

Minutes of the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board Meeting of Wednesday, January 8, 2014

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Takato Wakita called Meeting to order at 12:05 PM.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Members present: Takato Wakita, chair; Barbara Ellis and Marti Correa de Garcia, City-at-Large members; Blas Garza, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Jaime Sodusta, San Juan, Philippines; Linda Mathews, Toba, Japan; George Lilly, Kotor, Montenegro; Georgia Gastouniotis, Patras, Greece; Kathleen Zeitsoff (alternate), Dingle, Ireland; Staff Representative: Linda Gunther

Guest: Gil Garcia, President SOCAL
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** On a motion duly made by Georgia Gastouniotis, seconded by Kathleen Zeitsoff, and carried, the minutes of the meeting held November 13, 2013 were approved as written.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The following announcements were made:
 - Jaime Sodusta announced that \$3,150 was raised by the Santa Barbara Sister Cities for the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. He thanked everyone for their generous contributions.
 - Takako Wakita announced her Sushi Class on January 18, 2014 from 10am to 3pm.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE
6. **REVIEW CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2014:** The following items were added to the calendar:
 - January 26, documentary film "Pictures from a Hiroshima Schoolyard" sponsored in part by the Toba Japan Sister City Committee at the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara. 3:00 – 5:30 pm.
7. **NETWORKING/GET TOGETHER WITH MEMBERS FROM ALL COMMITTEE BOARDS:** Barbara Ellis reported on the January 24, 2014 event to be held at the Santa Barbara Greek Orthodox Church. All sister city members are invited. This is the second get together; shared experiences with specific topics will be on the agenda. Please RSVP to Barbara no later than January 17, complementary drinks will be provided, please bring an appetizer to share.
8. **UNITED NATIONS DAY FINANCIAL REPORT** - Takako Wakita reported that a net gain of \$458.99 was made, Income totaled \$943.34, and Expenses totaled \$484.35. Takako thanked Jaime Sodusta and the San Juan group for the donation of table flower arrangements and George Lilly and the Kotor group for the coffee.
9. **SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL REPORT – Pat Fallin** – NONE

10. **2014 YOUNG ARTISTS & AUTHORS SHOWCASE** – Gil Garcia invited all sister cities to be part of this annual worldwide competition sponsored by Sister Cities International (SCI). This year’s theme is “Connect Globally, Thrive Locally”. This is a private/public competition for students from the ages of 13 to 18. The Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee has taken on this program for the last several years. They would like to expand the program to include all Santa Barbara Sister Cities and to reach-out to young authors. This is a competition and only one winning entry can be sent to SCI to compete against other sister city entries. Please contact Gil Garcia or Marti Correa de Garcia with your input and interest.
11. **OPEN WORLD PROGRAM** – Gil Garcia reported that as of this date the State Department has not funded this program.
12. **PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY TV CHANNEL 18** - Takako Wakita reported that Kotor has finished their programming and it aired on Channel 18 for several weeks. It can still be see on the City of Santa Barbara, Sister City web-page. The sister cities still waiting to be interviewed and filmed are: Weihai, San Juan, Patras, and Dingle.
13. **PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL 71** - Takako Wakita reported that host Peter Haslund has a 30-minute program on Channel 71 and would like to showcase the sister cities. More information to follow once Mr. Haslund reports back to Takako.

14. **REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:**

Patras, Greece: Georgia Gastouniotis reported that the committee is active and currently waiting for the formalization of a group in Patras. The sister city committee had a booth at the Greek Festival and took down names of people interested in joining. Plans for a Greek Independence event in March are in the works. The group has regular meetings, every other month.

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico: Blas Garza reported on the Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Committee’s activities, handing out a sheet with various pictures and information of past activities including: A visit to Puerto Vallarta with 60 local members in November; Participation in assisting with a Health Clinic in Boca de Tomatlan; A donation of \$5,000 toward new floor for Santa Barbara Rehabilitation Clinic in Puerto Vallarta; The support of I. Madonnari in Puerto Vallarta with five Santa Barbara artists participating; and The December “Las Posadas” party.

San Juan, Philippines: Jaime Sodusta reported on the recent Thanksgiving fundraiser by this Committee. He again thanked everyone for the \$3,150 donation made to the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. The money was donated to Direct Relief International to be used for the most needed victims of the Typhoon.

Dingle, Ireland: Missy Zeitsoff, Alternate, reported on the activities of the Dingle Sister City Committee. A successful dinner at the La Arcada Bistro was held on December 11th. The Committee continues to grow. Their main goal is to re-connect with Dingle this year. Michael Fitzgerald has put a genealogy focus, hoping to connect Irish ancestry and families. A St. Patrick's Day celebration is being planned for March.

Toba, Japan: Linda Mathews reported on the activities of this Committee. She mentioned the documentary film "Pictures from a Hiroshima Schoolyard", encouraging everyone to attend. The annual general meeting will be held on Sunday, February 9th from 5:00 – 7:30 pm at Chase Palm Park Recreation Center. Wade Nomura is the guest speaker and will talk about "The Japanese Garden". Recruitment for the summer school exchange will be taking place. This is a family-to-family exchange; students from the ages of 13, 14 and 15 are invited to participate. A chaperon will also be recruited.

Kotor, Montenegro: George Lilly reported on the activities of the Kotor Sister City Committee, handing out a tentative schedule of events for 2014. They include: February 11-14, Tiffany DeVries, Dean of the Music Academy of the West will hold auditions in Kotor for the Academy's Fellows Program in 2014; February 21 the annual fundraising dinner to be held at the Music Academy of the West; March 21-30 the Santa Barbara Water Polo Club will send a team to Kotor to train and compete with coaches in Montenegro; June 16-August 8 will hopefully host a young musician from Montenegro at the Fellows Program at the Music Academy of the West; and Expanding internship programs for graduates of the Culinary Academy.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marti Correa de Garcia, Secretary