



# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By STEVEN ALAN HONLEY

Happy holidays! Once again it's time for my periodic invitation to take advantage of the many opportunities to contribute to the *Journal*.

Each issue features a focus section examining various facets of an issue related to the Foreign Service or international relations. This month, for instance, we examine the management challenges chiefs of mission (and all Foreign Service personnel) face in coordinating with overseas representatives of non-foreign affairs agencies. As always, we have put together a range of commentaries and analyses from a variety of perspectives, both from within the Service and beyond it.

You will find a list of the focus topics our Editorial Board has identified for the coming year (subject, of course, to revision) on p. 19.

As you can see, most of these themes relate directly to Foreign Service professional and lifestyle issues, so I hope many of you will consider sharing your insights and expertise. Do note, however, that because of our lead time for publication, and the requirement for Editorial Board approval, we need to receive submissions at least three months (and preferably longer) prior to the issue's

*There are many ways you can share your insights in our pages. Let us hear from you.*



release date. Thus, we have already lined up authors for the January and February issues, but there is still time to submit manuscripts for later months. Submissions should generally be between 2,000 and 3,000 words, though shorter pieces are always welcome.

If those choices don't grab you, or if you feel we have not devoted enough space to a professional concern or functional issue, please consider writing a feature article (also in the 2,000-3,000 word range) about it.

A new department we'll be introducing is FS Heritage. As its name suggests, this periodic feature is intended to spotlight key events in the history of the Foreign Service and diplomats whose names many of us know only from history books or the halls of State. (The first article will be about Loy Henderson.)

Our annual fiction contest continues with the same rules that applied this year: Entrants are restricted to one story of 3,000 words or less, which must be e-mailed to Business Manager Andrew Kidd at [kidd@afsa.org](mailto:kidd@afsa.org) no later than March 1. We will publish the winning story (selected by the FSJ Editorial Board) in our July-August 2008 double issue, and the other top stories during the fall months. For more details, see the ads in upcoming issues, or contact Andrew directly.

We invite those of you who expect to publish a book between now and next fall to send us a copy (along with promotional materials) for inclusion in our annual compilation of recently published books by Foreign Service-affiliated authors, "In Their Own Write." Sept. 1 is still the deadline for inclusion in the roundup, which will again run in November. For more information, contact Senior Editor Susan Maitra at [maitra@afsa.org](mailto:maitra@afsa.org).

## Share Your Insights

We take seriously our mission to give you "news you can use" — e.g., information about how to advance your career; tips on dealing effectively with the bureaucracy at

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State and the other foreign affairs agencies, especially when you are trying to resolve a problem; and updates on how AFSA is working to improve working and living conditions for Foreign Service employees and their families.

Much of that coverage is found, of course, within the pages of *AFSA News* (now part of the magazine's "white pages"). That section offers many different ways for members to share their experiences, thoughts and concerns regarding professional issues, including the following depart-

ments: Family Member Matters, Of Special(ist) Concern (a forum for specialists), Where to Retire, Memo of the Month and The System and You (notes from inside the bureaucracy). Contact Associate Editor Shawn Dorman for more information at [dorman@afsa.org](mailto:dorman@afsa.org).

Another place to look for such items is our periodic FS Know-How department (which ran five times in 2007, I'm happy to say). We welcome contributions on topics ranging from managing one's career and cutting red tape to parlaying one's professional

skills in retirement, as well as financial information and guidance for Foreign Service personnel.

The Speaking Out department is your forum to advocate policy, regulatory or statutory changes to the Foreign Service. These columns (approximately 1,500 words long) can be based on personal experience with a professional injustice or present your insights into a foreign affairs-related issue.

Our Reflections page presents short commentaries (approximately 600 words long) based on personal experiences while living or traveling overseas. These submissions should center on insights gained as a result of interactions with other cultures, rather than being descriptive "travel pieces." We are also pleased to consider poetry and photographs for publication, either in that section or as freestanding features.

Please note that all submissions to the *Journal* must be approved by our Editorial Board and are subject to editing for style, length and format. For information on how to submit a column, article or letter, please contact us at [authors@afsa.org](mailto:authors@afsa.org), and we will be delighted to respond. For other inquiries — changes of address, subscriptions, etc. — e-mail us at [journal@afsa.org](mailto:journal@afsa.org).

Finally, I hope you will share your reactions, positive and negative, not only to this issue but to what you read every month, by contributing to our Letters section. Just bear in mind that, as with all periodicals, the briefer and more focused your letter is, the more likely we'll be able to print it in full. (In general, 200 to 400 words is a good target.)

Let us hear from you. ■

### 2008 EDITORIAL CALENDAR for the *FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL*

JANUARY	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the Foreign Service
FEBRUARY	The Diplomacy of Climate Change (PLUS AFSA Tax Guide)
MARCH	Iraq, Five Years Later (PLUS AFSA Annual Report)
APRIL	Political Islam
MAY	Democratization and Transformational Diplomacy
JUNE	Future of the Foreign Service Personnel System (PLUS semiannual SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT)
JULY-AUGUST	Africa
SEPTEMBER	Foreign Policy & the U.S. Presidential Election (PLUS AFSA Awards coverage)
OCTOBER	The Peace Corps & the Foreign Service
NOVEMBER	COVER STORY: "In Their Own Write" (annual roundup of books by FS-affiliated authors)
DECEMBER	New Foreign Policy Ideas for the Incoming Administration (PLUS semiannual SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT)