

Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation

Spring 2007

2006-2007

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ASCF has exchanged memberships with the Center for International Studies (CFIS). For more info on their programs, look at their web site www.abqinternationalclub.org Their President is Dr. Marina Oborotova. Her email is: CFIS_1@msn.com

Turkmen Visit Albuquerque

Four Turkmen were in Albuquerque in February 2007. The Ashgabat-Albuquerque Sister City Committee hosted a dinner in their honor. Ogulijan Halliyeva and Nathan Young held the reception in their gracious home. The attendees enjoyed conversing with the guests, giving the interpreters quite a workout! One of the interpreters, Valery Yegorov, originally from the Ukraine and now a US citizen, resides in New Jersey. The visitors were half-way through their three-week sojourn in the US. As folks savored the many selections from the buffet table, all had an opportunity to spend some time visiting.

Ms. Selbi Akmuradova is the Director of Charity Without Borders. This group of local civic activists and small entrepreneurs works with disadvantaged youth and handicapped children. Founded in 1996, it targets audiences of orphans, handicapped, and youth-at-risk from low income families. Their mission is to strengthen civil society, increase knowledge of legal issues and advocate for rights of the disadvantaged strata of society. She wore a hand embroidered traditional dress. Mr. Valeriy Kotvin is the Director of Agama. This NGO provides troubled youth with alternative opportunities to help protect them from local problems particularly substance abuse. Agama conducts practical youth leadership

training and conducts fund raising campaigns to create additional opportunities for youth in the field of ecotourism. As a result of its work, youth are given the tools that allow them to find employment in the industrial sector. Last year, Agama conducted a mountain climb near Ashgabat. The climb was dedicated to the 60th anniversary of V-Day.

Yekaterina Berkeliyeva is a consultant on community development and a member of the civic group, "Ysahyl" (Green), which is focused on environmental issues. She is also a freelance youth trainer in leadership and public relations skills development, team building and conflict resolution. She has 2 children, her son being 11 years old. We discussed e-pals between students here and those in Ashgabat. She particularly enjoyed the shrimp, saying that shrimp in Ashgabat is quite small and not as tasty.

Mr. Yazmyrat Hommadov, chemist by trade, is the director and a teacher at the Lebap Youth EcoCenter. This organization administers projects under grants, and is currently working under FY06 Democracy Commission Award on saving the biodiversity of two natural reservations through development of ecotourism and environmental journalism. Under the latter project, Turkmenabat City Senior High School students are the target

audience for environmental, leadership and ecojournalism classes. The local community, apart from the ecojournalism, is provided with consultations on opening a small business in areas such as guided tours, catering services, lodging and other services, and legal aid to start a private business. Yazmyrat had a small album of personal photos, which he shared with the guests. These included ones of his lovely wife and his 2 children. His wife, who teaches biology, was in the USA 2 years ago under the same program that he is here with. Their son is currently attending a university in Russia. (The city is the birthplace of Lenin.) Their daughter is studying nursing at a school in Germany. One of the photos showed a lovely backyard garden. Another was taken in his personal library. Yazmyrat has over 4,000 books!! He presented several guests with traditional square pillow cases - the front was of raw silk and the design was hand embroidered.

Richard Buckler, chair of the Ashgabat Committee, welcomed everyone and presented them with gifts from Albuquerque Sister Cities.

Dave Bagley, president of ASCF, toasted them with champagne and the Balloonist Prayer. Ogulijan Halliyeva had a special decorated cake for the occasion. It said "Welcome to Albuquerque" and sported a large American flag.

See Page 6 for photos.

From the President's Desk

Our efforts to join students and schools in Albuquerque with our sister cities are paying off!

Eight Albuquerque Academy students visited their sister school in Guadalajara in March. Students from Colegio Guadalajara visited Academy last October, and we now have a wonderful match with these two schools. Read more about their visit in this newsletter. Speaking of student exchanges, fourteen students from a variety of Albuquerque schools should be on their way to Sasebo in late May, thanks to the effort of Kazumi Kawakubo and Pam Feather. You'll be able to hear about their trip at our annual June meeting.

Our June 24th annual meeting (12:00 noon to 4:00 pm) will be your chance to get caught up with Sister Cities activities, hear from two groups of students who participated in recent exchanges, enjoy some live entertainment, vote for officers, and best of all, enjoy

foods from a variety of cultures, as our menu will be pot luck. The meeting will be held at Temple Albert, so please avoid pork or fish in your selection of a dish. You'll get a reminder card in a few weeks.

Alma Solis is planning a wonderful cultural trip to Chihuahua August 26 to September 3. Look for her flier in this newsletter and respond early, as space will be limited.

And more trips are coming up. Richard Buckler and Wolfram Krank are planning back-to-back cultural trips to Helmstedt and Ashgabat in late October. Travelers may go to Helmstedt or Ashgabat or both by spending half of the time in each city. More information is in this newsletter and detailed fliers will be sent out shortly. We planned these trips to avoid "high season" travel costs to Europe during the summer

months.

Fred Mondragon is taking over as the Secretary of New Mexico Economic Development Department. I'm sorry to see him leave the City, as Fred provided endless help and guidance to Albuquerque Sister Cities but know he will be an asset to our state.

Carol Lopez (Santa Fe) is the new Sister Cities State Coordinator. You'll have a chance to meet her at our annual meeting in June.

Sister Cities wants your email address. The Internet can provide you with much more timely information about our events. We'll be sending out more information about our events via email; and in some cases, there simply isn't enough time to produce and mail cards or letters to our members. Please ensure that Membership Chair Richard Buckler has your current email address. Rest assured that we'll continue to send information through the post office about our activities whenever possible.

Want more copies of this newsletter? You'll find them on our website - <http://www.albuquerque-sister-cities.org>

Dave Bagley

Meet your Board: Ramon Gonzales and Robert Rodriguez

Ramon Donato Gonzales is the Chair of the Albuquerque, Spain sister city committee. Ramon, a 13th generation New Mexican, was born in San Antonio, NM, being one of 8 children. In 1943, during a family move, his mother sent him and his sister to Albuquerque to live with an uncle and his family. Ramon attended Albuquerque High School and at age 17 he joined the NM National Guard and then enlisted in the US Air Force. He served 22 years in the field of aircraft maintenance, spending four years in England where he met his wife, Margaret. Besides Europe, he was in Libya, Guam, Thailand, Viet Nam and Okinawa, Japan. After retiring from the USAF, he came back to Albuquerque with his family

where he entered the US Postal Service and officially retired in 1991.

In 1984 Ramon became a member of Albuquerque Sister Cities, being involved with the Gijon, Spain affiliation for about 3 years. He reactivated his membership in 1993. After a trip to Albuquerque, Spain in March 1993, he kindled a friendship between them and Albuquerque, NM. Coupled with subsequent visits by Ramon and his brother Nicholas the two cities became Sister Cities in August 2003.

Ramon has several "hobbies" that keep him busy. Genealogy has been a special focus of his for over 40 years. In fact, it was in search of his roots that originally led Ramon to Albur-

querque, Spain. He was one of the founders of the Hispanic Genealogical Research Center of NM (which now has over 500 members) and was also its first newsletter editor, holding that position for 12 years. He was also a founding member of the New Mexican Hispanic Cultural Preservation League. This group works towards preserving their customs, language, culture and history. They have worked with the NM legislature to include New Mexico history as part of the school curriculum. Ramon is banner chair of the Albuquerque Founders Day Celebration held in April. He also volunteered at Albuquerque's Special Collections Library, assisting with computer on line research. Ramon's family includes 2 daughters (both school teachers), 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. He likes to travel - to Crete in 1999 in search of his Greek roots - to Sidney, Australia in search of Margaret's relatives - to Okinawa to see his granddaughter who is stationed there with her USAF husband.

2006-2007 Chairs

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Ramon Gonzales is Honored by the NMHCPL

The New Mexican Hispanic Culture Preservation League (NMHCPL) honored Ramon Gonzales at their 9th annual banquet on April 28, 2007. The Caballero Award was newly created to acknowledge the efforts of the members of NMHCPL. Ramon is the first to be honored for his community service. He and his brothers Nicolas and Timoteo cared for the Founder's Day and Onate Banners that are carried in the Founder's Day Parade, and displayed at the NMHCPL Annual Banquet and other Hispanic functions throughout the year. Ramon has always helped build the floats for the parades. He is also the Chair of ASCF Albuquerque, Spain Committee and has published and mailed the newsletter for the Hispanic Genealogical Resource Center.



Ramon and his award.



Margaret & Ramon Gonzales with ASCF members - Betty-Mae Hartman, Dave Bagley and Tuty Quinton

Ramon & Margaret



UNM Zimmerman Library Thanks Bar- tolome Gil Santacruz

The Director of the University of New Mexico (UNM) Zimmerman Library's Special Collections, Dr. Patricia Birkich gave Margaret and Ramon Gonzales a tour of the Special Collections area on March 13, 2007. They were shown the book that Senor Bartolome Gil Santacruz of Badajoz, Spain donated to the library and where it is kept. To thank Senor Bartolome Gil for his generous donation, the UNM Zimmerman Library sent him a book of a collection of rare Latin American posters.

*"Discovery consists
of looking at the
same thing as every-
one else and think-
ing something differ-
ent."*

Roger von Oech

Meet Your Board Cont.

Robert Rodriguez is the co-chair of the Albuquerque sister city committee. In 1969 he was transferred to Albuquerque, NM by the US Air Force in order to run the computer shop in their weapons laboratory. He has been here ever since. In 1974 when he retired from the USAF, he went to work for the Albuquerque Public Schools - run-

ning the computer department in the central offices; retiring from APS in 1999. Sally Alice Thompson, a good friend of his, got Bob involved with sister cities about 15 to 20 years ago. In 2001 he traveled with Ramon Gonzales to Albuquerque, Spain and has been co-chair ever since. He met his wife in 1954 in San Antonio, Texas. They have 5 children (3 boys and 2 girls) - all have de-

grees. They also have 3 grandchildren. Bob enjoys tracing his family roots - his great grandfather came here from Cuba in 1868. He also volunteers as a counter for St. Charles Borromeo Church. In 1980 he was appointed to the NM State Commission for Higher Education. In the 1990's he served for 6 years on the NM Professional Standards Commission. Also he served for 6 years on the Citizens Advisory Committee for Urban Enhancement here in Albuquerque.

Sasebo Japanese Garden

On Wednesday, March 21, 2007, the board of Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation toured the area of the BioPark's Rio Grande Botanic Garden where the Sasebo Japanese Garden is located and is currently under construction. Catherine Hubbard, manager of the Botanic Garden, was our guide. When totally completed, the garden area will encompass about 5 acres, including the transitional gardens that lead up to the actual Sasebo Garden inside the wall. Three quarters of an acre is Camino de Colores, which leads visitors from other botanic garden exhibits to the Japanese area. This is already completed. The next 3/4 acre is the woodland/entry garden. Here is located the bell tower, several stone lanterns and a ceremonial hand washing area. The railroad tracks for the train connecting the zoo with the botanic garden run through this part. A formal entrance leads into the walled garden itself. These acres under construction have two phases for completion. Phase One has a

large lower pond, an 18 foot waterfall, and a pathway that encircles the pond. All this will be open by fall.

Phase two will have a smaller upper pond connecting to the larger lower pond, by a stream, a tea house, and a small pavilion. Plans include koi fish and Japanese ducks for the lower pond and Japanese cranes for the upper pond. Mr. Toru Tanaka, a well-known Japanese garden landscape designer, is the main consultant on the project. He is most particular about what plants, etc. are to be chosen and where they are to be located. He has inspected each large rock before finally placing it around the pond. Most of the plants chosen are climate adapted for New Mexico. Those that are not will be placed in containers so they can be moved. There are 200 grasses, 300 trees, and 2,700 shrubs ordered for the area. All agreed the finished garden will be a magnificent addition to the BioPark's Botanic Garden.



Standing in the entry garden are Pam Feather, co-chair for Sasebo committee, Catherine Hubbard, manager of the Botanic Garden and Dave Bagley,



Standing at the entrance to the Sasebo Japanese Garden with Catherine Hubbard are ASCF members: Dave Bagley, Bob Rodriguez, Tuty Quinton, David Hsi, Margaret Dike, Betty-Mae Hartman, Pam Feather and Richard Buckler.

Albuquerque Delegates Visit Sasebo

Kazumi Kawakubo led a group of business delegates from Albuquerque to visit Sasebo on 11/20 and 11/21, 2006. The group included Mr. Max Kiehne, President of American Japan Association (AJA) and business developer/owner; Mr. and Mrs. Casey Luna, former New Mexico Lt. Governor and business owner; Mr. Russell Burns, a director of AJA and his 14 year old son. Mr. Kiehne and his association are planning to develop a Long Stay Retirement Village for Japanese and American residents 55 years or older in

the Albuquerque area. The purpose of the trip was to promote the village among Japanese and discuss possible trade opportunities in areas of winery and stones and tourism. Mr. Tsuruta and Mr. Nakayama from the International Division of the Sasebo City Office met the delegates and arranged a luncheon at a hotel high on a hill overlooking the harbor and 99 Islands Bay. Sasebo's mayor and 10 city council officials were present. That evening the visitors had dinner at the International Cafe with several of the sister cities long time friends.

BRIDGES OF BOOKS: FROM ALBUQUERQUE TO SASEBO

Bridges of Books is a James Monroe Middle School project. It involves students writing and illustrating books to be bound and sent to various countries/places in the world. On April 23, 2007 there was a reading of these books. Students, their parents and friends were in attendance at this occasion. The Sasebo Sister Cities Committee had an information table at the event. The students from James Monroe Middle School that are going on the ASCF youth cultural exchange in May will be presenting some of the books to schools in Sasebo.

Toys Donated to Chihuahua Hospital

On December 16, 2006, Alma Solis, chair of the Chihuahua committee, visited children hospitals, orphanages, children homeless shelters and a rehab center for kids in Chihuahua. There she and others in her group distributed 4,000 toys to the patients. The toys were donated by an Albuquerque business man.



Alma Solis is on the right.



OTHER CHIHUAHUA EVENTS

On January 29, 2007, Alma Solis attended the inauguration of the bilingual library at the Luis Urias Elementary School in Chihuahua. This school has an exchange program with Valle Vista Elementary School in Albuquerque. Books for the library were donated by the Program of Culture and Education of the Association of Pan America Round Table.

In February 2007, the City of Chihuahua gave a statue of a Chihuahua dog to ASCF. This statue is to be painted by a local Albuquerque artist and then it will be installed next to the City of Chihuahua's Chihuahua dog statue at the dog parade event in Mexico.



TRIP TO CHIHUAHUA

August 26 - September 3, 2007

Price per person is \$875.00

For more info contact Alma Solis at (505) 804-5471 or almasolis5@hotmail.com

The Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce Mercado

The Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce held a mercado on April 19, 2007. It was held at Isotopes Park concourse area from 5 pm to 7:30 pm. Over 70 participant booths were there for the well-attended crowd to visit. Most of the booths were displaying information or promoting a business or product. Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation had an information table. Those manning the ASCF booth were Dave Bagley, Presi-

dent; Richard Buckler, 3rd Vice President and Chair of Ashgabat Committee; Tuty Quinton, 2nd Vice President; Betty-Mae Hartman, Past President; and Nathan Young.

Every day more money is printed for the game of "Monopoly" than the U.S. treasury.

Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented. It was ruled, "Gentlemen Only...Ladies Forbidden." And thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 25 - JUNE 3
Youth Cultural Ex-
change (APS) to
Sasebo, Japan

JUNE 24
Annual ASCF Mem-
bership Meeting
12 - 4 pm - Temple
Albert -food, enter-
tainment, elections

JULY 18
ASCF Board Meeting
5:15 pm - Compass
Bank - 505 Marquette
NW - 14th floor - all
welcome

AUG. 26 - SEPT. 3
ASCF trip to Chi-
huahua, Mexico

SEPTEMBER 19
ASCF Board Meeting

OCTOBER
ASCF Trip to Helmst-
edt, Germany and Ash-
gabat, Turkmenistan

CHINESE VISITORS TO NEW MEXICO

Two visitors from Lanzhou, China were in Albuquerque Feb. 19 & 20, 2007. They were Huanghe and his wife Zhangyan, owners and operators of an English Training Center in Lanzhou. Accompanied by Steve Parker, an escort from the US State Department; they were here to establish contacts with educational institutions in Albuquerque and to recruit future English teachers for their school. David Hsi, Chair of Lanzhou Committee, arranged for them to meet with knowledgeable persons at APS, Albuquerque Academy and UNM. Lanzhou Co-Chair, Jian Zhu joined them for lunch and a tour of the UNM campus. Guadalajara Chair Bob Montoya and his wife welcomed them to their home and offered advice about recruitment of teachers.

The Honorable Chinese Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong visited New Mexico on March 30, 2007. Governor Bill Richardson and the First Lady hosted a luncheon at the Governor's Mansion in honor of the Ambassador and his wife. David Hsi and Jian Zhu were among the 50 invited guests. That same evening Mayor Chavez hosted a dinner in an Albuquerque restaurant in honor of the Ambassador and his wife. David Hsi and his wife and Jian Zhu were invited to the dinner with 30 other guests. The Ambassador was very congenial, giving brief talks at both occasions. He expressed his willingness to help Mayor Chavez make contacts with the responsible officials in Beijing concerning a giant panda coming to Albuquerque.

Albuquerque Residents
Visit Chinese Ambassador
in Washington, D.C.

David Hsi accompa-
nied Mayor Chavez,
the Director and
Deputy Director of
Albuquerque BioPark
and a Chinese consul-
tant for the Albu-
querque Zoo for an
official visit with the
Honorable Chinese
Ambassador Zhou
Wenzhong at the Chi-
nese Embassy in
Washington, D.C. on
March 14, 2007.

*People are lonely
because they
build walls in-
stead of bridges.*

TURKMEN VISIT PHOTOS

Selbi at the buffet.



Ogulijan Halliyeva and visitors.



Carol Dawley
& Yazmyrat.



Richard Buckler
gives presents
to Turkmen.



Dave Bagley
pours cham-
pagne

GUADALAJARA STUDENT CULTURAL EXCHANGE

From Albuquerque Academy's newsletter, Fall '06: Seven students from Colegio Guadalajara, Mexico spent three weeks at the Academy in October 2006 as part of a new language and cultural exchange program.

This was the inaugural visit in the exchange program with the oldest private school in Guadalajara. Founded in 1895 by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, the school today has an enrollment of 1,850 pupils of diverse backgrounds in grades pre-K through 12. Albuquerque Academy worked with the Sister Cities program to identify a school that would be a good match for the exchange.

Speaking about the new program, Rolando Villegas, chair of the modern languages department at Albuquerque Academy, said "We are very excited about this exchange and look forward to a mutually beneficial relationship with Colegio Guadalajara for years to come. This exchange is not only important for Albuquerque Academy, but also for the city of Albuquerque. It gives all of us a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our ties with our sister city of Guadalajara, Mexico."

The seven students and one teacher from Guadalajara stayed with host families, attended classes at the Academy, and visited cultural sites throughout the area.

ACADEMY STUDENTS TRAVEL TO GUADALAJARA

by Lou Reynolds:

Eight Albuquerque Academy students returned an exchange visit to Colegio Guadalajara March 17-31,

took part in excursions throughout the area. Students and chaperones were housed with host families. The Academy students conducted an art project with students at Colegio Guadalajara, and presented a skit and a photo PowerPoint show at the end of their visit. The eight students from Academy returned home to share their cultural and linguistic experience with their classmates and teachers.

All of the students had a hard time leaving their host families. Exchange students and their families shared many hugs and tears at the airport as departure time drew near. Some of the students want to return in the summer to continue learning Spanish and all plan to stay in touch with their Mexican families.

"They were very welcoming and wanted me to feel as comfortable as I could. I fell in love with my first family and it was very difficult to leave and go to live with my next family. However, once I got there they were just as great to live with. They both went out of their way to make me feel as though I was part of their family." - Autumn Steffens, student

Guadalajara, Mexico
March 2007 - students and their art project.



IS YOUR PASSPORT CURRENT?

UPCOMING ASCF TRIPS CHIHUAHUA

August 26 - September 3, 2007

Itinerary includes 4 full days and 6 nights in the city of Chihuahua & an exciting train ride through Copper Canyon with an overnight stay.

Price is \$875 per person

RSVP by June 30, 2007 to:
Alma Solis at (505) 804-5471 or
almasolis5@hotmail.com

HELMSTEDT & ASHGABAT

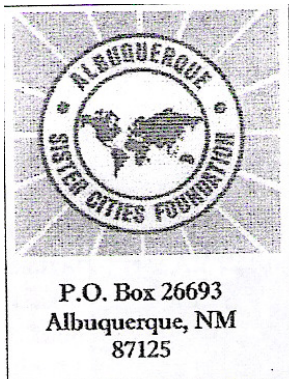
Tentative dates: October 19-30, 2007

The trip will spend approximately 5 days in Helmstedt, Germany and then depart to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan for 5 days there to attend the October 27 Turkmen Independence Day celebrations. Return to Frankfurt, Germany will be coordinated with the group remaining in Helmstedt so all delegates can return to Albuquerque together.

For more info on Helmstedt, contact
Wolfram Krank (505) 281-2080
wkrank@aol.com

For more info on Ashgabat contact
Richard Buckler (505) 291-8175
rbuckler3@comcast.net

Details on our website.



Mailing
Address
Goes
Here

ALBUQUERQUE SISTER CITIES FOUNDATION

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Annual Dues

Membership is: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

P.O. Box 26693
Albuquerque, NM 87125



THE ALBUQUERQUE

**sister
cities**
FOUNDATION, INC.

- | | |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL ADULT | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AMBASSADOR (AGE 21-35) | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY | \$30.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL YOUTH (AGE 13-20) | \$ 7.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR CITIZEN (65 OR OLDER) | \$10.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SMALL BUSINESS (15 OR LESS EMPLOYEES) | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LARGE CORPORATION | \$300.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION | EXCHANGE |

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ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ PHONE _____

E-mail/Fax _____

WEB SITE: WWW.ALBUQUERQUE-SISTER-CITIES.ORG