

Bridges to the World

newsletter of the Sarasota Sister Cities Association

fall2010

Sarasota Sister Cities New Officers and Directors for 2010-2011

Sarasota Sister Cities Association has announced its slate of officers and directors for the coming year, elected and confirmed at the group's annual meeting held May 19 at the Sarasota Hyatt.

Carla Rayman continues as president and Bill Wallace, past president. Lora Bedford remains secretary with David Pomeranz in his role as treasurer.

Vice presidents and their areas of responsibility include Suzanne Anderson (sports), Harry Dunn (cities and candidate cities), Anthony Homer (business development), Dr. Jane Rose (arts and culture), Jan Thomas (communications and public relations) and Dr. Raymond Young (education).

David Harralson is the new membership director, Bill Mallett remains city liaison, Max Martinez continues as youth representative and Bill Sikes as webmaster and communications chair.

Directors and vice-directors for Sarasota's seven existing and one pending Sister Cities are:

Bill Wallace (Dunfermline, Scotland)
Gloria Grenier and Terry Neuss (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada)
Harry Dunn and Eva Frank (Perpignan, France);
Dr. Carolyn Bloomer and Irene Leung (Siming District [Xiamen], China);
Betty Greenspan and Linda Rosenbluth (Tel Mond, Israel)
Alexandra DeStefanis and Federica Priano (Treviso, Italy)
Gundula Coleman and Nikolay Safonov (Vladimir, Russia)
Javier Curiel and Eleanor Williams (candidate city Merida, Mexico)

The Sister Cities program fosters international relationships between Sarasota and cities that have similar interests, creating exchanges in areas of culture, education, tourism, business and government. Its objective is to develop respect, understanding and cooperation through citizen diplomacy. The international program was founded in 1956 by President Dwight Eisenhower.



A Look Ahead— For the Benefit of Your Calendar

Thanks to advance planning by the Sarasota Sister Cities city directors, dates for 2010-2011 events have been tentatively established as follows:

Thursday, October 28 (late afternoon) – Perpignan – Sarasota *Herald Tribune* community room downtown
Wednesday, November 17 – Treviso – location to be determined in Lakewood Ranch

Tuesday, November 30 (late afternoon) – New Member Reception – Sarasota Yacht Club

Friday, January 28, 2011 (luncheon) – Tel Mond – Sarasota Yacht Club

Thursday or Friday, February 10 or 11 – Hamilton – location TBD

Thursday, March 10 (evening) – One World Event – location TBD

Wednesday, March 16 (luncheon) – Xiamen – location TBD

April 15 – ?Dunfermline? – exact date and location TBD

April 29 – (Friday noon) Annual Meeting – Sarasota Yacht Club

May – Florida Studio Theatre Young Playwrights – exact date and place TBD (probably 2nd or 3rd weekend)



Bridges to the World

Sarasota Sister Cities Association

Carla Rayman, President
Bill Wallace, Past President
Lora Bedford, Secretary
David Pomeranz, Treasurer
Jan Thomas, Editor

Suzanne Anderson, Vice President for Sports
Anthony Homer, Vice President for Business
Development

Dr. Jane Rose, Vice President for Arts and Culture
Bill Sikes, Webmaster & Communication Chair
Jan Thomas, VP for Communications & Public Relations
Dr. Raymond Young, Vice President for Education
David Harralson, Membership Director
Bill Mallett, City Liaison
Max Martinez, Community Youth Development

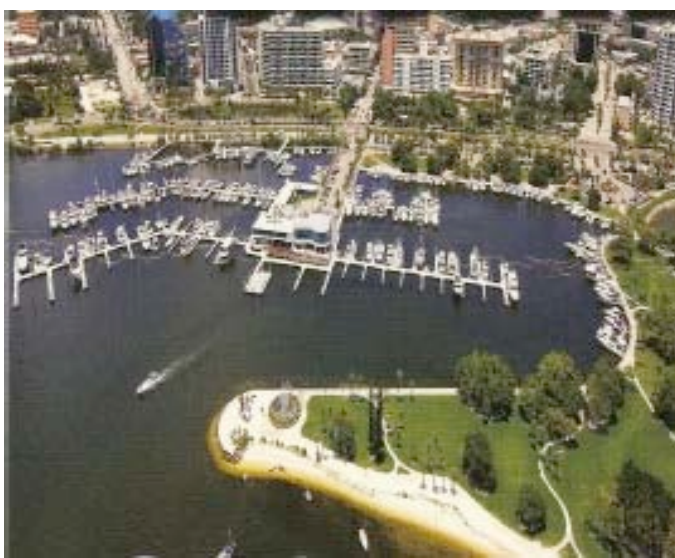
City Directors

Dunfermline, Scotland — Bill Wallace
Hamilton, Canada — Gloria Grenier
Terry Neuss, Vice City Director
Perpignan, France — Harry Dunn, City Director
Siming District (Xiamen), China — Dr. Carolyn Bloomer
Irene Leung, Vice City Director
Tel Mond, Israel — Betty Greenspan
Linda Rosenbluth, Vice City Director
Treviso Italy — Alexandra DeStefanis
Vladimir Russia — Gundula Coleman
Nikolay Safonov, Vice City Director

Building Bridges of Peace and Understanding Since 1963

Sarasota Sister Cities Association

1565 First Street • Sarasota, Florida 34236
www.sarasotasistercities.org



Sarasota Sister Cities Walk at City Island in Sarasota features trees planted by delegations from each of our Sister Cities

From Our President

I hope you enjoyed your summer. If you happened to travel to one of our Sister Cities over the summer, won't you let us know? We would love to hear your stories and have you share your photos. If you haven't been to our Sister Cities, you will have opportunities this fall to travel to Treviso, Italy, or Tel Mond, Israel. The details of both of these amazing tours can be found on our website www.SarasotaSisterCities.org.

The Sarasota Sister Cities organization has been busy planning their 2010-2011 season. In June, we had our annual strategic planning session. One of the major issues discussed was the visibility of our organization and membership. We hope you will join us in improving both of these by telling your friends and colleagues about our organization and encouraging them to get involved. Our city directors are always looking for volunteers to help with committees and events. The board of directors is also in dire need of someone to be our events chairperson. This person will be responsible for reservations for all events, checking in members when they attend, and helping the city directors coordinate their socials. If you are interested, please contact me at Carla@CarlaRayman.com or call me at 941/724-0519.

In July, board member Max Martinez (our Community Youth Delegate) represented our organization at the annual Sister Cities International Conference in Albuquerque, N.M. Max participated in the 2010 Youth Leadership Conference, where he engaged in workshops and community action project development. At this conference, Sarasota Sister Cities was recognized at the annual awards ceremony. Due to City Director Harry Dunn's efforts with the Perpignan students that visited last fall, our organization won the award for "Innovation: Sustainable Development- Energy Award for population under 100,000." Congratulations to Harry for all his hard work and winning this prestigious honor for Sarasota Sister Cities!

This year we will be doing some member socials at different locations to give members the chance to network with each other. We also are planning an evening with Perpignan in October and a dinner/theatre event with Treviso in November in collaboration with the Asonia Society. We look forward to seeing you soon!

In peace,
Carla

Don't Forget! Hamilton Photo Competition

The City of Hamilton (Ontario), and its Mundialization Committee have announced a photo competition to celebrate the anniversaries of its Sister City relationships with Sarasota (20 years) and Fukuyama, Japan (35 years).



The theme is "Hands Around the World" — reflecting the spirit of harmony and international goodwill

promoted by the Hamilton Mundialization Committee. All photos must be submitted digitally and must have been taken by a resident of Hamilton, Sarasota or Fukuyama in any one of the named municipalities.

CATEGORIES

- **Images of Peace** — Use any one or combinations of visual symbols or representations of peace.
- **Hands Around the World (Places & Spaces)** — Capture the essence of one of the cities so people will want to learn more and visit.
- **Special Bonds (People)** — Showcase people of these cities, exhibiting the essence of friendship and cultural understanding.

GRAND PRIZE \$500

Two additional awards of \$100 each will be awarded in each of the other categories. One additional prize for the best entry from each of the municipalities.

Entries must be received by 4:30 p.m., Sept. 30, 2010

An independent judging panel of local photographic professionals and community members will review entries based on technical quality, artistic composition, texture and light, and overall representation of the theme.

A maximum of one entry per category will be accepted from each entrant. Electronic entries may be submitted online at www.hamilton.ca/PhotoContest. Compact-disc entries (CD) may also be mailed to

City of Hamilton
Carolyn Bish
Customer Service, Access & Equity Division
71 Main Street West
Hamilton ON Canada L8P 4Y5

Complete contest rules and details are available at www.hamilton.ca/PhotoContest

Think Ahead — Sister Cities International Annual Awards Nominations

Applications will be available soon for the 2011 Sister Cities International annual awards. The deadline will be Friday, Jan. 21.

In 2010, our own Sarasota-Perpignan program was recognized with not only a statue but a \$1000 award as well under the SCI award for Innovation: Sustainable Development—Energy.

Visit the SCI website at www.sister-cities.org in the coming weeks to learn more about the 2011 annual awards as well as the annual conference to be held March 3-5 in Arlington, Va.



Perpignan Hosts Reception Wine-Cheese-Hors d'Oeuvres



Join us for a wine, cheese and hors d'oeuvres reception Thursday, October 28 — 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Hosted by the Sarasota Sister Cities Association
Perpignan Committee

In the community room at the Sarasota *Herald Tribune* Building
1741 Main Street, Sarasota

Bridges to the World

SSCA Golfers Victorious (Whew!)

by Bill Wallace

“With a little bit of help from their friends” (Scottish friends, that is), the SSCA-Dunfermline Golf Team emerged victorious against a superb Dunfermline team in the second Sister Cities Biennial Golf Tournament held in Fyfe, Scotland, the first week in June.

Led by Sarasota/Dunfermline sports chair, Caledonian Club member and former Coast Bank president Bob Antrim, the team arrived in Scotland with seven players – one short of the required eight for two foursomes, due to a last minute schedule conflict.

In the true spirit of sister city sportsmanship, Gerry McMullan, Dunfermline’s Sister City chair, recruited a fellow Scots Graeme Cockburn and Alick Kubrcht to fill out the second Sarasota foursome.

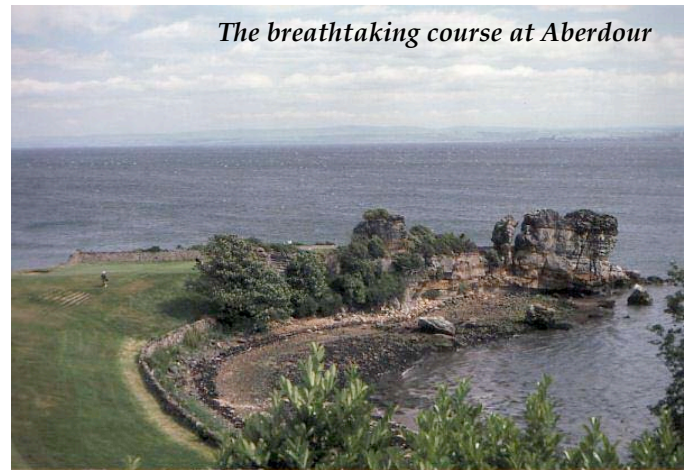
Going into the final day of competition, tension was high as Dunfermline led by a single point. Then, as McMullan downheartedly described it later, the loaned Scot on the Sarasota team played “out of his skin” and, after the last putt clunked the bottom of the cup, the one-point margin had turned in favor of the Sarasotans, allowing them to maintain their domination of the closely-watched, much-anticipated international tourney.

In addition to Antrim, victorious Sarasota team members included

- Mayor Kelly Kirschner
- Argus Foundation President Kerry Kirschner
- his son Kent
- Bob Rosenbluth, retired Sarasota physician
- his son Dan Rosenbluth, who represents Coors Beer in England
- Fred Allen, retired industrialist



The group in Dunfermline



The breathtaking course at Aberdour

Rounding out the Sarasota contingent were Rose Antrim and Cathy Allen. Both were delighted to receive tickets to the renowned Culross Festival, declaring that Scottish hospitality was “simply extraordinary.”

The tourney was played on three famous Scottish courses: Crail, the seventh-oldest golf course in the world; Pitfirrance, with its still-in-use clubhouse dating back to the 1500s, and Aberdour, where, as Antrim observes, you play “cliff to cliff”.

In between matches, McMullan had arranged several appointments with tourism and other commercial entities in Fyfe with an eye toward increasing business between our two sister cities.

With great anticipation, the Sarasota cohort look forward to the arrival in 2012 of the next contingent of free-swinging Scots, to further this great and warmest of competitions.



Recent Headlines from Hamilton, Ontario

by Gloria Grenier, City Director for Hamilton

City Hall Reopens After Major Renovation

The Hamilton City Hall reopened June 22 after a three-year renovation. All staff and city functions were moved into a temporary location during the construction period. The building, dated 1960, required a comprehensive renovation to meet current building codes and modern energy efficiency requirements. Both the interior and exterior refurbishing were designed to preserve the "International style" architectural features of the original Stanley Roscoe building. The upper level provides parking spaces for staff and visitors.



The newly updated Hamilton city hall

Tel Mond's Arab-Jewish Women's Project Honored

by Betty Greenspan, City Director for Tel Mond

Carol Clark, a member of on the Sister Cities Tel Mond committee, just returned from Israel. Carol had the opportunity to meet with Ayelet and Tzvika Shahak in Tel Mond and learned about the various projects the Association for the Commemoration of Bat-Chen Shahak is doing to promote peace.

One project is a beautiful calendar created by Women Weaving A Dialog, the Arab-Jewish women's group. Its objective is to contribute to building a bridge between the two peoples. Reuven Rivlin, speaker of the Knesset (the national legislature) was impressed by the project and its uniqueness and, as a result, invited the group to be guests at the Knesset. You can read more about the various projects at www.batchen.co.il.

If you would like to receive a copy of the calendar please contact Betty Greenspan at CD_Israel@SisterCities.org.

Canada Day 2010

Hamiltonians celebrated Canada Day July 1 with parades, concerts, a military tattoo and musical fireworks in various locations throughout this large city of over 500,000 inhabitants.

PROCLAMATION: George Hamilton Day

On August 2, the mayor and city council officially proclaimed that, in recognition of the city's founder George Hamilton, the August civic holiday in Hamilton will be named "George Hamilton Day". The ceremony will take place at 11 a.m. Monday, August 2, at the newly renovated City Hall, followed by a reception, illustrated talks and a guided walk.

Tel Mond Art Trip Postponed

The art-focused trip to Tel Mond and its surroundings, originally planned for next month has been postponed until next spring.



The itinerary is still expected to include trips to Jerusalem, Golan Heights, Katz-rin, Kiryat Yam, Haifa, Netanya, and Tel Aviv with optional side trips to other points.

More details will be announced soon.

Carol Clark, member of Sarasota Sister Cities Tel Mond Committee, is shown below (fourth from right) with members of the cross-cultural group Women Weaving a Dialog.



Sister Cities, Perpignan and “Soft Power”

by Harry Dunn, City Director for Perpignan

People-to-people exchanges can be an effective means of fulfilling our mission to “develop respect, understanding and cooperation through citizen diplomacy.” These exchanges can create long-lasting, meaningful relationships, and the experience can be remarkably rewarding on a personal and community level. On a national level, people-to-people exchanges can be an element of “soft power”.

Niall Ferguson, professor of history at Harvard University, discusses “soft power” in his book, *Colossus*, says that American power consists not just of military and economic power but also of “soft” power. The author quotes Joseph Nye, Dean of Harvard’s Kennedy School, as follows:

A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries want to follow it, admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness. Soft power, in other words, is getting what you want without force or inducement, sticks or carrots: It is the ability to entice and attract. Soft power arises in large part from our values.

The positive impact resulting from our exchange between students from Perpignan’s Lycee Pablo Picasso and Sarasota’s Riverview High School served as an example of soft power to my wife Happy and me this spring. We received multiple invitations to participate in

classes and discussions at Lycee Pablo Picasso. Our reception by students, parents, teachers and administrators was very rewarding, and a tribute to the many people who worked so hard to develop and implement the exchange. The reception as well as comments and questions from others, showed the great interest of the Perpignan people in Sarasota and the United States. We find that in general the people with whom we came in contact have a strong curiosity and interest in American culture. We were especially surprised by the interest in stars such as Marilyn Monroe and Marlon Brando from the 1950s and ‘60s. Some of the Perpignan students have or are planning to apply for admission to American colleges and universities.

SSCA’s Perpignan committee will focus on creating more face-to-face, family-based exchanges. Our approach is to develop a clearinghouse and the infrastructure to facilitate exchanges between individual Sarasota and Perpignan families, which will enable us to more efficiently and effectively create ongoing exchanges. Under a family-based, reciprocal exchange program, individuals from each city will live with a family in the other city for an agreed-upon length of time and on an agreed-upon schedule. Representatives of Perpignan area schools have agreed to work with us on the family-to-family exchange program.

The Perpignan students at Sarasota Polytechnical High School, during their 2009 visit



Sarasota-Perpignan Relationship Honored by Sister Cities International

The Sarasota Sister Cities Association has been recognized by Sister Cities International with a \$1,000 award for innovation in the area of Sustainable Development—Energy for our November 2009 exchange with Lycee Pablo Picasso. The award was presented by

SCI at its annual conference in Albuquerque, N.M., on July 31. Hadda Lamotte, leader of the Perpignan Student Exchange and Bridget Coughlin, SSCA board member and a teacher at Riverview High School, accepted the award on our behalf.



FPL's solar array in Arcadia is the largest solar photovoltaic solar facility in the nation. Constructed in less than a year, the DeSoto Next Generation Solar Energy Center uses more than 90,000 photovoltaic panels to turn the sun's rays into electricity to power more than 3,000 homes.

Sister Cities International Annual Conference 2011 — Start Planning Now

On this page and again on page 10 of this issue are articles that reference the 2010 annual conference of Sister Cities International held in Albuquerque, N.M. this past summer.

It's never too early to start thinking about next year. Join your brother and sister SCI "citizen ambassadors" as the organization celebrates its 55th annual conference right outside our nation's capital in Arlington, Va., March 3-5.

Arlington has been described as "a place where history and fun intersect." The city has been part of Washington D.C.'s history since the very beginning: It was part of the original Federal City designed by Pierre L'Enfant. It boasts some of our nation's most impressive and world-renowned monuments and memorials including the Robert E. Lee Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, Marine Corps (Iwo Jima) and Air Force War Memorials, the Pentagon Memorial and many other points of interest ... including fantabulous shopping.

April Trip Planned to Perpignan Region

The Perpignan Sister Cities group is planning a 12-day tour that will take in the Dordogne, Perpignan and Barcelona area. The dates are April 18 to 30, 2011.

More information will be available shortly. Contact Eva Frank (evita618@verizon.net) or Harry Dunn (hbdiii@verizon.net) for more information.



Relationship Blossoms with Chinese Sister City

by Carolyn Bloomer, City Director for Siming / Xiaming

The Siming District of Xiamen Municipality in China's southeastern coastal Fujian Province is Sarasota's newest Sister City. The relationship is barely three years old, the official agreements having been signed in June and October 2007. A detailed description of Xiamen will be posted soon on the SSCA web-site, and may also be found at www.amoymagic.com.

Embracing Our Differences

The spring 2008 Embracing Our Differences (EOD) exhibition at Bayfront Park included an entry from a Xiamen elementary school student, chosen from more than 5000 international entries. While the Xiamen student's banner was being exhibited on the campus at Ringling College of Art and Design, a 10-person delegation of Xiamen officials visited Sarasota and had their picture taken with the banner. The visiting delegation was headed by Xiamen's vice mayor, who was particularly interested in Sarasota's public sculpture collection. The delegation also met with the city's public sculpture curators, who presented a comprehensive explanation of Sarasota's collection, exhibition and conservation practices. In addition, they visited Mote Marine, Ringling Museum and, finally, mingled with various local dignitaries and business persons at a farewell dinner at Chart House, which was funded by a generous local sponsor.

The 2009 winning entry from six-year old first-grader from Xiamen's Egret River elementary school won first prize in EOD's student division



Spring 2009 brought the *coup de gras*. A six-year old first-grader from Xiamen's Egret River elementary school won first prize in EOD's student division, including a \$1000 award to the school. A play titled "The New Snow White" and written by five fifth-grade girls from Egret River School was later accepted into the Florida Studio Theatre's (FST) International Young Playwright's contest and performed as a reading at FST.

In June 2009, Dr. Carolyn Bloomer, SSCA's city director for the Siming / Xiamen relationship and her husband spent 10 days in Xiamen, exploring various possibilities for developing our Sister City relationship. A highlight of the visit was an elaborate all-school program organized by the Egret River School at which Carolyn personally presented the \$1000 first-prize check from EOD to the school principal, and a medal to little Shen Hongying, the six-year-old artist. Carolyn also awarded medals and certificates from FST to the fifth-grade playwrights. The event was given extensive local media coverage, making the evening television news and the front page of the *Xiamen Daily News*.

Xiamen Artists Visit Sarasota

In April 2009, SSCA and Art Center Sarasota sponsored a two-week visit to Sarasota by two Xiamen artists: Luo Ping, a watercolorist, and Zheng Shenglong, a traditional ink painter, both faculty members at Xiamen University. The artists were home-hosted by Cheyenne Wu and Ian Kempner of the Gulfcoast Chinese American Association (GCAA). Transportation, sight-seeing, and home-hosted dinners and luncheons were provided by members of SSCA, GCAA and the Sarasota Chapter of the U.S. China People's Friendship Association (USCPFA-Sarasota).

Luo and Zheng gave presentations and demonstrations at the Art Center and Ringling College and enjoyed such localisms as the Ringling Museum, St. Armands Circle, Amish food, Siesta drumming circle, sunsets on Longboat Key, Mote Marine, and *plein air* painting at Spanish Point. Once again, Xiamen visitors arrived during the EOD exhibition at Bayfront Park and so were able to see the Xiamen student's winning entry, as well as to interact with several school groups attending the exhibition.

Art Exhibition at Ringling College

In spring 2010, the Liberal Arts Program at Ringling College of Art and Design (RCAD), together with SSCA, GCAA, and USCPFA-Sarasota, sponsored an exhibition of digitally reproduced works by students and faculty at the Fuzhou University Xiamen College of Art and



Dr. Bloomer was featured on the front page of the Xiamen Daily News as she presented awards to winning student playwrights during her 2009 visit to the city

Design. The exhibit included lacquer painting, sculpture, visual communication and interior design. A reception with Asian snacks was followed by a specially prepared dinner at Gold Dynasty restaurant on the North Trail.

Saturday Chinese Film Series

GCAA and USCPFA-Sarasota sponsor a monthly Chinese film series screened at Ringling College of Art and Design which runs from September through April. Films include a wide variety of both current and classic Mandarin-language movies (with subtitles). Carolyn Bloomer provides introductory information and guides discussion following the films. To receive e-mail notices of the film showings, send your name and e-mail address to cbloomer@ringling.edu.



Treviso Enters Guinness Book with Grantavolata

On Sunday, June 6, 2010, the Province of Treviso entered the *Guinness Book of World Records* during the 5th annual Grantavolata held at the Trevigians City Park. The event showcased typical local products and cuisine as well as traditional folk music and shows.

Facts:

- Participating restaurants: 32
- Participating sommerlier: 200
- Guests: 6000
- Ingredients: nearly 1000 pounds of rice, nearly 1000 pounds of white asparagus, 440 pounds of onions, 35 gallons of oil, 66 pounds of salt and so far, 220 pounds of butter, 7000 pieces of chicken, 15,000 rolls, 660 pounds of carrots, 660 pounds of tomato, 330 pounds of celery, 130 pounds of Bibanesi and a mountain of Treviso Casatella cheese.
- Tableware: 24,000 pieces each of silverware, porcelain dinnerware and glassware
- Table length: over 1.5 kilometers (almost 1 mile)



- World record for longest tablecloth: one woven piece 1550 meters (5085 feet) long. In orange and white, the official colors of Treviso, incorporated the names of all participating restaurants
- World record for largest grappa bottle: 120 liters (32 gallons) — 2.20 meters (7 feet) high and 30 cm (12 inches) in diameter of distilled Prosecco

The event was hosted by Province President Leonardo Muraro on the grounds of the city park, headquarters of the Province of Treviso, and a unique example of environmental and urban revitalization.

All proceeds — approximately €150,000 — from the event benefited the local volunteer organization ADVAR which assists terminally ill patients and their families.

SCI Annual Conference 2010: Youth Leadership Conference Albuquerque, New Mexico

by Max Martinez, SSCA Youth Representative

The 27th of July through the 1st of August were probably the most magical days of my life. I attended a six-day Youth Leadership Conference held in Albuquerque, N.M., that attracted about 60 teenagers from all over the country as well as outside of the United States.

The conference—which was held in conjunction with the Sister Cities International Conference—included small group activities meant to exercise students' minds in topics ranging from cultural identity, to immigration role-playing, to hot debates on both local and global issues affecting our communities. Adult facilitators were assigned to each small group to guide the discussions. All the adults were excellent in letting the students express themselves, and served as amazing and inspirational role models. My facilitator was Robin Stevens, a wonderful, strong and enthusiastic woman from Phoenix, Ariz., who was so close to my group and me that she felt like a second mother.

Along with these activities, the entire body of students attended events such as classes where we were taught Cuban-style salsa. The cultural exchange was an everyday thing and included flamenco demonstrations, a trip to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, and a cultural showcase where students showed their talents, were examples of how students kept up Sister Cities' mission to learn and participate in global cultures.



The University of New Mexico at Albuquerque hosted the 2010 SCI Youth Leadership Conference



The students were also able to meet with the adults attending the main event. Many connections were made, some going as far as Ghana or Korea. Presentations were given in the areas of innovative design and energy, which provided students and adults alike with practical ideas on improving our communities through deeper problem solving. A panel discussion on Multiculturalism in Albuquerque offered a chance for students to form closer bonds with SCI adults by trading contact information, which was indispensable in continuing our relationships.

New Mexico is an incredibly beautiful place. Compared to Florida, where I'm even excited to see a hill, Albuquerque was bordered with an amazing view of mountains and rugged terrain. We visited Old Albuquerque Town, and Santa Fe, a historic city that left me in quiet awe. The plaza, restaurants, horse-drawn carriages, art galleries, and the cathedral of St. Francis were only small tastes of the traditions. I wanted to see more, but I would have needed much more time to take in even a small portion of the beauty.

Along with the incredible work put in by the facilitators, the students participated with enthusiastic participation. Each youth delegate demonstrated such a deep understanding for the various cultures represented, and had amazing life stories, dreams and passions. In a world where people can pass by each other every day without even a word or acknowledgment, this conference taught me to take time to meet as many people as I can.

Arriving in the Sunport Airport in Albuquerque, I knew nobody. The minute we met each other, all the delegates clicked as if we had known each other for a lifetime.

I returned to Florida with higher expectations for the world, with a stronger determination to serve my community, with a passion for meeting people, and with a another family. There is nothing like the touch of a human being to deliver motivation, friendship and love.

Xiamen Seeks Your Involvement

If you are interested in participating in any of these projects, or wish to propose additional projects, you are cordially invited to contact Dr. Carolyn Bloomer, city director, or Irene Leung, vice city director, at the eMail addresses shown below.

Two Sarasota Artists to Visit Xiamen 2011

Following the example of the highly successful visit of Luo Ping and Zheng Shenlong to Sarasota in 2009, Xiamen officials wish to home-host two Sarasota artists for two weeks in May 2011. Full details will be outlined in an official "call to artists" which will be issued by SSCA and Art Center Sarasota in September; applications will be due December 1 and awards announced by January 5.

Coordinator for High School ePals Exchange

Students (grades 10-12) at the Xiamen Foreign Language High School are proficient in English with many preparing for college in the United States. The school would like to enable some of these students to correspond in English with American high school students. We need a teacher or a school club willing to coordinate matches between American and Chinese students and to oversee ongoing electronic exchanges. The Siming/Xiamen Committee will provide guidelines and parameters for appropriate communications.

High School Teachers

The Xiamen Foreign Language High School is also looking for full-time teachers (one-year contracts) certified in English, world history, physics and math to teach classes in English in their AP Sino-American International Program, which is designed to prepare graduates for college in the U.S. The school also seeks English teachers for its regular English classes. The school is well funded and has a high level of academic achievement, 2400 students and a large modern campus. Accommodations, salary and teaching conditions are excellent. Requires teacher certification, TOEFL/ESOL certificate or two years' teaching experience; experience teaching AP courses preferred. Carolyn can share a website with you that contains additional details if you are interested. This is an ideal situation for retired teachers looking for an exciting and rewarding year abroad!

Short-Term High School Teachers (Any Subject)

As a part of their SAIP program (see above) XMFLS invites U.S. teachers to propose short-term teaching modules (2-3 weeks) that could be incorporated into the school's curriculum. Subjects can run the gamut (history, literature, science, math, etc.), but relevance to current events is of particular interest.

Medical Professionals Interested in Traditional Chinese Medicine

Xiamen's new state-of-the-art comprehensive Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital is interested in hosting a delegation of medical professionals from Sarasota. This could be a stand-alone 7-10-day trip, combined with visits to similar hospitals in Guangzhou and/or Beijing, or as one component in a broader China travel plan. The form and content of the delegation's visit would be determined by the particular interests of the participants.

Travel Agents to Collaborate with Xiamen Counterparts

Sarasota and Xiamen share similar disadvantages in regard to tourism: both are "off the beaten track" of standard national tours. To help both Xiamen- and Sarasota-based travel agents plan effective exchange trips, members of the Xiamen Committee who are familiar with travel and tourism in China, and Xiamen in particular, are eager to work with Sarasota travel agents to design a variety of options for promoting custom Sister City travel between Xiamen and Sarasota. The Xiamen side is ready to promote this project, which promises to benefit tourism in both cities.

Business People Interested in Connections

Xiamen was one of the four original Special Economic Zones established at the beginning of economic reform in the early 1980s. For nearly 20 years, major transnational corporations (e.g., Boeing, GE, Kodak, Dell) have had established subsidiaries in Xiamen, which has also been a key import gateway for European, U.S. and Japanese automobiles and components. Xiamen has also been a leading export hub for LED appliances, solar energy components, granite, camping gear, shoes, crafts, garden accessories and many other commodities. It also remains China's #2 environmentally cleanest city.

SSCA's newly appointed Vice President for Business, Anthony Homer, grew up in Hong Kong and speaks fluent Mandarin. Vice City Director Irene Leung for many years owned a textile business in Xiamen and regularly attends the China International Fair for Investment and Trade held there annually. Both Anthony and Irene are enthusiastic about promoting business relations between Sarasota and Xiamen.

Contact

Dr. Carolyn Bloomer, city director Siming/Xiamen —
CD_China@SarasotaSisterCities.org
Irene Leung, vice city director Siming/Xiamen —
irene.morningstar@gmail.com

Bridges to the World

Save the Date

March 10, 2011

The Sarasota Sister City Association will present the first-ever international award given in Sarasota on this date.

The One World Award will honor a person or entity (corporation, organization, etc.) who/which has significantly enhanced international "understanding and respect" through their work, personal or civic activities, heroism, philanthropy, etc.

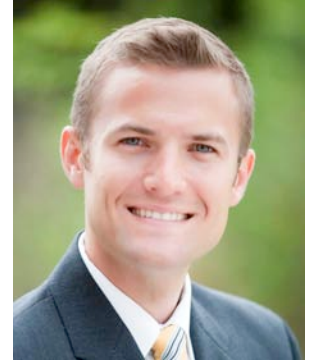
Nominations will open this fall with more details coming soon. An all-star selection panel representing various sectors of our local community will review nominees and select honorees.

More details to come.



Meet a New Board Member: Anthony Homer, Vice President for Business Development

Anthony Homer grew up in Hong Kong, enjoying an exciting 15 years in the cosmopolitan city. There he attended Chinese public school where he learned to read and write Cantonese.



After attending university in the United States, Anthony returned to Asia, this time to Taiwan, to learn Mandarin. In Taiwan he taught at an international school and co-founded an educational camp for children. He and his wife moved to Sarasota after their first son was born in Taiwan.

Anthony is currently working for the commercial real estate arm of SMR in developing the master planned community, Lakewood Ranch. He also works with Tampa-based OrientXpress as a consultant and trainer for businesses looking to enter the Chinese markets.



Bridges to the World
Sarasota Sister Cities Association
1565 First Street
Sarasota FL 34236