



**FUNKY
FACTS:**

- Did you know that roughly 11,000 U.S. Citizens live in Northern Greece?
- Locals of Thessaloniki spend 524,420 EU on taxis daily.
- Thessaloniki was founded in 315 B.C.

**INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:**

Sister Cities 2

YET 2

Upcoming
Events 2,
4

Q & A with
the CG 3

Consular
Advice 3

US Eagles 4

Northern Pages

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Independence Day Commemorated

In honor of the 232nd Anniversary of Independence Day, the U.S. Consulate General, on July 3rd, hosted an evening social and banquet at the American Farm School on the outskirts of Thessaloniki.

Independence Day, officially recognized on July 4th, is a special holiday for U.S. citizens. It's origins go back to 1776, upon the signing and approval of the Declaration of Independence by America's 'founding fathers', proclaiming to all that the American Colonies would no longer be subject to the rule of Great Britain.

John Adams, an American Patriot, said that the Fourth "... ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from

one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

Though times have slightly changed since then, with the Fourth now commonly associated with BBQ's, baseball games, and fireworks, it's still customary to celebrate with 'pomp', whether in the U.S. or in Greece. This year's celebration was not an exception; toasts, music, drinks, food and 'parea' were shared by all in attendance, making it a night worthy of remembrance!

We understand that some of our friends and colleagues did not receive an invitation, due to either errors in the

postal system or inefficient internal processing, for which we're deeply sorry. If anyone feels as if they were unjustly left out, please don't hesitate to inform us of our mistake.

Thanks to all of those who joined us in this festivity and we look forward to seeing you next year!



CG Hoyt B. Yee, accompanied by Deputy Principal Officer Robert King, welcomes guests.

Celebrating Religious Freedom

One of the goals of the Consulate is to inform the public about U.S. policy on global issues. In this issue, we highlight religious freedom.

Ten years ago, the International Religious Freedom Act was passed, and in its turn, it established the Office of

International Religious Freedom, which has the mission of promoting religious freedom as a core objective of U.S. foreign policy. "Even though many countries have become more tolerant in recent years of individuals worshiping as they choose, there are still governments

abusing religious freedom". This was what President Bush stated during the 10th anniversary of the International Religious Freedom Act.

In the Act's 10-year history, there has been "hopeful progress" in many countries, Bush said.

Upcoming Events

September 22 is European Day without a Car

The U.S. Consulate General, in cooperation with the Municipality of Thessaloniki, will host a concert by progressive soul singer Stacey Epps on September 22. Stacey will join Greek hip hop groups that will play at Aristotle Square of Thessaloniki in celebration of European Day Without a Car, which is intended to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the environment and using ecologically-friendly means of transportation.

Film Festival - Immigrants' Experience in America City of Komotini

The U.S. Consulate General, in cooperation with the Municipality of Komotini, is organizing a two-day film festival on the immigrants' experience in America, focusing on the multiculturalism and diversification that exists in the U.S. today. Well known film critics, professors, artists and directors are invited to present their views and analyses of the films, discuss and exchange ideas with the audience.

November 4 is the U.S. Presidential Elections

The U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki is organizing an Election Morning breakfast to monitor the U.S. Presidential Election Results in the Tiano Room of the American Consulate General in Thessaloniki.



YET meeting at the U.S. Consulate General Tiano Room



Young Entrepreneurs of Thessaloniki

Young Entrepreneurs of Thessaloniki ("YET") is a recently established (Facebook based) group for young entrepreneurs and future entrepreneurs. It aims to the exchange of ideas and the promotion of necessary conditions for innovation, entrepreneurship and the general prosperity of Thessaloniki and the wider region. YET activities have and will

include meetings, seminars, and informal networking opportunities. Members of YET will also work together with other like-minded organisations to build contacts between Greek and American businesses and specialists but also with European partners too.

YET's hosted its last roundtable discussion in July, with Georgia State

business Professor Asterios Kefalas. Dr Kefalas spoke to the 30 students and aspiring entrepreneurs and about the basic qualities of a business person and the ingredients for a successful business activity and also on how to identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities.

San Francisco - Thessaloniki Sister Cities Relationship Revived

Representatives of San Francisco and Thessaloniki, in cooperation with the Consulate General of the United States in Thessaloniki have agreed to revive the sister-city relationship between the two cities established in 1990, and agreed to pursue cooperation in a broad range of areas, primarily commerce, tourism and culture, including a visit to Thessaloniki by a delegation from San Francisco led by Mayor Gavin

Newsom, and a reciprocal visit to San Francisco by the Mayor of Thessaloniki, Mr. Vassilis Papageorgopoulos.

Thessaloniki and San Francisco became "sister cities" when Art Agnos, a Greek-American from Massachusetts and Konstantinos Kosmopoulos signed a joint declaration on August 7, 1990. They agreed to "further the traditional links of friendship between San Francisco and Thessaloniki and to affirm

the mutual intention to work together for the benefit of their cities and nations."

The revival of the Sister City relationship recognizes how much the two cities continue to have in common: both are port cities, tourist destinations, have almost the same size population, a vital art scene, universities, museums, and lots of cafés!



Cable Car in San Francisco

Image: Street Car by T. Bachman

Q & A with the CG



Consul General Hoyt B. Yee

What does the U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki do?

The United States has had a Consulate in Thessaloniki as early as the 1830's. While much has changed over the years, our basic purpose remains the same: to strengthen cooperation, friendship and trade between the United States and northern Greece, to help promote U.S. Government policies and objectives, and to protect the lives and

interests of U.S. citizens. The staff of the Consulate are Americans and Greeks who have a broad range of expertise in international relations, economics, culture, communication and administration.

Our goals include:

- Promoting mutual understanding through educational, cultural, and public affairs activities
- Addressing common concerns and differences through open and constructive dialogue with

officials, journalist, and other citizens.

- Increasing commerce between the U.S. and northern Greece and surrounding countries by identifying and promoting opportunities for trade and investment.
- Fighting terrorism, illegal migration, trafficking, and other cross-border crime through joint training and preventative efforts.
- Assisting U.S. citizens by providing prompt, efficient consular services,

To achieve these goals, we work in close cooperation with local authorities, the Government of Greece, NGO's, business people, academics and others who share our goals. We welcome your suggestions and comments [info@usconsulate.gr] and hope to see you at some of our events. For more information please visit our website, <http://thessaloniki.usconsulate.gov>

Religious Freedom cont...

One example is Vietnam's government, which has taken "promising first steps toward religious freedom" by releasing dozens of religious prisoners and re-opening churches that had been shut down by the government. However, many people still do not have the freedom to worship as they choose, and this is something that is keeping back

every attempt of possible evolution. Countries such as Eritrea, where 3,000 are imprisoned for their religious belief, or Uzbekistan, where members of religious minorities have been beaten and jailed, are the most obvious cases of religious discrimination. Nevertheless, recent agreements give us hope that these abuses will not be repeated.

"Today we urge the leaders of all these countries to immediately end their abuses of religious freedom", says President Bush, hoping for a religious freedom that soon will be a fact and not only a wish or effort, in all over the world. For more details: <http://www.america.gov/st/hr-english/2008/July/20080714163447hmnietusa08260919.html?CP.rss=true>

"Today we urge the leaders of all these countries to immediately end their abuses of religious freedom", asserts President Bush

Watch Your Passport!

In recent months, the Consulate has observed an increase in lost or stolen passports in our area. While we are here to meet your needs if you need a replacement for a lost passport, it's always best to keep the one you have. If you do lose your passport, we can usually replace it within 10 days. Here is what to do. First go to the local police

station to report the passport lost. Then come in to the Consulate during our regular 9 AM to 1 PM hours on Tuesday or Thursday and bring two 2 inches by 2 inches photographs with you. You can complete an application here and we will call you when the passport is ready. But save yourself the trouble and keep the passport you have!



Bob King says, "Keep a careful eye on your passport while traveling in Greece!"



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Upcoming Events:

- Sept. 24-25, Film Festival in Komotini
- Sept. 27, “Our Town” theatrical play performed in Xanthi
- Oct. 13th, Columbus Day. Consulate is closed
- Nov. 4th, Election Breakfast



Eagles “soar” to new heights

Season 2007-2008 culminated with an exciting friendly charity match in May 2008 against the Iraklis FC Veterans which ended 4-2 in favor of the ex-pros at the Kaftantzogleio stadium.

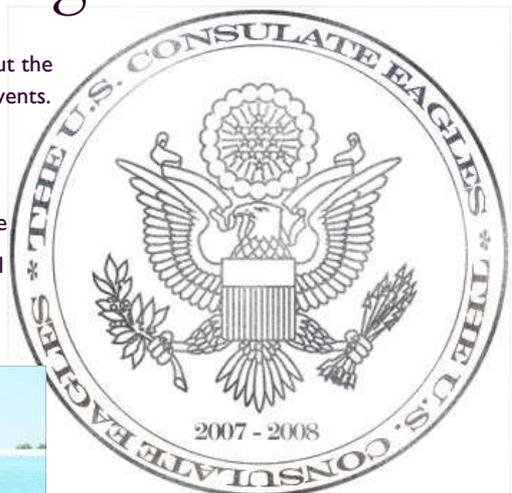
As an exciting new football season unfolds so does a busy schedule for the U.S. Eagles soccer team - with

matches lined up throughout the winter and various other events.

Team training is underway,

If you would like to receive more information about the

U.S. Eagles send us an email at info@usconsulate.gr



The Eagles before the charity event.

