



American Center Newsletter



November 2007

Embassy In Action

Ambassador Robert Blake reaches out to diverse communities



Ambassador Robert Blake delivering the Chief Guest address at the Lake House book launch.

U.S. Ambassador Robert Blake appeared at numerous public functions during the month of October. He addressed the European Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka's Intellectual Property Rights CEO Forum held at Cinnamon Grand on October 8.

Mr. Blake spoke at the American Chamber of Commerce Luncheon held October 9 and he was the Chief Guest at the Junior Chamber International Sri Lanka's Outstanding Young Persons awards ceremony held on October 11 at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel.

Ambassador Blake was also the Chief Guest at the book launch "Nothing Grows Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories" organized by the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. held on October 31.

To view the full text of the Ambassador's speeches visit: <http://colombo.usembassy.gov/speeches.html>

The American Center hosts "The Béra"



Ravibandu Vidhyapathi and his ensemble entertain the audience with their innovative drum compositions.

October 18, 2007: The American Center partnered with the Sri Lanka America Society to present an exciting evening of music heritage featuring world renowned percussionist Ravibandu Vidhyapathi and his drum ensemble, including musician Nesan Thiagarajan.

Deputy Chief of Mission James Moore hosted the event at his home in recognition of

October's "Harmony for Humanity" World Music Days. Inspired by the legacy of American journalist and musician Daniel Pearl, "World Music Days" is an international network of concerts using the power of music to reaffirm our commitment to tolerance and humanity.

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Upcoming Events

November 10:
American Voices will perform "Rhythm Nation" at Trinity College, Kandy, with students from the Belwood Cultural Center, Kandy, following three days of workshops there.

November 11:
"Rhythm Nation" Colombo Concert at 7 p.m. at the New Town Hall, Colombo.

November 13:
In recognition of International Education Week, the American Center will be holding a Reading Camp to promote reading habits and English language reading in the American Center Auditorium.

Continued on page 2

Embassy In Action

English Language Fellow Kane Gilmour speaks at Ananda College Creative Writers Circle Media Workshop



English Language Fellow Kane Gilmour lights the oil lamp at the opening of the Creative Writer's Circle Media Workshop held by Ananda College.

Honorable Alavi Mowlana.

Mr. Gilmour spoke to the audience about the differences between American English and other World Englishes, encouraging the young writers to use their understanding of differences in Sri Lankan English and other World Englishes for literary effect in their creative effect.



Mr. Henry R. Broaddus, Dean of Admission, The College of William and Mary, explains the U.S. University admissions process to the audience at the American Center Auditorium.

and financial issues" gave an overview of the varied possibilities of study in the US and outlined how to empower students to make their own choices for the future.

The following day, October 11, Consular Officer Christopher Green and Cultural Affairs Officer Kathleen Fox spoke with fifteen young Sri Lankans who have recently been accepted to attend South Dakota State University, studying a variety of subjects. The U.S. Embassy Officers spoke to the students about the Student Visa application process and adapting to university life in the United States and encouraged them to make the most of their international education experience.

October 29, 2007: The American Center's English Language Fellow, Kane Gilmour, spoke on American English at the Creative Writer's Circle Media Workshop held by Ananda College. One hundred secondary school students were in attendance as well as teachers, administrators, and other speakers including Professor Ravindra Fernando of the Center for the Study of Human Rights, University of Colombo and the Western Province Governor, the

The American Center promotes U.S. Education

October 10, 2007: The American Center hosted a U.S. University information seminar by Mr. Henry R. Broaddus, Dean of Admission, The College of William and Mary, for Sri Lankan education and recruitment professionals.

The well-attended presentation, "Higher Studies in the United States : The US University system, admission

Upcoming Events... From page 1

November 14:

Another reading camp will be held in Kandy from Wednesday November 14 to Friday 16 at the American Corner on the first floor of the D.S. Senanyake Public Library in Kandy.

Story telling sessions will be held at both reading camp events.

Visit International Education Week website:

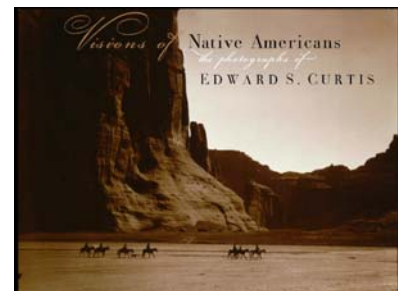
<http://iew.state.gov/index.htm>

November 14:

A presentation on "Librarians in the 21st Century: the Future of the Profession" at the American Center Auditorium.

Steven P. Kerchoff, the Regional Information Officer, U.S. Embassy, New Delhi will conduct.

VISIONS OF NATIVE AMERICANS THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF EDWARD S. CURTIS



A Flash slide show for Native American Heritage Month is now available on USINFO's website at

<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/students/curtis.htm>.

Same page can be reached through the U.S. Embassy Colombo website at

<http://Colombo.usembassy.gov>

Taking Care of Business—and People : American Companies at Work in Sri Lanka

Chevron Lubricants Lanka PLC

Formerly known as Caltex, Chevron Lubricants Lanka PLC (CLLP) is a subsidiary of Chevron. The company had a presence in Sri Lanka from the 1930s until 1970. They returned to Sri Lanka in the 1990s. Currently CLLP provides direct employment to 124 employees and indirect employment to more than 300 people.

CLLP is the pre-eminent manufacturer and marketer of lubricants in Sri Lanka. They pride themselves on customer service and each employee is expected to be in direct contact with customers.

Chevron is the second largest integrated energy company in the United States and ranked 4th in the Fortune 500. CLLP exemplifies the stability of US-Sri Lankan business alliances in every way.



CEO: Mr. Kishu Gomes: Mr. Kishu Gomes joined Chevron in 1996 and steadily rose to become the first Sri Lankan Managing Director / CEO of Chevron Lubricants Lanka Plc and Chevron Ceylon Limited in 2001. He was also formerly a Director of

Chevron Lubricants India Limited. He counts over 20 years of experience working for US multinationals having started his career at Coca-Cola in 1984.

Chevron – giving back to Sri Lankan society:

In 2003, Chevron embarked on a project to improve the living conditions of Deaf & Blind children in Sri Lanka. Chevron invested around US\$100,000 for the provision of various items required by Deaf & Blind schools ranging from educational equipment, to infrastructure development which included school buildings, sound proof auditoriums, and the provision of bunk beds, furniture, Braille machines, hearing aids, and musical and computer equipment.



Chevron also provided US\$ 50,000 to the Government of Sri Lanka to be used for immediate relief to Tsunami Victims following the December 26th Tsunami in 2004. A further US\$100,000 was granted by the Chevron Global Fund to USAID to be used to provide vocational training to the youth living in the Tsunami affected areas.

Chevron helped to renovate the Accident and Emergency Outpatient Department of the District General Hospital in Matara, which caters to approximately 2 million people in the Matara District as well as the neighboring Hambantota and Ratnapura Districts. The project is estimated to cost Rs. 5 million rupees.

In 2006, Chevron donated US\$ 50,000 to the Eye Care Foundation of Sri Lanka for conducting Mobile Eye Care Clinics in Tsunami affected areas. The Eye Care Foundations mobile eye clinic included a fully equipped mobile eye care facility, with computerized eye testing equipment, trained optometrists and provision of on-site eye care treatment and prescription of drugs.

The company works closely with Marine and Road Safety programs, environmental awareness, waste management programs, awareness programs for the visually impaired and handicapped, and other charity events such as the donation of basketball wheelchairs to the Spinal Injuries Association.

CLLP sponsors several sports teams and events, including the volleyball team of Dhammissara College, Nattandiya, the Deaf Schools Cricket Tournament, and the boxing team of Ratnapura Sivali Central College.

Finally, CLLP has just sent a proposal to the Ministry of transport to rehabilitate the Kandy Railway station at a cost of Rs. 5 million.

In November

National American Indian Heritage Month



Dancer Josh Hill.
(© AP Photo)

What started at the turn of the century as an effort to gain a day of recognition for the significant contributions the first Americans made to the establishment and growth of the U.S., has resulted in a whole month being designated for that purpose.

One of the proponents of an American Indian Day was Dr. Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca Indian, who was the director of the Museum of Arts and Science in Rochester, N.Y. He persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day for the "First Americans" and for three years they adopted such a day. In 1915, the annual Congress of the American Indian Association meeting in Lawrence, Kans., formally approved a plan concerning American Indian Day. It directed its president, Rev. Sherman Coolidge, an Arapahoe, to call upon the country to observe such a day. Coolidge issued a proclamation on Sept. 28, 1915, which declared the second Saturday of each May as an American Indian Day and contained the first formal appeal for recognition of Indians as citizens. The year before this proclamation was issued, Red Fox James, a Blackfoot Indian, rode horseback from state to state seeking approval for a day to honor Indians. On December 14, 1915, he presented the endorsements of 24 state governments at the White House. There is no record, however, of such a national day being proclaimed.

The first American Indian Day in a state was declared on the second Saturday in May 1916 by New York Governor Charles S. Whitman. Several states celebrate the fourth Friday in September. In Illinois, for example, legislators enacted such a day in 1919. Presently, several states have designated Columbus Day as Native American Day, but it continues to be a day we observe without any recognition as a national legal holiday.

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued each year since 1994.

In November

Veterans Day



World War II
Veterans
(AP Photo)

The Veterans Day holiday is derived from Armistice Day, commemorating the end of the First World War, November 11, 1918. Many states began quickly to observe this holiday, and Congress proclaimed a federal holiday in 1938. In 1954, Congress changed the holiday's name to Veterans Day, in recognition of

those who served during the Second World War and the Korean conflict. Today it recognizes all members of the armed forces, living and dead, who served during times of peace or war. (Memorial Day, by contrast, honors those who gave their lives.) While Veterans Day was among the holidays moved to Mondays beginning in 1971, Congress in 1978 restored the holiday to its original November 11 date.

Thanksgiving Day

A variant of the harvest festivals celebrated in many parts of the world, Thanksgiving is popularly traced to



Annual
Thanksgiving
Day Parade in
Philadelphia,
Nov. 23, 2006.
(AP Photo)

a 1621 feast enjoyed by the English Pilgrims who founded the Plymouth Colony (located in present day Massachusetts) and members of the Wampanoag Native American tribe. Over the years that followed, state and federal governments declared numerous days of Thanksgiving to mark important public events. In 1817, New York became the first state to declare an annual Thanksgiving Day. President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the federal holiday in 1863. In 1941,

Congress moved the holiday from the last Thursday in November to the fourth Thursday, in hopes of stimulating the economy by lengthening (in some years) the Christmas shopping season. The holiday is typically celebrated at home and remains the occasion for a large and festive meal, and for expressing thanks for that bounty.

USAID in Action

U.S. Teams with IOM and Sri Lankan Government to Help Combat Human Trafficking



Ambassador Robert Blake announces a new \$500,000 U.S. initiative to combat human trafficking in Sri Lanka in partnership with IOM. USAID Mission Director Rebecca Cohn (left), IOM Chief of Mission Mohammed Abdiker (second left) and Sri Lanka Bureau of Protection of Women and Children A.R. Waidyalankara (right).
Photo: USAID/Zack Taylor

A new program to combat human trafficking funded by the United States and implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) will help law enforcement officials identify instances of trafficking in persons and increase the rate of prosecution of those responsible for the practice in Sri Lanka.

Building on IOM's earlier initiatives to curb human trafficking here, the \$500,000 program, co-funded by the U.S. Department of State and USAID, will train 500 law enforcement and government officials on human trafficking, improve methods of data collection and dissemination to track trafficking cases, and enhance coordination among government and nongovernmental organizations.

The program will also assist the Government to develop a national policy to combat trafficking in Sri Lanka; support 'training of trainers' for more than 50 individuals to ensure that awareness on the part of law enforcement will continue to rise; enhance collaboration and coordination among government agencies and NGOs to share experiences, and, result in a database to help identify trafficking incidences.

More details about the stories appearing on this page available at our website :
"http://colombo.usembassy.gov/press_releases_2007.html"

Ambassador Blake Unveils Renovated Bribery Commission Library and Auditorium



Ambassador Blake at the Inauguration of the Bribery Commission Office, Colombo

Speaking at the opening of a new building housing the auditorium and the library of the Commission to Investigate into Allegations of Bribery or Corruption funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Sri Lanka Transition Initiative (SLTI), Ambassador Blake stated that the best way to combat corruption was for any government to be open and transparent. (A recent Sri Lankan study indicated that Sri Lanka's GDP would have grown by at least two percentage points in 2006 had the corruption in government been eliminated.)

In addition to the renovation of the Bribery Commission Auditorium, USAID also supported the publication of "Let's Get Rid of Corruption", a children's book about corruption written by Sybil Vetthasinghe.



Pick up free copy in American Center Library.

Faces of Friendship *Building American and Sri Lankan understanding one visit at a time*



Lakshman Joseph De Saram

Cellist Lakshman Joseph De Saram is a born artist. His father was a writer, his mother a sculptor and piano teacher.

Throughout his childhood, his parent's home in Sri Lanka was filled with classical music. His uncle gave him a tiny violin when he was only four years old and the instrument "just clicked," as he says years later. Though musical talent came naturally, it was his years at America's most renowned music schools that gave Lakshman the discipline and vision to become one of Sri Lanka's most respected professional musicians.

Recognizing his youthful interest in music, Lakshman's parents sent him to study with the best music teacher in Sri Lanka. When he was eleven years old, he was selected as UNICEF "Year of the Child" representative from Sri Lanka for his outstanding musical skills and went to both the USSR and Bulgaria. His international career was just beginning.

At only fifteen years old, he left Sri Lanka and went to New York City to audition at the famed High School for Performing Arts. Though it was thousands of miles from his home country, America was no foreign land to Lakshman.

As a boy he lived at the American Center in Colombo on a Saturday afternoon, reading the magazines and taking home the myriad handouts. His time at the American Center showed him the other side of the U.S., the side not seen in the news. Today he says "I didn't feel like a stranger arriving in America. I knew baseball long before attending my first Yankees game." Through concerts, books, and the wholesome atmosphere of the American Center, Lakshman gained an idea of America as a fun place that he wanted to like, a place he wanted to be, to go to school, to live.

Lakshman was accepted to school in New York and enrolled in a program for musicians continuing on to America's most respected music institution – The Julliard School. For eight years he honed his skills with the violin and trombone (he liked the contrasting sounds), moving from high school to the Manhattan School of Music to Colombia and onward.

At school in New York he was surrounded by creative artists and future stars - both Jennifer Aniston and

Chastity Bono (daughter of Cher) were in his class. But the most influential aspect of his education was the discipline and professionalism of his teachers and the students around him. "My expression was molded by my years in the U.S. There were no compromises, no cutting corners because we were teenagers. We were not treated as kids, not spoon-fed," says Lakshman. "Those expectations are now my driving force. All of my friends from school say the same thing and I go back every year to work with them on projects."

The young musician's life took a turn when he began to study under Romanian musician Sergie Celibidache. Sergie taught by the guru system and inspired young Lakshman to leave Julliard and expand his musical experiences beyond school. He said, "In music or art, university is people with PhDs teaching people who are getting PhDs about people who don't have PhDs." Lakshman learned that, though he gained lifelong skills, friendships and dedication at school, education does not end with a certificate.

Eventually Lakshman returned to Sri Lanka and apprenticed to concert master of the Sri Lanka philharmonic. He rose to the role of concert master himself and traveled world-wide with Premasiri Khemadasa. The premier composer has been his mentor for last 10 years.

In recent years, Lakshman has been composing for films after a break he got through a Sri Lankan friend from New York film school. He has won awards in both Sri Lanka and the Vatican for his original compositions for film. Working in the film world has brought him into contact with cutting-edge artists who continue to push his creativity.

Lakshman's U.S. connections continue today in his current project with Fox Searchlight Pictures. He is recording the score this month for a new film from the producer of "The Full Monty" and director of "Trainspotting." Look for the as-yet untitled film in early 2008.

On a more personal project, he is artistic director of the newly founded Chamber Music Society of Colombo. The group is currently holding a series of preview concerts to bring new compositions to Colombo, including collaborations with American composers. The American Center hopes to host him once again - perhaps for a Saturday afternoon, not as a schoolboy this time, but as an artist who continues to innovate and collaborate across borders.

Fulbright News and Events

Why Study in the United States?

Studying at a university outside one's home country provides unique opportunities. The experience immerses students in a new environment filled with exciting possibilities. In the classroom, international students gain exposure to a variety of novel approaches and perspectives. Outside the classroom, students interact with peers and professors from cultures distinct from their own.

Often an international education will be a life-altering experience, allowing the student to reach a firsthand understanding of international political, social, and economic issues. In addition, studying abroad develops self-confidence, cross-cultural awareness, and receptiveness to new ideas and values. Employers worldwide value these important assets.

Of all the places international students choose to study, the number one destination is the United States. In fact, about 30 percent of all current international students in the world are studying in the United States. Several features make a U.S. education so popular.

Reputation : The U.S. higher education system has an international reputation for quality. Distinguished programs are available at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in almost every field of study. Many universities attract world-renowned faculty and are at the forefront of research and technological development. State-of-the-art facilities include libraries, laboratories, computers, and other resources.

Diversity of Institutions and Programs Available : The range of educational opportunities available to international students in the United States is immense. Regardless of the kind of learning environment your students seek, they will find ample choices from among the 3600 diverse higher education institutions throughout the United States. Our College Search tool is a great resource for international counselors and students. The tool is the most popular university search engine in the world. Below are just a few of the criteria you and your students can use to search for schools:

Size: Institutions range from less than one thousand to more than fifty thousand students.

Student body: Most universities are coeducational, but there are sixteen for men only and fifty-six for women only.

Selectivity: University admission policies range from highly selective to open admission.

Setting: Campuses are located in small and large cities, suburban areas, and rural communities as well as in a variety of climates.

Field of study: With hundreds of major fields of study to select from, your students are likely to find a program that suits their personal interests.

Type of institution: Choices include liberal arts colleges that emphasize broad preparation in academic disciplines, and schools that provide professional, career-related training. Some offer technical programs that develop vocational skills, and a growing number of colleges offer options in distance learning.

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Free Group Advising for the Month of November

For Undergraduate Studies in the U.S.

Date: Monday 15th 2.45 p.m.
Topic: Initial orientation

Covers basic information, entry requirements, how to select universities & the application process.

Date: Wednesday 14th 3 p.m.
Topic: Tell us about yourself

Covers preparing personal essays for Undergraduate admission.

Date: Thursday 15th 3 p.m.
Topic: Awareness of Financial Aid

Covers hurdles, myths, basic premises, where the money is, etc.

For Graduate Studies in the U.S.

Date: Monday 26th 3 p.m.
Topic: Initial orientation

Covers basic information, entry requirements, how to select universities & the application process

Venue:

US-SL Fulbright Commission,
(US-SLFC) Auditorium,
7, Flower Terrace,
Colombo 7

Admission Free, for prior registration ;

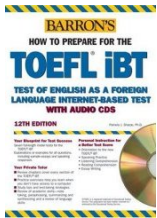
Contact :

Tel: 2564176/2564153

E-mail: advising@isplanka.lk

American Information Resource Center (AIRC)

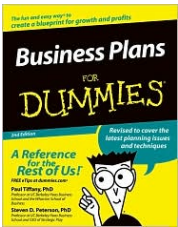
New Additions : Books



How to Prepare for the TOEFL iBT with Audio CDs

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is now being offered as an internet-based test,

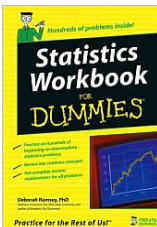
or iBT, and the new edition of Barron's TOEFL manual and accompanying software have been completely revised and updated to reflect the new format. The manual presents seven full-length model TOEFL iBT tests with explanations or examples for all questions, including sample essays and speaking responses.



Business Plans For Dummies

Are you an entrepreneur, executive, or a manager charged with creating a business plan, but

don't know where to begin? Don't worry! With Business Plans For Dummies as your handy reference, you'll find quick, easy solutions to all of your planning dilemmas. Equipped with tips, techniques, and expert advice, you'll develop a dynamite business plan like a pro in no time!



Statistics Workbook For Dummies

Competence in and understanding statistics is important to success in such fields as

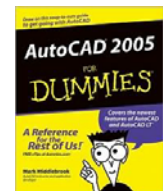
business and science, and is often a requirement for college students in a variety of programs. This handy guide complements author Deborah Rumsey's Statistics For Dummies by presenting exercises and fully worked solutions that let students and professionals practice and sharpen their statistical skills and understanding of the subject.



Looking Ahead, Vol.1 Introduction to academic writing

Looking Ahead focuses on the various types of writing that successful students must learn to employ; collecting, comparing, defining,

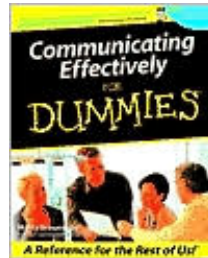
developing, classifying, and others.



AutoCAD 2005 for Dummies

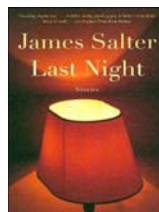
Find out how to use DWF, live up to new standards, and share files online. AutoCAD can be complicated, but this book isn't!

Here's where you'll discover how to set up a drawing, toe the lines, add dimension and text, share your stuff, and more, in AutoCAD or AutoCAD LT. Now you'll be able to create a presentable, usable, printable, and sharable drawing without getting old before your time.



Communicating Effectively For Dummies

An essential guide for communicating with clarity and effectiveness!



Last Night

Last Night is a spellbinding collection of stories about passion—by turns fiery and subdued, destructive and redemptive, alluring and devastating.



1000 Years for Revenge: International Terrorism and the FBI - The Untold Story

1000 Years for Revenge - a

groundbreaking investigative work that reads like an international thriller - award-winning journalist Peter Lance reveals how the FBI missed dozens of opportunities to stop the attacks of September 11, dating back to 1989. Drawing on interviews with scores of central figures in the story, as well as hundreds of pages of declassified documents, Lance uncovers startling evidence of FBI negligence that even a joint congressional committee missed.

AMERICAN CORNERS

For reliable information about the United States

- Books and Multimedia Collections
- Periodicals and Newspapers
- U.S. Government Materials
- CD-ROM Databases
- Hi-Speed Internet Access
- Cultural Programs
- Photocopy & Computer Printouts



First Floor
D.S. Senanayake Public Library
Kandy
Tel: 081-222-3716



Main Library
South Eastern University
Oluvil
Tel: 067-225-5260

American Information Resource Center (AIRC)

Collection of the Reference Books Available at AIRC

Encyclopedias :

- Encyclopedia Americana.
- Encyclopedia of African American business history
- Encyclopedia of American Biography
- Encyclopedia of American Constitution
- Encyclopedia of American culture & intellectual
- Encyclopedia of American economic history
- Encyclopedia of American education
- Encyclopedia of American foreign policy studies
- Encyclopedia of American immigration
- Encyclopedia of American literature
- Encyclopedia of American Studies
- Encyclopedia of business
- Encyclopedia of business and finance
- Encyclopedia of computer science and engineering
- Encyclopedia of contemporary American culture
- Encyclopedia of crime and justice
- Encyclopedia of educational research
- Encyclopedia of Environmental Issues
- Encyclopedia of management
- Encyclopedia of new media: An essential reference
- Encyclopedia of North American Indians
- Encyclopedia of poetry and poetics.
- Encyclopedia of small business
- Encyclopedia of sociology
- Encyclopedia of the American Civil War
- Encyclopedia of the American constitution
- Encyclopedia of the Persian Gulf War
- Encyclopedia of the United States in the nineteenth century
- Encyclopedia of women's history in America
- International Encyclopedia of business and management
- Macmillan Encyclopedia of energy
- The Encyclopedia of American journalism
- The Encyclopedia of American political history
- The Encyclopedia of American religions
- The Encyclopedia of microcomputer terminology
- The Encyclopedia of religion
- The Encyclopedia of the musical theatre
- West's Encyclopedia of American law..... *and many more*

eJournalUSA



The Long Campaign : U.S. Elections 2008

Electronic Journal of the U.S. Department of State, October 2007

This edition of *eJournal USA* presents an introduction to the upcoming 2008 U.S. elections. In these elections, U.S. voters will have the opportunity to vote for president and vice president, congressional representatives, state and local officials, and ballot initiatives. The journal describes aspects of this election which make it different from most recent elections and includes a pro-con debate of the Electoral College.

Web access : <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/1007/ijde/ijde1007.htm>

Why Study..... from page 07

Academic Life : One of the hallmarks of U.S. education is flexibility. At the undergraduate level, universities emphasize a broad, well-rounded education. Students are offered a wide range of classes—in math, science, the arts, social science, and languages—before finally having to decide on a specialization. Even at the graduate level, courses might be offered in related fields. Students are actively involved in designing their course schedules because so many options are available. It is even possible to combine academic classes with work experience that will be recognized as part of the degree program. Most institutions have qualified staff on hand to help students make the best course decisions to attain their academic goals.

Campus Life : A successful college experience involves more than academic work. Students will find a wide range of activities outside the classroom that will match their interests, such as internships, clubs, and social, cultural, and sports activities. These opportunities give students a chance to make friends while they develop team and leadership skills that they will utilize in future careers.

Courtesy: CollegeBoard.com

Film Screenings at the American Center

Every Tuesday at 6.00pm

November 2007 – Musicals

Movies begin promptly at 6:00pm every Tuesday. Entry is free. Seating is limited and is first-come, first-served. Bring photo ID for entry.

November 06 : Singin' in the Rain (2002, 103 minutes)

The image that everyone remembers from "Singin' in the Rain" has Gene Kelly, dressed in a yellow slicker, hanging from a lamp-post and swinging his umbrella in the wild joy of new love. The scene builds to a gloriously saturated ecstasy as Kelly stomps through the puddles of water in the gutters, making big wet splashes.

The entire sequence, from the moment Kelly begins to dance until the moment the cop looks at him strangely, is probably the most joyous musical sequence ever filmed. It celebrates a man who has just fallen in love and has given himself over to heedless celebration.

November 13 : West Side Story (2003, 152 minutes)

The Sharks and the Jets are two feuding street gangs in 1950's New York, the Jets being White and the Sharks being Puerto Rican. At a dance at a gym, Jet Tony falls in love with a Shark's sister, Maria. They know they can't be together because of the gang's war, but that doesn't stop them.

Meanwhile, The two gangs prepare for a rumble, and Tony tries to stop it out of love for Maria. In the process, his best friend and Jet leader Riff is killed by Maria's brother, Bernardo. In anger, Tony kills Bernardo. HE then realizes his mistake and begs for forgiveness, which, of course, Maria gives him.

November 20 : Grease (1998, 110 minutes)

During a 1950's summer, good girl Sandy and greaser Danny fall in love until Sandy has to return home to Australia at the end of summer. By a twist of fate, Sandy moves back to the US and unknowingly attends the same high school as Danny.

When her new friends introduce her to him again, he acts cool for his friends and makes her angry. The whole movie goes back and forth between him getting her back, and then losing her again, all leading up to when Danny, and his gang the T-birds, consisting of Sonny, Putzie, and his best friend, Kinickie, race Kinickie's car against "Crater-Face" from a rival gang, whoever wins gets the loser's car. Can Danny win both the race and Sandy's heart?

November 27 : Dreamgirls (2006, 130 minutes)

"Dreamgirls" is the story based on the Broadway musical that tells the story of a black, female singing group that crosses over to the pop charts in the 1960s.

After losing a local talent competition, the Dreamettes (Deena, Lorrell, and Effe) are offered the chance to sing backup for rising star Jimmy Early by local Cadillac dealer and aspiring producer Curtis Taylor. As Early rises to success, he begins having an affair with Lorrell, and Effe begins a romance with Curtis. When the girls get a solo act, Curtis has Deena sing lead, which outrages Effe, who clearly has the best voice of the three. The Dreamettes are now the Dreams, and as the group becomes more popular, Effe becomes more fed up with all of the attention being given to Deena, even to the point of walking out of performances.

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