



American Center director Jeffrey Reneau interacts with team members of the Alumni Teach Peace to Reach Peace Project.



BULLETIN - MAY 2012

Events at a Glance

May 3-4
Meet an Astronaut
(Kolkata/Guwahati)

May 4
Theater workshop
(Guwahati)

May 14-15
Communicative Language workshop (Kolkata)

May 31
Film Show: All About Eve
(Kolkata)

Holiday

May 28: Memorial Day



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Your Date With U.S. History

THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD AND ASIAN-PACIFIC AMERICANS

On May 10, 1869, the final spike was driven into the transcontinental railroad connecting the eastern United States to the West for the first time. More than 10,000 Chinese had worked on the railroad "under the most dangerous conditions, handling explosives used to blast through the Sierra Nevada mountains," notes a website sponsored by the American Anthropological Association. Today, a national historic site in

Promontory Point, Utah, offers visitors a chance to walk to the Chinese Arch, a natural limestone formation dedicated to the memory of those Chinese workers, and a website discusses their role in the building of the railroad. May is celebrated as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month in the United States.

With few exceptions, everyday life in the latter half of the 19th century lacked the telephone, the electric light, and the automobile. Rather, it depended on the horse-drawn wagon and carriage, the kerosene lamp, as well as the new and rapidly expanding network of railroads. Indeed, there was great celebration on the day a "Golden Spike" was driven to complete the first transcontinental railroad in 1869. The idea of a single railroad stretching across the continental United States sparked the imagination of citizens used to stage coach travel and the mail service carried by relay teams of horse riders known as the Pony Express.

The need for transportation networks was clear from the start. It was George Washington's dream to connect Virginia and other eastern states to the Ohio Valley--then the nation's frontier --through a canal from Washington, D.C., across the Appalachian Mountains to Ohio. President Abraham Lincoln signed the legislation creating a nationally chartered corporation to undertake the immense project. Two companies got the task of building the lines, one starting in Omaha, Nebraska, the other in Sacramento, California. The hazardous project crossed deserts and overcame western mountain ranges. It united the nation from coast to coast. Grain, coal to make steel and illuminating gas, copper, iron ore, petroleum, timber, clothing to supply new city department stores and consumer catalog businesses, foodstuff--even fruit in newly-created refrigerator cars--all could cross the country in search of markets.

Source: www.america.gov

LYMAN FRANK BAUM



Lyman Frank Baum was born on May 15, 1856, in Chittenango, New York. A children's author, playwright and journalist, he wrote the American classic *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. His father was Benjamin Ward Baum, who made a fortune in Pennsylvania Oil, and his mother was Cynthia Stanton. He spent hours reading in his father's library. He created his own adaptations of fairy tales in order to let children delight in stories rather than have them endure grim and frightful moral lessons.



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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

Brinda Dasgupta, who traveled to the U.S. on an exchange program, recounts her experiences thus: "Visiting the United States of America on the International Visitor Leadership Program on gender issues has been an eye-opener. While certain things like well-managed traffic and museum experiences really impressed me, I was especially struck by the level of American hospitality. Everyone had a kind word, a ready smile, or even a simple greeting to offer, making a stranger in the country feel that much more welcome. The meetings with the professional organisations were inspiring and fulfilling --and as I recover from the jetlag, I am carrying forward wonderful impressions and great memories of the U.S.!"



The photograph shows Brinda at the Young Women's Leadership Academy at Fort Worth, Texas.

Meet Astronaut Marsha Ivins

Kolkata: May 3, 10.30 a.m.; Guwahati: May 4, 11 a.m.



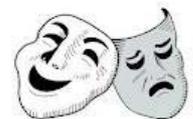
Former NASA astronaut Marsha Ivins presents "55 Days in Space: The Story of an American Astronaut" followed by an interaction with students, at the Science City Auditorium, Kolkata, on May 3; and at the Global School, Guwahati, on May 4. *Entry is open to all until capacity is reached.*

Contact: 3984-6325 or ghoshsx2@state.gov

Building Leadership through the Arts

Guwahati: May 4, 3 p.m.

The American Center presents a theater workshop to build leadership and team building skills for alumni of exchange programs at Hotel Gateway Grandeur, Guwahati. *Entry is by registration only.*



Contact: 3984-6392 or dassx@state.gov

Communicative Language Teaching

Kolkata: May 14-15, 9 a.m.



The American Center presents a workshop on communicative language teaching by Joseph Dwaileebe of the University of Arizona, a specialist in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. *Entry is by registration only.*

Contact: 3984-6392 or dassx@state.gov

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

Film Show:

All About Eve

(138 mins)

March 31,

3.30 p.m.: Kolkata



This 1950 film follows an aspiring actress named Eve Harrington who worships fading and aging stage goddess Margo Channing, and finds herself going from rags to riches when Margo befriends her. Smart, sophisticated, and devastatingly funny, *All About Eve* is a Hollywood classic that only improves with age.

Contact: 3984-6397 or sennx@state.gov

ReaderSpeak

On "Our Voice, Our Journey," March 2012

It was an inspiring experience for me to be a part of the program "Our Voice, Our Journey" which was held at the American Center. We shared the experiences and struggles of some great women personalities, and came to know that success cannot be achieved without hurdles. Ms. Maitreyee Trivedi, an eminent lawyer, taught us that even if we have difficulties in our life we should always think that life is beautiful, and gradually it really becomes beautiful. Ms. Brinda Dasgupta was a perfect example of "a true fighter" for today's younger generation: she told us that silence leads to failure, and if we raise our voice against wrong, then we will surely succeed. Other dignified women like Krishna Bose, Jane Thompson, Debashree Chatterjee and Anupama Arya also shone as dynamic examples. *Shalini Gupta, Shri Shikshayatan School.*



Many thanks for yet another wonderful session on journeys with women who have made a difference! Jane Thompson's comment on the "trailing wife" was superb. Her ability to make good from all situations was so heartening. My real connect was with Anupama Arya, who expressed the professional worth of women in high positions through her personal journey of beliefs and legacy. The woman who works despite all odds is Debashree Chatterjee: what a wonderful cop! *Sonali Lahiri, Caltech International.*

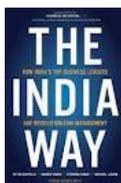
COMPELLING ADDITIONS TO THE AMERICAN LIBRARY'S COLLECTION



THE YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION: TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL COLLECTION edited by Gardner Dozois. St. Martin's Griffin, 2011. 704 pp. This venerable collection brings together award winning authors and masters of the field such as Robert Reed, Alastair Reynolds, Damien Broderick, Carrie Vaughn, Ian R. MacLeod, and Cory Doctorow. And with an extensive recommended reading guide and a summation of the year in science fiction, this annual compilation has become the definitive must-read anthology for all science fiction fans and readers interested in breaking into the genre.



THE 2020 WORKPLACE: HOW INNOVATIVE COMPANIES ATTRACT, DEVELOP, AND KEEP TOMORROW'S EMPLOYEES TODAY by Jeanne C. Meister & Karie Willyerd. HarperCollins, 2010. 294 pp. In *The 2020 Workplace*, human resources experts Jeanne C. Meister and Karie Willyerd offer a practical game plan companies can use to attract and keep these employees, and, in doing so, transform their organizations; achieve compelling business results, such as increased innovation and improved customer connectedness; and compete more effectively in the global marketplace.



THE INDIA WAY: HOW INDIA'S TOP BUSINESS LEADERS ARE REVOLUTIONIZING MANAGEMENT by Peter Cappelli, Harbir Singh, Jitendra Singh, and Michael Useem. Harvard Business Press, 2010. In *The India Way*, the Wharton School India Team unveils these companies' secrets. Drawing on interviews with leaders of India's largest firms--including Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries, Narayana Murthy of Infosys Technologies, and Vineet Nayar of HCL Technologies--the authors identify what Indian managers do differently. With its in-depth analysis and research, *The India Way* offers valuable insights for all managers seeking to strengthen their organization's performance.



THE MEANING OF LIFE AND OTHER STUFF by Jimmy Gownley. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2011. Amelia McBride may be growing up, but she's feeling down. If there's one theme to her life, it's that nothing lasts: not her parents' marriage, not Aunt Tanner's support, not the clubhouse for the Gathering of Awesome Super Pals (G.A.S.P.), not even her new spot on the stupid cheerleading squad. And while she's learning all kinds of things about foot fungus, cheer witches, and Reggie--who thinks Rhonda is CUTE?!--there's still one thing Amelia can't figure out, and that's the meaning of life. It takes a grownup sort of tragedy for Amelia and her friends to realize that even when the world is scary, and life is as mystifying as ever, some things--like friendship--do last.

American Center Facebook Page

<http://www.facebook.com/Kolkata.usconsulate>

In an age of social media, the American Center is delighted to report the successful functioning 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.

Surf On Our Turf

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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.

PROGRAMS ORGANIZED BY THE UNITED STATES - INDIA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION (USIEF)



May 4 (Kolkata): Admissions officials from the University of Chicago will conduct an information session for prospective undergraduate students at the American Center.



May 10 (Kolkata): Admissions officials from Princeton University will conduct an information session for prospective undergraduate students at the American Center.

Contact: madhabi@usief.org.in or 3984-6310

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES: "ENSURING WORK FAMILY BALANCE"



May 15 marks the declaration of the International Day of Families. Over the past decades several demographic and socio-economic trends led to major changes in work and family life. Demographic trends towards smaller households, growing women's labour participation, rapid urbanization, and greater mobility in search of better job opportunities, have resulted in weakening of traditional extended family networks offering care support for younger and vulnerable family members.

As extended kin are less available to care for the young, employed parents find it more difficult to manage the working environment with caring for children and fulfilling other family responsibilities. In particular, being active in an increasingly competitive labour market to provide economically, and having enough time to care for the young and vulnerable members of families, is a main challenge for contemporary parents.

In light of these trends, supporting formal policies as well as practical strategies promoting reconciliation of work and care responsibilities for families, especially those with young children, is becoming an important family policy goal. Work-family balance lies at the core of the ability of the family to provide economically and emotionally for its members. A variety of strategies to help families cope with work and family responsibilities is being used around the world.

It is in view of these facts that the United Nations has declared the theme of the 2012 international Day of Families as "Ensuring work-family balance."

Source: www.un.org

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