

Annual Report
Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

The Santa Barbara Sister Cities board has just completed another successful year of projects with seven sister cities (listed with the year the relationship was established): Toba, Japan (1966), Puerto Vallarta, Mexico (1973); Weihai, China (1993); San Juan/Manila, Philippines (2000); Dingle, Ireland (2003); Kotor, Montenegro (2009); and Patras, Greece (2010). The Sister Cities Board consists of 10 members, three appointed by the City Council plus one representative from each sister city committee. Below is the report from the Board, followed by a list of activities from each sister city committee.

July 13-15, 2017

The SCI (Sister Cities International) Annual Conference was held in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Board member Pat Fallin (Representative of Dingle, Ireland) attended the conference representing the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board.

July 7, 2017

Anna Kwong became the new alternate of Weihai, China to the board.

July 20, 2017

The Annual Report for July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 was submitted to the Mayor and Council.

September 6, 2017

The board received a new sister city proposal, Mukarange, Rwanda, from Janet Reineck, founder and executive director of the World Dance for Humanity.

September 11, 2017

The 12th annual Santa Barbara 9-11 Peace Concert was held at the Faulkner Gallery of the central library. Performers included the Edelweiss Choir of Santa Barbara, Jackson Gillies, the winner of the Teen Star 2016 competition, and the Z Wilde's Fratelli - a men's chorus. There were about 150 attendees and the concert was a great success. Mayor Cathy Murillo and Barbara Gaughen-Muller of the local United Nations Association welcomed the attendees.

October 19, 2017

The 26th Annual Sister Cities Celebration in honor of United Nations Day was held at the Cabrillo Arts Pavilion. A four-person delegation from San Juan, Philippines, including the vice mayor, attended the celebration and strongly appealed to revitalize the sister city relationship between Santa Barbara and San Juan. There were over 160 attendees from all seven sister city committees and the entertainment was "Folk dances from Santa Barbara's Sister Cities" by the World Dance for Humanity. Mayor Cathy Murillo and Barbara Gaughen-Muller, Santa Barbara Chapter President, United Nations Association, and the vice mayor of San Juan were the honored guests and offered greetings.

February 1-26, 2018

An exhibit of SCI's Young Artists and Authors Showcase National Winners was presented at City Hall. A reception was held on the First Thursday (February 1) in the lobby of City Hall. The exhibit was organized by the Santa Barbara County Office of Arts and Culture.

March 1-June 30, 2018

Items given to Santa Barbara by our Sister Cities were exhibited in the City Hall main hallway.

March 7, 2018

At a regular board meeting, the board decided to not recommend to the City Council that Mukarange, Rwanda become a sister city of Santa Barbara because Mukarange does not meet our required criteria.

March 20, 2018

The San Juan committee's video was completed and posted on the city of Santa Barbara's website under Advisory Groups/Sister Cities/San Juan.

April 18, 2018

A local Young Artists and Authors Showcase competition and judging was held at Rusty's Pizza, 111 State Street. The artwork of the first prize winner was sent to SCI in Washington, D.C for the national competition.

April 7 - 22, 2018

Board member, Gil Garcia and his wife, Marti attended the SCI educational Cruise.

May 7, 2018

The board decided to become a member of the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce. The membership fee is to be divided among the seven committees and all the committee members will be members of the Chamber of Commerce.

May 11 - 19, 2018

The Sister Cities Board, with the Rotary Club Santa Barbara North, hosted an Open World Program and invited six young professionals from Ukraine. This year's theme was Child Welfare, including foster children and adoption. Gil Garcia was the local coordinator. On May 13, the board held a lunch meeting for the guests and the representatives from each committee who brought dishes from their sister city and made a presentation of their programs.

June 25, 2018

Whitney Rush was appointed to the Sister Cities Board by the City Council. Her term is July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Takako Wakita, Chair

Toba, Japan

After summer hiatus, the Toba student exchange went very well, with eight talented youngsters making long-term friendships. Each year the kids become more tech-savvy, able to use apps like Google Translate to improve their communication.

Our Board had the opportunity to assist a woman participating in the Dream Foundation who wished to be dressed in a Japanese kimono and taken out for a meal at a Japanese restaurant. Our member Takako Wakita was happy to assist in making the woman's dream a reality.

We joined in the 9/11 celebration and one of our members invited her choir, the German Edelweiss Choir, as one of the performing groups. Peter Haslund reminded us all that President Eisenhower started the Sister Cities program on this day in 1956.

World Dance for Humanity was a big hit at the United Nations Day dinner, as were the official delegation visiting from Manila. One of our former students, James Paden-Rubin, also presented a talk together with former Chaperone, Lety Pacheco, on the joys and adventures experienced in the Toba homestay.

Our Shinnenkai this January was a wonderful opportunity to hear about one of our former homestay father's spiritual journey, walking the 88-temple pilgrimage path on Shikoku island. Dean Nevin wore the pilgrim's garb and staff, and narrated a well-edited slide presentation, which was an appropriately serious and uplifting topic in the weeks just following our terrible fire and mudslide.

In March, we cooperated in getting the word out about another Japanese organization's cultural event, the Mochitsuki (Mochi-pounding) sponsored by the Japanese Club.

In April we participated in the Sister Cities International Youth Art Contest. Two of our Board members were art judges. The winning students' art was sent to Washington, D.C. for a one-year tour to Sister Cities all around the country.

Then again in May we encouraged our membership to participate in Bethany Congregational Church's Spring Matsuri (Festival). There were about 400 attendees, so it was a great success.

Also in May was the Open World program, supported by the State Department. Several of our members attended, to socialize with the visitors. This

year it was again a group of Ukrainians, involved in children's issues. They toured appropriate facilities and met with local authorities during their days here.

Our personal connections to Toba resulted in a private visit to Board members Mark and Sally Hamilton. Their visitor brought all of us favors--candy and costume pearls from the recently-concluded G-7 Summit held in neighboring Ise.

We have recently concluded our exchange student and chaperone search for this year's student exchange. It will be our 25th anniversary of the exchange, and we'll celebrate with a simultaneous Skype party in both Santa Barbara and Toba on August 10th.

Submitted by Linda Mathews, President

Kotor, Montenegro

Culinary –

In January 2018, ten students from Kotor's Institute for Children with Disabilities will attend a Saturday morning class for 10 weeks to learn the basic skills necessary for entry level employment in Montenegro Resorts and Restaurants.

At the end of this course, three or four of the students will be invited to the U.S.A. to intern at Divino Restaurante and attend class at Santa Barbara City College's Culinary School. Upon completion of this program they have been guaranteed employment in Montenegro Resorts or Restaurants.

Water Polo –

In June 2018, fourteen young Santa Barbara Water Polo Players and their Coaches will travel to Kotor to train and compete with some of the finest Coaches and youth teams in Montenegro.

Music –

In January 2018, auditions will be held in Kotor for positions at the Music Academy of the West's prestigious Fellows Program. If any of these musicians are chosen they will travel to Santa Barbara to participate in the Academy's eight-week program in July/August.

In February 2018, auditions will be held in Santa Barbara for positions in the Kotor Arts Festival Orchestra. If any of these musicians are chosen they will travel to Kotor in July/August to perform at the Kotor Arts Summer Festival.

Submitted by George Lilly, president

Dingle, Ireland

The Dingle Sister City Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month. Officers were elected at the February, 2018 meeting: President, Pat Fallin; Vice-President, Linda Mathews; Secretary, Marti Correa de Garcia; Treasurer, Tom McCool; Corresponding Secretary/Membership, Brian Slattery; and Public Relations, Mo McFadden; Directors are: Gil Garcia, Joe King and Tom Parker. We have spent the past year reorganizing the Committee, electing officers, re-writing the Bylaws and re-establishing our finances and paperwork with the California Finance Board and the IRS. Many thanks to Gil Garcia, Linda Mathews, and Pat Fallin for their help with the bylaws and a special thank you to Tom McCool for getting the finances in order and all of the paper work completed for the IRS and the California Finance Board. Brian Slattery has built and is maintaining the data base for the Committee which is a big job and we appreciate his work very much. Mo McFadden has done an excellent job of Public Relations and getting the Dingle Sister City committee a lot of positive press. Thank you to the entire Board of Directors for all of the hard work that you have put in to bring back the Dingle Sister City Committee. We are once again a functioning sister city committee with 40 paid members, monthly board meetings and a minimum of four general membership meetings per year.

The Dingle Sister Activities the past year:

- General Membership Meeting – July at Mulligan’s - 15 new members
- In December, we Joined with Kerry Irish Productions to present An Irish Christmas 2017 at The Granada Theater
- In March we presented a movie “The Irishman Who Saved the Mission” at Hillside House. This was a general membership meeting and we added 25 new members.
- In March we joined Willy and Trini Quinn at LaArcada Bistro for the closing night and presented Willy with a thank you certificate for his dedication to the Dingle Sister City Committee and for his work to keep the Irish program active in Santa Barbara.

- In April we met with the Irish Counsel General, Robert O'Driscoll and his wife for dinner and to discuss the Dingle Sister City Committee programs and ways we might collaborate with the Irish Consulate in San Francisco to promote Irish culture in SoCal.
- Planning was begun for a trip to Dingle in September, 2018. At this time there are 20+ people signed up and more who have expressed interest in participating. Thank you to Marti Correa de Garcia for her work in planning and promoting the trip.

Submitted by Pat Fallin, President

Patras, Greece

Below are the activities of the Patras Sister City Committee during the past year.

- Our membership has been busy throughout the year. We grew our membership due to our first visitation to Patras, Greece.
- We held executive board meetings three times a year.
- We held several general membership meetings at member's residence and various restaurants.
- Regular correspondence with our Sister City in Patras is shared at our general membership meetings.
- We advertised our Sister Cities via the Greek Festival in July.
- An update report goes into the Greek Orthodox bulletin six times per year.
- President Georgia Gastouniotis, and Alternate Bessie Condos attended the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board meetings.
- Several Santa Barbara-Patras Sister City members attended the September 11th, 9-11 concert.
- A group of 14 delegates from Santa Barbara traveled to Patras, Greece. The group were in Patras from September 19 to September 26, 2017.
- Members attended and baked delicious traditional Greek dishes for the October United Nations dinner on October 19.
- A donation was given for the Sister Cities International Young Artist Showcase.

- We participated in the membership of the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board to become members of the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce.
- On March 24, 2018 we celebrated Greek Independence at the Santa Barbara Winery Tasting Room. Over 80 people attended.
- Proceeds from the March 24th Greek Independence event went to the Karamandaneio Hospital in Patras, Greece.
- Several members participated in the Open World Ukrainian program, sharing our Greek culture and food at an open house.
- Continue to work on a SKYPE/Pen Pal exchange with Patras.

Submitted by Georgia Gastouniotis, President

San Juan, Philippines

In August 2017, a letter was sent by San Juan Mayor Guia Gomez to Santa Barbara mayor, Helene Schneider, about a planned Santa Barbara city exploration tour to be held in October 2017.

On October 19, the first four delegates from San Juan, led by vice mayor Janella Ejercito Estrada, point man Vincent Pacheco, staff Rowena Macalintal and head delegate councilor Leo Celles arrived in Santa Barbara. The group joined the FCA/San Juan sister city group at the annual sister city UN dinner in honor of United Nations.

On October 24, the same four-group delegates met with Mayor Helene Schneider and later with the Santa Barbara City Council in the Council Chambers where they attended the City Council meeting and where Vice Mayor Janella Ejercito Estrada delivered a speech. In the evening the other seven members arrived.

On October 25, the eleven members had a self-tour where they visited and had pictures taken at the Santa Barbara airport where the sister city map was displayed. They then visited the University of California Santa Barbara campus, had lunch at the waterfront grill at The Harbor, visited the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, had wine tasting at the Funk Zone and then visited the Santa Barbara courthouse. In the evening, the four-member delegation, led by the vice mayor, visited the FCA Building on State Street.

On October 26, the eleven member delegates met with the mayor and attended the joint council/planning commission work session, where again vice mayor Janella Ejercito Estrada delivered a speech and then was followed by a taco bar lunch at the Chase Palm Park Recreation Center hosted by Mayor Helene Schneider with the president of Santa Barbara City College, Dr. Anthony Beebe attending. The group then proceeded to Solvang for a tour of the Danish community.

On October 27, the San Juan delegates listened to an informational presentation where panel of speakers spoke on tourism, education, disaster preparedness, financial planning, public health. At the end was a screening of a sister city international video.

In the evening, the FCA President, Ms. Virgie Horstman, hosted a dinner at the FCA building for the delegates with Mayor Helene Schneider attending.

On October 28, the group attended a BBQ lunch hosted by the Carpinteria Masonic lodge. The group then went to the Santa Barbara Courthouse's Sunken Gardens to watch "The Thriller Santa Barbara." They ended the day with a visit to the Walnut lane's pumpkin patch.

On October 29, the group attended the 11:00 mass at The Mission, their presence of whom were acknowledged by the parish priest, Father Dan Lackie, the group then proceeded to The Presidio where they were given a tour. A highlight of the tour was a visit to the marker of the first Filipino, Antonio Miranda Ridriguez, to be buried in California on May 26, 1784.

On October 30, the group was given a comprehensive tour of Santa Barbara City College that lasted for four hours. The group then left for Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, the director of Polytechnic University of the Philippines has been in constant contact as late as last month, with the Santa Barbara City College but apparently because of the ISIS issue, they have limited their foreign student admission. Once the College open up admission, the program will resume.

The San Juan group attended the Filipino American Friendship day held at the Elks Lodge Santa Barbara in Goleta last June 23.

Meanwhile, our alternate Mr. Jaime Sodusta and his wife attended the Watah (literally dousing of water) festival of the city of San Juan held last June 24. It is the feast of St. John the Baptist, patron saint of San Juan--thus, the dousing of water

(literally) to the residents or visitors and even using the water hoses of the Fire Department.

The San Juan group is planning to send a delegation before October to study the Disaster Management program of Santa Barbara. Other field of interests include exchange in the Arts and Culture, and student and youth immersion.

Submitted by Albemar Dumlao, president

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

Below are the Puerto Vallarta's Sister City Committee's ongoing Monthly Activities:

- A Monthly Newsletter was sent by email to all members in good standing.
- A General Membership meeting was held each month at the Mesa Café, featuring guest speakers from Mayor Cathy Murillo to an organic tequila tasting presentation as well as talks from members on their trips and/or the state of affairs in Mexico.

July/August

- Fundraising through Fiesta Food Booths

September 2017

- A group of 16 Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta members supported Patras Sister City and toured Greece – it was a wonderful trip!!

October 2017

- Celebrated Dia de Los Muertos at the Rockwood Women's Club

November 2017

- Board Members re-elected to same positions
- Annual Trip to Puerto Vallarta November 28 – December 9, 2017
 - Visited many of our sponsored and supported charities; Los Volcanes Sewing School, Boca de Tomatlan Clinic, Santa Barbara Rehabilitation Clinic – our original project. All of these projects are done with support of Santa Barbara North Rotary and the Puerto Vallarta Rotary Club and individual members.

- Participated in a procession for the birthday of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the famous church with a crown, a nine-day event.
- The Law Enforcement Exchange did not take place this year due to staff shortages in Santa Barbara. It was Re-scheduled for early 2018.

December 2017

- Annual Posada postponed due to Thomas Fire evacuations.

January 2018

- Retained same board officers for two-year period, members serve for two terms and half of the board is cycled through every year for re-election

March 2018

- Discussion begun on replacing the memorial plaque for the Puerto Vallarta dolphin fountain that washed away during a storm several years ago.

April 2018

- Fundraising raffle for a trip to Puerto Vallarta including airfare, hotel accommodations and many meals. Tickets are \$100 and raffle runs from May through October 2018.

May 2018

- I Madonnari Festival – Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta supports the festival as a major donor and pays the cost of an artist of the I Madonnari Festival in Puerto Vallarta, to participate in our local event.

June 2018

- Annual visit to Santa Barbara for Puerto Vallarta Club Members – June 12 – 19. This year only five members were able to attend. Mexico is suffering a period of an extremely high rate of inflation on the peso.

Submitted by Margaret Saavedra, president

Weihai, China

During the 2017-18 year, the Weihai Sister City Committee continued to support our core mission with a focus on educational, cultural, and economic exchanges. We have been pleased with the success of our progress thus far and are eager to continue

our efforts going forward.

With the new officers and directors appointed on April 8th, 2017, the Weihai Sister City Committee organized two events as follows:

1. November 3, 2017 - Chinese Consuls Ren Zhifang and Wu Yibo served as Antioch University's special guests for a lecture titled "The Future of United States-China Relationships" held at Antioch University Santa Barbara on November 3. The event was jointly hosted by the Weihai Sister City Committee and the MBA Program of Antioch University, Santa Barbara. The lecture delivered insight into the size and scope of the economic partnership, exploring how each person can be an influential member of a global economy.

Dr. Peter Haslund and Dr. Benjamin Cohen, Professor of Economics at University of California Santa Barbara, joined Consuls Ren and Wu for a panel on trade, investment, and economic partnerships.

The lecture also examined the concept of Sister Cities, where they discussed the belief that ordinary people on different sides of the world are capable of cooperation. About 80 guests and students attended.

2. February 23, 2018 – Members, friends, and guests of the Weihai Sister City Committee attended a dinner banquet at the China Palace, Montecito to celebrate the Year of the Dog Lunar New Year. About 45 members and guests participated.

Upcoming events in our plan:

1. The Weihai Sister City Committee is currently planning a prospective trip to Weihai, China for business and educational purposes. We expect to work with the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce in order to make this trip successful.
2. Our Weihai Sister City Committee is planning to host a trip to Chinatown, Los Angeles with the purpose of increasing awareness and knowledge of Chinese business culture and dining etiquette.

One of our organizations goals, for the coming year, is to revitalize our membership.

Our Board of Directors will continue to convene on a regular basis in order to plan and pursue the activities mentioned above.

Submitted by Anna Kwong, president

