



Around Our World

ROANOKE VALLEY SISTER CITIES, INC.

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Hopeful reflections for a challenging time

By Rebecca Chang
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When we welcomed the New Year of 2020, no one expected what would follow in the spring. By the end of January, people around the world watched COVID-19 evolve in Wuhan, China, at a time when millions of people were traveling home to be with their families and celebrate China's most important holiday. For Chinese-Americans, it was an anxious time with many of us having families in China. On the eve of Chinese New Year, the Chinese government decided to lock down the city of Wuhan and the surrounding area, and many other cities in China followed suit.

There is no doubt that the Chinese New Year of 2020 was a quiet one. Empty streets, closed shops, and people wearing masks and other protective equipment presented a grim start to spring. Even so, those of us in America did not realize that what we saw and heard on the news would soon be our own reality.

On Feb. 1, we celebrated Chinese New



Trey Hung Tu and Jane Wang celebrate Lunar New Year at the Taubman Museum of Art.

Year at the Taubman Museum. At the time, our friends in Lijiang were under tremendous pressure to find medical supplies, whether from local sources or abroad. It should have served as a warning sign for us; in early February, medical masks and other essential supplies became hard to find here in the United States. The good news is that Chinese government soon brought the situation under control and our friends in Lijiang were freed from their dire need for protective gear. Instead of "Happy new year!" my correspondence with our friends in Lijiang has changed to, "Please stay at home, don't go out," or, "Be very



In concert at the Chinese New Year celebration are (from left) Yi-Wen Evans, Andy Wang, Jane Wang, Patrick Branch, Benedict Goodfriend, Jahanvi Patel and Trinity Paschal.

careful, be strong."

And yet, despite these events, spring came to the Roanoke Valley with flowers

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President's Report

Ticking off accomplishments before quarantine cancellations



By Mary Jo Fassie
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In spring 2015, I became your Roanoke Valley Sister Cities president. Like many who start a new job or position, I began my volunteer role with plans for this organization. I'm pleased to report that I have been able to realize most of my seven goals. Here are those goals and examples of their accomplishment with the help and collaboration of our committee chairs and board members:

1. Encourage and facilitate sister city internships for university students both here and abroad with local businesses, schools and nonprofits. *(We now have interns from Roanoke College and Hollins University volunteering with RVSCI, are continuing the established St-Lô intern program and have added an agreement with Lijiang Teacher's College.)*

2. Continue to expand medical internships in cooperation with the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine (VTCSoM) and Radford University



Mary Jo and Roanoke College intern Katie Webb at the Lunar New Year gathering at the Taubman Museum on Feb. 1.

Carilion (RUC). *(Poland has been added as a medical exchange at Worlaw University, and RUC nurses exchange with Wonju.)*

3. Develop and maintain municipal partnerships between Roanoke and our seven sister cities as we identify, implement and sustain collaborative projects. *(From 2015-2019, all of our cities were visited at least once by the city chairs; relationships have grown, and projects have increased.)*

4. Provide opportunities for diverse communities of the Roanoke Valley to experience and explore other cultures

through reciprocal cultural, educational and professional exchanges via activities and programs. *(Korean language classes and cooking lessons and fall festival; Chinese fall dinner and cooking sessions; Kisumu committee relationship with Support Aid Ministry and the GLAC school in Kisumu; Skyping between Brazilian and Roanoke middle school students; Polka fest with the Chardon Polka Band.)*

5. Collaborate with organizations in Roanoke and our sister city countries that share similar goals. *(Roanoke Arts Commission, Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke College and their International Film Festival; Hollins University and Roanoke Valley high schools with the Young Artists Showcase.)*

6. Network with other sister city organizations in the USA associated with Sister Cities International to share and discover new ideas. *(I attended state and international meetings and networked with Richmond, Newport News and Norfolk sister cities members.)*

7. Promote the mission of RVSCI via social media, our newsletter "Around Our World" (AOW) and an updated brochure and website. *(All accomplished with even a second updated brochure ready to distribute. See at www.rvsci.us.)*



RVSCI's updated brochure is ready for distribution.

(Continued on Page 3)

* * *

Before everything came to a halt in April due to the virus, RVSC was able to carry out our mission in the Roanoke Valley by:

JANUARY

Meeting with Dan O'Donnell and Phil North at the Roanoke County Administration Building along with Bill Bestpitch to discuss the fall invitation to Opole, Poland, city officials and artist; Attending a meeting at Roanoke College for the International Film Festival committee;

Preparing and submitting the Roanoke County grant application online; Greeting the Wonju medical students at Jean Broyles' reception;

Attending the Kisumu, Kenya, photo presentation by Bill Modica and Barb Adams from Support Aid Ministry.

FEBRUARY

Representing RVSC at the Lunar New Year with board members Jean Broyles, Bill Modica, Linda Harrison, Patty Suppes, Rebecca Chang and the Lijiang committee, and Roanoke College intern Katie Webb;

Attending a meeting at the Taubman along with Lijiang co-chair MeiLi Foy and members of the RVSC/Arts committee (formed by Vice Mayor Joe Cobb and Taubman Executive Director Cindy Petersen with input from Hollins University and Roanoke College); Meeting with Jean Broyles and Bill

Bestpitch about RVSC membership data; Representing RVSC at the Roanoke College Internship Fair; Attending the Roanoke College International Film Festival's French film and reception at the Taubman along with several members of the St-Lô committee; Attending the RVSCI corporate board meeting at the Center in the Square board room.

MARCH

Picking up artwork at Roanoke Catholic, Arnold R. Burton and North Cross schools;

Setting up, monitoring the judging and greeting parents and students at the reception for the Young Artists Showcase at the Roanoke City Main Library;

Sending the list of winners with addresses to Treasurer Bill Bestpitch to distribute over \$600 in prize money for the Roanoke Valley Sister Cities Young Artists Showcase;

Signing letters of support from RVSC and the City of Roanoke for the mayors of Lijiang and St-Lô as our cities abroad deal with the pandemic ;

Preparing an art quiz for the Roanoke Arts Pop weekend;

Setting up the RVSC display board and Young Artists Showcase artwork at the Taubman for the Roanoke Arts Pop on March 6, 7 and 8 along with board members Jean Broyles, Anne Marie Green, Ramona Kirsch, Linda Harrison and John Makay; and Hollins University

intern Megan Caldwell; Meeting with Roanoke Arts and Culture Coordinator Doug Jackson for an interview featuring art teacher Kim Spencer from Roanoke Catholic and students Seaira Siv (1st place) and Zach Llavore (3rd place).

APRIL/MAY

Working on editing the RVSC brochure with designer Jeana Aaron, Ann Hackworth and Bill Bestpitch; Participating in a Zoom meeting with Brian Counihan and Jean Broyles to discuss Wonju Sister City; Holding a Zoom RVSC Corporate Board meeting; With the recommendation of RVSC board members, canceling all RVSC spring, summer and fall activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I admit that dealing with a pandemic was not something I was prepared for when I took on this role of president five years ago. Since April, we had to cancel so many wonderful projects (Chardon Polka Band, Annual Dinner and Local Colors) and exchanges (medical students from France and Poland, interns to and from St-Lô, as well as our planned fall visit from the Opole delegation and artist) for the rest of the year and are trying to envision virtual activities where possible. It is a challenge, and we would love to hear from our members and the community if you have any suggestions as we move forward during this crisis.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

June

- **23:** RVSC Annual Meeting via Zoom, 7 p.m. (login info will be emailed a week before).

July

- **30:** International Day of Friendship (reach out to friends abroad or at home with cards or virtual messages)

September

- **1:** RVSC Corporate Board Meeting, 5 p.m. on Zoom

October

- **10:** Virtual Korean Fall Festival with the Taubman Museum

November

- **17:** RVSC Corporate Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. at CITS or 5 p.m. on Zoom

Winners announced in Young Artists Showcase 2020

"One World: Out Of Many We Are One" was the theme for the 2020 Sister Cities International Young Artists Showcase. Roanoke Valley Sister Cities held its own competition for the fourth time and received 28 entries in the high school art competition. Deadline for the competition was March 3. High schools in the Roanoke Valley were contacted last fall and again in January, and entries came from Arnold R. Burton, William Fleming, North Cross and Roanoke Catholic. Judges for the competition were Bill Saari, Brian Counihan and RVSCI intern Megan Caldwell.

The Roanoke Main Library in downtown Roanoke hosted the judging of the artwork. A reception for all participants in which the winners were announced was held March 4 at the library. The art pieces that placed were:

1st place: \$200 for "Re-creation," by Seaira Siv of Roanoke Catholic;

2nd place (tie): \$100 each for "She'll be Apples" by Midora Firebaugh, and "Unity in the World" by Catherine Glenney, both from North Cross;

3rd place (tie): \$50 each for "Holding Up the World" by Zach Llavore of Roanoke Catholic, and "Beautifully Interconnected" by Ainsley McGinn from North Cross;

Honorable mentions (\$25 each) went to Annie Stemp, Shayla Kyle and Hannah Nguyen, all of North Cross; Chisom Ezigbo of Roanoke Catholic, and Teresa Loughery of Arnold R. Burton.

This was Seaira Siv's second time to win 1st place. She is a senior at Roanoke Catholic and also won three years ago as a freshman.

Most of these pieces were displayed at the Taubman Museum during the Roanoke Arts POP festival from March 6-8 and later at the museum from March 8-18. Once the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building in downtown Roanoke reopens to the public, we hope to display some of the artwork in the large shadowbox across from the RVSC display cases.

Thanks to the high school art teachers who encouraged their students to participate: Natalie Strum from Arnold R. Burton, Amy Jackson from North Cross, Kim Spencer from Roanoke Catholic and



Seaira Siv with her first-place artwork, "Re-creation. See Page 5 for more winning artwork.



Catherine Glenney's second-place (tie) work, "Unity in the World."

Melissa Fernatt of William Fleming.

The first-place work was sent to Sister Cities International in Washington, D.C., for judging on the national level.

--Mary Jo Fassié



Midora Firebaugh with her second-place (tie) work, "She'll be Apples."

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Left: Zach Llavore with his third-place (tie) artwork, "Holding Up the World."



Shayla Kyle's Honorable Mention-winning work.



Ainsley McGinn with her third-place (tie) work, "Beautifully Interconnected."



Teresa Loughery's Honorable Mention-winning work.



Hannah Nguyen's Honorable Mention-winning work.



Chisom Ezigbo's Honorable Mention-winning work.



Annie Slemp's Honorable Mention-winning work.

Brief internship was a cross-cultural learning experience

By Megan Caldwell
Hollins University class of 2020

I had the wonderful opportunity to intern with Roanoke Valley Sister Cities during my last semester of college. I first heard about RVSC through my university's international programs department and immediately wanted to apply for an internship. As an international studies and history major, I appreciated RVSC's mission to foster cross-cultural relationships. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with RVSC even though it was cut short in April because of the coronavirus.



Megan Caldwell

In my junior year at Hollins, I studied in Ludwigsburg, Germany. While there, I got to jump into a different culture, try my hand at a different language, eat

a lot of pretzels and learn from another country's customs and traditions. While the experience was exciting and fun, it also helped me gain a greater global perspective. When I returned to the United States, RVSC gave me the opportunity to continue to learn from different cultures right from home.

In February, during the 2nd Annual International Film Festival, one of the films played at Hollins. I peppered the campus with fliers and eagerly attended the event itself. "Sweet Bean" was a lovely Japanese movie that I believe touched the entire audience. Being present at the Film Festival was a great way to learn more about Japanese culture and try some Japanese desserts at the end.

I also helped with the Roanoke Valley Young Artists Showcase in early March. When the works of young students were on display at the Roanoke Public Library, I stood in as a substitute judge to help

pick the year's finalists. It was great to see the creative and skillful works of art as well as how the students had interpreted this year's theme. When RVSC then premiered the finalists at the Roanoke Arts POP at the Taubman Museum of Art, I also was able to help answer questions and talk about RVSC to visitors of the event. In addition to RVSC, several other Roanoke-based organizations were there. It was wonderful to be part of such a community-enriching event.

Finally, if the coronavirus had not led to its cancellation, I had planned on attending RVSC's Polka fest in April.

My internship with RVSC was a great experience. In addition to learning about the seven cities Roanoke is partnered with, I also got to experience the incredible Roanoke community as well. Having an internship with RVSC was a wonderful way to finish out my last semester of college.



In China, calligraphy has been viewed as the supreme visual art form. Here, Chih-Nan Chang and KC Huang demonstrate their skills at the New Year's celebration.

blooming in shades of pink, yellow, and red, full of life and vitality. Birds sing every morning with their usual full strength. The same happened in Lijiang, one of the most beautiful places in China. In late February, Roanoke Mayor Sherman Lea sent a letter to Lijiang's mayor, Zheng Yi. Mayor Lea expressed our concern over the impact of the coronavirus on Lijiang citizens and wished them well in the crisis. The message was warmly received. On March 22, we received a supportive reply from Mayor Zheng. He wrote, "We would be willing to provide whatever help we can for Roanoke. We believe that we can overcome the difficulties together and contain the epidemic situation in no time."

I am touched by Mayor Zheng's words and good intentions. Our world is no longer comprised of isolated countries and nations. We are living in a global village, and each of us is a global citizen. We need to be more understanding and compassionate toward each other, because what happens to one nation can happen to any of us. Through mutual trust we can work together for a better future. I am proud to say that our bond with our sister city Lijiang has been strengthened through this crisis.

Last but not least, I would like to wish everyone well in Lijiang and in Roanoke. Enjoy the spring and stay healthy!



Mayor Zheng

Pandemic in Taiwan presents study in contrasts

By MeiLi Foy
Roanoke-Lijiang co-chairwoman
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I came to Taiwan in mid-February to visit my parents, and I have been here ever since. The COVID-19 pandemic naturally has impacted life in Taiwan, but the official number of people infected stands at 443 (with 7 deaths). With a population of 24 million, this represents an infection rate of 0.002 percent, compared to the U.S. with 0.5 percent. I will share some details and my observations on how this island country just 81 miles off the coast of China contained the spread of COVID-19 so well.

The most apparent difference was speed of response, mainly from lessons learned from the SARS outbreak in 2003. When the first case was discovered in Taiwan on Jan. 21, travel from China was immediately banned, and face mask production was ramped up. When I arrived on Feb. 17, I was asked to fill out extra forms on where I planned to go and how I could be reached to ensure easier contact tracing in the event of an outbreak. All passengers walked through a thermal imager to check for fever. In fact, most places had temperature screening.

Any medical costs related to COVID-19 were paid for by the government. People who were infected were kept at the hospital with only one visitor per patient. Asymptomatic carriers were sent to housing areas (mostly converted hotels) for a two-week quarantine. While there, the government paid them a small stipend and provided food and essentials. There were daily updates and reports by the Taiwan CDC to keep citizens well informed.

Masks were mandatory when out in public. One big difference here was that masks could only be sold to the Taiwanese government to avoid price-gouging and hoarding. People were limited to buying five masks a week. There was no formal lockdown, and schools only had an extended two-week break. Restaurants and other businesses



This photo from March 11 shows how prisoners in Taiwan were called up to help combat the coronavirus and worked overtime to churn out protective face masks. – AFP photo

did move tables farther apart or set up barriers to encourage social distancing.

* * *

Before going to Taiwan, I attended a meeting with the Roanoke City Arts Commission, representatives of Hollins University and Roanoke College, Roanoke Vice Mayor Joe Cobb, Taubman Executive Director Cindy Petersen and Mary Jo Fassié. We discussed a proposed visit by a Lijiang artist, Mr. Mu, and his photographer wife, both of whom I and Vice Mayor Cobb met in China in fall 2018. I am happy to report that Roanoke Valley Sister Cities is looking forward to welcoming Mr. Mu and his family from our sister city of Lijiang to show his work at the Taubman Museum in July 2021.

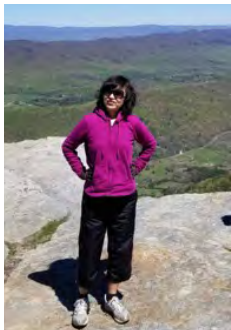


Lijiang artists (from left) Mr. Mu and Ajun, pose with MeiLi Foy and Roanoke Vice Mayor Joe Cobb in Lijiang in fall 2018.

Popular language classes to resume when it's safe to share classroom

By Brian Counihan and Jean Broyles
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Seung Taek Leem and Yeonsoo Noh, two medical students from Wonju College of Medicine - Yonsei University, did their rotations at VTCSOM from Jan. 17 - Feb 7. Roanoke-Wonju Sister City members and Korean language students welcomed the students at an informal gathering at the home of Jean Broyles on Jan. 19. The Roanoke-Wonju committee and the city of Roanoke presented the students with mementos. Ms. Noh also attended an event at the Taubman Museum of Art, co-sponsored by VTCSOM.



Jeong Hee Hong is a wonderful and popular teacher of the Korean language.

Korean language classes at William Byrd High School ended in March as a result of the COVID-19 quarantine. The teacher, Jeong Hee Hong, by all accounts has been a wonderful teacher and very popular. She did not want to move the class online

as she prefers to teach in the classroom. Korean classes will be suspended until it is safe to share a classroom. Cindy Belanger has been our point person for the class and has been posting regularly on the Roanoke Korean Class page on Facebook. Unfortunately for us, Cindy will be moving to Wilmington, N.C., to live closer to her family.

Because Local Colors has been canceled, the Wonju committee will not have a table at the festival this year. Last year, we promoted the Korean Alphabet Festival during Local Colors by offering T-shirts and information.

The Taubman Museum contacted the Wonju committee with a request that the

Korean Alphabet Festival could continue this year, but in some sort of a virtual format. Mary Jo Fassié and Jean Broyles have suggested that they will look into ways of realizing this project.

In May, we reached out to Yeonju Jee from the Wonju mayor's office. He replied on May 6 with this message:

"Thank you for your email.

"The number of daily infection of the virus is now down to one digit in South Korea, which once amounted to 900 people a day.

"In the beginning, it was very serious because some members of a cult religious group in Korea called Shincheonji got infected in China before they came back to Korea and spread it within the group without getting tested. As they tried to hide the infection, it was quickly spread to so many ordinary people outside the group. There was a fury among the public because if there was no such senseless acts done by them, things would have been resolved much sooner.

"I hope you and other Americans can overcome this situation soon.

"Please take good care!!

"Best regards, Yeonju"

* * *

Finally, Brian shared this with us: *"As you may know, I have been struggling to keep up with Wonju chair responsibilities, in addition to my full time teaching load and parental*



At her home, Jean Broyles poses with Korean medical students Seung Taek "Terry" Leem (left) and Yeonsoo Noh during a reception in their honor.

responsibilities. Unfortunately, despite initiating events like the Korean Alphabet Festival and the Korean language classes, I am afraid that I have to step down without being able to hand the chair to a successor as I had hoped. I will of course happily assist the new chair in any way I can."

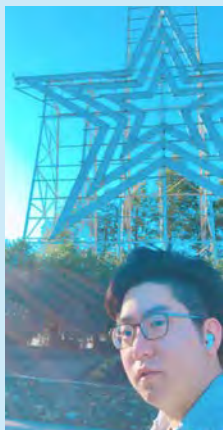
Anyone interested in chairing or co-chairing the Wonju committee, please contact Jean Broyles or Mary Jo Fassié at roanokevalleysistercities@gmail.com. Your help will be greatly appreciated!



Roanoke-Wonju members and Korean language students also attended the party at Jean's home.

Medical student enjoys brief immersion in U.S. culture

Seung Taek "Terry" Leem
Wonju College of Medicine - Yonsei University



Terry Leem snapped this selfie during his hike from downtown Roanoke to the Mill Mountain Star.

Hi, my name is Terry Leem. I am [a fourth-year student] at Yonsei Wonju Medical college. I was lucky to visit the Roanoke Valley and Carilion Clinic this year starting Jan. 13 for a month.

Being selected for the exchange ... was the hardest part for me throughout the whole visit. There was a competition of selecting 2 out of 7 people, because Carilion Clinic is famous for a high quality medical system ... and the warm hospitality our Roanoke Valley Sisters City members. Luckily, I was selected as an exchange student and my anticipation of the visit swelled throughout the time I was preparing for the visit.

After 2 weeks of a visit to New York, my first impression of Roanoke Valley was vast land and peacefulness of the city. New York was cool and fancy, but the city was too crowded and busy.

So, I was grateful for this peacefulness. Glenda from the Carilion Clinic picked us [Terry and his fellow student, Yeonsoo Noh] up from the airport and showed us our dorms at The Patrick Henry. I was astonished by how well the room [was] furnished compared to our dorms in Korea.

Also, my visits to the hospital were splendid too. The hospital system was well set up so the patients can get full care from doctors. Professors in the hospital taught me about medical protocols and systems of an American hospital, which was very helpful. I was able to attend a few classes with medical school students, feeling the difference in the educational system between the two countries.

Out of the hospital, the Roanoke Valley was a very attractive place too. Hiking up to the Roanoke Star was a fun journey for me. Starting at The Patrick Henry, [on the] way to the mountain I could see different parts of the Roanoke Valley. Hiking up the mountain wasn't very straining but the view was great. Especially at the top where The Roanoke Star is, where I could see the whole town in one gorgeous view.

Few days after hiking, I was invited to Jean's house for a party. It was my first experience at such a party, so I am very grateful for such an invitation. Also at the party, I met lots of friends in Roanoke Valley Sister Cities. We had lots of fun

at the party. I believe meeting Bill Saari at the party was very fortunate for me because he took us to all sorts of places in Roanoke. One of my favorites was The Floyd Country Store. The food was good, country music was great, but the best was a unique experience of tap dancing together. Though it was a little embarrassing at first, as I got used to it, blending in and dancing together was really fun.

I wish I could visit the Roanoke Valley again in the future, with more leisure time. I would like to hike up other mountains in the city, bike along the Roanoke River. Next time I would surely not forget to bring my driver's license and drive around the city. Also, I would like to invite Roanoke Valley Sister Cities members and serve some Korean dishes, all for returning the kindness they have shown to me.



A bluegrass band picks out dancing tunes at the Floyd Country Store. Terry reveled in his introduction to flat-flooting.



International Day of Friendship

International Day of Friendship is an International holiday that has been celebrated annually on July 30 since 2011. It was created in the hopes that fostering friendship among different people, cultures, and countries will inspire peace throughout the world. The United Nations also wanted to create a day that taught the today's youth the importance of diversity and to promote

understanding among different cultures. In some countries, it's celebrated on Aug. 2. In these countries, it is often known either as World Friendship Day, International Friendship Day or simply, Friendship Day.

Celebrate this year by phoning or emailing friends (domestic or international) or sending them cards or virtual greetings.

Changes, restrictions are 'tough on everyone's psyche'

By Dr. Kristina Bulas-Slowikowski
Roanoke-Opole chairwoman
krisbulas@gmail.com

The COVID-19 pandemic has shaken the world out of its usual rhythm. Life as we have known it has changed so much that we are unable to for see a return to what was before. We can only hope that it may.

In view of the pandemic, all Roanoke-based events for 2020 have been canceled, including: the Chardon Polka Band scheduled for April 3; travel to Wroclaw Medical University for two VTCSOM medical students in April; and a rotation at Carilion Roanoke Memorial hospital for two Polish medical students from the Wroclaw Medical University in the summer. Also canceled was the 25th anniversary celebration of the partnership between Opole, Poland, and Roanoke County as well as a two-2 week artist-in-residence project at Hollins University scheduled for October 2020.

* * *

Alexandra Brutkowska, a Wroclaw



Alexandra Brutkowska

medical student who spent a month at Carilion in August 2019, sent a recent update of life in Wroclaw:

"Poland has been in lockdown for 2 months: restrictions have been tough on everyone's psyche. We were unable to leave the house unless it was to go grocery shopping or the pharmacy for our basic needs, and have had to wear gloves in stores, be 2 meters apart from one another, soon they implemented wearing masks whenever you step out of the home. You could not meet with anyone. You could not take leisure walks, go on a run, or a bike ride. You were to sit at home or suffer the consequence of a drone/officer finding you not abiding to the restrictions and face a fine of up to 30 thousand zloty. (\$8,000 US)

"Positives out of this are that we of course had a quick reaction from the ministry of health and that we avoided

a larger infection rate like our neighboring EU countries (Italy, Germany and Spain). Quite honestly Poland is so underfunded on a regular basis for the basic hospital requirements, that this pandemic could have eradicated our elderly and cause so much suffering to all people. There have been some suspicions from the population that our numbers are being falsified by the ministry of health (using a different cause of death) or because we have little COVID-19 tests available. However, I think it's rumours. People like to speculate and make their own conclusions."

* * *

On March 13, Poland's Ministry of Health announced a "state of epidemic threat" (which is a legal situation announced within a given area with respect to a threat of an epidemic outbreak, in order to introduce suitable countermeasures) concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of this writing in late May, Poland's border restrictions were extended through June 12. The suspension of international passenger air travel was extended to at least June 6. Domestic passenger flights were suspended through May 31. Polish citizens and foreigners with permission to work and reside in Poland who return from abroad are required to quarantine for 14 days after returning. All other foreigners will not be permitted to enter Poland. Some road crossings remain open.

Restrictions until further notice:

- Face coverings or masks covering the mouth and nose are required in public places, including, but not limited to, public streets, sidewalks, stores, government offices, and places of employment.
- Religious gatherings are allowed



Opole's mayor, President Arkadiusz Wisniewski (right), poses with Roanokers Drs. Bruce and Cynda Johnson during a visit in which the Johnsons were exploring medical school exchanges between VTCSOM and Wroclaw Medical University. The mayor's letter of support to Roanoke County Administrator Dan O'Donnell is on Page 10.

at places of worship with a maximum of one person per 15 square meters of space.

- Small stores are allowed to have a maximum of four customers in the store per cash register/payment point. Large stores are allowed one customer per 15 square meters of space. Shoppers must wear the disposable gloves provided by the shops. Special shopping hours from 10 a.m. – noon are reserved for persons over age 65.

- Minors under the age of 13 may not go out in public without the supervision of a parent or guardian.

- Pedestrians must maintain a distance of 6 feet, except for young children and disabled people.

- Public transport will continue to operate, with limited capacity. Only half of the seats may be filled at any given time.

- Some additional businesses are permitted to reopen with proper sanitation and social distancing systems in place, including hairdressers, cosmetic salons, restaurants, bars, and sports facilities at schools. Restrictions on the number of passengers on local public transportation will also be eased. From May 25, preschools and elementary schools can open for childcare and high schoolers may return for exams. On June 1, all school children may return for consultations. Pupils are not required attend school; parents may decide to continue to keep their children at home.

TRANSLATION FROM POLISH

Dear Mr. O'Donnell,

In the face of the coronavirus pandemic, which is holding the whole world in tension, it is extremely important to act together, seek solutions and support each other. Therefore, I wish to express my solidarity with you and all the citizens of Roanoke County at this difficult time.

The current situation can surely be resolved if our actions have both team and strategic character. Together we can defeat our common enemy; the enemy that has paralysed life in the world, in Europe, and in particular countries, preventing us from performing our daily duties, both private and professional.

In Opole we are constantly doing our best to help the situation stabilize as soon as possible. We are taking various preventive and supportive measures. We are trying to make this difficult time a little easier for our citizens, entrepreneurs, companies and institutions. Simultaneously, we are looking ahead with optimism and hope, urging to see the mitigation, or perhaps, in the near future, the pandemic's end.

We firmly believe that our actions will bring the desired effects and we will soon be able to resume normal functioning and, as a result, our international cooperation.

I would like to wish you and the citizens of Roanoke County a lot of good health, optimism and perseverance.

Sincerely,
[-]
Arkadiusz Wiśniewski
Mayor of Opole

Mr. Dan O'Donnell
Roanoke County Administrator

Opole, 13 May 2020

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President Arkadiusz Wisniewski, mayor of the city of Opole, sent his support and best wishes to Roanoke County Administrator Dan O'Donnell as we all continue our worldwide fight against COVID-19.

Promising exchanges are on hold ... just for now

By Peggy Wells
Roanoke/St-Lô co-chairwoman
hpgwells@aol.com

Our friends in St-Lô have had many of the same experiences that we have had. The Hospitalier Mémorial France Etats-Unis in St-Lô has had many COVID-19 patients. Citizens were on lockdown – far stricter than ours – for several weeks, but in late May France began to lift some restrictions. At that time, people were allowed to travel anywhere they pleased in Normandy, but some preferred to stay at home because there were still many cases of the virus.

One of our friends has been making masks for her friends and family.

In April, the regional newspaper Ouest-France published an article that explored life in Roanoke during the pandemic. Several of our Sister City members, including Pierre Fassié, Bill Bestpitch, Ann Hackworth and Dave Trinkle were all interviewed for this article.

We have seen many plans postponed or canceled. In March, there were to have been two medical students coming to Carilion from Caen; a student from Roanoke College going to St-Lô in June or July; and two students from St-Lô coming to Roanoke this summer. All of



The Hospitalier Mémorial France Etats-Unis in St-Lô treated many COVID-19 patients. It's the hospital where several VTCSOM students have done rotations.

these wonderful exchanges have been postponed to better times. We have another Roanoker hoping to do an internship in St-Lô in November. We are hopeful that things will improve by then, and that that exchange can go forward.

We have discussed the possibility of doing virtual exchanges, but there are no definite plans right now. Many of us have been communicating by email with our friends in St-Lô.

Of course, our local events also have been canceled or postponed. Our annual Bastille Day picnic has been canceled for this year. Local Colors has been rescheduled for May 15, 2021!

We hope events and exchanges will be able to go forward before then. As one of

our French friends said, "We are waiting for tomorrow and after tomorrow!"

* * *

During the recent protests and outpouring of grief over the killing of George Floyd, we received this message of support from our St-Lô friend Jeanine Vérove:

"We wish you days of peace, love and friendship. May human values triumph!"

"Let the young and the not-so-young find the opportunities and the means that will allow them to meet and discuss the major questions of life: arms control, police reform, abortion, health, the cost of education for young people ... So many important subjects in building a democratic country

"Good luck to all of you."

Franco-American pens WWII memoir

Bernard L. Marie was 5 years old when the Allies stormed Normandy's beaches on D-Day. In this self-published memoir, "D-Day in the Eyes of a Boy," he recalls his life in France under the Nazi occupation and the many joys brought to him with the Allies: Freedom. Father. And chocolate! Paperback available via Amazon.com.



One of our Norman friends, Paulette Lemarigner, spent some time in quarantine by making face masks by the dozens.

Advancing the goal of less plastic pollution in Kenya

By Bill Modica
Roanoke-Kisumu chairman
modicabill2@aol.com

In January, the Roanoke-Kisumu group invited the public to view an exhibition of photos from students at the God's Little Angels Community School near Kisumu. The event in the Roanoke Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, where the photos were displayed, drew a number of members and interested guests. Barb Adams, from the Richmond-based Support Aid Ministry, spoke about the photographs and the school. Additional funds were collected to support the teachers and students at the GLAC School. (The photos will probably not be on view once the Municipal Building reopens to the public. To see them, visit Page 13 of https://www.rvsci.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/RVSC-Newsletter_December_2019_LOW_RES_2-1.pdf)

In late 2019, the GLAC School relocated to a more modern building. The faculty has been reduced, and the classes are now limited to primary school. We continue our support of the project and invite members to make donations.

* * *

We have embarked on a new effort to advance our goal of environmental stewardship in Kenya. I have reached out with an offer of support to DOW Chemical, which launched Project Butterfly. Introduced in 2017, Project Butterfly works with communities in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia and Algeria to tackle poor waste management through education, clean-up and innovation-focused initiatives. Along with nonprofits and local communities, the project aims to bridge the gap between recycling buy-back centers, sorting facilitators, collectors and



Bill Modica and Barb Adams address their audience at the Roanoke Municipal Building.

recyclers.

The initiative is advancing a circular economy in Africa – one that redesigns, recycles, reuses and remanufactures to keep materials at their highest value for as long as possible. Just like a caterpillar that transforms into a butterfly, this project is reshaping and transforming mindsets, communities and plastic waste using circular economy principles.

DOW is a founding member of the Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW), a newly formed organization committing more than \$1 billion to develop and scale

solutions that manage plastic waste and promote post-use solutions of plastic.

We intend to advance this effort by engaging our partners in Kisumu and using educational and business resources to make a difference in the local region. Learn more about this project at: DON'T-WASTE.DOW.com. "The Kenya we live in today is going to change. It will be clean because now we know better options for recycling." (Mary of Mr. Green Africa).

We are excited to begin a whole new adventure in our work.



Members of RVSCI and the public listen to Barb Adams at the Roanoke-Kisumu gathering at the Municipal Building in January.

Cooking at home the Brazilian way



A churrasqueira, or barbecue grill, is used for cooking a variety of meats.

Courtesy Embassy of Brazil,
Washington, D.C.

Brazilians love to cook at home, and many are doing that even more during the recent pandemic. One of their specialties is Brazilian barbecue. Here is a sample of how it is usually done.

The special grilling method involves a variety of meats cooked over a *churrasqueira*, or barbecue grill. Hearty chunks of top sirloin, filet mignon, and other cuts of meat are stacked on metal skewers and roasted by the embers of a charcoal or wooden flame.

The meat

Meats are generally seasoned with only a generous helping of sea salt before being grilled. Originally, *churrasco* was only beef: this meat was something the *gaúchos* came across in spades. Churrasco originated in the southern region of Brazil in the 1800s, originally the cuisine of *gaúchos* — South American cowboys. Today, it is a way of life and deeply ingrained in Brazilian culture.

Today, while still primarily red meat, churrasco incorporates fish and poultry. Generally, the most important thing is that the meat be high quality, and intensely marbled if red meat, as fat plays a basting role in the slow roasting process.

The style

To this day, churrasco is most commonly served by cutting meat directly off skewers tableside, and in an all-you-can-eat fashion. Brazilian steakhouses serving churrasco in this manner are called *Rodízio-style churrascarias*. Popularized when churrasco made its way to major cities like Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, they soon hit the mainstream.

The method

The essence of churrasco-style grilling is to showcase the flavor of the meat as it is. This is why Brazilian *gaúchos* purposely found ways to roast meat without smoking it, as this alters its natural taste.

The most common method of making churrasco is to slowly roast skewers of meat over an open-flamed charcoal bed, until the outer layers form a well-crusted sear. Once the outer layer is fully cooked, the *gaúchos* would carry the skewers around to serve their family and friends.

In modern *churrascarias*, steakhouses will offer a wide range of options, however, Brazilians typically will gravitate toward the traditional cuts of beef. The most popular cuts are:

Picanha: The most prized cut in all *churrascarias*. Picanha is top sirloin folded into a signature C-shape, grilled with a garlic or sea salt crust.

Fraldinha: Served long and flat, this bottom sirloin has strong marbling and is cut against the grain to maximize tenderness.

Filet mignon: The most delicate and tender section of beef, filet mignon is either grilled plain, wrapped in bacon, or crusted in Parmesan.

Chuleta: Whole cuts of ribeye steak are skewered and grilled.

Another popular choice for home cooking is Brazilian cheese bread, either as a party appetizer or with a good cup of coffee. Often these are made to resemble rolls.



Pao de queijo, cheese bread, is delicious and gluten free.

Pao de queijo

- 1 large egg
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1 1/2 cups (170 grams) tapioca flour
- 1/2 cup (packed, about 66 grams) grated cheese, your preference
- 1 tsp. salt (or to taste)

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
2. Pour olive oil, water, milk and salt into a large saucepan, and place over high heat. Stir the cheese and egg into the tapioca mixture until well combined. Drop rounded, 1/4 cup-sized balls of the mixture onto an ungreased baking sheet.
4. Bake in a preheated oven until the tops are lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes.

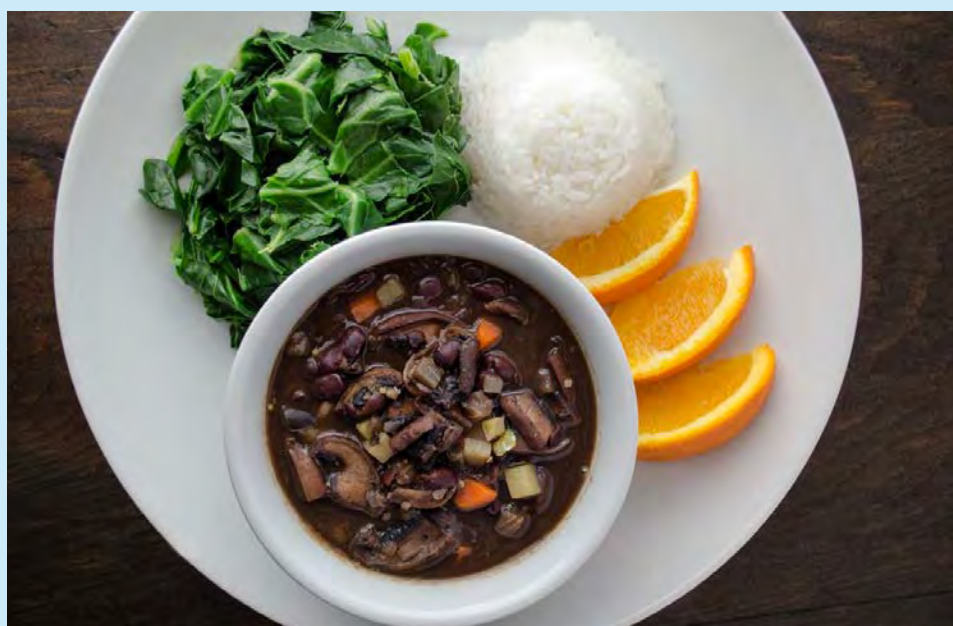
Feijoada

Feijoada is a dish of beans with pork, beef and sausage. The stew is directly connected to the presence of black people in Brazil. A result of fusing European habits with the creativity of African slaves, feijoada has become a symbol of our national cuisine.

At present, this traditional Brazilian dish consists of black beans boiled with some pork (ear, tail, feet, etc.) with side orders of green kale fried with oil and garlic, white rice, manioc flour, orange and hot pepper sauce. – *Brazilian Gastronomy Institute*

Makes about 8 servings

4 cups black beans
¼ lb. dried meat
1/3 cup pig ear
1/3 cup salted pork tail
1/3 cup salted pork feet
¼ lb. smoked pork ribs
¼ cup smoked pork loin
½ lb. beef sirloin
1/3 lb. Portuguese sausage
1/3 lb. kielbasa
2 large chopped onions
3 bay leaves
6 cloves of garlic
1/3 lb. bacon



1. Start soaking the dry and salted meats separately, the day before. Change the water several times, keeping in the refrigerator.
2. First cook the hard meat, then the soft meat.
3. When it is soft remove the meats, and place the beans to cook for about one hour.
4. Finally season the beans and add the meats back to the pan. Let cook for about

- 15 more minutes to blend the flavors.
5. To season the beans, fry the onions with the bacon or in the drippings. Add the garlic, bay leaves and the black pepper. Add to the pot and let blend the flavor. Add more salt if needed.
6. Cut the oranges in slices or chop them and serve on the side to soften the salt in the dish.

New and renewed members and donors as of May 31

Welcome to our new RVSCI members, and thanks to those who have already renewed their membership for 2020-2021 as of May 31:

Names and sister city affiliations

David Bowers & Margarita Cubas: all cities!
The Crouse family: St-Lô
Victoria Diaz-Eastman: St-Lô
MeiLi & Dan Foy: Lijiang and St-Lô
Bob & Mary Ellen Goodlatte: St-Lô

Marietta & Conrad Grundlehner: St-Lô
Ann & Bill Hackworth: St-Lô
Eric Hayslett: St-Lô
Doug Jackson: Opole and Pskov
George Kegley: St-Lô
Judy Kniskern: St-Lô
Kye & Moon Kim: Wonju
Carole Mayberry: Wonju
Cindy Petersen & Robert Borneff and family: St-Lô
Sue Sboray: Wonju
Siobhan Scro: St-Lô

Curt & Anne Steele: St-Lô
Katie Webb: Kisumu
Peggy & Hugh Wells: St-Lô
Teresa Wimmer: St-Lô

We are grateful:

A big thanks to these members and very generous donors!
Kye & Moon Kim
Curt & Anne Steele

All about the Pskov Krom and Trinity Cathedral

Compiled from online information

The Pskov Krom (or Pskov Kremlin) is an ancient citadel in Pskov, Russia. In the central part of the city, the Krom is located at the junction of the Velikaya and Pskova rivers. The citadel is of medieval origin, with the surrounding walls constructed in the late 15th century. It was the administrative and spiritual center of the Pskov Republic in the 15th century. In 2010, two of the towers of the Krom -- the Vlashevskaya, which dates to the 15th or 16th century, and the Rybnitskaya, which dates to 13th or 14th century -- were damaged in a fire. The Krom is a Russian-nominated candidate on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List.

The Trinity Cathedral is located in the Pskov Krom on the east bank of the Velikaya river. It has, since 1589, been the mother church of the Pskov Eparchy. It is the main shrine of Pskov, its heart and symbol. The cathedral, which can be seen from all parts of the city, is where the roads from all over the city converge.

The first wooden Trinity Cathedral was built in the 10th century, allegedly under the patronage of the Princess Olga. The legend of Olga claims that the Trinity Cathedral is older than the Krom. Archaeological data, however, does not confirm this story.

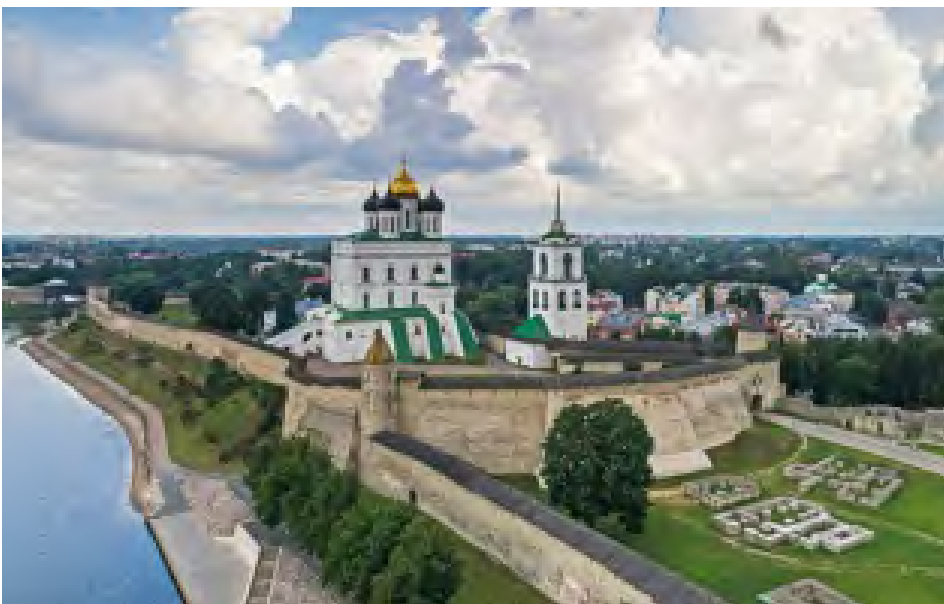
Thus, it seems likely the first church dates to the time of Christianization or shortly thereafter. This church was replaced by a stone church in 1138, allegedly at the behest of Prince Vsevolod Mstislavich, who died the previous year. The cathedral was destroyed and rebuilt several times over the centuries. The current building was consecrated in 1699. Thus, the church existing today is the third incarnation of the "House of the Holy Trinity," built by Peter the Great.

In the Soviet period, the cathedral was part of the schismatic Living Church movement in the 1920s before its closure in the 1930s, when it was turned into a museum. It was reopened as a church during Nazi occupation. It remained open after the war.

The cathedral is famous for its seven-tiered iconostasis (a screen bearing



The cathedral's iconostasis is decorated with gilded carvings depicting trees and fruits of the Garden of Eden.



The Pskov Krom was the administrative and spiritual center of the Pskov Republic in the 15th century.

icons, separating the sanctuary of many Eastern churches from the nave), whose height is 42 meters. It is decorated with gilded carvings depicting trees and fruits of the Garden of Eden. Surprising is the fact that the total area of icons inside the Trinity Cathedral exceeds the area of the temple itself. The especially revered icons of the Holy Trinity Cathedral are the image of Virgin Chirskaya, "The Trinity with the Acts" (the XVII century), and also Pskov Intercession Icon of the Mother of God, missing during World War II and returned to the temple only recently.

The cathedral is 256 feet tall and contains the tombs of the sainted princes Vsevolod Mstislavich (also known as Gavril, d. 1138) and Dovmont (d. 1299). Since February 1993, the Bishop of Pskov is Archbishop Evsevii (Nikolai Afanas'evich Savvin).

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MESSAGE FROM SCI LEADERSHIP

SCI leadership: Do not stay silent about racism



SisterCities
INTERNATIONAL
Connect globally. Thrive locally.

We are greatly saddened and angered by recent events in our country. Protests continue across the U.S. and around the globe highlighting the systemic racism and prejudice that have plagued our nation for far too long.

The senseless deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and no doubt, many others whose names we don't know, remind us that we still have so far to go. Our hearts break for the victims. Our hearts break for their families. Our hearts break for our communities and our world.

At the core of Sister Cities International is the belief that peace can be obtained through people-to-people and sustained community-to-community connections based on mutual respect and understanding. This message is more important now than ever before. We are at a precipice and our communities must now come together to answer the calls for social justice and reform.

Now is not the time for us to remain silent. Now is the time for us to lean in and open up dialogue around what is happening in our cities. It is only by encouraging discussions around institutional racism and ethnic inequity that we will begin to see the change that our communities are demanding.

Sister Cities International is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We stand in solidarity with our Black community and we will continue to promote peace, respect and mutual understanding within our local communities and with our sister cities around the world.

Ron Nirenberg
Chairman of Sister Cities International
Mayor of San Antonio, Texas

Leroy Allala
President and CEO
Sister Cities International

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Contact us at: roanokevalleysistercities@gmail.com



Annual Membership - Roanoke Valley Sister Cities New ☐ Renewal ☐ July 1, 20____ - June 30, 20____

Cities: ☐ Wonju ☐ Kisumu ☐ Pskov ☐ Florianópolis ☐ Opole ☐ Lijiang ☐ St-Lô

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

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