

**Asheville Sister Cities, Inc.  
2010 Annual Meeting**

Asheville Sister Cities, Inc. (ASCI) held its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 24, 2010, at 33 Page Avenue. The meeting began at 3:00 pm with a time of fellowship and refreshments. President Andrew Craig called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Andrew welcomed the attendees and encouraged all to begin or renew membership in ASCI. He then introduced guest musicians Annie Lalley and Joe Ebel, who entertained us with several original compositions. Andrew recognized former ASCI Presidents who were there and presented certificates of appreciation to members of the 2009 Board of Directors. He expressed our special thanks to Social Chair Barbara Hodgson for planning and carrying out the arrangements for this meeting. Next, he listed current Board vacancies, highlighting a need for a Public Relations/Marketing Chair and a Saumur Committee Chair.

**Sister City Committee Reports**

Vladikavkaz, Russia – Chair Constance Richards: The window display at 33 Page for January and February showcases the celebration of the Russian Christmas and New Year and also contains items associated with hospitality, such as the samovar. Constance directed our attention to the pictures of children's art on display from our Sister Cities on the theme, "Me and My Family." Pictures from students in Art Schools in the Vladikavkaz area are now on exhibition and for sale in Vadim Bora's Gallery on Battery Park Avenue in Asheville. Funds raised from the sale will be donated to the four Art Schools to purchase art supplies.

San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico – Chair Sarah Delcourt: This Committee will encourage a visit by a delegation from San Cristobal to Asheville this year, probably during the summer. Sarah announced that the Women and Children's Shelter has built a new greenhouse for growing mushrooms. She introduced Hartwell Francis, Director of the Cherokee Language Program at Western Carolina University, and Luzene Hill, Program Associate with the Oconoluftee Institute for Culture and Art. They presented a slide show summary of their visit to San Cristobal last November, highlighting the cultural and educational ties they are establishing with counterparts there.

Saumur, France – Interim Chair Barbara Hodgson: This Committee plans to concentrate its efforts on youth exchanges by working with Rotary Clubs and high schools in Asheville and Saumur.

Karpenisi, Greece – Chair Andy Apostolopoulos: Professor Greg Boudreaux gave a report, including pictures, of a trip by a group of students from UNC-Asheville to Greece and Turkey last spring. With financial help from the Karpenisi Committee, they spent two days in Karpenisi, where they were treated as "guests, not tourists."

Valladolid, Mexico – Chair Jerry Gregory: Jerry extended a special welcome to the newest Honorary Members of ASCI, George and Melinda Stuart. The Committee sponsored "A Day with George" (Stuart) in Valladolid; the Stuarts hosted an informative meeting about Mayan culture at their home in Barnardsville. Warren Wilson College and the Universidad de Oriente have signed an agreement to conduct educational exchanges. In fact, there is a student enrolled at WWC studying in Valladolid this semester.

Osogbo, Nigeria – Chair Valeria Watson-Doost: Plans are proceeding for a delegation from Osogbo to visit Asheville in May. This Committee is counting on the support of all ASCI Members to help make the visit a success. In addition to public officials, the delegation is expected to include a batik artist and a female teacher.

**Other Committee Reports**

Ken Richards announced that this year the World in Harmony Concert, in partnership between ASCI and the UN Association of Western North Carolina, will be held on Sunday, October 24, 2010. The donations will benefit the Wheelchair Foundation and UNICEF.

Social Chair Barbara Hodgson conducted drawings for Door Prizes.

Board Member at Large Jason Hill reported on the current status of the Sister Cities Park. He began with an historical review of the property in pictures and narrative. The White Fawn Reservoir property is near Beaucatcher Overlook Park and has been purchased by the City of Asheville. ASCI is partnering with the local nonprofit Greenworks to raise funds for design and development of the Sister Cities Park in phased implementation. The combination of the plan to include elements from each of our Sister Cities in the park, along with the intent to create a park sustainable and capable of operating "off the grid," will create a tourism destination unique in the USA. Gwen Hughes, Special Projects Chair, presented a Project Information Sheet and also a Donation Form. [You will receive a special letter from Jason, along with these documents, soon via email or USPS.]

Andrew presented two special awards and plaques. Jason Hill received the "I Can Do That" Award for 2009. Alice Keller received the "President's Award."

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

/signed/

Alice Keller, Secretary