



February 5, 2004

Ambassador W. Robert Pearson
Director General of the Foreign Service
US Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador Pearson;

Thank you so much for spending some time with me last week. I was happy to welcome you back to Washington and have a chance to share with you the goals and hopes that I have as AAFSW President.

We spoke of many things, and I promised to get back to you with something that encapsulates the concerns that AAFSW has been hearing from our Foreign Service constituency. As I mentioned, with the advent of AAFSW's new online chat vehicle, Livelines, we have been pleased to have a way to listen to the thoughts that are on the minds of the over 800 people who have access to the conversations. I believe AAFSW has a responsibility to bring forth what it hears, and believe you are in a welcome position to be at the other end of the conversation.

Listed here are some of the positions AAFSW heartily supports:

I. Establishment of a senior State Department division focusing on family member policy.

II. Ensuring that government housing overseas is equipped with internet access.

III. AAFSW be part of the deliberations on the future of the award that has been proposed by Ambassador Steven J. Green.

IV. Expanding mechanisms that develop personal employment options for spouses.

V. Enhancing and encouraging language and work-related state department training for all foreign affairs spouses who wish to work within the embassy environment.

With AAFSW's ear to the Foreign Service population, we believe we can offer our perspective for the purpose of betterment of our communities both abroad and in Washington.

Thank you very much for meeting with me last week. I look forward to future collaboration. Please feel free to contact me in any way.

Most sincerely,
Terri Williams
AAFSW President

A warm welcome to our new members!

February 2004

Barbara Bushby
Elena Clarke
Liz Cook
Tammie L. Gandy
Juliana L. Mabrey
Christine D. Parker
Anna Sheinberg
John Welch

IT'S NOT TOO SOON.....

AAFSW is always looking for new ideas and new volunteers! Have you thought that you might like to join us in our Washington, DC team? The AAFSW board welcomes anyone who is interested in finding out more about a particular volunteer position as a Committee chair or the AAFSW Board member. Our Membership chair (Shannon Jamison, (jandsjamison@earthlink.net) will be going overseas in summer 2005 and would love to start sharing her job now with someone who might be interested in taking over. Our Treasurer (Barbara Ratigan, (baratigan@aol.com) is also eager to job share. If you are returning to the DC area this summer, this would be a perfect way to ease into our AAFSW family as you are getting settled! It's not too soon to be thinking about how you might like to volunteer for the advocacy organization that has accomplished so much for Foreign Service families and continues to work to make our lives better! Already settled? We would love to have you join us! In addition to the Board positions, we always need volunteers to staff the Bookroom and the Housing Office! There are lots of ways for you to make a difference in our organization and in our lives! Contact the AAFSW Office (office@aafsw.org) anytime and we'll be in touch!



Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

We Need Membership Approval!

As you know, sound organizations have bylaws that outline their formation and structure. These ALSO include directions in case the organization decides to END. While AAFSW is hardly looking to end its operation, we do need to make sure our bylaws are in conformance to allow that to happen should it ever become necessary. Therefore, your board voted to include the following paragraph at the end of the Bylaws. We need the agreement of the membership in order for the Bylaws to be changed. Please take a short minute to cut this out and send it to our AAFSW office, or send an email with your vote of agreement or disagreement.

We thank you, as always, for the support of our membership as we guide this organization to further fulfill its purpose of support to the Foreign Service!

Proposed Dissolution Clause for Bylaws

“In the event that the organization (AAFSW) dissolves or closes, the board of directors shall, after paying and making provisions for the payment of all liabilities, distribute all the assets of the corporation over to an organization which has been recognized as a 501(C)3 organization by the Internal Revenue Service and which is dedicated to charitable and/or educational purposes for past and present members of the U.S. Department of State serving overseas.”

NAME OF MEMBER _____

_____ I APPROVE

_____ I DISAPPROVE

Mail or fax your approval/disapproval to:
AAFSW
5125 MacArthur Blvd. Suite 36
Washington, DC 20016
Fax 202-362-6589



Why is AAFSW dues so Expensive? What do I get for \$40.00 a Year?

I see the first question quite frequently when I am processing membership renewals, and the second question most often when talking to new or prospective members. I have to agree that the annual dues seem awfully high. So here's a way to put it in perspective, and hopefully make you feel better about that chunk of change you hand over to AAFSW every year.

It takes:

annual memberships	to pay for one month of	(one year)
24	Global Link prep, printing, mailing	(240)
24	office space	(288)
4	telephone, FAX, & internet	(48)
15	website: design, editing, hosting	(180)

That's already a total of 756 annual memberships needed for bare bones functioning (at the present time we have 685 active paid-up members), and I haven't even **mentioned** the office manager's salary, the book operations manager's salary, postage and paper and ink supplies for the office and the Board, credit card fees, the annual auditor's fee, insurance, or ANY of the wonderful programs we support financially (scholarships, SOSA, FSYF, Post Toasts, etc.).

So, the answer to the question "why are our dues so expensive" is that the cost of doing business, even with tons of volunteer hours and donated equipment, is simply higher than you might expect. Luckily, we make enough profit from the BookFair each year to pay our two salaried employees (the office manager and the book operations manager), and we also receive donations, interest on investments, profits and royalties from book sales - all of which help keep us solvent. The best long-term answer to keeping dues at a reasonable rate is to increase membership, to continue to attract as many others as possible to enjoy the benefits we all have had - so invite a friend to join!

The answer to the question "what do I get?" is: ten newsletters, access to great programs at Main State, several wonderful special interest groups, help from the housing office when you need it, the right to post classified ads on the internet, lobbying efforts on your behalf, a website loaded with incredible amounts of useful and entertaining information, Livelines, and most of all, the sense of community that comes from knowing that **your** dues are helping to ensure that AAFSW continues to exist - which benefits and supports everybody in the Foreign Service, and assures our continuing impact on quality of life issues for FS families.

So, when it comes time this summer to write that membership renewal check, or if the urge to send in a donation comes over you, just tap your heels together three times, close your eyes, and repeat "we're all in this together...we're all in this together..."

Debbi Miller, AAFSW Office Manager



The Washington Times, February 29, 2004

Week in Review

By David W. Jones

The Foreign Service



Somewhat like comedian Rodney Dangerfield, the Foreign Service men and women who staff America's embassies and consulates around the world these days feel underappreciated and in need of a little more respect. That may help to account for the tremendous cooperation we received when we set out at *The Washington Times* to tell their story like no daily newspaper has ever told it before. State Department reporter Nicholas Kralev spent the better part of the past six months working on the project, which will appear as an occasional series of articles beginning very soon — hopefully tomorrow, depending on the flow of daily news.

During that time, Mr. Kralev has conducted interviews with five past and present secretaries of state and almost 300 other diplomats, both in Washington and at some 30 U.S. missions on five continents. Seeking the broadest possible understanding of how our diplomats live and work, he has visited both the prestige capitals of Europe and Third World hardship posts such as Maputo, Mozambique. The project was made possible in part through a generous grant from the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, a Washington-based organization dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the U.S. diplomatic service. We made clear from the beginning that we had no agenda other than to put the Foreign Service under a microscope and to report what we found.

For Mr. Kralev, the interest in undertaking the project grew out of his travels around the world with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and the sometimes momentary glimpses into the lives of the permanent overseas staff that those visits provided. "I realized that most people in this country don't know what the Foreign Service is and what it does," Mr. Kralev says. "Even in Washington, there are many misperceptions about the Foreign Service and what diplomats do — outdated notions left over from 1930s images of white men in striped pants."

'America's other army'

The State Department was extremely helpful on the project, providing access to top officials who usually do not speak to the press. Spokesman Richard Boucher sent a cable to the missions on Mr. Kralev's schedule urging them to cooperate. The press officer at every post had already lined up a series of interviews by the time he arrived. Any requests for additional interviews were quickly honored. Not everything that Mr. Kralev heard, however, can be reported. In some cases, diplomats provided off-the-record details of sensitive ongoing negotiations that could compromise American interests if published.

At every mission he visited, Mr. Kralev reports, the staff were thrilled that someone was interested in telling their stories. Over and over he heard people say that, while the U.S. military gets a great deal of much-deserved respect for the courageous work it does around the world, few realize that from the Vietnam War until the recent Iraq war, the Foreign Service suffered more casualties in the line of duty on an annual basis. That fact inspired our logo for this series: "America's other army."

The diplomats "really feel that they don't have a constituency in Washington and that people don't appreciate the sacrifices they make for their country just by going to work every day in a building that could be blown up at any time," Mr. Kralev says. Their sacrifices will be one of the themes running through Mr. Kralev's articles, which will be appearing on Mondays over the coming weeks, either on the front page or the Global Issues briefing page. But Mr. Kralev will also take a hard-headed look at U.S. diplomacy, and the service's critics will be heard from as well. This is the kind of project that might not be possible to do for a newspaper in any other capital but Washington, which boasts the greatest concentration of U.S. and foreign diplomats anywhere in the world. It's all part of the fun of being a newspaperman in this city.

• *David W. Jones is the foreign editor of The Washington Times. His e-mail address is djones@washingtontimes.com.*

E-group for Japanese spouses

Providing a forum of information exchange among Japanese spouses of US State Department employees. When it was created two years ago, there was a total of three members!. Now, climbing to 45 members worldwide. We exchange information about the situation at our current posts as well as commonly faced issues such as obtaining greencards and US citizenship and other questions about our lives within the State Department. We primarily use Japanese language to communicate but also use English. If you are interested in joining or would like to further information, please contact Kyoko K. Hillman at kyokokh@hotmail.com or Noriko Koepcke at noriko_koepcke@hotmail.com.

Post Representatives

AAFSW would like to welcome our new volunteer Post Representatives to the following embassies and consulates. We are grateful to all of them for their generous contribution of their time, talents, and energies and look forward to a long, mutually inspiring relationship with each one of them.

Abidjan (until 06/04)
Algiers (after 10/04)
Ankara
Asmara (after 8/04)
Banjul (after 7/04)
Bern
Brussels
Cluj
Dhaka
Hanoi
Lisbon
Matamoros
Mexico City
San Salvador
Stockholm



Kathleen Stafford
Pierre Bélisle
Melissa Kunstadter
Sanny Wroblewski
Kathleen Stafford
Anja Lundberg
Paula P. Riddle
Elizabeth Mates
Douglas Kerr
June Carmichael
Carmen Blau
Sharon K Featherstone
Monica E. Skinner
Ruby Carlino
Bert S. Curtis

The goal of the post representative initiative is four-fold: 1) to expand our membership base, 2) to publicize our efforts, 3) to raise funds and 4) to act as virtual sponsor to other AAFSW members coming to post when needed. We are off to a wonderful start but we are still looking for a lot more good men and women who are willing to represent us in the far-flung places across the globe and help us build a truly global community. If you want to contribute to this vision, please contact Ruby Carlino, our organizer for this initiative via email at postrep@aafsw.org

The Foreign Born Spouses Group by: Alicia (Lisa) Wilkinson

We, of the Foreign Born Spouses (FBS), under the umbrella of AAFSW, are a group of convivial, warm and welcoming ladies from some 36 countries. It is truly amazing how a collection of women from these many different cultures and backgrounds can get along so well with one another! There is no doubt that our unique experience of having lived in many different countries and with peoples of various cultures is the most important cohesive element that binds us together. We are a mini United Nations! Our group consists of 70 members who come from far and wide. Countries from north to south and east to west. From Norway to Argentina and from Japan to Kenya. The countries represented in the FBS group at present are: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hongkong (China), Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe. The United States is also represented by a couple of ladies. Our group meets usually for lunch every third Wednesday of the month. We invite speakers to talk to us on subjects that are of interest to the group, we keep abreast with the many activities of AAFSW and the other groups within AAFSW, as well as spend a couple of hours each month for a pleasant afternoon together. So, we of the FBS group, extend this invitation to all foreign born spouses to come and join us! Our only "requirement" is that you share with us, whenever you can, a couple of hours once a month. Do you miss living abroad? Then come and join us! You might just feel like you're overseas again when you do! Nostalgia, anyone?

For more information on the FBS Group, please contact Lisa Wilkinson by email at alew217@aol.com or call 703-356-9233. You may also contact Chris Zarr by email at Jzarr@aol.com or call 301-229-7218.

Foreign Service Youth



Diplokids/Playgroup Family Potluck

The Playgroup and Diplokids got together on Saturday, January 31st, for a family potluck in the cozy fireside room at Arlington Courthouse Place. There were snowman-themed crafts, board games, a play area for little ones, and lots of good food! It was a great opportunity for working spouses to meet their children's friends and other Foreign Service families. Everyone had a great time.

Foreign Service Youth Foundation Community Service Award

The Family Liaison Office is assisting the Foreign Service Youth Foundation (FSYF) in requesting nominations for the 2004 Foreign Service Youth Foundation Community Service Award. Deadline for receipt of 2004 nominations is April 16, 2004.

The award honors teenagers who have demonstrated outstanding volunteer efforts either in community service or in service to their peers while facing the challenges of growing up in an internationally mobile lifestyle. Two awards, featuring a certificate of recognition and \$3,000 in U.S. Government Savings Bonds will be presented to Foreign Service teenagers for their work either overseas or in the United States. Winner are selected by merit. Location is not a consideration. The winners will be announced in Spring 2004.

Students in grades 7-12 are eligible. Overseas: They must be children of American U.S. Government employees assigned to an American Embassy or Consulate subject to Chief of Mission Authority. In the U.S.: They must be children of Foreign Service employees of a Foreign Affairs agency (such as USAID, FCS, FAS). The nominees should have demonstrated outstanding volunteer efforts either in community service work or with peers. The selection committee, which consists of board members of the FSYF, AAFSW, and the Director of the Family Liaison Office, will evaluate the volunteer efforts of the nominees. The nomination must include the following documentation: A description of the nominee's project or volunteer activity and how it increased awareness of, or served the needs of a particular group, encouraged relationships with host country, kept alive an American tradition, or met an emergency need. A description of the results or the impact the volunteer's work had on a targeted group. An explanation of the duration of the commitment. The number of years, months, and approximate number of hours per week the nominee committed to the activity. A description of uniqueness of the nominee's contributions. Why it is worthy of special note. Teens may be nominated by anyone who knows of their accomplishments. They may also nominate themselves. Nominations from parents are encouraged since parents know of their children's accomplishments, which might have preceded the current post of assignment. At least two supporting letters from other members of the community are required with a self or parent-nomination. Recommendations from authority figures such as a teacher, counselor, coach, or others must be submitted with the nomination. Submission of an overseas nomination must include a signed statement from an appropriate person at post, (the CLO, Management Officer, or DCM would be suggested) who would verify the nominee is a member in good standing of the mission community. Download a copy of the nomination form at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/8211.htm>. You may submit the information without a form, but be sure to include all criteria on the nomination form. Photos of the nominee involved in community service would be most welcome but are not a requirement. Selected winners will be notified in May and pictures will be requested for publication at that time.

Nominations should be sent via email to FLOAskEducation@state.gov, faxed to (202) 647-1670, or mailed to:

Education and Youth Officer
Family Liaison Office, Room 1239
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520-7512

For further information, contact the Family Liaison Office at 202-647-1076 or at one of the addresses listed above. Notify FLO that you are submitting an application. FLO will confirm receipt of your application. If you do not receive confirmation that your nomination packet has been received, please contact FLO. Decisions on the winners of the Foreign Service Youth Awards are based solely on the submissions received by the judges. Winning nominees traditionally have supporting documentation from several people outside of their immediate family, as well as photographs of the nominee participating in the volunteer work for which they are being cited. The strength of the nomination is evaluated by the quality and duration of the volunteer work, however, not the size of the nomination package.

March Program: Deadline to sign up is March 16th

Dr. Engin Inel Holmstrom – Following her graduation from the American College for Girls in Istanbul she attended Duke University on a Fulbright Scholarship and earned both her M.A. and PhD. in sociology. After moving to Washington in 1968 and teaching at various universities, she dedicated herself to social policy research. She has over 50 publications to her credit dealing with higher education issues, women's rights, and health professions training. She is very active in Turkish-American organizations.

These brief descriptions give only a glimpse of these highly experienced women, who are dedicated to helping Americans and Turks understand each other better. They have become tremendously popular as more and more organizations are soliciting their insights and observations.

April Program: Deadline to sign up is April 13th

April 20th Program

Please reply no later than April 13th

Name (as you wish it on name tag):

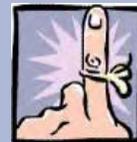
Social Security Number:

Telephone: _____

Name of Guest (s) and SSN (s)

Please send form and check made out to AAFSW (\$10 per person) to:

**AAFSW Reservations
5125 MacArthur Blvd. NW Suite 36
Washington, DC 20016.**



AAFSW Program Dates

Mark your calendars now for upcoming AAFSW Programs to be held in State's incomparable eighth floor reception room.

April 20, 2004

May 18, 2004

All programs, unless otherwise indicated, are from 10 a.m. until noon and cost \$10.00 p.p.

For more information about upcoming programs or to RSVP, contact the AAFSW office at 202-362-6514 or office@aafsw.org

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AAFSW
March 2004

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