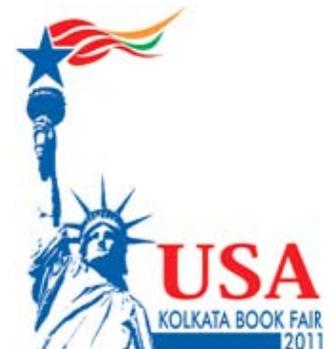
The photograph shows Supriti and friends from Pakistan.

35th Kolkata Book Fair

January 25-February 6

America promises to be your favorite hangout in the 35th Kolkata Book Fair at the Milan Mela ground near Science City. For the first time in any book fair in India, the United States of America will be participating in the Book Fair as the "Focal Theme Country" with a large and centrally-located pavilion. Highlights:

- ◆ Pulitzer Prize winning literary legend Richard Ford will inaugurate the Fair on January 25.
- ◆ U.S. Ambassador Timothy Roemer will be present.
- ◆ Urban planner Kristina Ford, Indian American writer Akhil Sharma, and National Geographic photographer Annie Griffiths Belt will deliver lectures at the Fair. In addition, Dr. Ford will conduct a seminar on January 27 at the West Bengal government's Department of Urban Development.
- ◆ A spectacular multicolor laser show, choreographed with music, depicting American culture, will run several times each evening during the Fair.
- ◆ Havikoro, a famous American break dance and hip hop group, will perform at the closing ceremony on February 6.
- ◆ Discounted membership of the American Library and attractive gifts will be offered to visitors who enroll at the pavilion.



Contact: 3984-6336 or ghoshdx@state.gov

Wellness Workshop and Performance

January 12-13: Kolkata



Performing artist and dancer Zuleikha will conduct wellness, story dancing, and interactive integrative education through a workshop and performance at the American Center.

Contact: 3984-6392 or dassx@state.gov

Mask Performance and Workshop

January 25, 2 p.m.: Kolkata

American mask performer Suzanne Benton, a specialist in mask-making as a story-telling device, will demonstrate her art at the American Center. Following this, she will lead a *Secret Future Workshop*.



Contact: 3984-6325 or mullicksx@state.gov

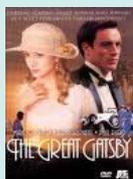
All programs are subject to change. Please confirm closer to the date of the event.

Film Show:

THE GREAT GATSBY
(100 mins)

January 28,

3.45 p.m.: Kolkata



Mira Sorvino, Toby Stephens, and Paul Rudd star in this 2000 classic directed by Robert Markowitz. On Long Island in the early 1920s, the mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby (Toby Stephens) tries to rekindle his romance with socialite Daisy (Mira Sorvino), who has married another man, the wealthy and cruel Tom Buchanan (Martin Donovan). Calmly observing the passing parade is Nick Carraway (Paul Rudd), who narrates the film. This is the fourth screen version of F. Scott Fitzgerald's masterpiece, often regarded as one of the greatest American novels of the 20th century.

Contact: 3984-6394 or guhasx@state.gov



FOCUS:

JEWISH GIRLS' SCHOOL, KOLKATA

Suman Kalyani, Hera Khan, and Elizabeth Das, students of Jewish Girls' School, send us this report on Consul General Beth Payne's visit to their school recently: "Ms. Payne told us that India had a woman Prime Minister, and has a woman President unlike America, and that women empowerment can be fostered by education and combating discrimination. She praised India and its culture and spoke of women empowerment during her visit to our school. She was welcomed by our Principal, Mrs. S. Bhattacharya, and coordinator Ms. Abeda Razeq. She interacted with the students of classes eleven and twelve. She idolizes her mother because of her struggle and perseverance.

She made the wonderful statement that "when a boy is educated, a future citizen is educated; but when a girl is educated, an entire family is educated" which ultimately leads to the education of the society. Moreover, she spoke of her mentor who had initially found only men fit enough to accompany him for fishing, but later realized that she was equally good. This success in her struggle for women's rights encouraged her further. She strongly believes that both men and women must be equal at work. She made everyone aware of the fact that eve-teasing and misbehavior should carry stringent punishment for the perpetrators. She spoke about her interaction with her colleagues during which she had taught a lesson to a colleague who had tried to misbehave with her. The program ended with her stating that, "every woman can be something." Having given us two hours of her precious time, she imprinted her personality in our minds and hearts, and made us realize our position in society and our collective responsibility as women. Hence, we all need to remember that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."



The photograph shows our three young reporters studying hard.

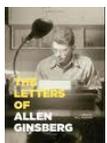
COMPELLING ADDITIONS TO THE AMERICAN LIBRARY'S BOOK COLLECTION



Bridge of Sand by Janet Burroway. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009. 328 pp. Burroway, known best for her popular creative-writing guides, revels in the beauty and dangers of hurricane country, where racial, class, and sexual conflicts surge and boil. With a possum in the kitchen, a snake in a piano, and a trailer-swallowing sinkhole, Dana, a brilliantly drawn character of conviction and adaptability, forges a surprising new identity. Suspense mingles with insight in this sensuous novel as Burroway reminds us that we can't extract ourselves from the wider world, that everything is always in flux, and that to survive, one must hold on to kindness, fairness, and love.



Trouble: A Novel by Kate Christensen. Doubleday, 2009. 311 pp. Christensen, a PEN/Faulkner Award winner, generally eschews sentimentality, spinning a stylish, even occasionally suspenseful story of middle-aged sexual awakening and female friendship. Of her troubled companion, Dorvillier muses, "Maybe she and I had failed each other by allowing each other the freedom to be ourselves, and maybe that was the inevitable consequence of true friendship." The book is great fun from start to finish.



The Letters of Allen Ginsberg edited by Bill Morgan. Da Capo press, 2008. This is a wonderfully rich collection of 165 letters from the 1940s until the poet's death in 1997, put together by his longtime archivist, Bill Morgan. It gives us a firsthand view of the man behind the poems, someone of whom it can be truly said that the personal was political. This remarkable collection by someone who perhaps invented the concept of 'oversharing' long before it became fashionable, reminds us of why he mattered then, and still does now.

American Center launches its SMS service:

Dial US4U at 9243000111

In keeping with the times, we are delighted to announce the introduction of a new service--*Tunespray*. The best feature of this service is SMS notification to you about our upcoming programs. Apart from standard SMS notifications, this feature comes with some other useful tools:



- ✳ SMS us your participation in American Center events.
- ✳ Give us feedback on events or policies.
- ✳ Interact with us live regarding events through Text 2 Poll and Message Boards.
- ✳ Voice your opinion through SMS.

To avail yourself of information on American Library membership, reference services, and programs, type: "US4U<space>LIBRARY 9243000111".

American Center launches its Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/AmericanCenter.Kolkata

In an age of social media, the American Center is delighted to announce the launch of 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 visit our Facebook Page at the above-mentioned link and "Like" us to get yourself added to our page.

THE YEAR THAT WAS



Ambassador Timothy Roemer conducts a press conference at Kolkata.



Consul General Beth Payne inaugurates the American Pavilion at the 34th Kolkata Book Fair.



Deputy Chief of Mission Steven White visits the Energy Park at Kolkata.



The band strikes up at the Mexican festival of Cinco de Mayo at Kolkata.



Students listen intently to Political-Economic Officer Clinton Brown at Tripura University.



The audience participates in a program to commemorate Earth Day at the American Center.



Information Resource Officer Steven Kerchoff speaks at a meeting in Kalyani, West Bengal.



Students of Aditya Birla School, Barasat, present a dance performance during the visit of Consul General Beth Payne to the school.



Imam Bashir Arafat of Maryland visits with a Muslim community in West Bengal.



English Language Fellow Daniel Stead conducts a class at the Indo-Arab Cultural Association, Kolkata.



Deputy Director Moulik Berkana converses with village citizens at Sambalpur.



Consul General Beth Payne joins in a tribal dance at Santiniketan.