

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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Inside This Issue

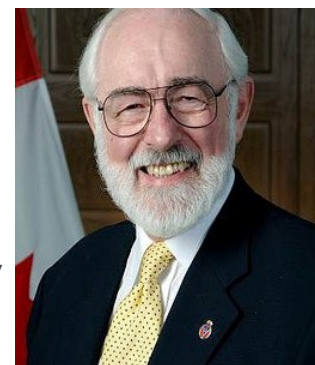
WACD Summer 2017 Newsletter

Program Committee Unveils Exciting Fall/Winter Program

October 22 - US CHINA RELATIONS - 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.

[Fall/Winter Program](#)
[President's Letter](#)
[WorldQuest](#)
[New Board Members](#)
[Board Member](#)
[Spotlight](#)

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November 12 - THE DARK NET - 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 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.

January 21 - CYBER INSECURITY - DARPA - Sharon Weinberger

Author of "[***The Imagineers: The Untold Story of DARPA, the Pentagon Agency That Changed the World.***](#)"

From the early development of the Internet to technological advancements ranging from drones, our global GPS capabilities, self-driving cars and most recently, A.I. technology capable of combating cyberattacks, the little-known U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has been and continues to be a critical contributor to America's national security capabilities and commercial successes in technology.

Sharon Weinberger will provide an





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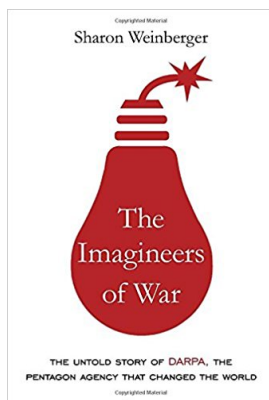


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inside view of this fascinating research organization and discuss its role in today's U.S. national security.

Weinberger is the National Security Editor at *The Intercept*, and a global fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. She was a Radcliffe Institute Fellow at Harvard in 2015-2016, and a Knight Science Journalism Fellow at MIT in 2008-2009. She has also been an International Reporting Project Fellow

at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, an Alicia Patterson Fellow, a Carnegie Fellow at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, a Nation Institute Investigative Fellow, and a Carnegie Newhouse Legal Reporting Fellow. She received her B.A. from Johns Hopkins University, and holds an M.A. from the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and an M.A. in Russian and East European Studies from Yale University. Her writing has appeared in *Nature*, *Discover*, *BBC.com*, *Slate*, *Wired*, *the Washington Post*, *Foreign Policy*, and the *Financial Times*, among other publications.

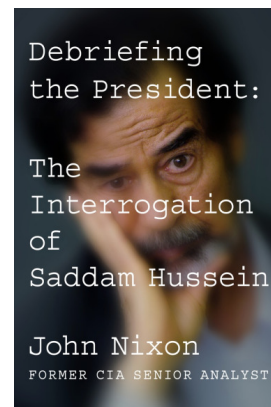
February 25 - DEBRIEFING THE PRESIDENT - John Nixon

John Nixon is a former CIA operative and author of "[**Debriefing the President: The Interrogation of Saddam Hussein**](#)."

Brought to prominence as the CIA agent who interrogated Saddam Hussein and was responsible for briefing President George W Bush and senior administration officials on the inside affairs in Iraq, Nixon will discuss the complex official and emotional relationships between US presidents and intelligence agencies that define America's national security policies.

Nixon was a senior leadership analyst with the CIA from 1998 to 2011. He did several tours in Iraq and was recognized by a number of federal agencies for his contribution to the war effort. During his time with the CIA, Nixon briefed the most senior levels of the US government. He also taught leadership analysis to the new generation of analysts at the Sherman Kent School, the CIA's in-house analytic training center.

Since leaving the Agency in 2011, Nixon has worked as an international risk consultant in Abu Dhabi, UAE.



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The program committee will announce our Spring speakers at a later date, but here are the dates, so be sure to mark your calendar!

March 25

April 8

President's Letter

These are very exciting times for the World Affairs Council of the Desert.

Our Board has spent considerable time thinking about our future as we prepared for the 2017-18 year. Very shortly we will be announcing that we have a new venue for our dinner/lecture programs next year. This location promises to be more convenient and will maintain the high quality of food and atmosphere for which we have become known.

In addition, we will try a new lecture format that will engage our audience more directly with our presenters. We believe this new approach will enrich the overall experience for participants. More information will be coming very soon via an email announcement.



Our programs for the coming year promise to be outstanding. As is reported elsewhere in the newsletter we have engaged top rated speakers on the topics of US-China relationships; the mysteries and dangers of the DarkWeb; the US research agency that has developed some of America's most important weapons systems; and the engagement of the intelligence community with the President of the United States. We will be announcing additional information and insights about our presenters and their compelling subjects over the next several weeks.

A special thank you to our outgoing board members Meredith Bettencourt, George Gallagher, Becky Kurtz and Karen Speros. I thank them for their dedicated service and their willingness to continue to serve on some of our committees as we go forward.

Please join me in welcoming three new Board members: Ken Bouldin, Mary Lehman and Yul Roe. They bring to our Board outstanding expertise and experiences to help guide WACD to new levels of achievement and engagement in the coming years.

This year we held a contest to encourage early renewal by our members. Members who joined by April 30 were entered in a drawing to win two free dinner tickets for the

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WACD
Newsletter
Editor



Katharine A.
Russell

2017-18 season. I am pleased to announce that Dr. Jerome Brodish was our lucky winner. I want to thank him and all our early sign-up participants for taking action in April.

Of course, it is never too late! The 2017-18 Season is going to be exciting! Please join us for the coming year.

Sincerely,
John D. Welty
President

Local WorldQuest Winners Compete in Washington, DC



Our winning team from Palm Desert High School traveled to Washington and performed in a spectacular manner at the national competition. Although they did not win, they made it all the way to the second tie breaker.

During a tour of the Newseum, a museum opened in 2008, whose mission is to promote the five freedoms of the first amendment, they won "free press" t-shirts by answering all the current events questions correctly.

Our Congressman Raul Ruiz met the students on the steps of the Capitol for a photo. His aide gave our group a personal tour of the Capitol building.



They walked twelve miles to view every one of the monuments on the Mall. In addition to the Newseum, they visited the National Air and Space Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Holocaust Museum and the American History Museum!



We are very proud of our young scholars and wish them every success in their academic journeys. We also congratulate their coaches and the entire WorldQuest team on another stupendous year full of great achievements and memories!

We Welcome Three New Board Members

Kenneth A. Bouldin was Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer of Corrections Corp. Previously, he was the president of KAB Associates, Inc., a management consulting company. Mr. Bouldin's business experience also includes founding Econotech, an IT staffing firm, and Econocom, a business that sold and leased data processing equipment, service as vice president and manager of the Federal Marketing Group of Comdisco, Inc., and service as chairman of the board of directors and president and chief operating officer of the Computer Dealers and Lessors Association. Mr. Bouldin also had a lengthy military career, rising to the rank of Major General and serving as a commanding general of the 125th Army Reserve Command from 1990 through 1994. Mr. Bouldin graduated cum laude from the University of Tennessee with a BS in Electrical Engineering.



Mary Lehman is a civil appeals attorney in Palm Desert. She was appointed to the California State Athletic Commission by Governor Brown. Before opening her own law offices, she was an attorney with Gray Cart Ware and Freidenrich LLP. She was a professional boxer from 1999 to 2002, ranking as high as number nine in the world for her weight class. Lehman earned her Juris Doctorate degree from the University of San Diego School of Law.

Yul Roe is a landscape architect with over 30 years experience in design, project management and development of integrated residential, golf course, and resort based recreational communities. He is President of Project Links, Golf Course Landscape Architects of La Quinta.



Yul was associated with the development of Toscana Country Club in Indian Wells. He has worked with some of the finest golf course architects in the world, including Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Tom Weiskopf.

Yul grew up in south central British Columbia and obtained a degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of British Columbia.

He worked as a Landscape Architect in Calgary and Vancouver prior to moving to California in 1997. His family moved to the Coachella Valley in 2000.

Board Member Spotlight

This month, Karen Speros is stepping down from the WACD board, after having served two terms. She has served with four presidents. She plans to continue to work with WorldQuest, the outreach activity that first attracted her to our organization, through her service on the education committee.



Speros enjoyed a thirty-year career in education, teaching English and history in public and private schools in California and Australia. Speros graduated from Northwestern University where she was a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority. She has been very active with the Coachella Valley Alumnae Panhellenic organization where she has served as corresponding secretary of the executive board, head of special projects and scholarship co-chair. She also serves as scholarship chair for the Northwestern Club of Coachella Valley and has served on other NU boards, including alumni admissions. She earned her Master's Degree from United States International University (USIA), now Alliant International University.

Speros married her high school sweetheart, and she and Bill moved from the Midwest to Irvine CA in 1969. In 1984, they bought their first home in the Coachella Valley so they could enjoy weekends in the desert. While in Orange County, Speros taught at University High School and coached girls' tennis. She also volunteered with the Irvine Historical Museum, Friends for the Library and various committees of St. Marks Presbyterian Church. She served as President of Orange County Women's Action for New Directions, focusing on educational, environmental and health care issues.

Throughout her life, Speros has pursued her passionate interests in educating students, life-long learning and policies supporting world peace. She has traveled to Israel and the West Bank under the auspices of the Holy Land

Trust, staying with a Palestinian Christian family. She also worked in Nicaragua with Witness For Peace.

In 2005, Speros became a full-timer in the Valley. "WACD was meeting at Las Palmas Resort, and the Northwestern Club's members were invited as special guests," she said. "I knew immediately that stimulating speakers could address my interests in international relations. It was also important to meet new people."

"As an educator, I was drawn to WorldQuest and the opportunity to work with high school youth," Speros said. "Priscilla Porter was my daughter's first grade teacher in Irvine, so the loyalty was immediate. Doris Wilson, Priscilla and Chuck Porter are my heroes."

Speros particularly enjoys being a mentor to students participating in WorldQuest. "With Regina Garrison on the team, WorldQuest is a well-run and exciting organization," she said. "Our recent survey reveals that the students love competing and listing WorldQuest as an activity on their college applications."

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