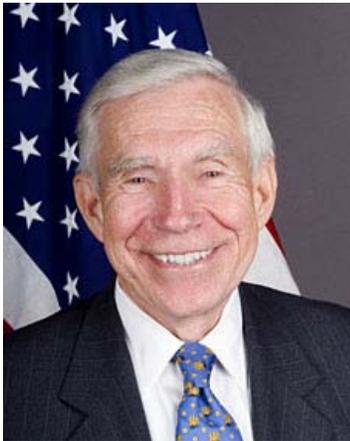




Embajada de los  
Estados Unidos de América

## *A Message from Ambassador Frank E. Baxter*



November 2007

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The U.S. Embassy in Montevideo is working hard to make the already excellent relationship between the United States and Uruguay even better. As Ambassador, I feel it's important that you know what we are doing, and why. I plan to write a letter to you like this every so often, to explain how our policies matter to Uruguay. Please take a little time to read this email message

### **U.S.-Uruguay Relations**

President Vazquez visited my home state of California during the week of October 29, and I had the opportunity to travel with him. The President met with key political leaders, including Governor Schwarzenegger, as well as mayors, U.S. senators and state officials. He also visited the headquarters of some of our most innovative and important industries, to talk about future business deals involving Uruguay. To see photos of the President's visit, [click on this link](#).

I always tell those who come to Uruguay that they can't say they know this country if they don't know the interior. That is why my agenda always includes visits to the different *departamentos*. In October, I went to beautiful Melo, along the border with Brazil, where I met the governor of Cerro Largo, as well as congressmen, armed forces officials, journalists, and businessmen. I had the pleasure of touring the industrial park and its biotech companies, and seeing the U.S.-Uruguay Binational Center (Alianza), which serves hundreds of local residents who want to learn English. To see pictures of my visit, [click on this link](#).

### **Business and Economics**

As you know, U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez visited Uruguay on October 8 – 9, as part of a regional tour that included visits to Brazil and Colombia. Secretary Gutierrez was interested in ways to match Uruguay's literate population with the jobs and opportunities of the future. El Pais published his op-ed on this subject. [Click here](#) to view the highlights of his visit.

"Blueberry Hill," by the great singer Fats Domino was a song I enjoyed listening to in the 1950s. It's funny how life turns out: today I'm a supporter of Uruguay's burgeoning blueberry industry. I personally enjoy blueberries because they taste great and offer important nutritive benefits. I believe blueberries will be one of a new wave of quality agricultural products that will brand Uruguayan produce with the mark of quality. Uruguay's blueberry crop has great export potential, because the growing season takes place during austral summer and the berries arrive in the American market during *our* winter months. The first blueberry shipment to the U.S. took place on October 30. To see pictures of Uruguay's blueberry production plants – and me visiting them - [click here](#).

### **The Embassy and the Media**

Speaking about Uruguay's interior, the U.S. Embassy organized a contest for journalists from outside of Montevideo which focused on how Uruguay and the U.S. gained their independence. The two journalists who won had the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, where they met and interviewed government representatives, media representatives. They also visited some of our key museums and cultural institutions. [Click here](#) to learn about the winners.

The third series of the television program on bilateral trade "La Ruta de...", co-produced and aired by cable station VTV, was nominated for one of the most important awards given every year in radio and television. Nearly 200,000 viewers were able to see aspects of our bilateral commercial exchange that they were not too familiar with. The last series, aired in September and October, covered the leather, wood and tourism industries, including a special segment featuring the state of Alaska, a tourist destination that many Uruguayans are discovering. To see information about this interesting program, [click here](#).

### **Education**

Uruguayans and Americans share a strong commitment to education. Uruguay's 97 percent literacy rate testifies to a commitment to learning that has a place in every Uruguayan home. I personally believe that international educational exchanges are key to amplifying the value of education at both the high school and university level. Our Embassy manages several exchange programs that bring dozens of Uruguayans to the United States to see and express their ideas on such topics as English teaching, economics, politics, and science. This month, we are promoting International Education Week, which takes place on November 12 to 16. Please look for [my op-ed on International Education Week](#) published on our website and one of the local newspapers.

We launched two very important cultural exchange programs recently. One of these, the Fulbright Educator Exchange Program, will bring 46 Uruguayan teachers, principals, inspectors, to the United States for a three-week cultural exchange. These educators will meet their American counterparts and see what aspects of our system might work here, while talking about Uruguayan education success stories. We have also launched our Youth Ambassadors program, an initiative that will bring ten young students from Uruguayan public high schools to the United States for two weeks in February. Both exchange programs will help Americans and Uruguayans learn more about one another. To read about the Fulbright Program and Youth Ambassadors, [click here](#).

### **Diplomacy and the Arts**

I strongly believe in diplomacy through art. That's why I sponsored an exhibition in my

house of American artists Jessica Snow and Anya Spielman. In addition, visitors to the Embassy can see first-rate works of Uruguayan art in our lobby. To see photos of these paintings, and the Snow/Spielman exhibition, [click here](#).

### **Our Embassy Staff and Their Commitment**

Many of the Americans and the Uruguayans who work at our embassy take time out on their weekends and holidays to work on projects that bring Americans and Uruguayans together. Allow me to introduce a few:



William "Bill" Maxwell, our director for security, is also a Scout Leader for the American Boy Scouts. In Bill's view, scouting means teaching young people to work on community service projects. Following tradition, Bill leads his scouts on clothing drives for poor people and builds homes for the needy. Bill's wife, Cathy, is a life-long "Girl Scout," who uses some of her time away from the office to further the good works of the Girl Scouts in this country. Both Bill and Cathy enjoy working with Uruguayan scouts.

Finally, meet Vince Alongi, the man singularly responsible for our web site. Vince is a Mission employee whose personal life might become the subject of a Hollywood movie some day. He is an avid photographer, on and off the job. His dad was an Italian diplomat who served in Canada, and Vince stayed on there, becoming a policeman in the Vancouver area, and later the owner of a graphic arts business in Ottawa. Vince loves Uruguay because he spent many of his younger years in this wonderful country. He's been with us for four years. Thanks to Vince, our embassy website is probably one of the best.



I hope you have enjoyed this message. It was done in order for you to know more about the activities of the U.S. Embassy in Uruguay. If you have any comment or suggestion, please write to me: [ambassadorbaxter@state.gov](mailto:ambassadorbaxter@state.gov)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank E. Baxter". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Frank E. Baxter

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