



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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Looking Back, Then Forward

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

This presumably will be my last message as President of the Rockville Sister City Corporation (RSCC). Because of physical limitations, I will not run for re-election, though I will continue to serve on the Board of Directors until my term expires in 2013.

In the four years that I have served in this capacity, we have increased our cultural exchange activity and have held more specialized cultural exchanges to augment the student exchanges. These cultural exchanges have focused on the wider interests of community members and have included: bicycling and swimming groups, musicians, an artist exhibit, and tourist groups to China as well as visitors from Germany. They have exposed more residents to our programs and to other cultures, have formed new friendships, and introduced new ideas and customs across the seas.

For example, Pinneberg now celebrates Thanksgiving in the American tradition with a big turkey

dinner. This annual event has become hugely successful and attracts many residents to Pinneberg's Hotel Cap Polonio and to the German-American Association Rockville/Pinneberg (DAGRP). Similarly, Pinneberg now celebrates German-American Day recognizing the founding of Germantown, Pennsylvania by a group of émigrés from Krefeld, Germany in 1683.



Bernd Hinrichs (l), President of the DAGRP, and Jim McConkey (r) exchange pointers on leadership during the reception at Glenview Mansion for the Sonderreise travelers

Both RSCC and the DAGRP are now encouraging tourist activities for the cultural edification of adult groups: RSCC visited Jiaying and much of Eastern China in 2010, and the DAGRP sponsored a *Sonderreise an die Ostküste der USA* (a special trip to the East Coast of the US) in May of this year. RSCC also offered a river cruise in Germany but could not get enough early bookings to follow through.

These trips serve a dual purpose in providing an educational experience to the participants and for raising funds to help support sister city programs.

All of this raises an important issue for the membership: *finances*. RSCC operates on a limited budget of approximately \$8,000 per year. Membership fees raise only \$2,000 to \$2,500 annually. The balance must come from donations or fund-raising activities such as the wine tastings, various

restaurant events, and trip participation. We need our members to patronize these events and to make donations when possible.

The future holds much promise for Rockville’s Asian community, and we would like to see greater involvement of our Asian members in service on the Board of Directors and in attendance at our events. We are trying to arrange cultural and student exchanges with Jiaxing to augment the visits of municipal government officials. We need people who can communicate with and who share cultural backgrounds with our Chinese partners. Caucasian members may have a desire to cultivate an understanding, but we really need the active participation of some Chinese-American citizens, too. Rockville expects to host a delegation of six Jiaxing officials in October or November and hopes to dedicate a Friendship Peony Garden during that visit. The plants, originally imported from China, are being donated to Rockville by Dr. and Mrs. Nelson Hsu of Germantown, Maryland.

RSCC is currently arranging with the Senior Center to hold an exhibit of photographs provided by the Fotokreis Pinneberg in the spring of 2013. Photos of Rockville, Montgomery County, and the Washington area will be solicited from photo clubs and private photographers for a later exhibit in Pinneberg. This would also present an opportunity for a home visit for exhibitors in Pinneberg when that exhibit is arranged.

Those interested in continuing such efforts in international relations and community activities are encouraged to seek a position on the RSCC board.

CULTURAL EVENTS

Wootton Students Visit Pinneberg

By Sue Thorpe

In the rich tradition of student exchange visits between Rockville, Maryland and Pinneberg, Germany, five students and one teacher from

Wootton High School traveled to Germany for two weeks at the end of June. Everyone was excited about the opportunity to live with host families and to learn about the history and culture of Germany. From the beginning to the end of the trip, the generous families, caring friends, supportive German educators, historic tour guides, tasty food, cultural experiences, and entertaining sporting events greatly exceeded everyone’s expectations. The students had such an outstanding experience that they wanted to share some of their reflections about the trip.

“It was a really interesting experience to travel to Germany with the Wootton students. It was my first time traveling overseas, and I was both excited and nervous about meeting and staying with my host family. Now, looking back on it, staying with my host family was one of the best experiences I’ve had in my life. One highlight of the trip was a visit to the Baltic Sea where the American and German students became close friends. It seemed like we had known each other forever!”

—Nicole Scheele



Sue Thorpe (r) and Wootton students during their recent trip to Germany

“The student exchange is a wonderful, life-changing experience. Not only do you meet new people but you truly experience their culture and lifestyle while learning about Germany’s past. The people were wonderful and loving and included us in everything that they did. The very first night we attended a

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birthday party, and everyone joined us in conversations in English. It was fun trying to figure out English and German words together. Everything on this trip was life-changing, and I would do it all over again.”

—Gabby Ayoroa-Perez

“The Rockville-Pinneberg exchange program is highly valuable because you get the opportunity to learn about the culture and customs of another country. You get a chance to compare and contrast schools in Rockville with schools in Pinneberg. You get to learn more about German history by visiting historic towns like Hamburg, Lübeck, and Berlin. I strongly recommend this trip: it is a lifetime experience that you will not forget.”

—Jesse Yao

“Upon arrival in Pinneberg and meeting the host families, I felt welcomed. All the people in Pinneberg were so friendly and inviting. It was very interesting to experience the culture of Northern Germany. My host family took me to a Viking village by the Baltic Sea and a small fishing village by the North Sea. It was great to make new friends, and when we were all together, we had a lot of fun. I expect to visit everyone in Pinneberg again!”

—Dianna Jordan

“Every single moment spent in Pinneberg was another exciting experience. My host family welcomed me with flowers and a large traditional German meal. Instantly, my host student became my best friend and sister. When we arrived at their high school, German students immediately greeted me and treated me like one of their own. It was interesting to see how differently they acted during school and at home, yet how similar we all are. We were introduced to German food, traditions, and fun activities like crazy golf, park climbing, and public viewings for the German soccer games in Euro 2012. I miss all my German friends and am counting the days until they come to visit us in Rockville this September.”

—Nikita Shah

As the student reflections state, the experiences were extremely meaningful and fulfill the RSCC mission for promoting peace, through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time. A special thank you is extended to the Rockville Sister City Corporation (RSCC) for their support for this outstanding cultural experience. It is a privilege to be a part of this tradition, and we appreciate the special efforts of each and every RSCC member! And we look forward to continuing the

tradition when we welcome twelve students and two teachers from Germany in September 2012.

German-American Day Dinner

Sunday, October 7th, 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
or 301 279-0708

The Wootton Visit Is a Success

By Ingeborg Hinrichs

In June, Susan Thorpe, teacher at Rockville's Wootton High School, visited Pinneberg with five students. She came for a second year in a row—carrying on a long tradition of mutual exchanges between schools in Rockville and Pinneberg. For many years, a magic triangle involving the Wootton High School, the Theodor Heuss Schule (THS), and the Grund- und Gemeinschaftsschule Pinneberg (GuGs) has succeeded in organizing fantastic exchanges.

This success is due mainly to teachers, in both countries, who take the responsibility for a trip like this. This year the teachers in charge were Susan Thorpe (Wootton), Bente Gnoyke and Bernd Adler (THS), and Ingeborg Hinrichs (GuGs).

To foster greater cultural understanding, the students and their teacher were hosted by families. The students actually lived with peers who will visit Rockville in the fall of this year. So, they took the chance to get to know each other and make plans.

The teacher-team set up an interesting program. It was a mix of time in school, with families, and on excursions. On the agenda were a guided tour of the historic town of Lübeck, city tour activities in Hamburg like goofy golf, Dialogue in the Dark, Miniaturwunderland, and other activities organized by families.

It ended with a barbeque at the Theodor Heuss Schule. Students from both Rockville and Pinneberg, host families, and teachers all took part. We had a great evening.

The following morning the group left for Berlin. Besides all the highlights you can discover in Berlin, the group took part in a guided tour of the Reichstag. We were so fortunate to have the group here with us! We are, though, kind of jealous that the THS group will visit Rockville soon. Here's hoping everyone has a good time!

The East Coast through German Eyes

By Herbert Hoffmann

(Translation by Tim Nixon)

Even during the planning stage of our *Sonderreise an die Ostküste der USA*, our trip exceeded expectations. Ultimately, 27 participants signed up for the trip—that's how much interest there was. I even thought for a while about putting a stop to any more registrations. However, several of the participants were not members of the DAGRP and were visiting the USA for the first time.

On May 7th, we started on our big trip to the East Coast of the USA with 27 travelers. New York offered us something incomparable. Our hotel, "The Newton," was right on Broadway, close to the subway, which gave us three days and nights of easy access for discovering this magnificent city. We "occupied" Broadway, Greenwich Village, Soho, Little Italy, Chinatown, Ground Zero, and the Empire State Building, as well as Wall Street. Further highlights were the world-famous stores, the plays and musicals, Central Park, and a trip on the Staten Island Ferry. New York is truly a splendid city.



The next stop was Philadelphia, "the birthplace of the USA." We stood in front of the Liberty Bell, which rang in 1776, declaring to all the new nation's independence. After a very quick visit with the Amish and Mennonites, we reached Washington. We visited the graves of heroes at

Associate Editor: Tim Nixon

Arlington National Cemetery and other important memorials. Annapolis enchanted us. The Maryland State House as well as the harbor and flower-strewn streets distinguish that city.

The highlight of the trip was the impressions left by our sister city, Rockville. Among those are the invitations to private dinners in members' homes—on Mother's Day, no less—and the festive reception at the Glenview Mansion. That was stupendous and left a long-lasting, positive impression. We would like to express our thanks for the expertly organized visit to Mount Vernon and the tour of the US Capitol. It was great that George Albrecht was always right there, by our side. And finally, thanks to Eileen McGuckian who led us through historic Rockville.

RSCC Wine Tastings Past and Future

By Jack Rodgers

Earlier this year, Rockville Sister City Corporation (RSCC) encouraged its members and others to celebrate the arrival of spring with wine, hors d'oeuvres, and pastry at Glenview Mansion. Participants were invited to taste several different wines and to vote for a favorite. The event, held on March 23rd, was attended by scores of guests who enjoyed wine and fellowship. Six different white wines were served from vintners located in four countries: Torrontes Reserve (Argentina); Chardonnay (California); Pinot Grigio (Italy); and Riesling, Sparkling Trocken, and Piesport Micheleisberg (Germany). After sampling at least four wines, participants cast ballots for their favorite. Given the current popularity of Pinot Grigio in the United States, one might expect this Italian wine to be selected as the favorite. However, this was not the case. The majority of votes were cast for the Sparkling Trocken from Germany, with the other two German wines scoring first and second runner up. In addition to providing an opportunity for friends and Rockville residents to socialize, the spring wine tasting generated over \$700 dollars to support RSCC programs.

As fall approaches, plans are underway for the next RSCC wine tasting. Thought is being given to the variety of wines to offer and possible ways to serve the wine that may enhance participants' ability to discern type and quality. Does the retail price and/or the country of origin of the same type of wine result in differences our palates can recognize? Is the age of wine really an important guide to likely satisfaction? Should we be concerned about whether wine comes in a bottle or a box or is sealed with a real cork, a plastic stopper, or a screw-on cap? The next RSCC wine tasting, which will be held on Friday, October 19th, at Glenview Mansion, will explore some of these issues in entertaining ways. You are invited to attend and to bring friends and neighbors. The suggested donation is \$25 by October 12th or \$30 at the door.

The Finest! Flies to Germany

By Rotraut Bockstahler

The Finest! Performance Troupe of Rockville were guests in Pinneberg July 23rd through August 4th, answering an invitation by the Pinneberg Mayor and the German-American Association Rockville/Pinneberg (DAGRPA). A heartfelt thank you to all members of RSCC, who worked to make this happen and to individuals, families, and corporations, who donated funds to make the trip possible.



The Finest! (and Senator Forehand) before their departure for Germany

Before leaving, all of the participants anticipated their travels with joy and excitement. They were hosted by families of the dance school of Pinneberg and members of our sister city partners. Our State

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Senator, Jennie Forehand, came to their last full meeting before the trip and wished them a wonderful experience as true cultural ambassadors of the United States.

The Finest! Wows Pinneberg and Berlin

By Michael Patt

After two years of planning and countless emails between Karen Rawlins and Michael Patt, The Finest! made it to Germany. On Monday, June 23rd, the group of 20 performers and escorts arrived at Hamburg airport. The dancers were hosted in families, and some even discovered the city of Pinneberg right away. However, there was no time to take much of a rest—everyone knew that the first performance would be the following day.

The day after their arrival, the group met the Mayor of Pinneberg, Mr. Klaus Seyfert, who gave a speech in the city building’s Rockville Zimmer and welcomed them to Pinneberg. Mayor Seyfert mentioned the long history of understanding and friendship and all the people-to-people contacts that have taken place between Rockville and Pinneberg.



The Finest! poses for a picture before their performances begin.

Then, The Finest! had to prepare for their first performance. A few hours later, Pinneberg’s Town Hall was crowded, and all the guests saw a perfect performance. Pinneberg had never seen anything like it. All of us were fascinated and watched the artists give a flawless performance that exhibited fun, energy, and dedication. The audience was

excited and brought down the house with their applause. Wow, what a show!

When they weren’t performing, The Finest! practiced common steps with the dancers of the Tanzschule Leseberg. Michael Patt had also arranged an itinerary with many excursions, so they went to the high ropes course, took part in a harbor and city tour in Hamburg, biked to the Wollny Lake, and experienced the “Dialogue in the Dark,” in addition to the many activities they had with their host families. The highlight was the trip to Berlin, where The Finest! gave a performance on the Alexanderplatz, which countless people watched and enjoyed. Even though it rained in the beginning, the weather did not dampen their impact: after the sun broke through, they tried again, and many, many people applauded excitedly.



The Finest! takes Berlin by storm.

On the last evening, The Finest! and the Tanzschule Leseberg gave a combined performance in the auditorium of the Grund- und Gemeinschaftsschule Pinneberg, the exchange partner school of Wootton High. And again there were as many guests as the assembly hall could hold. Yet once more the actors received a rapturous applause; it was like a flood of enthusiastic excitement.

In summation, it was great to have The Finest! with us. They gave us so much. We won’t forget this summer event. Many actors became friends, and everybody got along with each other. Sadly, time passed just too quickly.

China Connection

By Paul Newman

In June, I had the pleasure of joining a City of Rockville delegation to the Jiaxing International Sister City Mayor's Summit in Jiaxing, China. Sponsored by the Jiaxing Municipal People's Government, the summit brought together leaders from eight countries for four days of exchanges on the topics of historical and cultural preservation and urban development. For this trip I served three roles: participating as a long-time city resident; representing Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI), where I serve on the board of directors; and representing the Rockville business community as an owner/employee of Westat, Inc., the largest private employer in the city of Rockville. Our Jiaxing hosts graciously covered all expenses during the summit, but I was responsible for my own airfare and expenses for pre- and post-event activities.

Our delegation included Rockville City Councilman and former Westat employee, Mark Pierzchala, Rockville Chief of Planning Jim Wasilak, Rockville Sister City board member Bingjib Huang, and me.

In addition to those from Jiaxing and Rockville, participants in the summit included representatives from Australia, Canada, South Korea, Germany, Russia, and Italy. During the business meetings, each city described its local economy, cultural history, historic preservation efforts, and proposed paths for business and economic development. Outside of the formal meetings, there was plenty of time for informal interaction to get to know one another, share interests, and discuss potential future opportunities.

While in China, we visited the Maryland Center in Shanghai. Created in 1996, the Maryland Center represents the State of Maryland's interest in the expanding markets of China. Its mission is to develop commercial relationships between Maryland and China. The office is sponsored by the Maryland Department of Business and Economic

Development, but it also operates in collaboration with private-sector Maryland businesses.



Jim Wasilak, Paul Newman, Bing Huang, Lu Jun (Mayor of Jiaxing Municipal People's Government), Zhu Yongming, and Councilmember Mark Pierzchala at the Jiaxing International Sister City Mayor's Summit

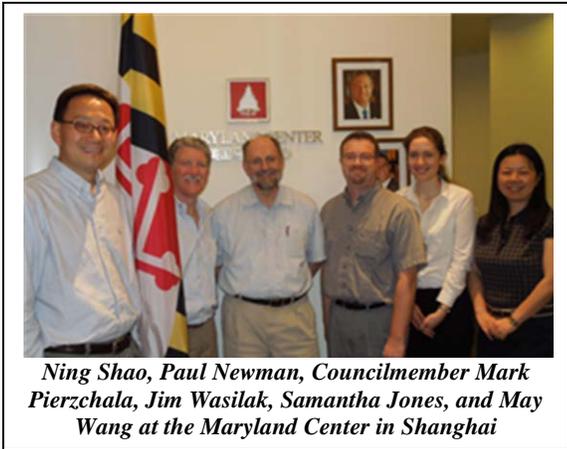
Ning Shao, Chief Executive of the Maryland Center, and May Wang, Executive Director, briefed us on the mission and activities of the program. Their partners in successful business ventures in China include well-known Maryland companies such as Marriott, McCormick, Discovery Communications, and IMAX. They can also make their offices and meeting space available to Maryland companies that need space in Shanghai.

Many friends and coworkers have asked me about the trip, and about our impressions. Well, the first response has to be "welcoming, but overwhelming." Our hosts' generosity was overwhelming; the food and drink were overwhelming (in quality, quantity, and variety!); the population is overwhelming; and the booming economy is overwhelming. There was so much to see and do that we exhausted ourselves cramming activities into our short stay.

First and foremost, it's no secret that the economy of China is booming. This growing international powerhouse affects every sector of our economy, from construction supplies like steel and concrete, to manufactured goods, to intellectual property. This massive economic expansion is clearly one of the first impressions travelers get of China. Everywhere you look there is interesting architecture, bustling activity, and a full range of international businesses, styles, and influences.

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At the same time, significant cultural differences between China and other countries can complicate efforts to participate in this growth. Happily, the Sister Cities movement is a terrific vehicle to bridge these gaps in China and elsewhere. We had a marvelous time getting to know our hosts and the other delegates. So a second impression is that the friendships and cultural exchanges we enjoy with Pinneberg need not be limited to a single sister city. It will take some effort to build the bridge, but once in place, these relationships can be an amenity for our neighbors as well as an opportunity for tourism and economic development—both for Rockville and for Jiaying.



Ning Shao, Paul Newman, Councilmember Mark Pierzchala, Jim Wasilak, Samantha Jones, and May Wang at the Maryland Center in Shanghai

And of course we made time to see some incredible sites. Our schedule was tight, but we found time between flights to hike on the Great Wall, explore the huge park at the Summer Palace, visit Tiananmen Square, and wander through the Forbidden City. The scale—both in sheer size and enduring cultural history—is incredible. In Shanghai we toured historic sites such as the Jade Buddha Temple and more contemporary sites along the Bund (riverfront urban park), Peoples' Park, and Pudong District.

Evidence of China's economic growth is everywhere in Shanghai, but it is most apparent in the construction cranes that are everywhere. The city is expanding, both outward and upward, at an incredible pace. In short, China is truly a fascinating country, where the modern challenges of

preserving historic and cultural heritage, while also pursuing urban development, business growth, and improved interpersonal relationships, are playing out on a grand scale.

National Gallery Exhibit Sure to Impress

By Liz Von Kaenel

On September 30th, 2012, an exhibit entitled "Imperial Augsburg: Renaissance Prints and Drawings, 1475 – 1540" will open in the West Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. More than 100 works—drawings, prints, and illustrated books—will be featured in this exhibit. Works by artists as varied as Hans Burgkmair, Erhard Ratdolt, Danile Hopfer, Jörg Breu, and Hans Weiditz will be on display.

The exhibit and the National Gallery of Art are free to the public. The "Imperial Augsburg" exhibit will run through the end of this year.

COMMUNICATIONS

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.

Annual Meeting

By James McConkey

The Annual Membership Meeting is regularly scheduled on the fourth Tuesday in September. This year, that date is September 25th, 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 24th. There will be a social at 6:30 PM, and the meeting will begin at 7:30 PM.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Report

By Brigitta Mullican

Thank you to the following members for supporting the Rockville Sister City Corporation with membership dues and additional donations.

Corporate Memberships

Allied Technology Group, Inc.
China Travel Service
Congressional Motors
Cruise Vacations International, Inc.
Transformations, LLC
Westat, Inc.

Family Memberships

Joseph and Pigeon Batz
Jocelyn Julian and Karen Becker
Rotraut and Larry Bockstahler
Jerol and Tom Briggs
John Britton and Katherin Treiman
John and Janet Brown
Thomas and Sarah Brown
Gerrie Checkon and Dale Hoover
Sam and Kil-Cha Choi
James and Lorine Coyle
Tom and Stephanie Curtis
Dennis and Linda Freezer
Gary and Claire Funkhouser
Elizabeth and Lorne Garrettson
Tanya and Bill Gazdik, Jr.
Robert and Beverly Hedrick
Hilbert and Joan Hubble
Byron and Lynn Johns
Barry and Aileen Klein
Sigy and Christina Krause
James and Nancy Little
Chris and Carol Malone
Jim and Cynthia Marrinan
John and Rita McKee
Thomas and Sherri McKenna
Robert and Holly Meyer

Tom Moore and Amy Gambrill
Thomas and Carol Moran
John and Marlene Moser
Bridget and Frederick Newton
Kevin Moran and Tim Nixon
Allan and Karen Rawlins
Theodore and Patricia Reuther
John and Patricia Rodgers
Bruce Romer and Kay Bowman
James and Betty Anne Sadler
Wayne and Joan Savage
Pat Wilson and Roald Schrack
Dale and Jean Schwindaman
Tyson and Pamela Tuchscherer
Steven and Susan Van Grack
Caryl McNeilly and Robert Williamson
Robert and Stephanie Wright

Individual Memberships

George Albrecht	Bob Nelson
Toby Altman	Carol Nicholas
Ingrid Barnes	Stephanie Riddick
Leah Barnett	Jane Salzano
Patricia Bharath	Harry Smith
Nancy Breen	Janice Solomon
Marika Brown	Susan Thorpe
Victor Chang	Elizabeth von Kaenel
Emily Cooke	Lois Vuolo
Sandie Lee Deighton	Martha Wallach
Bob Ekman	James R. Wasilak
Monica Fingas	
Steve Fisher	
Patricia Gallalee	
John Goon	
John Hall, Jr.	
Bing-Jib Huang	
David L'Heureux	
Christine Luckman	
Rae Lynn Mandujano	
James McConkey	
Eileen McGuckian	
William Michie	
Michael Moran	
Tommy Mosely	
Brigitta Mullican	

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 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
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Rockville, MD 20850-2364