

## **Visit from the US Consul General**

I was privileged to meet the new Consul General of the United States of America, Ms Aleisha Woodward in October 2010.

Ms Woodward arrived in Perth in late September 2010 to assume her duties as the U.S. Consul General. A Consul General is the post's Principal Officer and coordinates all functions of the U.S. Government in the consular district; in this instance Western Australia. It is her job to maintain contact with senior Australian officials, both State and Federal, within the consular district and keep the U.S. Embassy and Washington informed of important political, economic and any other developments affecting U.S. interests. The Consul General often represents the United States at public functions and addresses various groups and organisations on issues affecting Australia-American relations. Ms Woodward also briefs visiting U.S. official and American business representatives.

It was interesting to hear about Ms Woodward's experience overseas, where she worked in a variety of roles: as a Press and Cultural Attaché at the U.S., Embassy of the Republic of Moldova, a Consular Officer in London, and a Public Diplomacy Officer in Tokyo coordinating conferences and seminars on American society and foreign policy-related topics. Ms Woodward also speaks Japanese and Romanian.

Ms Woodward received undergraduate and graduate degrees in international relations from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. It was fascinating to listen to her previous assignments in Washington DC, where she worked primarily on Australia issues, including the U.S.-Australia 12 Month Work and Travel Pilot Program and the U.S.-Australia-Japan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue; and as a Senior Watch Officer in the Department of State's Operations Centre.

Ms Woodward expressed a desire to visit some of the vineyards and agricultural industries in the Margaret River region, as Ms Woodward was raised on a potato farm in the Pacific Northwest in the United States. As a representative for the South West Region, with my Electorate Office in Margaret River, I willingly explained some of the background to the diversity and attractions on offer and encouraged her to visit the Region.



Picture: *The President, the Hon. Barry House with the U.S. Consul General, Ms Aleisha Woodward.*



Picture: *The President, the Hon. Barry House, with Ms Veronica Kerr, Political Liaison from the U.S. Consulate (left), and U.S. Consul General, Ms Aleisha Woodward.*