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## American Citizen Services Newsletter June 2009

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### SAFETY AND SECURITY SITUATION

We reiterate the State Department's Country Specific Information on Macedonia: The security situation in Macedonia is stable, although occasional criminal violence does occur. Americans should avoid areas with demonstrations, strikes, or roadblocks where large crowds are gathered, particularly those involving political causes or striking workers. Crime in Macedonia is low by U.S. standards, and violent crime against Americans is rare. Pick-pocketing, theft, and other petty street crimes do occur, however, particularly in areas where tourists and foreigners congregate. American travelers are advised to take the same precautions against becoming crime victims as they would in any U.S. city. Valuables, including cell phones and electronic items, should not be left in plain view in unattended vehicles. Windows and doors should be securely locked when residences are not occupied. Organized crime is present in Macedonia; organized criminal activity occasionally results in violent confrontations between members of rival organizations. ATM use is generally safe; however, travelers should take standard safety precautions.

The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. If you are a victim of a crime while overseas, in addition to reporting to the local police, please contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for assistance. The Embassy/Consulate staff can, for example, assist you to find appropriate medical care, to contact family members or friends, and explain how funds could be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and find an attorney if needed.

The Worldwide Caution issued for American citizens abroad by the U.S. Department of State regarding the threat of terrorist acts has been updated as of February 2, 2009. For the latest security information, Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where up-to-date [Worldwide Caution Public Announcements](#), [Travel Warnings and Public Announcements](#) can be found.

## **DEMONSTRATION NOTICES**

As a reminder, as of May 4, 2009, the American Citizen Services unit stopped issuing warden messages regarding routine demonstrations taking place in Macedonia. Instead, information about routine demonstrations now is posted on the U.S. Embassy Skopje's website (<http://macedonia.usembassy.gov>), under the heading "Demonstration Notices." Please monitor our website regularly for information about demonstration activities in the country. We will send an email alert when a new demonstration notice has been posted. Please note that the Embassy will continue to issue warden messages, not relating to demonstrations, through the regular method.

## **UPCOMING HOLIDAYS**

The Embassy will be closed for the following holidays:

- Independence Day – Friday, July 3
- Ilinden Uprising Day– Sunday, observed on Monday, August 3
- Labor Day – Monday, September 7
- Independence Day – Tuesday, September 8
- Ramadan Bajram – Sunday, observed on Monday September 21

## **SECURITY AWARENESS: PROTECT YOUR HOME WHILE ON VACATION**

No home security system is 100% accurate. One of the easiest ways to protect your home and property while away on vacation is to create the impression that someone is still at home.

One good way to create this "lived in" look while you are gone is with the help of a neighbor. Of course, arranging to have a friend or relative check your home periodically is a good idea too. But your neighbors next door can provide around-the-clock security, simply by watching out for any unusual or suspicious activity around your residence, and then calling the police if they think something is wrong.

A vacation or weekend away from home should be a pleasant experience for you and your family. You can make it more enjoyable and carefree by taking a few simple steps to reduce the possibility that your home might be broken into while you are gone.

- Be careful about whom you tell that you are going to be leaving town. It's especially important to not talk to strangers about your trip.
- Don't let uncollected newspapers and mail pile up. Ask a trusted neighbor or friend to pick them up for you.
- Store jewelry and other valuables in a safe place.

- Prior to departure check all doors and windows to ensure all are locked.
- Do not close blinds and drapes. A “closed up” house is a sure sign of being unoccupied.
- Disconnect appliances. Eliminate possible fires by disconnecting all nonessential electrical appliances.
- Get a trusted friend or relative to “house sit.” Or, make sure your neighbors know your plans.
- Leave a car parked in the driveway, or ask a neighbor to park in your driveway.
- Leave a house key and a phone number with a trusted friend or neighbor where you can be reached in case of an emergency.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY PICNIC

U.S. citizens are cordially invited to the U.S. Embassy-AmCham Macedonia

### **Independence Day Picnic**

Saturday, July 4th, 2009 from 4:00– 8:00 pm  
at the Military Athletic Club (Skopje City Park)

#### **Tickets:**

400 MKD per adult

150 MKD per child (2-12 years old only; babies under 2 are free)

Drinks, hamburgers and hotdogs are included in the ticket price.

Note: Tickets will not be available at the door and are non-refundable.

Tickets will be available for purchase from June 15 – 26<sup>th</sup>. To purchase tickets, come to the U.S. Embassy Monday, Wednesday or Friday between the hours of 11:00 am and 12:00 noon. Upon arrival at the Embassy, please tell the guard that you want to purchase tickets and ask them to call ext. 2247. You must have your valid U.S. passport with you at the time of purchase.

**Activities:** Games, music, food and more!

#### **What to bring:**

- Dessert to share

- Frisbees, footballs, blankets, chairs, and whatever else you might need for an all-American style picnic

All guests should arrive with their ticket and valid photo identification.

To expedite security screening, please do not bring the following items:

- Weapons
- Knives
- Fireworks
- Alcoholic beverages
- Large personal bags
- Large portable radios (jam boxes)

For further details call the Community Liaison Office at 310-2247.

## **DOG BITES: WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A DOG BITES ME?**

Here are some things you should do to take immediate care of a wound caused by a dog bite:

- Wash the wound area gently with soap and water and leave it under running tap water at least ten minutes.
- Apply pressure with a clean towel to the injured part to stop the bleeding.
- Apply a sterile bandage to the wound.
- Keep the injury elevated above the level of the heart to slow swelling and prevent infection.
- Seek medical assistance as soon as possible after the exposure.

If you reside in Skopje, you should immediately go to

**The Clinic for Infectious Diseases  
University State Hospital  
Vodnjanska street, b.b.  
1000 Skopje  
tel: (02) 3147-147**

It is very likely that you will undergo a series of rabies shots and a tetanus injection.

If you reside in another city or village, you should visit the Department of Infectious Diseases at the nearest Medical Center.

If you know the owner of the dog that bit you, ask for the pet's vaccination record (record of shots) and take it to the veterinarian for a certification of the dog's health.

### **How can I prevent dog bites?**

Here are some things you can do to prevent bites:

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog.
- Never leave a young child alone with a pet.
- Do not try to separate fighting animals.
- Avoid sick animals and animals that you don't know.
- Leave animals alone while they are eating.
- Keep pets on a leash when in public.
- Select your family pet carefully, and be sure to keep your pet's vaccinations up-to-date.

## **FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WINNING SLOGANS SELECTED FOR THE 2009 VOTING SLOGAN CONTEST**

The Federal Voting Assistance Program is pleased to announce the winning slogans of its biennial Voting Slogan Contest. These slogans will be used to promote participation in the democratic process among citizens covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act -- members of the Uniformed Services, the Merchant Marine, their families, and all U.S. citizens residing outside the United States.

This year, the department received more than 1,600 slogans from all branches of the Uniformed Services, the State Department, local election officials and citizens living around the world. A panel of judges which included Members of the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives and Service Voting Action Officers was asked to rank their top selections based on originality and motivational value. These slogans will be part of the FVAP's 2010-2011 outreach campaign which focuses on increasing voter awareness among U.S. citizens worldwide and will be featured in the 2010-2011 Voting Assistance Guide, on motivational posters, and other FVAP publications.

The winning entries in the contest were:

“Honor the past, support the future - vote!”- 1st Place by Andrea K. Bristol, Army.

“Vote Today for Tomorrow's Future”- 2nd Place by James R. Hopkins Jr., USN.

“Never too far away to have your say! VOTE!”- 3rd Place by Jill E. Pigo, USN.

“Don't just protect the right to vote, use it!”- 4th Place by GySgt Michael D. Travers, USMC.

Receiving Honorable Mention were:

“Be a part of history: Vote!”- LT Laura Reeves, USN.

“Citizenship reaches around the world, Vote!”- John Tuteur, Napa County Registrar of Voters

“Be Informed. Be Involved. Be a Voter!”-Rob Rock, Rhode Island's Office Secretary of State

“Have a say in the USA- VOTE”- James E. Kramer, USAF.

These winners will receive a letter and certificate of congratulations from the Department. Mr. Thomas L. Bush, Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program congratulates these winners and thanks our judges and all those who submitted slogans.

## **FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER**

The Federal Voting Assistance Program publishes the Voting Information News which is a roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP). FVAP's June 2009 issue can now be viewed on their website: <http://www.fvap.gov/vao/vin.html>.

## **REGISTER YOUR STAY OVERSEAS**

You may have received this newsletter from a friend or directly from us after signing up on the Embassy website by providing your e-mail address. We use this mailing list to send our quarterly newsletters and periodic warden messages that announce important events and security-related news. However, we cannot use it to locate you, should your family ask us to contact you.

If you have never registered with the Embassy, we encourage you to do so. Registration is a voluntary way of telling us that you, as an American Citizen, are in Macedonia, whether for a long-term stay or a short-term visit. In the event of an emergency, we use registration information to communicate with you. Such situations could include family emergencies in

which relatives in the U.S. request that the Embassy contact you, or an emergency in which you yourself are injured and we need to contact family members. You can register your stay in Macedonia, or trips to other countries, online. You can update your contact information at any time on the website. If you register, you'll still receive our e-mailed newsletters and warden messages, but you'll also be better protected in the event of an emergency.

We invite you to register yourself and your family by visiting the State Department's registration website. U.S. citizens around the world who travel or reside abroad can access this site either through a link on <http://travel.state.gov> or directly at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

If you are unable to utilize the online registration process, you can register with the Embassy by downloading [the Registration Form for Americans in Macedonia](#) and sending it to us by mail, fax or email along with a copy of your U.S. passport. U.S. citizens may also bring their U.S. passport to the Embassy and apply in person. Registration is free.



This newsletter is an unofficial and informal source of practical information for American citizens residing in Macedonia. If you have comments, questions, or suggestions, please contact the Consular Section at (02) 310-2000, or at [consularskopje@state.gov](mailto:consularskopje@state.gov). This newsletter is also available on the American Citizens Services page of our website at <http://macedonia.usembassy.gov>