



Around Our World

ROANOKE VALLEY SISTER CITIES, INC.

Volume 18, Issue 2

January 2015–April 2015

“Seven Goals for Seven Sister Cities”

Mary Jo Fassié, Pres. RVSCI



*Dr. Downs & Mary Jo Fassié
passing Presidency Gavel.*

In order to prepare for my new role as President of RVSCI, my first initiative has been to meet with each sister city chairman to find out their needs and problems, to get their suggestions and to give them an idea of my vision and expectations. Having been chair of St-Lô for eleven years and vice-chair before that, I understand the challenges that face each of them. I hope that my experience, the strong presence of the seven chairpersons and our corporate board will guide me in my new administrative role.

I have set some expectations for myself and for RVSCI. Many of these are based on the goals of Sister Cities International [SCI], but others are particular to Roanoke. Our most far-reaching objective is membership. In order to increase membership, we must increase community visibility and personal contacts, while encouraging exchanges and regular communication with sister cities' members in Roanoke Valley, across Southwest Virginia and our “partners” abroad.

Here are the goals I would like RVSCI to implement over the next few years:

- Encourage and facilitate sister city internships for university students both here and abroad with local businesses, schools and non-profits.
- Continue to expand medical internships in cooperation with Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine [VTCOM] and Jefferson College of Health Sciences [JCHS].
- Develop and maintain municipal partnerships between Roanoke and our 7 sister cities as we identify, implement and sustain collaborative projects.
- Provide opportunities for diverse communities of Roanoke Valley to experience and explore other cultures through reciprocal cultural, educational and professional exchanges via activities and programs.
- Collaborate with organizations in Roanoke and our sister city countries that share similar goals.
- Network with other sister city organizations in the USA associated with SCI to share and discover new ideas.
- Promote the mission of RVSCI via social media, our newsletter “Around Our World” [AOW] and an updated brochure and website.

That makes *seven* goals for our *seven* sister cities! With continual inspiring help of dedicated chairpersons, directors and corporate board, we will move forward in the spirit of SCI promoting peace and cultural awareness – “one individual, one community at a time.”

MJF

“Echanges au Printemps: Medical à St-Lô et Artistique à Roanoke”
Mary Jo Fassié, outgoing chairwoman, new RVSCI president



Sohani Nagrani (center) surrounded by some of his colleagues in St-Lô.

Promoting exchanges here and abroad has helped to invigorate the twinning relationship between St-Lô and Roanoke. Even if the exchange involves only one person, this brings the whole committee together and even helps to draw in new members.

In the spring, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine fourth-year student Sohani Nagrani went to St-Lô to experience health care à la française. Sohani completed rotations in several departments: radiology, ER medicine, ICU, dialysis, neurology, physical medicine and rehab and family medicine. Most of his medical experiences there were organized by Thierry Lugbull, director of L'Hôpital Mémorial in St-Lô, who had visited Roanoke a few years ago to establish a strong exchange relationship.

While in Normandy, Sohani gave presentations about the U.S. health care system to the nursing staff and faculty at the L'Hôpital Mémorial in St-Lô and to medical students at the Université

de Caen. He noted several differences between the French and American medical studies:

- Six years of medical school immediately after high school (compared to our 4 years of college + 4 years of medical school in U.S.)
- 25 percent pass rate for exam during first year and student-ranking exam during fifth year (comparable to our Step exams in U.S.)
- Tuition and fees of less than \$1,000 per year (compared to \$50,000 per year in the U.S.)”]

In addition, Sohani learned notable differences in French medicine:

- Disease prevalence, such as less heart disease in France but more liver disease than in the U.S.
- Some diagnostic tests for patients are different, such as MRI for strokes in U.S.
- General practitioners make “home-calls” on patients in their homes in France.
- Medical teams in the hospital are less hierarchical
- Work is completed in a relaxed fashion with coffee and lunch breaks.

Sohani wants to express appreciation and thanks to the Saint-Lô twinning committee members for greeting him and inviting him into their homes. While in Normandy, he was also able to see the vestiges of the rich history of this area and hopes to return. We wish him good luck as he climbs the training ladder. He heads to Baltimore for one year of Preliminary Internal Medicine, then to Brooklyn for Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, and finally he plans to enter a Sports Medicine fellowship. Then a practice!

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Artist Cornelia Marin at the Wilson Hughes gallery in downtown Roanoke.

In late April, St-Lô artist Cornelia Marin returned to Roanoke to present her new exhibit, *Robes à Fleurs*, and to connect with the Roanoke community. Graciously hosted by Brenda Barksdale, Cornelia’s visit was planned by Brenda and members of the St-Lô board.

The Taubman Museum of Art [TMA] invited Cornelia to be part of the “Monster Art” rally on April 30 and the “Spectacular Saturday” event May 2. On May 1, Wilson Hughes Gallery opened its doors for “Art by Night” with tableaux from Cornelia’s exhibit along with a reception for the artist.

Her *Robes à Fleurs* exhibit continued until May 10 at the gallery and at the Wildflower restaurant on Fourth Street, accompanied by *real* dresses that Cornelia embellished with her art, modeled

by women from Roanoke. A fashion show of the dresses at the Wildflower on May 4 featured these creative works. Cornelia’s visit culminated with a visit to William Byrd High School [WBHS], where she painted with art students and shared with them her special artistic experiences.

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These two exchanges were not only successful they were a wonderful way to educate, share, connect and promote RVSCI as an important cultural asset, especially St.-Lô as very alive sister city. Community members on both sides of the Atlantic benefited from these experiences and new bonds of friendship were created, providing prosperity and peace through person-to-person “citizen diplomacy.” MJF



Cornelia took part in the “Monster Art” rally and “Spectacular Saturday” event at the Taubman Museum of Art.

“Generous Gift Reboots Our Exchange Program”

Brian Counihan, chair.

It has been a couple of years since we have had students visit from Wonju, and several years since we have had Roanoke Valley students visit Wonju. In 2015 the main focus of the Wonju Committee is to re-ignite our student exchange program. Work began in earnest when Wonju Mayor Weon, Chang-Mug with twelve delegates visited Roanoke for RVSC’s 50th celebration last October 15th.

Previous middle school exchanges were organized as home-stay exchanges for Korean middle school age students, who tended to be between 14 and 16 years old. Wonju students would arrive in Roanoke in late January and home-stay up to three weeks with Roanoke-area families. Roanoke students, whose families hosted them, would visit Wonju in July for two weeks or more the following year. Despite some Roanoke City grant funds, relatively low air travel cost, it was difficult on an annual basis to find Roanoke students who could afford to go.



Mr. Sang H. Park of Vienna, Virginia donated support for Student Exchange

This year we are delighted to announce that a generous donor has stepped forward who will pay for the students’ Round-trip flight to Wonju! Thanks to the generosity of Mr. Sang H. Park of Vienna, Virginia, seven students will visit Wonju this July ‘15. Students for this trip were recruited from Patrick Henry, North Cross and Community High School. Mr. Park explained that his brother had opportunity to visit Roanoke on a student exchange over 40 years ago. He wishes to give back to the program that gave him an opportunity to move eventually to the U.S. and start his successful business here.

Sandy Patterson, middle school science teacher at North Cross, will lead the student trip. Ms. Patterson visited Wonju on a previous trip, and has led numerous student field trips domestically and abroad. Thanks to Mr. Park’s generosity, this exchange trip to Korea can be open to students who could not participate due to lack of resources. Mr. Park would like to continue supporting this program in the future. He hopes to see Roanokers fundraise to supplement if not match his gift. RVSC requires one chaperone to accompany every three students. This cost along with transportation to and from Dulles Airport, touring expenses in Korea, and much more is not covered by Mr. Park’s donation. Please help us find ways that we can find local and regional financial support for this program.

In September, the Wonju Committee will form an Advisory Group to develop a fair and transparent student recruitment process for future years. We ask anyone interested in assisting and developing this program: contact us over the next few weeks ASAP.

If you know of a family and student, between 14 and 16, who may be interested in participating in a trip and hosting a Korean student in January ‘16, please let us know *today*. We would like many to be involved in this exciting process. Contact:

Brian Counihan, brian@communityhigh.net
 Jean Broyles, lvqday@aol.com, (540) 366-9065
 Sandy Lyle, lylo44@cox.net, (540) 989-8718

B.C.

“Rebuilding Amid International Tension”

Rachel Stauffer, chairperson



Rachel Stauffer

I have been in touch with Svetlana Tovstik, a representative of the International Relations Department of the Pskov *duma*, writing on behalf of the City of Pskov. Ms. Tovstik contacted Roanoke Mayor Bowers’ office in February, and I have been corresponding with her since then.

Beginning this year through 2019, Ms. Tovstik has indicated that they would welcome a Roanoke delegation for the celebration of several internationally oriented programs. I was planning a side-trip to Pskov in connection with a research trip to Ukraine and Georgia this summer, but those plans are on hold for now.

In late April, I was selected as one of 12 Russian language teachers who will take part in a Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad this summer ‘15 for six weeks in St. Petersburg. The trip is fully funded by the grant (apart from a small administrative fee, which Ferrum College very generously contributed on my behalf). It will involve living with a Russian family, taking graduate level courses in Russian language and Russian language pedagogy at the Herzen State Pedagogical University [HSPU] from June 24 through Aug. 9th. The grant and program are administered by American Councils for International Education [ACIE]. If I am able to make a side-trip to Pskov from St. Petersburg, I will certainly arrange it; but current tensions with Russia have made it such that foreign students and researchers, *particularly those from the U.S.*, are under fairly rigid restrictions with regard to travel in Russia. Right now it’s even uncertain whether I’ll get to go. Regardless of whether or not that trip occurs, we should consider try to rejuvenate our relationship with Pskov by sending a small sister city group there in the summer of 2016 or 2017.

Over two decades under the thoughtful diplomacy of our beloved Professor Sasha Saari, Ferrum College enjoyed a sustained relationship with Pskov State Pedagogical University (PSPU). The relationship annually included Ferrum hosting at least one Pskov exchange student. Ferrum did host a student in fall ‘14 semester, Sasha Semashko. According to Dr. Sandra Via, Ferrum’s *current* Director of International Programs, PSPU purposefully selected a “Sasha” to honor the legacy of *our* Sasha. Sadly, PSPU did not identify a student to attend in time for the spring ‘15 semester. Ferrum is currently transitioning its direction of international programs. In this transition, we are optimistic that in the not-too-distant future we will be able to resume fully the once fruitful relationship with PSPU which we pride fully enjoyed.

Please contact: Rachel Stauffer at rstauffer@ferrum.edu.

Editor’s note: Rachel was able to go to Russia this summer and was there when AOW went to press. We look forward to hearing about her experiences.

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“Encouraging, Exciting News from China”

Rebecca Chang, chairperson

This is the most recent update from Hellen He, our contact in Lijiang Foreign Affairs Office. Her message is encouraging and exciting:

“Here is good news about the progress of renewed sister cities twinning between Lijiang and Roanoke.

“We’ve already gotten official approval of the Yunnan Provincial Government on our renew proposal about this issue, and they’ll continue in submitting the proposal to the all important ‘relative’ national-level authority. After we get the final approval, our two cities could choose a fit time and place to sign the formal agreement document. It’s expected to be done within this year, 2015.



Lijiang in the spring.

“Personally, I feel quite encouraged at the good news, because this is the first time for me (Hellen) to submit such a proposal. I feel I’m witnessing the growth in sister city friendship between Lijiang and Roanoke, even though I have not as yet visited there. This has made me feel closer to Roanoke.”

The members of the Roanoke-Lijiang Committee and I want to share this wonderful news with everyone. With hope, we look forward to our future renewed wide cooperation with Lijiang’s Foreign Affairs Office officials and the people of Lijiang.
Rebecca



On June 15, while Rebecca unfortunately was out of the country, six delegates from Lijiang visited Mayor Bowers’ office and were greeted by Vice Mayor Dave Trinkle and RVSCI President Mary Jo Fassié. Seated in Mayor Bowers’ chair is the chairman of the Lijiang Municipal Committee, Luo Xuejun; standing to the right is K.C. Huang, vice chairman of Lijiang Sister City in Roanoke. He interpreted when Chairman Luo, in honor of Pearl Fu, presented a memorable gift, a painting by a Yi artist. The Yi minority is a large ethnic group in Yunnan Province, where Pearl’s family came from. A wonderful evening at Hotel Roanoke was later shared by the Lijiang China Committee and the Roanoke representatives from key civic organizations: Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau, Roanoke College, Roanoke Symphony Orchestra and the Szechuan Restaurant.

“Food & Art bring us Together”
Dr. Kris Slowikowski, chairperson



Members of Roanoke-Opole represented Poland in the parade at Local Colors.

We are happy to report another successful “Local Colors” 2015! It was a wonderful colorful turnout of the Polish-American community for the parade and for satisfying traditionally lots of hungry festival goers at our kielbasa grill.

At such an event, it is always exciting to share information about Poland and our Sister City of Opole with the people of Roanoke Valley and from Southwest Virginia communities. Equally, it’s fun to hear guests at our booth talk about Poland, their favorite foods and touring experiences there.

Richard Moon, Art Coordinator for Roanoke County Schools, will be traveling to Opole in July 2015 on invitation of the City of Opole to attend an artist workshop. He will be joined by fellow artists from several of Opole’s dozen sister cities, many neighbors in Europe, to create their interpretations of Opole using a variety of media.



Roanoke-Opole served up kielbasa at their Local Colors tent.

We are looking forward to Richard’s reporting on his experience to the community upon his return. As this is the 20th anniversary year of partnership with Opole, we are sure that the experience will be most memorable for both Opole City and Roanoke County and City. Stay tuned to date, time and place.
 Kris

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“Supporting a School in Kisumu; Re-writing RVSC Bylaws”

Bill Modica, chairman



Bill Modica

Kisumu Committee had its January ‘15 meeting at the “Harrison Museum of African American Culture” in Center in the Square. Since then we do not have a meeting to report. However, we have *not* been inactive. In February ‘15, we wired \$750 to Kisumu to help the “ Green Life Widows & Orphans School.” In March, I chaired the Roanoke Valley Sister City ad hoc committee charged with re-writing our bylaws; which were adopted by the board on March 3rd ; passed at May 30th annual meeting.

We setup our annual Sister City booth at the May 16th “Local Colors” festival. Tom Cain and I managed the booth. Coincidentally, on the same day, the “Delta Theta Sigma” sorority held its annual May luncheon. They recognized with an award work I have done for Kisumu and the Roanoke- Kenya connection.

A meeting, probably a picnic, will be held this summer. Watch for details &/or check the Sister Cities website. Remember, if not done yet, renew your Sister City dues ---\$15. Per annum --- this summer. Due to a change in the bylaws re. the RVSC’s fiscal year [July 1st -June 30th], the membership year now begins in July instead of March. You may receive an email reminder, *if* you have an email address on file. If not, please provide us one since most of our business and our AOW newsletters now go out mainly by email, avoiding high postal cost per copy despite a special mailing permit.

We look forward to hearing from you and getting together this summer. Bill

+++++

Breaking News:

The Harrison Museum of African American Culture has a special exhibit open now until Aug.31 featuring Tribal Masks from Africa. This collection is a traveling exhibit celebrating 3500 years of African Culture. Visit the Harrison Museum to see these important representations of the cultural and artistic heritage of East and West Africa.

Regular admission fees apply. For more information, call 540-857-4395 or go online to: www.harrisonmuseum.com.

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“Outreach to ‘Love’s Little Nest’”

Norma Peters, co-chairperson

For a number of years, the Florianopolis committee has had a special relationship with “Love’s Little Nest” (Lar Recanto do Carinho), an orphanage in Florianopolis for children who are HIV positive. Recently, Marila Deisenroth, a member of our committee, visited the orphanage and met with members of an organization that supports AIDS prevention (GAPA) as well as with the coordinator and social worker of Love’s Little Nest.

Marila reported that at the time of the meeting they had eight children and two babies *full time* and they were expecting to have three more children in the near future. They also provide day-care service for parents with low income. This amounts to total of about 48 toddlers and 10 babies. There are *separate facilities* for the day-care children.



Marila Deisenroth meets with staff members of Love’s Little Nest.



Marila poses with the coordinator and social worker of Love’s Little Nest.

The financial needs are great and the funds received from town are not enough. Our committee has been able to send some money for special projects in the nursery and the children’s bathroom. There are three children with special needs who require more trained nursing staff members.

Marila observed that the children have good care and love. She was able to meet three children with special needs, Samira (age 4), Juan (2) and Yasmin (2). NJP

Florianopolis meeting dates

Sept. 22, Greene Memorial United Methodist Church, 7 p.m.

Nov. 10, Greene Memorial United Methodist Church, 7 p.m.

Dec. 8, dinner meeting at Luigi’s, 6 p.m.

**“New Partnerships = Meaningful International Experiences” - Dr. David B. Trinkle
Associate Dean, Community & Culture, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine**

The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine opened almost six years ago to our first class of forty students. Even before the opening, and well before any students would be in their senior year and eligible for elective clinical rotations, the Dean Dr. Cynda Johnson the school’s administration set out to devise an international elective exchange rotation policy. It would feature well-vetted international sites with local connections. The local connection was important to allow pre- and post-educational opportunities in addition to the onsite experience. We felt strongly that working off medical relationships that already existed would not only strengthen these bonds with the presence of students but engage our VTCSOM students in unique ways with our local community. All of this, it was hoped, would lead to a much more meaningful international experience.

We just graduated our second class of 40 students and have had *two* classes participate in international rotations. I am pleased to report this local requirement started many years ago is indeed working. Obviously, when we sought out international sites with local connections: Roanoke Valley Sister Cities [RVSC] became a quick and obvious partner. We have memoranda of understanding with medical schools and hospitals in St-Lô, France, and Wonju, South Korea. This year, we had two students visit St-Lô and two students visit Wonju. In this issue of AOW, Drs. Josh Eikenberg and Elizabeth Gilliam of our Class of 2015, share their first-hand accounts of their Wonju rotations. In addition, Wonju sent one student to rotate here in Roanoke in January, and St. Lo is sending a student this summer!

Our students have participated with sister cities here and abroad in many ways, including giving presentations about their rotations to faculty and members of RVSC at our International Experience Student Forum on April 16 at the medical school. We have been exploring other sister city sites and are eager to form formal rotations where appropriate in the not too distant future. We also have agreements and students going to Mungeli, India, and Kazan, Russia (each with different local connections).

Perhaps someday our new partnerships with international sites could lead to adding more sister cities as well!!! We have greatly appreciate the role that the RVSC organization and committees have played in creating these international rotations and in assuring that they are not only clinically and culturally meaningful to our students but create lifelong memories for them about Roanoke, our community and culture and our international relationships.

DBT



*Photo courtesy of Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine
The first International Experience Student Forum was held April 16 at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. Among those in attendance were (from left): RVSCI President Mary Jo Fassié; VTCSOM President and Founding Dean Dr. Cynda Johnson; Associate Dean of Community and Culture Dr. David Trinkle; interns to Wonju, South Korea, Joshua Eikenberg and Elizabeth Gilliam, intern to St-Lô, France, Robert Varipapa; Lily Colpitts, Lindsey DeGeorge and Megan Donohue, interns to Mungeli, India.*

“Incredible Study Opportunity in Wonju” - Dr. Joshua D. Eikenberg
Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, Class of 2015
Wonju, Korea - exchange program
A Comprehensive Report

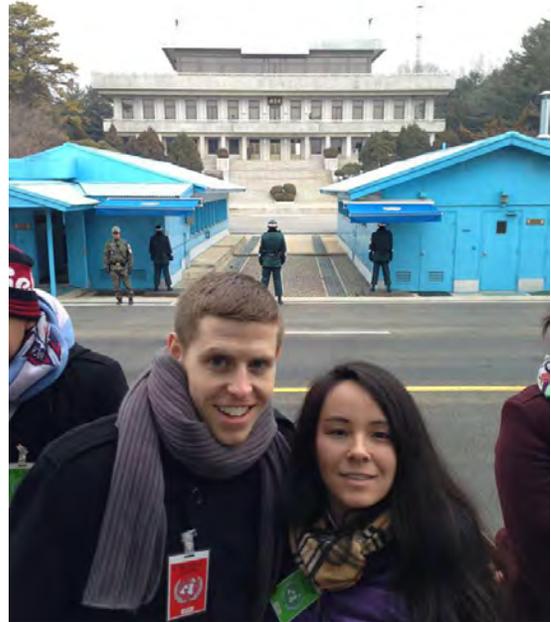
In my fourth year at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, I served a clinical rotation at Yonsei/Wonju Christian Severance Hospital and Medical Center. It was a fantastic experience. The students and faculty of Yonsei/Wonju Medical School as well as off campus citizens of South Korea showed tremendous hospitality.

One reason I wanted to travel to South Korea for a clinical experience was the opportunity to observe a functioning “*universal, single-payer healthcare system.*” After all, a universal, single-payer system has frequently been proposed as a potential solution to America’s rising healthcare costs. What I found: the citizens of South Korea love their health care! The quality of care is high and the cost of care is relatively cheap compared to costs in the United States (South Korea spends about one quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of what America spends *per person* for healthcare).

I also had an opportunity to see and experience medical education in South Korea. Compared to the United States, there is definitely a strong Confucian influence that I could observe in interactions between students, residents, and professors. I was impressed by the various demonstrations of respect for professors, such as rising from one’s chair when a professor enters the room or bowing to professors as you pass them in the hospital halls. I was also impressed by how well professors cared for their students, medical residents, and staff. Indeed, I, along with other students, medical residents, and staff, were treated to several delicious Korean cuisine meals by professors during my four-week stay.

In addition to my wonderful experiences with healthcare, medicine, and medical education in South Korea, I had an opportunity to learn about and experience South Korean culture. I enjoyed many Korean foods while I was there (and developed chopstick skills in the process). My favorite dish was *dakgalbi*. This dish is stir-fried at one’s table and consists of stir-fried chicken and vegetables with a spicy sauce containing *Gochujang* (*Red-hot pepper paste*) --- a Korean condiment made from red chili, glutinous rice, fermented soybeans and salt. My other favorite Korean foods include *bulgogi* (marinated and grilled beef), *samgyetang* (chicken ginseng soup), *ojinguh bokkeum* (spicy stir-fried squid), and *jjimdak* (marinated and simmered chicken, vegetables with cellophane noodles).

I also visited many interesting places in South Korea. I toured the Demilitarized Zone [DMZ], which is on the [*no peace*] truce defined border (1953), diagonally crossing the 38th parallel



*Josh and Elizabeth touring Panmunjom,
38th parallel truce center: “DMZ”*



Josh enjoying dinner with his medical instructor



Dining pleasure with two student friends.



“Gang Nam” Korean Rock-star ---known around the world!

between North and South Korea. With North and South Korean soldiers dug in trenches and bunkers in such close proximity (only 3 kilometers apart), the mined Demilitarized Zone is one of the tensest places on Earth.

I also explored the City of Wonju (population 330,000) with its many 15/20 story apartment and business buildings, modern highways having many mountain tunnels and Wonju’s imposing Chiaksan Mountain, (1,288m / 4,226 ft.)

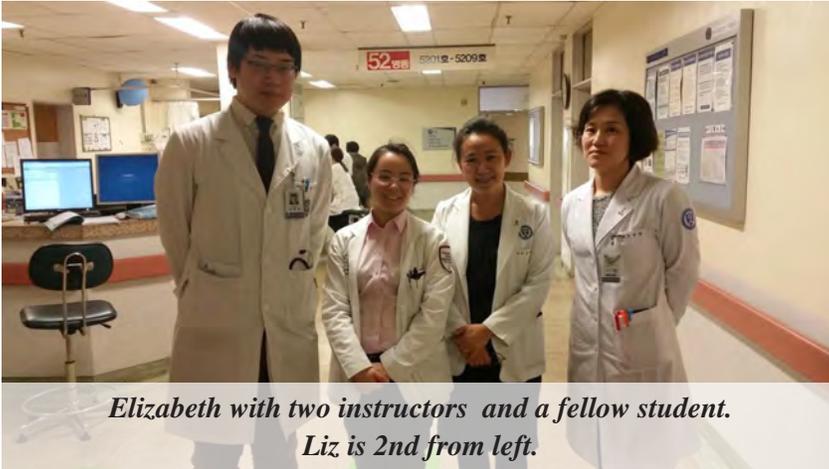
In addition, I visited many sites in Seoul, the capital of South Korea (pop. 12+ mil), which is a mere 80-minute train or bus ride from Wonju. The sites visited included: Gyeongbokgung Royal Palace, the National Folk Museum of Korea, the National Museum of Korea, Jogyesa Buddhist Temple, the Myeong-dong district, Insa-dong district, Itaewon shopping district, the tallest 63 story building and the Samsung D’light exhibition. I even had an opportunity to visit of the *jjimjilbangs* or public bathhouses, which are quite popular with Koreans.

Overall, my rotation in South Korea was an incredible opportunity for medical and cultural experiences. It will have lasting impact on me both personally and professionally. Indeed, I made many friends and professional connections in South Korea with whom I plan to continue contact. I greatly appreciate the many people who helped make my visit possible.

Dr. JDE

AOW Co-editor RFR added some detailed “ numerics” to Dr. Eikenberg’s accurately named sites during tour experiences in Korea.

“Seeing my Mother’s Homeland for Myself” - Dr. Elizabeth Gilliam
Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, Class of 2015
Wonju, Korea – exchange program
A Comprehensive Personal Report



*Elizabeth with two instructors and a fellow student.
Liz is 2nd from left.*

In February, I had a rare opportunity to study medicine in Wonju, Korea. As the premier of seven Roanoke sister cities, Wonju has a strong relationship, celebrating the 50th anniversary in 2014. This formed the basis for creation of a student exchange program between our two medical schools, the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Yonsei/Wonju Medical School.

I was quickly adopted into my new colleagues’ culture, both inside the hospital and out. In fact, they often went out of their way to ensure that I was always taken care of and happy. I was included in their social lives, from dinner plans to car rides to Seoul for a holiday. Though I knew that the sister cities program attempts to match cities based on their similarities, it wasn’t until I explored Wonju that I realized just how much it has in common with Roanoke Valley.



Wonju City “Freedom Bell”. Classic deep cup shape.

The first thing that struck me: the city is much larger than it appears. The Medical center and Hospital campus is set a bit away from the city center, on a hilltop. Wonju has that eclectic charm of being a city in the middle of a rich outdoors. There is a greenway with a river that people love to job and fish on, much as they do here.



Wonju Central Market open counters, tasty and different.



A member of the staff organizes items in a medical supply room at Yonsei/Wonju Medical School.

There's a bustling farmers market on the weekend, sometimes selling things I had never seen before. There's a love for coffee shops, and you're bound to find one on almost any corner. (With opening of "Sweet Donkey" and the new "Starbucks" right across the street from VTCSOM, I can't say we don't feel the same about coffee here!)

Despite all these similarities, it has some differences, halfway across the world from Roanoke. In Korea, it's clear that respect for one's family and elders plays a very large role in society. Koreans openly display respect with bowing and a more formal set of phrases used in deferent speech to elders. As a medical student from the U.S., sometimes there was a problem in know how I was perceived. My white coat is already short, per standards in the American medical training system. But in Korea, a physician's white coat gets shorter - not longer -- as he or she progresses from student, to resident and then attending.

Even though I am ethnically half Korean, I knew very little about my Mother's homeland before my exchange visit. I went there primarily to study medicine, so it wasn't all fun and games. At the same time being surrounded by my Mother's original culture, for me it was an essential meaningful learning experience.

I was struck by the universal generosity of the people to ensure that my time spent in Korea would be truly precious to me. I witnessed a country that has been transformed from the tragedy of its war-torn years, 1950-'53 into an economic powerhouse.

I heard some old stories like "garbage bibimbap," which starving people used to take *expired*, disposed U.S. military rations and mix it into their rice and barley. Today, by contrast, Korea is a thriving nation with all the luxuries of a developed country.

Despite how differently Koreans may approach problems as a society - with universal government programs, including their health care system - ultimately they have similar goals, hopes and dreams for their future: peace and prosperity.

Dr. EG



At our annual meeting on May 30, Jane Wang and Benedict Goodfriend led the talented young string players of the Jane Wang Studio in a medley of international music.



Guest speaker Ed Walker talked about “radical connectivity,” his effort to pull together people of different nationalities in Roanoke. Members of this group gave testimonials to how this has changed their outlook on Roanoke and broadened their horizons.



Outgoing Executive Director Jack Tompkins (left) was presented with a framed print of Ann Glover’s work “Late Afternoon View of Roanoke Market Square,” by former RVSC President Dr. Bob Roth.

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Calendar:

July 7 - Corporate Board Meeting - CITS Board Room - 5:30 p.m.
 July 10 – Mary Jo Fassie will attend - 2015 VA Sister Cities Association Annual Meeting in Richmond.
 July 12 - St-Lô Bastille Day Pique-nique - Shelter #4 at Longwood Park, Salem.
 CLOSING Aug. 31: - Harrison Museum of African American Culture featuring Tribal Masks from Africa.

Contact persons: [www.rvsci.us] check it out ---it’s beautiful.]
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Annual Membership - Roanoke Valley Sister Cities New Renewal

July 2015 – June 2016

Cities: Wonju Kisumu Pskov Florianopolis Opole Lijiang St. Lo

Individual: \$15 - one city ___ # cities x \$15 = ___ [Example: 7 cities x \$15 = \$105]

Family: \$30 – one city ___ # cities X \$30 = _____ Total # of family members ___

DONATION: Donor \$50 // Sponsor \$100 // Judge \$250 // Consul \$500 // President \$1000

Specify for: RVSC Corporate _____ // &/or for: City// Cities - per city _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ Check(s) # _____ Date _____

Name (Please print) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel. (home) _____ (cell) _____ E-mail _____

Make Check(s) to “Roanoke Valley Sister Cities”

Mail to RVSC - P.O. Box 136 - Roanoke, VA 24002
 All gifts/donations are tax deductible to extent provided by law
 501 c 3 – Fed. ID #51-0246592 [www.rvsci.us]

Membership Totals for 2015-16 (as of July 1, 2015)

City	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Wonju	88	82	4	72	82	85	74	65	74	62	60	98	70	46	37	47
Kisumu	55	52	64	83	57	65	68	51	50	46	44	50	29	24	21	28
Pskov	68	64	66	68	78	70	57	58	63	36	41	35	42	35	18	25
Florianópolis	47	44	45	46	41	46	42	32	39	38	43	54	61	51	19	22
Opole	30	24	16	16	28	27	30	18	22	20	30	32	41	37	12	18
Lijiang	64	64	68	95	44	55	42	34	43	37	36	46	17	21	14	24
St.-Lo	69	60	76	63	87	76	71	67	67	62	60	52	58	69	64	74
totals	421	390	429	443	417	424	384	325	358	301	314	367	318	283	185	238

"Membership year" starts July 1st @ year. Dues pd after July 1, 2015 continue active for one year.

ROANOKE VALLEY SISTER CITIES, INC.
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P. 1 “Seven Goals for Seven Sister Cities”

P. 2-3 “Spring Exchanges – Medical Students” Mary Jo Fassié, Pres.

P. 4 “Generous Gift Reboots Exchange Program” Brian Counihan, chair.

P. 5 “Rebuilding Amid International Tension” Rachel Stauffer, chair.

P. 6 “Encouraging, Exciting News from China” Rebecca Chang, chair.

P. 7 “Food & Art Bring us Together” Dr. Kris Slowikowski, chair.

P. 8 “Supporting School; Re-writing RVSC Bylaws” Bill Modica, chair.

P. 9 “Outreach to ‘Love’s Little Nest’” Norma Peters, co-chair.

P. 10 “New Partnerships = Meaningful Internat. Experiences”

Dr. David B. Trinkle - VTCSOM Asso. Dean

P.11-12 “Incredible Study Opportunity in Wonju” - Dr. J. D. Eikenberg

P. 13-14 “Seeing my Mother’s Homeland...” - Dr. Elizabeth Gilliam

P. 15 – Annual Meeting --Photogallery May 30, '15 / Membership Form

P. 16- Cover Page