



THIS for Diplomats Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 2

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Contact Us

Please send your comments, questions or corrections to the editor, Tina Bailem at Nicholas8555@msn.com



THIS for Diplomats
President
Dr. Phyllis Kaplan

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From the President

Dear friends,

We are about to welcome a new calendar year and our THIS membership year is at the half-way mark – a good time to celebrate some of our achievements as we continue our tradition of welcoming newly posted diplomats and their families, helping them feel more “at home” here in Washington.

Our new office space has worked out to be a pleasant and productive space for our staff as well as a more accessible location for our volunteers and diplomat visitors. We continue to have the use of Meridian meeting and entertainment spaces.

Our beloved Mort Caplin notified us of his intention to step down as Advisory Board Chair after nearly 40 years of exceptional service. I’m very pleased to tell you that Larry Dunham, a long-time member of the THIS Advisory Board, accepted my invitation to be our new Chair. Prior to his retirement, Larry was Assistant Chief of Protocol at the State Department for 16 years. I have already enjoyed working with him. We’re very lucky to have made a smooth transition between two such extraordinary leaders.

More good news: Capricia Marshall, who retired this summer from her position as Chief of Protocol, has accepted my invitation to join the Advisory Board. She has been a long-time supporter of THIS and will be a great asset to us.

Our collaborations with Johns Hopkins Medicine International and the *Diplomatic Connections* magazine continue. So far this year, we have partnered with Hopkins in two events, the latest of which was a very successful evening reception called “Ask the Doctor” in which five Hopkins physicians moved from table to table to answer questions about their specialties. Our friends at *Diplomatic Connections* generously provided us exhibit space at their recent Diplomatic Appreciation reception at the Fairmount Hotel, allowing us to meet (and recruit) diplomats who had not previously connected with us.

Madge Palumbo (our new COO) and I have been working together to identify possible cost-cutting measures that will allow us to stretch our funds further in our continuing service to diplomats and promotion of Citizen Diplomacy. In addition to our efforts to seek corporate and foundation support, we have launched an innovative program under Madge’s leadership called “High Hopes.” Please see the article on page 2. Attendance at these events is also open to non-volunteers, so this is also a way to raise our visibility in the community-at-large. We are “hopeful” that these small efforts will bring a substantial total. Please join us in this effort. Let us know if you have any questions.

We are also participating in the Amazon Smile program with the conviction that every little bit helps. Amazon will rebate a small percentage of the purchase price to THIS when people select THIS when making a purchase. Again, see page 2 for the article, please.

So, we have a good sense of momentum as we go forward. We feel a deep sense of satisfaction in our work and are constantly buoyed by the appreciation expressed by our diplomats. We know we are making a positive difference in their time here in America.

With thanks to all of you for your consistently warm-hearted devotion to our mission, here’s to another great year for THIS and for all of you!

THIS News***THIS HIGH HOPES - FUN/FUND RAISER EVENTS***

Find a teammate and plan a Mini Fundraiser for THIS! Instead of focusing on one large fundraising event this year, a series of smaller events is in the planning stage.



The HIGH HOPE is that a team of two volunteers would organize, advertise, and present an event/program for friends, neighbors, and others yielding a minimum donation to THIS of \$ 500.00. Twenty-five teams could make a total of \$ 12,500.00. Fifty teams could make \$ 25,000.00.

Teams are already in place for a 'Music Talent Show' (Larry & Yoko), 'Beading Lessons' (Madge & Olivia), 'Mystery Dinner' (Joan & Deborah) and 'The Gold and Silver Diggers' (Nicolette & all members) collecting broken jewelry, incomplete pairs, e.g., one earring or one cufflink.

Other ideas to consider are: bridge tournaments, gourmet dinners, mini tours, Virginia wine tasting trip, and cooking demonstrations or lessons. Let your imagination be your guide.

Please call:
Olivia Brown (202 966 3238)) for **registration and scheduling** and
Madge Palumbo (703 521 4089) for **ideas and questions**.

The THIS office will **not** be coordinating any HIGH HOPES projects.

***Amazon Smile***

Dear Members:

Amazon has special programs which help nonprofits fundraise. THIS is now registered with **AmazonSmile**. By participating in the AmazonSmile program, Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to THIS. The money will be deposited directly into the THIS bank account. Please encourage your family and friends to participate in this program.

Please use this link for instructions:

http://thisfordiplomats.org/media/newsletters/AmazonSmile_overview.pdf

Then please click this link which will take you directly to AmazonSmile:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-0744671>

Thanks so much!

Nicolette Regis

Executive Administrator

nregis@meridian.org



THIS News

On October 30, 2013 after over 40 years as Chair of the THIS Advisory Board, the Honorable Mortimer Caplin stepped down.

Dear Mort,

This is a letter I wish I didn't have to write! I console myself because THIS for Diplomats can never truly say "goodbye" to you.

I have so enjoyed getting to know you better through the unique circumstances reflected in the relationship between a President and the Chair of the Advisory Board. I shall always be grateful for the sound advice, support and encouragement you provided to me as we worked together to go forward in an unusually challenging time for THIS.

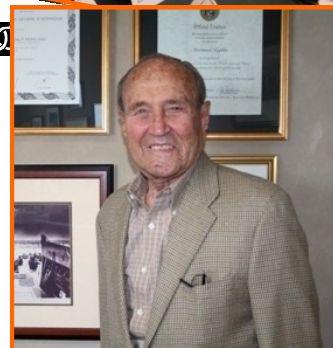
My thanks is not only for your help to me, but for all your years of service to THIS. Your leadership has strengthened our sense of purpose and helped us to carry out our role as Citizen Diplomats. We have represented the United States to the diplomats and their families in ways that have created lasting memories of friendship and hospitality.

We treasure you, Mort, and wish you a retirement that fulfills all your hopes.

With love,



Phyllis Kaplan, Ph.D.
President, 2012 - 2014



THIS News

THIS Thanks Our Generous Donors! ***We could not continue our 52-year mission without you!***

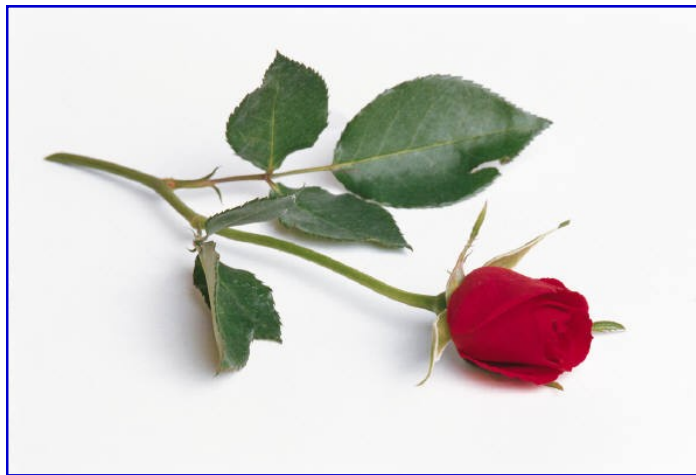
*This list reflects donations made to THIS between September 30, 2013 and December 15.
Donations made after December 15, 2013 will be recognized in future postings.*

Embassy Row Society

Promontory Financial Group

Ludwig Family Foundation

For a complete list of donors for the 2013/2014 program year please go to our website at THISforDiplomats.org and click on "Support THIS". Thank you!



Follow THIS on Twitter and "Like" Us on Facebook!

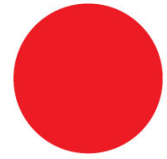
Twitter and Facebook users: Make sure you never miss THIS news or photo updates by following us on our new social media outlets. Simply go to our website, www.THISforDiplomats.org, and click on the Twitter and Facebook icons at the bottom. When you are routed to our Facebook page, be sure to click the "Like" button next to our name. We look forward to sharing more information with you!



THIS Programs and Services

Japanese Cultural Exchange

On November 7, members of the Japanese Cultural group enjoyed a very special VIP tour of the Kennedy Center.



European Influence on American Architecture

On November 19, John Vorhes, architectural designer and amateur historian, made an interesting presentation on the European influences of American architecture. In a 2-hour time span, participants traversed architectural history from the year 1500 to the present. Using over 250 color images, Mr. Vorhes made it easy to understand all the different influences that shaped our country.



Mr. John Vorhes and
THIS AGHD Committee
Chair Beth Barnett.



THIS Programs and Services



Does Technology Yield Prosperity in the Future?

On November 14, the Initiatives Committee presented an excellent program featuring Dr. William Raduchel, who spoke about the subject: Does Technology Yield Prosperity in the Future?

Dr. Raduchel is a strategic advisor to and consults with cutting edge technology companies such as AOL Time Warner, Sun Microsystems where he was chief strategy officer, Xerox and McGraw-Hill where he held senior executive roles. He taught corporate strategy at Georgetown and Economics at Harvard, where his students included Lawrence Summers and Ben Bernanke. He is a member of the Conference of Business Economists and served on the Board of the National Academy of Sciences.



Holocaust Museum Visit

On November 12, several diplomats joined THIS volunteers for an insider's tour of the United States Holocaust Museum and a most informative and enlightening exploration of this period in the world's history.



A Coffee with Ambassador Capricia Marshall

On Wednesday, December 11, attendees enjoyed a visit with Ambassador Capricia Marshall, recent Chief of Protocol of the United States, at the beautiful Meridian House. Ambassador Marshall told about her experiences representing the United States and her insights in building international relationships.

Among other positions, Ambassador Marshall served as Special Assistant to Hillary Rodham Clinton when she was First Lady, and at age 32 was appointed Deputy Assistant to President William Clinton and White House Social Secretary. She also served as Senior Advisor to the Hillary Clinton 2008 presidential campaign.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio to a Mexican mother and a Croatian father, she was raised in a multicultural community. Ambassador Marshall credits her childhood as preparing her for the world of diplomacy.



THIS Programs and Services

Halloween Party by Beth Barnett

What a wonderful evening we had for our Halloween Party at the beautiful Brazilian Mission to the OAS on Friday, October 25th. We were so lucky to have Marilia Bulhoes and her husband, Ambassador Breno Dias Da Costas host this event.

22 diplomats representing 9 countries and 20 volunteers and guests attended.

Many thanks to Linda Lotto and Harriet Kelman for doing a great job checking everyone in.

Thanks also to the cooking/kitchen help crew: Harriet Kelman, Trish Kent, Lorraine Gnecco, Sheila Switzer, Mimi Kolesar, Neil Ann Greene and Catherine Androus for the delicious food. And thank you Frederica Dunn for coming early and transporting some of the food and taking pictures.

The set-up crew of Sheila Switzer, Harriet Kelman, Trish Kent and Lorraine Gnecco did an amazing job decorating and making the rooms look so festive for Halloween.

Thanks to Marjorie Scott for her help in the pre-planning details of the party. Even though she couldn't be there that evening, Marjorie was there in spirit (pun intended).

Our hosts for the evening: Marilia Bulhoes and Sheila (Catherine of Aragon) and Tom Switzer (King Henry VIII).



Steven Williams and Amy Lin (both UK) dressed as Butterfly and Butterfly Catcher received a prize for their wonderful costumes!

And of course, none of this would have been possible without the leadership and hard work of Sheila Switzer. You certainly know how to throw a good party! We were also treated to Sheila's husband's, Tom (aka King Henry VIII), fun presentation about Halloween.

German Conversation and Cultural Group

The German Conversation Group enjoyed the Christmas Market in Baltimore on December 12 and celebrated their own Christmas party on December 13 with an exchange of "White Elephants", lots of laughter and good food.



THIS Programs and Services



Treasures of the Library of Congress

On November 8, THIS volunteers and diplomats enjoyed a tour of the splendid Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress designed to showcase the art and culture of our nation. The beautiful art and architecture make it one of the most amazing buildings in the United States. Attendees were taken on a docent-led tour of the remarkable treasures housed here. The elaborate decorations, by more than fifty American sculptors, painters and mosaic artists, were admired and appreciated by all.



Photos by
Debbie
Glaser

L.-r.: Erifyli Mylocharakti (Greece); Gily Rosenberg (Israel); Marina Terzoglou (Greece).



L.-r.: Eliete Verissimo (Brazil) and Bianca Rousselot (Switzerland).

A Woman's Journey by Carla Bicks (Liaison between Johns Hopkins International and THIS)

Recently, 6 diplomats and 3 THIS volunteers attended a Johns Hopkins International conference for women in Baltimore entitled "A Woman's Journey".

We travelled by bus which picked us up at 7:00 in the morning! When we arrived at the Hilton convention center we picked up our registration packets and headed into breakfast where we met about 1,000 other participants. First, we listened to a fascinating and informative speech by TV host Katie Couric. Afterwards, we attended several sessions with many interesting topics such as Memory, Aspects of Aging, Super Bugs, Farm to Table, You're So Vein, To Err is Human to Forgive Divine, Got Bones and many more. This was a wonderful program and we all enjoyed it very much!



THIS presents....

Brazilian painter Marília Bulhões

Our Diplomat of the Month for December, amazing Brazilian painter Marília Bulhões, was born the sixth of seven children. She describes herself as an optimistic, very religious, restless person (in pursuit of creation), as well as a very happy and proud mother of a beautiful and wonderful daughter, Juliana."



Her father, an agricultural engineer and her mother, a homemaker, were devoted to their family and supplied their children with "plenty of love and affection." Although demanding in regards to their education, they "always encouraged us to have our own opinion as well as expressing it in a firm and honest way." Marília grew up in Natal, the capital of the Rio Grande do Norte state, in Northeast Brazil. There she attended a catholic school and later studied at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte.

She started painting early in life. After she left Brazil she also took every opportunity to improve her skills and artistic abilities. She attended the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC, and studied at the Art Students League of New York between 2003 and 2006. Marília participated in many solo and group exhibitions in many countries and has been widely lauded for her work. She says that "Art for me is a deep sense of freedom of expression."

Using acrylic on canvas, she uses an abstract and minimalist approach, and in a recent exhibition at the Art Museum of the Americas Brasil, *Meu Brasil: Contrastes da Modernidade* (Brazil, My Brazil: Contrasts of Modernity) showed 15 paintings, promoting a constructive vision of South America's future through local and hemispheric cultural exchange. In an accompanying description it states that she "assembles a distinct mosaic of present-day Brazil, subtly revealing intricate contrasts while weaving a sense of cultural unity."

During his opening speech of the exhibition, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, detailed that "the abstraction of Marília's paintings guarantee a discovery of the richness and diversity of her country, offering an intimate perception of its people, the natural beauty of its surroundings and its modernity." Curator Roxana Martin stated that "Bulhões has created a landscape-in-progress that pulsates with the energy of contemporary Brazil. There is luminosity in her work that radiates even in its darkest hues. She applies paint in layers, with swift textural brushstrokes that highlight the grain of the canvas. Color is transparent, the forms assertive and elusive. While some of the paintings speak readily of tradition, others are edgier, with the restlessness of the unknown."

On her website (<http://www.mariliabulhoes.com>) Marília herself says that "in order to create my works of art, I always bring, along with my brushes, a great deal of uneasiness, images rescued from many locations, feelings, passions, reflections... I build abstract works that come to life interactively under my brush strokes, resulting in canvasses and personal art projects. My inspiration arises from the experiences and customs of the various places I have lived from time to time, and even from special trips I have taken. Based on these stories, my works are created and revealed in colors and in shapes."

Apart from her art, when in Brazil, Marília works with people with disabilities, whom she really cares for. Living one day at a time is also most important to her and "to have faith and trust in God: nothing happens by chance."

Asked how THIS for Diplomats has impacted her life she says that "THIS was fundamental for my assimilation to the city, meeting new people and making friends; it also provides me the opportunity to visit interesting places in a safe and organized manner along with wonderful people." Marília also exhibited at the 2013 Festival des Artistes, exercising diplomacy through art. We hope that Marília will continue to enjoy our programs and services and we wish her all the best for the future.

THIS presents

On Wednesday, October 30, 2013, one chapter of THIS history came to an end and a new one began. The Honorable Mortimer Caplin, THIS Advisory Board Chair has stepped down. THIS President Dr. Phyllis Kaplan has appointed Lawrence Dunham to this position.

Larry Dunham and his wife Deborah have both been longtime supporters and members of THIS and the Advisory Board. They have been very active in Home Hospitality over the years and have forged many great friendships with THIS volunteers and diplomats alike.

The Dunham's are extraordinary people. Deborah, a retired Geriatric Social Worker was also for many years on the Board of the Alzheimer's Association in Washington and is now a member of the Board of the Eden Alternative, an international, nonprofit organization that provides education and consultation for organizations across the entire continuum of care for the elderly.

Growing up in a quiet village on Nantucket Island, young Larry couldn't wait to leave after finishing high school. He wanted to come to Washington and experience everything this extraordinary city has to offer. He studied and received a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations at the Catholic University of America and rounded off his education at the George Mason University School of Law. After an initial position as a lawyer with the U.S. Customs Service, beginning in 1983, Larry held a variety of positions in the State Department Protocol Office and served as U.S. Assistant Chief of Protocol from 1989 until 2005. He was Acting Chief of Protocol from January until June 2001. He now consults for government and private sector clients, in particular 'Protocol Partners'. He also teaches occasionally at the George Washington University business school and will be presenting a course in protocol at GW's Elliott School of International Affairs this spring.

Although retired, Larry is still very active with a variety of valuable organizations besides THIS. One is the International Student House in Washington, a non-profit organization that provides an exceptional residential experience to a highly diverse international community of graduate students, interns, and visiting scholars. Another, which he was introduced to by THIS Past President Madge Palumbo and her husband Ben, is Nyumbani in Kenya, an organization which provides assistance to children and families affected by HIV. The Nyumbani Children's Home is Kenya's first and largest facility for HIV and orphans. Here, children receive the best medical, nutritional, academic and holistic care possible until they become self-reliant. Larry co-chaired and managed the 2011 and 2012 Benefit and Auction Dinners for Nyumbani, attracting more than 400 attendees and raising over \$250,000 each year.

Larry has received many awards over the years, including the State Department's Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards. Other awards include the Order of Her Most Catholic Majesty Queen Isabella, from the King of Spain, and the Commander's Cross, from the Government of Austria.

THIS members appreciate his outgoing personality, sense of humor and generous nature. Larry says he himself also values precision, accuracy and attention to detail, all characteristics that will assist him in his new position. His long experience in dealing with people from all over the world will be invaluable and although he feels that Mort Caplin "is impossible to succeed" we are confident in his abilities. Larry hopes "to engage Advisory Board members over the next couple of years in developing new thoughts and ideas on where we are going to go from here", to come up with a "Blueprint for the future" so to speak. His life, as always, will be very busy, but he says he doesn't mind, he considers it a "luxury" that he makes his own schedule now and that he doesn't have to "rush to be anywhere" anymore. We look forward to many years under his great leadership and hope that he will be as successful with us as he has been in all his previous endeavors.



Larry and Deborah Dunham

THIS introduces...

As you know, THIS for Diplomats is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers, and we are very happy to introduce the newest members of our organization to you:



Bonni Braverman

Bonni Braverman - Bonni is a native New Yorker, living in Washington, DC. Her passion is the pursuit of beauty in any form and women's issues. The cultural exchange between Americans and our friends abroad appeals to her because she feels that "we have so much to learn and I consider this a great opportunity to grow and share."



Kathryn Rickles

Kathryn Rickles - Kathryn grew up in Washington, DC. She has lived in several places in the US and also in Melbourne, Australia and is married with two grown sons. For 30 years Kathryn worked as a clinical social worker in mostly health care settings. She has participated in many volunteer activities and looks forward to being involved with THIS.



Margaret Huddy

Margaret Huddy - Margaret is known nationally and internationally for her watercolor and acrylic paintings. She resides with her husband in Washington. She is retired from teaching at the Corcoran College of Art and Design, the Art League School, Fairfax County Adult Education, and Coastal Carolina Community College. Margaret has traveled the world, paintbrush in hand, where she finds art is a universal language. She is looking forward to the opportunity of meeting the volunteers and diplomats through THIS.



Pernille Florin Elbech

Pernille Florin Elbech – Pernille and her husband are originally from Denmark. She has studied and worked in various countries since 1993 and this is her second time living in the Washington, DC, area. Before joining the Embassy of Denmark as Senior Advisor for Public Diplomacy & Press, Pernille worked within marketing and branding for large European banks. She holds an MBA in International Business. When not spending time with her family, Pernille enjoys travelling, history and cooking as well as design and architecture and looks very much forward to volunteering for THIS and meeting many new friends.

THIS Stream of Life



Memories - THIS mourns the loss of former volunteer Sue Wilhere who passed away on November 20. She was a co-chair for the ICCE Bethesda group for several years.

We are also very sad to tell you that Gene Stichman, Carol Kaplan's long-time companion, passed away unexpectedly on Monday, December 9.

Sue and Gene will be greatly missed and our thoughts and prayers go out to their loved ones.



Don't miss these fabulous programs in January and February

- January 16, Double Tours of Sackler & Freer Museums, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, Washington, DC;
- January 22, National Press Club Tour & Buffet Luncheon, 11:30 am - 3:00 pm, Washington, DC;
- January 28, Open Rehearsal Mariinsky Ballet, 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm, Washington, DC;
- February 10, Postal Museum Tour, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm, Washington, DC;
- February 23, National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Family Concert: Peter and the Wolf and the NSO Petting Zoo, 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm, Washington, DC;
- Feb 24, Pentagon Tour, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, Washington, DC.

To sign up please visit us online at www.THISforDiplomats.org. If you need help with online registration, call 202-232-3002.