



Sister Cities News Bulletins

Dandong International Birding Festival: An Amazing Journey

On April 24, Dandong held the opening ceremony for the Ninth International Birding Festival of the Yalu River Wetlands. Thousands of domestic and overseas friends attended the ceremony.



As the last stop for shorebirds that migrate from Australia and New Zealand to Russia and Alaska, the Yalu River wetlands are of great ecological and practical value. Experts and birders

all over the world keep coming to observe these birds which are referred to as world travelers without passports. The Yalu River wetlands are thought to be the final stop-over and refueling site for the migratory shorebirds in the East Asia-Australasian Flyway (EAAF). This National Natural Reserve has a sister site relationship with the Pukorokoro Miranda Naturalist Trust in New Zealand. In 2014, the Yalu River wetlands were classified as the "most ideal habitat for shorebirds" by Wetlands International.

The annual International Birding Festival is a tie between humans and nature; it serves as a platform to spread the concept of ecology, while bird-watching, as a healthy, trendy and eco-friendly outdoor activity, is a reflection of people's desire for a better life. For the city of Dandong, to host this event is to reiterate people's inspiration for the harmony between humans and nature. The goal of the festival is to raise awareness of protecting the environment; and to call people's attention to nature, to the wetlands and to birds. This festival is themed "The Eco-friendly Home for Humans,

the Wonderland for Shorebirds", aimed to enrich the bird-watching experience, to ensure appropriate recognition and protection for nature and wetlands as well as to seek a balance between humans, nature, and society.

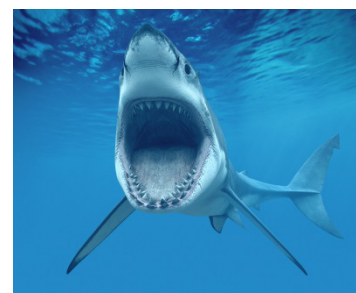
Each year more people are going to get to know the region's natural conditions and be keenly aware of the importance of wetlands via this event. The festival is designed so that we give a full play of the area's resources to draw people's attention to the earth, the wetlands, migratory birds, and our homeland as well. We hope that more people, not just experts, volunteers, and photographers could join us to get involved in protecting wetlands and shorebirds.

Article & photo contributed by: Chen Deyuan, Dandong Foreign Affairs Office



Swimming with Sharks in San Pedro

If you thought we meant sharks like as in "fish," you are wrong. The title refers to the popular American TV series, "Shark Tank," based on Japan's "Dragons' Den."



This spring the Caye Financial Center hosted an event bringing together aspiring entrepreneurs and investors as part of its Annual President's Week Investment Conference which was held in San Pedro on Ambergris Caye.

The panel of investors included 5 diverse business leaders, referred to as the “Dolphin Pool,” and the total pot of money available to invest in business start-ups was up to \$1 mil (US).

Among the entrepreneurs was Maria Villaneuva who needed capital to expand her market for a Belizean dipping sauce made from locally grown fruits and nuts. Maria was not the only woman seeking an angel investor, Alexandra Nicholson, produced organic mud soaps using a Mayan formula already being trial tested by Neiman Marcus stores in the US. The latter was seeking an investor to help promote the brand. Another business was a solar dried organic fruit process with the slogan, “nothing added but the sun.” The Hummingbird Hidden Valley Tilapia Farm based in the Cayo District was seeking an investor to build additional ponds to service a new contract with a customer in Mexico.

Caye Financial Center did not reveal the outcome of the event to the media but we may find one or more of these uniquely Belizean products on the shelves in our local stores in the not-too-distant future.

Barbados Plays USA Eagles 7 in June Tournament

The USA Rugby organization had chosen North Carolina’s Triangle Region for the inaugural North America Caribbean Rugby Association (NACRA) Olympic qualifying games. Held on June 13 & 14 at WakeMed Soccer Park, the US team beat Barbados, Mexico and Jamaica, and Canada. St. Vincent and the Grenadines forfeited. The US NACRA Men’s team will be competing in the next Olympic Games.



The 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro will include golf and rugby teams for the first time. The games held this June in North Carolina was one of the ways a team representing the North American and Caribbean Rugby Association could qualify to compete in 2016. NACRA was formed in 2001 and is one of six regional world rugby associations; and includes the following countries: the Bahamas, Bermuda, BVI, Canada, the Cayman Islands, Curacao, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos, and the US

Doncaster’s Historic Gem Getting a Face Lift This Summer

Mansion House (circa 1748), a historical landmark on Doncaster’s High Street, is undergoing repairs. Sections of the roof will be replaced, original features including the lion and cherubs will be repaired to restore the Council owned Mansion House to its original stature.

Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, said: “The Mansion House is one of Doncaster’s most treasured assets and part of the town’s wonderful heritage. Packed with more than 260 years of history, visitors from all over the world call in to see its splendid architecture and find out about its fascinating stories.

“These essential improvement works will enhance its curb appeal and protect the building and its precious contents....”

The original cost for construction in the mid-seventeen hundreds was £8,000, according to town records, and is one of only three civic mansion houses in England. The current improvements are anticipated to cost an estimated £300,000 to complete, assuming there are no surprises given its age.

Source: Doncaster Government website

Other News

Sister Cities Commission

A joint committee of the commission and association has begun meeting to plan designs for sister city gardens to be part of the outdoor rooms in the master plan for the new park on the downtown riverfront.

SCAW & Local Chapter of the United Nations Association Work Together



The Sister Cities Association and the area UN Association are partnering to offer a screening of the documentary film, Daylight Coming, this fall

in Wilmington. The film was part of the program during Cucalorus 20 and will return to Wilmington for a September screening at Lumina Theater. It will be followed by a Q&A with the filmmakers.

The world is largely unaware of the tragedy in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Aside from occasional

news coverage of the war or elections, the continuing violence, especially against women and girls, hasn't made it onto most of our radars. This feature length documentary film is based in part on a Telly Award-winning seventeen episode video podcast. In a country where rape is used as a weapon of war, a question persists: in the face of tremendous suffering, can one person make a difference? Daylight Come offers a new voice in the story being told about the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) by examining the effects rape has on a small group of Congolese women stuck between the danger of village life and the poverty they experience in the city of Bukavu.

The crisis in the DRC is the result of a very complicated and tragic history, multiple wars and continued armed conflict. Following decades of these wars in the Congo, two American women work to help several Congolese women rebuild their lives amidst the scars of sexual violence and dire poverty. This moving documentary reveals the Congolese women as so much more than victims of violence and injustice, but as women of worth, hope, irrepressible faith and love.

Citizen to Citizen Diplomacy Honor Roll

SCAW attempts to involve as many people and institutions as possible to achieve its mission in Wilmington and the international community. We want to recognize the individuals and groups that have made a contribution in the past calendar quarter through their active participation or support of a Sister City program activity.

Fenton Maxwell
Marilyn Cantarella

Scott Czechlewski
Charles Blanton

Wilmington. The reception will be from 5:30 – 6:30 PM after which you can join the students for the Council meeting in the upstairs Chambers or a walking tour of the Historic District in Downtown. *Members only event
Sept 5-14 St. Leger Festival – Planning a trip to Europe this fall be sure to visit Doncaster's 10-day St. Leger Festival, which includes horse racing, music, fine food, arts and culture. For more info go to www.visitdoncaster.co.uk

Sept 30 (*date change) "Daylight Come: Life after Rape in the Congo" -film documenting the story of the ongoing conflict in the region through the eyes of two American missionaries. The screening will be at Lumina Theater in the Fisher Student Center at UNCW beginning at 7 PM. There will be a Q&A with the producers following the film.

Oct 12-14 – The 2015 BioMarine Business Convention will be held in Wilmington at Cape Fear Community College's Union Station. Explore ways cities and countries may work together to promote and grow the Blue Economy globally. For more info and to register – www.mbcoi.net

Upcoming Events

August 6-8 Belize's largest international event is held on Ambergris Caye – the International Costa Maya Festival. The main stage features both local and international artists from throughout the Americas (Belize, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama)

Aug 24 "Landscapes of Belize: Exploration of the Sibun River Watershed". Join Dr. Andrea Hawkes as discusses Belize from the Maya mountains to the Caribbean following the Macai/Sibun Watershed. The lecture will be held at the New Hanover County Main Library starting at 6 PM. Optional dinner following the program at Riverboat Landing. Advance reservations required for dinner only by 8/23

membership@scawilmington.org or 910-343-5226

Sept 1 International Student Reception - Join Mayor Saffo, City & County elected officials for a reception at City Hall to formally welcome the 2015-16 international students to the University of North Carolina and