

Send a Letter from Abroad: Help Raise the Profile of the Foreign Affairs Agencies

By Chris Zarr, President

The foreign affairs agencies budget - a fraction of what the U.S. spends for military equipment - faces serious cuts from a Congress determined to reduce government spending. Effective and adequately funded diplomacy often saves money in the long run by preventing situations which require the costly deployment of troops abroad.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher argued in a recent letter, "...It may be tempting to think of State Department operations as if they were just overhead that can be easily reduced. Nothing could be further from the truth. Operating, supporting and communicating with our posts overseas represents

"When someone says the State Department is a Mickey Mouse operation, everybody knows what he means."

the heart of the programmatic activities of the State Department. Without these efforts, the eyes and ears of the United States abroad would be shut and our daily activity to analyze and influence world events would be harmed. Our 266 overseas posts - our nation's first line of defense - serve as the operating platforms for more than 38 other agencies including the Defense Department, the Commerce Department and law enforcement agencies."

The American Academy of Diplomacy, a group of retired government servants including all living former Secretaries of State, several former Secretaries of Defense, Directors of Central Intelligence and members of congress, as well as both career and non-career

ambassadors, calls the funding cuts - which may be reality by the time you get this newsletter in Tashkent or Douala - "penny-wise but pound-foolish" and, "...beyond reasonable belt-tightening."

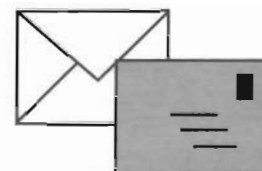
"The Academy urges Congress and the Administration to regard the Department of State as a 'national security agency' for budget purposes, as it does the Pentagon and the CIA."

These cuts have come about in part because back home most people don't know what an Embassy is for or what Ambassadors do. A DEA agent, an AID education specialist, a commercial attache, a USIS Public Affairs Officer: they serve America. But how, exactly? All of us know from our spells in the U.S. that our functions - and the need for our functions - are not well understood and, thus, the Foreign Service agencies have little supportive constituency in the heartland or in big American cities or, consequently, in Congress.

Casual snide comments prove this. They pop up constantly. Death was the topic in the D.C. *City Paper* recently and a *Washington Post* obituary writer was quoted as saying that he took great pleasure in giving more prominence to the life of a D.C. school principal than to "someone from the Foreign Service who never did anything, but could order a meal in twelve languages."

Discussing Disney's commercial primacy and universal images, a reporter lets drop, "When someone says the State Department is a Mickey Mouse operation, everybody knows what he means."

In another *Post* article, this time on American policy in Ireland, a State Department employee (no less!) characterized his fellow officers as inert and called them, "Suits...who have three-hour martini lunches."



Offensive remarks by Senator Phil Gramm, who alleged that diplomats were living in marble palaces and wearing "high hats and long coats", and needed to start driving Fords rather than limousines, were, we are pleased to see, protested feelingly by Katharina Frasure, the widow of one of the diplomats killed recently while traveling in order to try to stop the bloodshed in Bosnia.

What can we do about this dismissive attitude and public ignorance? It's certainly a tough assignment. One thing we are doing at AAFSW is updating the written briefing material which will be used to inform new congressional staffers about the realities of Foreign Service employment abroad and the nature of daily living in many posts - the medical, housing and school situations, the number of evacuations, the posts where guards and roving patrols are required, the inconveniences that result from constant moves and so on.

What could you do? As you sit down to create that minor art form (so hated by some), the yearly duplicated holiday greeting which describes your life and work, take the time to write an additional letter to send to your old high school, home town church or local newspaper. Explain what mission employees do and what American interests are in that

(See "Holiday Letter", page 5)

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CALENDAR

Evacuee Support Workshop

DECEMBER

- 4-5 OBC Security Overseas Seminar
 4-8 OBC Introduction to Foreign Service Life
 9 (Saturday!) OBC Maintaining Long-Distance Relationships
 12 **AAFSW General Meeting**
 12 OBC Advanced Security Overseas Seminar
 13 OBC Protocol & U.S. Representation Abroad
 14-15 OBC American Studies

JANUARY

- 9 **AAFSW General Meeting**
 OBC Advanced Security Overseas Seminar
 10-12 OBC Regulations, Allowances and Finances
 22-23 OBC Security Overseas Seminar
 23 **AAFSW Board Meeting**
 25 OBC Documenting Our Mobile Experiences
 26 OBC Marketing Our Spouse Talents
 27 OBC Post Options for Employment and Training (Saturday!)
 OBC Personal Finances and Investments for Beginners (Wed. evening)

FEBRUARY

- 7-9 OBC Regulations, Allowances and Finances
 12-13 **AAFSW General Meeting**
 OBC Security Overseas Seminar
 13-14 OBC Life After the Foreign Service
 23 OBC Tax Seminar
 24 OBC Adapting to Life Overseas (Saturday!)
 26 **AAFSW Board Meeting**
 OBC Advanced Security Overseas Seminar
 28 OBC The Logistics of Going Overseas (Wed. evening)

NOTE: Watch for news of a special lunch to honor BOOKFAIR and Housing volunteers in next month's newsletter! The tentative date is the third Thursday in January.

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27 - Foreign Born Spouses Theater trip

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AAFSW Membership is open to all employees and family members of the U.S. Foreign Service Community. Annual Dues are \$25.00. Subscriptions to the NEWS are open to the public at \$25.00 per year.

Your Turn

Pickles and Programs

It is ironic that as the Congress cuts the State Department to practically bare bones, the morale in the Foreign Service hits a new low and we all wonder what next for the Foreign Service, the programs for families hit an all time high!

Perhaps it's not so ironic as serendipitous!

...I chuckled as I read "Have You Had Your Say?". [Sept. issue]. I was reminded of the post report for Calcutta, which, in 1962, recommended taking a two-year supply of pickles to post! Since I knew cucumbers grew well in India, and I also knew salt and vinegar were available, I didn't take pickles!

Betty W. Atherton

Farewell USIA, Hello Spouse Training-?

In a fiscal environment where USIA is contemplating firing 500 employees, it isn't reasonable to expect them to pay for spouse training, and I personally doubt that they will. I am a USIA spouse and have already taken both classes which I found very useful — particularly "Understanding Regulations".

How terribly ironic that from a purely selfish perspective, non-State Dept. spouses should be rooting for the (budget-slashing) consolidation program (combining all agencies into State) so we will not be excluded from the benefits spouse training gives!

It seems from this OBC policy that the Foreign Service "community" has decided we will indeed all hang separately.

Shannon Jamison

Reader Criticizes Cuts

I was shocked to read about the Overseas Briefing Center policy change which asks agencies other than State to pay for certain courses.

My husband is a senior Foreign Service Officer working for USIA. We have served as a team for over 20 years, in six third-world posts. I have watched "benefits" dwindle and, in my opinion, this is another form of removing benefits from spouses. USIA is taking massive cuts and closing posts due to budget concerns. It is hard to believe the

money will be found for spouse training.

I feel this policy change also makes State spouses more equal than other agency spouses and is quite divisive.

I urge FSI to reconsider.

Jill P. Hull

We make sure that copies of all of your letters on the training proposal are reaching OBC officials. Please keep sending your opinions on this and other topics!



BOOKFAIR Breaks Records!

This year's BOOKFAIR brought in a record amount of over \$100,000. Congratulations to volunteers and donors for contributing to an overwhelmingly successful event!

Forum: Are We Still Talking About a Revolution?

"...being chairman of the Forum Committee was considered a revolutionary role."

--Jean Vance

The Forum Committee will celebrate 20 years of existence in 1996. Out of Forum meetings have come significant developments such as the establishment of the Family Liaison Office: current CLOs may not realize that they have employment because of AAFSW's Forum!

Have these historical accomplishments finished the job? Is the time for revolution past, a relic of the sixties and seventies? Is there nothing left to say or suggest?

This year's Forum is scheduled for Saturday, March 5 at the Marriott Hotel in Crystal City. There are numerous opportunities for your involvement. If you prefer the role of armchair critic, please pass along your ideas about today's most pressing topics to AAFSW President Chris Zarr or Forum organizer Pettí Flood.

Some suggestions have included: "Why Can't We Help Ourselves?" - taking a look at why (primarily female) family members are so reluctant to get involved in improving their circumstances. This might involve looking at ways to reach incoming Foreign Service spouses, as well; "Training for the 21st Century" - gaining access to the State Department's computer training facilities; "Is There a Doctor in the House?" - examining available medical services; "Together We Stand" - establishing ongoing dialogue with military, congressional and other government family members; "Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks" - requesting equal access to OBC services for family members from

all foreign affairs agencies (don't take the title personally, please!); and "The Right to Write" - considering the extent to which foreign affairs agencies may limit family members who are writers in their choices of topics or forums.

Do any of these strike you as being interesting or essential issues, in which clarification or change is needed?

Active efforts are also in demand. If you are an organizational whiz, please consider contributing your skills to plan Forum. Are you a budding graphic designer or public relations person? AAFSW would like to make the most of Forum as an opportunity for generating positive publicity in order to reach family members who are not aware of the range of services and support mechanisms available to them (as well as to remind the general public why the foreign affairs agencies need continued funding!)

Finally, as the topic of childcare has gained such prominence, there are questions as to whether the day should include a children's program, to alleviate babysitting difficulties. What is your opinion? Are you willing to help arrange something? (and can a lawyer out there tell us if this is legally feasible in terms of liability?)

If there are changes you would like to see happen, please get in touch immediately - from overseas as well as from Washington. The only way for AAFSW to accurately reflect the views of its members is for the members to shed a little light. We look forward to hearing from you!



Who You Gonna Call? Bill Busters!

If the holidays are almost here, can the bills be far behind? Come to OBC's Wednesday Special Event on Jan. 31, "Personal Finances and Investments for Beginners" for tips on organizing your financial affairs. Then, in February and March, get tax advice from the expert, Mr. Bruce Hirshorn, with the latest IRS rulings and recommendations for foreign service personnel. He'll be available on Friday, Feb. 23 at noon in Main State; March 12 at noon in the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC); and March 27 in the evening from 6 to 8 PM at NFATC. Call OBC at 703-302-7268 to sign up for these money-saving sessions.

International Teens Sponsor Holiday Festivities

Foreign Service teens (age 13 and up) are invited to a Holiday Bash to be held on Saturday, Dec. 16 from 7 to 11 PM in the Great Hall of the International Student House, 1825 R Street NW, Washington, DC. This event is supported by Around the World in a Lifetime (AWAL) and the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, but teens from the World Bank and other international organizations have also been invited. What a fabulous opportunity to meet other kids who don't think it's weird to talk about which airport has the worst food or which country is the most fun!

Tickets, which include a light buffet, cost \$10 if they are reserved in advance, or \$15 at the door. An early response will enter you in the door prize drawing.

For more information, please contact Karen Pugh at 703-255-2861.

D.C. Phi Beta Kappa Plans Holiday Banquet

All Phi Beta Kappa graduates and their spouses or friends are invited to a holiday dinner and program on Dec. 6 at the American Foreign Service Club.

For more information, please contact Christel McDonald at 703-525-9755 immediately, as reservations should be made by Nov. 29.

My Turn by Jan Fischer Bachman

New Traditions and Light Memories

It was a dramatic, heart-rending piece of writing. I reviewed it carefully and tears came to my eyes. Yes, as an elementary school author, I had accurately captured the agony of a coat when the closet door is shut.

This great work of literature has sadly been lost, but it demonstrates the affinity I have always had for light, which traces a delicate pattern through some of my favorite holiday memories, at home and abroad.

I dreaded my first Christmas overseas. As a graduate student in England at a time when the dollar hit a new low, there was no way that I could get to Ohio (without swimming).

I would not have considered our family a traditional one. When my mother decided that we were old enough to need to learn that her house was home for Christmas, we stopped our bi-annual treks across the country to visit grandparents and designed Christmas customs from scratch. We faithfully ate pizza and went bowling on Christmas Eve day because that was our new "family tradition"! Nevertheless, there seemed to be something fundamentally wrong with spending Christmas in another country, away from my family.

I just didn't fit. British friends laughed derisively when I asked if Christmas crackers were sweet or savory. I went to carol services and everyone sang the wrong tunes. The attitude-du-jour was a deep cynicism about everything Christmas represented.

A Danish friend came to the rescue, inviting me to spend the holidays in Scandinavia. The trip began auspiciously: I was late for my train, but found that it had not left without me because someone "could not find the engine"! (It is rumored that this person was put in charge of shipping for the State Department, but, I repeat, this is only a rumor).

In Denmark, I found the cultural differences delightful: hearts and lights adorning the streets of Copenhagen, a determination to enjoy the celebrations, a generosity which extended to providing bank customers with cookies and holding parties in English, even if there was just one foreigner present.



Christmas week I spent on a picture-book 19th-century farm, complete with ladders for climbing up through trapdoors to our rooms in the loft. At the local village celebration, children played dancing games around a huge Christmas tree. We slyly sought the almond in the Christmas pudding, and walked around the candle-lit family tree singing carols (never mind the pronunciation!)

Meanwhile, my family tape-recorded their Christmas morning. The cassette abruptly ends with "It's you on the phone, so we'll turn this off now". A new tradition (happy oxymoron) was born.

The - perhaps mistaken - lesson I took from this experience was that Christmas is a good time to travel and become part of someone else's celebration. Thus, the next time holiday separation threatened, I made immediate arrangements to abandon London for a friend's home in Ireland.

Disaster! Shortly before Christmas I discovered that her friends were planning a surprise holiday theatre trip. Left without a surrogate family, I checked at the local library for volunteer opportunities. It turned out that there was a nearby shelter for homeless men looking for people to help cook Christmas dinner.

There was a wonderful feeling of camaraderie amongst the volunteers and even the visiting men, who made a point of generously informing us where we could find the only open pub. I know that I was a great help, particularly in leaving supper prepared. It was difficult to cut through all those strings tying that



(Continued from previous page)

meat together before I put it in the pot to boil. I'm sure that the terrible face the cook made when she arrived was in recognition of my great efforts!

I found the streets nearly deserted as I walked to a friend's house for tea. The few people I passed seemed to be lazily and peacefully walking off an enormous Christmas dinner. Partially opened curtains spilled light which reflected from the damp pavement. What sticks most vividly in my memory is the overwhelming sense of tranquility.

We constantly need to recreate our celebrations. Even people who never move find their circumstances changed by the marriage of a child or the death of a beloved relative. It is important to take the time to consider which are the essential aspects of a holiday for each family member and to incorporate these in some way regardless of our location, without trying to copy a Christmas or Hanukkah which can no longer exist.

Camaraderie, love, peacefulness and light are my personal essentials. My husband requires homemade Christmas cookies, baked by the hundreds

We faithfully ate pizza and went bowling...because that was our new "family tradition"!

and given in trays to every guest. Last year, in the Dominican Republic, we filled the house with candles, invited friends, listened to orchestral Christmas music, ate cookies and hors d'oeuvres (which did not include meat either presently or formerly tied up in string) and read the Christmas story. It was a perfect, tranquil occasion. Meanwhile, other friends were holding a riotous pig roast and pool party, which fit their list of essentials. They would have hated our "sweetness and light"!

This year, when you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, the New Year or other events, remember this paraphrase of an old Moravian saying: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, flexibility; in all things, charity." Happy holidays!

Neighborhood Network Takes Off in D.C. Area

The following people have volunteered to answer your neighborhood questions by phone and have received small packets of material from the office. We thank them heartily for coming forward. Please do give your representative a call if you have not already spoken.

Maryland and D.C.

20902 - Wheaton
Martha Netherton 301-681-0625
20814 - Bethesda
Barbara Reese 301-951-4328
21114 - Crofton
Gerre Lee Craig 301-858-0860
20816 - Mass. Ave., Bethesda
Chris Zarr 301-229-7218
20037 - Georgetown
Lucy Williams 202-861-0650

Virginia

22031 - Fairfax
Amy Struble 703-849-0709
22044 - Falls Church
Ann Lewis 703-237-0277
22042 - Falls Church
Britt-Marie Forslund 703-237-8673
22124 - Oakton
Jan Fischer Bachman 703-255-2798
22015 - Burke
Sandra Duncan 703-455-5915
22207 - Arlington
Joan Deason 703-241-8914
22305 - Alexandria
Marie S. Taylor 703-683-2427
22303 - Alexandria
Maryagnes Kerr 703-329-6217

Won't you help in your neighborhood?
Chris Zarr, President

Times, They Are A'Changin'

According to a study by Foreign Service Officer Sally Slocum, done in 1994 during her Sabbatical Fellowship with the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, only 8% of the FSO Corps today are single income, married partners with children. Watch for more on this not-yet-published study in future

Holiday Letters Needed

(Continued from page 1)

country - probably it will be an interesting exercise in summarizing. Maybe add a snapshot of the mission community (photographic or written). Have fun! If you are too busy, ask your high-schooler to do it, as a chance to become a published writer!

One of the best gifts to give this year is your effort towards raising the profile of our Foreign Service agencies.

Community Corner

For those of our members who would like to become more involved in the community around us, we will use this space to announce volunteer opportunities in the Washington area. If you are interested in more details, or want to sign up, please contact the organizations directly.

So Others Might Eat (SOME) provides help to the poor, particularly to the elderly and homeless, by offering food, clothes, medical care, housing and rehabilitation. SOME has several facilities in Washington, including the Thea Bowman House which provides affordable housing for homeless families or those on the brink of homelessness. AAFSW contributes financial support to this House, which needs volunteers interested in children's activities, as well as those willing to offer workshops to the adults. Contact the Southeast Center Coordinator at 202-581-8000.

SOME could also use helpers in other facilities. Volunteers can distribute food, organize clothing drives, help with building maintenance, provide companionship to the elderly, tutor young people, prepare holiday meals, answer phones, provide secretarial support or participate in many other ways in SOME's many programs. Professional legal, nursing and psychiatric help is also needed. A complete listing of SOME's activities and individual volunteer needs can be obtained by calling the main facility at 202-797-8806.

*Barbara Leven
Community Relations Committee*





AAFSW Oral History Collection

Sheila Switzer was instrumental in developing the Foreign-Born Spouses Network in the 1980's. She has received a number of awards, including the 1991 AAFSW/Secretary of State pin; Special Recognition by the Association of the Diplomatic World in Madrid, Spain in 1992; and the Avis Bohlen Award in 1993. Her volunteer and paid work ranges from being a model and promotional assistant for Chanel and Guerlain to raising two children (now in their teens, or almost) to presiding over various volunteer organizations in different countries. In her transcript, which was presented at this year's Oral History Tea, she describes some of the special difficulties of foreign-born spouses:

"I believe it is easier to be in a third country than here, because our husbands say, 'Well, we're back home' when they are assigned to Washington. But for us, it's not home, it's another foreign post, and the most difficult one for many of us...you don't have the same kind of support from the community that helps you to get involved and encourages you to do things. You don't get invitations like you do overseas; here, you're on your own. And that is why some of the foreign-born spouses stay in their house; it's like a shell, they go in and they don't come out. That's our biggest problem that we confront with the foreign-born spouses: the lack of self-confidence to go out. Sometimes they are not able to call us for help. If the husbands do not get in touch with us, their wives are not going to call us. If they don't speak the language, then they are afraid to confront others.

"Unfortunately, because of all the privacy laws, we cannot always find out about when a foreign-born spouse is coming to the Washington area. That's why one of the things I worked so hard on was doing more publicity for the group.

"The first thing that I did was to arrange an interview for three foreign-born spouses in the *Washington Post*, which was a terrific success! Actually, the Sunday in which the article appeared, I got 51 calls in one day. It was unbelievable! This was obviously a main way of communication to them.

"Some 30 active members were in the group when I took over. When I left last month, there were 200 active members!

"I remember everybody would ask me, 'Why are we never invited to the White House? We are foreign-born spouses, but we work as hard as the Americans who are present in the United States.' So I decided to send a letter to the First Lady to ask for a meeting. Of course, the answer was that they were very busy, but that they would invite us for a tour at Christmas in the White House. However, it was limited to only forty people. I was then in a difficult position; I couldn't advertise in the newsletter because everybody would come. So I decided to ask those spouses who never attended. I called them that day, and they all showed up, without exception. It was fantastic, because they really enjoyed a wonderful Christmas tour at the White House.

"This group is very important because [about] one-third of the Foreign Service wives are foreign-born, and I think we have to have more information about this group. Because, as you know, all human relations are very fragile. That's why it's very important to have a friendly relationship among us foreign-born spouses. In fact, all we Foreign Service wives are in the same boat. We should take care of one another and let each other know that we are not alone and that we can help."

The Foreign-Born Spouses group is reviving at present, after a decline in membership and activities. (See related story on this page.) If you are interested in getting involved, or know of any foreign-born spouses who should be contacted, please call one of the coordinators listed on page two.

Foreign-Born Spouses Meet

Both new and long-established wives got together at the OBC's recent seminar, "Transition to Washington for Foreign-Born Spouses", which was described by participants as "most useful".

One woman summarized the day by saying, "I felt that I was not alone in feeling this way, i.e., frustrated, confused, alone, etc. I was given good advice and plenty of suggestions."

After talking about the normal, but difficult, transition to the U.S., participants discussed ways to keep the supportive atmosphere going. It was agreed that evening meetings were needed as well as daytime events. Both an evening meeting and a daytime cruise on the Potomac were planned for October.

On Thursday, Dec. 7 there will be an informal coffee at Chris Zarr's house, 5322 Tuscarawas Road, Glen Echo Heights, Bethesda. This is near the Glen Echo Fire House on Massachusetts Ave.

...participants discussed ways to keep the supportive atmosphere going.

Children are welcome, as are USA-born spouses along with their foreign-born counterparts. The coffee is scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., so it will slide into brunch. To attend this friendly meeting (and to get a direction map), call any of the following: Rosario Kramer, 703-938-3794; Britt-Marie Forslund, 703-237-8673; Katarina Hamilton (AAFSW Office Manager), 202-362-6514.

A special welcome to Britt-Marie, who is newly on board as an organizer for the Foreign-Born Spouse group. More ideas and input are needed, so get involved!

Thanks to Chris Zarr and OBC's Terri Williams for collaborating on this article.

Spanish Group Commences

Petti Flood would like to begin a Spanish Language group, to supplement the existing French and Italian groups. If you are interested in using your Spanish skills, whether native or acquired, or in participating in activities with other Spanish speakers, please call her at 202-298-7540, preferably in the evening.

Christmas Time - with the Tropics on our Minds

as presented by David X. Young

Tour the State Department Reception Rooms with Your Guests

A delightful program to open the Christmas season will be presented to us by the talented artist from New York City, David X. Young — a program which received accolades when presented at the National Press Club in June of this year under the title of "Glimpses of a Life: Never Exhibited Paintings (1949-1995)."

Much admired by the well-known artists William Dekooning, Franz Kline, and Jackson Pollock, David X. Young held his first one-man show in 1951 at the age of 21. This was followed by numerous exhibitions at galleries in Boston, Chicago and New York.

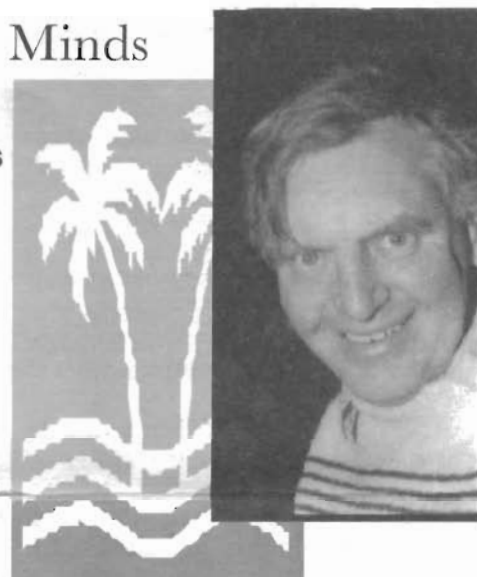
The *New York Times* acclaimed Young as a "brilliant colorist"; the well-known art dealer Charles Egan summed him up as "one of the Boston-New York artists who honestly developed from that controversial period of American art" (the abstract expressionists). Sir David Ashton, Hugh Hefner, Joseph Hirshorn, *Life* photographer W. Eugene Smith, actors

Zero Mostel and James Whitmore are among the many celebrities who have bought his paintings.

Jazz deeply influenced David's work. Famous artists and musicians including Thelonius Monk, Jim Hall and Zoot Sims would often meet for jamming sessions in David's old loft in the "Manhattan Flower District".

In 1955, David took off for the hills of Haiti where he immersed himself in the study of its culture, which in turn influenced his painting and caught his imagination to such an extent that he returned many times. Thus, he has become an authority on and a promotor of all the positive and exciting aspects of this emerging democracy.

David's beautiful slides of his works (unique places in the U.S. as well as in Haiti) accompanied by special music and his in-depth commentary will bring us up to date in a creative way on a Caribbean country in which this Administration has



taken great interest, a country whose art is highly prized by major collectors.

As a part of this program, as noted above, there will be a tour of the eighth floor by a docent at 10 a.m. (coffee at 9:45 a.m. for those taking the tour); the regular program at 10:30 a.m.; and Christmas carol singing led by Pat McKee, daughter of Richard Keller McKee, presently serving at our Embassy in Ankara, Turkey.

If you are interested in the AAFSW Programs, but cannot usually attend, please check this box: ☐

Reason you cannot attend: _____

☐ I would attend a program held in the evening. ☐ I would attend a program held on a Saturday or Sunday.

☐ I (or my post) would be interested in video tapes of selected programs.

NAME: _____

Please return this coupon to the AAFSW office (after reading the back page!)

December Program Coupon - Return by December 6

Tuesday, December 12, 1995, 9:45 coffee for those touring the eighth floor at 10 a.m.

10:30 a.m. Program only

Benjamin Franklin Room

Eighth Floor, State Department

Name _____ New Member? yes ____ no ____
(Name as you wish it on name tag)

Date of Birth _____ OR Social Security Number _____ Phone _____

Name(s) of Guest(s) (with DOB or SSN) _____

NOTE: BRING A VALID PHOTO I.D. (OR CURRENT BUILDING PASS) FOR ENTRY TO STATE DEPARTMENT. Reservations accepted in the order CHECKS are received. Please send form, with check made out to AAFSW (\$5 per member, \$5 per guest), to AAFSW reservations, 5125 MacArthur Blvd, NW, Suite #36 Washington, DC, 20016 Phone 202-362-6514. REMINDER: Special permission granted members and guests to enter the Dept. of State building is limited to hours of meeting ONLY. No refunds after December 6.

Childcare Heroine Emerges

Washington area residents may contact Blanka Ruebensaal at 301-365-7964 for information about local childcare facilities. It is best to try to reach her in the morning, after 9 a.m.

Blanka has been a Bethesda resident for the past two years, after spending 18 years at a variety of posts. Her childcare knowledge is both personal and professional: she has two teen-age daughters and started a pre-school in Tel Aviv in 1985.

There is still a need for more people to get involved in childcare issues. It would be ideal for members to visit each center on the lists, to be able to give a first-hand impression - and more childcare options are needed. If you can help in any way, please call Blanka, Felicia Holgate, 703-276-1807, or the AAFSW office.

Pia Connell Joins FLO Staff

The Family Liaison Office is pleased to announce that Pia Connell has joined the staff as the Secretary Receptionist. Pia, a Foreign Service spouse who has lived overseas for most of the last 20 years, has recently returned from Ankara where she worked as a roving secretary in the Embassy and was an avid supporter of the CLO program. In the Family Liaison Office she will assist the CLO Support Officer and the Support Services Officer, in addition to welcoming visitors to the office.

Bulletin Board

Old News, New Starts

Treat yourself to a new career this Christmas: apply for the AAFSW Continuing Education scholarship, which will be awarded in April, 1996.

To be eligible, you must be the present or former spouse of an employee in the foreign affairs agencies and a member in good standing of AAFSW. Financial need, past educational record and the nature of your continuing education project will all be considered. Courses in technical, practical or academic fields are included - this means everything from history to hairdressing!

Application forms may be picked up at the AAFSW office or requested by mail or fax (see page 2 for information). All requirements must be completed and forms received by Feb. 10, 1996 for your application to be considered.

In this case, old news is good news: let someone else help you for a change!

Project Needs Interviewers

Attention: State/AID/ACDA/USIA!

We need volunteers to interview Foreign Service spouses for the Oral History Collection. Please, if you have or want to gain experience in interviewing as a job skill, call, write or fax AAFSW for details.

Pamela Stratton

Oral History Collection Manager

Fresh from FLO: AWAL Returns to BOOKFAIR

Once again, volunteer teens from Around the World in a Lifetime participated in AAFSW's major fundraising event, the BOOKFAIR. This year fourteen AWALers joined with AAFSW members to provide assistance to customers.

On Family Night, Oct. 13, and all day on Oct. 14, the young people greeted visitors, handed out maps of the book and art displays, assisted with checking-in coats and packages, helped stack books and stock shelves and accompanied people with large purchases to the freight elevators.

The AWAL volunteers also appreciated the opportunity that AAFSW BOOKFAIR provided them to offer information to interested families about the activities available to Foreign Service teens through AWAL and to sell the first publication of the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, *Notes from a Traveling Childhood* (which is about growing up in an internationally mobile family).

This year's AWAL teens were pleased to have a chance to show their appreciation for the continuing financial and moral support that AAFSW offers through its scholarships and other forms of recognition to Foreign Service young people.

Family Liaison Office

AAFSW

News

December 1995

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