



Editorial



Public diplomacy is a lot like marriage. If you do not cultivate the relationship, sooner or later it is bound to wither and someone else will take the space that used to be yours.

Although the United States has had a very good relationship with Portugal for a longtime, it would be highly presumptuous of us to take the Portuguese for

granted when it comes to understanding U.S. foreign policy.

This electronic newsletter is born under the spirit of a relationship that we wish to further strengthen, so both sides can grow in mutual understanding.

Furthermore, many Embassy contacts still remember the days of the United States Information Agency, known abroad as USIS, that used to put out a number of products, newsletters among them,

that are still a reference in many people's minds.

Are we being nostalgic? Well, yes...no wrong in admitting to that. Even though times are fundamentally different and a lot more challenging, please accept our wishes that this might be the beginning of a useful, fun and informative product that will assist you in understanding the "American way".

Welcome, readers to this first edition!

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Celebrating Literacy Worldwide

September 8 celebrated International Literacy Day. For the past 38 years, this date has aimed at reminding the global community of the status of literacy and adult learning worldwide.

The ability to read is a gateway to educational excellence and a key to success in any democratic society. But furthermore, for individuals it also paves the way to dreams, fulfillment and greater personal confidence.

United States First Lady Laura Bush made education and literacy the centerpiece of a renewed partnership with UNESCO in support of human rights, tolerance and learning worldwide when she organized and hosted in New York in 2006 the White House Conference on Global Literacy.

Yet, worldwide, despite many and varied efforts, literacy remains an elusive target: some 774 million adults lack

minimum literacy skills; one in five adults is still not literate and two-thirds of them are women; 72.1 million children are out-of-school and many more attend irregularly or drop out.

Portugal and the U.S. are particularly well-positioned to help improve the lives of men, women and children in various nations. May this date serve as a renewal of that commitment.



LITERACY IS KEY TO A NATION'S POLICIES. IT SEGUES INTO EMPOWERMENT, BETTER HEALTH, ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT.



Did you know that...?



U.S. Department of State at the dawn of the 19th century.

On September 15, 1789, U.S. Congress passed "An Act to provide for the safe keeping of the Acts, Records, and Seal of the United States, and for other purposes." This law

changed the name of the Department of Foreign Affairs to the Department of State because certain domestic duties were assigned to the agency. 219 years later, the State Department's embassies span the world in more than 190 countries, employing 48,000 American and foreign service nationals, who represent a variety of backgrounds.

On average, a career diplomat's tour abroad lasts one to four years depending on

post and specific situations. Diplomats periodically return to the United States so they do not lose sight of the country and culture they represent, such tours in the capital city lasting a maximum of five years. In order to be a member of the American Foreign Service, applicants must be U.S. citizens, be at least 20 years old and no older than 59 years of age, and be available for worldwide assignments. ♦

STATE of mind: FLORIDA

The 27th State to be admitted to the confederation on March 3, 1845, Florida is known as the "Sunshine State", with Tallahassee as its capital city. Currently governed by Charlie Crist, its major economic strengths include international trade, tourism, agriculture and space industry leading to a state budget of around 65 billion dollars and a gross state product of around 491 billion dollars (2001). It is also the state with the fourth largest population, right after California, Texas and New York. Florida has over 17 million inhabitants, and each day it is estimated that 1,000 new residents move there. Renowned for its beaches and golf courses, it is an obvious target for tourists — both foreign and domestic. Boasting 12 international airports, it is home to Orlando's Disney Park, Daytona's NASCAR competition, Hemingway's hometown Key West and a lot more. With so much to see and discover, it is no wonder that Florida welcomes 6 million campers every year!



- NEED FOR SPEED?
- A HEMINGWAY
- FAN? LONGING TO
- MEET DISNEY
- CHARACTERS OR
- EXPLORE THE BEST
- OF BUSINESS?
- GO SOUTH!

Are you next?

For more information, visit www.stateofflorida.com



Working a SecState Visit

As soon as word comes that a Secretary or President is coming our way, the Embassy becomes a whirlwind of excitement and planning. Condoleezza Rice's recent visit to Lisbon was no exception, even though the Secretary stayed for less than 24 hours. Here now, we give you a taste of what it feels like on the other side of the ropeline.



The way your boss tells you that a VIP visit is coming depends on his personal style. The Diplomat: "I'll need to rely on your energy soon..." The Secretive One: "Are you planning on going away around the week of September 5?" The Fortuneteller: "We shall receive a very important visit shortly, but more will be revealed to you on Tuesday."

Truth is that the dates for the visit are not always clear and there is only one thing you can be sure of - prepare for repeated changes until "D-day". The other good idea is to cushion your personal life for the particular period of time. Shop ahead, cook in advance, hire baby sitters or bribe your parents and in-laws. The minute the cycle starts, nothing

else takes priority. Got it? You are now as ready as you can possibly be for the adventure.

A high level visit starts with the arrival of an advance team who will visit the sites, run the routes, learn about local angles, etc. You want to keep them happy, so take them for a Pastel de Belém. As the timeline evolves and countdown meetings unfold, you will understand that such visits are like the Oscar Awards — everything is highly choreographed and there is no room for surprises.



Menus, official gifts, the size of the bed, risers, a menacing cobblestoned pavement or the number of questions to be asked at a press conference can all be major headaches for planners. But VIP visits are always memorable for their stories.

To this day, Embassy staff still recalls the special bed that was made in the embassy for Ronald Reagan when he came through, because back then all other beds were too small. The bed was such a hit, that the

carpenters autographed the bed and President Reagan had it shipped to the U.S. at the end of the visit!



Despite the importance of issues such as the Caucasus, NATO or Lajes, for Embassy staff the highpoint of the visit was the Meet & Greet, where Condoleezza Rice acknowledged the 25th anniversary of the current embassy facilities and shook hands with "everyday folks" who make miracles happen on the ground.

But you know what? As much as embassies love these events, the minute the officials take off, we are ready for the "wheels up" Party.

It is all about celebrating mission accomplished!



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Coming up

☞ **Oct. 13-17 Embassy volunteers help build house for Habitat for Humanity**

☞ **Oct. 18: A Pink Ribboned Affair Fundraising Dinner**

WE ARE ON THE WEB!

Please check out our new homepage at

<http://portugal.usembassy.gov>

@ a glance : Embassy Tiles



THE U.S. EMBASSY PROUDLY EXHIBITS A BEAUTIFUL COLLECTION OF PORTUGUESE TILES. ON THE RIGHT, TWO EXAMPLES OF THIS ARTWORK INHERITED FROM THE ARABS.

Visitors coming through the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon often marvel at the tiles decorating the Manor House, the chapel and gardens of our mission. In fact, when the U.S. Government acquired the current embassy grounds, then known as Quinta do Pinheiro, the Espírito Santo Lima family imposed a requirement for the deal -- that the buildings exhibiting such patrimony never be demolished.

And understandably so.

The word “azulejo” (tile) stems from the Arab *azzelij*, which means *small polished stone* and designated byzantine mosaic from the Near East. Although the first tiles date back to Ancient Egypt, their use spread with Islamic expansion when Arabs brought them to the Iberian Peninsula in the 14th century.

It was the year of 1498 when King Manuel I travelled to Spain and was bedazzled with the exuberance of Moorish interiors in Zaragoza, Toledo and Seville. Upon return and wishing to build a residence in a similar style, he ordered the importation of tiles from Seville, turning the National Palace of Sintra into one of the best and most original

examples of such artwork in Portugal.

The U.S. embassy is fortunate to thus be part of a vast list of sites exhibiting Portuguese tiles, such as the Tile Museum, Casa do Alentejo, Cervejaria Trindade, or the Church of Madre Deus, to mention just a few.

