

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES NEWSLETTER

САЙХАН ШИНЭЛЭЭРЭЙ!



The Consular Section congratulates you with the Lunar New Year and wishes you and your families health, happiness and prosperity!



Become a fan of **U.S. Embassy Ulaanbaatar, Consular Section** on Facebook.

Inside this issue:

Consular Outreach

Consular Outreach	1
Tsagaan Sar Visit to Verbist	2
Tsagaan Sar, the Lunar New Year	3
Tax Information	3
Register and Request Your Ballot for Upcoming Primaries	4
Implementation of SMS System for Future Announcements	5
Smart Traveler Enrollment Program	5
Travel Warnings and Alerts	5
Upcoming Holidays	5
Embassy Contact Information	5



Consul Philip Cargile also visited the University of Defense last week and spoke to around 300 students. Most of the students' questions were about opportunities of getting scholarships at U.S. military academies as well as other civilian education institutions. The Consul was impressed with Mongolian female students' equal right to study at military academies in comparison with the countries where he worked before.





Tsagaan Sar Visit to Verbist

It has become a good tradition that the Consular Section visits Verbist before Tsagaan Sar holiday, and this year was no exception.

We were able to see some of the children who came from school. We were also able to meet the new Director and Social Worker. Several Consular staff members enjoyed playing with the children. They had a chance to play chess and darts, read with the children and color in their new coloring books. The children loved all of their presents including a special gift from the Embassy's ESTH Officer, Susan Russell!



Tsagaan Sar, The Lunar New Year

Tsagaan Sar, or White Month, is one of Mongolia's two major and long-awaited holidays, the other being Naadam in July. For Mongols, Tsagaan Sar is not only an ancient holiday marking the end of winter and the beginning of a new year's cycle, but is also a time for unification and reinforcing social bonds.

Preparations for the festive start well ahead of time. Several families usually gather in the eldest man's gher, where the holiday will take place.

Bituun - last dinner of the outgoing year. *Bituun* takes

place on the last day of the lunar month. Beforehand, all the business of the past year must be wrapped up; debts paid and good relationships restored. In daily life Mongols frequently exchange gifts. For Mongols a gift expresses feelings rather than words. The price of the gift is not important, for it expresses respect, sympathy, friendliness and wishes for health. Visitors may arrive with a gift, especially when visiting a family with children or old men. Candy for children, some milk or dairy products for elders are enough. If unprepared for a visit, it is all right to give little money to children to buy candies.



Tax Information

Income tax season is fast approaching. We recommend that you obtain your tax forms online at <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>.

Please note that all U.S. citizens or resident aliens must report and pay federal tax on their worldwide income, even if they live abroad. For your convenience, attached is an electronic copy of the [Publication 4732](#) and it is also available on the internet at <http://www.irs.gov>

For more information on U.S. taxes, please consult the list of websites and telephone numbers below to help find the forms and answers you need.

STATE TAX RETURNS: For individual state income tax information, visit <http://www.taxadmin.org/>. The Embassy does not have state tax forms or state tax information.

Tax guidance for U.S. citizens abroad: <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=97324,00.html>

Tax guidance for persons in the military: <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/military/index.html>

Electronic payment website: <http://www.eftps.gov/>

Refund information: <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96596,00.html?portlet=4>

Phone Services:

Individuals	1-800-829-1040
Businesses	1-800-829-4933

For Telephone Assistance for people who live outside the United States, the hours of availability vary by location. Please see the [International Services](#) page.

Please note that calling the above 1-800 U.S. numbers from an overseas location will usually not be toll-free.

REGISTER AND REQUEST YOUR BALLOT FOR UPCOMING PRIMARIES

Voters from these States should visit the FVAP.gov web portal to register and request their absentee ballot for the March, April, and May 2012 Presidential Preference Primary (P) and State Primary (S) elections listed below:

March Primaries (30-Day Notice):

NOTE for March Primaries: If you have not received your requested State ballot, submit the back-up Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot at FVAP.gov (see FWAB information below).

- Georgia (P): March 6
- Massachusetts (P): March 6
- Ohio (P,S): March 6
- Oklahoma (P): March 6
- Tennessee (P): March 6
- Vermont (P): March 6
- Virginia (P): March 6
- Alabama (P,S): March 13
- Mississippi (P,S): March 13
- Illinois (P,S): March 20
- Louisiana (P): March 24

April Primaries: (60-Day Notice)

- District of Columbia (P,S): April 3
- Maryland (P,S): April 3
- Texas (P,S): April 3 (This is a change, the election was originally scheduled March 6)
- Wisconsin (P): April 3
- Alabama (Primary Runoff): April 24
- Connecticut (P): April 24
- Delaware (P): April 24

Go to FVAP.gov and get started! It only takes a few minutes!

All members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, their family members, and citizens residing outside the U.S. who are residents from these States should submit an FPCA for these elections by going to the FVAP.gov web portal or by following the instructions in the [Voting Assistance Guide](#), also available at FVAP.gov.

Be sure you include an email address, phone number, and/or fax number on your absentee ballot application in case your local election official needs to contact you. Remember, many States allow you to submit your form electronically, and deliver your ballot electronically or provide online ballot access. Go to FVAP.gov or your [State's election website](#) to see how you can return your form.

To find out the status of your registration/absentee ballot request, contact your local election office at <http://www.fvap.gov/shortcuts/wheresendfpc.html>, or visit your [State website](#).

Vote the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

The FWAB is a backup ballot. If 30 days before the election (or longer based on your geographic location) you think you will not receive your State ballot in time to vote and return it (especially in **March** Primary States), vote the FWAB at FVAP.gov. The FWAB is also available in embassies and consulates and military installations around the world.

Additional information

Check your State's election website for specific information on candidates, elections, contact information, and links to your local election offices. Find your State's website at FVAP's web portal: <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/links.html>.



Implementation of SMS System for Future Announcements

The Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy Ulaanbaatar has set up a bulk SMS communication system for all American Citizens residing in Mongolia. This system will be used to send out **ONLY time-sensitive messages via text message to your cell phone**. We will not use this service for each and every warden message. Instead, the SMS program will allow us to quickly reach you in the event of an emergency, or when other modes of communication are down.

Please be aware that an independent telecom company will be providing the service, not the U.S. Em-

bassy itself. This service is completely free of charge for you. **If you have not already replied to this message**, and are interested in getting our text-messages in addition to the emails we send, please send us a short email with your valid cell phone numbers to be included in our SMS program to UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov.

We will appreciate it greatly if you inform us of any changes in your cell phone numbers at UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov. This might be a good chance to send us any other updates on your contact information (new emails, mailing addresses) or to enroll with the Embassy by signing up with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

If you no longer reside in Mongolia, and would like to remove your email from the distribution list, let us know as well.

Upcoming Holidays

March 8 – International Women’s Day

Embassy Contact Information

American Citizen Services
 Embassy of the United States
 11th Micro District
 Big Ring Road
 Ulaanbaatar 13, Mongolia
 Tel: 976-11329-095
 Fax: 976-11323-788
 After-hours
 or emergency number: 9911-4168
 E-mail: UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov
 - or -
 American Embassy Ulaanbaatar
 4410 Ulaan Baatar Place
 Washington, DC, 20521-4410

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

Stay Informed. Sign up for our free [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (formerly known as “Travel Registration” or “Registration with Embassies”) to receive the latest travel updates and information! You only need to sign up once, and then you can add and delete trips from your account based on your current travel plans!

Stay Connected. By connecting with us on the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#), we will be able to assist you better in the case of an emergency, such as if you lose your passport or it is stolen while you are abroad. We also assist U.S. citizens in other emergencies, such as in natural disasters.

Stay Safe. We believe that a well-informed traveler is a safer traveler. Our consular officers around the world compile [country-specific information](#), [travel alerts](#), [travel warnings](#), fact sheets and warden messages to provide you with timely and accurate travel information about every country where you may travel.

Stay informed by connecting with us via our [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) so you can have safe and enjoyable travels!

Travel Warnings and Alerts

- [Colombia](#) 02/21/2012
- [Mexico](#) 02/08/2012
- [Syria](#) 02/06/2012
- [Panama](#) 02/05/2012
- [Pakistan](#) 02/02/2012
- [Bahrain](#) 01/23/2012
- [Iraq](#) 01/19/2012
- [Tunisia](#) 01/13/2012
- [Congo, Democratic Republic of the](#) 01/12/2012
- [Nigeria](#) 01/12/2012
- [Sudan](#) 01/11/2012
- [Philippines](#) 01/05/2012
- [Central African Republic](#) 01/04/2012
- [Republic of South Sudan](#) 12/22/2011

For additional information about these travel warnings and alerts, please go to this site: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/