



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES

BUDAPEST NEWSLETTER

Recently at the Embassy

October 2008



Secretary Chertoff Visits Budapest, Visa-Free Travel for Hungarians to Begin on November 17

U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff visited Budapest on October 28th and met with Justice Minister Tibor Draskovics, National Security Minister György Szilvássy, and Foreign Ministry State Secretary Márta Feksz. The highlight of his visit was his appearance at a Foreign Ministry press conference where the long awaited date of the Hungarian entry into the Visa Waiver Program was announced. Thus, starting on November 17, Hungarian citizens will be able to travel to the United States for tourism or business without a visa for stays of up to 90 days. Secretary Chertoff called the move to Visa Waiver travel a major milestone in a long-standing and excellent relationship between the U.S. and Hungary. State Secretary Feksz demonstrated for the assembled press corps and invited guests the ease of using the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). Speaking of the agreements signed between the two countries that led to the Visa Waiver announcement, Minister Draskovics said that Hungary as well as the U.S. will now be more secure because of them, both having a better chance of combating the drug trade and international terrorism.

[More information on visa-free travel to the U.S. and ESTA](#)



Ambassador Foley's Pre-Election Outreach in Veszprém

Ambassador Foley spoke to more than a hundred students about the U.S. elections at a meeting in the American Corner in Veszprém on October 21. The attending students came from three different high schools and asked a variety of questions ranging from who the Ambassador thinks will win the elections and what does an average American know about Hungary to whether Hillary Clinton supporters will possibly vote for Sarah Palin. After the meeting, the Ambassador visited the famous porcelain factory at Herend and then met with students of the Dohnányi Music High School in Veszprém where she learned to sing a Hungarian folk song. [More](#)



U.S. Embassy Book Donation to the University of Szeged

Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Jeffrey Levine presented the "American Bookshelf," a collection of recent books on American society, government and culture, to the American Studies Department of the University of Szeged on October 20. After the donation ceremony, the DCM met with students and faculty from the University and discussed the U.S. elections with them, then gave remarks on corporate governance at an American Chamber of Commerce symposium hosted by the Business Studies Department of the University. [More](#)

Pacific Boychoir Strikes a Harmonious Note for Cultural Diplomacy

On October 20, the Oakland, California-based, Grammy award-winning Pacific Boychoir delighted a Budapest audience with a multi-language concert of international music. At the event, Ambassador April Foley awarded the young boys with her Award for Cultural Diplomacy. [More](#)



U.S. Elections Conference Attracts Hungarian University Students

On October 14th, Embassy Budapest presented an immensely successful, day-long conference on the 2008 U.S. Presidential Elections. The program, hosted by the Budapest College of Communication and Business, drew an audience of 150 interested and energetic participants from universities throughout the city. Invited Fulbright scholars from around Europe talked with the students about the critical issues of immigration, race, religion, and the role of both internet and traditional media in the upcoming election. The program also featured a live debate between representatives from Democrats Abroad and Republicans Abroad. [More](#)



Hungarian Field of Dreams: DCM Levine Inaugurates New Baseball Diamond

On October 15, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Jeffrey Levine joined representatives of the Hungarian Baseball Federation and the Érd Baseball Association to inaugurate a new regulation baseball field in Érd, a milestone in the development and promotion of baseball in Hungary.

[More▶](#)



U.S. Public Diplomacy Envoy Fran Drescher in Budapest

U.S. Public Diplomacy Envoy Fran Drescher successfully reached out to thousands of Hungarians on the important theme of cancer awareness and prevention during her recent visit to Budapest. Ms. Drescher spoke live on "Reggeli," the highest-rated morning TV show in Hungary. Along with Ambassador Foley and the Prime Minister's wife, Klára Dobrev, Ms. Drescher led hundreds of people across the pink-lit Chain Bridge in a widely-covered event highlighting breast cancer awareness. [More▶](#)

Visiting American Speaker Assists Embassy Transparency Initiative

From September 30 to October 2, the U.S. Embassy welcomed the visit of Steve Kohn, Executive Director of the Washington, D.C.-based National Whistleblower Center. As part of an ongoing transparency initiative, and in response to a recommendation by Transparency International that Hungary adopt whistleblower protection laws, the Embassy arranged a two-day program for Kohn, one of the preeminent whistleblower experts in the U.S.



The visit helped introduce and raise the profile of whistleblower protection as an important concept in improving public and private sector accountability and in combating corruption. [More▶](#)



Ambassador Foley Visits Historic Hungarian Battle Site in Pákozd

On September 27th, 2008 Ambassador Foley, accompanied by Defense Attaché Colonel Robert Duggleby, visited the famous Huszárs in Pákozd, where a battle between the Huszárs and the invading army of Croatia took place in 1848, resulting a Hungarian victory. Lieutenant General László Tömböl, Commander of Hungarian Joint Forces, was the official host for the visit. Ambassador Foley laid a wreath in honor of those who died during the battle and then laid a wreath at the nearby Hungarian Peacekeepers

Memorial in honor of all the Hungarian soldiers who have lost their lives in support of peacekeeping operations worldwide. [More▶](#)

Ambassador Foley on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Tolerance

On October 2, Ambassador Foley met 50 art students from Zirc visiting the Keith Haring exhibit at the Ludwig Museum. After observing the high schoolers taking part in an artistic activity, the Ambassador talked to them about the Bush administration's moral and financial commitment to fight HIV/AIDS globally and underscored Keith Haring's messages on the importance of prevention and tolerance. She encouraged the students to act responsibly and to accept differences.



U.S. Embassy Supports an International Conference on Combating Global Corruption

Ambassador Foley joined Hungarian Prosecutor-General Dr. Tamás Kovács and Finnish Ambassador Jari Vilén in opening an international conference on Combating Global Corruption and Money Laundering on September 29 in Budapest. The Conference, sponsored by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Hungary and organized with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice and the Government of Finland, presents an opportunity for prosecutors from countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia to share tools and best practices in the fight against



money laundering and public corruption. [More▶](#)

Honoring Congressman Tom Lantos

During a day of commemorations on September 25, Ambassador Foley and others paid tribute to the life and legacy of the late U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos. The day's events began with the unveiling of a plaque, marking the home where Congressman Lantos took refuge during WWII, followed by a symposium. Ambassador Foley emphasized the importance of carrying on Congressman Lantos' efforts on behalf of freedom, tolerance, and human rights. Ambassador Foley was joined at the commemoration by Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, U.S. Ambassador to NATO Kurt Volker, Dr. Charles Gati, Mrs. Annette Lantos, and many other distinguished guests. [More](#)▶



Elections Night Live!

Our pundits and political experts will present constant coverage and analysis of Election Day 2008. Ask questions or simply tune in to see the latest updates. We will be online all night to keep you informed of the latest election news. This webchat will take place at

<http://statedept.connectsolutions.com/elections08>. No registration is needed. Simply choose "Enter as a Guest," type in your preferred screen name and join the discussion.

Looking Ahead

State of Ohio Trade Mission to Visit Budapest

On November 6, the State of Ohio Trade Mission will visit Budapest to meet with potential Hungarian partners. The delegation consists of representatives from: **Columbia Chemical**, zinc plating additives manufacturer; **Polycom**, videoconference equipment maker; and **Mission Essential Personnel**, Columbus-based military training provider. For more information you can contact: Andrea Imrik, Commercial Specialist (andrea.imrik@mail.doc.gov; tel: 475 4234)

In the News... from Washington

U.S. Public Diplomacy and the War of Ideas

Under Secretary Glassman (Oct. 28): "While official diplomacy is aimed at officials – our Secretary of State talking to their foreign minister – public diplomacy is aimed at publics – our officials and often our publics engaging with their publics. So a simple breakdown of public diplomacy puts our work into three categories: first, telling America's story, explaining our policies and principles to the world; second, engaging in cultural and educational exchanges in battle-tested programs like the Fulbright fellowships; and third, fighting the war of ideas, which is what I want to talk to you about today." [Full Text](#)▶

New Publications

[eJournal: The Candidates](#)▶

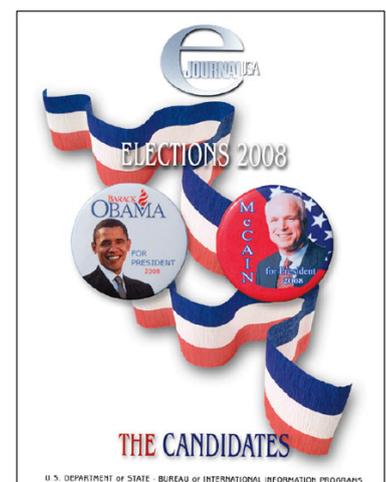
What sort of people rise to the top in the U.S. political system, what are their attributes, their sensibilities, and their strengths?



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