



# Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

## INSIDE

### U.S. Military General and Flag Officers Visit Ethiopia

Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) Friday, August 10, 2007 -- Nineteen newly selected American military general and flag officers have concluded a three-day visit, August 8-10, to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. They are part of a program, called CAPSTONE, which provides seminars and field experience in national military strategies and how multinational operations support national strategic goals and objectives un-

der the auspices of the National Defense University. The nineteen officers visited Djibouti and Kenya prior to their visit to Ethiopia, and will next travel to Senegal and Tunisia.

While in Ethiopia, the newly selected American military general and flag officers had separate meetings with Ato Kuma Demeksa, Minister of Defense, and Ato Tekeda Alemu, State Minister of

Foreign Affairs. They also met with the African Union and United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and members of the Ethiopian Command and Staff College.

In addition to meetings with their Ethiopian counterparts, the nineteen officers visited Entoto Maryam Church, the September 11 memorial on Entoto Mountain and the National Palace. ♦

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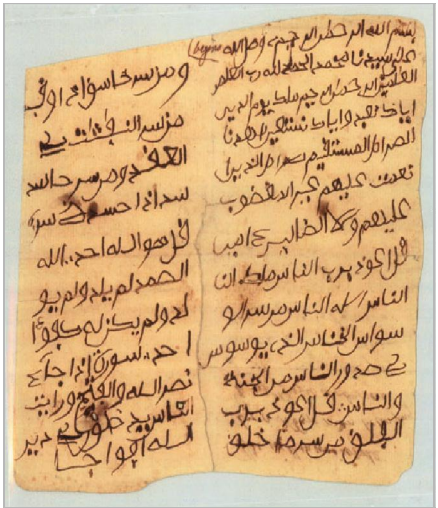
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### America's Extensive Islamic Heritage Detailed in Exhibitions

By Jeffrey Thomas  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Some years ago, Amir Muhammad began researching his family's roots without any thought that it might lead him to America's little-known Islamic heritage. Until then, he assumed that most American Muslims arrived in the 20th century, and he was unaware of any Islamic connection in



A Charno Arabic letter done in 1768  
(Collections & Stories of American Muslims)

his own family prior to his personal acceptance of Islam 35 years ago.

But Muhammad discovered he does have Muslim ancestors, as do many African Americans and Native Americans, and that the story of Islam in America reaches back much further than most people imagine.

In 1996, he established the nonprofit  
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## America's Extensive Islamic Heritage Detailed in Exhibitions . . .

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organization Collections & Stories of American Muslims (CSAM), of which he is president and curator. His goal is to uncover and preserve America's Islamic heritage and to create a greater awareness of the Islamic experience in America.

CSAM exhibitions have been displayed at universities, public libraries and community centers in the United States and abroad, including the Smithsonian Institution's Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture, located in Washington. Muhammad is seeking a building to house his collection.

Muhammad begins his account of America's Islamic heritage with Moors fleeing the Spanish Inquisition. One of them was Estevanico, a Moor born in North Africa, who accompanied Spanish explorers in 1527 to what would become the Southwestern United States.

Slavery enters the story of Islam in America with the early European settlement. One of the myths Muhammad seeks to dispel is that enslaved Africans brought by the settlers had no organized religion and could not read or write.

He cites the story of Ayuba (Job) Suleiman Diallo, who was captured in 1730 in The Gambia and brought to Annapolis, Maryland, where he was sold into slavery. Diallo wrote a letter in Arabic to his father, according to Muhammad. The letter came to the attention of James Oglethorpe, the founder of the U.S. state Georgia, who helped buy Diallo's freedom. Oglethorpe sent him to London and then back to his

hometown to work for the Royal African Company of London. While in London, Diallo wrote down in Arabic three copies of the Quran from memory.

The CSAM exhibition includes four Quranic suras written in Arabic by a man named Charno in 1768, petitions written in Arabic by South



A photo of Ayuba (Job) Suleiman Diallo (Collections & Stories of American Muslims)

Carolina Muslims seeking their freedom in 1753 and 1790, and photos of a diary in Arabic kept by a man named Ben Ali around 1829. Sources from the 17th and 18th centuries often refer to African Americans as Muslims, or as bearing Muslim names, or as practicing the Islamic faith. Muhammad notes that many early American Muslims had engraved on their tombstones a hand with one finger pointing up as the Islamic symbol of God's oneness, and their tombstones were facing toward Makkah.

In every war the United States has fought, Muslims have played a role.

Two Muslims who fought with distinction in the American Revolutionary War, Peter Salem and Salem Poor, have been honored on U.S. postage stamps.

Muhammad also has found records of 292 U.S. Civil War veterans with Islamic names who fought for the Union and more than 5,200 American Muslims who served in World War I.

By the later 19th century and early 20th century, Muslim immigrants were arriving in America from Yemen, Albania, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, India and Poland. In 1899, Syrian immigrants in Ross, North Dakota, established what may have been the first Muslim place of worship in America. But the "first effective mosque in North America" was built by Albanian Muslims in Biddeford, Maine, in 1915, according to Muhammad.

He says that as a Muslim, he has found the stories that he uncovered inspiring. American Muslims from various backgrounds "kept their faith no matter how bad things were," he said during a presentation at the State Department August 9.

"Muslims and Islam have been a part of the American fabric for centuries," he said. "It is part of the many threads of culture, colors, religions and lifestyles that make up the American pluralistic quilt."

Muhammad has written several books, including America's Masajid and Islamic Centers: A Pictorial Account, Muslims in America: 7 Centuries of History, People of Color in Pre-Islamic and Islamic History and Contributions of Muslims to the World. ♦

## Renovators Help Iranian American Stay Active Despite Disability

By Howard Cincotta  
USINFO Special Correspondent

Washington – Sometimes it is the small things in life that count, especially for someone with a disability.

For Fariborz (Frank) Fouladi, an Iranian American with multiple sclerosis, the small things were modifications to his house: a second paved walkway and wheelchair ramp, interior railings and other changes to make his home more comfortable and accessible – including a "wheelchair friendly" shower.

Although several of the renovations took a month or more to complete, much of the work was done in a single day when a swarm of some 30 volunteers descended on the Fouladi home in Maryland from two organizations – the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), which has more than 35 million members nationwide, and the local community organization Rebuilding Together, which focuses on home rehabilitation for low-income and disabled families.

"This is what America is all about," Fouladi declared of the burst of volunteer activity around his home. Despite his medical condition, Fouladi remains a man who exudes energy and enthusiasm for his life, family and adopted country. "Behind my beard, there is an all-American boy," he wrote in an e-mail to USINFO.

Volunteering and charitable giving, such as that provided to the Fouladi family, is a prominent aspect of life in the United States. In 2006, for example, Americans increased the amount of charitable donations to a record \$295 billion, according to the Giving USA Foundation, which noted that more than 80 percent of

this money is given by individuals. (See related article (<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=June&x=200706261522251CJsamohTO.8012354> ).)

For their part, foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Ford Foundation gave an estimated \$40.7 billion in 2006. U.S. corporations gave another \$4.2 billion. These amounts represent increases of 12 percent and 6 percent, respectively, over the previous year.

Apart from donations of money and material, estimates are that more than 60 million Americans donated their time in 2006, including for nongovernmental domestic volunteer groups like Habitat for Humanity (which builds homes for low-income families) and for federally sponsored volunteer programs like the domestic AmeriCorps and the international Peace Corps.

AARP, for example, closes its offices for one day each May so that employees can participate in a National Day of Service. In 2007, more than 32,000 AARP staff, members and other volunteers repaired homes, sorted clothing donations, worked at food banks, ran blood drives and assisted the elderly and disabled.

The smaller Rebuilding Together organization assembles skilled and unskilled volunteers from civic and religious organizations, as well as local companies, to repair and renovate the homes of poor or disabled families living in Montgomery County, Maryland. The organization has completed work on more than 1,100 such homes since 1990 – both "light" projects requiring rou-

tine maintenance and painting, or "heavy" houses that need extensive renovations and skilled repair work.

Fouladi was born in Iran and emigrated to the United States shortly after finishing high school. He studied English in California, and later earned a degree in civil engineering from George Washington University in Washington.

In the 1990s, he worked in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where he met his Egyptian-born wife and where his two children were born. "Our life has been sweet and challenging," he comments, because just before his daughter's birth, he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

The family returned to the United States in 2000. Fouladi says he adopted the nickname Frank because, in English, being "frank" means speaking openly and freely about one's thoughts. "I cherish and honor our freedom of speech," he says, "our laws of checks and balances, and our democratic government." He now works as a credit specialist and design consultant with the international home improvement retailer, The Home Depot Inc. "They took a chance on me," Fouladi said of the company's decision to hire someone with a progressive disability.

Fouladi continues to pursue his other dreams and interests. He is passionate about building greater bonds among people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. On several occasions, Montgomery County has honored Fouladi for serving as an effective cultural ambassador promoting greater understanding and support for cultural diversity.

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## Stopping Violence in Guatemala Aim of New International Body

By Eric Green  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- The global community is hailing the creation of a new international commission that will aid Guatemalan authorities in investigating and prosecuting illicit groups engaged in violence in the Central American nation.

The new commission's work in curtailing violence in Guatemala is seen as boosting that nation's human rights condition and the rule of law.

The Guatemalan Congress on August 1 approved creation of the body, called the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG).

James Derham, U.S. ambassador to Guatemala, told USINFO August 10 that the United States, along with other international donors, plans to contribute funds for CICIG and is in the process of determining funding sources to help get the commission operating as soon as possible.

Derham said that under an initial two-year mandate, the U.N.-led commission will investigate crimes committed by "criminal structures and clandestine security organizations that threaten civil and political rights and undermine the rule of law in Guatemala." Derham added that the commission will assist Guatemalan government institutions in prosecuting the "clandestine groups, promoting justice and police reforms, and implementing institutional vetting [screening] processes."

CICIG will be an independent body with headquarters in Guatemala City, although its commissioner will be appointed by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The commissioner will report periodically to Ban.

Derham indicated that while the United Nations has supported both international and national "truth



President Bush is welcomed by Guatemalan President Oscar Berger in March 2006. (AP Images)

commissions" in Latin America and worldwide, this will be the first time that a U.N.-sponsored commission will support local authorities in their work to prosecute crime. Truth commissions, such as one established in Guatemala in 1994, are used to clarify events that occur during a country's internal conflict. As part of its mandate, CICIG will seek to strengthen Guatemalan government institutions, such as the public prosecutor's office, police and judiciary, to dismantle clandestine groups.

Derham said that under the agreement creating CICIG, the Guatemalan government, in consultation with the United Nations, is commit-

ted to developing and submitting to the Guatemalan Congress a series of reforms necessary to ensure the proper functioning of the country's criminal investigation and prosecution system and to bring the legal system into compliance with international human rights conventions.

U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey said in an August 2 statement that the United

States congratulated the Guatemalan Congress for approving the agreement establishing the commission.

Casey said the commission's goals of helping Guatemalan authorities stop the violence of illicit groups is a "groundbreaking and promising initiative." The United States, he added, "will continue to seek ways to support" CICIG.

Guatemala was ravaged by a 36-year civil war that ended in 1996. More than 200,000 people were killed in the conflict.

The State Department said in a February "background note" on Guatemala that "common and violent crime, aggravated by a legacy of violence and vigilante justice, presents a serious challenge" in the country. In addition, impunity from justice is a major problem, "primarily because democratic institutions, including those responsible for the administration of justice, have developed only a limited capacity to cope with this legacy," the department said.

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## New U.S. Poet Laureate Charles Simic Immigrated as Teen

By Jeffrey Thomas  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington - Charles Simic, the new poet laureate of the United States, did not begin learning English until he was 15 and moved to New York City, then Chicago, after a traumatic childhood in the former Yugoslavia.

"The big, big influence on my life was being born in Yugoslavia in 1938. And then, in 1941, the war started and I was there during the war, and then in the years after the war under communism. The war years in Yugoslavia were pure hell," Simic told USINFO in an interview August 9.

In 1953, Simic, his mother and brother were able to travel to Paris, where they stayed for a year. Then they moved on to the United States to join Simic's father. "If you came to New York in 1954, it was incredible. Europe was still gray; there were still ruins. New York was just dazzling. When I was a little kid in Yugoslavia I loved jazz, I loved movies, so this was paradise," Simic said.

Later, as a youth in Chicago, he wanted to be a painter. "I started writing in high school and then I met people who were writers and poets. We would talk about poetry, read poetry. I started publishing my first poems in 1959 in the Chicago Review – a pretty good magazine. So five years after I entered the United States, I published my first poem."

An immigrant learning English in his teens "doesn't take it for granted,"



Poet Charles Simic at the City University of New York. (File photo AP Images)

Simic said. "One notices things about language, one notices things about American culture and other things that I imagine a native-born would not see."

Although he published his first book of poems in 1967, Simic did not really take himself seriously as a writer until a few years later. "The first time I realized my poetry meant something was in 1970. I was living in New York City, working. I worked at a photography magazine. I started getting letters out of the blue from colleges and universities asking me whether I would come and teach creative writing and literature. I had planned to spend the rest of my life in New York City working at different jobs, but to my surprise these offers kept coming."

In 1971, Simic took a teaching job at California State College at Hayward. In 1973, he moved to the University of New Hampshire, where he taught until his recent retirement.

His appointment as the 15th poet laureate was announced by the Library of Congress August 2. On the same day, the Academy of American Poets awarded him the \$100,000 Wallace Stevens Award for "outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry."

"The range of Charles Simic's imagination is evident in his stunning and unusual imagery. He handles language with the skill of a master craftsman, yet his poems are easily accessible, often meditative and surprising. He has given us a rich body of highly organized poetry with shades of darkness and flashes of ironic humor," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington in making the appointment.

The position of "poet laureate consultant in poetry" at the Library of Congress, modeled on its British equivalent, was created in 1986. It was held in the past by such notable poets as Robert Penn Warren, Richard Wilbur, W.S. Merwin, Mark Strand, Rita Dove and the Russian-born Nobel Prize laureate, Joseph Brodsky. From 1937 to 1986, the position existed under two separate titles.

According to the Library of Congress, the poet laureate "seeks to raise the national consciousness to the greater appreciation of the reading and writing of poetry." But in Simic's words, the position "is pretty much what you make of it." He will give a speech at the library's National Book Festival Sep-

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## New U.S. Poet Laureate Charles Simic Immigrated as Teen . . .

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tember 29 and a poetry reading October 17.

Simic rejects the notion that the poet has any role other than "to write good poems." Every time he is asked about the role of the poet, he thinks of the communists and their "cultural policy."

"They always had duties and roles for writers and poets. Poetry presents poetry. Any poet is an individual voice. If he is a good poet or she is a good poet, the whole question is of trying to do what you do well -- the integrity that comes with the work that you do," he said.

The audience for poetry in the United States today is "terrific,"

Simic said, and has been so since the so-called "Beat" poets of the 1950s and early 1960s. "Poetry readings became really, really popular everywhere, so that there isn't a college, university or community center in this country that doesn't have a poetry series. People are used to going to poetry readings. The audiences are huge."

Simic sees himself as writing in the New England tradition of Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost and Wallace Stevens, and feels "at home philosophically with New England writers like Nathaniel Hawthorne or Ralph Waldo Emerson or Thoreau - all the grumpy ones."

He has won many awards, including a Pulitzer Prize and the "genius award" from the MacArthur Foun-

ation.

He also has won major awards for his numerous translations of French, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian and Slovenian poetry, and is currently revising and expanding an anthology of Serbian poetry, for which he won an award from the Academy of American Poets in 1993.

For someone unfamiliar with his work, Simic suggested a selection of his later poems, *The Voice at 3 AM* (2003), as the best place to start.

He recommends "Prodigy," a poem set in Belgrade, Serbia, during World War II. He remains especially fond of this poem, he told USINFO.

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## Stopping Violence in Guatemala Aim of New International Body . . .

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The United Nations said August 1 the commission's creation sends a "clear message" both to Guatemala's people and to the international community that Guatemala is "committed to fight crime and impunity, and to provide security for its citizens."

The European Union also praised CICIG's creation. In an August 1 statement, that body said it is "truly confident" that the commission will help Guatemalan authorities strengthen the country's rule of law and provide "instruments to offer citizens an environment of security and respect for human rights."

### HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS REACT

Nongovernmental human rights and humanitarian groups also issued statements touting CICIG's mission. New York-based Human Rights First said August 2 that some of the people responsible for committing the worst atrocities during Guatemala's civil war later formed illegal security organizations, which "now rival" the power of the Guatemalan government.

London-based Amnesty International said CICIG could become a "valuable contributor in the fight against Guatemalan clandestine groups and the impunity they enjoy."

Amnesty International said it welcomed the international support the commission has received.

A nonpartisan Washington-based humanitarian group, the Guatemala Human Rights Commission, called CICIG's formation a "landmark decision that will hopefully curtail the escalating violence that plagues" Guatemala.

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## National Powwow Honors American Indian Cultural Traditions

By Lauren Monsen  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Since the late 19th century, powwows have been a significant social and cultural force in the lives of the indigenous people of North America.

Bringing together American Indians from different tribes to dance, sing and share traditions, these social events are held throughout the United States from March to September, but the largest on the East Coast is the National Powwow, a biennial event in Washington that attracts members of some 250 tribal nations from the United States and Canada.

The Northern Plains Dancers, a group that performs traditional and contemporary American Indian dances, traveled from the Fort Berthold reservation in North Dakota to attend the third National Powwow (August 10-12). Before joining the festivities, the group stopped at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) to perform at the museum's amphitheater.

In interviews with USINFO, several of the dancers spoke about the importance of sharing their culture with outsiders, and all stressed the need to dispel negative stereotypes.

"I want to show people that there's more to us than what they have seen in movies," said Wylie Bearstail (of the Hidatsa and Arikara people), a grass dancer. Rylan Baker (Hidatsa/Cree), who specializes in the Men's Fancy Dance, agreed: "I hope that [spectators] will get a different perspective on Native Americans. We're not sav-

ages; we're just like anyone else."

Accompanied by singers who also played drums, the dancers entered the amphitheater wearing regalia adorned with eagle feathers, fringe and beadwork. Individual dancers



National Powwow

then demonstrated popular dance styles performed on the powwow circuit.

With fringe flying, the dancers kept up with the drumbeats while an offstage narrator explained the significance of each dance. One example is the Buffalo Dance, which is performed by a male dancer in a horned buffalo headdress. In American Indian culture, hunters were reverent toward the animals they killed for meat and hides, reciting prayers to thank the animals for sacrificing their lives.

Buffalo herds, hunted to near-extinction by white settlers in the American West, have made a comeback and are being conserved in their native habitat by Indian tribes.

"Today, the buffalo has become the symbol of our survival," the narrator said.

Many powwow dance styles are faithful to 19th-century prototypes, but others are modern-day variants. The Grass Dance, which spread throughout America's Great Plains region in the late 1800s, declined in popularity during the 1960s and 1970s but has experienced a revival. Performed by male dancers wearing regalia with yarn fringes that represent prairie grass, this dance is thought to be part of a complex healing ceremony.

The Women's Jingle Dress Dance is another traditional dance conceived as a healing ritual. Two female dancers demonstrated its steps, punctuated at every turn by the jingle of metal cones that adorned their dresses.

Women once were relegated to the perimeter of dance circles in American Indian societies, but they now join men in the center, performing their own dances as well as the "couples dances" in which they link hands with their male partners.

Onstage at the NMAI, a male dancer performed the Eagle Dance, sporting a band of eagle feathers on each arm. As he circled with arms outstretched, he mimicked an eagle in flight, thereby sending messages to the Great Spirit. The eagle is regarded as a messenger to the spirit world, because it flies closer to the heavens than almost any other bird, according to the narrator.

Rituals and dances associated with warrior honor societies still are performed, but today they honor American Indian soldiers serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, as well as

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## Baseball Icon Cal Ripken Using Sports to Bridge Cultures

By Eric Green  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Baseball Hall of Fame player Cal Ripken Jr. is taking his talents teaching kids the fundamentals of the sport to a higher level as a new U.S. State Department public diplomacy sports envoy.

Ripken's first assignment will be visiting China October 28-November 6 to train Chinese youngsters in the Asian country's budding baseball program.

Ripken, a shortstop and third baseman in his 21-year career with the Baltimore Orioles, said August 13 at the State Department that he plans to use his new position to bridge the gap between people of different languages and cultures.

Introduced by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Karen Hughes, under secretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, Ripken said that sports, and baseball in particular, is "very magical. It can go across cultural lines; it can appeal to all kids and all people."

"Sport is a great way to teach teamwork and to teach how to deal with people, to understand that preparation is important in all aspects of your life," said Ripken.

He said he will train Chinese youngsters in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, with the hope

of planting a few seeds that will "grow" the game of baseball in China. Ripken said he also hoped to visit other countries as the U.S. sports envoy.

Known as the "Ironman" for playing in a record-breaking 2,632 consecutive major league games, Ripken said serving as a sports envoy is not a political statement for him.



Cal Ripken Jr. will promote baseball globally as a U.S. State Department public diplomacy envoy. (Janine Sides/State Dept.)

Rather, the assignment is about "using baseball for good reasons, to cross cultural lines," he said.

He told his State Department audience: "I think it's amazing to watch kids interact [who] can't speak and can't communicate" with each other because of language differences "but do have sport in common. There's a respect, there's a credibility that's born" in the dedication required to achieve skill in baseball and "anything [else] if you're willing to work hard for it."

### REMARKS OF RICE, HUGHES

Secretary Rice said Ripken's work with kids did not begin with his new sports envoy role. The secretary said the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation, named for the ex-ballplayer's father, uses baseball to teach "life's lessons" to disadvantaged youth. In addition, she said, he built the Ripken Youth Baseball Academy, which she said is the largest baseball academy in the United States.

At that academy in Aberdeen, Maryland, where Ripken went to high school, thousands of young people learn the finer points of baseball and deepen their love for playing the game, said Rice.

In addition, Ripken is hosting the Cal Ripken World Series in Aberdeen for youngsters 12 years old and younger. Korea and Japan are among the six foreign countries with teams in the August 11-18 event.

Ripken said, "It's difficult for me to communicate with the Koreans -- I don't speak Korean -- [or Japanese], but when you put [the youngsters] out on the baseball field and you start seeing them ... the communication obstacles go away."

Hughes said the U.S. public diplomacy envoy position was created in 2006 as part of a larger effort to encourage Americans from all walks



## Bush Dedicates Memorial to Victims of Communism

By David McKeeby  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington – The new Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington stands as a reminder that freedom is precious and cannot be taken for granted, President Bush says.

In a June 12 speech at the unveiling of the memorial, Bush said the Cold War taught that "evil is real and must be confronted; and that given the chance, men commanded by harsh and hateful ideologies will commit unspeakable crimes and take the lives of millions." These lessons continue to resonate today as nations fight violent Islamic radicalism and other forms of terrorism, he continued.

Joined by members of parliament from Hungary and the Czech Republic, former dissidents and foreign ambassadors, Bush dedicated the monument to the memories of the millions killed by communism, from China to the former Soviet Union, Cambodia to Ethiopia, Cuba to Nicaragua, and North Korea to Vietnam.

"These voices cry out to all, and they're legion. The sheer numbers of those killed in communism's name are staggering," Bush said. He invoked the memories of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who rescued 100,000 Jews from the Nazis only to be arrested by the Soviets after World War II, and Polish clergyman Father Jerzy Popieluszko, who was killed by authorities for supporting Poland's anti-

communist Solidarity movement.

The memorial, a 4.2-meter-tall bronze replica of the "Goddess of Democracy" statue built by Chinese students during the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, was the brainchild of historian Lee Edwards and former ambassador Lev Dobri-

cents perished at the hands of communism, Bush said, helping to make the 20th century "the deadliest in human history."

"We'll never know the names of all who perished, but at this sacred place, communism's unknown victims will be consecrated to history and remembered forever," he said.

The president drew parallels between communism and terrorism.

"Like the communists, the terrorists and radicals who attacked our nation [September 11, 2001] are followers of a murderous ideology that despises freedom, crushes all dissent, has expansionist ambitions and pursues totalitarian aims," Bush said. "Like the communists, our new

enemies believe the innocent can be murdered to serve a radical vision."

But Bush added that terrorists, like communist regimes before them, are doomed to failure because they underestimate the power and attraction of democratic freedoms, and the commitment of the United States and its allies to preserving and extending liberty to all. "By remaining steadfast in freedom's cause, we will ensure that a future American president does not have to stand in a place like this and dedicate a memorial to the millions killed by the radicals and extremists of the 21st century," Bush said. ♦

ansky, who spent more than a decade raising nearly \$1 million to complete the project on a site near the U.S. Capitol.

The dedication ceremony was held on the 20th anniversary of former President Ronald Reagan's 1987 speech in Berlin in which he called on then-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall that separated the city and had divided a continent since the end of World War II. Bush noted that the wall would finally fall two years later, liberating the people of Central and Eastern Europe and changing the world.

In all, as many as 100 million inno-



President Bush addresses his remarks, June 12, 2007, at the dedication ceremony for the Victims of Communism Memorial

## Nuclear Power Industry Poised To Meet Challenges to Expansion

Washington -- The U.S. nuclear power industry is tackling a lack of skilled workers, insufficient manufacturing capacity and other problems as it works to expand its capacity to meet some of the projected increases in electricity demand.

The Bush administration and Congress, which see nuclear power as an essential part of energy security and any realistic climate change solution, have encouraged the expansion of the industry by streamlining the regulatory process and providing financial incentives for several new nuclear power plants.

Before the end of 2007, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) expects to receive three to five applications to construct and operate new reactors and about 10 more in 2008, according to NRC Chairman Dale Klein. Experts expect the first licenses to be granted in the beginning of the next decade.

### FACING NEW CHALLENGES

Before ground is broken for new facilities, the industry must address shortages of skilled workers, limited U.S. manufacturing capability and uncertainty about future uranium supplies.

Retirements and attritions are expected to trim the industry's work force by 40 percent over the next five years, according to the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), an industry trade group. Companies are dealing with the expected personnel shortages stemming from the graying work force by offering re-employment to retirees, making operational changes and entering into partnerships with local colleges to train workers. The departments of Labor and Energy are helping the

industry by awarding grants to universities to fund nuclear engineering, medicine and related programs.

But getting people educated and trained takes time, says NEI spokesman Steve Kerekes.

NRC's Klein is particularly concerned about the lack of certified welders and other construction workers when the expected nuclear construction boom materializes.

But Andrew Paterson of Ecoenergy International, a renewable energy company, believes the industry has enough lead time – about four years to five years – to train enough welders with the support of labor unions.

In addition, several bills moving through Congress address shortages of a skilled work force and scientists in general.

The manufacturing sector that constitutes a supply base for the industry also has changed since it built the last plants. The number of domestic suppliers with nuclear accreditation dropped to 100 in 2006 from 500 in the late 1980s, according to NEI. As a result, the industry must rely on foreign manufacturers for many major components such as steam generators or reactor vessels. Most of these suppliers are operating at full capacity but are experiencing production backlogs because other countries, including China and Russia, also plan to expand their nuclear power sectors.

In addition, utility executives worry about the future supplies of uranium fuel. They say supplies will be uncertain after an agreement with Russia to provide uranium from its decommissioned warheads expires in 2013. The Russian sup-

plies represent about half of the fuel burnt in U.S. commercial reactors.

Globalization of the nuclear power supply network puts an extra burden on NRC, which must assure the quality of parts and materials coming from all over the world, Klein said.

In May, at a forum in Paris, Klein proposed establishing "more extensive channels of communication" among national regulatory authorities to share information about inferior, counterfeit or defective components and equipment.

"We need to look at the same metrics and elevate our standards to the same level," he said.

### LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges to nuclear power expansion plans may present opportunities to other U.S. industries, according to NEI's Kerekes.

He said that NEI tries to broaden awareness of these plans in the hope that some U.S. manufacturers will take an interest in becoming suppliers to the industry.

As for nuclear fuel, the Energy Department has been circulating among utilities an innovative plan to extract nuclear fuel from retired U.S. nuclear warheads and wastes from the process of enriching uranium for U.S. nuclear weapons, according to Kerekes. And, with prices for uranium ore skyrocketing, an interest in reviving U.S. uranium mining operations is growing, he added.

Ecoenergy's Paterson believes major U.S. producers will consider catering to the nuclear industry's

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## National Powwow Honors American Indian Cultural Traditions . . .

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legendary warriors from the past.

The Men's Fancy Dance and Women's Fancy Shawl Dance are contemporary dances that have achieved tremendous popularity. In these styles, the women are known for the grace of their movements, while the men maintain a fast pace that demands great athleticism. As in all other American Indian dances, performers must pay close attention to the drums because they are required to conclude the dance exactly on the last beat.

"I've been dancing since I could walk," said Lauren Frank (Arikara/Blackfeet/Cree), who performed the Jingle Dance and Fancy Shawl Dance. "I'll definitely pass it on to my children."

With the participation of the Northern Plains Dancers and many others, modern powwows help preserve the social traditions that are at the core of American Indian identity. In the words of NMAI scholar George P. Horse Capture (A'aninin/Gros Ventre), the powwow is "a living celebration of the Indian peo-

ple of today" that will continue "with vigor, tradition and change, year after year, as long as there are Indian people in the world."

For more information, see the National Museum of the American Indian ( <http://www.nmai.si.edu/> ).

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## Nuclear Power Industry Poised To Meet Challenges to Expansion . . .

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needs when they see at least a dozen firm orders for new plants. Once they determine that starting new operations makes economic sense, those operations will be on the cutting edge of technology, he added.

Paterson said it is too early to tell whether revived U.S. uranium min-

ing operations will make economic sense, given stricter environmental and safety requirements faced by the uranium mining industry today.

He believes, however, it does not matter that much because major suppliers of uranium ore such as Australia, Canada and Kazakhstan have much idle uranium mining capacity.

For more stories on nuclear energy, see Climate Change and Clean Energy ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/global\\_issues/climate\\_change.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/global_issues/climate_change.html) ).

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## Renovators Help Iranian American Stay Active Despite Disability . . .

*(Continued from page 3)*

He remains eager to contribute to his community and country for as long as possible. "I do not wish to become just the fertilizer for the daisies – time is of the essence," Fouladi remarked, as he considered his efforts to promote cultural diversity in this corner of the United States and to explore the possibility of opening a Home Depot franchise in a country like Afghanistan.

Other Americans have helped Fouladi build what his disability requires he have. But he is giving back by building those crucial cultural bridges – and that is part of fulfilling his American Dream.

For more stories about U.S. society, see Volunteerism & Philanthropy ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life\\_and\\_culture/volunteerism.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life_and_culture/volunteerism.html) ) and Americans with Disabilities

( [http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/history\\_geography\\_and\\_population/civil\\_rights/disability\\_rights.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/history_geography_and_population/civil_rights/disability_rights.html) ).

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## Human Rights Groups Concerned over Chinese Press Freedom

By Eric Green  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Freedom of the press in China, where 29 Chinese journalists are in prison, is a top concern of independent press advocacy and human rights groups that have issued new reports about the matter.

Bob Dietz, Asia program coordinator for the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), told USINFO August 8 that his group has joined other global press organizations in calling for China to honor the commitments it made to stop repressing Chinese journalists when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) granted China rights to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

Speaking from Beijing, Dietz said his group intends to keep insisting to the IOC, based in Lausanne, Switzerland, that the IOC pressure the government of China to end its repression against Chinese journalists. Both the IOC and China promised in 2001 that the human rights situation in China would be improved for the 16-day Olympic competition that begins on August 8, 2008, Dietz said. But instead, he charged, the Chinese government continues to repress Chinese journalists while the IOC is "waffling" on the issue.

A CPJ report, released at a news conference August 7 in Beijing, said the Chinese government "severely restricts and censors the domestic press despite its promise to give the media complete freedom." Besides condemning the fact that 29 Chinese journalists are in prison, the report says "vast censorship rules are in place" in China, and "press attacks and harassment occur with impunity."

Dietz, one of the report's principal authors, said the CPJ news conference in Beijing attracted a sizable number of international and Chinese journalists. Although the release of the report received extensive global



Reporters Without Borders members protest China's imprisonment of its journalists in Paris, France, in 2005. (AP Images)

media coverage, "I'm not aware of anything being written about it in the Chinese press," Dietz said.

China's censors are said to keep a tight grip on local media and block foreign Web sites and broadcasts critical of the government.

### OTHER VOICES ON CHINA

John Negroponte, the U.S. deputy secretary of state, says the Chinese government "needs to respect its citizens' right to speak, assemble, and publish ... free of coercion."

Testifying May 1 about China before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Negroponte said the United States believes that China's people

"should have a meaningful say in how they are governed and to take part in the conduct of public affairs. These are fundamental human rights stipulated in international human rights instruments, as well as in China's own constitution."

Meanwhile, the Paris-based Reporters Without Borders staged events around the world August 7 to denounce what it called China's "appalling human rights situation." The press group, in a statement rebuking China for being the world's "largest jailer of journalists," called for the release of journalists, cyber-dissidents and free speech activists currently being held by the Chinese government, and for an end to censorship of the news media and the Internet. At least 12 Web sites in China were closed or blocked in July, said Reporters Without Borders.

Another group, Human Rights Watch, issued a report charging that Chinese authorities repeatedly have obstructed the work of foreign journalists in 2007, even though China adopted at the beginning of the year "temporary regulations to comply with commitments it made to the International Olympic Committee on guaranteeing journalists' freedom."

In an August 7 statement, Human Rights Watch said the Chinese government's "attempts to intimidate and detain foreign journalists for simply doing their jobs shows contempt" for the Olympic ideals of fair play.

The human rights group Amnesty International said August 7 that the Olympics are being used by the Chinese government to justify its "growing crackdown on Chinese

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## U.S., Middle Eastern Experts Join in Fighting Breast Cancer

By Louise Fenner  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- When Kendra Woods asked 25 colleagues at America's leading cancer treatment center to serve as advisers for a program to fight breast cancer in the Middle East, she expected about 10 people to agree. Instead, she got all 25 -- plus another person who heard about it.

"I'm just thrilled," said Woods, who oversees international collaborations at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. "These are experts, M.D.s and Ph.D.s, who have volunteered to work with Jordan."

M.D. Anderson is part of the U.S.-Middle East Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research. The center is working with the King Hussein Cancer Center in Amman, Jordan, to develop research projects, training, exchanges and other programs to improve health care for Middle Eastern women.

Another U.S. partner is Susan G. Komen for the Cure, America's largest grassroots organization of breast cancer survivors and activists. The foundation is training women and medical personnel about the importance of screening and early detection.

The breast cancer partnership, currently in Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, soon will expand to Saudi Arabia. It was launched in 2006 by U.S. first lady Laura Bush and is part of the State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

tiative (MEPI).

"We have the highest level of support in every country," said Erin Walsh, who oversees women's programs for the department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

diagnosed at earlier stages -- stage I or II -- because of greater awareness and mammography screening, she said. According to the American Joint Committee on Cancer, 87 percent to 98 percent of women whose breast cancer is diagnosed



Staff from King Hussein Cancer Foundation in Amman, Jordan, at the launch of Breast Cancer Partnership. (Courtesy ICF International)

About 70 percent of breast cancer cases in the Middle East have advanced to stage III or IV (locally advanced or spread to other areas of the body) by the time women see a doctor, according to Susan Brown, manager of health education for the Komen foundation. These stages are more difficult to treat. The situation is similar to that in the United States 25 years ago, when breast cancer was a "taboo subject," Brown said.

In contrast, 80 percent of breast cancers in American women are

at stage I live for at least five years (five-year survival rates are a standard way of discussing long-term survivals).

Brown conducted awareness training for medical personnel in Amman, women employees at Citibank in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and female university students in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. She hopes such efforts will encourage Middle Eastern women to talk more freely about breast cancer and inform friends, colleagues and rela-

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## U.S., Middle Eastern Experts Join in Fighting Breast Cancer . . .

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tives -- and most important, to see a doctor as soon as they detect a lump or other symptoms.

Mammography is available in the United Arab Emirates and Jordan, Brown said, but not enough women take advantage of it.

Ana Teasdale, another trainer, said the Komen group will do more training and customize it for different audiences, including translating additional materials into Arabic.

"Some university students in Dubai are very Internet-savvy and are using materials from our Web site," she said.

Komen officials are sharing "intellectual property on what they've done over the past 25 years to raise awareness about breast cancer" in the United States, said Walsh. Without the organization's work, she added, "we would not be where we are today."

The M.D. Anderson Center will provide scientific and medical expertise to help determine why women in the Middle East "are developing their [breast] cancer in such high numbers and as young as they have been," Woods told USINFO. "What are the genetic reasons? And what are the social reasons" that may prevent women from getting screened for cancer?

"We need to determine why this is occurring, so we can develop therapies to prevent it or prevent recurrence," she said.

In March, Woods traveled to Amman to meet with Dr. Mahmoud Sarhan, director-general of the King Hussein Cancer Center, which she called "one of the shining stars in

the Middle East in terms of providing care." She also met with department heads and with Princess Ghida Talal, chair of the center, and Princess Dina Mired, director of the King Hussein Cancer Foundation.

Representatives from the King Hussein Cancer Center visited M.D. Anderson in June and met the experts on the advisory committee -- surgeons, oncologists, radiologists and others. The two institutions also plan to hold a regional breast cancer conference in Jordan in 2008.

The breast cancer partnership is reaching out to the private sector through its Workplace Awareness Program. Karim Seifeddine of Citibank United Arab Emirates, which is conducting the pilot program, said in an e-mail that trainees in Dubai will begin to train others at United Arab Emirates branches in Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Al-Ain. "We hope to triple the number of trained staff and incorporate the breast cancer training into a wider community campaign driven by the Citigroup Foundation," he said.

The women and medical personnel trained in Jordan and the United Arab Emirates were very enthusiastic, said Teasdale, and some asked "personal questions about their family and sometimes about themselves. It really seems like they heard the message and were willing to share it with immediate family members at least. It was encouraging to see."

Susan G. Komen for the Cure is sponsoring a Global Breast Cancer Advocates' Summit in Budapest, Hungary, September 29-30. Information ( <http://cms.komen.org/komen/index.htm> ) on the summit is available on the Komen Web site.

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## Human Rights Groups Concerned over Chinese . . .

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human rights activists and journalists" in the name of harmony or social stability rather than "acting as a catalyst for reform."

Amnesty International, which also released a report on the situation, said it remained hopeful that "prompt action can still be taken to create a more favorable human rights environment for the Beijing Olympics in August 2008 and beyond."

Victor Cha, former director for Asian affairs at the White House National Security Council, wrote in an August 8 Washington Post opinion piece that the Olympics are generating pressure on the Chinese regime "to change its behavior, not just its image."

Cha, now a Georgetown University professor in Washington, said Beijing must find a way "to join its controlled and closed political system with the classical liberal ideals of individualism, open competition, and respect for human dignity embodied in the Olympics."

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## Indonesia Still Not Sharing Virus Samples for Avian Flu Vaccines

By Cheryl Pellerin  
USINFO Staff Writer

Washington -- Despite agreeing to share viruses with the World Health Organization (WHO) in March, Indonesia -- the nation with the highest rates of infection and death from highly pathogenic avian influenza -- still has not done so.

All countries except Indonesia are sharing human samples of the H5N1 avian flu virus with the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance Network so experts can assess the risk that a viral strain might mutate to pass easily from person to person and so diagnostic tests and vaccines can be developed.

By not sharing viruses, said Dr. David Heymann, WHO assistant director-general for communicable diseases, during an August 6 press briefing, Indonesia is "putting in danger its own population, because if those viruses are not freely shared with industry, vaccines will not contain the elements of the Indonesia infection."

This also puts the world's public health security at risk, he said.

On July 11, Indonesia confirmed its 102nd human case of avian flu in a 6-year-old girl from Banten. So far, WHO has confirmed that 81 people have died there from the virus. Around the world, since 2003, 319 people have fallen ill from H5N1, and 192 have died.

Heymann was reporting on the results of a five-day meeting in Singapore, where representatives of 24 countries met beginning July 31 to discuss issues related to virus sharing and equitable distribution of vaccines among rich and poor nations.

### SHARING BENEFITS

In May, the WHO World Health Assembly passed resolution 60.28, which outlined the flow of activities designed to ensure "that countries received the benefits they felt they would need from virus sharing," Heymann said.

Singapore was the first meeting in that process; the next meeting will be held in Geneva in early November. The end-point of the process should be the 61st World Health Assembly, to be held in May 2008.



An Indonesian official collects specimen from a pet bird during a door-to-door bird flu test in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Under the resolution, a new stockpile of H5N1 vaccine has been established, initially containing 50 million doses donated by GlaxoSmithKline. WHO Director-General Margaret Chan was asked to develop a mechanism for benefit sharing among countries, and the stockpile is part of that effort. The director-general also will commission a report on intellectual property relating to virus ownership.

"WHO is now working to determine the mechanism that will govern this vaccine and make sure that it's equally distributed around the world to countries in need," Heymann said.

Stockpiling is a short-term benefit-sharing mechanism. In the medium and long term, developing countries have asked for a transfer of technology so they can produce vaccines in their own countries.

WHO has given grants to six developing countries to transfer vaccine production technology using resources provided by the United States, Japan, Canada and the Asian Development Bank.

### NEW VACCINES

In the United States, a team of scientists at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, and a collaborator at Emory University School of Medicine in Georgia are preparing vaccines and drugs that could target predicted H5N1 mutants before the viruses evolve naturally.

"While nobody knows if and when H5N1 will jump from birds to humans, [the team has] come up with a way to anticipate how that jump might occur and ways to respond to it," said NIH Director Elias Zerhouni, in an August 9 statement.

Making a vaccine against an H5N1 strain or another flu virus is fairly routine. Samples of flu virus strains are isolated and then grown in eggs or cell cultures. The virus then is collected, inactivated, purified and added to the other components of the vaccine.

A flu shot prompts a person's immune system to detect pieces of the inactivated virus in the vaccine and make neutralizing antibodies against them. Later, if the same person is exposed to a flu virus, the antibodies should help fight the in-

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## Indonesia Still Not Sharing Virus Samples for Avian Flu Vaccines . . .

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fection.

But flu viruses constantly mutate and vaccines are most effective against the specific strains from which they are made. That makes it difficult to predict how effective a vaccine made today will be against a virus that emerges tomorrow.

### BIRD FLU AND PEOPLE

Led by Dr. Gary Nabel, director of NIAID's Vaccine Research Center, the team focused on mutations that let H5N1 bird viruses more easily recognize and enter human cells.

Bird-adapted H5N1 binds to places on the bird cell called surface receptors. These receptors differ slightly from the receptors on human cells, which is partly why bird-adapted H5N1 can infect but not spread easily among people.

The team found that the mutations change how the immune system recognizes the virus and used this knowledge to create vaccines and isolate new antibodies that might be used against human-adapted virus mutations.

They vaccinated mice with the material from viruses they altered to contain the mutations and discovered one antibody that could neutralize the bird- and the human-adapted forms of an H5N1 virus.

"This research could possibly help to contain a pandemic early on," said NIAID Director Anthony Fauci.

For more information on U.S. and international efforts to combat avian influenza, see Bird Flu ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global\\_issues/bird\\_flu.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/bird_flu.html) ). ♦

## Baseball Icon Cal Ripken Using Sports to Bridge Cultures . . .

*(Continued from page 8)*

of life "to join in America's public diplomacy efforts." Through their personal examples, the envoys "become leaders in America's efforts to engage in a positive and constructive dialogue with the world," Hughes said.

The first State Department public diplomacy sports envoy, figure skating star Michelle Kwan, recently returned from Russia on behalf of the United States, where her "message of working hard and dreaming big resonated with young people" in that country, said Hughes.

Hughes added that the sports envoys are "helping us reach out to that vital audience of young people" and provide a way "to counter

extremism and foster greater tolerance and respect for diversity and differences."

Attending the event were 12 baseball coaches from China, who are improving their coaching skills at Ripken's baseball academy in Aberdeen.

Hughes said the foreign participants in the U.S. baseball exchanges are learning "much more than new coaching or hitting techniques, as important as they are. They're also building the people-to-people connections that are so important to the future peace and security of our world."

Two of the coaches, Sam Wang Guangyuan and Jean Zhang Jianping, told USINFO through an interpreter that they are learning

"baseball theory" and "baseball training methods" that are different from those in China.

Guangyuan, coach of a team from Guangzhou, said his favorite major league player is shortstop Derek Jeter of the New York Yankees, while Jianping, who coaches a squad in the city of Wuxi in Jiangsu province, admires Taiwanese pitcher Chin-hui Tsao of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

A transcript ( <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2007/08/90860.htm> ) of remarks Rice, Hughes, and Ripken at the event is available on the State Department Web site.

For more information, see Sports ( [http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life\\_and\\_culture/sports.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/life_and_culture/sports.html) ). ♦