

Seattle Sister Cities Annual Report 2006

Highlights

Beer Sheva

Involvement in Washington-Israel Business Council

Many of the Seattle-Beer Sheva Sister City Association (BSSCA) board members participated in the 2006 startup of this group designed to foster trade between Israel and Washington State.

Beer Sheva Park

BSSCA member Ruth Bell led a demonstration program for a national Parks and Recreation Conference held in Seattle in October 2006 that highlighted our work surrounding the ongoing renovation of Beer Sheva Park in South Seattle. Board President Andrew Benjamin participated in the site visit to describe the creative, personal and financial assistance BSSCA provided to the City of Seattle and the Friends of Beer Sheva Park in the restoration and improvement efforts.

Trip to Beer Sheva

The group trip to Beer Sheva originally planned for spring of 2007 in celebration of the 30th anniversary of our sister city relationship has been postponed as Mayor Nickels is committed to travel instead to Kobe, Japan in honor of the 50th anniversary of that relationship. We have received a formal invitation from Mayor Turner for a visit to Beer Sheva. We will continue to plan for a trip there.

Bergen

This year, we participated in the Norwegian Constitution Day parade, the Seafair Torchlight parade and Ballard's Seafood Fest. We also held our annual Association picnic in August and our annual Julebord dinner in December.

As in past years, we coordinated student and teacher exchanges. In May, Seattle exchange teacher Ralph Hammersborg from Nathan Eckstein School left for Bergen for a one month stay. Bergen teacher Magne Aasties arrived in Seattle in November, also for a one month stay. Seattle students Lexi Kyle-Hammer from Summit K-12 and Alex Berg from Roosevelt High School left for Bergen in August and October, respectively. Also in October, Bergen student Anna Saetre arrived in Seattle to attend Summit K-12.

Cebu

In January, the book "Pacific Voices: Keeping Our Culture Alive" was released. The book is a photographic tour of the "Pacific Voices" permanent exhibit at the University of Washington's Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture.

In April, Irene Alazas visited Cebu and paid a visit to the Mayor's Office and the Office of Tourism.

In July, Vice Mayor Michael Rama, along with two Council members, visited Seattle after attending the Sister City International conference.

The months of September through December were dedicated to reorganizing and the recruitment of new members.

Chongqing

During 2006 we received 16 delegations of Chongqing officials from several agencies and departments. The delegations had various interests, which included city management, social security practices, real estate management, science and technology and municipal taxation policies. In all, Seattle received more than 167 visitors from Chongqing.

2006 saw the initiation of several new exchange programs, such as:

- Seattle Library with Chongqing Library
- Woodland Park Zoo with Chongqing Zoo
- Chongqing Yangtze River Museum with Seattle Art Museum, Museum of History and Industry and the Burke Museum
- Performing arts exchanges in both directions
- Sister College initiatives with Antioch University and South Seattle Community College and Chongqing universities and colleges.

These exchanges focus on highlighting the 25th anniversary of the sister city relationship which will occur in the year 2008. Planning is also under way for celebration delegations to travel in both directions in 2008.

Christchurch

Toi Maori

The Seattle-Christchurch Sister City Association (SCSCA) was a co-sponsor of the Toi Maori Exhibit 'The Eternal Thread' at the Burke Museum. Board members attended the February opening as well as the closing ceremonies on the exhibition's last day in May.

25th Anniversary Visit

In celebration of the 25th anniversary of the SCSCA, a delegation from Seattle visited Christchurch in February. This delegation was led by Board Vice President Patrick Grant and Seattle City Councilman Richard Conlin. Christchurch Mayor Garry Moore, who hosted several events, praised the strength of Christchurch's relationship with Seattle.

Mayor Visit

Mayor Greg Nickels and his wife Sharon visited Christchurch in May following the Trade and Development Conference in Melbourne, Australia.

Seattle Scholars Visit

Three Christchurch high school students visited Seattle for two weeks. Seattle City Councilman Richard Conlin officially welcomed the Scholars at City Hall.

Grant Application

The SCSCA received a grant of \$1,000 from the Sister Cities Association to fund a bench, sculpture or appropriate landscaping object that would become a permanent part of the planned New Zealand garden at the Arboretum. The Board is working with the Arboretum on the design process.

Galway

Irish Week 2006

Great crowds attended the various events, especially the St. Patrick's Day Dash, the St. Patrick's Day Mass, the St. Patrick's Day parade and the Seattle Center Irish Festival. Over \$32,000 was raised for the Matt Talbot Center, 12,675 runners competed in the Dash, almost 10,000 walked or watched the parade, and many more than that attended the Irish Festival.

Minister Noel Dempsey, T.D. (Teachta Dala, Member of the Dail, Ireland's Parliament), made his first ever visit to Seattle and attended the St. Patrick's Day Mass, the Friends of St. Patrick Banquet and the St. Patrick's Day parade.

Anniversary Celebration

The Seattle-Galway Sister City Association celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the formal sister city relationship between Seattle and Galway with a reception and dinner at FX McRory's. Galway Mayor Brian Walsh was in attendance to help mark the occasion.

In June, Sister City Association members met with John Bruton, former Taoiseach (Prime Minister of Ireland) and current European Union Ambassador to the U.S., after he spoke at Cascadia Community College.

Dublin's Gate Theatre visited Seattle's Moore Theatre for a week's presentation of Samuel Beckett's acclaimed play, 'Waiting for Godot.' The internationally acclaimed Gate Theatre Company had never before visited Seattle. This visit was part of the Beckett Centenary celebration.

Gdynia

Seattle Polish Film Festival

The Seattle-Gdynia Sister City Association (SGSCA) sponsored another successful Seattle Polish Film Festival. The Festival featured the most commercially successful polish-language films in 2006 as well as personal appearances by leading Polish actors and directors. Our Festival Gala also included a presentation by Krystyna Tokarska-Biernacik, Consul General of the Republic of Poland. Beginning in 2007, Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) will support the Festival.

SGSCA delegation attends 80th Anniversary celebration

In February, SGSCA sent a delegation to Gdynia to participate in the City's celebration of its 80th anniversary. It was an honor for SGSCA to be part of the festivities.

Naming of LOT 787 for City of Gdynia

SGSCA, the City of Gdynia, and the U.S. Embassy in Poland are trying to persuade LOT, the primary Poland airline, to name one of its new Boeing 787 aircraft 'The City of Gdynia'. It is a tradition for LOT to name its large aircraft after Polish cities, and the Embassy staff wants to recognize the sister city relationship between Seattle, the home of Boeing, and Gdynia with this honor. Letters from both the Mayors and U.S. Ambassador will be sent to LOT officials in early 2007.

Special Recognition for SGSCA members

SGSCA members Ron and Martha Golubiec were awarded the Cavalier's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland in honor of their efforts to promote Polish culture abroad. This is an incredible honor given to foreigners of polish civilians by the Polish government. Congratulations, Ron and Martha!

Haiphong

In April, Greater Seattle Vietnam Association (GSVA) Board member visited Haiphong and met with several new government officials. Both sides discussed future opportunities for collaboration between Seattle and Haiphong in business development and friendship.

GSVA hosted visitors from the National Institute of Health and Epidemiology in Hanoi who were attending the Pacific Rim Health Conference in September; a Representative from the Mekong Delta projects August through October; and the filmmaker and lead actress from the new movie 'The Story of Pao' in November.

GSVA organized a fund-raiser for the 'Pig Me to School' program for the Mekong Delta region.

In February, GSVA held a presentation on the HumaniTour (a project of the GSVA) at the Rotary Club of the University District of Seattle. October 24th through November 7th was the 8th HumaniTour Vietnam.

GSVA's ongoing projects include:

- A teaching English program at the Go Vap Orphanage in HCMC
- A program supporting children in the Mekong Delta region with scholarships, school supplies, and clothes.
- 'Pig Me to School' project in the Mekong Delta region

Kaohsiung

In January, Seattle-Kaohsiung Sister City Association (SKSCA) began planning for a Seafair Pirates and sister city visit to Kaohsiung.

A Kaohsiung delegation arrived July which included students from San Hsin High School and Deputy Mayor Tang. During their stay, the SKSCA hosted lunch and dinner parties.

After 12 years, Al and Lyn are stepping down. Nominations were held for new officers and in December an election was held. Natacha Seska is the new president. Al and Lyn will serve as advisors for one year.

Kobe

The Seattle-Kobe Sister City Association had another strong year of events and exchanges with counterparts in Kobe. Annual events included the Kobe Earthquake Remembrance ceremony, kimono dress up booth at the Cherry Blossom Festival, Kobe Day with the Mariners and jazz concerts.

In particular, the association hosted their 2nd annual jazz contest to send two female vocalists to Kobe to perform; the adult and high school winners were well received in Kobe, and Seattle hosted the Kobe contest winner for the 7th time this year. Organizations which played a part in the exchanges were: Dimitriou's Jazz

Alley, Greater Seattle Japanese Community Queen program, Seafair, and the YMCA.

Seattle hosted several small groups of visitors this year, and was pleased to send representatives to the Sister Cities International 50th anniversary conference in Washington D.C. in July.

Seattle and Kobe will be celebrating their 50th anniversary as sister cities and look forward to a year full of celebrations in 2007.

Limbe

Visit to Limbe, Cameroon

Ruberta Alexis, President of the Seattle-Limbe Sister City Association (SLSCA), was genuinely surprised by the overwhelming reception in Limbe and their interest in Seattle. She attended many public and private meetings with various organizations to discuss how we could improve our relationship and offer mutual benefits to both cities.

Limbe Urban Council Library

SLSCA has decided to adopt the library development as our primary project for the year. The library board has a long term plan that includes capital improvements and updating library equipment.

African Sister Cities Open House

This September we joined with Mombasa Sister City to host an Open House. The evening was designed to introduce new members to sister cities and hopefully engage new interest and ideas for recruitment and projects.

Sister Cities International 50th Anniversary Conference

SLSCA was well represented at the conference. The largest African delegation was from Cameroon. Delegate Lifanda's enthusiasm for sister cities has spread to other regional government officials.

Mombasa

During the year 2006, the Seattle African Sister Cities Association (Seattle-Mombasa and Seattle-Limbe) partnered to explore and support several activities that strengthen outreach efforts with partners throughout Africa focusing particularly on Mombasa, Kenya and Limbe, Cameroon. These projects included humanitarian and financial support for:

- The Cameroon Empowerment and Social Development Organization

- The African Sister Cities and Sister Cities International Conference in Washington D.C.
- Seattle serving as one host for Wangari Maathai, Kenyan event at Benaroya Hall.
- Seattle Sister Cities reception
- Seattle Central Area Chamber of Commerce meetings and activities
- African Chamber of Commerce meetings, and
- Seattle Torchlight Parade

Membership support to grid community connections for the Seattle Art Museum, PATH, Global Impact and Africare have expanded group commitment to the networking of these meaningful partnerships!

Nantes

In May, the Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association (SNSCA) participated in the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) as a Community Partner. We sponsored the French film, *A Comedy of Power/L'ivresse du Pouvoir* by Claude Chabrol and were featured as a supporter of the SIFF throughout the Festival.

The Dollars for Scholars program awarded its first scholarships this year. After a hugely successful funds drive in 2005, we were proud to award four students with \$1000.00 scholarships to pursue French studies in Washington. Dollars for Scholars had a fundraiser in October, where they were able to raise 25% of the needed funds to get matching funds for the 2007 program!

In addition, the Goldmark Seattle-Nantes Scholarship awarded 5 scholarships this year to students from Puget Sound who will be studying in Nantes.

A new program was piloted in the fall of 2006 between our two cities. The Young Ambassador Program, which brings a young person from each city to the other for 3-6 months, was initiated to better facilitate projects between our two cities. The goal is to develop an understanding of the "culture" of our cities governments. Seattle's representative, Colton Caruthers, went to Nantes in the fall and Hocine Jouini, from Nantes, came to Seattle after the first of the year.

Also, a new student exchange began in April between West Seattle High School and Lycee Talensac in Nantes.

Pecs

With the help of the \$300 grant received last fall from the Sister Cities Association, the Seattle-Pecs Sister City Association was able to hold the Announced Competition at the Sister Cities Middle School in Pecs. The

challenge for the 6th and 7th grade students was to prepare art work expressing their imagination of their sister city, Seattle.

In August, two students from Pecs University arrived in Seattle for a two week stay. They were hosted by SPSCA families and toured various Seattle and Washington sites.

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, a Hungarian totem pole (Kopjafa) was displayed in the lobby of City Hall and Seattle Council President Nick Licata addressed participants at a noon dedication ceremony.

Zoltan and Maria Kramar traveled to Pecs in October where Zoltan taught two courses at the University of Pecs about American History. Maria visited the Mayor's office and the Sister Cities Middle School during their two month stay.

Perugia

Calendar

Our major project in 2006 was the creation of a beautiful calendar in both English and Italian, with color pictures of both cities in each month, and a short history of SPSCA on the back inside cover. Donna James led this project, with crucial help from local photographer Bob Peterson and graphic designer Gregory Erickson.

Sister City Market

Each year, the six sister cities of Perugia participate in an annual 5-day market held in Perugia. SPSCA gave away a trip for two to Seattle in a raffle. The winners, two young Perugini, made their visit to Seattle in September. Also, in April we hosted Elisabetta and Giorgia, the two winners from 2005.

Books for Ripa

Josie DeLellis and Marty Curry presented several boxes of English language books for the library in Ripa, a small town outside of Perugia that lost its public library a few years ago.

Totem

The City of Perugia commissioned Native American artist Martin Oliver to cast a bronze totem in the shape of an orca fin which will be installed near the major transportation hub of Perugia in 2007. SPSCA is working on transporting the totem to Perugia.

Reykjavik

In March, Seattle-Reykjavik Sister City Association (SRSCA) assisted a group of students from the University of Washington's School of Business Management on the Bothell campus, with a trip to Reykjavik.

SRSCA gave monetary assistance to the Nordic Heritage Museum (NHM) in order to bring the Reykjavik Wind Quintet to perform at the Mostly Nordic Music Series at NHM. Board members hosted the members of the quintet. SRSCA also co-sponsored Leifur Eriksson Day at NHM in October.

SRSCA worked with the Icelandic Tourist Bureau in New York and Trade Commissioner of the Icelandic Consulate in New York regarding Iceland Days. Mayor Greg Nickels proclaimed Icelandic Heritage Days in Seattle, November 1-5, 2006.

Sihanoukville

The Seattle-Sihanoukville Friendship School

The Seattle-Sihanoukville Sister City Association (SSSCA) coordinated with American Assistance for Cambodia and provided funds for a computer instructor to teach at the school for one year.

Takeo High School

SSSCA contributed \$2,000 to complete the construction of three classrooms in this high school.

Starfish Project

SSSCA contributed more than \$2,000 in 2006 to Starfish, a non-profit organization which supports the elderly, those affected by HIV/AIDS, disabled children and adults, the homeless and gravely ill people who need help accessing medical care.

Cambodian New Year Celebration

SSSCA's 11th Annual Cambodian New Year celebration was held at China Harbor. Over 200 people attended and \$2,000 was raised.

Surabaya

The Seattle-Surabaya Sister City Association (SSSCA) co-sponsored the Indonesian Student Association of the University of Washington for Tsunami Relief.

In May, President Kathryn Amundson visited Indonesia to discuss future programs.

SSSCA assisted with the rebuilding of an elementary school due to an earthquake and assisted both Mercy Corps and Yayasan Nurani Dunia with emergency supplies for earthquakes.

In August, SSSCA participated in the annual Seafair parade sister cities float project.

Taejon

The newly elected Mayor of Daejeon (Taejon) Seoung Hyo Park was inaugurated on July 1, 2006. Mayor Nickels and the Taejon-Seattle Sister City Association (TSSCA) sent congratulatory letters to Mayor Park and assured our continuous mutual exchanges in coming years.

A member of city staff of Taejon, Mr. Han Sic Cho, was returning to Taejon after completing his one year Korean Development Institute (KDI) program at Syracuse University in New York. Mr. Cho and his family stopped over in Seattle and TSSCA hosted his visit.

Governor Gregoire led a Trade Mission to South Korea in October. Due to an advanced itinerary, she was unable to visit Taejon. In lieu of her visit, the Governor extended an invitation to Mayor Park for a reception at the American Ambassador's residence in Seoul, Korea.

As in 2005, the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea and the Korean Airlines granted sponsorship for the 2006 Annual Sister City Reception.

Tashkent

2006 was a quiet year for the Seattle-Tashkent Sister City Association (STSCA). Strained relationships between the U.S. and Uzbekistan resulted in little measurable activity between our cities. STSCA focused its efforts on strengthening relations within the community by reaching out to Central Asians now living in the Pacific Northwest.

The highlight of the year was a festive and well attended Novruz (Spring New Years) celebration featuring Uzbek food, dance performances, music, and other festivities.

In the fall, a committee formed to plan a significant celebration in Seattle and Tashkent for 2008 to honor the 35th anniversary of the founding of the sister city relationship.