



The U.S. Embassy Information Resource Center

Yerevan Times

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U.S. Independence Day

Independence Day, or the 4th of July, is one of the most important national holidays in the United States. It commemorates the formal adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The declaration is a powerful statement of the American colonies' intention to become an independent nation.



The United States celebrates its Independence Day, 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.

"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.

The Fourth of July also is a time when elected officials and other public figures give speeches extolling American traditions and values.

The USA: What We Know



On July 3, 2010 at 13:00 join us at the Yerevan American Corner to enjoy the exciting quiz tour about the USA and celebrate the 234th birthday of the United States!

Women's Equality Day: August 26

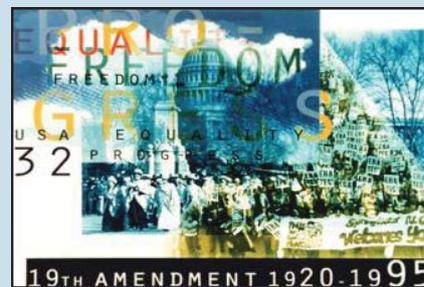
On July 13, 1848, five women met for tea in upstate New York. Having commiserated about the lot of women in American society, they did something brash and wonderful...they sent off a notice to the local newspaper announcing "a convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious conditions and rights of woman" to be held just six days later in Seneca Falls.

The Women's Rights Movement was born!

The U.S. Congress designated August 26 as "Women's Equality Day" in 1971 to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which granted women in the United States the right to vote. Each year a Presidential Proclamation recognizes the hard work and perseverance of those who have helped secure women's suffrage.

The women's rights movement originated in Seneca Falls, New York, in July 1847, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott initiated a convention "to discuss the social, civil and religious condition and rights of woman." The convention's "Declaration of Sentiments" affirmed that women are entitled to the same rights as men. One of the resolutions called for universal women's suffrage, and one hundred women and men from all walks of life signed the Declaration.

Today, American women are leaders in business, gov-

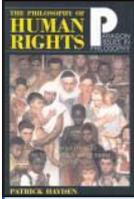


ernment, law, science, medicine, the arts, education, and many other fields. Remarkable American women have broadened opportunities

for themselves and women around the world. The observance of Women's Equality Day not only commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, but also recognizes women's continuing efforts toward full equality.

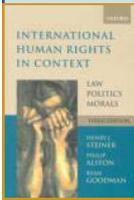
New Resources at the Information Resource Center

Human Rights



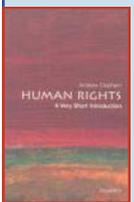
The Philosophy of Human Rights by Patrick Hayden. This book brings together an extensive collection of classical and contemporary writings on the topic of human rights, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, minority cultures, and the environment, providing an exceptionally comprehensive introduction. It places special emphasis on the historical development of theories of human rights, and includes western and nonwestern views.

International Human Rights in Context: Law, Politics, Morals



by Henry J. Steiner, P. Alston, R. Goodman, Publisher: Oxford University Press, 2008. This interdisciplinary course book presents a diverse range of primary and secondary materials alongside extensive text, editorial commentary, and study questions. International Human Rights in Context, Third Edition, thoroughly covers the basic characteristics of international law.

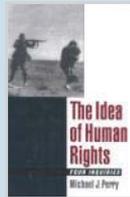
Human Rights : A Very Short Introduction



by Andrew Clapham, Publisher: Oxford University Press, 2007
Taking an international perspective, and focusing on highly topical issues such as torture, arbitrary detention, privacy, health, and discrimination, this *Very Short Introduction* will help readers to understand for themselves the con-

troversies and complexities behind this vitally relevant issue. Andrew Clapham explains what our human rights actually are, what they might be, and where the human rights movement is heading.

The Idea of Human Rights: Four Inquiries

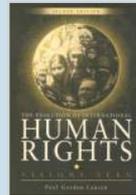


by Michael J. Perry/ 1998
Inspired by a 1988 trip to El Salvador, Michael J. Perry's new book is a personal and scholarly exploration

of the idea of human rights. Responding to recent criticism of "rights talk," Perry explicates, in his essay, the meaning and value of talk about human rights.

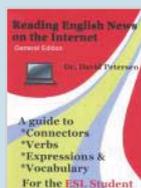
The Evolution of International Human Rights: Visions Seen

by Paul Gordon Lauren. Publisher: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003; This volume is a model of scholarship. It shows how visionaries and diplomats, NGOs and governments, moved from the almost totally unquestioned pre-WWII doctrine of domestic sovereignty to the current reality of global awareness and of obligations to internal human rights practices.



For English Learners

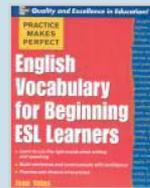
Reading English News on the Internet



This ESL guide to "media English" covers nearly 200 connectors, phrasal verbs, idiomatic verb phrases, and everyday

expressions. There are tips on reading news, sports, and finance articles online, and students can test themselves with mini-quizzes and a final exam.

English Vocabulary For Beginning ESL Learners



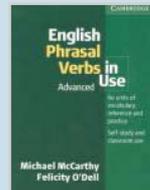
This book introduces you to hundreds of essential words and helps you quickly build the skills and confidence needed to use them correctly in conversation. Many useful exercises provide you with word-building practice.

English Grammar In Use



This book is a fully updated version of the classic grammar title. This third edition has 10 completely new units, including 9 new units on phrasal verbs to more thoroughly cover this important area for intermediate students. The with-answers version of the book is packaged with the CD ROM.

English Phrasal Verbs in Use



This reference and practice book contains 60 attractive two-page units featuring approximately 1,000 phrasal verbs. This new level of English Phrasal Verbs in Use is specifically designed for advanced level students looking to improve their knowledge of this often difficult area of the English language. The book includes many phrasal verbs useful to students preparing for the Cambridge CAE, CPE and IELTS examinations.

What's New at The American Corners?

IN YEREVAN: Intercultural Communication



Dr. Rochelle Parks-Yancy at Yerevan American Corner

On Saturday, June 19, 2010, the American Corner in Yerevan organized an "Americans at the American Corner" public lecture entitled "Intercultural Communication." Dr. Rochelle Parks-Yancy, Assistant Professor of Management for the Jesse H. Jones School of Business at Texas Southern University led the discussion.

Dr. Parks-Yancy highlighted the various factors that influence a person's cultural identity, presenting the huge differences between various nations and bringing examples of very typical situations that occur in everyday life. She noted that culture is a social construct and we develop our cultural influences from parents, friends, schools, religion, and the media, among others. She also discussed her impressions of Armenia from her American perspective.

IN YEREVAN: Community Organizing in the United States

On May 15, 2010, the American Corner in Yerevan featured an "Americans at the American Corner" lecture entitled "Community Organizing in the United States." U.S. Embassy Political Officer Bart Putney served as guest speaker.

Mr. Putney noted that before joining the Foreign Service and becoming a U.S. diplomat, he worked as a community organizer. He explained that community organizing is the process by which people who live in proximity to each other come together into an organization that acts in their shared self-interests. A core goal of community organizing is to generate "durable power" for an organization representing the community, allowing it to influence key decision-makers on a range of issues over time. Ideally, stated Putney, a community organization can influence institutions, increase direct representation within decision-making bodies, and foster social reform. He also explained that organizing groups often struggle to find resources. During the question and answer session, Mr. Putney shared many humorous anecdotes and noted that despite difficulties, "facing challenges often brings success."

More than 30 students and alumni participated in the lecture. They asked many questions about the requirements and qualifications for becoming an organizer. Mr. Putney said that there are no requirements. He stated that the real key is motivation, a creative strategy, and intuition in how to mobilize people. After the lecture, participants had a clearer understanding of the requirements, advantages and disadvantages of becoming an organizer.



IN GYUMRI: My Career as an American Diplomat



Discussing with the audience

On June 9, 2010, U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer Thomas Mittnacht gave a public lecture at the Gyumri American Corner entitled "My Career as an American Diplomat."

Mr. Mittnacht explained that American diplomats come from a variety of backgrounds. He said that after graduating from his university studies, he began a career in banking. Later, he decided to join the State Department. The Foreign Service is a proud profession and every year thousands of young professionals apply to become a diplomat. Mr. Mittnacht explained the selection process.

During his presentation, Mr. Mittnacht spoke about his career and the countries he has visited. He showed pictures that illustrate some of the interesting aspects of the profession and how the families of diplomats live. The audience enjoyed hearing his humorous stories and tales about some of the more challenging and rewarding times of his career in Mexico, Croatia, Russia and Chile.

The audience asked many questions about the advantages and disadvantages of a Foreign Service career, the necessary qualifications for becoming a diplomat, how many years a can diplomat stay in one country, etc.

IN VANADZOR: Driving Across the USA

On Wednesday, June 2, 2010, the U.S. Embassy Political Admin Assistant Srin Seetharahlm gave a public lecture in Vanadzor on "Driving Across the USA." The lecture started by screening a small part of a film about America's most famous highway – Route 66.

During the lecture, which was illustrated by Power Point, the students virtually travelled from the East Coast to West Coast on the highways of the USA.

Mr. Seetharahlm discussed the diversity of nature surrounding the highways and the fun people have by travelling, shopping or resting in the small town motels or inns alongside the highways. He also noted that many retired Americans buy a "house on wheels" and spend their time travelling, visiting their children and grandchildren. He also gave tips on how one should prepare for that kind of long journey, one of the most important preconditions of it being a full tank of gasoline. Participants actively expressed their opinions and asked questions concerning travel safety, national parks, road conditions, and traffic rules.



Blogging and Microblogging

WHAT IS A BLOG?

A blog is a frequently updated Web page that contains links to resources, personal commentaries and opinions. In 1998, when blogs first made their appearance on the Web, there were maybe a few dozen in existence. There are now over 135 million. One of the reasons why blogs have become so popular is the simplicity of publishing them. There is no need for the author to know HTML, and there are free blog automated publishing tools, such as Blogger, that make it easy for anyone to create a blog.

WHAT ARE BLOGS USED FOR?



Blogs are often defined as personal online journals, operated by individuals who compile lists of links and comment on these links to provide information that interests them, with new links on the top of the page, and older ones at the bottom. Recently, however, blogging culture has grown to include political campaigns, institutions such as libraries and museums, and virtually any entity that wants to create a community of interest around particular topics. Blogs are also a good way to uncover news that the regular media cannot or will not cover. Blogs have encouraged the trend of "**citizen journalism**." Blogs can be authored by one person or a team of people. The public can usually insert comments, which makes them effective interactive tools. Blogs can be great tools to facilitate conversations, brainstorming, and topical discussions.

Here are some Popular Free Blog Services:

- Blogger <http://www.blogger.com>
- LiveJournal <http://www.livejournal.com>
- Wordpress <http://www.wordpress.com>

MICROBLOGGING USING TWITTER

Microblogging is a form of communication that allows users to publish short pieces (usually 140 characters) of content on the Internet. The content may include text and/or links to articles, pictures, videos, or other types of media. Microbloggers create profiles and post information that others may or may not



"follow." Twitter is currently the most popular microblogging tool. It allows users to send and read other users' updates (otherwise known as **tweets**). A

user sends a tweet to their Twitter account using the Twitter Web site, Web-enabled cell phone, or through another Web-based application. A

very few countries allow tweets to be sent via SMS (short message system). The tweets are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have signed up to "follow" them.



Here are blogs of U.S. and Armenian officials:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/>

<http://blogs.state.gov/>

<http://secretaryclinton.wordpress.com/>

<http://blogs.america.gov/obama/>

<http://tigransargsyan.livejournal.com/>

<http://beglaryan.wordpress.com/>

Most visited Armenian blogs (Circle.am)

<http://kornelij.livejournal.com/>

<http://pigh.livejournal.com/>

<http://armjan.wordpress.com/>

<http://517design.livejournal.com/>

THE LANGUAGE OF BLOGGING

Blog — Short for Weblog. A Web site that contains written material, links, or photos being posted all the time, usually by one individual, on a personal basis.

(To) blog — Run a blog or post material on one.

Blogger — Person who runs a blog.

Blogsphere — All blogs, or the blogging community.

Blogroll — List of external links appearing on a blog, often links to other blogs and usually in a column on the homepage. Often amounts to a "sub-community" of bloggers who are friends.

Blogware — Software used to run a blog.

Comment spam — Like e-mail spam. Robot "spambots" flood a blog with advertising in the form of bogus comments.

Blogging and Microblogging

Content syndication — How a site's author or administrator makes all or part of its content available for posting on another Web site.

Moblog — Contraction of "mobile blog." A blog that can be updated remotely from anywhere, such as by phone or a digital assistant.

Permalink — Contraction of "permanent link." Web address of each item posted on a blog. A handy way of permanently bookmarking a post, even after it has been archived by the blog it originated from.

Photoblog — A blog containing mostly photos, posted constantly and chronologically.

Podcasting — Contraction of "iPod" and "broadcasting." Posting audio and video material on a blog and its RSS feed, for digital players.

Post — An item posted on a blog. Can be a message or news, or just a photo or a link. Usually a short item, including external links, that visitors can comment on.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) — A way of handling the latest items posted on a Web site, especially suited for blogs because it alerts users whenever their favorite blogs are updated.

RSS Aggregator — A software or online service allowing a blogger to read an RSS feed, especially the latest posts on his favorite blogs. Also called a reader or feedreader.

RSS Feed — The file containing a blog's latest posts. It is read by an RSS aggregator/reader and shows at once when a blog has been updated.

Trackback — A way that Web sites can communicate automatically by alerting each other that an item posted on a blog refers to a previous item.

Web diary — A blog.

Wiki — From the Hawaiian word "wikiwiki" (quick). A Web site that can be easily and quickly updated by any visitor. The word has also come to mean the tools used to create a wiki (wiki engines). Blogs and wikis have some similarities but are quite different.

TWITTER'S IMPACT ON RESEARCH: SEARCHING THE LIVE WEB

While Twitter began as a tool primarily used by individuals to let others in their community know what they were doing, it has grown to be a significant communication tool for institutions, companies, journalists (including "citizen" journalists documenting local news they have witnessed), and more. Some recent events such as the [Iranian election](#) and the [2008 earthquake in China](#) show the power of Twitter to document events that the mainstream media is unable to cover. By searching Twitter traffic using <http://search.twitter.com>, we can follow live breaking news stories as they happen. At any time of the day or night Twitter is capturing news. The news may be as mundane as a traffic jam on a major thoroughfare, or as tragic as a tsunami in Southeast Asia, but for those affected by an event, any news may be important.

State of America's Libraries

Internet use continues to expand at public libraries, which have seen double-digit growth since 2007 in the online services they make available to their patrons. More than 71% of public libraries provide their community's only free public access to computers and the internet, according to an article in the November 2009 issue of *American Libraries* (p. 14). Wireless access also continues to grow and is now offered at more than 80% of public libraries.

Ninety-six percent of Americans feel that school libraries are an essential part of the education experience because they provide resources to students and teachers and because they give every child the opportunity to read and learn.

America's academic libraries are experiencing increased use, both physical and virtual. The National Center for Education Statistic (NCES) reports academic libraries have more than 20.3 million visits per week, answered more than 1.1 million reference questions, and made more than 498,000 presentations to groups. Almost 95% of students use their academic library's website at least once a week.

Global Reach

SCOTLAND

Jacqueline Wilson overtook Harry Potter author J. K. Rowling as the writer whose books are most stolen from Scotland's libraries. Rowling's books have slipped from the top spot to sixth in the most stolen list. Thieves have instead been taking works by children's author Wilson, American writer James Patterson, and romance novelist Nora Roberts.

UNITED KINGDOM

Free internet access and coffee shops could help reverse a decline in the number of people using libraries in England, according to a government report released March 22. The *Modernisation Review of Public Libraries: A Policy Statement* stated that opening on Sundays and offering e-books could boost library use.

AMERICAN CORNER COORDINATORS ATTEND INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY CONFERENCE

From June 6-12, Yerevan American Corner Coordinator Anna Grigoryan and Vanadzor American Corner Coordinator Lilit Hunanyan participated in the 17th International Library Conference "Crimea 2010." The annual conference is a forum for library professionals, heads of publishing houses, museum directors, archivists, and IT companies representatives from around the world to discuss library science issues.

The first two days of the conference were dedicated to American Corners worldwide. The coordinators of many American Corners shared their experiences, their programs, and new ideas to be implemented. The U.S. Consul in St. Petersburg and creator of the first American Corner, Mr. Eric Johnson, also provided a history of the American Corner's creation and its role for the patrons and the coordinators working there. Ms. Michelle Woods (Library of Congress) and Ms. Barbara Conaty (U.S. Department of State) also delivered speeches giving very useful data about web pages that are helpful both for the coordinators and patrons.

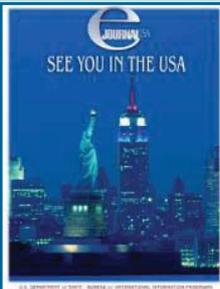


From left: Anna Grigoryan, Barbara Conaty (IRO, Washington), Andrea McGlinchey (IRO, Warsaw), Lilit Hunanyan

The two representatives from Armenia prepared a Power Point presentation covering the activities of the American Corner program in Armenia. They described the basic functions of the American Corner Web site and the mailman program, which is one of the most convenient ways for the corners to disseminate information about AC services and programs. The coordinators also presented a usage statistics web page.

The conference was an excellent opportunity for international dialogue, and the coordinators returned to Armenia with many inspired ideas.

EJOURNAL USA: "SEE YOU IN THE U.S.A."



Every year tens of millions of people visit the United States. They come to study, or for business, or for fun. But the best reason of all is to meet Americans. "See You in the USA," the May 2010 issue of eJournal USA, is a successor to the September 2005 edition. It provides information and tools to help foreigners plan travel to the United States. Contents of "See You in the USA" include:

- Specific information about applying for student, tourist, and business visas.
- Firsthand accounts by students from India, Morocco, Iran, and Bangladesh
- "An Official Welcome," by Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Janice L. Jacobs.

- "The Trouble With Top-Schools Lists," by Burton Bollag, former correspondent for The Chronicle of Higher Learning.

- "The Top 10 U.S. Destinations" and "10 Other Worthy Destinations," by Tanner Latham

- "10 Great American Sandwiches," by journalist and food writer Robb Walsh.

The URL for the journal is: <http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa.html#0510>

PDF and Internet versions are currently available in English on www.america.gov, the IIP Web site. Selected articles will also be available for comment and discussion on the eJournal USA Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/ejournalUSA>

MONDAY MOVIES

As part of its movie series, an English language film is shown at the U.S. Embassy Information Resource Center every third Monday of the month. A 30 minute English-language discussion follows each movie.

An upcoming movie will be shown on July 18, at 15:00pm.

The next movie to be shown is "To Kill a Mockingbird" (1962) by Robert Mulligan. Please contact: ircyerevan@usa.am or call 49 44 11 if you plan to attend the movie series.



The U.S. Embassy Information Resource Center is open to the public Monday through Friday from 13:00 to 18:00.
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