



Editorial



One of the intense memories from my childhood is the smell of a new school notebook about to be used for the first time. "Coloring" empty pages with life, stories, drawings and characters was one of the most extraordinary feelings at the beginning of each

new school year. In the aftermath of last Tuesday's election, a new Administration will soon start writing a new chapter of American history and transatlantic relations. Not just the President and Vice President, but also their spouses who are now expected to do more than just host amenable events. In this edition, we pay tribute to great women behind American presidents.

In the aftermath of the U.S. Presidential election, we feature an ear-

lier interview with prize-winning journalist, author and commentator Jerry Hagstrom, whom we invited to come to Lisbon for addresses at Portuguese universities.

And on our last page, we share with you the eccentricities of Halloween, an all-American favorite that recently "spooked" the embassy.

Enjoy your copy! 

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Opposing Violence Against Women

Domestic violence, trafficking in persons, genital mutilation – three different forms of violence against women, a growing phenomenon that calls for everyone's efforts and firm policies, so that women all over the world can fully enjoy their rights and to effectively participate in society. The United States recognizes October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Additionally, the United Nations establish November 25th as the Interna-

tional Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Violence against women (VAW) exists in epidemic proportions, in a variety of forms. Eliminating such violence has long been a goal of the United States and requires a multifaceted strategy that incorporates a variety of legal, educational, health, and infrastructural reforms. The State Department has instituted bilateral and broad-based programs to address such

problems. Secretary Rice recently urged embassies to recognize the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and to participate by engaging host country governments, civil society and media in the prevention violence against women.

With an initiative scheduled for late November, U.S. Embassy Lisbon is proud to be part of that network. 

VIOLENCE HAS DEVASTATING REPERCUSSIONS AFFECTING WOMEN'S PERSONAL HEALTH, THE FAMILY, AND THE COMMUNITY





Did you know that...?



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

MARTHA WASHINGTON, THE FIRST OF ALL FIRST LADIES

Since Martha Washington in the 18th century, the role of American first ladies has been highly visible, vastly undefined and sometimes controversial. They have evolved from hostesses and

trend setters to more substantive players with direct access to the Head of State and often a degree of political power over policy and legislation. This may explain why the minute a presidential candidate decides to run for office, his spouse becomes a political issue.

They often broke ground in different ways. Julia Tyler was the first to be photographed; Florence Harding the first to vote and deliver speeches; Abigail Adams wrote highly political letters

to legislators; Dolley Madison sought equal access for women in Supreme Court hearings and oyster houses; Lady Bird Johnson was a pioneer in growing environmental protection; global humanitarian Eleanor Roosevelt and fashionable Jacqueline Kennedy became true icons.

Finding her own style among such references will be Michelle Obama's next challenge. ☞

STATE of mind: ILLINOIS

Illinois may stand high in manufacturing, coal mining, agriculture, and oil production but right now it is probably best known as Barack Obama's home state. To no surprise, since Illinois witnessed the rise of Abraham Lincoln from farm laborer to president.

The year was 1673 when French explorers Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet became the first Europeans of record to visit the region. In 1699 French settlers established the first permanent settlement at Cahokia, near present-day East St. Louis. Great Britain obtained the region at the end of the French and Indian Wars in 1763 and the area later figured prominently in frontier struggles during the Revolutionary War and in Indian wars during the early 19th century.

Nicknamed the Prairie State with Springfield for its capital, Illinois manufactures include food and agricultural products, transportation equipment, chemicals, industrial machinery, and computer equipment. The sprawling Chicago district (including a slice of Indiana) is a great iron and steel producer, meat packer, grain exchange, and railroad center. Chicago is also famous as a Great Lakes port. ☞



WHAT DO QUINCY JONES, DAVID MAMET, OPRAH WINFREY, BILL MURRAY OR GLORIA SWANSON HAVE IN COMMON? THEY ARE ALL FAMOUS NATIVE OR RESIDENT ILLINOISANS !

For more information, visit <http://www.infoplease.com>



Interview with Jerry Hagstrom

Atlantic Notes (AN) - When this edition of the Embassy Newsletter goes out, the world will hopefully have learnt the result of the U.S. election.

What's your forecast for November 4?

JH- Today is Oct. 17. If the election were held today, I believe Barack Obama would win. The big issue is now whether the African Americans and youth who support Obama turn out to vote. In the past African Americans and young voters have turned out in smaller percentages than middle aged and elderly white voters.

AN - In U.S. elections, the character of candidates is a fundamental campaign issue. What is the impact of a McCain vs. Obama victory upon transatlantic relations?

JH - Both candidates have said that if elected they will consult more with the leaders of other countries than President Bush has. The real difficulty in predicting behavior of presidents is that they must respond to changing world conditions over which they do not have control.

AN- Some claim things must change so that everything remains the same. Is it true that, regardless of what party conquers the White House, the U.S. has timeless interests that will rule over everything else? There is sort of an everlasting US foreign

agenda...

JH - The U.S. does have a timeless interest in its belief in democracy. In addition there are long term economic relationships with other countries that continue. But the history of war and peace over the centuries and particularly in Europe in the 20th century would indicate that times and alliances do change.

AN - Furthermore, political priorities on both sides of the Atlantic often do not match. *Transatlantic Trends 2008* shows that climate change is a major concern for Europeans, but not perceived as one for the American leadership; even war on terrorism does not seem to pull us together like the Soviet threat once did. Guantanamo, Iraq, Afghanistan, accession of Turkey to the EU are all important dividers...

JH - Since the *Transatlantic Trends 2008* study was done the world has started going through the biggest economic crisis since the 1930s. The banking crisis and the ups and downs of the stock market have already shown that the United States, Europe and other countries are strongly inter-linked. I think dealing with this crisis will be the biggest concern of all in the next few years and countries will want to work together so that the financial system does not sink.

AN - In February Anders

Fogh Rasmussen suggested an "alliance of democracies" to tackle common interests; the U.S. in turn often speaks of strategic alliances on a case by case base. Are Europeans day dreamers?

JH - I don't think the Europeans are day dreamers. But any major effort to deal with problems today must include China, which is not a democracy, and other oil-rich countries, which are also not democracies. The democracies cannot exclude the leaders of other countries from decision making and still be effective.

AN - Amidst all this, what do you foresee happening? America leaning more towards soft power or Europe hardening its stance, as in passenger data sharing , initially opposed by the EU and now a reality?

JH - It's hard to predict a general trend. I think issues will be handled on a case by case basis. A few weeks ago, no one would have expected that the United States and the European Union and Great Britain, which is not in the euro zone, take almost the same actions in concert to address the banking crisis.

AN - If you could advise the new U.S. President and EU President Barroso on future block relations, what would you say?

JH - Meet often, stay flexible and recognize that domestic pressures on each side of the Atlantic are not irrational, but reactions of ordinary people to real problems. Elites cannot lead by trying to ignore what the majority of people are saying. 

Prize-winning journalist, author and commentator Jerry Hagstrom was recently in Lisbon to talk about American government and political life at a US embassy-sponsored event. The interview that follows took place ahead of last week's election, during the speaker's visit to Portugal.



HAGSTROM'S PIECE OF ADVICE TO BARACK OBAMA AND DURÁO BARROSO ALIKE: "MEET OFTEN, STAY FLEXIBLE AND RECOGNIZE THAT THE DOMESTIC PRESSURES ON EACH SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC ARE NOT IRRATIONAL, BUT REACTIONS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE TO REAL PROBLEMS."

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**CAN EMBASSY STAFF
PLAY AROUND WHILE AT
WORK?
AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR,
"YES, WE CAN."**



@ a Glance : Love you, pumpkin!

Have you ever imagined arriving at the office and seeing your boss dressed as Darth Vader? Or being given the most serious instruction by a supervisor wearing a violet wig and a fake nose? At U.S. Embassies around the world, this is not a crazy scenario, it can be pretty real.

Halloween is as much a part of our diplomatic activities as *démarches* or diplomatic notes. Only that explains why on October 31st, visitors to the visa section may be greeted by consular staff in a most surprising way.

We still take care of our core mission, but it is fair to say that a lot of energy and ef-

fort goes into decorating the cafeteria, as well as doors, halls and stairways. Creativity is assessed with a decoration contest that everyone wants to win — even Ambassadors and Deputy Chiefs of Mission.



Then, come four o'clock, flocks of children in costume go from section to section to "trick or treat". How to get work done amidst all the frenzy—*that* is real challenge. But to quote the new President elect, "yes, we can" and ...we do.

While the name and most recent influences of Halloween are Christian, the day itself is of Druidic origin. Despite being an American favorite, it was not widely observed during the first 200 years of American settlement. The great impetus was provided by the terrible potato famine in Ireland in the 1840s that sent thousands of Irishmen across the Atlantic. In fact, the pumpkin lanterns are based upon the legend of Irish Jack.



How can you not like pumpkin?! ☞

Coming up

☞ **Nov. 14: Embassy-sponsored Bandeira Azul awards for Best Young Reporters for Environment**

☞ **Nov. 18: Speaker Rick Ridder with post-election analysis at Serralves Foundation, Porto**

☞ **Nov. 25: Infotalk with Portuguese media on Gender Violence**