

World Affairs Council of the Desert

Engaging and Educating Adults and Students in International Affairs



Our Vision



We focus on developing future world leaders through engagement in international affairs.

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WACD Fall 2017 Newsletter

Our Season Opens with an Exciting, New Venue, Thunderbird C. C., and a New, More Interactive Format!



The location for our evening programs has been moved to Thunderbird Country Club, which boasts a beautiful dining/lecture setting, social interaction space and outstanding cuisine. Under the able direction of General Manager Scott Julien, the club is bound to take WACD to the next level in terms of elegance and responsiveness.

Thunderbird is a special valley institution in many ways. Founded in 1951, Thunderbird was the first country club of its kind and the model for the majority of the clubs that were to follow in the Palm Springs area and elsewhere. The club made contributions to golf course design and construction, and played a role in the introduction of golf carts. Leaders in all walks of life, from golf to government, and from the Arts to industry have called Thunderbird their desert home. It might interest you to know that in the early

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days, lots at Thunderbird could be had for \$2,000, and membership cost \$450. Those were the days!

WACD is proud to become a part of this tradition. We also welcome Thunderbird to our sponsorship roster. We believe this will be a great partnership!

In addition to this venue change, we are introducing a new format for our events. After a brief cocktail mixer, members and guests will be seated for a first course which they can enjoy while listening to our speaker. Following the presentation, dinner will be served. Attendees will be in a better position to discuss the evening's topic with their tablemates. After dinner, there will be a short question and answer session.

Thunderbird Country Club is located at 70-737 Country Club Drive in Rancho Mirage. Enter the main gate and tell the guard you are attending a WACD event. Once in the club house, ask to be directed to the Main Ballroom.

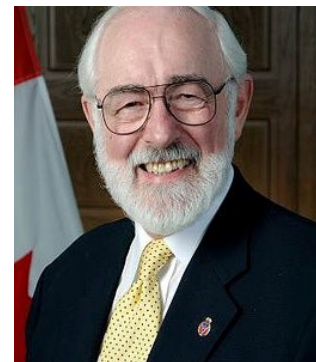
[Thunderbird Country Club Website](#)

Book Your Reservations Early For Our Kick-Off Program on China!

October 22 - The Developing South China Sea Crisis - Dr. James Boutilier

What pressures will China's aggressive territorial actions in the South China Sea exert on US-China relations?

James Boutilier, Special Advisor to Commander of Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters, Canada, on matters of defense and foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region, will share his perspective at our 2018 season kickoff meeting.



Dr. Boutilier earned a BA in history from Dalhousie University, an MA in history from McMaster University, and a PhD in history from the University of London. He has held posts at various universities, including the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji, the Royal Roads Military College in Victoria, British Columbia and the University of Victoria.

He lectures nationally and internationally on political, economic and global security developments, and has published extensively on maritime and security concerns.

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Thunderbird Country
Club



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Book early, but book not later than Wednesday, October 18th.

Get Tickets Now!

President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends:

This has been a busy summer for your leadership team! We believe the strategic decisions we have made and the implementation work done by our committees and staff has produced an outstanding program for our members to enjoy.



We have changed our venue and format, and altered the way we recruit and schedule speakers. The details are spelled out elsewhere in this newsletter, but I want to thank Jim McFarlin, Chair of the Program Committee and his team for delivering such rich and varied content that truly covers the globe. I also want to commend our board for the courage to experiment with new approaches.

We have strengthened our team by adding new board members and expanding our officer ranks. We welcome Mary Lehman, Jim McFarlin and Yul Roe as new board members as they begin to serve their first term. We welcome back to the board BG (Ret) Guido Portante who will be serving as Chief Executive Officer of WACD. He will focus on administration, fund-raising and membership. His willingness to take on these responsibilities allows us to expand our organizational reach and flexibility.

Also, a new administrator has joined our team. Pam Golden comes to us with an extensive background in project management, and a strong commitment to our mission and the community we serve. Our former administrator, Pam Zadel, has moved on after having served WACD with industry and passion for over three years. We thank Pam for her service and wish her the very best.

Please join me in welcoming new sponsors for the 2017 - 2018 season. They share our passion for educating youth and providing avenues for valley citizens to think globally. We welcome College of the Desert, Merrill Lynch Asset Management, UBS Financial Services, and of course, Thunderbird Country Club as sponsors at the Silver level. Renewing their support for 2017-18 at previous levels are Palm Springs Life, Charles and Priscilla Porter, Anderson Children's Foundation, and Rabobank. We appreciate their continued confidence in us. For increasing their support to the Gold level, we thank CSUSB Palm Desert and the County

2017 - 2018 Student Program Benefactors



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WACD
Newsletter
Editor



of Riverside.

As 2017 rushes to a close, I want to give one more shout-out to Palm Desert High School for winning last year's WorldQuest Competition. You are a very impressive group of scholars.

There is one sad note to share. WACD has lost a steadfast supporter with the passing of Harold Marguleas. Harold was a long time member and student program benefactor. Our condolences go out to his family, friends and colleagues. Every time you see young people at our dinners, think of Harold and his good work.

In closing, I want to remind each of you that every event we hold is an opportunity for you to do good work. Invite a guest to the October dinner. Everybody is going to want to checkout our new venue, so get those reservations in pronto! Volunteer for the WorldQuest event. Join one of our standing committees. Become a Diplomat. Make a difference for your community and its young people!

Sincerely,
John D. Welty
President

Our November Program Sheds Light on Dark Net

**November 12 - The Dark Perils of Our Virtual World -
Ron Nehring**



Explore the Deep Internet, the anonymous web, where hackers and spies thrive and everything is for sale.

Speaker Ron Nehring is a strategist and communications expert who served as National

Spokesman in the 2016 Presidential campaign of Senator Ted Cruz.

He has served as an expert lecturer and trainer in the areas of governance and communications for government officials and candidates in regions including Bosnia, Serbia, Morocco, Egypt, Chile, Spain, Italy, Canada, Honduras, Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Iraq. He has served as an international election observer in Kenya and Honduras.

Previously, Nehring was elected the Republican nominee for Lt. Governor of California, in 2014. Nehring also served as chairman of the California Republican Party. He inherited an organization millions of dollars in debt and ensured that

Katharine A.
Russell

upon leaving office, all bills were paid, there was no debt, and a substantial cash reserve existed in the bank. Financial controls were improved and a professional staff put in place.

Governor Schwarzenegger appointed him to the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in 2005 in the aftermath of the Cedar Fire, the largest and most destructive wildfire in American history. Nehring participated in the development of new regulations to improve management of lands and property to reduce wildfire threats to families and communities.

Ron graduated from the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

12/6 - Save This Date for WorldQuest

The Charles & Pricilla Porter 2017 Academic WorldQuest will be held December 6, 2017. The primary youth program of WACD, Academic WorldQuest is a team competition designed to test high school students' knowledge of international affairs. Teams representing high schools from around the valley compete to win scholarships, special prizes and, for the one prevailing team that comes out on top, a trip to Washington, D.C. in April 2018 to vie for the national title.



The event will take place in the Indian Wells Theater on the CSUSB Campus, 37-500 Cook Street, Palm Desert, from 5:30p - 8:30p, with competing teams and coaches arriving at 4:00p.

All WACD members are invited to attending this inspiring event. Moreover, many volunteers are needed to assist with check-in, refreshments and other logistics. If you can commit to help out, or if you would like to learn more about what would be required, please contact Dr. Doris Wilson, Chair of our Education Committee doriswilson01@yahoo.com.

[WorldQuest Web page link](#)

Please Welcome Our New Administrator, Pam Golden!

Pam Golden joined WACD as our new Administrator in August. Before relocating to the desert, Pam had a very successful career as a corporate trainer serving numerous



companies in Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties, including Abbott Laboratories, Yoplait, Nissan Motors, Mazda USA, and Day Runner.

Pam holds a B.A. in Theater Arts from U.C.L.A. and is a DDI-certified (Direct Interactive

Instruction) trainer. She has administered DDI-developed programs, designed original training programs, and taught process improvement and conflict resolution as well as other corporate skills.

Pam moved to the desert twenty years ago to be near her father and stepmother, who have both since passed away. Here in the valley, she continued to work on assignment through Proper Solutions, Inc. She has done project work for The Management Trust, KSL, Indian Wells City Hall, Rancho Mirage City Hall, The Lakes Residences and RBG Engineering, to name a few assignments.

Pam also has consulted with elementary schools on the implementation of Social Emotional Skills and Bullying Prevention programs, and has guest taught at Desert Sands Unified School District.

"I love the Coachella Valley, and WACD fits so perfectly with my desires," she said. "I am very pro-education and love the mission of WACD and what we do! I am so looking forward to the speakers, the students and the season."

Pam has a daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren. Her husband, John O'Keefe, has five children and a troop of grandkids too. She and her husband love to travel.

Board Member Spotlight

Katharine Russell moved to the desert from San Francisco in 2002 to bring her mother, Jane, to a less humid climate. They learned about WACD from friends who had also attended Northwestern University, and started coming to the dinners after attending a special 'Northwestern' night. Katharine holds a B.S. in history and an M.B.A. from Northwestern.



Katharine Russell and partner Phil Gagnard at

"I've been interested in history

all my life," Katharine said. "I a recent WACD dinner. focused on Russo-American relations in college. I like listening to lectures on international relations, especially topics that deal with intractable problems like the cold war."

WACD afforded Jane, a very social nonagenarian, another wheelchair friendly venue for a fun evening out. She passed away in 2016 at the age of 93.

Katharine became editor of the newsletter and a member of the communications committee three years ago. Subsequently, she joined the board and became chair of the communications committee.

"I have an M.S. in journalism from Boston University, a certificate in creative writing from U.C.L.A. Extension, a lengthy history as a business writer and four novels to my credit, so newsletters sort of come naturally," she said.

Katharine's professional career was spent in the healthcare, pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. She worked for Baxter International and Cetus Corporation, one of the first genetic engineering companies. As a consultant, her clients included Abbott Laboratories, the American College of Surgeons, Becton Dickinson, Genentech, and dozens of startup and development stage companies. Katharine also started three companies of her own. She retired from consulting in 2005 and began writing fiction.

"I believe WACD is one of the few organizations in the desert that offer regular opportunities for intellectual exploration in a social setting," Katharine said. "I may have retired, but I love challenging my brain cells. Reading books is great, but interacting with other curious people is rewarding and fun."

Katharine is a trustee of Saint Mary's College of Maryland, Maryland's public honors college. She also volunteers in the library of the Palm Springs Air Museum. "The Museum and WACD share a common mission of educating young people, a vital task in our valley. I am fortunate to be able to serve institutions that inform youth about the past and the present, so that they can walk confidently into the future and take up the reins of leadership."

Katharine and her partner, Philip Gagnard, reside at Desert Falls Country Club. Phil, who lived in Saudi Arabia for many years as an employee of ARAMCO, the world's largest oil company, also is interested in world affairs.

WACD Schedule At-A-Glance



2017

- October 11 -- WACD Board Meeting 3p
- October 22 -- The Developing South China Sea Crisis 5p
- November 12 -- The Dark Perils of Our Virtual World 5p

2018

- January 21 -- The Secretive US Research Agency That Changed The World 5p
- January 24 -- WACD Board Meeting 3p
- February 18 -- US National Intelligence: Separating Facts From Rumors 5p
- March 25 -- Middle East Perspectives, An Eyewitness Account 5p
- March 28 -- WACD Board Meeting 3p
- April 8 -- All Measures Short of War: The Future of American Power 5p
- May 9 -- WACD Board Meeting 3p

[Read more about our events on the web site](#)

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