



Sister Cities News Bulletins

San Pedro Town Council Celebrates La Isla Bonita's Mothers – *San Pedro Sun*

While the love is there year round, on the second Sunday of May, mothers around the world are shown extra love, care and attention. Mother's Day is a huge celebration in San Pedro, an annual gala is held by the San Pedro Town Council (SPTC) to spread love to the mommies of our San Pedro community. Every year, mothers look forward to an evening of entertainment, dinner, laughter, drinks, prizes and surprises.

2011 proved no different, as hundreds of mothers filed in to the old football field, where they were greeted by the lovely Miss Chiquitita Gabby Knox-Alexander and Miss Carnaval Beny Aguilar, who presented each one with a beautiful red rose. With a special entrance ticket in hand, mothers got comfortable at the tables in anticipation of a night of fun.

Master of Ceremonies Elijio Lopez led the show, inviting lay minister Lucio Guerrero to lead the prayer/blessing, after which Mayor Elsa Paz read a poem dedicated to the charming mothers in attendance, and to those who were unable to attend. After a few words from Minister Heredia who was on hand, young singer Christian Ku took the stage to start off with a medley of songs for the mothers. He was followed by a special dance performance by Yamily Vasquez and Jhoshi Alexander.

After a very fun game of musical chairs that had everyone laughing, dinner and drinks were served to the deserving mothers by a staff of young volunteers, as well as members of the San Pedro AIDS Commission. Raffles were held throughout the night, and winning ticket holders got to take home great prizes.

Volunteers gathered the names of all mothers over the age of 60 who were in attendance. The names were placed in a box and one name was drawn. There was an expectant pause before Mayor Paz

announced the winner of the title – the new 2011 Mother of the Year was announced as Yolanda Ayuso Yoli (*pictured center below*), as she is affectionately known, is the mother of Marivel Gomez, Zoby Ayuso, Tula Ayuso, Adolfo Ayuso Jr., and Ricky Lemus. She was presented with a tiara, sash, a gorgeous bouquet of flowers, a framed tile from Gecko Graphics, plus \$500 cash from the San Pedro Town Council. Minister Heredia promptly added \$200 extra to the list of prizes.



It was another wonderful night celebrating the well-deserving island mothers. Hats off to the organizers of the event, and as always, the SPTC thanks all the generous sponsors who helped make it such a success.

NEWS FROM SUNNY DONNY! – *Colin Jeynes, Doncaster, UK*

We thought you might like to read an up to date assessment of how your twin-town, Doncaster in the UK (the "sunny Donny" of the title!), is doing in the throes of the global financial crisis?

Having only begun to recover from the disaster of the closure of almost all of its coalmines in the 80's, the town was only getting to its feet when the new disaster hit. The coal industry had provided the town with over 17000 jobs and whilst new industries came, they had come with tens or hundreds of jobs, not with thousands.

A major element of the recovery which did occur was driven by public sector spending – service increases, new public projects, support for

voluntary organisations, encouragement of new business start-ups, and the like. Now our new government is spearheading its economy measures by fiercely cutting public expenditure, especially in local government. Doncaster's Council is having to cut \$45 million from its current programmes and expects to lose at least 2000 of its staff. So there is a definite downturn in our local economy yet again – many private sector industries feed off the spending of the local authority and so they are badly hit too! But Doncaster still has its special innate qualities and with those it will fight for its survival. Its people are famously welcoming (the town's motto is "Discover the spirit!") and are used to making their own way in the world. The town still has marvelous communications – 1 hour 45 minutes to London by train, surrounded by motorways, and with a budding new airport (and approval has been given to complete the motorway connection to the airport too).

Our rail connections are the best in the country – not just to London but also Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle; for just about anywhere worth going to in Britain, the best place to start from is Sunny Donny! So how do we capitalise on all these qualities? We have to plan ahead, have a vision of where we want to get to, and how we make the journey. So the Council's officers have developed a new Local Development Framework, which will guide us to a better future, and this is now being consulted upon within our community.

So mark my words – things can only get better and there's plenty worth coming to see in our town – visitors from Wilmington are particularly welcome so call in for a cuppa whenever you fancy!

Work Begins on New Bridge to North Korea –*Ji Beibei (Global Times)*

China has decided to take "an economic approach" to ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula and push North Korea to forsake its nuclear plan, according to Chinese observers. The observers spoke shortly after construction work began [January 2011] on a new bridge between China and North Korea, a move that raised a round of speculation.

The six kilometers long bridge across the Yalu River will link the new zone of Dandong, Northeast China's Liaoning Province, with southern Sinjiju in North Korea, and is expected to take three years. China will pay the 1.7 billion-yuan (\$258 million) price tag, the report said. Currently there is just a

one way bridge over the Yalu River that was built in 1937 and not suitable for trucks that weigh more than 20 tons. It doesn't meet growing bilateral trade needs, which stood at 4.22-billion yuan (\$640 million) in 2009. Statistics show more than 70 percent of trade between the two countries was based in Dandong. In October 2009, Premier Wen Jiabao visited North Korea and he signed an agreement to build a new bridge over the Yalu River to boost economic ties. Construction was scheduled to begin in October 2010, but was postponed several times.

In Other News

Wilmington's First Dragon Boat Race Held in June

Blue Hand Home owner, Arnie Cullipher, took the bull by its horns and organized the first dragon boat race to take place in Wilmington.



On June 4 the 500 meter race began just north of the Isabelle Holmes Bridge. For race results go to: www.capefeardragonboat.com. The money raised from the event benefited two local organizations - Step Up for Soldiers and the Sunburst Foundation.

Dragon boat races are growing in popularity in North America. Basically teams of 18 people race in a boat adorned with a dragon head to the beat of a drum. Its origin is rooted in a tradition from China to honor the poet and patriot, Chu Yuan, who drowned on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month in 277 BC. The photo above and the slide show on the SCAW web site are courtesy of Gerald Waller.

Wilmington Befriends City in Iraq

SCAW members became inspired to take action in establishing ties with one city in Iraq following Mike



Upcoming Events

Craft's talk at the March Annual Meeting. While Samarra is not a sister city with Wilmington, both the City Council and SCAW have agreed in principal to offer support to help foster a dialogue between our two cities as the reconstruction of Iraq as a free democracy continues onward. A blog was created to offer a vehicle for Wilmington residents to begin a conversation with the Women's Center in Samarra (Women's Center pictured above). You can visit the blog by going to: <http://fromcapefeartothetigris.blogspot.com>. If you are interested in joining the blog, please contact marilyn@scawilmington.org.

A school partnership between Samarra and Cape Fear Academy was also established during [Samarra] Mayor Mahmood's recent visit to the area. He was able to visit the campus and meet representatives from CFA's student council as they talked about approaches they might undertake to begin an international exchange between students and teachers. CFA headmaster, John Meehl, said, "He was excited about the prospects for this type of exchange."

Commission Updates

The winner of the 2010 Young Artists Showcase was New Hanover High student, Carolina Lara Corona, for her painting titled, "Effluent – Bradley Creek." The theme for this year's competition was "Shaping your Community for a Greener Future." Corona received a \$150 cash award from the Commission and her painting was submitted to SCI to compete at the national level. The Sister City Commission welcomed a new member, Keith Parker, appointed by City Council at its March meeting.

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.

Tina Roberts
Mayor Mahmood
Dr. Tony Oberschall
Mayor Elsa Paz
Felix Ayuso
Pablo Ico
San Pedro Town Council

Keith Parker
Cape Fear Academy
Dr. Bill Bolduc
Gerald Waller
Juan Alamillo
Colin Jeynes

July 5 – Join us for the premier of a documentary film short selected for the 2010 Belize International Film Festival. The screening will be at the Front St. Brewery (upstairs Beam Room) 9 N. Front St. at 6:30 PM. No cover charge. Food & drinks will be standard menu prices. Reservations required by July 3 by email – membership@scawilmington.org or by phone 910-343-5226.

Aug. 22 - "Madrid: Then becomes Now" Dinner Program. Location: New Hanover County Library (Main Branch). Lecture begins at 6:00 PM with dinner afterwards at Mixto's Restaurant on S. Water St. Bill McCarthy, UNCW professor and expert on Spanish history, will lead us through the intense history of Madrid over Muslim and Christian control during the ninth century through the Golden Age of Carlos III and ending with its trend-setting, classical appearance today. Madrid is ranked fourth among cities visited in continental Europe. Reservations required by August 21 by email – membership@scawilmington.org or by phone 910-343-5226.

Sept. 16 – The Consulate to Belize will host a celebration at Thalian Hall in honor of Belize's 30th anniversary of its independence.

Sept. 20 – Sister Cities will host a welcome reception for the 2011-12 international students enrolled at the University of North Carolina – Wilmington. The welcoming reception is on the program for the first hour and afterwards participating students and guests will have the option of either doing a walking tour of the historic district or observing the first hour of the City Council meeting in the upstairs chamber. City Hall 5:00 – 7:30 PM. This is a "members only" event.

Oct. 24 – "World Cinema After WWII" Dinner Program. Location: New Hanover County Library (Main Branch). Lecture begins at 6:00 PM with dinner afterwards at Caffe Phoenix on N. Front St. Carlos Kase, professor at UNCW in film studies, will speak about globalization and the film industry, and its influence on contemporary culture. Reservations required by October 23 by email – membership@scawilmington.org or by phone 910-343-5226.

Nov. 10 – Sister Cities will host a luncheon for visiting international filmmakers following the Cucalorus International Film Festival Global Perspectives program at Center Stage. The luncheon will be held in the Beam Room at Front St. Brewery from noon to 1:00 PM. This is a "members only" event.