

ASHEVILLE SISTER CITIES INCORPORATED



Building Global Connections

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ASCI Newsletter July 2015

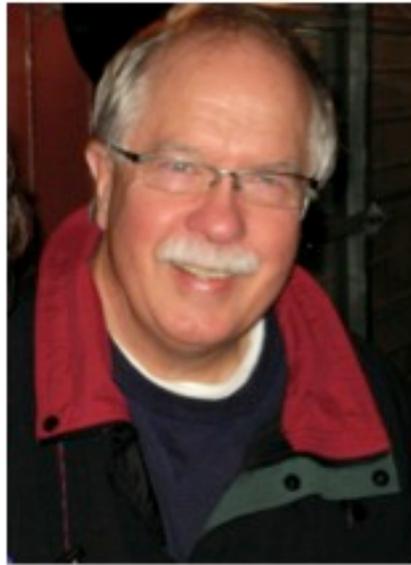
Promoting International Partnerships

Message from the President: From where I sit

By Andrew Craig

June, July, August and September are exciting months for ASCI!

Our **Valladolid Committee** has just returned from a successful delegation visit to the city, which included in part the delivery of school supplies. The **San Cristóbal de Las Casas** delegation is preparing for their visit August 4-11. Eleven delegates are going, including two 14-year-old students. It is never too young to begin to appreciate foreign relations. **Bastille Day**, a celebration at Metro Wines, planned to the nines by our Saumur Committee will be July 12, 3-5pm. In September, Sunday the 13th, 2-5pm, we are going to celebrate **Asheville Sister Cities!** We will gather at LaFontaine Vinyard for food, entertainment, and, of course, wine. *We are mourning the demise of our long-serving, hard-working refrigerator.* If you have a fridge in good working order that you can donate, we would certainly be very appreciative, and can offer you a tax deduction. Thank you for your support!



Follow ASCI activities on the web!
<http://ashevillesistercities.org>

Like us on Facebook - keep up with ASCI news.

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

Asheville Sister Cities Saumur Committee

INVITES YOU TO

Bastille Day Celebration



AT METRO WINES

169 CHARLOTTE STREET

SUNDAY  **3:00 TO**
JULY 12TH **5:00 PM**

ADMISSION: \$10 AT THE DOOR

FEATURING

Live entertainment

Silent auction

Food tasting

Mini open-air market featuring
local artisans and producers

PLUS

Crêpe stand from Bouchon

SPONSORED BY



All proceeds will benefit the ASCI Saumur Committee
For more information, visit www.ashevillesistercities.org

Area college students intern in Valladolid, Mexico

By Kelly McEnany

For our second year, area students traveled for an internship program to our Sister City of Valladolid, Mexico for two weeks in May. One student is a recent graduate of the first class of the Brewing,



Distillation, and Fermentation (BDF) program at A-B Tech. Anthony interned at a blue agave distillery called Mayapan. The company recently won an award for the best mescal or tequila in Mexico, beating out the bigger distilleries. Anthony was able to apply technical skills from his A-B Tech education to the distillery process at Mayapan. The first day of his internship, they handed him an axe and he was asked to chop the plants out in the hot sun, preparing the process for making tequila/mescal. That night he covered his blisters with Band-Aids, smiled from the hard work, and headed back the next morning. He worked in all parts of the factory, from farm to the tasting room for tourists, to the retail shop. He was able to follow the process from the farm to the final product of a distilled spirit. In reflecting on the experience he writes, “I have been so impressed by how friendly everyone I have met has been and will sorely miss the welcoming Yucatan attitude. I initially feared that the language barrier would be a significant problem but everyone has taken their time and given me a chance to understand what is going on. It is hard to

even begin to process how much has happened in so little time. I have seen a wonder of the world, met dozens of new friends, and come to love a city in faraway place that I hope to see again soon.”

Anthony is now preparing a business plan for the distillery to create a local beer, what they call “artisanal beer”. He will help get that in place so that next summer the BDF students who participate can create a batch of a new local beer at Mayapan.

Maria is in her final year as a Management student at UNC-Asheville. She interned with Casa de Los Venados to further the inventory project of their amazing folk art collection. She worked closely with the staff at CDLV, as well as meeting with the teachers and students from the local area that came to tour the collection. As Project Manager, she solved technical problems, communicated in Spanish and English, and immersed herself in the folk art of Mexico. She writes of the experience, “While working at Casa de los Venados, I remembered many art history terms applied to the art I learned in my college course. I became more interested in learning about arte popular... Valladolid is extremely beautiful!...the strong Mayan culture, the folklore dances with the women in *ternos*, and the delicious *papazules* are a few of the great things that belong to the Vallisoletanos.”



We are very impressed with all of our students, and their eagerness to explore the world.

Preparations under way for the San Cristóbal de las Casas delegation!

by Greg Clemons, chair

The date is almost here for the yearly trip of the **San Cristóbal de las Casas** committee of Asheville Sister Cities! Our group of 11 departs on Tuesday August 4 for one week in our Mexican Sister City, San Cristóbal de las Casas in Mexico's southern state of Chiapas! Our group is comprised of local, Asheville professionals from public health, architecture, public service/local government, and K-12 and higher education. Our group will be connecting with our counterparts in San Cristóbal to forge stronger relationships for future visits both there and here. We are very excited to be able to re-establish our official Sister Cities connection with the San Cristóbal mayor and to reconnect with our friends on the ground there. In addition to our official work, we will be finding time to relax and explore our historic, colonial sister city and surrounding areas such as the cultural center Na Bolom and the two indigenous municipalities of San Juan Chamula and Zinacantan! Our committee looks forward to sharing with you the details (and pictures!) of our trip when we return on August 11! The next meeting of our Asheville Sister Cities committee is Thursday July 9 at 6pm at 33 Page, downtown Asheville, across from Sante Wine Bar. Contact Dr. Greg Clemons, Chair, San Cristóbal de las Casas committee of Asheville Sister Cities. Come hear about the details of this exciting trip! ¡Te esperamos!

ASCI'S NEWLY-FORMED GIVING SOCIETY

On behalf of the Board of Directors of ASCI, we are pleased to announce the Founding Members of the newly-formed giving society. We are delighted that 25 members of ASCI have generously made their pledge to support this group in our efforts to develop funds for scholarships for students and deserving adults, as well as special programs designed to educate our community about Asheville Sister Cities and our many wonderful projects.

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW FOUNDING MEMBERS as of 6/20/15

Jackie and Andrew Craig	Karon Korp and Russ Martin	Alice and George Keller
Bunny and Ned Cabaniss	Janna and Rick Lutovsky	Nancy and Charlie Worley
Margaret and Bill Mull	Gwen and Carroll Hughes	Marjorie McGuirk
Barbara Etsell	Paige Hansen	Sybil Argintar and Gary Boyer
Sarah and Benoit Delcourt	Allison and Jeff Weems	

These **Founding Members** will be gathering to celebrate and to further develop guidelines for this group as well as choosing a meaningful name. This event will take place on Tuesday evening, July 28th. An official invitation will be sent to each person who has joined the group as of July 15th. This guiding group will listed as the **Founding Members** for this society in all published materials for use by the society.

If you, as an ASCI member, would like to be a part of this important group of dedicated supporters of the work of our organization, please go the website and print out a form, fill it out and mail to the ASCI address with your check before July 15th. This will ensure that you can be listed as a founding member and attend the meeting to help make the decisions to help grow this group.

Many thanks to you all. Andrew Craig and Gwen Hughes

FEATURE ARTICLE

Asheville mayors and welcoming sister cities over the years

Second in the series

By Ken Richards

With a stroke of a pen in 1990 Asheville Mayor Ken Michalove and the Mayor of Vladikavkaz, a city located in the Caucasus Mountains of Russia, brought our two cities together. At that point Asheville Sister Cities Inc. had been chartered by the global Sister Cities International and became the international arm of our Western North Carolina metropolis. Heading up the citizens committee of Asheville was Kitty Boniske and the charter members of what has become known as Asheville Sister Cities, Inc.

Asheville Mayor, Ken Michalove 1989-1993...Vladikavkaz, North Osettia, Russia



The agreement is always between mayors with city council support. This in fact sets the scene for those in their city to put into action Citizen Diplomacy. The city supports the program in many ways. One of which is to provide meeting space for the citizens to form the local Sister Cities council. During delegation visits the flag of the guest country is flown at the respective city halls. The mayor, or delegate, serves as Honorary Chair of ASCI. The president of the United States is the honorary chair for the mother hoist of Sister Cities International. That exchange has become legendary with several citizens of Vladikavkaz eventually moving to Asheville. Artist exchanges have occurred and a student art display from that Sister City was conducted in Asheville. Funds raised from this program have been returned to our sister city to replenish art supplies for the involved schools. Most dramatically in the publication of the SCI, “Fifty Years of Sister Cities”, Asheville was noted for their serving as the conduit for the entire USA collecting funds to support the survivors of the terrorist tragedy where more than 300 students and teachers were murdered at the Beslan School located in the Vladikavkaz region. Current chair of the



committee, Constance Richards and her husband (now deceased), Vadim Bora are pictured in the article. ASCI was also recognized in the same publication for establishing what proved to be an interesting blend of cultures when the short-lived Sister City united Asheville with Karasol in the former Soviet Union. Asheville member, Ned Cabiness is pictured receiving the award for our city.

Mayor of Asheville, Russ Martin 1993-1997...Saumur, France

Early members of ASCI Dennis and Barbara Hodgson formed a local committee in leading the way to connect with a Sister City in France. Their explorations carried them to the Loire Valley to the city of Saumur. Mayor Jean-Paul Hugot of Saumur reciprocated with a visit to Asheville. Thus the second Sister City joined hands when Mayor Russ Martin signed the documents with Mayor Jean-Paul Hugot.

Eventually Russ Martin served as president of ASCI. He has visited Asheville's sister cities in France and in Mexico. He and his wife Karon Korp continue active leadership in ASCI. Since then the exchanges between Asheville and Saumur have been numerous. One such exchange provided the opportunity for young athletes, and their parents, to meet in sports events in Saumur. Another exchange of note was a two-week visitation by students of the Saumur culinary school turning the host hotel, Holiday Inn Sunspree, (current site of Crown Plaza Hotel), into French dining for all of Asheville and the hotels clients. This occurred two years in succession. Bastille Day is celebrated in Asheville along with the French club in the area and other Francophiles. ASCI shares the Saumur experience with Asheville Rotary. Current co-chairs of the Saumur committee are Jerry Plotkin and Allison Weems.

Asheville Mayor, Leni Sitnick 1997-2001, San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Mexico

Mayor Sitnick welcomed our third sister city, located in the deep south of Mexico. Partnering in this program over the years have been Warren Wilson College, Asheville Rotary and

continuously, Mars Hill University. Gwen and Carroll Hughes were instrumental in developing exchange programs. Weavers of the Mayan community have participated in the Folk Art Center Handcraft programs at the U.S. Cellular Center. They have also promoted programs to provide water systems to aid those in San Cristóbal with clean and available water. Another important program was working with hospital staffs in the training of midwives. Customs of the people of that region have been shared with displaying student art work in Asheville; continuous delegate exchanges; programs at 33 Page, ASCI, meeting space; and working with their fellow Mexican committee brought a stage production to Asheville, local colleges and universities and eventually to Broadway. Retired and now deceased National Geographic long-time Mayan expert, George Stewart, who retired to Dillingham, NC, led expeditions of delegates to Mayan ruins in Mexico and was featured speaker at ASCI hosted events at A-B Tech. Current chair is Dr. Greg Clemons.



Asheville Mayor Charlie Worley, 2001-2005, Valladolid, Mexico

During his administration Mayor Charlie Worley signed the sister city agreement with a second city in Mexico, Valladolid. Prior to that Mayor Worley and his wife Nancy traveled with the Saumur delegation to France and established a close friendship with families in that area. Their families have joined in deep friendship, as have many of those in the various delegations, to the point of seeing their world neighbor as part of their family. Shortly after departing his Mayoral chair, Charlie assumed leadership of ASCI as president. Former Asheville school psychologist Tom Jones and his wife Cathy established residence in Valladolid. Through his efforts in organizing committees in both cities the relationship was formalized. Today traffic is heavy between our two cities as delegations flow continuously. A-B tech

has established a sister program with a college of their counterpart in that Mexican city. Karon Korp is current chair of the committee.

Asheville Mayor, Terry Bellamy, 2005-2013, shown here with friend Andie McDowell (yes, that Andie McDowell)... Osogbo, Nigeria and Karpenisi, Greece



Artist Valeria Watson-Doost brought with her to Asheville her orientation as a priestess in Osogbo, Nigeria. Through her dynamic efforts she organized a committee and delegation to head into that far corner of the world to share cultures. ASCI received two delegations and sent one in return. During the first delegation to Asheville a pediatrician was able to spend several months shadowing his counterparts at Mission Hospital. His wife was in the fish industry and shared experiences at Western North Carolina's Sunburst Trout Farm. Valeria obtained funds to develop a much-needed water system the Osogbo region. Likewise, she obtained a grant with other Sister Cities to establish programs in China. Current committee chair is Brit Casteñeda. Mayor Bellamy inked her pen so as to sign sister-city partnerships with Osogbo, Nigeria and with Karpenisi, Greece. While having coffee at the former Eckard Drug Store fountain, now Rite-Aid, George Kaltsunis and Dennis Hodgson discussed the enrichment offered the citizens of Asheville to learn more about our Greek community. Thus, they formed a committee that has taken us beyond the Palm Sunday and Mother's Day luncheons and the fall Greek festival to visit the homeland of many who form the Asheville community. Delegations have visited both areas with one joining ASCI as we hosted the second World Congress of Asheville Sister Cities. As then ASCI president, Dick Hall, stated, "The World Came to Asheville."...a true example of Citizen Diplomacy. Sophia Ungert is Chair of the Karpenisi Committee.



On the horizon our current Mayor Manheimer will have the opportunity to sign the newest Sister City into the fold which will be from Scotland. ASCI members Rick Lutovsky and Dr. Doug Orr have been pursuing this connection with Fiona Richie.

Mayor Esther Manheimer, 2013-current

FROM THE SAUMUR COMMITTEE

The Saumur Committee's itinerant member, John Sweet, has during his travels to France visited with the Mayor of Saumur and members of the Mayor's office, indicating our interest in warming up relations with our French sister city. Now that the economy has improved, there is new interest in sending an ASCI delegation – and receiving a delegation.

June Valladolid Delegation A Tremendous Success!

By any measure, this most recent delegation to Valladolid was the most productive to date! We must recognize and honor the hard work of the committee in Valladolid, led by Evelin Avila and Ivan de Leon, who many of you met last fall here in Asheville. What a program they put together for our delegates! We visited 7 schools:

The group welcome reception

Primaria Carlos Novelo Fernandez, Siglo XXI, Escuela Secundaria Tecnica Agropecuaria, Primaria de Dzitnup, Telesecundaria de Dzitnup, Escuela Secundaria Nocturna “Ramon Osorio-Osorio” (LEAF connection), and Preescolar Demetrio Rivero Triay. Thanks to generous donations, and the work of committee members Lisa Marie Quinlan and Emily Quinlan, we had large bags full of donated school supplies to gift each school.



Students perform at Carlos Novelo Fernandez

Karon Korp, Lisa Marie Quinlan and Russ Martin atop the great pyramid at Ek Balam



Committee member Gabriela Aragonaz donated a laptop computer, which was presented to Valladolid Committee Chair Evelin Avila for use at her school. The interaction between the schools and the four teachers from Ira B. Jones was AMAZING!

Thanks to Laura Beeler, Claudia Yokum, Camille Cushman and Shay Winkeljohn, we see great opportunity in expanding our school connections and Pen Pal letter program.

At Carlos Novelo Primaria

We enjoyed a warm welcome at lunch hosted by Casa de los Venados and John and Dorianne Venator, swam at cenote Selva Maya, toured Chichen Itza and marveled at the evening sound and light extravaganza, spread the word about the sister city program through an interview on radio station

“Candela 92.7” with host and committee member Andres Martinez.

We enjoyed Mayapan agave at the Distillery, toured the honey cooperative and manufacturing facility with Erika Beutelspacher, climbed the pyramid and ruins at Ek Balam, feasted on a wonderful breakfast hosted by Denis Larsen at Casa Hamaca, visited the mayan village of Villa Guadalupe and thanks to Homero Novelo Burgos, had a most memorable adventure in the jungle visiting an underground cavern.



We also had the honor of meeting the new Mayor Elect of Valladolid, Alcadesa Alpha Alejandra Escalante Tavera, who graciously welcomed us. We presented a letter of congratulation from Mayor Esther Manheimer, and a lovely gift from Appalachian Crafts.

At Dzitnup Secundaria

Our visit was beyond memorable. Lasting friendships were formed. Exciting new connections were made. Incredible food was

devoured. There were, of course, a few margaritas and cervezas consumed. There is nothing like a sister city delegation to truly represent the BEST of the sister city program, and all that is possible.

We wish to thank all our delegation members for their INCREDIBLE participation in this journey! In addition to our teachers, myself, Kay Manley, Russ Martin, Nevada Munro, Jacquie Nightingale, Lisa Marie Quinlan and Judy Warner made this an unforgettable experience.



Group photo at Selva Maya

One UNC-A student's thoughts on her visit to Valladolid

By Abigail Billman

I am a recent graduate of UNC Asheville who was fortunate enough to be introduced to Asheville Sister Cities last summer. As a Spanish major (with teaching licensure) I am well aware of the unparalleled education that comes with travel and language immersion. Unfortunately, the study abroad programs offered by my university were far too expensive to take advantage of. Asheville Sister Cities allowed me to embark on a month-long excursion and design my own internship in the beautiful city of Valladolid, Mexico during the summer of 2014. I fell in love with Valladolid, or as the locals say, drank the Cenote water and never wanted to leave. I had the privilege of living with an incredibly generous and kind host family and cannot articulate my gratitude for all they've done. I decided to return to Valladolid this summer 2015 as a graduation gift to myself. Although this trip was intended to just be a vacation, I have found two jobs teaching English and will be returning to live in Valladolid permanently for a year. Words cannot describe how excited I am for this opportunity, one that would



never have materialized without Asheville Sister Cities. I would love to personally thank: my host family, the Dzib Barcos, who have housed me during both of my visits, Evelin and Ivan De Leon who are fantastic presidents of the Valladolid sector of ASC, and Kate Bove and Kelly McEnany who are the best trip leaders and teachers of all time. Without these individuals and the Sister Cities program I would not be the educator or person I am today; this is an organization that nurtures an international family. I am filled with gratitude and will ensure to do my part in supporting ASCI while in Valladolid and beyond.

Russ about to enter the Mayan underworld

LET'S PARTY, ASHEVILLE SISTER CITIES!!

Asheville Sister Cities has numerous events during the course of a year, whether entertaining a delegation from a sister city, celebrating an annual event like Bastille Day, or an annual meeting. BUT,

We have seldom, if ever, taken an opportunity to celebrate ourselves and our successes as an organization.

So, with that in mind,

We will celebrate Asheville Sister Cities, Inc., on

Sunday, September 13, 2015 -- 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

At LaFontaine Vineyard 36 Mt Airy Rd, Marshall, NC 28753 (put that in your GPS!)

(828) 683-2316

A buffet will be prepared by the staff of LaFontaine Vineyard (French chef Michel)

Wine will be available by the glass for \$6

Or you may choose to purchase a bottle of their fine wines for \$21.00

Sodas and beer will also be available (donation).

RSVP, \$30 Adults, \$20 children under 10.

Payment with RSVP to ASCI.

<p>Party contact person: Jackie Craig Contact her at [apcraft(at)bellsouth.net] or at 828-778-8499 \$30.00 per person \$20.00 10 and under please send in payment with form. You can also pay on line.</p>

President - Andrew Craig	kurmugon(at)bellsouth.net
Vice President – Marjorie McGuirk	marjoriemcguirk(at)gmail.com
Secretary – Alice Keller	gakeller(at)gakeller.com
Treasurer – Inge Robert	irobert68(at)bellsouth.net
Past President – Russ Martin	rmandkk(at) attglobal.net

ASCI CALENDAR OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

ASCI Board Meeting	3 rd Thursday of each month – 5:30 pm, 33 Page Ave.
San Cristóbal Committee	2 nd Thursday of each month – 5:30pm, 33 Page Ave.
Saumur Committee	4 th Monday of each month – 5:30pm, 33 Page Ave.
Karpenisi Committee	Next meeting July 20 – 6:00 pm, 33 Page Avenue
Valladolid Committee	Last Wednesday of the month - 5:30pm, 33 Page Ave.
Osogbo Committee	3 rd Tuesday of each month – 6:00 pm, 33 Page Ave.
Vladikavkaz Committee	Time and Date TBA – Contact Committee Chair.

If you have a particular interest in a committee, please email the chairperson to confirm time & place.

ASCI Party ticket order form for Sep 13. Clip out and complete to send with check.

Name(s) of attendees @ \$30 / \$20 child

Address

Phone

Email address

PLEASE EITHER contact Jackie Craig at [appcraft(at)bellsouth.net] or at 828-778-8499

Or

Mail this form with your check to Asheville Sister Cities, Inc.
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