

# Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation

Spring 2009

## 2008-2009

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Mr. Sidney Yen has resigned his post as the Hualien Chair due to health considerations. ASCF thanks him for his many years of service. Our best wishes and prayers are with him.

## An Irish Tea

On Friday April 17, 2009 the ASCF hosted an Irish tea for its members. About 30 attendees enjoyed a repast of: chicken salad and lettuce on mini croissants, cream cheese and salmon on pumpernickel, caramel and blueberry scones, mini brownies, mini creampuffs and white cake with white icing and green sprinkles. There was Irish tea, coffee and bottled water to drink as well as Irish coffee. The bartender, Sean Dawley, knew just how to make the flavorful coffee speciality. Irish music played in the background as conversation abounded. Photos of Ireland as well as maps were on the

wall to entice folks to join ASCF members on a trip to Northern Ireland this July. SCI's international convention is being held in Belfast, Northern Ireland from July 29 to August 1, 2009. Quite a few ASCF members are attending to help promote the SCI international convention here in Albuquerque in July 2010. Although individuals are making their own travel arrangements, the group will be staying at the Park Inn or the Travel Lodge in Belfast during the convention. It is not too late to decide to come along. For more details, contact ASCF President, Richard Buckler at 291-8175 or rbuckler3@comcast.net.



Enjoying some refreshments at the Irish tea are left to right: Georgina Solis, Alma Solis, Mary Hope Buckler, David Buckler and Betty-Mae Hartman.

## A Reception for Turkmen Visitors

On April 8, 2009, Bill and Mellie Myer, Co-Chairs of the Ashgabat committee, hosted a reception for 3 Turkmen visitors. Accompanied by Kevin Krug of the US State Department were Mubarak Hemzayev, Shatlyk Kazakov and Shamil Roznazarov. The group was here in the United States for two weeks. They started their stay in Washington, DC. Before coming to Albuquerque, they visited Texas A & M University campus in College Station, TX. While in Albuquerque, they experienced Acoma Pueblo; the ice cave and El Malpais National Monument in Grants; the Indian Pueblo Culture Center and a television news station. Mubarak is a producer and represents Turkmenistan TV Channel. Shatlyk is a cameraman who also represents the TV Channel. Shamil, the interpreter for the visitors, represents Zaman, the major Turkmenistan newspaper. Mellie Myer coordinated a sumptuous pot luck dinner for the 30 attendees.

Continued on page 3

## *From the President's Desk*

Happy Cinco de Mayo! By the time you read this newsletter, you may have already participated in celebrating Albuquerque's Mexican roots through parades, folklorico, mariachis, and of course, the wonderful food. Later this year in November you will have the opportunity to travel to our sister city Chihuahua, Mexico. With the direct flights we can be there in a little over an hour. Our Chihuahua Chair, Alma Solis, always plans a great trip so stay tuned for more details.

Have you ever experience the culture and hospitality of our Central Asian sister city, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan? Bill and Mellie Myer will lead an October "expedition" to this fascinating part of the world. It will coincide with Turkmenistan's 18th Independence Day celebration on October 27. Contact the Myer's by July to participate.

Interested in helping us represent Albuquerque to the general Sister Cities International membership? As mentioned in prior newsletters, we will have a featured night at the SCI conference this July 29 - August 1 in Belfast Northern Ireland. Plan a vacation to this beautiful country, and stop-over for a couple of days and let our New Mexico charm shine. July 31 is OUR night and we

will feature New Mexican and Native American entertainment along with great food.

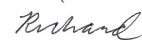
Many of us are planning on attending the full conference, where we will share and learn practical ideas from other U.S. and international cities on how to expand our local programs. For example, several workshops are available on how to maintain a viable youth group. Your board recognizes the need to build a strong youth program. Over the years, we've had some excellent youth involvement, including exchanges and colloquiums. And, this July we expect several students from our sister city, Sasebo, Japan to visit here for a week. However, with Albuquerque hosting the 2010 SCI conference, we will have a unique opportunity to promote the Youth Conference held here at the same time. What an opportunity to reinvigorate our youth presence in ASCF, something so vital for our future. So, look for a renewed effort in the coming months to expand our youth involvement and participation.

Our next cultural event is slated for June 14 when we invite you to learn more about our newest sister city - Rehovot, Israel. And, what better venue than at the Jewish Community Center. My thanks to those at the

Center who have made possible our use of the JCC. Lunch begins at 1 P.M. and will cost \$7.00 but ASCF will waive the cost for paid members. So, stop by, join or renew your membership, and then enjoy lunch on us.

At the June 14 meeting we will also elect some of the officer positions. Speaking of officers, I am proud to announce that Mark Bentz has been appointed and approved by the full ASCF board as our new interim Treasurer. Mark has a strong business and volunteer background, and for several years kept books for a branch of another charitable organization here in Albuquerque. In recent years, Mark and his family hosted a Japanese student for a school year and realized that ASCF embodies many of the same values that they hold dear. Mark will stand for election on June 14, but his willingness to support ASCF in the interim is greatly appreciated.

See you June 14! Thank you for the privilege of serving you,



Richard Buckler, President

## *June 14, 2009 ASCF Annual Meeting*

Sunday, June 14, 2007 Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation will hold its annual meeting.

It will be located at the Jewish Community Center at 5520 Wyoming Blvd between Spain and Academy.

Luncheon will be served at 1 pm followed by a program featuring ASCF's newest sister city, Rehovot, Israel.

Lunch is \$7.00 but gratis for ASCF members.

Reservations are needed. Contact Carol Dawley at 883-9516 or [crdawley@juno.com](mailto:crdawley@juno.com)

Officers standing for re-election are:

2nd Vice president - Carol Dawley  
3rd Vice President - Dave Bagley  
Treasurer - Mark Bentz  
Secretary - Mary Hope Buckler  
Additional nominations can be taken from the floor.

President and 1st Vice President are only elected in even years (i.e. 2010).

**Voting on By-laws Confirmation at Annual Meeting** - You will find the a current copy of our by-laws in this newsletter. Over the years you, our members, have voted to approve all by-law changes at our annual meetings; resulting in the enclosed document. However, in order to meet various filing requirements with the State of New Mexico, you will have the opportunity on June 14 to confirm these by-laws in total. For by-law questions, please fee free to call Dave Bagley (771-3114) or Richard Buckler (291-8175).

## *Meet Your Board: Bill and Mellie Myer*

Bill and Mellie Myer are Chair and Co-Chair of the ASCF Ashgabat Committee. They moved to Albuquerque about 16 years ago when Bill was transferred with the US Fish and Wildlife Service from Washington DC.

Bill was a VISTA volunteer on the Pine Ridge Oglala Sioux reservation in South Dakota in the 1960's and worked for several years with the Peace Corps, serving overseas twice as an associate director in West Africa and as director in Turkmenistan. He also worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service for 17 years.

Mellis was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana in the 1970's, teaching journalism at the Ghana Institute of Journalism. After taking off some years to raise their two daughters, she returned to work as an executive director of Common Cause MO and Common Cause NM; and is cur-

rently executive director of the NM Psychological Association. When Bill and Mellie were in Turkmenistan, Mellie worked for the U.S. Embassy as an assistant general services officer.

Bill decided to end his career with federal services as a Peace Corps Country Director. As they prepared to move to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, Mellie was googling information and was amazed to find that Albuquerque and Ashgabat were sister cities. The Myers got in touch with Sally Alice Thompson and Greg Gleason and had an opportunity to host a dinner for the Ashgabat visitors to the Albuquerque Tricentennial celebration in July 2006. They later reconnected with some of these visitors in Ashgabat. Upon reutrnig to Albuquerque in 2007, the Myers became actively involved with ASCF.

The major family interests of the Myers are rocks, gems, jewelry and fossils. They love to travel. Bill is a fly fisherman and jewelry maker and Mellie is interested in genealogy and painting.

Mellie and Bill have two daughters: Caroline, a geologist, lives in Texas with her husband who is also a geologist; and Emily, a senior at UNM and member of the Albuquerque Ashgabat Committee. Both daughters have visited Ashgabat and Emily has taught at the International School there.



Bill and Mellie Myer

## *Turkmen Visitors Cont.*

The guests included the special visitors, ASCF members, the evening's entertainers and several interested folks. One of the guests was Nyaka who is from Turkmenistan and is currently a student at UNM majoring in English.

After dinner, Bill Myer presented the three visitors with gifts from ASCF. He then asked Alana McGrattan to introduce the entertainment which she had arranged. Andrew Thomas, a Navajo flute player was first. He brought four different types of wooden flutes and played a song on each. The songs were his own originals. In between songs, he explained some of the Navajo culture. The last one he played was called "Going Home," where he wished safe travel for the visitors. Andrew and his wife, Kwee Straits, live in Albuquerque but he has traveled and performed internationally. Amaya was the next performer. Her dancing is the fusion of the

passion of flamenco with the "Feminine Oriental." She performed the "Danza Mora," the dance of the Moors and was called upon to do an encore.

The Turkmen had an opportunity to interview Sally Alice Thompson, the founder of the Ashgabat sister city relationship. (See ASCF newsletter Spring 2006 page 4 for an interview with Sally Alice). They thanked everyone for coming to meet them and said that they had a most enjoyable evening.



L to R: Shatlyk, Mubarak, Amaya, Alana, Andrew, Shamil



## Balloon Museum Exhibit

On Sunday, March 1, 2009 the Albuquerque Balloon Museum hosted an open house celebrating Japanese culture. Their new exhibit gives the history of balloons sent to the U.S. from Japan. More than 1,000 unsuspecting Japanese children were sent to support their war effort at a top secret work-camp on Ohkuno Island. What they created - balloons made of konjac mannan paper less than 1 mm thick - led to the only foreign-inflicted deaths on the American continent during World War II. Over 9,000 Japanese "Fugo" balloon bombs flew the jet stream to North America. The exhibition highlights the story of Reiko Okada, a young Japanese school girl, who secretly built balloon bombs. As an adult, after learning her childhood actions led to killings, she recounts her experience through stirring text and illustrations to make a "fervent wish for peace."

Many special activities were held throughout the Open House. One could make Origami paper cranes aided by

Jacob Spanard; experience viroqous Taiko Drumming; see the beautiful Miyagi Ryu Okinawa Dancing group; appreciate tranquil Ikebana flower arranging; and learn about Albuquerque's Japanese sister city, Sasebo. Ikuko Begay dressed women and children in kimonos to have their picture taken. And there was a peaceful tea ceremony presented by Gary and Valerie Tibbets. The tea ceremony was held in a special area decorated with beautiful Japanese calligraphy featuring the four virtues of tea - Wa/Harmony (from Daoism); Kei/Respect (from Confucianism); Sei/Purity (from Shintoism); and Jaku/Tranquility (from Buddhism). The calligraphy was done by Aki Maru Masa Ko and set the tone for serenity.

Lots to see and enjoy. Upon exiting the museum, attendees were encouraged to write down their own special wish for peace and hang it on a tree outside.



Sabrina Dawley tries on a kimono with the help of Ikuko Begay.

Peace tree in front of the Balloon Museum.



### 2008-2009 Chairs

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## Ashgabat Trip Planning

On Sunday, March 15, 2009 the Albuquerque/Ashgabat Sister Cities Committee held a pot-luck lunch meeting at the home of Oguljan and Nathan Young. They discussed plans for a visit to Ashgabat in late October 2009 and future committee activities.



L to R: Bill Myer, Oguljan Young, Vic Dawley, Mellie Myer, Jim Genasci, Linda Miles and Alana McGratton

## Betty-Mae Honored

Betty-Mae Hartman is being honored at the Silver Horizons 27th Senior Hall of Fame Luncheon on May 21, 2009. For an interview with her, see Fall 2006 ASCF newsletter page 2)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

May 20 - ASCF Board Meeting - Compass Bank - 505 Marquette - 14th floor - 5:30 PM  
All welcome

June 14 - ASCF Annual Meeting - Jewish Community Center - 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE - 1 - 4 pm - Call for reservations: Carol Dawley 883-9516 or [crdawley@juno.com](mailto:crdawley@juno.com)

July 29 - August 1 - SCI International Conference - Belfast, Northern Ireland

July/August - Sasebo Youth to visit Albuquerque

October - ASCF trip to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

November - ASCF trip to Chihuahua

July 2010 - SCI International Conference in Albuquerque!

## Traveling with ASCF

Northern Ireland - Sister Cities International will hold its annual conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland from July 29 to August 1. For more information contact: Richard Buckler at 291-8175 or E-mail: [rbuckler3@comcast.net](mailto:rbuckler3@comcast.net)

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan - Ashgabat committee chairs Bill and Mellie Myer are planning a trip to Ashgabat in October. If interested, contact them at 821-8774 or E-mail: [bill.myer@yahoo.com](mailto:bill.myer@yahoo.com)

Chihuahua, Mexico - Chihuahua Chair Alma Solis is arranging a trip to Chihuahua, Mexico this November. The trip is to coincide with the Chihuahua Balloon Festival. If interested, contact Alma at 417-0525 or E-mail: [almasolis5@hotmail.com](mailto:almasolis5@hotmail.com)

## ASCF Business Members

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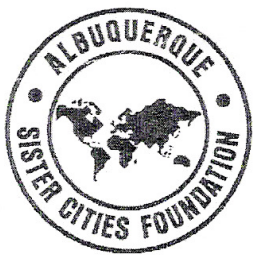
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Kazumi Kawakubo 's mother recently visited her from Japan. Here they are at the Sasebo Japanese Garden. Kazumi, Chair of the Sasebo Committee, has had several opportunities this year to interact with Japanese dignitaries visiting Albuquerque.

## CHIHUAHUA REPORT

In April, Alma Solis took a high school marching band to Chihuahua's Children's Day Parade. Chihuahua had their four sister cities school bands march all together as one; with each city providing 25 students. The Parade is the beginning of Chihuahua's Tricentennial



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## *Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation*

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

#### Annual Dues

Membership is: ☐ New ☐ Renewal



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- |  |          |
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| <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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