



ROCKVILLE SISTER CITY CORPORATION NEWSLETTER

Rockville Sister City Incorporated is a non-profit corporation founded in 1986 in order to support and promote mutual understanding through personal experience based on Youth, Educational, Cultural and Commercial Exchanges among Sister Cities throughout the World.

<http://www.rocknet.org/Community/SisterCities/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Help Wanted

By James F. McConkey, Jr., President—RSCC

RSCC needs a person with some IT skills to be **Webmaster** for our website. We are losing the current webmaster due to business demands.

We previously tried to get a Montgomery College IT class to redesign and rebuild our website to make it easier to maintain and update, but were unable to get a sufficient commitment to complete this successfully. We would like to make the site more user-friendly and easier to navigate. This could be done with outside help, like a college class or competent student. Such activity even could qualify for community service, if there is any benefit in that. Still, we need to have the ability to provide guidance and to monitor development progress for such a project.

I would appreciate someone volunteering for this position or a referral of a person outside our current membership. Contact me at jfmccjr@comcast.net or by phone at 301 926-6059.

Another need we have is for a **Public Relations Coordinator** to serve as a central point of contact to all the media outlets including newspapers (both domestic and foreign language papers), city-run media, cultural organizations, etc. This person should be a good writer who can be concise, have

some competence with Microsoft Word or other word processing programs, and be able to file articles via e-mail.

Please refer any prospects to me at the above e-mail address or phone number.

EXCHANGES

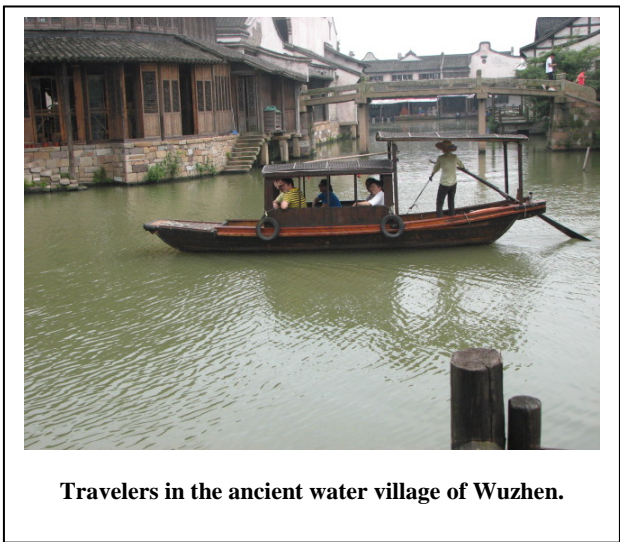
China Tour

By James McConkey

On July 5th a group of 26 members and directors of the Rockville Sister City Corporation left Rockville for a Grand Tour of China, including our Friendship City of Jiaxing. The tour arrangements were made and booked by our new sponsoring partner, Nexus Holidays/China Travel DC. The tour covered 12 cities and towns in two weeks.

We arrived in Shanghai in the evening, had dinner, and then went to our hotel for a good night's rest. In the morning we boarded our tour bus for the trip to Jiaxing and the meeting of the official Rockville delegation with the Municipal Officials, about which you can read elsewhere in this newsletter. The highlights of Jiaxing were the family visits, the farewell banquet, South Lake where Mao formed the Communist Party, and Wuzhen, the ancient water village under the jurisdiction of Jiaxing. Rotraut Bockstahler, talking about the banquet where Chinese and Americans intermingled and

conversed, said, “As one official put it at the most enjoyable banquet in Jiaxing, honoring the signing of the official documents between Jiaxing and Rockville: ‘Peace and development, those are our priorities!’ In our opinion, the world should learn from China, and China seems to be eager and willing to learn from the world.”



A two-hour ride from Wuzhen, through a vista of many farms, factories, and apartment complexes, took us to Hangzhou. We found the cruise across West Lake a cooling and relaxing interlude. (For the most part, the weather was very hot in China.) In Hangzhou, the group visited the Yellow Dragon Cave, toured the Dragon Well Tea Factory, and enjoyed impressive shows over the course of two evenings. Chris Luckman observed, “I am especially impressed by the high quality of their performing arts, especially the Tang Dynasty music and dance show with its elaborate scenery and costumes, and ‘Impression of West Lake’ in Hangzhou on West Lake at night, in which the performers appeared to be walking on the surface of the water amidst beautiful and dramatic lighting.”

Next we went to Wuxi to visit the Turtle Head Peninsular Park on Lake Tai, the largest freshwater lake in China, and the Liyuan Garden with its spectacular display of Lotus Blossoms. The next stop was Suzhou, a city of many classical Chinese gardens built along the Grand Canal. Here we

visited Tiger Hill, with its leaning pagoda, sword-testing rock, and tomb of an emperor; the Master of Nets Garden; and a silk fashion show.

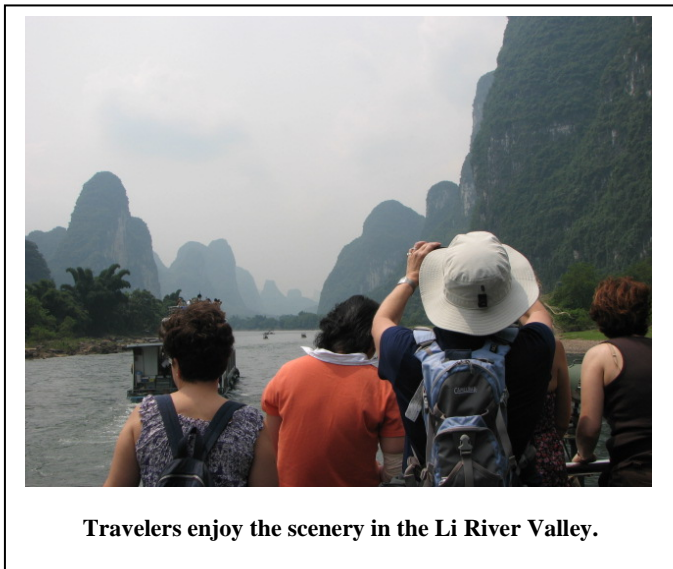
Then it was off to Shanghai and a chance to see some of the 2010 World Expo. Some did get into several pavilions, but many lines were too long, so many of us only had a chance to see the mass of visitors and the impressive structures. Jim and Cynthia Marrinan noted, “Our visit to the Shanghai World Expo reflected two things: the huge crowds (about 500K per day) of nearly all Chinese standing in long lines and the longest lines being at the Chinese Pavilion, indicating national pride.”

We had a chance to walk along the Nanjing Road shopping area and the Bund during the afternoon, visited the Shanghai Museum, then took a night-time cruise on the Haungpo River to witness a spectacular light show set against the Shanghai riverfront skyline. The cruise afforded several with a great opportunity to converse with Chinese citizens. Lorine Coyle observed, “Our most extraordinary experience in China was the people.



First, their friendliness. Time and time again I would make eye contact with someone, and the exchange usually involved a shared smile. Almost every day someone in our group was tapped on the shoulder and asked to be photographed with one or more Chinese people. At first we thought they wanted us to take their group picture, but no, they wanted *us* to be in their group pictures!”

Probably the most memorable impressions of the beauty of China were gathered during a four-hour cruise down the Li River from Guilin to Yangshou. Gary and Suzie Kurz fondly recalled “the river cruise down the Li River seeing the majestic Karst Mountains, the fishermen with their cormorants, the bamboo rafts selling fruit, the water buffalo, and the women doing laundry at the water’s edge,” as well as “shopping in the little stands in Yangshou, bargaining, and then relaxing in a tea house.” The area around Yangshou also provided a brief look at rural and farm life—a very stark contrast to the primarily urban vistas in most places visited. Sights in Guilin included the Reed Flute Cave, Elephant Hill, an art gallery, and a minority song and dance show.



Travelers enjoy the scenery in the Li River Valley.

From Guilin, we flew to Xian, the first capital of unified China (it continued as such through 11 dynasties), the site of the tomb of its first emperor, Qin Shi Haung (founder of the Qin dynasty) and the army of Terra Cotta Warriors guarding the site. We also had an opportunity to walk on the city wall and observe in the distance the Bell and Drum Towers. In the evening we enjoyed a dumpling banquet and the Tang Dynasty Show.

Then it was off to Beijing for the wrap-up of the tour and its highlights, including Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden Palace, The Temple of

Heaven, The Summer Palace and Gardens, and of course The Great Wall. A fantastic show of Chinese acrobatic skills was the last of the performances viewed.

The Rockville Group was very impressed with China and Jiaxing. Here are a few concluding impressions:

“Regarding the people, I admired enormously how healthy the majority looked. It must have something to do with their healthy diets—so much great food and still I lost weight!”

“We felt privileged to be part of the Sister Cities delegation and would love to return to China someday to once again experience their friendly, welcoming people, wonderful food and beautiful country.”

“I am grateful that I have had an opportunity to visit this country twice, and I am proud to be part of the Sister Cities group in its effort to reach out in friendship and increased understanding of a country and culture that is very different from our own.”

“It was a truly life-changing experience, and I am so grateful that I was able to go on this first delegation from the City of Rockville.”

“I hope that Rockville and Jiaxing become sister cities and have many exchanges in the future, and I hope to return to China again someday!”

Impressions of China Posted

By James McConkey

Twenty members of the Chinese tour group wrote their impressions of China after returning to Rockville. These have been posted on the Rockville Sister City web site (<http://www.rocknet.org/Community/SisterCities>). Please visit the site and read more what our travelers have to say about their tour.

Delegation Recommends Patience

By James McConkey

Rockville's six-member, "official" delegation to Friendship City Jiaxing, China made its report to the Mayor and Council at a meeting on November 22nd, 2010. The delegation was accompanied by a group of 20 for a special tour of China arranged by RSCC sponsoring partner Nexus Holidays/China Travel DC.

The initial stop in Jiaxing was at an apartment complex where the group broke into five smaller groups to visit five families in their homes. Each of the families had prepared a presentation on a specific topic: (1) Happy and Healthy Elderly People, (2) Talented Couple, (3) Chinese Medicinal Herb Hobby Group, (4) Elderly People Enjoy Themselves, and (5) Chinese Calligraphy. After the presentations and demonstrations, there was some time for open discussions and questions. This was a specific response to RSCC's desire for some cultural interchange.

The Jiaxing Office of Foreign Affairs took the whole tour group to a local hotel for lunch. After lunch, the delegation proceeded to City Hall for the meeting with Jiaxing officials, and the tour group went sightseeing.

The delegation was greeted at City Hall with welcoming signs and led into a large conference room with welcome signs and decorations, a long conference table, and a special table set aside for a signing ceremony.

The meeting followed an agenda suggested by RSCC and was initiated by a presentation about city financing by Jim Marrinan, former Rockville Councilman, and a presentation of written material on the subject delivered by the delegation chairman, Jim Coyle, former Mayor.

Discussions then followed on the possibilities for exchange programs, including student exchanges at the high school and university level, artist and

performer exchanges or exhibits, and official government visits. Jiaxing agreed that such exchanges could be arranged, although they were uncertain about the procedures to implement them.

That being the essence of the discussions, an Agreement in Principle drafted by RSCC, to follow up with agreements between the city governments and specific plans was signed by Jim Coyle and the vice-Mayor of Jiaxing, Mr. Jiang Ren Huan. Then the two groups exchanged gifts following the Chinese custom.

RSCC concluded that the development of a relationship similar to that enjoyed between Rockville and Pinneberg would take a long time and that patience would be required to make it happen. But they did allow that such a relationship could happen, considering the changes in Chinese relationships with foreign entities, the greater freedoms being enjoyed by its citizens, and the fact that even some NGOs, which would more easily fit the RSCC/DAGRP model, are being created.

It was recommended that RSCC draft a letter to be sent to Jiaxing's Mayor by Rockville's Mayor and Council accepting the principles outlined in the agreement and to solicit Jiaxing's ideas on initial exchanges and procedures for their implementation.

RSCC also wants to conduct a survey of Rockville citizens to ascertain the depth of their interest and support for advancing the concept of a second Sister City.

CULTURAL EVENTS

German-American Day

By James McConkey

On October 6th, 1683, 13 families from Krefeld, Germany landed near Philadelphia and founded the town of Germantown, Pennsylvania, which is now a suburb of Philadelphia. The landing of the families was celebrated as a holiday in the area through

much of the 19th century, but the practice was discontinued during WWI due to the anti-German feeling that developed. The holiday was revived by President Ronald Reagan, and appropriate festivities and celebrations are encouraged to observe the contributions of Germans to the development of the United States of America.

RSCC held its second annual German-American Day dinner at the Old Europe Restaurant on Wisconsin Avenue in the District on Sunday, October 3rd, 2010. Forty-five members and guests attended and enjoyed the Oktoberfest buffet menu and geniality—or, what German speakers refer to as *Gemütlichkeit*. RSCC held a raffle with numerous prizes donated by members, Frames by James, Strathmore Music Center, etc., which raised significant funds to support our programs.



Diners enjoying themselves at RSCC's 2010 German-American Day Dinner

Thanksgiving in Pinneberg

By James McConkey

For several years now, the DAGRP has hosted a Thanksgiving Day dinner featuring turkey and all the trimmings at the Cap Polonio Hotel. Bernd Hinrichs, President, reported that this year 70 people, the largest group ever, took part in the event. According to Hinrichs, the group enjoyed

perfectly prepared turkeys, which he said “tasted great.” In addition to Hinrichs’s remarks to the group, an American guest talked about the history of Thanksgiving.

He had been nervous about his speech to the diners. They are concerned about rumors that RSCC will not be able to host or sponsor high school exchanges in 2011 because of Wootton High School dropping German as a foreign language. He is also worried about arrangements for the Fotokreis Pinneberg photography exhibit. RSCC is working to resolve these issues.

It is our understanding that a lack of school leadership or sponsorship is the reason for concern about the exchanges. We may have a solution for that, if a Wootton trip could be chaperoned by someone not connected with the school faculty. We are also investigating the potential involvement of the other high schools in hosting and making visits to Pinneberg, based on interests in history, culture, and government rather than language.

The Fotokreis exhibit has not been scheduled yet, because of renovation work at the Senior Center. We expect soon to get a date for the completion of the work; otherwise, we will look for another venue for this exhibit. We should have more information about this by the New Year.

Rockville: Site of Weiqi Tournament

By John Goon

The 2010 Moon Cha Memorial Go/Weiqi/Baduk Tournament was held on November 13th, 2010 in the Fellowship Hall of the Rockville United Church (RUC). The RUC is just a few short blocks from one of the busiest and noisiest roadways in Montgomery County, Maryland, but nothing was going to distract the 19 competitors from the task at hand. They were there to indulge in an Asian pastime of great antiquity and intellectual challenge. Go (a.k.a. Weiqi in China and Baduk in Korea) enjoys the distinction of being the only remaining

traditional strategy mind game in which the skill gap between computers and human players is still substantial, and these players were doing their best to maintain that separation.

The Moon Cha Tournament was conceived as a fundraiser event to support the Rockville Sister City Corporation and to promote public awareness in Go. RSCC is particularly interested in Weiqi (Go), because of its popularity in China and especially in Jiaxing, which is home to a major Chinese Weiqi (Go) Training Academy.



The 19 tournament players competed in two sections. The first section was organized as an open event with no handicap given—that is, all games were played as even. In the second section, all games were handicapped in accordance with the difference in player strength. The award winners were:

First Section Award Winners

- 1st: Won Suk Suh 5 dan
- 2nd: James Park 5 dan
- 3rd: Juan Pablo Quizon 5 dan
- 4th: Keith Arnold 4 dan
- 5th: Zhenying Gu 5 dan

Second Section Award Winners

- 1st: Todd Blatt 1 Kyu
- 2nd: Joseph Contarino 2 dan
- 3rd: Samuel Zimmerman 5 Kyu

Gift certificates and Go books were awarded to these section winners. Prizes were provided by Slate & Shell Publishers and McDonalds. The Chinese Culture and Community Service Center, a regional 1000-member non-profit that sponsors social and educational programs throughout the DC area, was a major contributor to this event. Proceeds from this event will help augment RSCC's program initiatives with Jiaxing, China.

The tournament is named for Moon Cha, a DC area Go player who passed away in September 2003. According to his daughter Serena, he had a major influence on the local, national, and international Go communities and was highly regarded for his skill as a player and for his common decency as a person. He mentored multiple generations of area Go players and was beloved by many and respected by all.

For more information about this and future Weiqi (Go) events, feel free to contact John Goon at spineyone@yahoo.com.

Pinneberg Clarinetists Play Joint Concert

By James McConkey

On October 2nd, RSCC met a group of seven students and their instructor from the Klarinetten Ensemble of the Musikschule of Pinneberg. They were tired and anxious because the airline left most of their baggage and instruments in Amsterdam. Not only that but several had a unique experience with US Customs and Immigration officials who detained a couple for questioning about their professional status and performances. We finally brought them to City Hall to meet their host families about an hour later than scheduled.

Thankfully, the baggage was delivered two days later.

Despite the inauspicious start, the group had a fine visit, sharing some activities with the group of students from the Theodor Heuss Gymnasium who were visiting Wootton High School at the same time. The activities for their stay included seeing the monuments and museums in Washington, DC, touring the Air and Space Museum at Dulles, visiting George Washington's Mount Vernon, attending a performance of Mahler's *Requiem* by the National Philharmonic Orchestra at Strathmore, and participating in an American-style backyard BBQ.

Clearly one of the highlights of their visit to Rockville was a joint concert with a number of clarinet players from the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra (MCYO), which was held at Glenview Mansion. The concert was enjoyed by a large audience, who also learned something about the different instruments. The Germans play on German-style clarinets; the Americans play on French-style instruments, and each has unique tonal qualities.

The concert arrangements involved many people new to RSCC activities, including Council Member Piotr Gajewski, Artistic Director at Strathmore Music Center; Ms. Cheryl Jukes, Executive Director of the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra; Dr. Albert Hunt, Clarinet Instructor and Conductor; and Ms. Susan MacPherson Klise, Administrator of the Glenview Mansion, as well as several others. We thank them all for making this visit such a success.

RSCC also welcomed several new families who served as hosts for our guests. They enjoyed the experience as much as the students and their instructor.

The experience could lead to a chance for members of the MCYO to make a similar trip to Pinneberg and Germany.

Cultural Events

By Liz von Kaenel

On November 27th, 2010 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM and November 28th, 2010 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM a German Christmas market was held at the Zion Church on City Hall Plaza in Baltimore, Maryland. The cost for admission was \$2 per person. Authentic German foods and imported holiday items were featured along with handmade items from local crafters. A model train garden was also part of the event.

On December 12th, 2010 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM a German Christmas celebration will be held at the Heurich Mansion. The celebration will include music by the Alte Kameraden band, the Christmas story in German and English, a visit from Sankt Nikolaus and Knecht Ruprecht, Christmas cookies from Germany, and a tour of the Mansion (Washington's most intact late Victorian house). The event is free. The Heurich Mansion is located at 1307 New Hampshire Avenue NW, one block south of the Red Line's Dupont Circle metro station.

On December 13th, 2010 at 3:00 PM, Washington Sangerbund's annual Christmas concert will be held at Concordia United Church at 20th and G Streets, NW. Donations are requested.

Fotokreis Pinneberg Exhibit Coming to Rockville

By James McConkey

Fotokreis Pinneberg, a group of amateur photographers from Pinneberg, is hoping to hold an exhibit of photos in Rockville as soon as RSCC can make arrangements for a venue. The photography exhibit will probably be in the fall of 2011. The Senior Center usually hosts such exhibits, but it will be undergoing renovations early in the year. Pinneberg would also like to invite Rockville photographers to exhibit their work in Pinneberg.

Allenberg Exhibit at Glenview Mansion

By Rotraut Bockstahler

RSCC is pleased to report that we are making progress with preparations for the Detlef Allenberg Exhibit at Glenview Mansion (i.e., the Rockville Civic Center) in September 2011. At the festive opening reception on Friday, September 9th, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, you will have the opportunity to meet the prolific artist and other guests from Pinneberg.

Detlef Allenberg, who visited Rockville on several occasions, is known to members of the RSCC and citizens of Rockville, since he designed the original logo of our organization and produced the 50th anniversary commemorative plaque. The triangular bronze plaque is permanently part of the grounds at Town Center across from the new library. As a symbol of our Sister City relationship with Pinneberg, Germany, and thereby completing a perfect square, an identical plaque is displayed at City Hall in Pinneberg.

Allenberg studied at the Visual Arts Academy in Hamburg and expanded his background in World Literature at the University of Hamburg. As an artist he developed his own style and has created a large volume of well received works in graphics, painting, and sculpture. His participation in group shows, as well as individual exhibits, has brought him regional and national recognition in Germany and other countries.

Please place a visit to the Allenberg exhibit, including the reception on September 9th, in your 2011 calendar.

COMMUNICATIONS

RSCC to be Featured on TV

By James McConkey

On November 30th, RSCC taped a program for the Access Montgomery TV (CH 19) show *Studio 501*

(c)(3) for their series highlighting the work of county non-profit organizations. We do not know when the program will be broadcast.

It describes the mission, history, goals and objectives of the Sister City program. In addition, it outlines and illustrates some of the activities conducted by RSCC, including adult and student exchanges, art exhibits, and visiting performing groups. The program covers both the Pinneberg and Jiaying relationships.

From Our German Friends Abroad

By Rotraut Bockstahler

Margrit and Jürgen Ziegler of Pinneberg returned to China to teach German for one more semester at a private education center in Hangzhou. They spent an entire school year in Jinhua last year. Here is an excerpt of a letter they sent in October.

Dear Friends,

After four weeks, we feel that we have finally arrived in China again. Our students here are as interested and eager to learn as the group we had in Jinhua. We are joined by three young, very helpful Chinese teachers (females), who are also teaching German, and the beauty of nature around Hangzhou gives us continued pleasure.

Our modern school, the Hangzhou Greentown Yuhua School, is an independent private school with about 5,000 students, who are predominantly housed in dormitories. The school includes all levels—kindergarten, elementary school, junior, and senior high school—and is privately owned by a well known investment corporation. Since good education is highly valued, education enterprises are not only profitable, but create the desired image and reputation. Foreign-born teaching staff is part of the necessary ingredient. In our high school, we along with another German teacher and a teaching assistant are the only foreigners. However, in our

apartment complex there are American, Indian, and Norwegian teachers as well.

German is being taught in grades 10, 11, and 12 in preparation for the final exam and the German Language Diploma. Most students answer the question about their future plans with saying that they would like to study at a German university. Of the students who passed the German Language exam last year, 15 just went to Karlsruhe and 2 to Hannover. The language diploma combined with top grades in Gaokao (Chinese High School Diploma) open the doors to German university programs; and for that goal students study, study, study.

We are thinking of all of you and are looking forward hearing from you.

Yours fondly,

Margrit and Jürgen.

Board Meeting Schedule

RSCC board meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Wednesday of each month—*except December*—at 7:30 PM in City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, in Rockville.

MEMBERSHIP

New and Returning Sister City Members

By Brigitta Mullican

The RSCC membership period is January through December. All payments for memberships made after September receive a year membership through the following December. Thanks to the following sister city members who continue to support our programs with their 2011 membership and contributions.

Corporate Members:

Aziz James Barimani (Frames by James)
Matthew Lee (Allied Technology Group, Inc.)
Bi Xiaosheng (Nexus Holidays/China Travel Service DC)
City of Rockville

Individual Members:

Stephen Bennetts
Tommy Mosely
Brigitta Mullican
Bruce Romer
William A. Vogel

Family Members:

Jerol and Tom Briggs
Jennie and Bill Forehand, Jr.
Dennis and Linda Freezer
Tanya and Bill Gazdik, Jr.
Robert A. and Holly H. Meyer
John O. and Marlene Moser
Kevin Moran and Tim Nixon
Theodore C. and Patricia Reuther
Jack and Patricia Rodgers
Wayne and Joan Savage
Caryl McNeilly and Robert Williamson
Zhu Xiaming and Guoqing Weng

In addition to their annual 2010 membership dues, the following individuals have given additional money to RSCC. A special “thank you” goes to each one. We invite others to make tax-deductible contributions in 2011.

Piotr and Tisha Gajewski
Jerol and Tom Briggs
Sandie Deighton
Benjamin and Susan Fulton
Jennie and Bill Forehand, Jr.
Elizabeth von Kaenel
Tommy Mosely
Bruce Romer
Theodore and Patricia Reuther

ROCKVILLE SISTER CITY CORPORATION (RSCC)
Membership Application/Renewal Form

I would like to (check one) ___renew, or ___apply for membership. Enclosed is my tax deductible payment (check one):
_____ \$20 Individual, _____ \$30 Family, or _____ \$100 Corporate Membership, for the Calendar Year _____.
Additional tax deductible contribution of \$ _____, **Total enclosed \$ _____**. RSCC is a Tax Exempt, Not-For-Profit Corporation.

Please print below.

Please, Please provide your email address. Otherwise we have no way of keeping you informed of our activities and events.

Name: _____ Spouse Name: _____ Email Address: _____

For internal use only. We do not release to other organizations.

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____, Work Phone: _____, Cell Phone: _____

Make checks payable to: RSCC Send to: Rockville Sister City Corporation, c/o Rockville City Hall,
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850-2364

AREAS OF INTEREST: (TO ALL MEMBERS, NEW & RENEWAL, PLEASE, PLEASE CHECK AT LEAST ONE.)

I would be interested in: ___Hosting visitors from Pinneberg; ___Hosting exchange students (high school); ___Fundraising;
___Helping with membership drive; ___Helping w/ Wine Tasting Events; ___Helping w/ Memorial Day Parade; ___Organizing
Cultural or Sport Exchanges; ___ Bicycle Tours; ___Developing or Helping with Other Events; ___Serving on Board of Directors;
___Just participating; ___Other (specify below) (These are not commitments, but do help us understand our members' interests.)

Other Comments, suggestions, etc. _____

(Continue on reverse side and check here ___ if appropriate)

Memberships are for the calendar year. There is no prorating of memberships. Members who join on or after September 1st will be credited with membership through the remainder of that current calendar year AND the full following calendar year.

Application/Renewal Form Ver.10-5(Revised 8/18/09)

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Rockville Sister City Corporation
c/o Rockville City Hall
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850-2364