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ASCI Newsletter January 2020

Promoting International Partnerships

ASCI Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 12, 2020 – 3:00 – 5:00 pm
YMI Cultural Center

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on the web and on Facebook!
<http://ashevillesistercities.org>*

Mission Statement: Asheville Sister Cities, Inc. promotes peace, understanding, cooperation and sustainable partnerships through formalized agreements between International cities and the City of Asheville, North Carolina. Website: www.ashevillesistercities.org

Message from the President

by Karon Korp



A Fond Farewell

What a joy and honor it has been to serve as your President these past three years. So much has been accomplished, and wonderful things are on the horizon for 2020! All of this has been possible through the generosity of time, talents and resources on the part of our Board, Committee Chairs and members, community partners, schools, organizations, support from the City of Asheville, and of course, our dedicated sister city partners around the world. Together we ARE changing the world, making it a little better for our children and future generations, and we will continue that mission.

I've had the pleasure of welcoming delegations and guests, Mayors and municipal representatives from six of our sister cities, and traveled to two. Being in Valladolid for the completion of the Wheelchair Project in January of 2018 was certainly a highlight, as was accepting the Best Overall Program Award from SCI President Roger-Mark De Souza at the convention in Houston last July. We added the twin cities of Dunkeld and Birnam, Scotland during my tenure, and that relationship is blossoming beautifully.

This past fall, we secured our new office space and HQ in the United Way building downtown, created a new brochure for ASCI thanks to Kudzu Brands, and sought your ideas and suggestions with our Member Survey (don't forget to send them back!).

After more than thirty years, Asheville Sister Cities is a vibrant, growing organization! With student exchanges and internships, art and photography exhibits, cultural presentations and workshops, performances and programs, and ongoing special events celebrating our sister cities, there's no limit to what we can do!

Join me in welcoming our next President, Ken Nelson, to the board. And when you see Past President Andrew Craig, be sure and thank him for serving this next year with Ken as Vice President. We hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on January 12th, where we will celebrate together the power of our collective efforts.

Hand in hand, and heart to heart... "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." Here's to believing in dreams....

Things to look forward to in 2020:

- Early 2020 – Osogbo event in Asheville
- February 04-09 – outgoing Valladolid delegation
- February 06-19 – high school students from Saumur (France) in Asheville
- Children's art show from all our sister cities
- April 2020 – Karpenisi delegation from Asheville (contact Dr Sophie Mills – see article this issue)
- May 24-30 – outgoing San Cristóbal de las Casas delegation

Welcome ASCI's new president, Ken Nelson!

I am both honored and excited to be selected as the next president of Asheville Sister Cities. My wife Julie Hettiger and I moved to Asheville in 2015 and were introduced to ASCI thru the several committee fund raisers held at Metro Wines. After visiting Saumur as part of the 2017 trip delegation, we have become active members of both the Saumur and Kapenisi Committees and are looking forward to travelling to Greece next year.

Professionally I am the founder and co-owner of Blue Delta Energy, a firm focused on renewable energy finance that works with clients on funding their various sustainability projects. While our business is headquartered in New Haven, Connecticut we have a significant presence here in this region with clients in Virginia, Georgia and both Carolinas.

In addition to having lived in the multi-cultural cities of Houston and San Diego and having studied in Madrid is part of my MBA, I have spent a fair amount of traveling through the Spanish speaking regions of the world and am hoping to find the time (someday) to achieve real fluency in my Spanish. However, as Jerry (aka the editor) can attest from my participation in the French classes he taught prior to the 2017 trip to Saumur, my French language skills are at best "rudimentary". And let's not even mention Greek or Russian (or Scottish, though I will admit that I have eaten haggis on a trip to Scotland in my teens!)

While I recognize that I have much to learn about several of the committees, I am thrilled to have the support and encouragement of the board and am especially glad to have Andrew Craig agree to serve as vice president. Coupled with Karon's commitment to working to bring me up to speed and insure a smooth transition, I am confident that we can continue our organization's many successful programs as well as build towards an even brighter future.



¡Hasta la próxima vez!

ASCI Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 12, 2020 – 3:00 – 5:00 pm

YMI Cultural Center
39 Market Street, Asheville, NC

Refreshments & Hors d'oeuvres / Door prizes

Parking available at Diana Wortham Theatre and Aloft Garages

My summer in Saumur, by our ASCI French intern

My name is Diana Casillas, I'm a student at UNC-Asheville graduating in May 2020. I'm a double major in International Studies and French. This past summer, from June to early August I was able to intern at *le Château de Saumur* in Saumur, France. This internship was a life-changing experience for me: I was able to work in a castle-museum in France, who gets to do that? Definitely not a lot of Americans, considering how stringent France is on internships and work opportunities for foreigners. In Saumur, I was able to experience the French working culture, something that is pertinent to what I intend to do after I graduate. I hope to work in France as a teaching assistant after I graduate, and this experience definitely prepared the groundwork for what I can expect. As a student learning French, this experience immersed me in the French language and helped me improve my language skills. I could hold conversations with all of my lovely co-workers. We exchanged stories and learned from each other. I enjoyed sharing my experience as an American and they were more than happy to share their knowledge with me as well.

My internship in Saumur, France at the *Château de Saumur* was a very rewarding experience. I certainly hope that others will have the opportunity to work in Saumur as well. I think it's important to maintain international relationships and I think that any work put into these international relationships is for the best. Experiencing culture outside of our own is a learning experience that connects us more, even if we're thousands of miles away and speak different languages, we're still human and we all have something to learn from one another.

Afterthought: The ASCI Board was very pleased that Diana was able to share with them some of her experiences. Her reporting was fascinating, and her photos were excellent. In addition, she was able to assist with an equestrian-related photo contest in which an American had entered some great photos.



News from Osogbo

The Osogbo Committee will be traveling to Nigeria for the Oshun Festival in 2020 with full support of Osogbo Sister Cities. Among committee plans is a fundraiser in March 2020.

Please join us in the Osogbo Committee Meetings every first Monday at United Way to strategize for an awesome 2020 to develop and create events, as well as programs, to elevate the quality of life for Osogbo, Nigeria in the name of global awareness and peace. *Eboné Graham, chair*

Eboné (left) with Valeria Watson, creator of the Osogbo Committee

News from the Karpenisi committee

The Karpenisi committee is delighted to invite applications for its 2020 delegation to Karpenisi from May 20th-29th.

Highlights of our itinerary are as follows:-

May 21: Depart Athens. Tour of southeastern Greece –the archaeological site of **Thebes** is included. Overnight at a hotel in a picturesque location.

May 22: Thermopylae - Mount Oeta and mediaeval sites tour – Arrive at Karpenisi. Overnight at Elvetia Hotel.

May 23-26 staying in Karpenisi at the Elvetia Hotel visiting the beautiful Proussos Monastery (pictured below) and local villages, the ancestral homes of some of our Greek community in Asheville.

May 26: Departing Karpenisi and touring southwestern Greece, including the archaeological site of Thermon. Overnight at a hotel in a beach town in the broader area of Delphi.

May 27: visit to the oracle at Delphi, and return to Athens with a tour of the historic district in central Athens.

May 28: Athens: museums and shopping/dining.

May 29: The delegation members will be transferred to the airport of Athens for their return flights to the U.S.

Costs

Each traveler is personally responsible for arranging passage to Athens.

The cost of the trip is 710 Euros pp. based on double occupancy. A surcharge will be added for single room arrangements.

Three-star hotel accommodations are provided throughout the trip. Breakfast is included in the cost. Also included in the cost is in-country travel, with comprehensive daily sightseeing per

itinerary, by private motor coach with qualified driver and English-speaking, licensed guide/escort.

Costs not included: lunches, dinners, drinks, and snacks; entrance fees at all sightseeing sites as per itinerary; tipping at hotels and restaurants, and for drivers and guides.

Deadline for initial applications with a **\$300** deposit is January 29th, 2020

For more information, please email Dr. Sophie Mills (smills@unca.edu) or telephone 828-251-6296 after January 8th.



VALLADOLID SCHOOL FAN PROJECT IS COMPLETED!

Our thanks to all who donated and sponsored a school ceiling fan for 8 schools in Valladolid.



We were able to raise our number of fans donated to 60 because of your generosity. A delegation from Asheville will be traveling there to celebrate on Feb 4th -9th. The group will include a representative from Bee City, a local radio station, educators and several Rotarians from the Asheville Breakfast Rotary Club – who also assisted with a significant sponsorship of the fans. Thanks to Dana Irwin for our hand-held fans design, to Cam McQueen, of Block off Biltmore, for sponsoring a fan and supporting the project, to Ay Caramba Grill for our tasty event there and to all of you who made this a successful project. GRACIAS!

News from San Cristóbal de las Casas

Our Committee met recently to review possible activities for 2020 and make plans to move forward. Joining our committee is Danielle Burke, a textile/fiber graduate who has offered to take on leadership of the Maya Weaving project portion that will include workshops in backstrap weaving, Maya embroidery, and some dyeing – all taught by Maya weavers in and around San Cristobal. This delegation trip is proposed for May of 2020. Danielle has offered a pre-trip weaving class to educate those who might want to go, but are not weavers, so that they can participate in the workshops in Chiapas. We are looking forward to expanding the group to include other arts and counterpart connections as well. Details coming soon.

We are also spearheading a new Children's Art Show, and will be developing guidelines, a theme and flyer to go out to all our Sister City Committees to send art here for a full 6 months of shows and receptions, finishing with a sale of all works at our ASCI Fall Event – Global Glitz. Funds raised will be returned to each school. With so many outgoing delegations, we are able to bring art back (without shipping issues) by the end of May or early June.

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 9th at 6pm and notices will be sent with details. If you have questions or would like to be more involved, please contact Gwen Hughes – gwengh@charter.net

News from Saumur



1. Promoting the Wines of Saumur

Look for this special logo at participating restaurants and wine shops around Asheville in the new year! Please help support those businesses who support our Sister City of Saumur! A list of those locations will be available online in 2020.

2. Un Dîner Français

What an amazing evening put together by the Saumur Committee of ASCI! Eliada

graciously provided the venue for the evening on their beautiful campus on November 3, 2019. Despite the dark of night arriving early with the time change, attendees were welcomed with warm apple cider and a blazing fire! Charcuterie and canapés trays were passed by UNCA student volunteers from the French program. With the second course guests were welcomed and asked to take their seats at tables adorned with French-themed decor. Some words were spoken by Saumur Chair, Jessica Coffield and ASCI President, Karon Korp.

The third and main course for the evening was a special treat of Ratatouille and rice or Coq au vin and potatoes served by UNCA student volunteers. Special guest, Monica Stevenson (at right), made an appearance and was presented with an award for winning best Sister Cities photo from her photography work shown in this summer's photo exhibition in Saumur, France.

Over the cheese course, Stephanie Hellert of the Franklin School of Innovation, elaborated on the exciting partnership with ASCI to bring high school students from Saumur in February and send students from Asheville to Saumur in April with the goal of a truly



immersive experience! We also had Diana Casillas, ASCI's summer intern in Saumur, give a report on her experience in France and help shed some light on why the internship is such an important program to continue.

The evening closed with the dessert buffet. It was piled high with macarons, chocolate torte, assorted cookies, apple tart, and madeleines, but only momentarily as guest indulged in the fresh baked goodness along with a cup of café or thé.



"This was one of the more exciting events I've attended with ASCI and I'm thankful to have been a part of it and to be able to see the impact that this committee is making in the lives of students. We are so thrilled to welcome the group of 29 high school students to Asheville in February and hope that we will have the full support of ASCI and the city of Asheville in doing so," said Committee Chair, Jessica Coffield.

Metro Wines was hugely helpful with lending of glasses and providing excellent French wines! Thank you to Bouchon's Rendezvous for help with the delicious Coq au vin and mashed potatoes. A HUGE thank you to Ivory Road Cafe & Kitchen and Old Europe for donating some of the desserts! And many thanks to Hickory Nut Gap for donating an assortment of charcuterie!

This could not have been pulled off without the help of Barbara and Phil Sheppard (at left), Kelly Biers and Jeff Johnson, Allison and Jeff Weems, Julie Hettiger and Ken Nelson, Susan Roderick, Stefan Stackhouse, Gail Jolley, Andrew and Jackie Craig, Jessica and Ryan Coffield, Johnny and Lynne Hope. Thank you all! And a big thank you to all those who attended and donated.



3. Saumur holiday party

The Saumur holiday celebration on December 16th at RendezVous. 16 committee members showed up to celebrate the wonderful year of programming and fundraising brought to Asheville by the Saumur committee. Those who chose to, participated in a gift exchange of global themed gifts and French wine was flowing from the wonderful selections that RendezVous (Bouchon's second location) has to offer.

OUR 2019 CORPORATE MEMBERS

Earthart Network, Kudzu Brands, Purplecat Networks

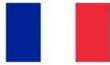
President -- Ken Nelson	kennelson7(at)aol.com
Vice President – Andrew Craig	kurmugon(at)bellsouth.net
Secretary – Alice Keller	gakeller(at)gakeller.com
Treasurer – Jackie Craig	appcraft(at)bellsouth.net

ASCI COMMITTEE CONTACTS

ASCI Board Meeting	3 rd Thursday of each month – 6:00 pm <i>United Way Office Conference Room, 50 S. French Broad Ave</i>
Dunkeld&Birnam Committee	time and date TBA – Contact Committee Chair <i>Rick Lutovsky – rlutovsky (at) gmail.com</i>
San Cristóbal Committee	2 nd Thursday, 5:30 pm <i>Gwen Hughes – gwengh (at) charter.net</i>
Saumur Committee	4 th Monday of each month – 5:30pm <i>Jessica Coffield – jeallen8 (at) gmail.com</i>
Karpenisi Committee	1 st Monday of the month (Nov 04 at 6pm, Metro Wines) <i>Sophie Mills – smills (at) unca.edu</i>
Valladolid Committee	4 th Wednesday of the month – 6:00pm <i>Janell Cooper – janellcooper7 (at) gmail.com</i>
Osogbo Committee	1 st Monday of the month (contact Chair for time and venue) <i>Eboné Graham – ebone.graham9 (at) gmail.com</i>
Vladikavkaz Committee	Time and Date TBA – Contact Committee Chair <i>Constance Richards – schtanzi (at) aol.com</i>
Global Outlook Committee	<i>Jay Harris – jayharrisglobal (at) gmail.com</i>



USA



France



Greece



Mexico



Nigeria



Russia



Scotland

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Parting shot

