



NEWSLETTER

December 2007



To our dear friends,

Simple joys, little pleasures,
Laughter and smiles in big measures,
Friends, family, togetherness, love...
The choicest blessings from above;
Peace, prosperity and happiness, too...
All these and more are our wishes for you!!!

Happy Winter Holidays!!

American Corner Bitola staff





There are many different customs that make the Christmas season so special. When were some of the customs first used and where did they come from? Let's take a look at some of the more popular yuletide traditions!

People once believed that...

- ☉ it was good luck for the first person up on Christmas day to open a door and "let Christmas in."
- ☉ bells placed near a baby or small child would keep evil spirits away
- ☉ the number of days between the first snowfall and Christmas told how many snowfalls would come before spring
- ☉ a cricket chirping at Christmas brought good luck
- ☉ sparks from a yule log would create warmth in human souls.
- ☉ a candle left burning all night in an empty room on Christmas eve would bring light, warmth, and plenty all year.

Holly

A symbol of peace and joy, the holly tree was often the site for settling quarrels. Holly also was planted near a home to frighten off witches and protect it from thunder and lightning.

Candles

Candles have long been the symbol of guiding light in the midst of darkness. At Christmas, they represent the journey Mary and Joseph made when travelling to Bethlehem and how they sought a place to spend the night. Today a candle burning in the window of a home on Christmas Eve means that this is a home where visitors are welcome.

Carols

Carol means a round dance and probably originated in the middle ages when worshipers joined hands and danced in a circle as they sang at religious rites. Today the carol is a joyous narrative. St. Francis of Assisi is often credited as being the "father of Christmas carol" At his Nativity scene in 1224, he led his followers in songs of praise to Jesus. From his joyful singing came a new way of celebrating the holiday.



Cranberries

Indians told the Pilgrims that the wild raspberries in the marshes near Plymouth were good to eat. Soon Cranberry sauce was served with turkey and became one of the few truly native American Christmas foods.

Gifts

A Christmas gift symbolizes the gifts taken to Bethlehem by the Wise Men. Each gift foretold what Jesus would become: a king (gold), a high priest (frankincense), and a great physician and healer (myrrh).

Reindeer

No one knows for sure, but Scandinavians may have brought the idea of Christmas reindeer to the United States. They became famous because of Dr. Clement Moore's poem of 1823, in which Dancer, Prancer, Donder, Blitzen, and the other reindeer were introduced as the animals who pull Santa's sleigh. Until the 19th century, St. Nicholas had ridden on a donkey, on a horse, or in the sky chariot drawn by horses.

Plum Pudding

Plum pudding dates back to 1670 when it was a thick plum porridge made from meat broth, chopped cows' tongues, raisins, fruit juice, wine, and spices. Plum refers to the rising or swelling of the raisins when cooked.

Colors

Red, green, and white have long been associated with the Christmas season. Red, the color of greatest excitement, represents fire, blood, and charity. Green is the symbol of nature, youth, and the hope for eternal life. Christmas is the feast of hope, with the Baby Jesus at its center. White stands for light, purity, joy, and glory. We see white in the robes of angels and in holiday decorations and snow.

Stockings

The custom of hanging stockings on Christmas Eve began in 300 A.D., when a young bishop in Asia Minor became famous for his kindness to others. Later known as Saint Nicholas, the bishop often left gifts for people, but didn't wait for thanks. One night, he climbed onto a rooftop and dropped a gift down the chimney. The gift fell into a stocking that had been hung to dry. Through the years, children began leaving things, from wooden shoes to stockings, to be filled with goodies on Christmas Eve by the generous fellow who is known to us today as Santa Claus.





December 1st is World AIDS Day. Established by the World Health Organization in 1988, World AIDS Day serves to focus global attention on the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Observance of this day provides an opportunity for governments, national AIDS programs, faith organizations, community organizations and individuals to demonstrate the importance of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

With an estimated 38.6 million people worldwide living with HIV at the end of 2005, and more than 25 million people having died of AIDS since 1981, December 1st serves to remind everyone that action makes a difference in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Americans should be reminded that HIV/AIDS does not discriminate. With an estimated 1,039,000 to 1,185,000 HIV- positive individuals living in the U.S., and approximately 40,000 new infections occurring every year, the U.S., like other nations around the world is deeply affected by HIV/AIDS.

The theme for World AIDS Day 2007

World AIDS Day was originally organised by UNAIDS, who chose the theme after consultation with other organisations. In 2005 UNAIDS handed over responsibility for World AIDS Day to an independent organisation known as [The World AIDS Campaign](#) (WAC).

The WAC's slogan for their work is "**Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise**". This is an appeal to governments, policy makers and regional health authorities to ensure that they meet the many targets that have been set in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and especially the promise of universal access to HIV treatment, care, support and prevention services by 2010. **This campaign will run until 2010, with a related theme chosen for World AIDS Day each year.**

The 2007 theme, "**leadership**", highlights the need for innovation, vision and perseverance in the face of the AIDS challenge. The campaign calls on all sectors of society such as families, communities and civil society organizations - rather than just governments - to take the initiative and provide leadership on AIDS.

The red ribbon started as a "grass roots" effort; as a result there is no one official AIDS ribbon manufacturer, and many people make their own. It's easily done - just use some ordinary red ribbon and a safety pin!

For further information and materials go to:

<http://www.hhs.gov/aidsawarenessdays/days/world/index.html>

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY - DECEMBER 10th

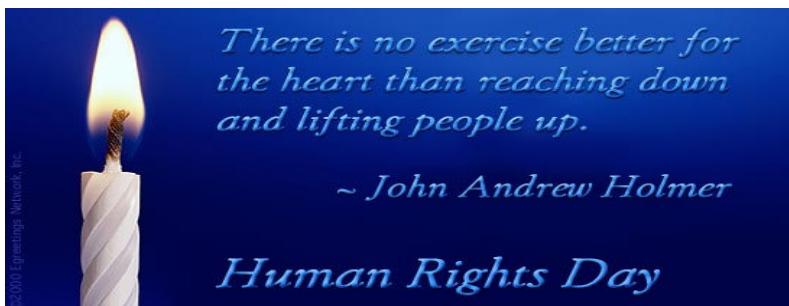
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

December 10, 1948

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people, Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law, Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations, Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge, Now, therefore, The General Assembly, Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.



**To read the entire
declaration you can go
to:
[http://www.state.gov/g/dr
l/rls/60372.htm](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/60372.htm)**

AMERICAN CORNER BITOLA MONTHLY PROGRAM –DECEMBER 2007

December 1st - World AIDS Day
Book display from December 1st – December 7th

Tuesday December 4th at 18:00 o'clock
English Conversation Hour *PLEASE SIGN IN TO ATTEND*

Saturday December 8th at 11:00 o'clock
“Marketing Can Be Fun” Seminar *YOU MUST SIGN IN TO ATTEND*
Facilitated by Patrice Koerper, US Peace Corps volunteer in Bitola

December 10th – Human Rights Day
Paper show “Human Rights: Liberty, Justice, and Equality”

Tuesday December 11th at 18:00 o'clock
English Conversation Hour *PLEASE SIGN IN TO ATTEND*

Thursday December 13th at 18:00 o'clock
“A Musical Journey to New York City”
Presentation by Emilija and Aleksandar Stefanovski and Tatijana Bozinovska-
otherwise known as Trio Interart

Tuesday December 18th at 18:00 o'clock
English Conversation Hour *PLEASE SIGN IN TO ATTEND*

Friday December 21st from 13:00 – 15:00 o'clock
Individual Education Consultations **YOU MUST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT**

Saturday December 22nd at 11:00 o'clock
Children’s Storytelling Hour *YOU MUST SIGN YOUR CHILD UP TO ATTEND*

Thursday December 27th at 18:00 o'clock
Winter Holidays Celebration

Highlights from November Programs



American Corner Bitola together with Marita Robinson, Peace Corps Volunteer in Resen organized a live drama performance titled **“Make It Stop”** which was performed in English by five Macedonian high school students from Resen in the small hall of the Center for Culture. The focus of the drama was on discrimination and harassment among the youth. The audience of over 50 people had an opportunity to view these

magnificent students perform various scenes that all delivered very important messages on issues that are dealt by the youth on a daily basis and how each and everyone of us can step up, take action and help harassment and discrimination stop. One scene included 7 random audience members do assist in the delivery of the message. The audience was extremely pleased with this event and afterwards an interactive discussion took place where the topic was discussed further.



Wild Alaska” was the topic of the presentation that took place at the American Corner Bitola on November 15th at 6 p.m. Molly and Chris McGee, Peace Corps volunteers from Sveti Nikole and natives of Alaska prepared a two part presentation for the audience of 16 people. First the history, geography and economics of Alaska was discussed where the audience enjoyed to hear of the unique qualities of the 49th state. Then five of the major cultural groups were presented where we learned about their different tradition and how in modern day times these groups continue to follow them.



Several items characteristic of Alaska were displayed such as earrings made of porcupine quills, seal fur and various pictures. Several questions were asked by the audience following the presentation on igloos, Mt. McKinley and the diversity of the Alaskan population.

Highlights from November Programs



the English language and gain first hand interaction with a native English speaker.

In honor of Thanksgiving Day the American Corner organized a Children Storytelling Hour on November 21st Tara Trepanier, a Peace Corps volunteer in Demir Hisar read several various short stories to the children and included visual aids plus activities to keep the session interactive. The meaning of Thanksgiving was discussed and then a short story about giving thanks was read. The children then made their own turkey hands and wrote what they were each thankful for. Also a Thanksgiving word search was given to the children to learn and practice vocabulary. Children were able to learn about the American holiday Thanksgiving as well as continue their education of



campaign commercials as well as ads on promoting the right to vote were aired for the audience. The use of these visual aids provided a better understanding for the audience on issues that were before not clear for them. Also discussed were studies completed on several minority/ethnic groups and their views and roles in the electoral process. Handouts on the electoral process, the presentation and the publication ‘About America: How The United States Is Governed’ were provided.

U.S. Presidential Elections” was the title of the presentation that took place at the American Corner Bitola on November 27th with guest speaker Myra Michele Brown, Information Resource Officer based at US Embassy Rome. Ms. Brown presented to an audience of 25 people an overview of the significance of the US presidential elections, the current running candidates and important election factors. Several video clips of debates, past and new



Listed below are the titles of new books on our shelves for borrowing. We received a new English Language Book Set which includes a wide choice of materials to meet the needs of beginners, mid –level and advanced students.



New Books at the Corner

1. ***Pronounce It Perfectly in English*** by Jean Yates, M.A.
2. ***Adult Learning in Your Classroom***
3. ***A Course in Language Teaching ; Practice and Theory*** by Penny Ur
4. ***Do As I Say; Operations, Procedures, and Rituals for Language Acquisition***
5. ***Discussion Starters; Speaking Fluency Activities for Advanced ESL/EFL Students*** by Keith S. Folse
6. ***Learning Computers, Speaking English; Cooperative Activities for Learning English and Basic Word Processing***
7. ***Five-Minute Activities for Business English*** by Paul Emmerson and Nick Hamilton
8. ***Oxford Collocations; Dictionary for Students of English***
9. ***Building Academic Vocabulary*** by Lawrence J. Zwier
10. ***A Course in Language Teaching; Practice and Theory –Trainee Book*** by Penny Ur
11. ***The Ins and Outs of Prepositions*** by Jean Yates
12. ***Shenanigames; Grammar-Focused Interactive ESL/EFL Activities and Games***
13. ***Grammar Practice Activities; A Practical guide for Teachers*** by Penny Ur
14. ***The Oxford Picture Dictionary***
15. ***The Oxford Picture Dictionary; Teacher's Book***
16. ***Classic Classroom Activities; The Oxford Picture Dictionary Program***
17. ***Small Talk; More Jazz Chants*** by Carolyn Graham
18. ***The Ultimate Phrasal Verb Book*** by Carl W. Hart
19. ***Three Little Words; A, An and The*** by Elizabeth Claire
20. ***The Modal Book*** by Joseph Krupp and Lisa Tenuta
21. ***The ESL Miscellany; A treasury of Cultural and Linguistic Information***
22. ***Getting A Fix On Vocabulary; Using Words In The News*** by Raymond C. Clark

23. *American Vocabulary Builder 2* by Bernard Seal
24. *Essentials of English* by Vincent F. Hopper
25. *Essentials of Writing* By Vincent F. Hopper
26. *Write to be Read; Reading, Reflection, and Writing* by William R. Smalzer
27. *Write to be Read; Reading, Reflection, and Writing – Teacher’s Manual*
by William R. Smalzer
28. *Oxford Dictionary of American English*
29. *Blue Highways; A Journey Into America* by William Least Heat Moon
30. *She Who Remembers* by Linda Lay Shuler
31. *Seventeen* by Booth Tarkington
32. *National Geographic Student Atlas of the World*
33. *Searching for The Sound* by Phil Lesh
34. *CHEER USA! Go, Girl, Go!* By Jeanne Betancourt
35. *Madeline’s Rescue* by Ludwig Bemelmans
36. *No Pets Allowed!* Animal stories from *Highlights*
37. *The Mystery of The Vanishing Cave* by John Bibee
38. *It’s Fine to Be Nine’* 12 stories about being nine
39. *A Common Life; The Wedding Story* by Jan Karon

