



## 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.*

[www.rockvillesistercities.org](http://www.rockvillesistercities.org)

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### Sister City Relations

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

Over Mother's Day weekend, the Rockville Sister City Corporation (RSCC) played host to a group of German visitors touring under a program organized by the *Deutsche Amerikanische Gesellschaft Rockville-Pinneberg* (DAGR). The trip was advertised as a "Sonderreise an die Ostküste der USA" (a special trip to the East Coast of the USA). It was opened to the general public in the Pinneberg area to help attract new members to our partners' organization.

The DAGRP picked up on the idea after Rockville's successful trip to Jiaxing and the Highlights of China Tour in 2010 and our proposal for a home stay in Pinneberg and a river cruise in 2013. The group consisted of 27 travelers, about half of whom had no prior experience with any Sister City activities. The group thoroughly enjoyed the experience and the very cordial

welcome they received here in Rockville. I think the DAGRP will gain several new members as a result.

We are also looking forward to the visit of Councilmember Mark Pierzchala, who will be representing Mayor Phyllis Marcuccio and the rest of the City Council at the Sister Cities Mayor's Summit in Jiaxing in June. This trip will be a great

opportunity to develop the new relationship and to establish some initial exchange possibilities. Most significantly, Councilmember Pierzchala can announce the establishment of a Sister City Peony Garden at the Glenview Mansion on the grounds of Rockville's Civic Center. The garden will commemorate our friendship with



*Travelers from Pinneberg on the 2012 Sonderreise Tour accompanied by RSCC's own Jerol Briggs (far right)*

Jiaxing.

We expect to acquire a number of peony plants in the fall. These are being donated by Dr. and Mrs. Nelson Hsu of Germantown. These peonies should be very special to residents of Chinese heritage, because they were imported from China many years

ago. We will work with various civic organizations like neighborhood garden clubs over the next few months to see if more plants can be transplanted to help beautify Rockville and to encourage greater participation by members of the Chinese-American community.

Another significant event upcoming is a visit of Rockville's The Finest! performance troupe to Pinneberg during the summer. This trip will be a unique opportunity for special representation of Rockville's diverse population to the people of Pinneberg. These youth will live with German families for approximately two weeks and have an opportunity to visit Berlin. During their time in Pinneberg, the group will give several performances and will invite a Pinneberg dance group to participate in one performance. RSCC and the DAGRP are cooperating to make all of the arrangements and to help with substantial financial support. The Finest! troupe is working diligently to earn the additional funding necessary to finance the trip. Donations will be gratefully accepted by RSCC, c/o Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850.

RSCC is encouraging all residents to participate in our programs and to meet and get to know your neighbors. While Rockville is proud of its diversity, we do encourage unity in the community.

## CULTURAL EVENTS

### A Peony Garden for Rockville

By James McConkey

The Rockville Sister City Corporation is in touch with Dr. and Mrs. Nelson Hsu, a couple of Chinese ancestry residing in Germantown. They own and maintain an extensive garden of several varieties of peonies, which originally came from China. The Hsus have generously offered to donate some of these plants to RSCC in honor of the Friendship City agreement between Rockville and Jiaying, Zhejiang, People's Republic of China. There is also

a personal connection here, because the sister of Mrs. Hsu lives in Jiaying.

We have contacted Rob Orndorff, the city horticulturist, who visited the Hsus' garden last month and arranged for a group of plants to be transplanted from their Germantown location into the perennial garden at the Civic Center later this fall. There the garden will be dedicated to the developing friendship with Jiaying for the enjoyment of Rockville residents and especially the large community of residents of Chinese heritage.

The peonies normally bloom in the months of April and May.

### Hurray, We Have a Rockville Room!

(Translation of a Pinneberg Newspaper Article)

Translation by Rotraut Bockstahler

Such a sight is rather unusual at City Hall: Pinneberg's Mayor, Kristin Alheit, has climbed a ladder and is in the process of attaching screws to the new sign above the entrance to Meeting Room B. Next to her is Bernd Hinrichs, the president of the German-American Society (DAGRP), also with a tool in his hand. Almost euphorically they are attaching a sign that reads "Rockville Room" above the heavy-duty wooden doors. Effective immediately, the room formerly known as Meeting Room B has a new name.

This dedication takes place in honor of the 54 years of partnership with a city in the US in Maryland, a cooperative effort founded by Henry Glissmann of Pinneberg and Rockville Mayor Dickran Hovsepian. Hinrichs remarked that it became almost embarrassing not to be able to show Rockville visitors a counterpart to the Pinneberg Room at their Civic Center. For the very successful redecoration of the rather drab meeting room, he expressed a deep thank you to all the residents of Pinneberg. "Everybody looked through his or her storage area in the basement and parted with some memorable items," said the president of the

DAGRP. The result is indeed presentable: countless pictures, a beautifully worked tapestry that includes the name Rockville, and even a piece by artist Detlef Allenberg contributed to the lovingly done transformation of this room. From now on, dull meetings will become enjoyable and will be inspired by memories of our American-German friendship. Anyone who still would like to donate items is still welcome to do so. Mayor Alheit and Bernd Hinrichs would like to see the Rockville collection grow.



*DAGRP President Bernd Hinrichs and Mayor Kristin Alheit affixing the nameplate to the new Rockville Room in Pinneberg's government building*

## Photographers Alert

By James McConkey

Now that renovations of the Senior Center are complete, we will try to schedule a photographic exhibition of works by photographers, who are members of the *Fotokreis Pinneberg* (Pinneberg Photographers' Circle). The exhibit will feature photographs of people, sites, and events in and around Pinneberg, Germany. The Fotokreis has invited Rockville photographers to send a similar group of pictures to exhibit in Pinneberg. They would like to establish communications with a club or groups here in Rockville interested in photography. Perhaps exchange visits can be arranged in the future.

If you know of any photography club or are just interested in participating yourself, please contact Jim McConkey at [jfmccejr@comcast.net](mailto:jfmccejr@comcast.net).

## German-American Day Dinner

Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM



**Clyde's Tower Oaks**  
2 Preserve Parkway  
Rockville, MD 20852

**Prior Reservations Required**

**\$40 for RSCC Members**  
**\$45 for Nonmembers**

**For tickets and additional information  
contact**

**[Gerrie.checkon@longandfoster.com](mailto:Gerrie.checkon@longandfoster.com)  
or 301 279-0708**

## Rhine River Cruise

By Denny Freezer

We previously reported preliminary planning for an Elbe River Cruise during 2013, either spring or fall. Because payment is required far in advance of the tour, we just couldn't get it accomplished this year. Since then we've done further research on different cruises and prices and dates, working with Patty

Perry of Cruise Vacations International, Inc. and have selected Viking River Cruises for an eight-day Rhine River cruise from Basel to Amsterdam. Viking has an excellent reputation and many dates to choose from. We also investigated tours by a German company by the name of Nicko Tours; the tours are cheaper but lack many amenities offered by Viking Cruises, and they only provide an English-speaking guide for groups of 30 or more.

We are hoping to have 20 – 24 participants. Options will abound for extending your trip by visiting Hamburg, spending time with families in Pinneberg, or making other visits either on the front or back end of the trip. The cruise itself will start in Basel on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and provide six guided tours in four countries while traveling through Breisach, Strasbourg, Heidelberg, Koblenz, Cologne, and Kinderdijk. Departure from Amsterdam for the return home will be on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. The cost per person, based on double occupancy, will be \$2,255.50 to \$3,355.50 for the cruise alone, depending on the type of accommodations desired, and of course airfare will depend on the exact itinerary you desire getting to and from the start and end points of the cruise. These cruise rates are locked in until December, but your selection of cabin type in all categories is entirely based on availability at the time you make a \$1,000 per cabin deposit for two people. Final payment is then due by December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Please let us know if you would like to participate. Members on a limited schedule can just fly into Basel and depart from Amsterdam, but RSCC encourages travelers to experience a short family stay in our Sister City of Pinneberg if possible.

Please contact Denny Freezer at [dennyfreezer@verizon.net](mailto:dennyfreezer@verizon.net) or Marika Brown at [marika.brown@verizon.net](mailto:marika.brown@verizon.net) if you are interested in participating. Additional details on the cruise itself and actual booking arrangements are available from Patty Perry of Cruise Vacations International ([patty@cruisevacationsintl.com](mailto:patty@cruisevacationsintl.com) or 301 217-9474).

The trip is open to anyone, but Rockville Sister City membership will be required before booking. Membership costs \$20 per year for individuals and \$30 for families.



*The village of Lorch on the banks of the Rhine*

## International Photo Contest Announced

By Tim Nixon

The provincial government of Zhejiang in China has begun publicizing a photo contest that they are calling “Eyes on Zhejiang.” According to the official announcement, the Zhejiang Provincial People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries wants “to showcase what Zhejiang has achieved since China adopted the policy of reform” and a new openness in 1978.

The official statement clearly specifies that the contest “is open to foreign friends living or working in Zhejiang,” as well as “those who have been to Zhejiang before.” Some of the individuals who traveled with RSCC to Jiaying, therefore, might be interested in submitting one or two photos taken while on that trip. The submissions should focus on Zhejiang and its cities, including social, historical, cultural subjects or the lives of the people.

The deadline for submissions is August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and there are cash prizes for the winning pictures. Submissions can be in either film or digital formats,

and contestants can submit no more than two entries. Also, no manipulation of the image (such as framing or alteration through programs like Photoshop) is allowed.

To submit a digital file, which can be no smaller than 1.5 MBs, email the image with a short biography to zhuyun6699@hotmail.com or intouchzj@126.com. Film submissions should be mailed, along with the negative, to

General Office of Zhejiang Provincial  
People's Association for Friendship  
with Foreign Countries  
25 Santaishan Road  
Hangzhou  
310007 Zhejiang  
People's Republic of China

All entrants should keep copies of the submitted photos, because submissions will not be returned. And prize-winning photos will be compiled into a photo collection, which will be sent to all entrants.

For more information, please contact Bing Huang at bingjibhuang@gmail.com. There were many beautiful pictures taken by RSCC members who traveled to Jiaxing in 2010. We do hope that some of those travelers will consider entering the contest.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Dear Friends:

Inspired by an invitation from the Mayor of Pinneberg and following intense planning for more than a year, the trip of The Finest Youth Performance Troupe, IMPACT!, to Pinneberg, Germany is becoming a reality. Supported by the Rockville Sister City Corporation, the City of Rockville, the Department of Recreation and Parks, The Finest Performance Foundation, Inc., and Congressional Motors as a corporate sponsor, the group will visit Pinneberg this summer from July 22<sup>nd</sup> to August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. As a member of the

fundraising committee, I would like to ask for your financial support, since we still have not reached our goal of providing a substantial contribution to the cost of the trip that we have estimated at \$2,000 per person. The group consists of 15 performers.

It is the first time that we are sending such a unique group to Pinneberg. The Finest was not only noticed by the Mayor of Pinneberg during the celebration of Rockville's 150th anniversary, but it is an outgrowth of one of Rockville's very successful social programs that has existed since the 1980s, impacting many young lives. Pinneberg is eager to learn from us and welcomes our "Cultural Ambassadors."

The Finest—IMPACT! is an after-school program focused on a teen performance troupe that uses theater arts (acting and dance) to address real-world issues and teach the skills of conflict resolution, violence prevention, tolerance, leadership development, and activism. IMPACT! looks at society and asks the questions "what is the problem?" and "how can we make a difference?" Through thought-provoking, enthusiastic, dynamic theater and dance, IMPACT! engages and inspires audiences to "act" for positive change. The Artistic Director/Choreographer/Writer is veteran performer, Kashi-Tara Barrett. The Finest—IMPACT! is a program like no other, designed to help young people develop empowering theatrical skills, leading to self-confidence, heightened self-esteem, and personal integrity.

I personally thank you for your consideration and donation. Please make your check payable to The Finest Performance Foundation, Inc. and mail your tax-deductible contribution to

The Finest Performance Foundation, Inc.  
15 Clemson Ct.  
Rockville, MD 20850

Thank you,

Rotraut Bockstahler

## Seeking Host Family

By James McConkey

The Rockville Sister City Corporation has received a request from a family in Pinneberg to provide an opportunity for a high school-aged girl to attend a high school in Rockville for the 2013 – 14 school year. The first step in this process is to identify someone willing to host the student. Only then can we approach the International Student Office of the Montgomery Public School System to make the arrangements.

The student would stay with a Rockville family to maximize her learning experience about the United States. Therefore, we are seeking a family, resident within Rockville, preferably with one or more high school students at home, to commit to hosting this student.

The Rockville Sister City Corporation (RSSC) will screen candidates and provide administrative, advisory, and logistical support for the visitors (such as arranging for the students to attend school). The student will pay for her own incidental expenses (such as lunch and entertainment). The host family will be responsible for providing room and board during the school year.

In the past, the IRS has allowed a tax deduction to host families of \$50 per month. Check with a tax professional to ensure that that is still the case. Also, RSSC is a tax-exempt, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Thus, much of your financial support to our programs is also tax-deductible.

Norm Hampton, a former member of the RSSC Board of Directors, whose family hosted a Pinneberg student several years ago, observed that “This is just as much a learning experience for the host family as it is for the student.” Hampton said his family, like many other host families, developed a long-lasting relationship with the student who stayed in their home. “We have another kid now who is almost like family,” he said.

In addition to the full-year student from Pinneberg, several other short-term exchanges are regularly held between the cities. This summer, eight Wootton High School students and Rockville’s The Finest! performance troupe will visit Pinneberg, and in the fall, about a dozen students from a school in Pinneberg are scheduled to visit Rockville.

Families interested in hosting the Pinneberg student should contact Jim McConkey at [jfmccjr@comcast.net](mailto:jfmccjr@comcast.net) or by phone at 301 926-6059. For more information about RSSC and its programs, visit the web site at [www.rockvillesistercities.org](http://www.rockvillesistercities.org).

## Annual Meeting

By James McConkey

The Annual Membership Meeting is regularly scheduled on the fourth Tuesday in September. This year, that date is September 25<sup>th</sup>, when our Jewish members begin the observance of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the most important of the High Holy Days. Therefore, the Board of Directors has rescheduled the 2012 meeting to Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. There will be a social at 6:30 PM, and the meeting will begin at 7:00 PM.

## School Matching in Jiaying

By James McConkey

Zhejiang’s provincial government is encouraging the matching of schools in the province with schools at comparable levels in the United States. RSSC will be contacting various schools in Rockville that have Chinese language programs, including College Gardens Elementary and Rockville High School, to encourage matching with a school in Jiaying. When Councilmember Mark Pierzchala visits Jiaying in June to represent Rockville at the Mayor’s Sister City Summit, he can meet with an official to establish this first step toward cultural exchanges. Initially, schools will establish communications via the Internet, and hopefully later, they may be able to conduct actual student exchanges.

## Board Meeting Schedule

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

## MEMBERSHIP

### Membership Report

By Brigitta Mullican

The Rockville Sister City Corporation thanks the following supporters for their membership dues and additional contributions. Our main source of income is our membership dues.

#### *Corporate Members*

Allied Technology Group, Inc. (Matthew D. Lee)  
China Travel Service (Xiaosheng Bi)  
City of Rockville  
Congressional Motors (Susan Seboda)  
Cruise Vacations International, Inc. (Patty Perry)  
Transformations, LLC (Chandrashkar Tamirisa)  
Westat, Inc. (Bruce Romer)

#### *Family Members*

Joseph & Mae Batz  
Rotraut & Larry Bockstahler  
Jerol & Tom Briggs  
John Britton & Katherin Treiman  
John & Janet Brown  
Thomas & Sarah Brown  
Gerrie Checkon & Dale Hoover  
Sam & Kil-Cha Choi  
James & Lorine Coyle  
Tom & Stephanie Curtis  
Dennis & Linda Freezer  
Gary & Claire Funkhouser  
Tanya & Bill Gazdik, Jr.  
Hilbert & Joan Hubble  
Byron & Lynn Johns  
Sigy & Christina Krause  
James & Nancy Little

Chris & Carol Malone  
Jim & Cynthia Marrinan  
John & Rita McKee  
Thomas & Sherri McKenna  
Robert & Holly Meyer  
Thomas & Carol Moran  
John & Marlene Moser  
Bob Nelson  
Tim Nixon & Kevin Moran  
Allan & Karen Rawlins  
Theodore & Patricia Reuther  
John & Patricia Rodgers  
Bruce Romer & Kay Bowman  
James & Betty Anne Sadler  
Wayne & Joan Savage  
Tyson & Pamela Tuchscherer  
Steven Van Grack  
Robert Williamson & Caryl McNeilly  
Robert & Stephanie Wright

#### *Individual Members*

George Albrecht	Bing-Jib Huang
Ingrid Barnes	Rae Lynn Mandujano
Leah Barnett	James McConkey
Patricia Bharath	Eileen McGuckian
Marika Brown	William Michie
Victor Chang	Michael Moran
Emily Cooke	Tommy Mosely
Sandie Lee Deighton	Brigitta Mullican
Bob Ekman	Carol Nicholas
Monica Fingas	Harry Smith
Steve Fisher	Janice Solomon
Patricia Gallalee	Susan Thorpe
John Goon	Elizabeth von Kaenel
John Hall, Jr.	Lois Vuolo
Robert & Beverly Hedrick	Martha Wallach

### Become a Member

We invite anyone who is interested in joining us to fill out the membership application in this newsletter. The only requirements for membership are completing the application and paying annual dues. Members, who haven't done so already, please don't forget to renew your membership.

**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. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Memberships are for the calendar year. There is no prorating of memberships. Members who join on or after September 1<sup>st</sup> 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