



Around Our World

ROANOKE VALLEY SISTER CITIES, INC.

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RVSCI holds inaugural Young Artists and Photographers showcases

By Mary Jo Fassie
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In an effort to reach out to students and teachers in our area, Roanoke Valley Sister Cities launched its first annual Young Artists and Photographers showcases this year.

Using their imagination, creativity, and passion for world peace, students were asked to interpret the theme "We're Going Places," showcasing the importance of travel and exchange in achieving peace. Students were encouraged "to draw inspiration from their

experience with sister cities, travel, exchange, international friendships, and their goals to present their vision of where the future will lead."

The RVSCI showcases had two categories: art on the high school level and photography on the college level.

Schools and art teachers throughout the Roanoke Valley were contacted in January with information about the competition. The deadline for entries was March 31, when entries would be picked up at the high schools and all photographs would be submitted electronically directly to RVSCI.

Judging was held at the Roanoke City Main Library. Three Roanoke-area artists, Brian Counihan, Chico Harkrader and Bill Saari, scored each piece of art and photograph on technical skills and how well the student artist expressed or

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Roanoke College student Jaina Lanum poses with her first-place winning photograph, "Universal Language."



Seaira Siv, a Roanoke Catholic School student, poses with her first-place winning artwork, "Road to Peace."

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interpreted the theme "We're Going Places." Prizes were awarded as follows: first place \$200, second place \$100, third place, \$50, and 2 honorable mentions at \$25 each.

The top art prizes went to the following students:

First place: Seaira Siv,
Roanoke Catholic School;

Second place: Casey Murano,
Hidden Valley High School;

Third place: Irene Johnson,
Arnold R. Burton Center for the
Arts and Technology;

Honorable mentions: Ben
Li of North Cross School and
Madeline Nicely of Arnold R.
Burton

In photography, the following
received prizes:

First place: Jaina Lanum,
Roanoke College;

Second place: Anshu Thapa,
Hollins University.



"Reaching for Friendship," by Irene Johnson of
Arnold R. Burton Center for the Arts
and Technology.

The first-place artwork was sent to Washington, D.C., where a panel of Sister City International judges will select grand-prize winners and finalists based on originality, composition, and theme interpretation. Each grand-prize winner is awarded \$1,000. After the finalists for art and photography have been announced, their works embark on a yearlong tour hosted by local sister city programs on a monthly basis.

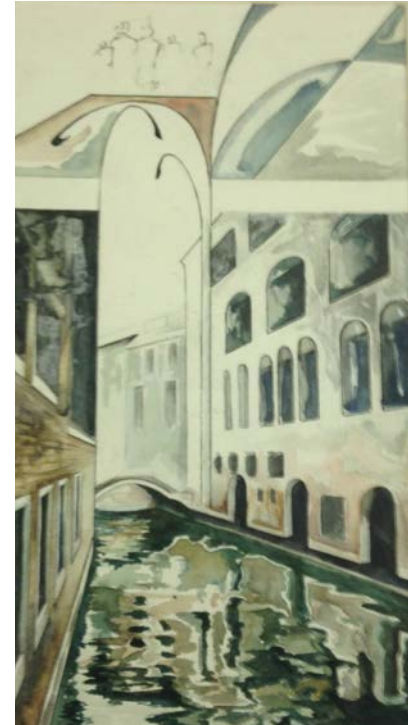
RVSCI hopes to sponsor this competition again next year as it was a great success. Many teachers have asked me to let them know the competition theme as soon as I receive it from Sister Cities International in order to incorporate it into their curriculum. Our thriving Young Artists and Photographers



"The Discoverer of the New World," by Ben Li,
North Cross Schools.



"Girl with Her Submarine," by Anshu Thapa,
Hollins University.



"Arch to the Future," by Casey Murano of Hidden
Valley High School.

Showcases gave RVSCI an opportunity to connect with the community and engage local art teachers while reaching out to a student audience that may not already be included in our sister city activities.



"Together We Can," by Madeline Nicely, Arnold
R. Burton Center for the Arts and Technology.

New home for display cases means better visibility all around

By Mary Jo Fassié
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A group of about 30 Roanoke Valley Sister City members and city of Roanoke employees gathered at 10 a.m. on Friday, June 2, to dedicate eight new Sister City display cases installed in the corridor connecting the north and south sections of the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building. Formerly located in the pre-function area of the Berglund Center Special Events Center, the contents of the new display cases representing the Roanoke Valley's seven sister cities and the city of Roanoke have found a new home where they will be more visible to the people of the Roanoke Valley.

Roanoke Councilman John Garland and I greeted the guests assembled in the foyer of the north section. We both spoke of the importance of informing the public about the mission of RVSCI and affirmed that the new venue for the display cases will shine a light on the rich cultural heritage of our seven sister cities as well as the exchanges and activities of our organization.

The display cases were dedicated in honor of Dr. Robert Roth, Roanoke Valley Sister Cities Inc. co-founder in 1964 and president 1991-2010; and in



After the dedication ceremony, the Lisk and Roth families gathered for photographs. From left, Anita and Tom Lisk, Bob Roth, Tim Lisk, Dot Roth and daughters Lauran Roth Glover and Joy Roth Gerhard, whose visit was a surprise to their parents.

Joy Roth Gerhard, were present for the dedication, along with Tom and Tim Lisk, sons of David Lisk.

Additionally, we must pay tribute to and thank Dot Roth, who was the behind-the-scenes organizer for RVSCI for so many years. Lauran Glover has said that her mother did everything from writing place cards, to newsletter writing, to editing and mailing. Dot was responsible for countless aspects of RVSCI, including taking inventory, running things around town, setting up functions, greeting and hosting dignitaries, providing Korean interpretation informally, overseeing the books, chauffeuring dignitaries around town, and coordinating via phone and in-person many other functions. And she never wanted credit for any of them! "She is well-known for her kindness, generosity, grace and humility. Her steadiness and organization made her the glue that kept Dad's wonderful passion and ideas together in their shared goal of

enriching the lives of those in the Roanoke Valley as well as across the globe!"

The new display cases have been decorated by members of each sister city and the current and past executive boards. Including a case dedicated to Roanoke, they represent the past and present cultures of our cities in eight countries and on five continents. They are a tribute to the mission of Roanoke Valley Sister Cities, Inc., which strives to foster and encourage friendship and peace through cultural, medical, economic, educational and professional exchanges among the people of the Roanoke Valley and the citizens of our seven cities: Wonju, South Korea (1964); Kisumu, Kenya (1976); Pskov, Russia (1992); Florianópolis, Brazil (1995); Opole, Poland (1995); Lijiang, China (1996); and Saint-Lô, France (1998).



Bob and Dot Roth pose beside two of their favorite cases. Photo courtesy of Lauran Glover.

President's Report: Connect with RVSCI in 2017-18!

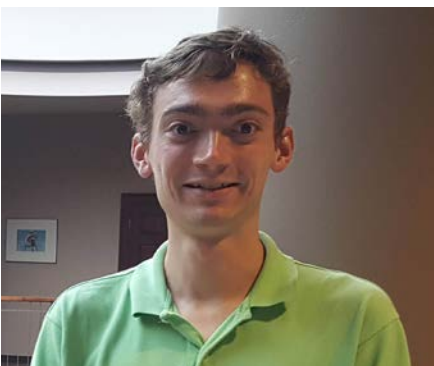


By Mary Jo Fassie
President, RVSCI
mjfassie@gmail.com



The local Fox TV affiliate films as Mary Jo addresses the audience at the dedication of our sister city display cases at the Roanoke Municipal Building on June 2.

It is hard to believe that I am just finishing my second year as your RVSCI president! These past two years have been a challenging experience in helping to run a nonprofit organization. Whether tackling new projects (a brochure, website update, T-shirts, display board, PowerPoint presentations, young artists and photographers contest) or establishing new relationships (RVSCI interns from Roanoke College and a partnerships with Local Colors and the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine), I have found that the job of president has been rewarding. It is a pleasure to meet so many people in the



RVSCI intern Howard Daniels

Roanoke Valley and to connect with the community, whether it be speaking to groups or doing a radio interview. I hope that everyone got a chance to meet our Roanoke College summer intern, Howard Daniels, at the annual dinner.

Plans for the fiscal year of 2017-18 have already given us new goals and experiences to anticipate. Join us this summer at the annual Bastille Day potluck picnic on July 9 and bake international cookies or volunteer with us for Olde Salem Days on September 9. In the fall, host a student from Normandy for a week in October and mark December 7

and beyond in the summer.

At the annual dinner, the members of RVSCI voted on the executive board's proposed changes to the RVSCI bylaws. These changes included the new mission statement that was approved by the membership at our last annual dinner, clarifications of the time frame for dues payment and the establishment of a quorum for the executive board. The changes to the bylaws were approved by the voting members on June 1st, 2017.

One item to note, our Pskov sister city is looking for a new chair as Dr. Rachel Stauffer has moved



At our annual dinner on June 1, Seaira Siv (seated right), a Roanoke Catholic student, was awarded the \$200 first-place prize in the inaugural Roanoke Valley Sister Cities Young Artists Showcase. In this photo, she is joined by (clockwise from left of Seaira) her art teacher Kim Spencer, Margarita Cubas, former Roanoke Mayor David Bowers, Seaira's parents, Ra and Denise Siv, and RVSCI president Mary Jo Fassie.

on your calendar as we celebrate the holidays with international food and customs at the Shenandoah Club. At the beginning of 2018, come to the Taubman Museum to enjoy the Lunar New Year celebration on February 3, and on April 6, put on your dancing shoes as we celebrate at our inaugural Polish Polka Fest. If you would like to travel in 2018, join the St-Lô group as they visit Normandy

to Harrisonburg. If you know of anyone interested in taking over this chairmanship, please contact me.

We hope that the coming year will continue to bring more positive experiences as we all make it our goal to spread the mission of RVSCI and to enjoy the many cultural and educational activities that all of our cities have planned.



Pskov Report: The difficult steps of preparing to leave Pskov

By Rachel Swyhart
Ferrum College exchange
student studying in Pskov

My last semester in Pskov has been more about good-byes than hellos. We all feel the end of the year approaching – overhead, the church bell tolls and we are frozen. But not everything is sad. The more time slips away, the more we tend to feel shy to reach out to each other, but when we do our meetings are that much sweeter. We are a family. So many birthdays have come and gone – during the entire month of March, we had a birthday twice a week until everyone had eaten enough cake to last the rest of their lives.

Stronger bonds tie us together. No matter how many new faces appear all around us, we stay together. But our studies grow more intense, our Russian grows sharper, more accurate, and all around us bloom new friendships in the most unexpected places – in familiar buildings, fresh off the tourism bus, even in the local KFC.

The weather is finally breaking up. On the 9th of May, the Victory Day holiday for Russia, it snowed. I was in Kaliningrad with my German roommate tracing her



International Dinner May 2017. From left: Andrijana from Macedonia; Rachel from America; Duygu and Refik from Turkey; Maria and Raphael from Africa; Cokail, Hamid and Abdul from Afghanistan; Farid from Tajikistan; Hasan, Hasem and Haldun from Syria; O from Thailand; Manchur from Turkmenistan; and Hatem from Egypt.



Russian Easter eggs.

great-grandparents' footsteps along the ancient German-Russian city when it happened. Sitting in the windowsill thinking that there was nothing better than a well-deserved Russian spring, I watched the parade of tanks drive by our hotel through a flurry of snowflakes. Winter began on the 25th of October – which turned Pskov into a winter wonderland – and only now are we thawing our toes in the spring sunshine. Not unreasonably, we're all feeling the effects of spring. The ones who are staying longer than the rest of us are flirting with the locals, making new friends. The ones going to different cities find their minds wandering from their studies to their futures. And the ones of us leaving are watching with eyes full of wonder as our little world revolves around us, marveling at all we have before it's snatched away forever.

Russia's religious capital has been a kind hostess, but we're ready for whatever is next. Pskov is burned

into our minds like a tattoo. We will hear the river in our dreams. We will know the smell of the Russian air in our lungs. These memories will be a monument to our youth, and we will remember.

I find myself loving the people surrounding me – Russians, Afghans, Syrians, Africans and Chinese alike. But I don't love them like family.

Eventually, everyone outgrows their families. I don't love them like friends, either - friends can easily slip away, or be replaced. I find myself loving them as I love myself. I love them with unhindered affection and a passion for their endless potential, and even though leaving the city of Pskov means leaving behind a point in time I will never be able to recapture, I cannot wait to see them spread their wings and fly.

You cannot outgrow a piece of yourself, only shed old habits, old thoughts. And you can never replace such precious memories. You can only make more.



Rachel's second try ice skating in an outdoor children's park.

Lijiang Report: Lijiang reaches out to the community here & abroad

By Mary Jo Fassié
President, RVSCI
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Rebecca Chang and students perform a fan dance at the Taubman Museum.

Members of the Lijiang committee, led by Chairwoman Rebecca Chang, brought in the Lunar New Year at the Taubman Museum of Art with a wonderful display of Chinese culture. Under the direction of Rebecca's husband, a table was set up for demonstrations of Chinese calligraphy. Visitors of all ages lined up to get a sample of their names written in Chinese and some to practice this art as well.

Rebecca and her students from Roanoke College put on a graceful performance of a fan dance that kept the crowd in awe of this ancient dance form. Ladies from the Chinese community in Roanoke dressed in traditional costumes and sang several Chinese songs under Rebecca's leadership.

During this past semester, Rebecca and her Chinese class at Roanoke College reached out

to students in Lijiang.

Via Skype, her class and a class at Lijiang Teacher's College communicated online from their respective campuses. In addition, Rebecca is working on creating an intern exchange with Lijiang College.

Rebecca will be attending the 2017 South and Southeast Asia Commodity Expo from June 12-18 in Yunnan Province. She will have a display that will include information from home about the VTCSOM, Roanoke College, "Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge," etc. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the citizens of the Yunnan Province to learn about their sister city of Roanoke, Virginia.



Celebrating the Lunar New Year at the Taubman Museum of Art with a calligraphy demonstration and display.

Florianópolis Report: The Brazilian experience at home and abroad

By Linda Harrison, co-chairwoman
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Fourth-year VTCSOM student Chris Li, who interned in Florianópolis this year, poses with Jean Broyles and Mary Jo Fassié at the global medicine rotations presentations in April.

In April, we gathered at VTCSOM to listen to students describe their global medicine rotations. Then-fourth-year Chris Li described his very successful internship in Florianópolis at the Universidade do Sul de Santa Catarina.

Marilia and Mike Deisenroth continue to be active supporters of our local Florianópolis sister city. Last month, after recently returning from Brazil, they visited at

our Local Colors booth and shared information with visitors. They invited Bill Modica and me for a delicious Brazilian dinner at their Blacksburg home the next week. We shared information about the orphanage we have helped sponsor and government and social issues in both countries. The couple also attended RVSCI's annual dinner at Roanoke College and took great pictures. Marilia presented a lovely tri-folder poster that she made. It depicts pictures and samples of the bobbin lace from Florianópolis that she makes. It has current maps, pictures and descriptions about some of their folk dances and important events. It will be an asset to our collection.



Marilia Deisenroth displays the new informational poster that she created and donated to our local sister city group.

Several members attended the cabinet dedication in the Roanoke Municipal Building on June 2. We shared memories of exchanges with the Roth and Lisk families. The display cabinets are being enjoyed by more people in this spot.

We received an email from Love's Little Nest, the orphanage that we help sponsor, with a list of items and pictures of equipment they had purchased with our most recent donation. They were very appreciative of our gift.



Florianópolis Chair Linda Harrison and Kisumu Chair Bill Modica at Local Colors.

Violist Bryan Matheson



RVSCI Annual Dinner Photos



Mrs. Sikshin Caecilia Hubbard, Mrs. Dot Roth, Dr. Robert Roth, Dr. Kris Slowikowski

Guest Speaker, Dr. Cynda Johnson



Saint-Lô Report:

Young people carry on our mission on both sides of Atlantic

By Cammie Williams
Chairwoman
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They say that that it is difficult to have a good life. That the world has little patience or consideration for the innocent. Yet, as I stare out across the rolling hills of green, dotted with stone cottages and sheep, I cannot help but feel at ease. I don't know if it is the slow hum of the train's wheels as they glide across the tracks that offer me a sense of peace but for the first time in months, I have no fear. There is a simplicity nestled in the hearts of the people here. As if, it was conceived within the flower beds, the water, the landscape. A part of the soil that bore bountiful fruits,



Emily Holter

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VTCSOM fourth-year students Sarah Abdulla and Eileen Bui pose with the iconic unicorn statue in the heart of Saint-Lô.

eaten by the masses and replenished with a passing smile. A way of life that is Normandy. The elegance and grace that lingers within silence. There is an understanding without speaking.

This is but an excerpt of Emily Holter's experience this summer in Saint-Lô. A VCU student, she is a former host to high many school guests, a traveler in return and an intern, and as she makes her way back to the U.S. will again touch base with our visiting summer intern, Ambre Siard. Emily is obviously a gifted writer and has chosen her journalism major appropriately. Read more about her experiences here: <https://tendaysinamadhouseblog.wordpress.com/>

Our burgeoning relationship with VTCSOM may at first glance seem an odd juxtaposition to our organization's roots in WWII and with the local soldiers who liberated Saint-Lô. However, this is an ongoing venture that allows modern medical education, cultural perspectives and sharing of history to merge, especially through Saint-Lô's Hôpital Mémorial, which has a memorial mosaic in honor of American veterans at its entrance.

It was the desire of several Roanoke-area veterans that young people continue the relationships started between our two cities. Three VTCSOM students visited this spring as part of their medical training, and

they relished the hospitality and history of Normandy. Moreover, they noted these medical perspectives: "In Virginia, the patients seem more advanced with illnesses than here," Sarah Abdullah told the regional newspaper Ouest-France. "Many arrive at the last moment to get an operation." Sarah believes this delay is due to the elevated cost of care. During their internships at the Hôpital Mémorial, Sarah and Haoxuan Xu explored vascular surgery, while Eileen Bui studied gynecology. "The birthing process is much shorter in duration than in the United States," Eileen told Ouest-France. With an eye on current events, the students said they worry about Donald Trump's revocation of "Obamacare," health coverage that was put in place by



Representing our membership in the Parade of Nations at Local Colors this May are (from left) Vice Chairwoman Siobhan Scro, Emily Hadfield and Chairwoman Cammie Williams. Emily was our intern to Saint-Lô last summer, and her family will host Ambre, the intern from Saint-Lô, for her entire stay this summer.

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Saint-Lô Report: (Con't)

Barack Obama. "We're not worried about our job, rather about those who are not going to be able to get care," Sarah said. Along the same lines, the students said they believe that the attempt to halt immigration, notably of doctors who come from other countries, could cause a problem. [Ouest-France, March 2017]

To come full circle, a former intern to Saint-Lô, Emily Hadfield, and her family will soon host Ambre Siard. Ambre will volunteer for the Taubman Museum of Art and create plans to go along with the tours in

French that the museum now offers. Cindy Petersen, Deputy Director of Education & Visitor Engagement, will shortly be in Saint-Lô, planning for future partnerships and discussing plans for the 20th anniversary of our twinning.

All are invited to our annual potluck Bastille Day potluck picnic on July 9 at 5 p.m. at Longwood Park in Salem. Stay tuned for another student visit in October and upcoming events for the anniversary.

Vive la France et vive l'amitié franco-américaine!



Cubist painter and sculptor Fernand Léger, a native of Lower Normandy, created this mosaic at the entrance to the Hôpital Mémorial.



On April 12, VTCSOM students reported on their international experiences to school officials, RVSCI members and the Roanoke public. Seen here with RVSCI secretary Jean Broyles (left) and RVSCI president Mary Jo Fassie are recent interns to Saint-Lô (from left) Haoxuan Xu, Sarah Abdulla and Eileen Bui. Photo courtesy of VTCSOM.

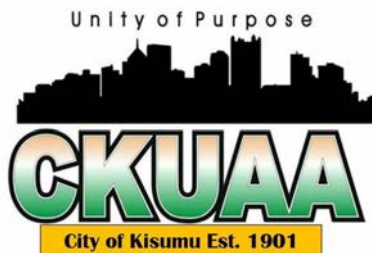
Kisumu Report: Helping our partners promote peace and fairness

By Bill Modica
Chairman
modicabill2@aol.com

Kisumu has, like many African communities, experienced political and social disruptions and in some instances, violence and civil unrest. Much of this results from ethnic discrimination among political factions, but a general level of social inequality also contributes to the tensions. A report in 2016 by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission of Kenya earmarked Kisumu as one of 20 violence hotspots likely to face incidents of post-election violence.

In Kenya, 2017 will be election

year, and it looks like it's going to be bruising battle among the main contenders. Because of this, The Roanoke/Kisumu committee has established a formal relationship with a business association in Kisumu known as the City of Kisumu Urban Areas Association (CKUAA). Its goals are to promote peaceful political activities and encourage fairness in government and business operations.



We intend to support such political goals and still maintain the support we have shown in the past for medical and humanitarian projects.

Our representative in Kisumu, Dr. Makori Moronge, will act as our liaison. We invite our members to take a more active role in activities that impact the Kisumu area. Another of our members, Ruphina Okeyo, who currently resides near Blacksburg, is working on a project to support sustainable food production, storage and distribution. We will have more information on that later in the summer. Ruphina helped out this year on a number of our activities and attended the annual Sister Cities

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dinner meeting. Read more about that meeting in Mary Jo Fassié's president's report.

In other news, our Kisumu Sister City exhibit display case is finished and on display at the Roanoke Municipal Building. We invite you to stop by and view the contents. If you have interesting items you would like to lend us to include in the display, please contact Bill Modica at modicabill2@aol.com. We want to thank the city of Roanoke for making this possible and providing the display cases and RVSCI President Mary Jo Fassié for arranging for it to be in such a wonderful location.



Kisumu Report: (Con't.)



Socializing before our delicious meal at the annual dinner at Roanoke College were (from left) Kisumu member Ruphina Okeyo, her daughter Loretta Okeyo, Roanoke Vice Mayor Anita Price, Florianópolis co-chairwoman Linda Harrison, Deputy Director of Education & Visitor Engagement at the Taubman Museum of Art Cindy Petersen (soon to visit Saint-Lô), and Kisumu chairman Bill Modica.

Opole Report: Our Polish sister city is celebrating its 800th anniversary!

*By Dr. Kris Bulas-Slowikowski
Chairwoman
krisbulas@cox.net*



Mateusz Rozek, seen here outside of the Museum of Polish Song, acted as Kris's chauffeur in Opole. He will perform Chopin in Warsaw in July as part of the "Chopin in the Park" series.

The celebration of the 800th anniversary of Opole's establishment as a town is an opportunity to highlight one of Poland's oldest cities, its rich history and multiculturalism, which includes Polish, Czech, Austrian, German and Jewish cultures. The name of the city refers to one of the first tribal communities on now-Polish land. For centuries, Opole has been inextricably linked with the Oder (Odra in Polish) river. The city of Opole survived many invasions, wars, floods, fires, political and religious changes. Music, art and theater dominate the city's life. Opole is known as the Capital of Polish Song. The National

Festival of Polish Song, the National Puppet Theatre Festival and the Opole Theatre Confrontations -Polish Classics festival are annual events. The Opole Zoo is considered one of the most beautiful zoos in Poland.

I am happy to say that RVSCI will participate in anniversary festivities that will officially occur this September.

In July, Roanoke artist Max Mead Mitchell will participate in an Opole partner city art workshop. The theme is celebrating Opole's 800th anniversary. We look forward to viewing his artistic inspirations, which will remain on display in Opole.

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Opole Report: (Con't.)

In May, I traveled to Opole for a short, one-day visit to discuss current and future collaborations. As always, Opole rolls out the red carpet for its partner cities. Maciej Wrobel with the Opole Department of Culture, Tourism and International Cooperation made sure that I met with theater, art, library and music directors.

I toured a wonderful new museum of Polish song, which uses interactive computer programs to allow you to scroll through archived videos and listen to popular music from the early 1900s to the present time. This museum has been open since November and is not to be missed.

I met with the director of the puppet theater, Krystian Kobyłka, to discuss the possibility of a tour in the U.S. I went to a performance of "Colorful People," a new production for children that explores diversity using minimal props, dolls, special lighting and minimal words – a lovely performance in which the children attending were enthralled.

The director of the modern art gallery, Anna Potocka, gave me a tour of a new building and exhibit of local artists. Opole now offers classes in



In May, Kris met with a variety of cultural officials including (from left) puppet theater director Krystian Kobyłka and Maciej Wrobel and Magdalena Matyjaszek from the Opole Department of Culture, Tourism and International Cooperation.

graphics and ceramics to the public.

The new modern library built with monies from the European Union resembles our own new Roanoke libraries. Of interest, they work closely with the American consul from



This poster is advertising the "Chopin in the Park" concerts.

Krakow and have started a section called "America in Your Library." I am sure that Roanoke can add to that section with books from our region as well as cultural exhibits about, for instance, the Crooked Road – Virginia's Heritage Music Trail. Danuta Łuczak, head of the Department of Promotion for the Municipal Library, was most enthusiastic and eager to reach out to our County Library.

I discussed with the president's representative, Opole director of culture, tourism and international cooperation, Magdalena Matyjaszek, other options for possible exchanges such as a collaborative zoo theme, beer brewery theme and others.

Of course no visit to Opole can occur without a visit to the music school that we have supported for 20 years. This is such a wonderful and special relationship where I am

treated as family and the students that have visited remain part of our Roanoke family. Mateusz Rozek, who visited Roanoke twice, acted as my chauffeur. Mateusz will perform Chopin in Lazienki Park in Warsaw in July as part of the "Chopin in the Park" series. Professor Celina Hellerowa, now 82, the premier piano instructor at the school, is still active and is a dynamo in the music realm. She teaches only the most talented students at the school, and Roanoke has been privileged to hear her students numerous times. I was treated to my own private concert featuring 5 student performers: an amazing 9-year-old boy who played beautiful Chopin, a young man who played accordion in a way that I had never heard, a trumpet duo, saxophone duo and ended with beautiful piano selections from Antoni Pikuta, who played in Roanoke 3 years ago. We celebrated my visit with a wonderful dinner at the home of Anna Rozek attended by the director of the music school, Magdalena Czercowy, vice director Henryka Mikosza and husband and others. What an amazing day.

From September 15-19, Opole will celebrate its 800th anniversary with a historical parade. I will join Opole's other partner cities in attending this event while representing Roanoke County. Dr. Cynda Johnson, founding



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Opole Report: (Con't.)



This May, in Opole, Kris Bulas-Slowikowski (center) met with Professor Jacek Szepietowski (left) and Kamil Machera, representatives of the Wroclaw Medical University, to talk about a global medicine rotation for WMU and VTCSOM students.

dean and president of VTCSOM, will accompany me on this trip.

On May 22, I met with Professor Jacek Szepietowski, Prorector of Wroclaw Medical University Development, and Kamil Machera, Director of International Relations at the Wroclaw Medical University, to solidify our discussion regarding a 4-week global medicine rotation for VTCSOM students. In return, 5th- and 6th-year medical students from Wroclaw Medical University will rotate at Carilion Medical Center also for a 4-week block in a specialty of their

choice. A formal MOU will be signed in the fall with the exchange to begin during the 2017-2018 school year.

Put your dancing shoes on and get ready to polka with the Chardon Polka Band on April 6, 2018, at the Taubman Museum. www.chardonpolkaband.com. This band is so popular that a date is hard to get. They have more than 7,000 likes on Facebook and have wonderful music videos to view. Watch their videos, like them on Facebook and come and dance! Polka lessons may be coming in preparation for this fun time, so stay tuned.



Wonju Reports:

Student and book exchanges reflect our growing ties

By Brian Counihan
Chairman
brian@communityhigh.net



Brian Counihan, with daughter, Veronica at Local Colors.

Three medical students from Yonsei University Wonju College of Medicine spent several weeks at VTCSOM in February as part of our ongoing exchange program. They were Hanna Moon, Minseon Kim and Sojin Lee. They had a wonderful visit, and they loved Roanoke. Kye and Moon Kim were wonderful Roanoke hosts, and many Wonju committee members met them for lunch and helped make

them feel welcome.

Last year RVSCI received a half dozen books from Korea as part of a book exchange program that the cities of Roanoke and Wonju have initiated. Wonju sent a couple of cookbooks, an introduction to Korean history and a two books introducing the Korean language, all of which can help readers understand the rich culture of Korea. All the books are for English speakers, of course, and will find a home at the renovated Williamson Road Library. Branch director Mary Lou Puritz welcomes the addition to her library, which will have a focus on books and media of international interest.

With the assistance of the city of Roanoke, RVSCI is preparing to send half a dozen or so books to Wonju to be made available to their citizens in a public library there. So far, we have two books on Roanoke streetcars and rail history, a book on WDBJ Radio history and an official visitors guide. We would like your help in selecting more books

and media that would help the people of Wonju to get to know us better. Can you suggest cookbooks, local history, arts and crafts, music history, novels by local authors, glossy books on noteworthy Virginia artists or beautiful books on Virginia's vineyards and landscapes? We may have time to include a few more books in this box, and we need more ideas for the next box.



Yonsei University Wonju College of Medicine students (from left) Hanna Moon, Minseon Kim and Sojin Lee interned at VTCSOM earlier this year. Read about Minseon's and Hanna's Roanoke experiences, in their own words, on pages 13-14.

Wonju Reports:

Lucky to have had such a valuable experience in Roanoke

*By Minseon Kim
Student
Yonsei University Wonju College of Medicine*

I came to Roanoke to take clinical clerkships at VTCSOM because I planned to apply for neurology residency in the United States this year. Thankfully, I had valuable and unforgettable experiences at Carilion Clinic. I took rotations in pediatric neurology, internal medicine and geriatric psychiatry for four weeks. This clearly shows how lucky I was because all of them are crucial to a neurologist. During the rotations, I encountered diverse patients, from a 4-day-old baby with seizures to an 88-year-old senior with diabetes.

Closely observing how professors build a meaningful relationship with patients and their family, I learned that friendly interacting with patients is a key in building good rapport. Patients do not want to be regarded as mere medical problems or research

subjects but as a unique individual. Professors Otallah and Lantz also kindly gave me feedback on my history taking, physical examination and case presentation. Through this precious time, I was able to broaden my understanding of medicine and a patient's mind.

I also noticed many differences between the practice of medicine in South Korea and that in the States. First, the U.S. health insurance system is very complicated; patients pay different amount of money depending on their insurances. Almost all Koreans, however, are covered by national health insurance that they pay the same unless very poor. In addition, I had a chance to participate in class at VTCSOM, and it was surprising that the first year medical students learned how to take sexual history from teenagers and how to do a breast examination. I learned these skills at the beginning of my third year; in fact, for the first two years I was in the same classroom from 8 a.m. to 5

p.m. from Monday through Friday. If I had had such clinical experiences earlier, my studying would have been more productive and integrative. I am so glad that I had my last rotation as a student at VTCSOM. It was an eye-opening experience that helped me shape my career path.

It was also a truly blessing for me to meet members of Roanoke Valley Sister Cities. I have been to many cities in the States before, but never had I had such a warm welcome. All people I met were very kind and open-minded. Even when I spoke broken English, they listened to me carefully without frowning. If I come back to Roanoke for my neurology residency training, I will definitely join the committee and keep working on its mission so that the next generation can enjoy what I had here. I sincerely appreciate you for all the love and care you have given me.



Wonju Reports:

Friendliness found here could cure a cynic's soul

*By Hanna Moon
Student
Yonsei University Wonju College of Medicine*

I don't think I will ever forget the night I arrived in Roanoke. After several hours of delays at the Chicago O'Hare airport, I dozed off as soon as I got on the plane to Roanoke and did

not wake up until the plane landed. As I got off the plane, yawning and rubbing my eyes, I was first surprised at seeing Dr. Harrington so close to the gate, then slightly bemused at the modest size of the Roanoke airport.

Dr. Harrington introduced me to his wife, Gil, who wanted to make sure I was well-fed before dropping

me off, and drove me to the Patrick Henry, where I stayed for the month of my visiting clerkship at the Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. I remember staring out of the window of his car into the streets of downtown Roanoke, and realizing that the streets are reminiscent of

(Continued on Page 14)

Wonju Reports: (Con't.)

(Continued from Page 13)

chick flicks starring Ryan Gosling and/or Sandra Bullock. The streets lined with quaint brick buildings with the star-lit sky in the background seemed to welcome me with open arms.

In fact, this warm, fuzzy feeling of welcome and hospitality would greet me wherever I went. From lunch at Wonju Restaurant with Dr. Kye Kim and his wife to a Sister City luncheon at the Olive Garden and dinner at Bill Saari's house, my fellow students and I were met with unprecedented hospitality.

I'm far from my teenage self who trusted people blindly or believed in utopia. In fact, after a particularly difficult year of clinical rotations, I was on the verge of becoming a cynic; however, I can safely say that every one of the patients, families, doctors and nurses I encountered were kind and respectful to one another and to me. While I am unable to discuss

the patients I was fortunate enough to encounter, the prevalence of the genuine kindness in Roanoke truly warmed and healed my heart.

For those who are new to Roanoke and doubtful of their genuine hospitality, I would sincerely encourage them to get on the Star Line Trolley and see the interactions between the commuters. That alone would be enough to demonstrate this city's heart. This is not New York, where people are too busy wrapped with their own lives. This is a city where families help other families, and help one another without expecting anything in return. I feel truly privileged to have met so many incredible people during this visit. I would like to say thank you to all those who extended their thoughts and hospitalities to me, and may God bless the families of Roanoke.



Hanna Moon and Sojin Lee visit the Korea statue of the Sister Cities sculpture in downtown Roanoke's Century Plaza.

RVSCI Mission Statement

Roanoke Valley Sister Cities is committed to fostering and encouraging mutual understanding, friendship and peace through cultural, medical, economic, educational and professional exchanges among the people of the Roanoke Valley and the citizens of our seven sister cities on four continents.

Upcoming Events: Save the date!



All RVSCI members and friends are welcome to the annual Bastille Day picnic, July 9 at Longwood Park in Salem.

- July 9, 2017 – Bastille Day Picnic at Longwood Park
- September 9, 2017 – Olde Salem Days International Bake Sale
- December 7, 2017 – Int'l Holiday Gala at the Shenandoah Club
- February 3, 2018 – Lunar New Year at the Taubman Museum of Art
- April 6, 2018 – Polish Polka Fest at the Taubman Museum of Art

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Contact us at: roanokevalleysistercities@gmail.com

Annual Membership - Roanoke Valley Sister Cities

New Renewal

Cities: Wonju Kisumu Pskov Florianopolis Opole Lijiang St-Lo

Student: \$10 - one city ___ # cities x \$10 = _____ July 1, 20 _____ - June 30, 20 _____

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