All of us in Albuquerque Sister Cities (ASCF) are grieved at the enormous loss to the Japanese people from the recent earthquake, tsunami and the ongoing nuclear issues. Many members have expressed this grief in emails and phone calls, wondering what ASCF can do. And, several of you have asked whether our sister city, Sasebo, Japan was affected by the immediate disaster.

Good news! According to ASCF Sasebo chair, Kazumi Kawakubo-Todman, Sasebo Mayor Tomonaga’s office reports that Sasebo has had very little damage from the earthquake, but much appreciates our concern and that which was recently expressed by Mayor Berry’s Office.

In addition, ASCF is reaching out to Japan monetarily. At the March board meeting, ASCF board decided to donate $500 to NMJACL (New Mexico Japanese American Citizens League). NMJACL with the national JACL is joining with Direct Relief International in efforts to support relief and recovery in Japan. 100% of monies donated will go to Japan’s Relief and Recovery Fund.

Continued page 3
March 11, 2011. A day of tragedy for Japan but felt by the entire Sister Cities organization. Over 182 cities in Japan are twined with respective cities in the USA. Our own sister city, Sasebo is thankfully located on the far south-west region of Japan in the Nagasaki Prefecture. Sendai, Japan was not so fortunate, and we mourn for the victims and also express our condolences for Riverside, California who lost many friends in Sendai. Riverside and Sendai have been sister cities for the past 54 years.

Many of you have expressed your personal grief for our Japanese friends. The need will continue for many months and even years. Thus, your board voted to take the next few months to collect any donations you might send marked “Relief,” and pass these donations on to our local chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League at our Annual Meeting. See article page 1 for details on how you can contribute.

What, in the first place, created such a strong relationship over the past five decades between Riverside and Sendai, which subsequently has resulted in equally strong support in Sendai’s hour of need? Riverside gives credit to many different kinds of exchanges between the two cities, which have included the museum, citizen, youth and government sectors. If there is a bright spot in the terrible tragedy it is that the Sister Cities model and the vision that President Eisenhower had for the world to be joined together one city at a time, works.

Here in Albuquerque, we continue to pursue such relationships with our nine sister cities as well as listen to City Hall and our community about what further relationships should be considered. Put on your calendar the September 10 Asian Cultural Celebration (see details on page 4). The city will be a co-sponsor with us and together we will highlight in music and dance our sister cities of Ashgabat, Hualien, Lanzhou and Sasebo.

We are also continuing to meet regularly with the Office of African American Affairs, Dr. Harold Bailey, Executive Director, as we consider the possibility of linking Albuquerque to the African continent. Africa has been getting a lot of attention lately within Sister Cities International. President of the US Africa Sister Cities Foundation, Inc. (www.usac.org) Shirley has agreed to work with us to identify cities in Africa that might be interested in taking the first steps of city-to-city friendship.

Other wonderful events that show how we here in Albuquerque seek to carry-out the city-to-city, people-to-people vision are reported elsewhere in this newsletter; such as our recap of Mayor Berry’s trip to Israel at the subsequent town hall meeting. Meanwhile, we celebrated the Persian New Year thanks to our wonderful Ashgabat committee. Interested in how to be a Sister Cities advocate? Register to attend the April 29-30 state-wide Sister Cities conference hosted by our local organization. We also expect delegations from Mexico, Germany, China and Turkmenistan this year and we will be a co-sponsor with the Albuquerque Council for International Visitors Citizen Diplomacy Day during Balloon Fiesta. Few organizations get the advantage of working with different cultures and organizations, but that is what Sister Cities is all about. Thank you for being a part.

Richard Buckler

Eva Gonzales}

Eva Gonzales is the new Chair of Albuquerque, Spain Committee. She replaces her brother, Ramon Gonzales.

As a native New Mexican, she grew up in Albuquerque. After attending classes at UNM, she decided she wanted to see the world and enlisted in the US Air Force. She spent the next four years in Texas!

Upon her discharge from the Air Force, she traveled to San Francisco where she lived for the next 40 years, marrying and raising her two daughters. While there, she volunteered with the Girl Scouts and the League of Women Voters.

In 2007, she retired from her position as a customer service manager in financial services and moved back to Albuquerque.

Besides being involved with ASCF, she volunteers at the National Hispanic Cultural Center as a docent and in the Foundation Office. She loves to travel, having been to Mexico, Spain, Italy, Greece, Ireland and Russia, with a trip to Guatemala planned this April.

She is excited about promoting the sister cities program and interacting with Albuquerque, Spain.
**Reflections on a Visit to Israel, with Mayor Richard Berry**

Written by Dave Bagley

To enhance economic and cultural exchange between Israel and New Mexico, Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry, along with his wife Maria and son Jacob, visited Israel February 18-24, 2011. During this visit, Mayor Berry participated in the Eilat-Eilot renewable Energy Conference, met with municipal authorities and business and technology leaders, visited Albuquerque’s newest sister city of Rehovot as well as Jewish and Christian sites in Jerusalem.

The Mayor discussed his trip, his impressions of Israel and the culture of the Israeli people at a March 24 Town Hall meeting. He also mentioned possible future technological exchanges between Israel and Albuquerque as a result of his meetings, and he gave his personal reflections of his visit, which was organized and funded by a consortium of individuals from New Mexico’s Jewish and Christian communities.

The Mayor and his family were on the move from the moment their plane landed in Tel Aviv. Their days started early and kept going until midnight! While the mayor attended the Renewable Energy Conference, his wife and 8th grade son visited a local school. Jacob quickly discovered that students in Israel were, except for the language, very much like his friends in Albuquerque. Mayor Berry learned about Israel’s development of desalination facilities, photovoltaic production and solar energy. On related topics, he spoke about the implementation of an electric “smart grid.”

While visiting Rehovot, Mayor Berry met with Mayor Rachamin Maloul. He also toured the famed Weizmann Institute of Science, meeting with several of its directors and discussing the possible ties with Sandia National Laboratory. They also talked about technology transfer, which seems to function much too slowly in both Israel and the U.S.

After his 40 minute presentation at the Ronald Gardenswartz Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque, the mayor answered a variety of questions from the full-house audience of 240 for another 30 minutes.

---

**Cont. Aid to Japan**

ASCF board recognizes that the relief effort in Japan will be a long and ongoing process. Thus, we want to combine the $500 with any donation members might wish to make. Over the next few months up until our annual meeting on June 5, 2011, ASCF will set aside any donations sent to ASCF that are ear-marked for RELIEF. There will also be a final opportunity at our annual meeting to make a donation through ASCF. Upon request, a tax deductible receipt will be given for any and all such donations.

More information about assistance to Japan can be found at ASCF’s website, www.albuquerque-sister-cities.org and clicking on the home page link “Reaching Out to Japan” which takes you to the website of New Mexico’s Honorary Consul General of Japan - Davis Begay. Mr. Begay and his wife Ikuko have been long-time members of ASCF.

---

**THANK YOU**

ASCF wishes to thank Ramon Gonzales for his work as chair of Albuquerque, Spain committee. We welcome Eva Gonzales, Ramon’s sister as the new chair. Ramon will serve as her co-chair.
**SEPTEMBER CONCERT**

*Saturday, September 10, 2011*
*2:00 - 4:30 pm*
*South Broadway Cultural Center*
*1025 Broadway SE*
*Admission is FREE - call ahead for tickets*

*Albuquerque’s concert will feature our Asian sister cities. Tatiana Ventrisnaya (native of Turkmenistan) from the New Mexico School of Music will play the piano. Representing Taiwan, Chaco Lin will have a voice solo accompanied by Pei Pei Chu. They will be followed by Chinese folk dances performed by the Chinese Christian Church and a Pipa soloist from UNM Chinese Student Association. Concluding our Chinese feature will be a Ribbon Dance performed by Lin’s Chinese Cultural Center. Following an intermission with refreshments there will be Japanese music: a Shamisen soloist and Taiko drummers.*

**SISTER CITIES STATE CONFERENCE**

*Friday, April 29, 2011*
*6:00 - 7:30 PM*
*Reception*
*Richard & Mary Hope Buckler’s home - 10100 Isla Place NE*

*Saturday, April 30, 2011*
*9:00 - 1:00 PM*
*Meeting and Lunch with speaker*
*Sandia Labs Federal Credit Union - 3707 Juan Tabo NE*

**Keynote Speaker:** Bernardo Rubenstein, an orchestra conductor, will talk about his travels to Cuba.

*Cost: $10.00    RSVP by April 22*
*Make check payable to NM Sister Cities & send to: 3349 La Avenida de San Marcos - Santa Fe, NM 87507
*** Call Carol Lopez at 505-690-4114*

*Those wishing home stays call Dave Bagley at 771-3114. Closest hotels are near I-40 and Eubank: Econo Lodge, Days Inn, Quality Inn.*

---

**Hong Kong Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs speaks at a Luncheon**

Written by David Hsi

On March 30, 2011, David Hsi, Chair of Lanzhou Committee and Jian Zhu, the co-chair represented ASCF at a luncheon at the Hotel Parq Central hosted by the Albuquerque Economic Development Department. There were some 30 attendees, representing private business and public organizations who have interests in the economic and trade affairs in Hong Kong. Director John Garcia introduced the speaker, Mr. Donald Tong, Hong Kong Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs, USA. Mr. Tong is located in the Washington, D.C. main office. Two other Hong Kong Economic offices are situated in New York City and San Francisco. Director Jeff Leung and Deputy Director Wendy Au of the San Francisco office were also present as they are responsible for New Mexico business contacts. Other dignitaries, Lt. Governor John Sanchez representing Governor Martinez and Albuquerque Mayor Berry made brief welcoming remarks before Mr. Tong’s talk. His power point presentation included an overview of the vitality of Hong Kong’s robust economy, business opportunities and the target industries of Hong Kong. According to Mr. Tong, their favorable political and economic environment offered great potential for foreign direct investment. He also mentioned the similarities in priority industries between Hong Kong and New Mexico such as innovation and technology, clean environmental industries, and creative and cultural businesses. These similarities and other common interests in tourism and professional services will lead to further collaboration in economic development between Hong Kong and Albuquerque and between Hong Kong and New Mexico.
Early March 3, Richard Buckler and I boarded a bus for Capitol Hill. Here we received Advocacy training. We were told that it was critical for congressional delegates to hear from their constituents before making budget decisions about public diplomatic efforts such as Sister Cities. We then went for our appointment at Senator Tom Udall’s office. We met with his Legislative Assistant, Matthew Padilla and presented advocacy information and materials to give to the Senator. Next stop was the House of Representative Office Building and Congressman Martin Heinrich’s office. Here we met with Heinrich’s Senior Legislative Assistant, Tony Samp and gave him some advocacy materials for the Congressman. We did have the opportunity to briefly meet with Congressman Heinrich, who came into his office at a break from a Congressional meeting. Last stop for the day was the U.S. State Department where we received some more briefings by U.S. State Dept. officials.

The opening plenary session on March 4 was led by Carbondale, IL Mayor Brad Cole, Chairman of Sister Cities International board. Because of the sizable grant received by SCI from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, considerable program emphasis was placed on urban relief in Africa. Out of 20 countries represented, over one third came from Africa, nearly one third from Asia and the rest from Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Israel, Russian Federation but none from EU countries.

I am glad to report that I heard many favorable comments about the SCI conference held in Albuquerque last year.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Fri. & Sat. April 29 & 30, 2011 - New Mexico Sister Cities State Conference - see page 4

Thursday, May 19, 2011 - ASCF Board Meeting - Sandia Labs Federal Credit Union - 3707 Juan Tabo NE - 5:45 pm - All welcome

June 3 - 11, 2011 - Delegation coming here from Turkmenistan with Open World Program.

Sunday, June 5, 2011 - ASCF Annual Meeting - 12:30 pm - Evergreen Buffet - see insert

July 8 - 18, 2011 - ASCF youth trip to Helmstedt, Germany

Sat. September 10, 2011 - September Concert - South Broadway Cultural Center - 2 pm - see page 4

Sept. 30 - Oct. 1, 2011 - Sister Cities Regional Conference - Riverside, California. If interested in attending, contact Richard Buckler 259-7392 - see page 7

October 24 - 31, 2011 - ASCF trip to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. For more information, contact Ashgabat Chair Oguljan Young at 803-0247

July 2012 - ASCF youth trip to Sasebo, Japan

Friendship Force of NM Honors David & Kathy HSI

The Friendship Force of New Mexico presented the Del Valdez Lifetime Membership Award to David and Kathy Hsi. This is an award made to FFNM members who have made an outstanding contribution in furthering the goals and objectives of Friendship Force. David Hsi has been a member of FFNM for 23 years and was president from 2001-2002. He hosted the SW Regional Conference during his term. Also, he led and translated for 38 ambassadors on an exchange to China.

David is a past president of ASCF and current Chair of Lanzhou, China committee.

Book Presentation at Nowruz Luncheon.
L. to R: Alana McGrattan, Steve Harris, Olivia Baca, Dean Smith and Oguljan Young

Releasing of “Birds of Peace” by Hakim Zamir
SCI Honorary Board Member, Elena Lu Goes to China

written by Elena Lu

As an SCI Honorary Board member from Albuquerque, I was asked to represent SCI at the 2010 China International Friendship Cities Conference in Shanghai, China. The theme was “City Cooperation Leads to a Better Life” and was held from September 8 - 12 by the China International Friendship-Cities Association (CIFCA) & Shanghai Municipal Government. The conference included a total of 372 representative from local government organizations and friendship-city organizations from 47 different countries and 145 local government officials from across 32 provinces.

Attending the opening ceremony and giving keynote speeches at the panel discussions were Shanghai Mayor Han Zheng and other VIP’s from local governments. Foreign guests included former US President Jimmy Carter, former French Prime Minister Alain Marie Juppe and former Togolese Prime Minister Edem Kodjo. In their speeches, Carter and Juppe spoke highly of the efforts made by the CIFCA for promoting international friendship-city ties and enhancing friendship among the people of the world. Carter said countries all across the world currently face difficulties and challenges such as climate change, shortage of resources, urban poverty, cultural friction, war, disease, etc. The solution to these issues needs to include contributions from countries around the world, transcending national boundaries. Closely linked, they make greater joint efforts and strengthen cooperation so that together, they realize peace and sustainable development of the world. The friendship cities conference provided a good platform for these exchanges. After the conference, jimmy Carter met with the 10 US delegates in his hotel suite.

PAYPAL is Coming!

ASCF has made arrangements with Paypal so that you can pay your membership online. Expect to see the link on the membership page of ASCF website www.albuquerque-sister-cities.org within the next few weeks. Special thanks to ASCF member, Andrew Jaffe for programming the Paypal interface.

SCI Fall Regional Conference - Riverside, CA

Fri. Sept 30  7 PM -9:30 PM
Sat. Oct. 1  7 AM - 9:00 PM

Purpose: To bring together indivuals and organizations to discuss citizen diplomacy. Youth groups are being encouraged to participate.

More information is available on SCI website (www.sister-cities.org/regionalconference/)

ASCF is tentatively planning on sending youth as well as ASCF adult members to the conference.
In This Issue... Celebrating “Nowruz” Turkmen style - ASCF sends aid to Japan - Mayor visits Rehovot, Israel

WEBSITE: WWW.ALBUQUERQUE-SISTER-CITIES.ORG
Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation

ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2011        12:30 pm

Evergreen Buffet - 11001 Menaul Blvd. NE

Entertainment - Chinese dancers

Cost: $5.00 ASCF Members      Deadline for reservations: Wed. June 1, 2011
    $10.00 Non Members

Board Member Election
Nominating Committee recommends:
    President and 1st Vice President are elected for 2 year terms and were
    elected last year.
    2nd Vice President - Carol Dawley
    3rd Vice President - Dave Bagley
    Secretary - Mary Hope Buckler
    Treasurer - Carl Londene

RSVP to: Albuquerque Sister Cities
        PO Box 26533
        Albuquerque, NM 87125-6533

Name(s): _____________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City, State and Zip Code: ____________________________________________

E-mail: ___________________________________ Telephone ___________________

Number attending: Member ________ Non-Member_______

Amount enclosed (checks payable to ASCF): ___________________________