



## Naples Council on World Affairs

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**2014/2015**

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# NAPLES COUNCIL ON WORLD AFFAIRS NEWS & VIEWS

Vol. 8

December 2014

**T**his year is off to a great start. The first lectures have been practically filled. I wonder if we have more people staying all year in Naples, or if last year's freezing winter motivated people to come sooner. In any case, I am so pleased to know that more of you have enjoyed the great presentations by Andrew Tabler, John Donovan and Ambassador Arturo Sarukham. As usual, timeliness and attention to the critical issues around us will be the hallmark of the upcoming lectures.



Four members of the Board attended the National Conference in Washington, D.C. this past November. The speakers and panel discussions covered many of the topics to be addressed by our lectures, Great Decisions and the Book Club this year and in the future. It is an ideal place for us to meet and preview speakers for the upcoming season. Topics discussed this year included: Africa's Transformation, Meeting Russia's Challenge, Future of Energy, Cybersecurity, Changing Dynamics: China, Asia and the US, along with others. It was an opportunity for us to meet with leaders of other councils and to benefit from their experience and programs. It was gratifying to come away from the meeting knowing that the Naples Council is not only one of the largest, but outstanding with respect to the quality of our speakers and our outreach to the community.

I see many of you taking notes at our lectures and hope you know that the lectures are recorded on video and can be seen on our website ([www.ncwa-fl.org](http://www.ncwa-fl.org)) in addition to the WGCU broadcasts. Also if you enjoy traveling on unique tours to fascinating destinations, our website has a link to information on the World Affairs Council trips that many of our members have enjoyed.

The Board of Directors made some changes at the October meeting. Maureen (Mo) Winograd has joined the Board. Those of you who know her will agree that she is a welcome addition to our "working board." We congratulate Donna Suddeth who has been elected as our new Treasurer and appreciate her willingness to undertake responsibility for this demanding position. We are very grateful to Doug Hartman for his dedication and good work as Treasurer the past two years.

Our world has become a troubled place, and wishing for world peace in the coming year is probably a very big stretch. However, on an individual basis, we wish you and your families a new year of happiness, good health and safe travels. I look forward to seeing you in January.

Judith Lipnick, *President*

## Program Committee



*Andrew Tabler*

As Andrew Tabler stepped up to the podium on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, our Lecture Series began with a most thorough briefing on Syria and the “ISIS Crisis”, which continues to tear up the geography of the region and pushes Western leaders to find a working solution to this new conflict. For many in our audience, the after-comments indicated a much clearer understanding of the Assad regime’s *modus operandi* and what, if anything, the West can do on both these fronts. The following morning, the student body at Seacrest School, 120 + students, welcomed Mr. Tabler and asked great questions following his presentation.



November 17<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed John Donovan back to Naples to address the “Perils of Journalism”. John’s long and varied experience on both domestic and foreign fronts made him eminently qualified to talk to the subject, and his easy manner belied the danger and difficulties journalists face today in the field. He also spoke to a group of students at Barron Collier High School and kept their interest in journalism as a possible career path.



*John Donovan*

We look forward to Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan’s presentation on December 8<sup>th</sup> and his over view of Mexico’s difficulties—which are clearly a very “hot topic” at the moment—as well as our relations with our Latin American neighbors.



*Ambassador  
Arturo Sarukhan*

Wishing you all a wonderful Holiday Season!

Mimi Gregory, *Vice President—Programs*

## Committee for Special Activities

**O**n October 13<sup>th</sup> we were fortunate enough to have Bruce Donahue, Deputy Chief of Mission in Kiev, Ukraine, address the Council “year-rounders” at St. John’s. We were a good 150 who were most interested in the update Bruce gave us following his presentation last spring. He spoke to the continuing presence of Russian supported forces in the east of the country and also the continuing denial by President Putin of the Russian hand in the pie. Life in Kiev and most of the western part of the country continues quite normally. The newly elected Parliament will now face the conflict at hand, and we wish them success. Bruce also noted that our Senator, Bill Nelson, had paid a call at the Embassy during the summer recess.



*Bruce Donahue*

A month later, November 13<sup>th</sup>, our dual program with Google took place. Beginning with breakfast, Ben Blink spoke to an obviously “techie crowd” of about 120, the smaller numbers a reflection of our not so technical membership. Those who enjoyed the presentation (along with the donuts and coffee) asked excellent questions and were very pleased to have attended.



*Ben Blink*

Later that day, Ben made a presentation to 99 Collier County teachers at Lorenzo Walker High School. The use of Google’s programs as an enhancement to learning in the classroom was very well received and Ben also gave the teachers links to Virtual Fieldtrips, Connected Classrooms, the Google Cultural Institute and, of course, their worldwide maps. We are very appreciative of the work that Wendy Hodgson did to organize and gather the teachers for the seminar. Thanks, too to members of the School Outreach Committee and especially Judy Harper who organized a light supper for all at Lorenzo Walker.



*Abdullah Sharif*

December 15<sup>th</sup> we will welcome our member, Abdullah Sharif, who will present his first book [of two] “SARDAR”, which speaks to the life in Afghanistan, past and present.

Mimi C. Gregory, *Vice President—Programs*

## Membership Report

Membership for the 2014-2015 season is officially closed.

Despite efforts to extend the membership renewal period and reserve a few seats for persons who for some unforeseen reason missed renewing, we still ran short of seats to accommodate all members who didn't renew on time! To help with next year's renewal, we plan to start earlier with the hope of catching more members before summer travel begins.

Everyone's cooperation is necessary since we really want to avoid having to tell members who missed the renewal period that we are unable to accommodate them because all seats are gone. Also, if you have any suggestions for improving the renewal process, please send them to me at [erbsteinb@embarqmail.com](mailto:erbsteinb@embarqmail.com).



Bob Erbstein, *Chair*

## Outreach Committee

The kids are back in school, and engaged in their hectic schedules. For those who were the recipients of our scholarships this past summer, there is a requirement that they have to meet: they must appear before their high school audiences and tell about their summer adventure. Several of us on the Outreach Committee have witnessed some of these presentations, which occur during class hours, showing that the various school administrations are fully behind the program. The students speak eloquently of their experiences and of their gratitude to the NCWA. I never get through one of these sessions without getting misty-eyed.



Of these presenters, the best will be chosen to speak to our NCWA lecture audience sometime in the new year. Soon Outreach members Debbie Doyle and Connie Van Den Top will begin preparing them to make a three-minute speech before an audience of over 700 adults. This is an enormous challenge and opportunity for the students and - for Debbie and Connie - a task requiring a lot of skill and diplomacy. If past is prologue, it all will come out very well.

We are also busy setting up the application and interview process for next summer's various scholarship programs. They will begin as early as the middle of this month for certain programs and pick up again in February for the rest. Terry Trimble, an Outreach member whose professional career was in high school administration, is organizing this process.

Preparations are gearing up for both our Middle School and High School Academic World Quest contests, to occur in February and March, respectively. They will be held at Community School, which every year gives us access to a gymnasium large enough to hold upwards of a hundred student contestants, their parents and the teacher coaches. They are always impressive to experience.

Daniel Bumstead, *Outreach Chair*

## Great Decisions Program

By the end of November a record number of NCWA members and associate members had registered for the 2015 Great Decisions program. With four new discussion groups added, we will have 26 groups in total and most of them are filled to capacity. However, for late registrants there are still spaces left, in particular in the new group at the Norris Center (Wednesdays 2-4 pm), the two groups at the Moorings Presbyterian Church (Tuesdays 2-4 pm and Thursdays 2-4 pm), and the group at the Covenant Church of Naples (Thursdays 2-4 pm). A list of all groups and their leaders can be found on our web site ([www.ncwa-fl.org](http://www.ncwa-fl.org)) under the heading Great Decisions.



The topics for discussion will be: 1) Russia and the Near Abroad; 2) Privacy in the Digital Age; 3) Sectarianism in the Middle East; 4) India Changes Course; 5) U.S. Policy toward Africa; 6) Syria's Refugee Crisis; 7) Human Trafficking in the 21st Century; and 8) Brazil's Metamorphosis. The sessions will begin during the week of January 19-23, 2015, and continue through the week of March 9-13, 2015. Early January the topic videos will be posted on our website.

By the time you are reading this Newsletter, all members who have registered should have received a postcard confirming their group assignment and giving information about the briefing book distribution. For most groups, the book distribution will be on Saturday, January 10, 2015; for the groups in the Moorings Presbyterian Church and the Covenant Church it will be on Monday, January 12. The postcard will state the time and place. I wish you an interesting and enjoyable discussion season. If you still wish to join us you can register online on our website (see above) or call (239) 649-3942.

Maas van den Top, *Chair*

## Hospitality Committee

As we begin 2015, you might consider joining 90 other families in the President's Club. Club membership requires donation to the NCWA of a tax-deductible minimum of \$250 in addition to the general membership fee. These generous donations support additional students in the Outreach Program on global affairs.

It also provides the opportunity to attend a few intimate luncheons with a speaker on the day of the lecture, and also meet some of the Board of Directors and other members of the President's Club. We have had three interesting luncheons thus far this season. If you would like to join, please call 239-649-3942 or e-mail the NCWA office at [admin@ncwa-fl.org](mailto:admin@ncwa-fl.org).



Judy Rubinstein, *Chair*

# SWFL Model United Nations Program

I have another **two-part report** to share in this edition of the newsletter. The first part addresses the exceptional, essential work of our MUN Administrative Coordinator, the second stresses once again the enriching experience of being a volunteer MUN judge.

**So first**, let's consider how a complicated, multi-day MUN competition involving so many Southwest Florida high schools can be carried off so faultlessly and with such precision. The Model UN is fortunate to have as **Administrator Coordinator, Beth Foss, who truly does know "what's going on" and is responsible for managing it all.** Let's take a look at her job responsibilities and her work calendar.



**Beth's Model UN work begins each August** with the update of the program's website and the contact of the prior season's school Model UN Coaches. She orchestrates school registrations and the assignment of country responsibilities. She collects and tracks school payments, and makes sure the coaches stay on track through the fall months as they prepare their teams for competition. In January she collects position papers, orders necessary supplies, confirms catering arrangements, and collects individual registrations for as many as 350 students.

Many years ago Beth automated the scoring process, allowing the task of calculating competition winners to take minutes rather than hour. But it takes the whole month of February to get the intricate workbook of Excel spreadsheets set up to accomplish that task, and it needs to be customized for each student on an annual basis.

**The final week before the Model UN session is spent finalizing** catering, stuffing hundreds of folders and name badge holders, printing position papers and attending to dozens of details so that, come 8 am on the first day of the session, 400 or more people can be processed in under an hour, and the two-day session goes off without a hitch.

**In the weeks following the Model UN session**, supplies are inventoried and stored, the score sheet is finalized and dozens of impressive-looking awards are printed, assembled and mailed to the schools. Several of the schools that compete in our program also travel to many other domestic and international Model UN conferences; they tell us that ours is the most professionally operated, well-run conference of the bunch! Beth became the Model UN Coordinator in 2001, making the 2015 session her 14th. Originally from Pittsburgh, Beth holds a BS degree in Computer Information Systems and an MBA. She is the owner of a luxury travel agency that focuses on cruises and Disney destinations. She is amazingly busy and successful with it all.

**Second**, we shift our focus and again read about the experience of **serving as a Model UN Judge. Hear what one of our more experienced judges has to say** about the experience:

**"Model UN can use your help and you can reap benefits, too...** Those of us who have volunteered to act as "judges" have found the experience **enriching and extremely rewarding."** (Mo Winograd, multiple years as a judge)

It is only a two-day commitment of your time. And more strong endorsements of what you will experience is provided by some of last year's judges:

**"I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.** I was immensely impressed with the maturity, poise, intelligence and performance of these young adults....If you want to be encouraged about our future, then you must see these young leaders in action." (Dennis Parass, 2014)

## SWFL Model United Nations Program *Continued*

“Other than personal and family events, my experience as a judge of the Model UN at FGCU this past Spring was **the most meaningful single experience that I can recall.**” (Jan Guben, 2014)

Anyone willing to give this fun project a try on March 5 and 6, 2015, please contact Bob McGinn at (973) 626-0799 or email Bob at [mcginnbarbara@hotmail.com](mailto:mcginnbarbara@hotmail.com).

Earl Anderson, Chair

## Website News

I've just finished posting our first two lectures of the new season on our website:

**November 3, 2014 NCWA Lecture: “Syria and the U.S. Policy in the Levant” by Andrew J. Tabler**

**Andrew J. Tabler**, Senior Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Mr. Tabler focuses on Syria and U.S. Policy in the Levant. He resided in the Middle East for fourteen years and is a fluent Arab speaker. He addressed our issues with Syria, our crisis management with Russian, Iranian and Hezbollah's patronage of that country, and what, if any, are possible solutions.



**November 17, 2014 NCWA Lecture: “The Perils of being a Foreign Correspondent”, by John Donovan**

**John Donovan**, John Donovan is the host and moderator for the Intelligence Squared U.S. Debates and is an author and correspondent for ABC News. He has hosted “Nightline,” “World News,” “Good Morning America,” and NPR’s “Talk of the Nation,” and WBUR’s “On Point.”.

They can be seen by clicking <https://www.ncwa-fl.org/lecturevideos.html>. Also on the site are all the lectures from the 2013-2014 season. It should be noted that Videos are only available for viewing by Members and Associate Members. Our goal is to post them within a week of the presentation. We hope to be successful most of the time!

This year we've also included in essays by attendees of the School Outreach programs for the Summer Cultural Ambassadors (formerly EIL), Governor's Institute and Georgetown University. After reading them I think you'll feel very proud of NCWA's participation in these programs through our School Outreach team, and proud of the young people in our community participating. To access the School Outreach page click on <https://www.ncwa-fl.org/schooloutreach.html> and then select the program of interest from the toolbar shown.

Bob Erbstein, *Webmaster*



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## LECTURE BROADCASTS

Our Lecture Series is aired on  
**Sunday nights at 8:00 pm**  
after the Monday lectures

Thanks to our partnership with WGCU-FM, Public Media

The lectures can be heard on  
WGCU: 90.1 FM, Naples and  
WMKO: 91.7 FM, Marco Island

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Gregory E. Hudson, *Newsletter Editor*