

An Open house program staged at Ethiopian Embassy

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A day-long annual event dubbed DC Passport, highlighting Ethiopian cultural and social extravaganza which attracted close to 6,000 residents of the Washington Metropolitan hub was colorfully held in the premises of the Ethiopian Embassy here today.

The festival was accompanied by a colorful display of Ethiopian traditional coffee ceremony, authentic and organic Ethiopian cuisine, raw and roasted Ethiopian coffee and other cultural beverages and drinks. The open house program was also bolstered by the presentation of Ethiopian made apparel products, bags designed by local Ethiopian seamstress, Ethiopian music CDs and DVDs, children's books and other tools of learning and delicious Ethiopian cookies and pastries.

The occasion that included modern and traditional music by Ethiopian artists and musicians gave an added impetus to the celebration with recorded ancient Ethiopian album and the screening of a film entitled "Discovering Ardi". This documentary film which was produced by the world class and renowned Discovery channel, depicts the fossilized skeletal remains of a female, *Ardipithecus ramidus*, an early human-like species 4.5 million years old, referred to as the most complete early hominid specimen, discovered in Ethiopia corroborating for the second time, next to the early human remains known as Lucy, that Ethiopia is the origin of Humanity.

The visitors who have been doubling in number since the program was launched three years ago were entertained by an array of other programs including a visit of the pictorial exhibition depicting the reach and diverse historical, cultural, wildlife, fauna and flora and environmental heritage of Ethiopia.

A slide and film presentation also brought to light the current multi-faceted effort demonstrating the strides made in the overall development of the country and the impressive result attained in good governance, democracy and the comprehensive steps that are being taken to make the up-coming election, fair, free, peaceful and credible.

The Deputy Ambassador of the Embassy of Ethiopia Mr. Tesfaye Yilma, Ms. Linda Harper, Executive Director, Cultural Tourism DC, and the entire staff members of the Embassy were on hand to welcome the visitors. /Tsehay DeBalkew/