

June, Issue 6 - 2010
AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER NEWSLETTER
U.S. Embassy Helsinki

LOOKING AHEAD

Unique Partnership Continues Between the U.S. Embassy and the Helsinki University

U.S. Ambassador Bruce J. Oreck and Helsinki University Rector Thomas Wilhelmsson signed the American Resource Center Cooperative Agreement for a new 5-year period on Friday, June 4. The agreement continues the long and close cooperation between the U.S. Embassy and Helsinki University. The American Resource Center (ARC) will continue to be housed at the National Library premises until the construction of the new University Library building in the city centre is completed in 2012. The new building will offer a new location for the ARC right in the middle of the university hub.

Read more at http://finland.usembassy.gov/ev_060410.html

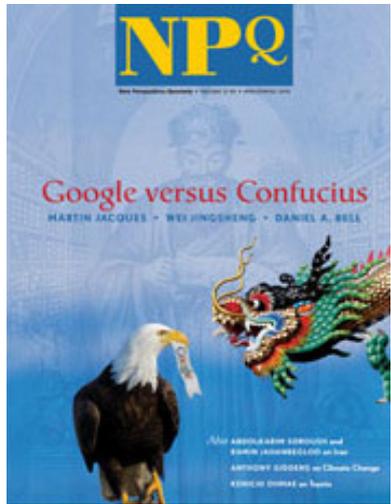
(Photo by State Dept.)



PEEK INTO THE ARC'S MAGAZINE SHELF

For a full listing of the ARC's periodicals, please visit <http://finland.usembassy.gov/periodicals.html>

Journal of the Month: New Perspectives Quarterly



New Perspectives Quarterly (NPQ) has a well-earned reputation around the world as the one publication that consistently engages the best minds and most authoritative voices in cutting-edge debate on current affairs - and does so in a way that is always interesting, accessible, and concise. Its coverage is wide-ranging, its contributors outstanding. An indispensable source of information, NPQ is avidly read, by prime ministers and corporate leaders, film directors and college students the world over. In this so-called information age, New Perspectives Quarterly is the only world-class publication dedicated to the exchange of knowledge globally.

(Source: Publisher's website)

Thank You & Good-Bye!

Counselor for Press and Cultural Affairs Nicole Conn from the U.S. Embassy Helsinki is leaving her post after 3 years in Finland. Ms. Conn headed the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section of which the ARC is an important part.

Her term in Helsinki has included many wonderful projects, including several recycled arts contests for high school students, [America@YourLibrary](#) book donations to regional libraries around Finland, and various Embassy-sponsored cultural events.

She was also the main architect for the successful negotiations with the Helsinki University for the renewal of the American Resource Center Cooperative Agreement.



Bon Voyage, Nicole!

WEB PICKS

Disclaimer: The views expressed on these websites are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. Government policies. These links are being provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or approval by the ARC or the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki, nor can we bear any responsibility for the accuracy, legality, functionality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links.

American Life

The Insiders' Insider by Mark Leibovich. New York Times Magazine, April 25, 2010.

The web site and newspaper Politico has been in existence only three years with the goal of becoming as central to political addicts as ESPN is to sports junkies. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/25/magazine/25allen-t.html>

What I Learned From YouTube by Brian Rosenberg. Chronicle of Higher Education, April 23, 2010.

A middle-aged college president makes a video and is surprised by its popularity... Rosenberg says, "We never imagined the video primarily as a fund-raising tool; rather, our goal was to entertain and engage people and capture something of the spirit of the college." <http://chronicle.com/article/What-I-Learned-From-YouTube/65141/>

Who Owns Guns in America? America.Gov Living Book.

A new chapter in the You Asked living book. The question is "Who owns guns in America?" Supplying the answer is Professor Robert J. Spitzer at the State University of New York in Cortland. He is the author of The Politics of Gun Control. http://www.america.gov/you_asked.html

Working Women. The Atlantic, July/August 2010.

For the first time in American history, women now hold the majority of the nation's jobs. Will the 'fairer sex' have an unfair advantage in the modern global economy? <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/the-end-of-men/8135/1/>

Economy and Politics

China's Towers and U.S. McMansions: When Things Fall Apart (Literally). Of Two Minds / Charles Hugh Smith, 4/14/2010.

During the building boom in recent years, shoddy construction was rampant around the world but especially in China and the U.S. The long-term consequences will be serious.

<http://charleshughsmith.blogspot.com/2010/04/chinas-towers-and-us-mcmansions-when.html>

The Economics of Organic Farming. Energy Bulletin, May 5, 2010.

Growing food locally keeps wealth in local communities and may be the best path to surviving economic hard times.

<http://www.energybulletin.net/52697>

Green Economics. New York Times Magazine, April 11, 2010.

Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize-winning economist, notes that we can afford to tackle climate change, but any serious solution must rely mainly on giving everyone a self-interested reason to produce fewer emissions.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/11/magazine/11Economy-t.html>

How Much Does a Gallon of Gas Cost? Newsweek, June 13, 2010.

Oil at what expense? The true price of gas does not get paid at the pump. A Newsweek article explains that catastrophes like the BP oil spill are only part of the many hidden costs of oil production.

<http://www.newsweek.com/2010/06/13/how-much-does-a-gallon-of-gas-cost.html>

How the United States Became a PR Disaster for Deutsche Bank. Der Spiegel, June 10, 2010.

Deutsche Bank is called "America's Foreclosure King," a German magazine reports, and it played a critical role in inciting the American real estate crisis. Although DB emerged from the crisis relatively unscathed, the damage to its image in the U.S. is steadily increasing.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/o,1518,699754,00.html>

The Rise and Fall of the G.D.P. The New York Times Magazine, May 10, 2010.

A growing number of critics of GDP say the conventional economic measure gives a misleading and inaccurate picture of prosperity.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/magazine/16GDP-t.html>

Solar Solutions for the Developing World. Solutions, January-February 2010.

Neville Williams' experience with solar energy dates back to 1979, when he joined the U.S. Department of Energy. The solar technology that works so well in Asia and Africa has the same promise in the United States: "Solar energy is now the fastest growing business on earth," he writes. <http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/548>

Spillonomics: Underestimating Risk. The New York Times Magazine, May 31, 2010.

Spillonomics BP executives are far from the only people to dismiss low-probability, high-cost events; if it is difficult to imagine, we underestimate its likelihood. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/06/magazine/06fob-wwln-t.html>

Why Caffeine Is the Perfect Addiction for a Worker Bee Society. Alternet, May 15, 2010.

Coffee beats naps? Caffeine fuels our worker-bee society.

http://www.alternet.org/drugs/146877/why_caffeine_is_the_perfect_addiction_for_a_worker_bee_society/

Global Challenges

The Anthropocene Debate: Marking Humanity's Impact. Yale Environment 360, May 17, 2010.

Scientists are now debating whether to name a new geological epoch in recognition of the changes the human race has generated: the Anthropocene. <http://www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2274>

Fading Fast. National Parks, Spring 2010.

Light pollution, a problem in many brightly lighted urban centers, is preventing us from seeing the stars distinctly and even having adverse health impacts on humans and animals. <http://www.npca.org/magazine/2010/spring/fading-fast.html>

Flushing Forests. World Watch, May/June 2010.

The growing popularity of toilet paper use threatens forests worldwide.

<http://www.noellerobbins.com/pdf/Flushing%20Forests%20World%20Watch%202010.pdf>

Grannies Gather for AIDS Summit. IRIN News, May 11, 2010.

African and Canadian matriarchs convene in Swaziland to share support and solutions.

<http://www.plusnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=89086>

The Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill: An Accident Waiting to Happen. Yale Environment 360, May 10, 2010.

Recent calls to expand offshore drilling in the U.S. reflected a belief that deepwater oil operations had become so safe and technologically advanced that the danger of an accident was infinitesimal.

<http://www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2272>

Jeremy Jackson Talks About How We Wrecked the Ocean. TED Talks / The Oil Drum, May 17, 2010.

Marine biologist Jeremy Jackson on overfishing in the world's oceans and the resultant habitat destruction of the seafloor, disappearance of coral reefs, pollution and "the rise of slime." What does he think needs fixing the most? Ourselves.

<http://www.theoil drum.com/node/6474>

The Oil Spill and the Politics of Energy and Climate Legislation. Council on Foreign Relations, May 26, 2010.

9/11 gave the Bush administration enormous leeway to make sweeping changes; the Gulf oil mess may not give Obama the same latitude for the climate/energy bill. <http://blogs.cfr.org/levi/2010/05/26/the-oil-spill-and-the-politics-of-energy-legislation/>

The Status Quo of Electric Cars: Better Batteries, Same Range. Low Tech Magazine, May 3, 2010.

Batteries for electric cars have improved, but more weight and higher speeds have canceled out any increase in driving range.

<http://www.lowtechmagazine.com/2010/05/the-status-quo-of-electric-cars-better-batteries-same-range.html>

International Relations

Babies Onboard. Foreign Policy, May 6, 2010.

International adoptions are increasing. A professor argues that better global safety-nets are needed to guard against black-market adoptions and to protect children.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66408/ethan-b-kapstein/babies-onboard>

Britain Braces for the Shocks to Come. The Nation, May 13, 2010.

A Guardian correspondent outlines what the recent win by the Conservative party in British elections will mean for the U.K.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/britain-braces-shocks-come>

Is Afghanistan 'Medieval'? Foreign Policy, June 2, 2010.

Medieval Solutions for Contemporary Problems. The 15th century was a high point in Afghanistan's history. Medieval solutions may help save it today. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/06/02/is_afghanistan_medieval

NG-Uh-O: The Trouble with Humanitarianism. New Republic, June 10, 2010.

The humanitarian thinker David Rieff sees a new model for NGO humanitarian action: highly partisan, highly political.

<http://www.tnr.com/article/world/75421/ng-uh-o?page=0,0>

Surge for Dutch Anti-Islam Freedom Party. BBC, June 10, 2010.

Dutch Freedom Party Gains Ground Reports from the Netherlands link the success of the anti-Islam Freedom Party in this week's elections suggest immigration remains a prominent issue for Dutch voters despite the economic crisis.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/europe/10271153.stm>

What the Heck Is Going on in Thailand? Foreign Policy, May 19, 2010.

A look at the conflicts and tensions within Thai society and politics that have led to the recent protests and violence in Bangkok.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/19/what_the_heck_is_going_on_in_thailand



eJournal: See You in the USA



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE - BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

The latest edition of eJournal USA: *See You in the USA* introduces readers to travel in the U.S. It contains information for tourists including U.S. travel destinations, transportation, and airport security. Readers will also find stories about e.g., American cuisine, U.S. colleges and universities, and first-hand accounts from foreign visitors to the U.S.

A wide section on studying in the U.S. includes important information for those wishing to study in America. Also a selection of links for further resources is extremely helpful when planning a trip to the U.S.

Available online at http://www.america.gov/see_you.html.

Celebrating 4th of July

The United States celebrates its Independence Day on July 4, a day of patriotic celebration and family events throughout the country. In the words of Founding Father John Adams, the holiday would be “the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance. ... It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more.”

The Fourth of July holiday is a major civic occasion, with roots deep in the Anglo-American tradition of political freedom.

Throughout the United States, Fourth of July fireworks displays are popular, from the spectacular exhibition on the National Mall to more modest fireworks shows in city parks across the land.

“The Fourth” is a family celebration. Picnics and barbecues are common. July is summer in the United States, and millions of Americans escape the heat at beaches and other vacation spots.

Read more at <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2007/May/20060628141729JMnamdeirFO.745434.html#ixzzoqnuWz4YE>



Bioenergy Expert Dr. Art Ragauskas' Research Aims to Create More Affordable Cellulosic Biofuel

On June 2nd at the American Resource Center, Dr. Art Ragauskas – Fulbright Fellow in Alternative Energy and Professor of Chemistry for the Bioenergy Science Center at Georgia Institute of Technology – provided an overview of the latest U.S. advancements in biofuel research. Biomass is the only renewable source of carbon-based fuels and chemicals, and according to Dr. Ragauskas the U.S. has sufficient biomass stock to supply more than 1.3 billion dry tons per year. Yet despite the U.S.'s biomass abundance, conversion of biomass to biofuel remains expensive, particularly the pre-treatment of cellulosic biomass required to release its energy-rich sugars.



Read more at http://finland.usembassy.gov/ev_060210_b.html

The next double issue (July-August) of the American Resource Center newsletter comes out at the end of August. We wish you all a wonderful summer and a Happy July 4th!



The American Resource Center

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