

# Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation

Winter 2014

## Turkmen Perform in Albuquerque

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By Oguljan Young and  
Chuck Larrabee

Over 70 musicians, dancers and officials from Turkmenistan, as well as US State dept. officials visited Albuquerque December 4-7, 2013.

The visit to the US was sponsored by the US State Dept., the Turkmenistan Ministry of Culture and Albuquerque Sister Cities. The Albuquerque visit was the last of a three-stop tour for the Turkmen that included performances and visits to New York City and Washington D.C. with the final stop in Albuquerque.

According to Oguljan Young, coordinator for the Albuquerque Sister Cities relationship with Ashgabat, "We wanted the experience of these young people to be meaningful—to learn about life in the US as we learn about the culture of Turkmenistan."

As a result, the volunteers arranged visits for the performers and officials to the Albuquerque Bio-Park, the Explora Museum, the Albuquerque Museum for a lecture on New Mexico history, Coronado Center and Best Buy for shopping and the Frontier Restaurant.

The visitors attended a breakfast reception with a Mariachi band at the Balloon Museum. Tours of the

exhibits followed the reception.

A delicious buffet lunch was held at the home of Amelia Myer. The visitors were so impressed with the hospitality, they burst into song and did an impromptu dance.

The culmination of the visit was a performance by the Turkmen musicians, singers and dance groups at the Hyatt downtown. Over 650 Albuquerque residents attended as well as Turkmenistan's Minister of Culture and representatives from the Ashgabat Mayor's Office and the Turkmenistan ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The performance included ancient folk music, beautiful ballet and rigorous folk dances as well as modern music—all performed by talented Turkmen, many of whom are considered in Turkmenistan to be "Honored Artists." The culmination of the performance was a major dance and musical number saluting the relationship between Turkmenistan and the United States.

Reflecting the importance of the inter-cultural event, Nakotah LaRance, accompanied by his father, Steve LaRance, performed an American Indian Hoop Dance and members of the Pojoaque Dance group did

a Buffalo Dance. Several traditional Spanish dances were done by the National Institute of Flamenco from Albuquerque.

"The unqualified success of this visit was made possible by the hard work and dedication of our Albuquerque Sister Cities' volunteers," said Richard Buckler, President of ASCF.

"This will go a long way towards furthering our Sister Cities relationship with Ashgabat."

ASCF volunteers who made the visit happen were: Richard & Mary-Hope Buckler, Oguljan & Nathan Young, Chuck Larrabee, Vic & Carol Dawley, Baymuhammet Dadebayev, Amelia Myer, Alana McGrattan, Tenaya Torres-Tellez, Susan Koestner, Maria Amaya, Alma Solis, Kirt Edwards, Steve LaRance, Neal Copperman as well as Beatrice Rivera, Randy Trask and Chuy Martinez from the City of Albuquerque and Dr. David Hsi, a board member of the Explora Museum and Albuquerque Sister Cities. Sponsors of the visit were, in addition to the City of Albuquerque and ASCF, the Hyatt Regency Downtown, Explora Museum, AMP Concerts, the National Institute of Flamenco and the Pueblo of Pojoaque.

Event photos on page 4.

## From the President's Desk...

**INCREDIBLE!** That is the theme song of this year's 2014 Winter Olympics taking place in Sochi, Russia. Perhaps many of you have been watching already. Celine Dion teaming up with Ne-Yo reminds us of the great blessing it is to be part of a world community full of dreams, talents, and of course exchanges on every level—including Sports.

Some of us remember Celine's song that opened the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, which emphasized the "magic spark that lights the fire of our imagination" encouraging every one of us to be mindful of the "special part" we each play as we pursue the "power of the dream."

All great accomplishments start with a dream. Last month, as a nation, we celebrated the life of Martin Luther King, whose dream of inclusion is continuing here in Albuquerque through many avenues, including your sister cities organization. This month we celebrate the birthdays of two presidents--Washington and Lincoln. These leaders from our past point to the direction for our future, one that must include the celebration of the diversity of our nation and world. Sometimes this calling seems to be Olympian in size, yet with ordinary people like you and I and our counterparts around the

world, we can do "incredible" things that promote greater understanding, mutual respect and cooperation.

In this newsletter issue you will see highlights of some of our activities the past few months that pursue our "dream." Special thanks to our Ashgabat, Turkmenistan Committee led by Chair Oguljan Young who took on what seemed like an Olympic size test: 70 plus Turkmen musicians/dancers performing in Albuquerque this past December 6. Thanks also to the 650 plus Albuquerqueans who came out to the Hyatt Regency to support them! Incredible!

Also, in late November, Albuquerque, Spain had its first every Robotics competition at its local high school, put on in person by New Mexico Inquiry Facilitator's RoboRAVE team of Russ and Ann Fisher-Ives, Fabian Lopez and Pam Feather. And, to complete the loop, Inquiry Facilitator's and your sister cities organization will sponsor two teams of four students each to come here to Albuquerque, New Mexico May 1 – 4, in order to participate with 1500 other youth across our state and the world in our annual Robotics competition at the Convention Center. Incredible! The week of May 19 – 24, 2014 will mark another milestone in Albuquerque Sister Cities, as His Worship Mayor Daniel Chisenga of Lu-

saka, Zambia is expected to come to Albuquerque and sign an official sister city agreement with Mayor Berry. In addition to its great people, Zambia, as you may know, is home to some of the world's greatest natural resources, huge animal reserves, and Mosi-oa-Tunya, better known to the Western world as Victoria Falls. Can you say "Incredible"?

So, as you continue to enjoy watching world class athletes compete in these 2014 Winter Olympics and cheer on your Olympians, feel the pulse of our world and celebrate with all the competitors who give their best, gold medal or no. Thank you, too, for your continued "incredible" support of your Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation and like-minded organizations here in New Mexico, as we look forward to another year of world-class exchanges.

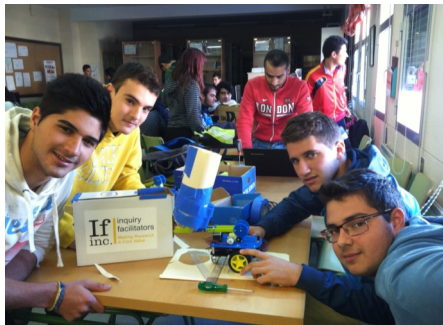
*Richard*

## Board Nominations

Nominations for the ASCF board are being accepted. To nominate a person or for more info, please call the nominating chair, Bob Rodriguez, 505-265-9013. The election will be at the Annual Meeting June 8. Positions open this year are: President, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd V.P.s, Secretary, and Treasurer.

## IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Margaret Gonzales on November 25, 2013. She was the wife of Ramon Gonzales, former Chair of the Albuquerque, Spain committee.



Left: Robotics training being enjoyed in Spain by students of the IES Castillo de Luna High School. See article on Page 6.

# ASCF Hosts international Tea

On Saturday, January 25, 2014, Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation hosted an International tea at Manzano Mesa multigenerational Center. Free and open to the public, many folks from the area came to discover the activities of Albuquerque's sister cities committees. Special tea, coffee and hot chocolate from Mexico Japan, Germany, Turkmenistan, Zambia, China and Spain were offered as well as tasty treats. The committee chairs and co-chairs welcomed the visitors to their tables and several signed up for trips. Door prizes of gift certificates to restaurants and coffee shops were given out along with ASCF tote bags. An annual winter event, ASCF looks forward to next year and welcoming more interested people.



Chihuahua, Mexico: Co-chair Gina Solis and Chair Alma Solis serve tasty flan to folks at their table.



Helmstedt, Germany: Co-Chair Ray Heidfeld (left) and Chair Nathan Young (center) welcome guests.



Sasebo, Japan: Co-chair Pam Feather and Chair Kazumi Kawakubo-Todman



Guadalajara, Mexico: Chair Jose Luis Cruz-Campo (center) serves cinnamon hot chocolate.



Ashgabat, Turkmenistan: Chair Oguljan Young pours tea.



Hualien, Taiwan: Co-Chair Rubing (left) and Chair Yu-Lin Shen (center) talk about Hualien.



Above: Lanzhou, China: Co Chair Lin Ye (with his family) displays pictures of that city.



Above: Representing Lusaka, Zambia: Patrick Mapalo and his son David show video of Africa.

Left: Alburquerque, Spain: Eva Gonzales (on left) greets folks at her table.



## Turkmen Visit to Albuquerque



Mellie Myer (right front) welcomes Turkmen to lunch at her house.



Mariachi band is joined by Minister Mammedova and Turkmen singer Gulshat Gurdowa at the Balloon Museum.



Local performers Nakotah LaRance, National Institute of Flamenco, and Pojoaque Buffalo Dancers join in concert.



ASCF president Richard Buckler and Nurmuhamedova Annajemal, Director, Dokmachylar Dance group cut special cake.



L to R: Oguljan Young, Ashgabat Chair; Guncha Mammedova, Turkmenistan Minister of Culture; and Betty Rivera, City of Albuquerque Cultural Services Director.



Turkmen enjoying the special lunch.



Steve LaRance and a Turkmen jeweler share a moment at the Balloon Museum.



Turkmen Musicians playing ancient instruments from Turkmenistan.



Snapshots of the Turkmen performance at the Hyatt Regency December 6.

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Manager of Albuquerque-Bernalillo  
Trade Alliance and  
Encuentro president.

## Lanzhou Delegation Visits Albuquerque

By Lin Ye

A six member delegation from Lanzhou, China, led by Li Wan, deputy Director of Lanzhou New Area, visited our city on Nov. 24-25, 2013. In the morning of the 25th, they met with UNM officials followed by a visit to Mesa del Sol. Here they discussed best practices of planning and building an industrial park. The concept of Albuquerque water conservation attracted their attention and will be in their final report to the Lanzhou city government.

ASCF President, Richard Buckler hosted a lunch for them after their tours at the Aquarium and Botanical Garden. The group saw the plaque by the tree near the front entrance to the BioPark, commemorating the Albuquerque-

Lanzhou sister city relationship.

In the afternoon, Mayor Berry met with the delegation and was invited to visit Lanzhou International trade Affairs this June or in his convenient time.

The group also met with the city Department of Planning.

Around thirty local people from Albuquerque Sister Cities, UNM, New Mexico Philharmonic, and mainly members of Albuquerque's Lodge of Chinese American Citizens Alliance attended the dinner at Ho Lo Ma restaurant to welcome the Chinese guests.

During this visit, we discussed a performance tour of a large group of musicians of New Mexico Philharmonic to China as well as future education, youth and municipal exchanges.



The Lanzhou delegation: Li Wan, Deputy Director of Lanzhou New Area is 3rd from left.



ASCF President, Richard Buckler (left) presents Deputy Director Li Wan and the Lanzhou Delegation with Albuquerque balloon calendars.

Chinese students from Tianjin visit New Mexico over Christmas for some early Robotics training and a holiday party at Lanzhou Co-Chair Lin Ye's house Dec 23. They will return in May for RoboRAVE.





# RoboRAVE goes to Alburquerque, Spain

By Pam Feather

The Inquiry Facilitators team (Pam Feather, Fabian Lopez, Russ Fisher-Ives and his wife Ann) left Nov. 23, 2013 for Alburquerque, Spain. The team had three goals to accomplish: 1. Introduce, train and engage students and teachers in Robotics Education/RoboRAVE International 2. Strengthen Albuquerque's sister city relationship with Alburquerque, Spain and 3. Explore what possible economic opportunities the two cities could embark upon together.

The team arrived in Madrid and drove to Trujillo, Spain for an overnight stay. They toured the city's castle, enjoyed the food and met with an acquaintance of Russ Fisher-Ives. The next day the team toured Caceres, Spain's churches and castle en route to Alburquerque. Nov. 24-29, the team had a busy schedule. Nov. 25th began with a press conference at the IES Castillo de Luna school. Alburquerque Mayor Angel Vadillo and the RoboRAVE team shared their goals and desires. Mayor Vadillo embraced the idea of students learning technology and welcomed the team from

Albuquerque. Pinto Gemio (Lucy), Directora del IES Castillo de Luna welcomed the team to the school. V. Alvarado Orellana, Industrial Design teacher, coordinated the schedule for the Robotics education workshop. Thirty two students in teams of four participated in designing, programming and testing robots. The students were very engaged and excited. The teachers were overwhelmed with how involved the students were; commenting, "I have not ever seen my students work together" and "I can't believe the students didn't want to take their break." Ms. Lucy and other teachers came by to observe the students and were very impressed. The local media and newspaper covered the week. The workshop concluded in a mini RoboRAVE International competition with Mayor Vadillo and his staff members attending along with the local media and newspaper. This was an exciting moment for IES Castillo de Luna and their community.

During the week Paul Lizardo Ortiz organized various meetings for the team to network with the

community and neighboring community of Badajoz. The team met with Juan Josef Ortega Perez owner of an after school robotics program in Badajoz. They also met with various business owners, city officials and parents of the students. Paul took the team to Elvas, Portugal to enjoy a different dining cuisine.

The evening of Nov. 28th, the team dined with Mayor Vadillo and discussed possible economic opportunities between the two cities. One outcome that Inquiry facilitators and Mayor Vadillo are exploring is the possibility of manufacturing a cork base for the Arduino robot platform. The idea is to encourage a "Going Green" concept. The stay in Albuquerque was very positive and the people were wonderful! The team was able to accomplish all three goals during their stay.

Before flying back home, the team enjoyed seeing San Vincente's Cork Museum, Merida's Roman Aqueduct and other Roman ruins. Alburquerque, Spain will be sending 8 students to participate in the May 2014 RoboRAVE competition. here in Albuquerque.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1—4: RoboRAVE. Contact Pam Feather [pjfeather@q.com](mailto:pjfeather@q.com) or 980-5886 for more information

May 19—23: ASCF signing with Lusaka, Zambia. May 22 evening reception planned at this time.

June 8—ASCF annual meeting featuring our Chinese sister cities—venue TBD.

July 27—Aug. 3—Expected visit to Albuquerque by Sasebo, Japan students. Host families needed. Contact Kazumi Kawakubo-Todman for more details at 235-0597.

July 31—Aug. 2—Sister Cities International Annual Conference—San Jose, California

Aug. 8—18—ASCF membership trip to Helmstedt, Germany. If interested contact chair, Nathan Young at 977-6033

October—possible trip to China. If interested, contact Chair Dr. Hsi (345-3866) or Co-Chair Dr. Lin-Ye (249-4896)

# Sister Cities Trip to Germany

August 8<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> 2014



A trip to Germany is scheduled to visit Albuquerque's Sister City Helmstedt for 4 days. There we will stay with host families and go on day trips within the surrounding area. We will also be staying two nights in Berlin, one night in Dresden, and two nights in Mainz from where we will go on a Rhine river cruise. We will arrive in Berlin and depart from Frankfurt. Travel between cities will be by train.

*Helmstedt*


Please contact Helmstedt Chair Nathan Young at [nathaneyoung@gmail.com](mailto:nathaneyoung@gmail.com) or 977-6033 for more information and to sign up.



Albuquerque Sister  
Cities Foundation

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**Inside this issue: Turkmen Concert; Lanzhou,  
China Visit and ASCF International Tea**

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