

# NEWSLETTER

October 2007

## COLUMBUS DAY – OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

Christopher Columbus is one of the most famous discoverers in history. He is given the credit for finding the continent of North America. Actually he may have been the first European to find this continent but there were others here ahead of him and many more had actually been here hundreds of years before. Leif Erikson was a Norwegian sailor who came earlier. The Norwegians have a joke that Columbus used Erikson's maps. The Norwegians had actually colonized parts of northern Canada early in the 10th century. No matter who was first Columbus did open the world to discovery. Following his adventures came new villages of pilgrims. That part is important and a very good reason to remember this important man. Columbus was born in Italy in 1451.



His family was weavers and this gave him the opportunity to become familiar with the royal families of Europe. Although he was a good weaver he really wanted to become a sailor. He was well educated and could not believe that the world was flat as was the beliefs of the people of his time. They thought that since so many huge ships and crews went to sea and never returned that they had gotten too close to the edge of the earth and fell off. To us this seems silly but we have to remember that back then there were no phones, satellites, or rockets. They had no communication with people of other lands across the seas except from the brave sailors who would try to find new routes to other countries. Columbus really wanted to sail and explore and knowing that the kings and queens of Europe were interested in gold and spices he was able to talk to the King and Queen of Spain and get them interested in finding a new route to Asia where those things were available. They gave him 3 ships and the money to support them for a year. We know these ships as the Pinta, Nina, and Santa Maria. In 1492 Columbus sailed West in an attempt to find India. After 3 months at sea they found land. Many historians have tried to figure out exactly where Columbus and his crew landed. The best scholars believe it was somewhere near the Spice Islands. When Columbus returned to Spain he was a hero and was able to return to the West 3 more times. He always believed that he had found India. It was not until much later that people found that on one account he was right! The earth was round. You never fall off the earth. But he was also wrong. He had not found India. But in fact a new land, land that is now known as North America.



<http://www.loogootee.k12.in.us/west/columbus.htm>

At the American Corner  
Columbus Day Quiz, Tuesday October 09, 18:00h

# Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

**September 15 to October 15**



Tashia Cruz dances in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month in Lincoln, Nebraska. (© AP/WWP/Lincoln Journal Star, Michael Paulsen)

Hispanic Heritage Month honors the diverse people of Spanish-speaking backgrounds in the United States. From September 15 to October 15, a multitude of special programs, events, exhibits and Web sites celebrate the heritage, culture, spirit and extraordinary contributions of Hispanic Americans.

The celebration of Hispanic Heritage began on a national scale in 1968 with Public Law 90-498, which authorized an annual Presidential Proclamation making the week of September 15 and 16 Hispanic Heritage Week. The designated week was selected to coincide with Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua's Independence Day celebrations on September 15, and Mexico's on September 16.

The 1968 Proclamation called upon the people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities. To encourage participation, in his 1974 Proclamation, President Gerald R. Ford called for schools and human rights organizations to participate more fully in the Week. And in 1988 President Ronald Reagan repeated Ford's call for more recognition of Hispanic Americans by approving Public Law 100-402, which expanded the celebration to Hispanic Heritage Month -- to run from September 15 to October 15.



Today, more than ever, Hispanic Americans play an integral role in shaping the American experience. They serve as leaders in government, law, business, science, sports, the arts and many other occupations. The influence of Hispanic culture is reflected in every aspect of American life, from politics to education to music and television.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the Hispanic population of the United States at 44.3 million people as of July 1, 2006 -- making them the nation's largest race or ethnic minority, and 15 percent of the U.S.'s total population. By July 1, 2050 the Bureau estimates Hispanic Americans will make up 24 percent of the U.S. population.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/Archive/2005/Sep/06-87873.html>

**UNITED NATIONS DAY**

## ***What is United Nations Day?***

Simply put, it is the birthday of the United Nations. On 24 October 1945, the United Nations was formally established after a majority of its founding members ratified a treaty setting up the world body. In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution recommending that the day be observed as a public holiday by Member States. Traditionally, it has been marked throughout the world by meetings, discussions and exhibits on the goals and achievements of the Organization.

## ***How is the Day observed at United Nations Headquarters?***

Traditionally, UN Day is marked by an international concert in the General Assembly Hall. Sometimes, special events are arranged, electronically linking the UN with cities around the world.

The Day is also notable for messages issued by the UN Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly. A video taped message of the Secretary-General is often shown by national TV stations around the world.

In addition, special briefings are arranged for non-governmental organizations on UN-related topics. Sometimes schools and civic groups arrange "peace marches" and other celebratory events.

<http://www.un.org/events/unday/2006/background.html>



*The name "United Nations", coined by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, was first used in the "Declaration by United Nations" of 1 January 1942, during the Second World War, when representatives of 26 nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers.*

<http://www.un.org/aboutun/unhistory/>

At the American Corner  
UN Day Lecture by Filip Petrovski, Wednesday October 24,  
18:00h

**HALLOWEEN**



## October 31



*While not an official holiday, the traditional October 31 Halloween celebration is much beloved by children in the United States, for whom the day is a chance to don costumes—often depicting ghosts, goblins and other "supernatural" creatures—and to collect candy and other treats from adults.*

Today, the two most prevalent Halloween customs are costumes and "trick-or-treat." While an estimated 36 million American youngsters dress up as "spooky" or supernatural characters—ghosts, witches, skeletons and the like—the purpose is not to promote the occult, but to collect candy.



The costumed children, usually accompanied by their parents (who often wait discreetly in the background) appear at their neighbors' doors shouting "Trick or treat!" The neighbors, feigning fear of such scary ghosts, vampires and zombies, quickly distribute the treats, so as to avoid any possible "trick."

A third custom is the decoration of a pumpkin by scooping out the inside, carving out a face and illuminating the result with a candle. Today, these "jack-o'-lanterns" are purely decorative but they originated long ago in Britain, where turnips were used, and the "jacks" were believed to ward off evil spirits.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/Archive/2005/Oct/29-384606.html>

<http://www.creston-iowa.com/halloween/index.html>

[At the American Corner](#)  
[Halloween Event for Children, Wednesday October 31, 18:00h](#)

# CELEBRATING HALLOWEEN IN THE UNITED STATES – OCTOBER 31<sup>ST</sup>



Listed below are several links for you to learn more about Halloween traditions, history and myths.

- **Official White House Website**

[www.whitehouse.gov/holiday/halloween](http://www.whitehouse.gov/holiday/halloween)



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- **Library of Congress**

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/halloween.html>

The American Folklife Center aims to be the national center for folklife documentation and research, and this Web site offers a virtual destination for those who cannot visit the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

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- **U.S. Census Bureau**

[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/007465.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/007465.html)

AMERICAN CORNER SKOPJE  
MONTHLY PROGRAM – OCTOBER 2007

<b>October 03, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Conversation Club</b> With PCVs Rachel Wilkinson and Aryn Bloodworth
<b>October 06, 2007</b> <i>at 8:00 and 8:30 o'clock</i>	<b>TOEFL TESTING and GRE SUBJECT TESTING</b>
<b>October 09, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Columbus Day Quiz</b> With High School Students
<b>October 10, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Conversation Club</b> With PCVs Rachel Wilkinson and Aryn Bloodworth
<b>October 16, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Children's Hour Video Showing</b> Video Showing – "Matilda"
<b>October 17, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Conversation Club</b> With PCVs Rachel Wilkinson and Aryn Bloodworth
<b>October 21, 2007</b> <i>at 11:00 o'clock</i>	<b>TOEFL TESTING</b>
<b>October 22, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Public Speaking Class</b> With PCVs Rachel Wilkinson and Aryn Bloodworth
<b>October 24, 2007</b>	<b>UN Poster Show</b>
<b>October 24, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>UN Day Lecture</b> By Filip Petrovski
<b>October 26, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Video Showing</b> Rain Man (starring: Tom Cruise and Dustin Hoffman)
<b>October 27, 2007</b> <i>at 8:30 o'clock</i>	<b>GRE GENERAL TESTING</b>
<b>October 31, 2007</b> <i>at 18:00 o'clock</i>	<b>Halloween Event for Children</b>

**\* Please note that the American Corner will be closed on October 8, October 11, October 12 and October 23 due to American and Macedonian national holidays.**

**\*\* You must sign in to attend the conversation club**

*September 2007 Program - Highlights*

The second **Conversation Club** in September on the topic **“The World After 9/11”** was led by **Mr. Ryan Rowlands, Public Affairs Officer in the US Embassy in Skopje**. Although 18 people have signed up to participate on this Conversation Club, the American Corner welcomed a total of 26 members just few minutes after the beginning.



The session was opened with Mr. Rowlands’ own impressions of the tragic event, after which a lively discussion was raised.

To thank the members who signed up for the session in advance, Mr. Rowlands distributed 19 books on the subject of 9/11.



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The **Constitution Day** was observed in the American Corner Skopje with a lecture by **Mr. Peter Neisuler, a US Embassy Officer**, on September 18. The lecture was attended by 26 invitees, all of which showed great interest in the topic.

Mr. Neisuler gave a presentation on the US Constitution, after which he welcomed the questions from the audience. A copy of the actual US Constitution was displayed and available for browsing.



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The first **Public Speaking Class** was held in the American Corner on September 26<sup>th</sup> and was one of the new activities planned for the upcoming period. It was intended to provide a class type lecturing for a previously defined group of members who would attend regularly and would gain knowledge and tips about presenting topics in public and in the later stage would allow them the chance to show what they have learned in practice. The class is held by PCVs **Rachel Wilkinson** and **Aryn Bloodworth**.

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September's **Story Hour** was held by **Emily Audette, US Peace Corps volunteer**, on Thursday September 27<sup>th</sup> at 18:00 o'clock. A group of 7 children attended, accompanied by their parents or teachers, and had the opportunity to hear the reciting of three children's books in English: "The true story of the 3 little pigs", "There was an old lady who swallowed a fly" and "Don't let the Pigeon drive the Bus!". After the reading, the group played 3 rounds of "Simon Says", and were drawing and solving puzzles and connect-the-dots games prepared by the staff of American Corner Skopje.



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Please note that the American Corner will be closed on the following days:

- Monday October 8th - Columbus Day
- Thursday October 11th – People's Uprising Against Fascism
- Friday October 12th – Ramazan Bajram
- Tuesday October 23rd – Macedonian Revolutionary Struggle Day