



## Consulate Again Accepting Immigrant Visa Petitions

In January 2007 the Consulate General in Amsterdam temporarily suspended accepting immigrant visa petitions in order to comply with the Adam Walsh Act, which requires that criminal record checks be performed on all immigrant visa petitioners in order to protect beneficiaries. We are pleased to announce that effective immediately, consular posts abroad, including the Consulate General in Amsterdam, may again accept petitions for the immediate relative immigrant visa classification. Petitions may be filed by American citizens who are legally resident in The Netherlands, including members of the armed forces. Emergency cases that involve life and death or health and safety, and others determined to be in the national interest will also be permitted, on a case by case basis.

An example of a family emergency is a minor child who unexpectedly left without a caretaker. An example of national interest includes facilitating the travel of United States military and other USG direct hire employees assigned overseas



who are pending transfer on orders, and need to petition for immigrant classification of their spouse and minor children at posts overseas. New marriages and family separation will generally not qualify as emergency cases.

For more information, please email [ImmigrantVisasAMS@state.gov](mailto:ImmigrantVisasAMS@state.gov) or call 31(0) 20 575 5331, between the hours of 8:30 AM and 12:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

### On-line Chat with the Consul General



U.S. Consul General  
Marjorie Ames

On April 2, the U.S. Consulate General in Amsterdam will launch its new website to provide clear and up-to-date information to American citizens in The Netherlands and to the traveling public. Consul General Marjorie Ames will host a webchat to mark the launch of the new website and answer questions on a broad range of consular topics. The chat will take place from 1 PM to 2 PM on April 2. The public is welcome to submit questions at that time or in advance at [ConsularAmster@state.gov](mailto:ConsularAmster@state.gov).

### Closing Once a Month to Serve you Better

We are constantly striving to improve our services to the American public. An important part of this commitment means stepping back from our daily operations from time to time for staff development and training. To minimize inconvenience to the public we will begin doing this on the same day each month. We will close to the public for routine services on the last Wednesday of each month, starting Wednesday, March 28. We will reopen for all services on the next day. We apologize for any inconvenience.

### Statistical Snapshot of What We Do

Perhaps you've stood in line in our small (but gezellig) waiting room wondering just how many services we provide in a year. (Or perhaps you have better things to do!) But if you did wonder, the answer might surprise you.

The Consulate General in Amsterdam is one of the busiest in Europe, ranking second in Europe in cases involving missing persons and fifth worldwide in repatriations of destitute or ill Americans. In 2006 we provided 8,219 separate services. We issued 782 emergency passports.

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The Consulate General will be closed on March 28, April 6 (Good Friday), April 9 (Easter Monday) and April 30 (Queen's Day). In emergency cases involving American citizens, please call 070-310 2209.





## Consul's Corner



### Going Back Home with Your New Family

So, a few years back you came to live in the land of windmills, tulips and bicycles. Now you are ready to go back to the U.S., but not alone. During your time abroad you may have gotten married and even had children. How do you move the family back, you may be wondering.

If you are a U.S. citizen who has had children abroad, they were very likely American citizens at birth. If you have not already registered them at the Consulate and received a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) and a passport, then you should immediately call or come see us to start that process. For your non-citizen spouse to reside in the U.S., you will probably have to request an immigrant visa. For more information on the requirements for both processes, please visit our website at <http://thehague.usembassy.gov/>

### Step One for the Perfect Holiday

Sun, sand and an idyllic location may fill your thoughts as you plan the perfect holiday. However, don't let those pleasant thoughts distract you from the little details that can make or break a holiday. One of those is a valid passport. If you don't have any specific travel plans – even better. Why not renew now, when there is no rush on your part? That way you're ready in case you may need or want to travel on short notice.

As you can see in the chart on this page, passport applications increase dramatically during the summer months. Though we usually are able to supply passports 2-3 weeks after the renewal request is made, we recommend that you apply several months before your planned trip.

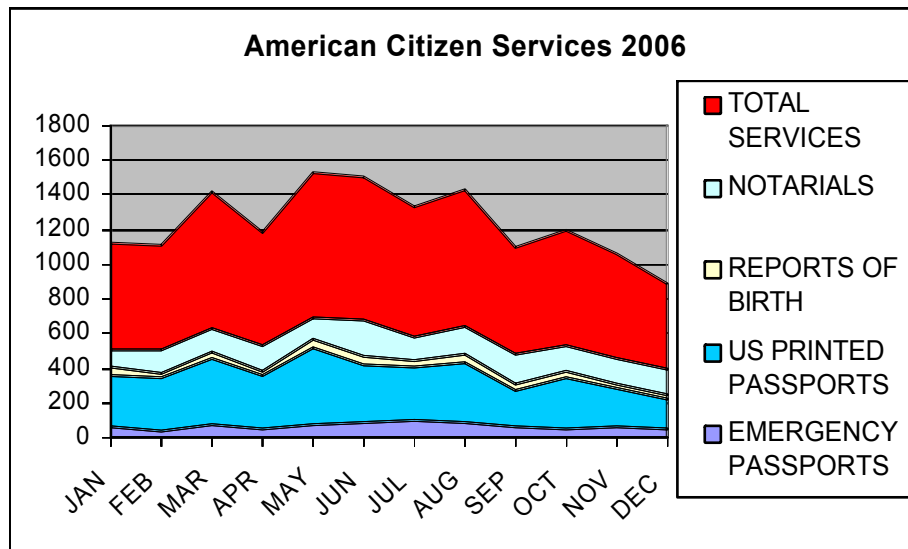
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processed 3,649 non-emergency passports, issued 414 reports of birth of an American citizen abroad, and notarized 1,788 documents.

Our customers come from the more than 40,000 U.S. Citizens who reside in The Netherlands and the more than one million who visit the Netherlands every year.

Of the thousands of U.S. citizens who live here, only a small percentage have registered with the Consulate through the Department of State's database. We recommend that people do register — this helps if we need to contact you in an emergency and gets you a free subscription to this newsletter and emergency notifications. You can register at:

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp>.



### Annual Meet and Greet



From l. to r.: Vice-Consul Heidi Arola, Employment Advisor Karen McDonough and Visa Clerk Theresia Handayani

On March 21, staff from the U.S. Consulate General in Amsterdam and the Embassy in The Hague participated in the annual "Meet and Greet" event hosted by the Amsterdam American Business Club at the Hilton Hotel. This event was a networking opportunity for hundreds of business professionals working in The Netherlands. Embassy and Consulate officials offered information on the activities of their respective organizations and answered questions about consular services for American citizens.