

Next PDAA Lunch Program

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

DACOR-Bacon House
1801 F Street NW,
Washington, DC

Speaker:

Tom Gjelten, details at right

- Cash bar 12:00 noon
- Lunch 12:30 pm
- Speaker 1:00 pm

\$33.00 members/\$40.00 non-members

Reservation deadline:
Wed. November 7, 2012

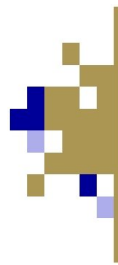
To reserve please return coupon on p. 7, or online at www.publicdiplomacy.org/

January 2013 PDAA Lunch Program

Mark your calendars for PDAA's next luncheon program on **January 15, 2013**, featuring a discussion of public diplomacy and the arts.

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PDAA Today

Public Diplomacy Alumni Association

Formerly USIA Alumni Association

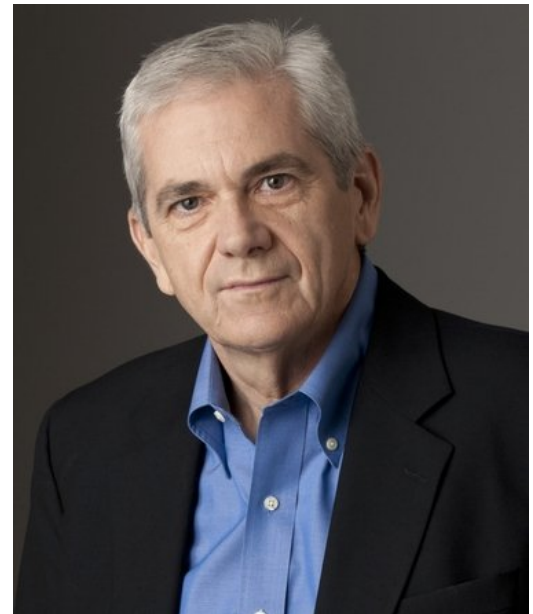
NPR's Tom Gjelten to Discuss Post-Election Foreign Policy at November 13 PDAA Event

Tom Gjelten, who covers global security and economic issues for National Public Radio, will give his take on the direction of U.S. national security policies in the wake of the 2012 election. Mr. Gjelten will discuss these developments at the next Public Diplomacy Alumni Association luncheon program on Tuesday, November 13, at the DACOR-Bacon House in Washington, D.C.

Gjelten will review the changes anticipated from a continuing Obama administration or a new Romney administration, in policies toward the Middle East and China, as well as probable new faces in key positions. He will also discuss the outlook for defense spending in case no action is taken in Congress on sequestration before the large automatic cuts are scheduled to take effect.

Gjelten has covered U.S. diplomacy and military affairs for NPR, first from the State Department and then from the Pentagon. He was reporting live from the Pentagon at the moment it was hit on September 11, 2001, and he was NPR's lead Pentagon reporter during the war in Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq.

Gjelten joined NPR in 1982 as labor and education reporter. He served as NPR's Latin America correspondent from 1986 to 1990 and in Berlin as Central Europe correspondent from 1990 to 1994. During those years, he covered the wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia, as well as the Gulf War of 1990-1991 and the wars in Croatia and Bosnia. He is the winner of numerous awards for his work including the Overseas Press Club's Lowell Thomas Award, a George Polk Award and a Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award.



His reporting from Sarajevo from 1992 to 1994 was the basis for his book *Sarajevo Daily: A City and Its Newspaper Under Siege* (HarperCollins). Gjelten is also the author of *Bacardi and the Long Fight for Cuba: The Biography of a Cause* (Viking), *Professionalism in War Reporting: A Correspondent's View* (Carnegie Corporation), and a contributor to *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know* (W. W. Norton).

This PDAA event will take place on Tuesday, November 13, 2012 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm, at the DACOR-Bacon House, 1801 F Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. Reservations at \$33.00 for members and \$40.00 for non-members are due by **Wednesday, November 7**. You can pay with a credit card on the PDAA Web site at www.publicdiplomacy.org, or complete and mail the coupon on page 7 with your check.

Photo: Doby Photography/NPR

A 17-Year Tour in Australia

Dan Scherr

Perhaps as a reward for two hardship tours in Kinshasa, Zaire and Luang Prabang, Laos, in August 1971, I was assigned as BPAO to Perth, Australia. Perth is the farthest foreign service post from Washington. Upon arrival, the Consul General gave me a map showing Perth as the center of the universe. For the past 40+ years, it has been for me.

Perth is the capital of the state of Western Australia. It is 2,300 miles away from the embassy in Canberra. The state occupies over one-third of the big island continent – bigger than Texas and Alaska combined. Western Australia's population of 2.4 million is mostly centered in the southwest corner along the Indian Ocean, and some 1.8 million people live in Perth. The total population of Australia is 23 million, fitting into a land mass almost as large as the U.S. Most Australians live close to the shore, in an arc from Cairns, Queensland in the northeast to Adelaide, South Australia in the south central part. So there is lots of empty space, especially in Western Australia.

I was BPAO in Perth through 1974 and met my wife, Robyn, there. We married on the fourth of July of 1974 and assignments to Washington, Jerusalem, and Paris followed. But we were never far from our faraway place. I was Desk Officer for Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands from 1984 to 1987, East Asia Personnel Officer from 1991 to 1993, and CAO in Canberra from 1987 to 1991.

When I retired from USIA in November 1993, I told people that I was honoring our wedding vows which were "Love, honor, obey and return." So, off we went back to Perth, with our son, 15, and daughter, 8.

Pounding the pavement

We built a house overlooking the Indian Ocean, which might have been quite impulsive, since I didn't have a job at the time. I spent the next two years pounding the pavement looking for full-time employment trying to trade in on contacts I made over the past 20 years, with mixed success.

Finally on the pavement – the main street of Perth – I ran into the former news director at one of the two

commercial TV stations that existed in the 1970s. He said he knew of another American who was about to leave a job in the state government and maybe I could take his place. I had lunch with the guy, met his boss, and wound up with the job.

My role was to get broadcasting and telecommunications services out to this vast state, taking advantage of federal projects, private sector initiatives, and creating and expediting the state government's own programs. It took on many guises and while the responsibilities changed little, I went through a lot of stationery as I worked in six different departments over 14 years.

My job description remained pretty constant as ministers, directors-general, and all manner of supervisors shifted above me and colleagues skipped about as I did. I never fully learned to navigate the bureaucracy successfully, but somehow we got lots of good things done.

I spent a lot of time lobbying for funds and programs for the State, "catalyzing" federal, state, and local government authorities; broadcasters; service providers and the populace. We created a public television station for Perth, and sent it via satellite across the state. We helped establish retransmission of Australia's second government-owned TV service in towns under 10,000. Once those transmitters got up, the commercial networks piggy-backed on them.

Covered the whole of the state

We secured over A\$20 million of funds from the federal government to provide communications infrastructure and information technology training for the most remote parts of the state. Much of that resulted from two state-wide audits of communication resources and needs. We covered the whole of the state, including using satellite teleconferencing so people in remote communities were able to tell the "suits" in the capital what they needed.

In Perth we found funds for a fiber-optic network along a new suburban rail line. This opened access for homes, businesses and universities along its path, not to mention every other passenger on the train who seems to be using a wireless device.

(Continued on page 3)

A 17-Year Tour in Australia (ctd.)



Dan Scherr, left, explaining the state government's online services at a 2000 information technology conference in Perth.

(Photo courtesy, Dan Scherr)

Western Australia has a unique network of over 110 telecenters, locally owned and operated institutions that provide access to information and services. Usually located in towns no larger than 5,000 and as small as 200, they offer Internet, fax, and satellite television services, as well as information technology training and varied community facilities.

I led 40 communities onto the Internet. We trained hundreds in new technologies at these sites. Today the telecenters have become full community resource centers where locals can also conduct government business, do their banking and even have remote medical examinations.

I was "making a difference." You can see it when people can get health and emergency services because of the cable and the transmitters you helped install. Remote areas of Western Australia are being developed for their mineral and energy resources, but the boom hasn't reached everywhere. So, when you get broadcasting, telecommunications and information technology training into an Aboriginal community 1,000 miles northeast of Perth, it takes a bit of effort and does make a difference.

My most recent 17 ½ year "tour" in Australia, brought new dimensions to my life, and reminded me constantly that there was a life quite beyond the diplomatic service.

New at PublicDiplomacy.org

PDAA member blog:

It's all about being in the right place at the right time. Ernest Uribe tells how he got recruited into a role in a Hollywood film while posted as Student Affairs Officer in Bogotá, and even did his own stunts (blood and all).

<http://publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=blog>

PDAA Community page:

The American Councils for International Education seeks volunteers in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, to evaluate State Department-funded scholarship applications of students from former Soviet republics, countries of South Eastern Europe, and the U.S.

<http://publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=public-diplomacy-community>

A Way with Words: Books by USIA Authors

Added recently:

- The Last Three Feet: Case Studies in Public Diplomacy, edited by William P. Kiehl
- The Undesirables by Mary C. Smith
- Blaming No One: Blog postings on arts, letters, policy by Dan Whitman

http://publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=usia_authors

President's Notes

Greetings from DC-land rapidly tying itself in knots over the coming elections and myriad standoffs over budgets, deficits, health care, the Mideast, and Big Bird! Thank heavens, we'll be able return to "normal" with the annual Presidential pardon of some lucky turkey before Thanksgiving. Let's hope for a return to some semblance of humor, which the nation will badly need to recover after this grimy campaign.

Our bit will be to speculate on what the elections outcome portend, with NPR correspondent Tom Gjelten, who will bring years' of experience and wisdom to our November 13 luncheon meeting.

We hope to follow in January with an update on U.S.-sponsored performing arts programming – how it is evolving, the variety, the expression of American diversity and creativity, how American performing artists grow from their international tours, and what they bring back to infuse American culture.

And ... to host senior leadership from the Department of State who have led the Secretary's global initiative to empower women. You might check the ECA Web site on TechWomen at <http://ow.ly/erWax> for information about this modest aspect of a much larger effort.

We'll continue our effort to audio or video streaming some of the luncheon presentations for PDAA members not able to attend. Please let us know your reaction, and whether, if it's possible, you would like to "sit in" via Skype or Adobe Connect.

Meanwhile, for a snapshot of PD activities around the world and in DC, check out <http://ow.ly/erWnt>. Many such snapshots might add up to broader understanding of the scope of public diplomacy.

Your help is vital in helping the Association recruit new members. Please contact friends and colleagues and urge them to join. Consider individuals you have worked with, who are part of the larger community of international communicators and exchange program managers or participants, retired or still working.

New members who join PDAA from October through December 2012 will also receive the entire year of 2013 in their membership; see page 6 for details, and a form to pass along to prospects.

All the best.
Mike Schneider

Member Updates

Leo Sarkisian, 91, officially retired in September from VOA, where the weekly radio show he started 47 years ago, "Music Time in Africa," is its longest-running English-language program. The Washington Post, in a lengthy article about Sarkisian, said that he had the "kind of career that today lives only in legend: Hired by famed broadcaster Edward R. Murrow, he was paid by the U.S. government to travel throughout Africa, visiting every country over half a century and returning with thousands of rare recordings of music that most of the world had never heard."

The article noted that in Africa, Sarkisian socialized with presidents, military dictators, accomplished musicians and tribal villagers. "He outwardly steered away from politics, but under the surface he wove a subtle diplomatic tapestry based around grooving on tunes."

VOA Director David Ensor told the Post that Sarkisian's recordings, are "one of the most valuable and sought-after collections in the world." The collection is housed in VOA's Leo Sarkisian Library of African Music, and gradually being digitized by University of Michigan's African studies department. Sarkisian told the Post that he plans to do more painting -- he has done many portraits of the Africans he met -- and playing the *kanun*, a 74-string Middle Eastern lap harp. He "still can't help raising his arms and shuffling his feet whenever African music plays."

Does your mailing label say [2012]?

Then it is time to renew your PDAA membership for 2013. Renewals are collected annually in the first few months of the year. Because of the low fee, we cannot pro-rate memberships for a partial year.

You can renew your membership with the form on page 7 or online at www.publicdiplomacy.org — click on the **Online** link in the right-hand column under **Join PDAA**. All major credit cards are accepted.

In Memoriam

- ◆ Theodore A. Bork, 83, a retired employee of USIA's overseas design office, died May 23 of complications from Lou Gehrig's disease at his home in Columbia, Maryland. He served in the Army during the Korean War and worked as an architect before joining USIA in 1974. He helped design American cultural centers and libraries around the world. He retired in 1993 while on assignment in Prague. He enjoyed traveling.
- ◆ Marjorie Coffin, 63, who retired in 2007 as deputy director of the State's Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, died September 8. She had ovarian cancer. Ms. Coffin, an Arlington, Virginia resident, joined the State Department in 1975 and served in Guatemala, Japan, and Costa Rica. She transferred to USIA in 1988. Her FSO assignments included Turkey, Spain, Mexico, and El Salvador. She was a soprano with the Capitol Hill Chorale in the 1990s and was a volunteer at Inova Alexandria Hospital.
- ◆ Henry Krieger, 91, who retired from Voice of America in 1991 as chief of the French-to-Africa Branch, died August 11 in Washington. He had an abdominal aortic aneurysm. Krieger, worked at VOA for 27 years. His previous work included monitoring and translating broadcasts at FBIS. Krieger was born in Germany and grew up in Switzerland. A university student in Brussels at the time of the German invasion, he escaped from internment, made his way to Havana, and then the U.S. in 1943. He served in the Air Force during WW II. Krieger volunteered as a kindergarten tutor at Key Elementary School in Washington for 12 years.
- ◆ John Mosher, 77, director of USIA's AmPart office during the Reagan administrations, died September 27 in Arlington, Virginia of cardiac arrest. Serving with the U.S. Navy in Japan, he developed a life-long interest in that nation. He wrote extensively on Japanese culture and was a recognized expert on Japanese postage stamps. Mosher lived for nearly 20 years near Salzburg, Austria where he taught skiing and sang in the Salzburg Opera. On his return to the U.S. in 1983, he was appointed to USIA. While at USIA, Mosher also served as a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee. From 1988-92 he served international director of the Special Olympics International. He helped expand the Special Olympics program from 57 to 119 countries. Mosher continued to write extensively in retirement.
- ◆ Patricia Schaefer, retired executive director of the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, died August 25. The Columbia, Maryland resident had cancer. She had 39 years of Federal service including 26 years with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Pat retired in November 2010.
- ◆ Morteza K. Yahyavi, 93, who retired from VOA in 1982 as a deputy chief of the West Asia service, died August 2 at his home in Oceanside, California. He had prostate cancer. Yahyavi, a native of Iran, joined VOA in the early 1950s as an editor and translator for Persian broadcasts. He later became a producer in the Near East division and served as chief of the Persian and Dari service. Under a Fulbright scholarship, he studied at the University of Washington in the 1950s. As a freelance writer, he wrote for Persian-language newspapers.

Wanted: Member News, Tributes, Appreciations

PDAA Today carries updates of one to three paragraphs each on the activities of USIA or State Department public diplomacy alumni. Any submission should include the date you retired or left USIA or State.

We will also accept short articles — up to 1,000 words — on your activities that would be interest to the membership. Topics could include continued work in public diplomacy or unrelated fields. Please continue to let us know about deaths in the USIA or State public diplomacy family. Articles of tribute and appreciation are welcome.

Please send your contributions by e-mail to Ed Scherr at: edscherr@earthlink.net

Welcome New PDAA Members

Dr. Jennifer CLINTON
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301-762-8240
lajurvis@earthlink.net

James C. PALMER
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801-426-8437
X4nservice@hotmail.com

Member Directory Updates

Please note the following corrections and updates to the 2012 PDAA membership directory.

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Paul P. BLACKBURN
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706-621-2486

Nancy SNOW
310-995-7669
nsnow@fullerton.edu

New members: Join PDAA *now* and get all of 2013 free

The annual membership fee for the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association is **\$US30.00**.

New members: Join PDAA during October-December 2012 and get all of 2013 free. Because of the low fee, we cannot pro-rate memberships for a partial year. Please complete the form below and mail the completed form with your check to:

David Whitten, PDAA Treasurer
4100 S. 16th St.
Arlington, VA 22204

Name(s) _____
Street address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Telephone number _____
Email address _____
Date _____

Membership type, please check one: New (\$30) Lifetime (\$300)

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Renewals: Please renew online at <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=membership>

Or complete and return by mail the form on page 7 .

PDAA membership for 2013 ... Check your mailing label for renewal status

- The annual membership fee for the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association is \$US30.00 and \$300.00 for a one-time lifetime membership. Renewals are collected annually by the first few months of the year. Because of the low fee, we cannot pro-rate memberships for a partial year.

- If your mailing label says **[2012]**, it is time to renew your membership for 2013.

Please complete the form below (indicate if any items are changed from before) and mail the completed form with your check to:

**David Whitten,
PDAA Treasurer**

**4100 S. 16th St.
Arlington, VA 22204**

No change in contact info; fill in name and date only

Name(s) _____

Street address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone number _____

Email address _____

Date _____

Membership type, please check one: New (\$30) Renewal (\$30) Lifetime (\$300)

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Or you can renew online at <http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/pages/index.php?page=membership>

PDAA November 2012 luncheon program

November 13, 2012 - DACOR-Bacon House (See page 1 for program details),

1801 F Street, NW, Washington, DC

Deadline for reservations: **November 7, 2012.**

Please complete the form below and mail with your check to:

**David Whitten
PDAA Treasurer**

**4100 S. 16th St.
Arlington, VA 22204**

No change in contact info; fill in name and date only

Name(s) _____

Street address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone number _____

Email address _____

Date _____

Number of members/guests _____ x \$US 33.00 Number of non-members _____ x \$US 40.00

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____ **Please send payments for this event only.**

Or you can reserve online at www.publicdiplomacy.org

Public Diplomacy Alumni Association Board of Directors

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PDAA Today

Editor: Alan Kotok

Member News Editor: Ed Scherr

Editorial review: Peg McKay

Contributing writers: Michael Schneider, Dan Scherr

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Public Diplomacy Alumni
Association

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