



# Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board



## Annual Report Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board 2010 - 2011

June 30, 2011

The Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board consists of seven sister cities: Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Toba, Japan; Weihai, China; Dingle, Ireland; San Juan/Manila, Philippines; Kotor, Montenegro and our new sister city, Patras, Greece. Attached are the reports from each committee. The board was involved in the following activities:

### **July 29-31, 2010**

The Sister Cities International (SCI) Annual International Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Gil and Marti Garcia from the Puerto Vallarta Committee attended.

### **August 24, 2010**

**Patras, Greece** was approved as the new sister city at the Santa Barbara City Council meeting.

### **September 1, 2010**

Theony Condos was welcomed at the board meeting as a new board member representing Patras, Greece Sister City Committee.

### **September 11, 2010**

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual September 11<sup>th</sup> Peace Concert was held at the Unitarian Society; Santa Barbara Music Club and the Unitarian Society co-sponsored the event; and 130 people participated.

### **October 21, 2010**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Sister Cities Celebration in honor of United Nations Day was held at the Cabrillo Pavilion. The honored guests included Catherine Dishion, Santa Barbara Chapter President, United Nations Association; Santa Barbara Mayor Helene Schneider; and 16 members of a delegation from Toba, Japan, celebrating the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Santa Barbara-Toba sister relationship. The entertainment was a Flamenco Dance by the 2010 junior and senior Queens of Fiesta and Irish Music by the Foggy Due. About 150 persons attended from all seven sister city committees.

### **December 17, 2010**

Takako Wakita was re-appointed by the City Council to serve another four year term on the Sister Cities Board.

### **March 1-31, 2011**

The Library display case exhibition was at the main library.

### **March 3-5, 2011**

The SCI Annual International Conference was held at Arlington, Virginia. Board member Linda Mathews and Gil and Marti Garcia from the Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee attended.

Respectfully submitted by,

**Takako Wakita, Chair**

Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board

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## **Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee**

### **1. Special Projects**

- a. Law Enforcement Exchange:
  - Outbound – Puerto Vallarta (December 2010)
  - Inbound – Santa Barbara (July 2010)
- b. Clinica de Rehabilitación Vallarta – Santa Barbara, A.C. – continued support
- c. Donation of Fire Equipment (suits) to Puerto Vallarta Fire Department

### **2. Youth Projects**

- a. Student Exchange – on hold for this year
- b. Sister Cities International Showcase of Young Artists – local high schools participated, winning entry sent to SCI in Washington, D.C. to be judged with worldwide youth artist entries
- c. Sponsor additional square with two Santa Barbara High School Youth Artists

### **3. Cultural Exchange**

- a. Puerto Vallarta artists participate in Santa Barbara's 25<sup>th</sup> Annual I. Madonnari Festival
- b. Santa Barbara I. Madonnari artists participate in Puerto Vallarta Street Painting Festival

### **4. Social Exchanges and Friendship Gatherings**

- a. Visitation to Santa Barbara by Puerto Vallarta (July/August 2010)
- b. Visitation to Puerto Vallarta by Santa Barbara (November 2010)
- c. Conference attendance by members:
  - U.S./Mexico Sister Cities Association – Redlands, CA (January 2011)
  - Mexico/U.S. Cuidades Hermanas Association – State of Morelos, Mexico (May 2011)
  - 55th Anniversary – Sister Cities International – Alexandria, Virginia (February 2011)
- d. Attended U.S./Mexico Sister Cities Association Annual BBQ
- e. Reception – Showcase of Young Artists (April 2011)
- f. Strawberry Social (June 2011)
- g. Held ten general dinner meetings
- h. El Fandango Dinner/Dance – held at El Paseo Restaurant (July 2010)

### **5. Joint Community Projects**

- a. Sister Cities – September 11<sup>th</sup> Concert (September 11, 2010 – 5th Annual)
- b. 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Sister Cities Reunion in Honor of United Nations Day (October 2010)
- c. Mexican Jaripeo (rodeo) at Earl Warren Showgrounds, joint event with Timber's Restaurant (February 2011)

### **6. Special Mention**

- a. Cash donation to community based organizations: YMCA – Campaign for Youth, Children's Creative Project
- b. Donation of sports equipment to DIF sponsored orphanage
- c. WEB-PAGE ([www.sbpvsistercity.org](http://www.sbpvsistercity.org))
- d. Fund-Raising trip to Taxco, State of Morelos and Mexico/U.S. Sister Cities Conference

## **Santa Barbara/Toba Sister City Committee**

The Santa Barbara/Toba Sister City Committee held several events this year in cooperation with outside organizations and led field trips to events in the Los Angeles area to broaden the types of activities through which we can showcase Japanese culture. We also hosted a delegation of 15 from our Sister City to begin a celebration of our 45th anniversary, and we look forward to taking a delegation from Santa Barbara to Toba this coming November to close out this special year. Then, after learning that Toba had also experienced severe damage from the March, 2011, earthquake and tsunami in Japan, we organized a major fundraising effort to aid our Sister City.

- In the summer of 2010, we once again welcomed four Junior High School students from Toba for ten days of family-to-family exchange. This visit always comes during our historical Fiesta celebration, and this year we were proud to have one of our own four Santa Barbara students performing at one of the entertainment evenings. The Japanese students clearly enjoyed appearing onstage with their local host brothers and sisters in Fiesta costume and showing real Santa Barbara Fiesta spirit.
- In the fall, we participated in a new event of the Santa Barbara Historical Society, celebrating the long Asian influence in old-town Santa Barbara. On display were historical photos as well as artifacts from recent archeological work in the pre-war Japanese community in Nihonmachi, or Japan town.
- We participated with the other Santa Barbara Sister Cities in the annual 9/11 Peace concert. Musical groups representing many of our sister cities, including a lovely performance of Japanese flute or Shakuhachi, made the occasion, held in the Unitarian Church, very moving and memorable.
- The Toba delegation arrived just in time for United Nations Day. All of Santa Barbara's Sister City community was present to welcome them with music and dance, great food, and an evening of true grassroots connection. Later in the week we took our Toba friends on the "Land Shark" to view Santa Barbara from both land and water, and enjoyed as well a day visiting the Santa Ynez Valley. We capped off their visit with family-hosted friendship dinners in small groups. Our Mayor promised Mayor Kida of Toba to join in the Santa Barbara delegation celebrating our anniversary in Toba this coming November.
- We began 2011 with a Girl's Day "Hinamatsuri" party at our annual general meeting, complete with traditional hand-made decorations, Koto music, a talk about the production and subtleties of Japanese Sake, and a narrated Sushi-making demonstration.
- We took two field trips this spring, first joining the Los Angeles' Aurora Foundation in March for their demonstration and talk on Kabuki and Japanese folk dance by one of the only American actors ever admitted to the Japanese Kabuki actors guild. He gave a wonderfully detailed talk showcasing his very accomplished group of young dancers. In April, one of our members led a group to see an exhibit of the Noh Theater Masks at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Both trips provided rare chances to go behind the scenes of an ancient Japanese tradition which usually remains unknown to outsiders.
- Our greatest accomplishment this year was our sold-out fundraising event in April which brought in close to \$40,000 to benefit the sea products' farmers in Toba so devastated by the tsunami this past March. All of Santa Barbara came together, donating food, entertainment, and items for our silent auction. Our Mayor co-chaired the event, helping to create a real atmosphere of city-to-city care and friendship.

## **Santa Barbara/Kotor Sister City Committee**

Following is a summary of some, but not all, of our activities for the year 2011.

### **The Goran Milik Culinary Academy:**

On March 14, approximately fifty friends of Kotor attended a fund raising dinner at Divino's Restaurant in Los Angeles in support of the third year of our Sister Cities Culinary Academy in Kotor, Montenegro.

From May 25 to June 10, Randy Bublitz, Chair of the Santa Barbara City College Culinary Department, conducted classes for twelve deserving young students at the Institute for Children with Disabilities in Kotor. They were taught the basic skills necessary to find entry-level employment in hotels and restaurants in Kotor and the surrounding area.

This was our third and most successful year at the Culinary Academy with a number of the students receiving internships and employment at the end of the course. One student, who excelled at the Academy, will be brought to California this fall to attend classes at Santa Barbara City College and intern at Divino's Restaurant in Los Angeles.

### **The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual International Children's Theatre Festival in Kotor Montenegro:**

Kotor's Mayor, Marija Maja Catovic, invited thirteen of our most talented youngsters from Santa Barbara High Schools to perform at their International Theatre Festival. They met and performed with others from all over Europe.

On March 13, our young 'troupe' performed in 'Songs For A New World' at the Granada Theater to raise funds for the trip. Over three hundred people attended and rewarded their performance with a standing ovation.

On June 28, our 'troupe' had an open rehearsal of 'Dr. Delusions Magical Talent Circus,' an original musical production, written and performed by the 'troupe' for the Theatre Festival.

On June 30, our Troupe left for ten days in Kotor where they were acknowledged as 'the best in the show' for their presentation. The U.S. Ambassador for Montenegro as well as the Mayor of Kotor and other dignitaries attended their performance.

## **Santa Barbara/Weihai Sister City Committee**

During the past year, the Santa Barbara/Weihai Sister City Committee enjoyed a number of successes in building understanding and personal relationships between our two cities and nations. The Association Board has met monthly over the past year under the leadership of Chairman Peter Haslund with vigorous support from a combination of new and veteran members. As always, the social highlight was the annual Chinese New Year Dinner which was attended by Mayor Helene Schneider and many other notable Santa Barbarans.

We are excited about two unprecedented events. First, a dynamic business partnership between Santa Barbara based True Vision, a cutting edge medical equipment and technology company, and a Weihai based manufacturing and distribution company was finalized and is apparently thriving. Second, the Santa Barbara/Weihai Sister City Committee is hosting a dozen middle and

high school aged students from Weihai this August. This will be the largest group of Weihai visitors ever to travel to Santa Barbara and the first group of students as well. The Chinese teens will stay in Santa Barbara for two weeks with the goals of improving their English skills through classes provided by Santa Barbara area teachers and experiencing life in the United States first-hand.

The Association is making preliminary plans to send a new group of Santa Barbara area teachers to Weihai during 2012.

### **Santa Barbara/Dingle Sister City Committee**

The Dingle, Ireland, Sister City Committee has been in the process of re-organization and trying to re-activate the membership without too much success. We have attempted a visitation to Dingle for several years but due to the economy both here and in Ireland, rise in airline prices, and the fact there are no more direct flights to Shannon, which also adds to the expense of the trip, a visitation from Dingle has not been feasible in three years.

We have been directing individuals to Dingle who have an interest in setting up small ambassador groups to Dingle for exchange, including a former Santa Barbara police officer, a communications businessman, and Dr. McClintock, a local dentist, who is also a singer. While Dr. McClintock was in Dingle she met with a former head of the Chamber of Commerce in Dingle. I arranged for her to meet with another singer/songwriter who owns a record shop in Dingle.

Prepared by Erin Graffy, President

### **Santa Barbara/Patras Sister City Committee**

On July 21, 2010, the Santa Barbara/Patras Sister City Committee (Group) presented its proposal to establish a sister cities relationship between Santa Barbara and Patras, Greece, to the Sister Cities Board. The Board unanimously approved the proposal.

From July 31 to August 1, 2010, the Group sponsored a booth at the Greek Festival, showcasing photographs and food products of Patras, and collecting over 90 names for a "Friends of Patras" organization.

On August 24, 2010, the Group presented its proposal for a sister cities relationship between Santa Barbara and Patras to the City Council, which unanimously approved the proposal.

On August 29, 2010, the Group hosted a luncheon at Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church to announce the City Council's approval of the proposal for a sister cities relationship and to discuss future plans.

On September 11, 2010, the Group arranged for a set of Greek folk songs as part of the September 11 Concert program. During September, the Group also established a website and changed its name to the Santa Barbara/Patras Sister City Committee.

In October, 2010, members of the Committee participated in the United Nations Day dinner.

In March, 2011, the Committee participated in the Sister Cities display at the Santa Barbara Public Library.

In June, 2011, the Committee contributed to the Toba Relief Fundraising effort. Due to the continuing economic crisis in Greece, the Committee decided to “go dark” for the time being.

Committee representatives attended all but two meetings of the Sister Cities Board during the past year.

The Executive Committee of the Patras Sister City Committee held two meetings in 2010 (July 14 and October 7), and three meetings in 2011 (March 10, April 28, June 23).

Prepared by Theony Condos, President

### **Santa Barbara/San Juan Sister City Committee**

Events held during the past year were:

- August 14 - Luau Party, a Hawaiian Themed Annual Celebration
- September 18 - Annual Picnic Party
- October 22 - Country Night Party. Celebration with Country Western Theme
- November 20 - Thanksgiving Party
- December 11 - Christmas Party
- December 18 - Midnight Mass (officiated by the priest from the Philippines) (Note: This was followed by Noche Buena, a midnight Dinner Party at the Mission, and was attended by the Filipinos and Americans from Santa Barbara and adjoining areas down to Los Angeles)
- February 12 - Valentine's Party
- April 14 - Easter BBQ Celebration at Tuckers Grove
- May 15 - Filipino Youth Choir Concert in Panorama City (presented by the Filipino Youth Choir visiting California from the Philippines)
- May 21 - Parents' Day Celebration and Party honoring the parents
- May 28 - Toba Tsunami Fundraising event (actively participated and donated \$1,000+)
- June 18 - Philippine American Friendship Day at Elks' Lodge (Note: This is the biggest annual activity for our group with full participation from major Filipino-American organizations in the Tri-Counties; complete with presentations of Country Dances and Filipino Folk Dances - Tinikling and Maglalatik)

Prepared by Jaime Sodusta  
Chairperson, Santa Barbara/San Juan Sister City Committee