



Around Our World

ROANOKE VALLEY SISTER CITIES, INC.

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President's report: Reaching our goals for RVSCI



By Mary Jo Fassie
President, RVSCI
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During my first year as the president of Roanoke Valley Sister Cities, I have tried to keep in mind the seven goals that I set forth last July, when our fiscal year began. Many of these goals will soon be realized and others will be ongoing into our next fiscal year.

Having already updated our newsletter, added a new banner and display board and ordered RVSCI T-shirts, we will soon have a new website and brochure, which have

occupied much of my time the past few months. Our internships are expanding, and we plan to have two Roanoke College interns in 2016-17 with the hopes of offering more internships abroad. The medical exchanges with Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine will soon expand to Florianópolis, Brazil. At the International Sister Cities Conference in Washington, D.C., this summer, I hope to be able to network with other leaders to gather ideas for our organization and to share what we do as well. In addition, we will continue to collaborate with Local Colors and reach out to the Roanoke Valley with our presence at festivals and community gatherings.

In 2016, we have been delighted to greet visitors from Lijiang, Wonju and Florianópolis and will be sending a group to St-Lô in June. During this school year, Rachel Stauffer has successfully re-established the exchange between Ferrum College and Pskov State University. Making international connections is our raison d'être, and Sister Cities provides a network for people of different cultures to exchange ideas, to increase world understanding, to share experiences, to travel to foreign lands and to make new friends here and abroad.

(Continued on Page 2)



Our updated RVSCI brochure was designed by Joseph Mackereth, marketing manager at Center in the Square, and his staff.

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To accomplish the RVSCI goals, I have been busy with our mission as I ...

January

- Attended the Kisumu gathering at the African art exhibit at the Taubman Museum.
- Greeted the Lijiang delegation at City Hall and at the Sheraton Hotel dinner.
- Prepared a new display board for RVSCI.
- Met with John Makay several times to work on the Roanoke city and county grants.
- Attended the Florianópolis luncheon at Luigi's restaurant.
- Met with our RVSCI intern, Blair Gloe, to discuss her role this semester.

February

- Made a power point presentation to Roanoke City Council.
- Participated in the Roanoke College Internship Fair.
- Met with Joseph Mackereth and Ann Hackworth at CITS about the RVSCI brochure.
- Consulted with Sarah Mayhew about the RVSCI website.
- Attended the St-Lô potluck at the Henshaws' home.
- Presided over an executive board meeting at CITS.
- Attended a book signing at the National D-Day Memorial for author Linda Hervieux.



Mary Jo and Jean Broyles welcome Local Colors visitors to the RVSCI welcome / information booth in May.

March

- Met with Professor Chad Morris to discuss his role as guest speaker at the annual dinner.
- Consulted with Bill Bestpitch and Bill Modica about needed changes to the bylaws.
- Met with Pskov chairwoman Rachel Stauffer to discuss possible visit from Pskov.
- Attended a book talk and signing by author John Guzowski at the South County Library.
- Met with Anne-Marie Green to discuss RVSCI matters.
- Collaborated with Jean Broyles and Joseph Mackereth on the dinner program.

April

- Met with Ann Hackworth to discuss the first draft of the brochure.
- Ordered the RVSCI T-shirts at King Screen.
- Consulted with the Roanoke College chef and staff about menu for the annual dinner.
- Was filmed at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine as I spoke about the medical exchange.
- Met with the Wonju committee to discuss possible programs.
- Prepared flags and decorations for the annual dinner.
- Attended the VTCSOM international student forum about foreign medical experiences.
- Presided over the annual dinner meeting at Roanoke College.

May

- Designed and ordered a banner for RVSCI.
- Continued to work on brochure and website with developers.
- Set up the RVSCI display at Local Colors with Jean Broyles.
- Submitted the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs form on time.

Interns feel 'honored to continue this friendship'

By Drs. Katie Gambale,
Russell Trigonis and Julia Selfridge
VTCSoM Class of 2016



Katie Gambale and Russell Trigonis pose at the Fernand Léger mural at the Centre Hospitalier Mémorial France-Etats-Unis de Saint-Lô.

The connection between Roanoke and Saint-Lô goes way back to World War II and the battles of D-Day along the Normandy beaches. It is known that a troop of U.S. soldiers led by a man from Western Virginia was actually the group of men who helped liberate Saint-Lô from German occupation, following its almost complete destruction due to the Allied bombings. The U.S. helped the French rebuild the city, and in particular the hospital, after the war.

We were so honored to be able to continue this friendship.

The sister city program between our two cities is mostly why we had SUCH a great time on our trip. The folks from the Sister Cities program (they call it the "twinning" in Saint-Lô) were the most welcoming people we've ever met! They were happy to volunteer days of their time to drive us around and teach us about their beautiful home. We loved getting to know them and spending time with them during the weeks we spent in Saint-Lô.

The medical aspect of the rotations was also very educational. We were somewhat surprised to see that the medical treatments and procedures are very similar there. We were greatly impressed by the hospital facilities. We also really loved getting to work alongside medical students and residents during our rotations. The rotations the three of us did there were: Emergency Medicine, EMS (called "SAMU" there),



Katie Gambale (right) has continued her friendship with a French medical student whom she met while they both worked in the emergency department at the Saint-Lô hospital.

Internal Medicine, Anesthesiology, Gynecology, Vascular Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, and Visceral Surgery. In general, the medical teams were very welcoming toward us and allowed us to participate just as we would have in a U.S. rotation.

Lastly, we can't emphasize enough how grateful we are for the friendships we developed while in Saint-Lô. We continue to chat weekly with one of the medical students we got to work with in the Emergency Department. We will never forget the kindness that the Sister Cities group showed us during our visit, and we would love to return the favor in the future if any of them visit the U.S.

We feel lucky and honored to have had this opportunity! Thank you!



The medical students raved about this dinner they were treated to by members of the Saint-Lô 44 - Roanoke association. The menu starred a countless variety of Norman cheeses.

VTCSoM students' report from Wonju

Students enjoy 'eclectic' medical experience and traditional culture

By Drs. Omer Abdul-Hamid, Scott Call,
Eric Kim, Varun Razdan
VTCSoM Class of 2016



The Roanoke-based medical school students pose at the entrance to the Yonsei University Wonju College of Medicine.

In 2009, Kye Kim, a member of the Roanoke Valley Sister Cities, traveled to Wonju, South Korea, with the founding dean and other faculty members of the Virginia Tech Carilion

School of Medicine to help set up an exchange program with the Yonsei University Wonju College of Medicine. Eric Kim, a senior at the University of Virginia at the time, went to Wonju to visit his father, Kye Kim, and met the VTCSoM faculty for the first time. Little did Eric know that he would be back.

Seven years later, in the spring of 2016, fourth-year medical student Eric Kim, along with fellow VTCSoM medical students Omer Abdul-Hamid, Varun Razdan and Scott Call, traveled to Wonju to participate in that same international program. During the month-long visit, the students rotated in various departments of the hospital including gastroenterology, hematology/oncology, neurology,

interventional radiology and endocrinology.

They learned about the South Korean health-care system, the medical education system, and how cultural differences affect health risk and health-care delivery for South Koreans. They happened to be in the country during the Korean New Year and did sightseeing in Seoul with Eric's family.

While in Wonju, the students met with several Wonju community members who are involved with the Roanoke-Wonju Sister City relationship, including Dr. Heon Kook Kim, a private practice orthopedic surgeon. Many of the community members traveled to Roanoke in October 2014 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Sister Cities.

Here are their reflections from their Wonju experience:

Reception/Integration:

When we arrived in South Korea, we were warmly received by a number of individuals associated with the school, hospital, and sister city program. One student was generous enough to drive two hours from Wonju in order to greet us at Incheon international Airport, while another student graciously helped us get settled when we reached the Wonju campus. Within a few days, we met dozens of students, residents, professors, area physicians, city officials, and sister city committee members.



Eric Kim poses with one of his Wonju mentors.

Clinical Experience:

Our experiences in the hospital were eclectic. We were able to see the entire spectrum of medicine, including general medicine and pediatric inpatient care, outpatient oncology and infectious disease

evaluations, and specialized interventional radiology procedures. We were immediately struck by some key differences in South Korea's health-care system. First and foremost, there was a premium placed on efficiency and cost-management. Physician-patient

VTCSoM students' report from Wonju, continued

interactions typically lasted less than 3-4 minutes, even in the outpatient arena. Second, patients appeared far more active than their American counterparts. Whether because of the tight quarters or a fundamental difference in behavioral norms, patients were frequently seen out of their rooms, grooming, socializing, and generally making the best of an otherwise unpleasant hospital stay. Third, attending physicians were afforded a level of deference not normally seen in academic medical centers in the States. The physician took the lead during most encounters, with the residents providing support and the medical students watching vigilantly.

Cultural Experience:

Over the course of four weeks, we were introduced to many aspects of traditional Korean culture. In addition to culinary staples such as kimchi and bibimbap, we tried Korean galbi (BBQ), bulgogi, and even sannakji (raw octopus), often with a side of mekju (beer) or soju. Because our trip coincided with the Lunar New Year, we were able to witness and participate in Sebeh, the traditional bowing ceremony performed as a gesture of respect to family



The students were in Korea during the New Year's holiday and did sightseeing in Seoul with Eric Kim's family.

elders. We also had the opportunity to see several attractions in the capital city of Seoul over the long holiday, including N Seoul Tower, the popular Nanta Musical Knives show, the bustling Insadong market, the international neighborhood of Itaewon, as well as the world-famous Gangnam District (popularized by Korean entertainer Psy).

Sister City Connection:

Throughout our stay, we were frequently reminded of the special connection between Wonju and Roanoke. The sister city connection was well known to students, residents, and faculty at Yonsei University, many of whom had either been to Roanoke or hoped to travel there in the future. We also had the distinct honor of dining with several members of the sister city committee on more than one occasion. They welcomed us with open arms, beaming smiles and Napa Valley wine. We immediately felt at home.

Future Plans:

The students graduated from VTCSoM on May 7, 2016. Omer will begin a child neurology residency at the University of Tennessee-Memphis, Scott will train at the Internal Medicine-Pediatrics residency at the University of Cincinnati, Eric will train as a radiologist at the University of Chicago, and Varun will train as a radiologist at the University of Wisconsin.



A lighter moment with young hospital staffers.



This postcard shows the hospital in the foreground and, in the background, the snowy mountains outside of downtown Wonju.

Exchanges extend to nursing students and dancers

By Brian Counihan, chairman
(540) 330-0203, brian@communityhigh.net

As we enter our summer months, I would like to hear from anyone who would like to work on developing a student exchange trip to Wonju in the summer of 2017, or in helping start cultural programs such as Korean language study, Korean book club, Korean film/K-drama club or anything else that you may be interested in. None of these can happen without a group of volunteers willing to help.

In February, four Korean nursing students from Yonsei University's College of Medicine in Wonju visited Radford University for two weeks. The students attended nursing classes at Radford and made six clinical visits to hospitals and rehab centers in Roanoke and Radford.

Radford University assistant nursing professors Linda Ely and Eunyong Lee will lead a spring 2017 return trip to study the Korean health care delivery system. The nursing



As part of their cultural exchange, four Korean nursing students joined their Radford University colleagues, nursing faculty and friends for a dinner and Super Bowl watch party. Photo courtesy of Radford University

students at Radford University need financial assistance. Many students are the first generation of their family to attend college, and some have never been outside Virginia. This trip could change their lives. If you belong to an organization that would like to help, Radford University's nursing program will recognize sponsorship on related printed materials.

The city of Wonju has invited any interested dance groups from the Roanoke Valley to participate

in its Dynamic festival, from Sept. 6 - 11. The festival has its origins in military marching tattoo, but now has expanded to feature the largest K-Pop street party in Korea. The city of Wonju has offered to provide three nights' hotel accommodation, three meals a day for three days, transportation to and from Incheon International airport, and a one-day tour of Wonju to groups willing to participate. The deadline for application is June 20. Contact me for details.

A new member has a family in Kisumu

By Bill Modica, chairman
modicabill2@aol.com



Bill Modica staffs the Roanoke-Kisumu booth at Local Colors.

The Roanoke-Kisumu Sister City group participated in the Local Colors festival again this year. We had a display table, manned by Bill Modica and Tom Cain, with our sister city's flag and various artifacts. We were joined by a new member, Ruphina Okeyo, who is from the Kisumu area and still has family living there. She also marched in the festival's Parade of Nations on our behalf. We are looking forward to contacting all the folks who stopped by and expressed interest in joining.



Ruphina Okeyo, seen here during the Parade of Nations at Local Colors, is from the Kisumu area.

A return visit by Brazilian friends caps our spring

By Linda Harrison, co-chairwoman
lindaharrison29@hotmail.com



Linda Harrison (in hat) hosts the Roanoke-Florianópolis booth at Local Colors with member Joslaine Austin and her children Sammy and Vanessa.

On May 17, Roanoke-Florianópolis members Mike and Marilia Diesenroth had a lovely dinner and visit at Bill Modica's home in Salem. The Diesenroths – who split their time between their homes in Brazil

and Virginia -- had hosted Linda and Bill at their home in Florianopolis for two weeks at the end of November. She is an excellent chef, and they were very generous with their time, home, knowledge, car and hospitality. To partially return their hospitality, Bill served a delicious dinner and gave a tour of his gardens.

On May 21, friends of the Florianopolis Sister City participated in the parade and booth display at the annual Local Colors festival. Joslaine Austin, her three children and friend marched in the Parade of Nations. Co-chairwoman Norma Jean Peters, Bill Modica, Joslaine Austin and children, one of our Brazilian member families and Marilia and Mike Diesenroth helped with our display booth. The rain held off, and we were able to talk to interested

festivalgoers all day.

In July, Linda Harrison is going to the Sister City International conference in Washington, D.C., to get some good ideas for our committee. We invite all of our members to come to the Bastille Day potluck picnic July 17, 5-7 p.m., at Longwood Park in Salem.



Linda Harrison (from left), Marilia Diesenroth, Joslaine Austin and Mike Diesenroth pose during a dinner party at Bill Modica's home.

Student exchanges are going full force

By Rachel Stauffer, chairwoman
rachelstauffer@gmail.com

We have initiated conversations with Pskov about a possible visit by a delegation to Roanoke as soon as October 2016. However, the current economic situation in Russia and the upcoming September elections in Pskov are creating a bit of uncertainty, so we have not definitively moved forward with these plans yet. I hope to visit Pskov again this summer, and I remain optimistic that continued dialogue will lead to more specific plans for the future.



Roanoke-Pskov chairwoman Rachel Stauffer hopes to visit Pskov again this summer.

The exchange relationship with Ferrum College and Pskov State University is in full swing, though. Elizaveta Vasileva enjoyed the spring

2016 semester at Ferrum, where she assisted with Russian language conversation classes and completed coursework in the arts, literature and health. Michelle Ecklund, a fourth-year Ferrum student majoring in environmental science and Russian, will return to Ferrum in the fall semester after spending the spring in Pskov, and we are eager to hear all about her experience.

Ferrum will host another student from Pskov State University in the fall semester, and Rachel Swyhart, a fourth-year Ferrum student majoring in English and minoring in Russian, will spend the fall semester in Pskov.

Continuing connections with D-Day vets and Norman medical professionals

By Cammie Williams, chairwoman
crwilliams@rcs.k12.va.us

The first half of 2016 has flown by for the Saint-Lô Sister City committee. The snow cooperated for us on Feb. 21, and we had a lovely potluck at the home of members Tim and Sherrie Henshaw, who prepared an authentic Boeuf Bourignon.

The next day we sponsored a reception at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford for Linda Hervieux, author of "Forgotten: The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War." The author came to Bedford to give a lecture about her book in commemoration of Black History Month. (Detailed information about the book can be found at lindahervieux.com.) That evening we also heard a first-hand



Adrienne B., her little sister and Paige Garner marched in the Parade of Nations for us during Local Colors. Adrienne and Paige are French students from William Byrd High School.

account from one of the book's featured soldiers, William Dabney, who is from Roanoke and was a member of the Army's 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion. (This battalion was the first black unit in the segregated American army to come ashore on D-Day.) Now in his 90s and a recipient of the French Legion of Honour, Mr. Dabney enthralled the audience with his stories and acuity.

We are grateful for the relationship that has developed between Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and the Centre Hospitalier Mémorial France-Etats-Unis in Saint-Lô. In February and March, three Roanoke-based medical students shadowed doctors in Saint-Lô and returned to share lessons learned in the VTCSom international experience student forum on April 28, which many of us attended. While the students found medical practices in France similar, they were interested that a doctor and nurse went directly from the hospital to meet emergency patients and determine needs for future treatment. A Roanoke College student, Kate Yakuboff, also went to Saint-Lô in May to shadow nurses. All reported how kindly they were welcomed by Jeanine Vérove and others who showed them around Saint-Lô and Normandy. The report back to Roanoke was equally enthusiastic from the French who met them.

This summer, Emily Hadfield is representing our committee as an intern in Normandy, and she will



Author Linda Hervieux and D-Day Veteran, William Dabney.

work with various English classes at the Institut Saint-Lô. Family from her previous hosts, la famille Anne, graciously met her in Paris and got her to Saint-Lô. We look forward to hearing more soon about her experiences, which are tailor-made to her English as a Second Language studies at James Madison University.

Local Colors 2016 was blessed by a break in the ongoing spring rain. Although our contingent was small (thank you to the Hackworths, Yvonne Gravely, Darlene Wade and students from William Byrd for coming out to staff our booth and represent us in the Parade of Nations), we met many folks interested in discussing the history of our local veterans and our active exchange programs.

Our annual Bastille Day picnic is scheduled for July 17, 5 p.m., at Longwood Park in Salem. All are welcome!

Poet's memoir is powerful and deeply moving

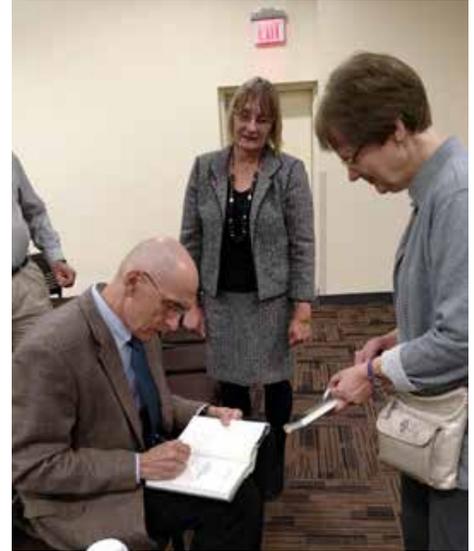
By Kris Slowikowski, chairwoman
krisbulas@cox.net

On March 31, John Guzowski, professor emeritus of English literature at Eastern Illinois University, presented a moving reading of his book of poetic memoirs, "Echoes of Tattered Tongues: Memory Unfolded," at the South County Library. His theme was the little-mentioned group of slave laborers, multinational and multiethnic, who toiled in German concentration camps during World War II. Guzowski's Polish-born parents were both slave laborers. They and others worked in fields and factories performing work to supply the German army machine. They lived in conditions similar to those

described at Dachau and suffered many of the same horrors as those in Nazi extermination camps.

Poetry stirs emotion, and Guzowski's words were powerful and deeply moving, illustrating images of the fight for survival that the post WWII generation has not experienced; yet as history repeats itself, can be applied to the current refugee crisis.

Roanoke-Opole sold its festival-favorite Polish kielbasa at Local Colors this May. Rain thankfully held off allowing the crowds to enjoy one of the best festivals of the season. Many thanks to our Polish community for help with grilling and transporting supplies.



Poet and author John Guzowski signs copies of his book as Kris Slowikowski and Mary Jo Fassie look on.

Renewing ties with our Chinese counterparts

By Rebecca Chang, chairwoman
salemki@aol.com



Rebecca Chang (standing second from right) and several international students from Roanoke College performed "The Jasmine Flower" during the Chinese New Year's celebration at the Taubman Museum of Art. The dancers are (standing, from left) Giylisha Cena, Amy Tyeryar, Chiara Legrenzi, Angela He, Rebecca Chang, Josephine Dennis and (in front) Brenda Prieto-Velazquez.

On Jan. 15, a delegation from Lijiang visited Roanoke to renew our commitment as sister cities and to sign the Sister Cities agreement in City Hall. In the evening, the city of Roanoke hosted a banquet at the Sheraton Hotel to welcome the delegation. With about 50 guests representing Roanoke Valley government, businesses and cultural groups, the banquet was a warm and successful event. The delegation also visited downtown Roanoke and the Mill Mountain Star.

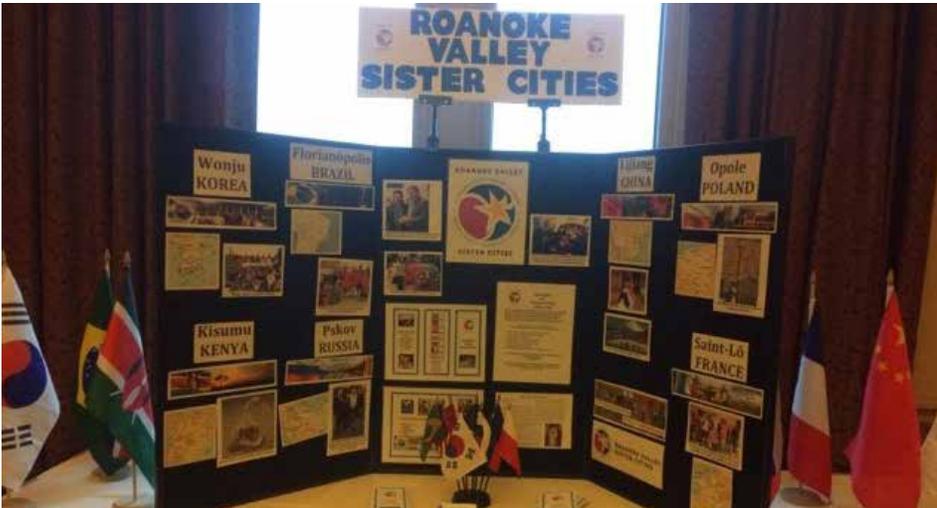
The Chinese delegation and the Roanoke-Lijiang committee discussed plans for exchange programs. The Roanoke-Lijiang committee will contact Lijiang Teacher's College

about possible exchange activities with students from Roanoke College's Chinese language classes. In the summer of 2017, the Roanoke-Lijiang committee plans to take American musicians to Lijiang to perform Western classical music. The committee is also organizing a trip to Lijiang in the near future.

In February, for the fifth year, the Roanoke-Lijiang committee participated in the Chinese New Year's celebration at the Taubman Museum of Art. This year, the international students from Roanoke College performed a Chinese dance, "The Jasmine Flower." The committee plans to work with more students in future activities.

Annual Dinner

Highlights from our annual dinner, April 30, 2016



A new display board for RVSCI.



Roanoke Mayor David Bowers and his wife, Margarita Cubas, joined us for the evening.



Opera Roanoke apprentices take a bow after their lovely performance: singers Molly Cox and Dustin Odum, and pianist Charlotte von Claparede-Crola.



Sherrie and Tim Henshaw catch up on St-Lô news with Darlene Wade.



Chad Morris, associate professor of anthropology at Roanoke College, presented a wonderful talk that gave us food for thought with his topic of "From Olík to Irió: Finding Meaning in the Food We Eat."



RVSCI President Mary Jo Fassié greeted the guests in all seven languages of our sister cities.

International Buffet Menu:

Caesar salad

Porcini Asiago (penne with mushrooms)

Chicken tikka masala with cilantro chutney and raita

Basmati rice and Mediterranean sautéed vegetables

Yeast rolls with butter

Coffee and tea

Italian lemon cream cake with berries

Roanoke College tarte au chocolat

RVSCI's new mission statement

The following was approved at the RVSCI Annual Dinner:

Roanoke Valley Sister Cities is committed to fostering and encouraging mutual understanding, friendship and peace through cultural, medical, economic, educational and professional exchanges among the people of the Roanoke Valley and the citizens of our seven sister cities on four continents.

RVSCI Corporate Board Members

President: Mary Jo Fassié

Vice President: Bill Bestpitch

Secretary: Jean Broyles

Treasurer: Wayne Firebaugh

Members at large:

Anne-Marie Green

Dr. Cynda Johnson

John Makay

Sister City Chairmen:

Florianopolis: Linda Harrison & Norma Jean Peters

Kisumu: Bill Modica

Lijiang: Rebecca Chang

Opole: Dr. Kristina Bulas-Slowikowski

Pskov: Rachel Stauffer

St-Lô: Cammie Williams

Wonju: Brian Counihan

Contact us at: roanokevalleysistercities@gmail.com

Save the date!



RVSC Summer Bastille Day Potluck Picnic

July 17, 2016

5-7 p.m.

Longwood Park

Shelter No. 4.

Please RSVP to Peggy Wells

by July 13, 989-0218

Annual Membership - Roanoke Valley Sister Cities

New Renewal July 1, 20____ - June 30, 20____

Cities: Wonju Kisumu Pskov Florianopolis Opole Lijiang St-Lo

Student: \$10 - one city ___ # cities x \$10 = _____

Individual \$15 - one city ___ # cities x \$15 = _____

Family \$30 - one city ___ # cities x \$30 = _____

Example: 7 cities x \$15 = \$105

Other Levels: Patron \$50 | Benefactor \$100 | Diplomat \$250 | Consul \$500 | Ambassador \$1,000

Specify for: RVSCI Corporate \$ _____ &/or for: City or Cities checked above: \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ Check # _____ Date _____

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

Tel (home) _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Make check payable to **Roanoke Valley Sister Cities** | Mail to **RVSCI - P.O. Box 136 - Roanoke, VA 24002**

All gifts/donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. RVSCI is a 501c3 - Fed ID #51-0246592

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