

Newsletter

May 2008



May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month—a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. A rather broad term, Asian/Pacific encompasses all of the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam, Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia) and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands,

French Polynesia and Easter Island). Like most commemorative months, Asian/Pacific Heritage Month originated in a congressional bill. In June 1977, Reps. Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution that called upon the president to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian/Pacific Heritage Week. The following month, senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced a similar bill in the Senate. Both were passed. On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the annual celebration. Twelve years later, President George H.W. Bush signed an extension making the week-long celebration into a month-long celebration. In 1992, the official designation of May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month was signed into law. The month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

<http://images.google.com>

<http://www.loc.gov/topics/asianpacific/about/>



WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

MAY 3

Freedom of Expression, Access and Empowerment

Freedom of Expression is a fundamental human right as stated in Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. This is especially worth recalling as we mark the 60th anniversary of that declaration.

At this year's World Press Freedom Day celebration, UNESCO would like to explore how media freedom and access to information feed into the wider development objective of empowering people. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional social and political process that helps people gain control over their own lives. This can only be achieved through access to accurate, fair and unbiased information, representing a plurality of opinions, and the means to actively communicate vertically and horizontally, thereby participating in the active life of the community.

*For further reading visit:
<http://portal.unesco.org/>*



Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in American nation's service. There are many stories as to its actual beginnings, with over two dozen cities and towns laying claim to being the birthplace of Memorial Day. There is also evidence that organized women's groups in the South were decorating graves before the end of the Civil War: a hymn published in 1867, "Kneel Where Our Loves are Sleeping" by Nella L. Sweet carried the dedication "To The Ladies of the South who are Decorating the Graves of the Confederate Dead" (Source: Duke University's Historic American Sheet Music, 1850-1920). While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is more likely that it had many separate beginnings; each of those towns and every planned or spontaneous gathering of people to honor the war dead in the 1860's tapped into the general human need to honor our dead, each contributed honorably to the growing movement that culminated in Gen Logan giving his official proclamation in 1868. It is not important who was the very first, what is important is that Memorial Day was established. Memorial Day is not about division. It is about reconciliation; it is about coming together to honor those who gave their all.

*<http://images.google.com/images?gbv=2&hl=en&q=memorial+day>
<http://www.usmemorialday.org/backgrnd.html>*

See what happened at the American Corner at April!

The American Corner Bitola together with the Public Affairs Office of the US Embassy Skopje organized a two day long *workshop* titled

“Capacity Building and Effective Grant Writing: Getting beyond the Challenges”

with the guest expert **US Speaker Louise E. Shaw** on April 18th and 19th.



On April 10th, the American Corner Bitola hosted an one hour *workshop* titled



“Tips and Techniques for Getting Positive PR”

for people who wanted to learn the basics of Public Relations to promote their business or organizations. The workshop was led by **Patrice Koerper**, U.S. Peace Corps volunteer.



The American Corner Bitola together with Peace Corps organized an exceptional program for the second time, a *Youth Debate Club*. Two debates took place between high school students from Kratovo and Bitola.



Earth Day 2008

was honored at American Corner Bitola with an interactive session of children storytelling with **Tara Trepanier**, US Peace Corps volunteer on April 21st.



American Corner Bitola hosted the workshop title “**8 Steps of Change**” facilitated by Patrice Koerper, US Peace Corps volunteer on April 3rd.

Please Note:



American Corner Bitola will be closed

Thursday May 1, in observance Labor Day
Saturday May 24, in observance of Saint Cyril and Methodius Day
Monday May 26, in observance of Memorial Day