



American Center director Jeffrey Reneau visits the Santiniketan Society for Visual Art and Design with artist Jogen Chowdhury.



# BULLETIN - JANUARY 2012



## Events at a Glance

### January 13:

College Principals' meet: (Kolkata)

### January 14-15:

Stand up comedy: (Kolkata/ Durgapur)

### January 26-February 6:

Kolkata Book Fair

### January 27:

Film Show: *The Devil Wears Prada* (Kolkata)

## Holidays:

### January 2

New Year's Day

### January 16

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 which 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.



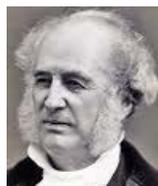
Following U.S. seizure of California in 1846, a great gold strike in the foothills of the central Sierra Nevada in 1848 brought the first significant change in the region's settlement fortunes. Within a year, 40,000 people had come to the gold fields by sea, passing through San Francisco harbor. Perhaps a similar number 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 pass through on their way to a weekend getaway in Connecticut or Westchester.

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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](mailto: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.

**College Principals' Meet**

January 13: Kolkata



The American Library hosts a gathering of college principals of Kolkata and neighboring districts. U.S. Consul General Dean Thompson, Director of the American Center Jeffrey Reneau, and Director of the American Library Sushanta Banerjee will meet and interact with the educational leaders. *Entry is by invitation only.*

Contact: 3984-6336 or [ghoshdx@state.gov](mailto:ghoshdx@state.gov)

**Make Chai Not War**

January 14, 6.30 p.m.: Kolkata; January 15, 6.30 p.m: Durgapur

The American Center, in association with Sangit Kalamandir, presents an Indian American standup comedy showcase "Make Chai Not War" at Kalamandir, Kolkata; and at Srijani, City Centre, Durgapur. The showcase comprises comedians Azhar Usman, Hari Kondabolu, and Rajiv Satyal. *Entry is open to all.*



Contact: 3984-6392 or [dassx@state.gov](mailto:dassx@state.gov) and 3984-6325 or [ghoshsx2@state.gov](mailto:ghoshsx2@state.gov) for Kolkata; and 3984-6324 or [mullicksx@state.gov](mailto:mullicksx@state.gov) and 3984-6326 or [dayalss@state.gov](mailto:dayalss@state.gov)

**36th Kolkata Book Fair**

January 24-February 5



The American Pavilion promises to be your favorite hangout in the 36th Kolkata Book Fair at the Milan Mela grounds near Science City. The American Library will participate at the Fair with a promise of something for all book lovers, big and small. This year, the Library brings you an exciting collection of books for youngsters, and a vernacular collection of books on the United States. On display will also be those eye-catching titles that you had always wanted to read. For students aspiring to study in the United States, brochures and information will be waiting, courtesy the United States India Educational Foundation (USIEF).

Contact: 3984-6336 or [ghoshdx@state.gov](mailto:ghoshdx@state.gov)

Film Show:  
**THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA**  
 (109 mins)  
 January 27, 4 p.m.:  
 Kolkata



As assistant to impossibly demanding New York fashion magazine editor Miranda Priestly (Meryl Streep), young Andy Sachs (Anne Hathaway) has landed a job that "a million girls would die for." Unfortunately, her heaven-sent appointment as Miranda's personal whipping girl just might be the death of her!

Contact: 3984-6394 or [guhasx@state.gov](mailto:guhasx@state.gov)

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



## FOCUS:

### CONNIE GLASER, WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP EXPERT

Connie Glaser, a U.S. expert on women's leadership and diversity, visited Kolkata and Ranchi recently on a U.S. Government program. She reflects on her travels thus: "It was a privilege to be the guest of the U.S. Consulate, to tour and speak on issues related to the changing role of women in the Indian economy. And my visit to Kolkata and Ranchi provided the most memorable experiences of the trip. From TCG Lifesciences in Kolkata to South Bihar Welfare Society for Tribal, I was continually struck by the warmth and hospitality of the people. I was also impressed by the drive, talent, and ambition of the women I met. With an annual growth rate of 8.5% India is in the superpower class of nations. However, women currently constitute less than 25% of the workforce. With an anticipated shortage of 5 million skilled laborers in the next few years, India has a real need for more women in the workplace if the economy is going to continue its rate of growth. And it became increasingly clear to me that India's secret economic weapon is its untapped pool of women's talent.



Connie with the citizens of Huruwa village near Ranchi.

Many young Indian women are eager to pursue careers; however, social and family expectations often discourage women from working outside the home. Yet, I met many motivated and ambitious young women who are taking on the challenge of trying to integrate their work and personal lives. And innovative companies-like TCG Lifesciences-are providing a work environment that encourages women's ambitions. This generation of progressive leaders will pave the way for India's future as a world-class economy."

Aditi Raman, a young reporter with the *Hindustan Times*, has this to say about Connie's impact on her: "Dressed in a bright red dress and speaking in a soft yet assertive tone, Ms. Glaser stood tall among the people who had gathered to hear her. I could not help grabbing this moment to address my worries. Her tips on how to conduct oneself in a professional environment, how to manage time better, and how to not settle for anything less just because of being a woman, are some of the many invaluable lessons I learned from her that evening. Courtesy Ms. Glaser, I am still a workaholic and have plenty of assignments every day, but my work-life relationship is perfectly balanced."

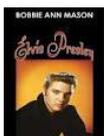


## A CORNER FOR YOUNG BOOKWORMS

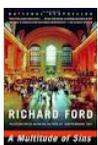


The American Library now boasts a Youth Corner for the city's youngsters. Those aged 4-15 are sure to find something exciting here. More than 1,000 paperback and hardbound fiction, non-fiction, and educational titles beckon young bookworms. Old favorites such as *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Wizard of Oz* vie for the reader's attention with new arrivals such as *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* and *Hotel for Dogs*. The Corner also has two computer terminals for readers keen on doing internet research or watching children's films that are also part of the collection. Special programs for young readers are organized from time to time. To enable readers to take advantage of this newly-added collection, the American Library has introduced family membership. To know more about the American Library and its resources, call 39846336/6337/6394/6397/6398/6399.

## COMPELLING ADDITIONS TO THE AMERICAN LIBRARY'S COLLECTION



**ELVIS PRESLEY** by Bobbie Ann Mason. Penguin Books, 2007. 178 pp. To this clear-eyed portrait of the first rock 'n' roll superstar, Bobbie Ann Mason brings a novelist's insight and the empathy of a fellow Southerner who, from the first time she heard his voice on the family radio, knew that Elvis was "one of us." Elvis Presley deftly braids the mythic and human aspects of his story, capturing both the charismatic, boundary-breaking singer who reveled in his celebrity and the soft-spoken, working-class Southern boy who was fatally unprepared for his success.



**A MULTITUDE OF SINS** by Richard Ford. Vintage Books, 2003. 288 pp. One of the most celebrated and unflinching chroniclers of modern life now explores, in this masterful collection of short stories, the grand theme of intimacy, love, and their failures. With remarkable insight and candor, Richard Ford examines liaisons in and out and to the sides of marriage. Ford brings to these vivid, unforgettable dramas marks this as his most powerfully arresting book to date-confirming the judgment of the New York Times Book Review that "nobody now writing looks more like an American classic."

**American Center's SMS service:**  
Dial US4U at 9243000111

In keeping with the times, we are delighted to report the successful functioning 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 your participation in American Center events.
- ✳ Give us feedback on events or policies.
- ✳ Interact live with us 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's Facebook Page**  
[www.facebook.com/AmericanCenter.Kolkata](http://www.facebook.com/AmericanCenter.Kolkata)

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**

The American Library invites you to blog at:



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.

**THE YEAR THAT WAS**



Students of St. John's Diocesan School interact with U.S. novelist Akhil Sharma.



Former U.S. Consul General Beth Payne greets visitors on the occasion of President Obama's visit to India.



Pulitzer prize winner Richard Ford delivers the keynote address at the Kolkata Book Fair.



A Crafts Mela in [progress] at the American Center.



Former U.S. Consul General Beth Payne enjoys a meal with Mizos women at Aizawl.



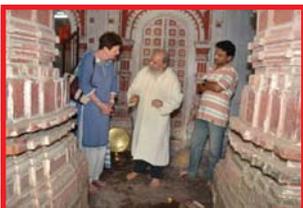
Students through the booths of U.S. universities at the Oberoi Grand.



American hip-hop troupe Havikoro performs at City Centre, Kolkata.



The Paul Taylor Dance Company 2 performs at the American Center.



Artist Shuvaprasanna explains a point about the Antpur temple in West Bengal.



Consul General Dean Thompson addresses the audience at the American Center on the occasion of breast cancer day.



American jazz band Paul Beaudry and Pathways performs at the Taj Bengal.



High school students learn the movements from American dance therapist Zuleikha at the American Center.