



Sister Cities News Bulletins

Doncaster Changing Gears in 2014

- Peter Brindley, Doncaster, UK

Belize Joins Other Caribbean Countries in the National Trade Information Network

According to a news release posted on Business Barbados the Caribbean Export Development Agency officially launched the Belize National Trade Information Network (N-TIN) at the Radisson Hotel in Belize on October 11.

N-TIN is designed to facilitate trade information among trade and business support groups within the partner countries. In addition to Belize, participating countries in the network include Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic, Barbados, Suriname and Jamaica. The purpose of the network is to gather data that provides accurate and up-to-date information on markets/sectors, tariff and non-tariff data, a directory of businesses, and links to intermediary organizations. Compiling this sort of information is an essential part of doing business in the private sector for companies interested in exporting goods/services.

The collection and dissemination of trade information will be uniform and governed by a memorandum of understanding to help countries in the region expand their markets. The oversight agency for the region is the Caribbean Export Development Agency which will also provide the training and tools for the data collection. BELTRAIDE will coordinate the national business and export registry for Belize.



We spent 4 years in the doldrums created by a Doncaster elected mayor who was sufficiently xenophobic to regard sister city activities as supping with the devil. DIPA is now basking in the warm glow

exuding from our new mayor, Ros Jones, who made it one of her first tasks in office to write personally to the civic leaderships of all our twin-towns. In her letter she made it clear that, not only was she totally supportive of having such relationships between towns, but also she was delighted that DIPA had managed to keep the doors open between us in the inter-regnum. In fact she has designated DIPA as her gateway in these matters.

Clearly sister city programs are not her first target; in these harsh times for public spending, her immediate priorities are the care we offer in supporting children and the elderly, and job creation. As regards the latter, she has given DIPA the challenge of finding a way to add economic regeneration and job creation into our twinning programs, which have of course hitherto concentrated on education, culture, and sports. DIPA has accepted that challenge and is already working hard with Council officials and the Doncaster College to find the vehicles by which we can support our Mayor's priorities. The Mayor is appointing an official to represent her on our Executive Group, so that she can be kept in touch with developments.

So how do we plan to begin? It happens that 2014 is the 25th anniversary of our link with Herten in Germany (and also the 20th anniversary of the link between Doncaster Youth Jazz Association and the EKS Band in Herten). Herten has already asked us to join them in the second weekend in June 2014 to attend a celebration there, which will also include their other twin towns, Arras in France and Szcztyno in Poland. Our Mayor has asked DIPA to



accept that invitation on her behalf and we will be sending a team to represent Doncaster. But we too are planning a celebration in Doncaster in the last week of June 2014 (only 10 days after our visit to Herten). The EKS Band is already metaphorically packing its instruments and music sheets in a bus to be ready for a week of concerts and school visits, culminating in a joint concert on 26 June 2014 with our jazz orchestra in CAST, our sparkling new performance venue (which, by the way, is getting rave reviews from its fans with a refreshingly innovative program of shows and entertainments!).

And it is in that week that we are planning to start responding to our challenge from Ros Jones. The idea is to add into the menu for that week an opportunity for businesses from Herten to come over and network with their counterparts here; we will develop activities with which we will hope to entice them into spending some time to find out what we make and sell and what we might be interested in buying from them. It's too good an opportunity to miss so planning is moving forward on that basis.

But if it's interesting enough to entice them to Doncaster, why shouldn't such a program of activities tickle the taste buds of Wilmington's business community as well; and of Dandong (in China) and Gliwice (our Polish twin)? So the invitation will be coming your way too.....

We have been reading the coverage in your local newspaper about whether spending (on travel, hotels and the like) on sister city programs can be justified in these hard times; Wilmington Mayor Saffo, our Ros Jones, and I are absolutely certain that it can – when the objectives are targeted securely on the very economic problems which engender our shortage of resources! We will show that the financial investment can be beneficial in the long run if a good part of the focus is on our economic problems and their solution. We will use the existence of our long-standing friendships as the vehicle for addressing the financial problems which assail our communities; we will piggy-back on the existing education, social, cultural, and sporting ethos of our partnerships and build upon them - for the economic betterment of our towns! Now who's going to argue with that? Surely it's a win-win situation – if you share a problem, the obvious way forward is to try to share your solutions. It's a no-brainer to me – we've been friends long enough to be frank with each other so let's find a way forward which will add a new

dimension to sister city working – with the emphasis on working!! I look forward to seeing you in Doncaster; make a note of the date of week commencing 21 June 2014 and watch this space.....

Note: Writer is chairman of DIPA (Doncaster International Partnership Association)

Locke Visits Dandong before Leaving His Post as US Ambassador to China

Photos: Dandong Foreign Affairs Office

US Ambassador Gary Locke announced in November he will be returning home to Seattle early next year to spend more time with his family. Gary Locke was a two-term governor of Washington State and the first Chinese American to serve as a US governor before his appointment as Commerce Secretary in the Obama administration. Locke was appointed in 2011 to replace Jon Huntsman who resigned his role as ambassador to China in order to run in the presidential primary.

A significant achievement during Locke's tenure as Ambassador was the reduction of time in processing visas for travel to the United States from 70-100 days on average to 3-5 days.



On December 10 Locke visited Dandong joined by the Consulate General based out of Shenyang. He met with Mr. Dai Yulin, Party Secretary of the CPC Dandong Committee. The focus of the discussion was the communication and cooperation between Dandong and the US, city planning and infrastructure construction. After the official meeting Locke met with representatives of the Rilin Group, owner of the Dandong Port. An agreement was reached that would allow employees [Rilin] to

travel to the US for business and education purposes on a group visa. The memorandum of agreement also included language that supported the expansion of overseas markets for the Rilin Group.



The Ambassador ended his visit with a walk on the Broken Bridge and a stop at the Hushan Great Wall which starts about 15 km northeast of

Dandong City. During the Korean War the original steel bridge connecting China and Korea suffered damage. The North Koreans removed nearly half the bridge leaving only support columns. The newer Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge was constructed next to the original span. Both locations are of tremendous historic significance and popular tourist sites.

In Other News

Gà cí le to our International Visitors and Cucalorus 19

Sister Cities hosted 7 international filmmakers for lunch at Riverboat Landing on opening day of

Photo Credit: Ruth Paxton (from left Mea Lansaw: Hope Dickson)



Cucalorus 19. Among the group was Hope Dickson Leach, who was named Ambassador for the Residency Program established by the Cucalorus Film Foundation

in 2012. Hope, born in Hong Kong, attended boarding school in England at the age of 9 and studied philosophy at Edinburgh University where she was introduced to the film industry. Inspired by her exposure to the world of film as a student worker, she went on to receive a graduate degree in cinema from NYU and has been recognized by numerous industry groups as an emerging new talent in independent film. The first production that had its beginning in the new program with some financial support from the Southern Fund was "Something You Can Call Home," a social documentary on homelessness in the US. The

world premiere was Cucalorus 19. The film's producer, Rebecca Kenyon, who also hails from the UK, was a founding member of the residency program.

Another interesting lunch guest was Poyan Karini, a newcomer to acting who was cast in a dramatic short with no dialogue. The film, "On Suffocation" was produced by Swedish filmmaker Jennifer Malmquist and was featured at Sundance earlier in the year. Malmquist produced this film with a grant from the Swedish Film Institute. Poyan's character and his lover were executed for being homosexuals. When asked how he got involved since he had no previous acting experience, Poyan said his brother submitted a photo of him on the hunch that finding actors with Middle Eastern features in Sweden might be challenging. The Karini family left Iran in the late 1980's and the setting for the film was from that region. Using film to bring attention to basic human rights issues is what excited him.

Cucalorus Foundation Director, Dan Brawley, reported a 26% increase in year over year attendance at the 19th festival. There were 227 films representing 12 countries, and 61 cities across the US. If you want to support independent film and emerging artists, be sure to check out the details for the upcoming Oscar party (March 2) at www.cucalorus.org which promises to be a really cool event.

SCAW Board Bids Farewell to Student Representative Eric Wade

Student representative to the SCAW board of directors, Eric Wade, graduated from UNCW this month. Eric, whose home is Belize, assisted sister cities with maintaining a presence on Facebook, designing a survey instrument to help guide the board in planning future programming, and helping with the annual international student reception. He managed to do all this while working part-time in the Office of International Programs and for several semesters carrying an 18 credit workload.



Eric applied to several universities for his graduate studies and, while he had numerous offers of

Upcoming Events

acceptance, he has chosen to continue at the University of North Carolina in Wilmington. How about that! He will be studying public policy in the discipline of marine science. The board wishes Eric well in his future endeavors and presented him with a certificate of appreciation for his contributions to his adopted community and the organization.

At the November SCAW board meeting, two new student representatives were approved, Garrett Bucksath and Cameron Meredith. Both students are studying International Affairs and want to learn about more about how community organizations operate.

Commission Updates

The City has received a request from the mayor of Dandong, Mr. Shi, to assist with arrangements for a delegation to visit Wilmington. No dates have been confirmed as of yet; however, the Commission is encouraging Dandong to consider participating in the US-China Sister Cities Conference to be held in Washington, DC in late March. There are 200 US-China sister city relationships and Sister Cities International is hosting a major conference to bring elected leaders, businesses and other partners together as part a bi-lateral agreement between the US and China to strengthen relationships at the local level among other areas of cooperation.

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.

Rosemary Toumey	Fenton Maxwell
Manna 123	Riverboat Landing
Marilyn Cantarella	Kathryn Byrd
Melanie Tremaglio	Dick Airey
Maria Goudiss	Eric Alexander Wade

Feb 5 (Wed) – Join us to usher in the **Chinese New Year** according to the lunar calendar. The festivities will be held at Szechuan 132, S. College Rd. at 6:30 PM. Cost: \$20 per person for 7 course meal. Reservations required by 2/3 by email – membership@scawilmington.org or by phone 910-343-5226.

Feb 22 (Sat) – **UNCW iFest** Stop by and visit the Sister Cities Booth and enjoy international food and entertainment with the family. The event will be held at the Burney Center on the UNCW campus from 10 am – 2 pm.

March 24 (Mon) – **Sister Cities Annual Meeting** Location will be the Lord Compton Room at City Hall beginning at 6:00 PM.

Wishing you peace, joy and all of the season's glad tidings in abundance



*Sister Cities Association of
Wilmington Board of Directors*

*Dale, Darrell, Fenton, Dick, Li,
Chad, Marilyn, Garrett, Cameron
and Eric*