

Portland-Suzhou Sister City Annual Report to Portland City Council
On June 4, 2015 by Cathy Chinn, President

Good afternoon, Mayor Hales and Commissioners,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to report on the accomplishments of the Portland-Suzhou Sister City Association over this past year, in carrying out our mission of facilitating cultural, educational and economic exchanges between Portland and Suzhou, China.

2014 Leadership Awards at the July Evening Under the Stars Gala

During our 2014 signature event, the Evening Under the Stars Gala, we recognized strong community support by honoring three organizations:

Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, for the Business Leadership Award, accepted by Jim Mei, Partner.

Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts, for the Cultural Leadership Award, accepted by Ms. Lori Kramer, Deputy Executive Director.

Suzhou Education Bureau, for the Education Leadership Award, accepted by Mr. Chen Shaoyi, Chief of Education Equipment Department of Suzhou Municipal Education Bureau. Mr. Chen traveled from Suzhou to accept this award.

Suzhou Week 2014 - Book donations from Suzhou, Suzhou photo exhibit and Frances Li's art exhibit

In conjunction to the Gala, we organized the first "Suzhou Week" in Portland here at City Hall, with ribbon cutting by Mayor Hales. We celebrated the introduction of a new book, "In Suzhou", by Suzhou Information Office, the Suzhou Education Bureau and the Suzhou Daily Group. Here is a picture of Mayor Hales accepting a donation of 300 books to the citizens of Portland.

As part of Suzhou Week, we also held two exhibits in City Hall – the art exhibit, titled "*Majestic Mountains and Shimmering Water*", by Portland artist and our Board member Maihwa Frances Li.

There was also the photography exhibit, "*Drink in the Beauty of Suzhou*", by famous Suzhou Photographer, Mr. Jingzhong Fu.

Official Suzhou Delegation visit to Portland in October

We welcomed Suzhou Official Delegation of five people, led by Mr. Zhou Yulong, Vice Director of Suzhou People's Congress. Here is a picture taken during their visit with Mayor Hales. This is a senior level delegation with economic development leadership. Our organization arranged a Nike campus tour, organized a "We Build Green Cities" presentation by Portland Development Commission, and hosted them for a welcome dinner at the University Club. Our objective was to cultivate excellent relations with our sister city in China and to showcase the Portland region. They loved the clean air

and the beautiful natural environment. They were interested in learning more about our expertise in sustainable development and interested in future follow up. In fact, our PDC delegation just visited Suzhou yesterday.

Annual Suzhou sister school students and teachers exchange visits to Portland

Every year around Chinese New Year, our Board Directors, Kojo Hakham of the Portland Public Schools Chinese Immersion Program; and Hongyu Cai of Skybridge International, actively support the Suzhou sister school visits to Portland. On average, we welcome 6-8 schools every February. The Suzhou students and teachers will typically spend up to a week in Portland, getting to know their counterparts in their sister schools by spending time in classes, outings, and meals. These sister school exchange visits create good and long-lasting memories for students of both Cities and help enforce their learning and understandings of the two cultures.

Preparations for our annual fundraising, Evening Under the Stars Gala, June 12, 2015

The Evening Under the Stars Gala is our annual signature fundraising event to generate our needed funds to support our work carrying out our mission. We use this special occasion to strength our relations with our sponsors, partners and community members.

It also provides us the opportunity to recognize our strongest supporters through Leadership Awards in Culture, Education and Business. For this year:

Education Awards – two winners:

Hosford Middle School and Cascade Heights Public Charter School

Business Award: Great Cheers (America), Inc.

Culture Award: Lan Su Chinese Garden

I would like to add that the Lan Su Chinese Garden, which is a friendship project between Portland and Suzhou and is celebrating its 15th Anniversary this year, has a special relationship with the Portland-Suzhou Sister City Association. Our organization's involvements with this Garden started long before its construction. We are very appreciative of their ongoing support allowing us to hold our annual Evening Under the Stars Gala at the Garden at very reasonable cost.

We hope you all can join us on the evening of June 12 at the Lan Su Chinese Garden to celebrate the 27 years of excellent relations between Portland and Suzhou, and the 15th anniversary milestone of Lan Su Chinese Garden.

Thank you.

KHABAROVSK (HA-BA-RUVSK) IS PORTLAND'S SISTER CITY IN THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST. OUR CITY HISTORIES HAVE MANY SIMILARITIES. KHABAROVSK, AN INLAND PORT CITY ON THE CONFLUENCE OF TWO MAJOR RIVERS, FOUNDED IN 1858, OFFERED EASTWARD PIONEERS ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES: GOLD, TIMBER & SALMON. NAMED FOR THE 17TH CENTURY EXPLORER YEROFEY KHABAROV, KHABAROVSK IS A TERRITORIAL CAPITAL, POPULATION 800,000, AND A MAJOR CENTER OF INTERNATIONAL CULTURE & COMMERCE.



Хабаровск-Khabarovsk



Портланд-Portland



PORTLAND-KHABAROVSK SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

Since our founding in 1988, PKSCA cultural and humanitarian activities have run the gamut from exchanges to celebrations. **2014 in review:**

- * *International Women's Day* (often referred to in Russia as simply "The 8th of March") featured flowers for the ladies, love songs by Natalia Hougen, and snacks for all at Portland State U.
- * *Victory Day* (often referred to in Russia as simply "The 9th of May")—a major Russian holiday celebrating the heroic Soviet role in the defeat of Hitler—was commemorated by PKSCA with a Sunday afternoon party featuring authentic Russian cuisine at one of Portland's newest restaurants—Katchka. Holiday tributes were offered via narrative, poetry, and music, featuring performances by singers Yulia Ovchinkova and Marilyn Keller, with John Bennett on key board.
- * *Day of the City and Rose Festival* were celebrated by a first-ever back-to-back exchange of festival delegations—PKSCA represented in Khabarovsk by Alan Ellis, Scott Rook, Robbie Steeves, and Pam Hall at the end of May, and the Khabarovsk City Administration represented in Portland by Deputy Mayor Sergei Chernyshov, Solid Waste Management Director Alexei Izotov, and International Relations Department specialist Andrey Khmara during the first week of June.
- * *Bridge to Russia*, PKSCA's annual fall cultural gala, was held in a unique venue—a university-owned movie theater. In collaboration with the Portland State U. Russian Club (comprised of Flagship Program Russian language students), a "sister city culture night" was presented that included Russian hors d'oeuvres ("zakuski"), a Khabarovsk photo exhibition, a performance by Russian singer Boris Smolyansky, computerized presentations on the PSU Russian Club, PKSCA, and the May/June delegation exchanges, and a screening of "Nobody's River"—the hauntingly-beautiful documentary about a group of young American women who in 2013 kayaked the mighty Amur River from Mongolia to Khabarovsk.

For more information, go to www.pksca.org.

Alan Ellis—President

WHAT IS PKSCA?

The Portland-Khabarovsk Sister City Association (PKSCA) was formed June 10, 1988 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to foster international friendship through cultural & educational exchange and to facilitate social & economic ties between the citizens of our two communities. We are a self-governing board operating under a city ordinance which requires us to be both financially independent of and accountable to the Mayor of Portland. PKSCA is entirely dependent on contributions from its members, supportive businesses and organizations, and fund-raising events. (nonprofit EIN = 93-0981758)

PKSCA is governed by a Board of Directors. Honorary Directors are designated from time to time for their service in achieving the PKSCA mission. A Board member serves a three-year renewable term, participating in scheduled meetings and helping to further the PKSCA mission. Board members nominate candidates to fill vacancies on the Board, with a simple majority vote needed for approval. *If you have an interest in serving on the Board, please contact PKSCA President Alan Ellis at aje0280@gmail.com or by phone at 503-287-0477.*

Board of Directors meetings are held at Portland City Hall's Lovejoy Room (2nd floor), on the last Wednesday of most* months, beginning at 6:30 pm and adjourning around 8:15 pm. The meetings are open to the public, and light snacks & refreshments are provided. (Entrance doors to City Hall are locked after 6:00 p.m., but a PKSCA Board member will be available to open for attendees. (Call 971-219-1831.)

* See **Exceptions** in 2015 Event Schedule column

OFFICERS

Alan Ellis, President
Holly Grennan, Vice President
Martha Hickey, Secretary
Thomas Benke, Treasurer

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Shireen Farahi, John Bennett, Conrad Henkel Sergei Melnik, Patti Pulliam, Scott Rook, Robbie Steeves, Zoya Surits, Natalie Verdi

HONORARY DIRECTORS

J.E. "Bud" Clark, Rene Berblinger, Sandra Freels, Catherine Hay, Gretchen Miller Kafoury, Vera Katz, Mike Lindberg, Earl Molander, Consul General (SF) Vladimir Vinokurov

2015 EVENT SCHEDULE

January

28 Board Meeting
6:30 pm – Lovejoy Room, City Hall

February

25 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

March

8 *Women's Day Celebration*
time and venue TBA
*18 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

April

29 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

May

9 *Victory Day Celebration*
time and venue TBA
27 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

June

24 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

August

26 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

September

30 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

October

28 6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

November

7 *Bridge to Russia Fundraiser*
time and venue TBA
*18 Board Meeting
6:30 pm—Lovejoy Room, City Hall

***Exceptions** to meetings held on last Wed. of month:

March = 3rd Wed. (to avoid week of Spring Break)

Nov. = 3rd Wed. (to avoid week of Thanksgiving)

There are no meetings in July and Dec.; TBA times & venues will be announced via e-mail and on Web site.)

2015 PKSCA MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Please check here if you would NOT like to be included on PKSCA's email list to receive information and reminders for PKSCA activities. Address information is for PKSCA internal organizational use only and will NOT be given to any third party.

Membership Category:

_____ Corporate (\$250)

_____ Sustaining (\$100)

_____ Family (\$50)

_____ Individual (\$30)

PKSCA membership is on a calendar-year basis. Please make check payable to PKSCA and mail, with form, to:
PO Box 80651, Portland OR 97280-1651

The Portland-Khabarovsk Sister City Association (PKSCA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to fostering international friendship and understanding through cultural, educational and professional-technical exchanges. We are governed by an all-volunteer board operating under a city ordinance which requires us to be both financially independent of and accountable to the Mayor of Portland. All of our programs are funded by donors and grants, not by the City of Portland.

Thank you, Mayor, Commissioners. My name is Héctor Miramontes, Director of International Relations for the City of Portland. Among my responsibilities, I work with Portland's nine (9) sister city associations and our one (1) friendship city association – this is a committed group of volunteers who together put on an incredible variety of activities and events every year that support our engagement with the international community. Earlier today, this group of sister city association leaders put on the 4th annual sister city reception for visiting sister city guests, international dignitaries, consuls general, and other international leaders based in Portland.

This is my second time speaking before the council, and I would like to thank the Mayor and Commissioners for this opportunity.

Today we would like to use our time to have Portland's sister city association leaders speak to the council on their respective sister city association, providing a brief annual report on activities carried out in the course of the previous year.

Before I invite my colleagues to speak, I would like to provide some background on the Sister City program. Portland's nine (9) sister cities are members of Sister Cities International, a national non-profit program that was initiated by the Eisenhower administration in 1959 with the purpose of working to foster an international atmosphere of understanding and respect.

Portland also has an active friendship city relationship with Utrecht, The Netherlands. The friendship designation is a provisional status before becoming a Sister City. I would like to point out that in spite of this provisional status, our relationship with Utrecht is defined by productive exchanges in business, education, government, and beyond.

Each of Portland's nine (9) sister and our one (1) friendship city bring real benefits to our city and the metropolitan area – they contribute to and enhance Portland's engagement with the international community, helping us promote cultural and educational exchanges AND fostering global economic ties. It is an honor to work with such a committed group of people.

I would now like to now invite my colleague, Mr. James Autry, President of the Portland-Ashkelon Sister City Association to start us off with his association's annual report.