



Sister City Association of Bloomington-Normal

Vladimir
Canterbury

Communicator

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President's Message

by Margaret Ann Hayden

As I write this letter the VCSCA is experiencing many challenges in maintaining our relationship with Vladimir Russia. Yes, we are very supportive of the people and our many friends in Vladimir. We have received encouragement from the Sister City International. See statement later in this newsletter as posted on our VCSCA website.

We have constructed a series of programs to be held via Zoom with both Canterbury and Vladimir. They are listed later in this newsletter. In February we held a planning meeting with Vladimir to plan this year's programs. Our programs will be via Zoom and will be available to all three cities. In fact, all three cities are presenters.

Then in April we held a Zoom meeting with both Vladimir and Canterbury, just for social and to get reacquainted. The group requested to get together again this summer. Our relations with these two cities seem to have been strengthened.

VCSCA officers held a meeting with the new mayor of Bloomington, Mboka Mwilambwe, as we had not met him and wanted to inform him of our past and present activities with Vladimir and

Canterbury. The meeting was most productive. We discovered that our website presence on the city of Bloomington needed to be updated.

Membership renewal notices have been sent out. We encourage you to support us as we hope to return to our normal activities including city exchanges.

For our Bloomington Normal members, we plan to notify you of our Zoom programs so that you can participate. A lecture on May 11 at 11 am, was our first program on architecture with lectures from both Canterbury and Vladimir. In July, a picnic is being planned.

So, as you can see, we are trying to make the best of the situation and provide meaningful programs and activities.

VCSCA Statement on the situation with Russia and the Ukraine

The attacks on Ukraine are deeply disturbing. We condemn the ongoing violence and unprovoked attacks on Ukraine's sovereignty. We stand with the people of Ukraine and their fight for democracy. Their courage is inspiring and gives us hope for their future.

We also stand with Russian citizens who oppose their nation's actions, including more than 1 million who have signed a petition calling for an end to the war in Ukraine.

Sister Cities International, of which we are affiliated, warns, "While suspending or ending a sister city relationship to register disapproval of a foreign government's actions may seem, on the surface, like a positive policy protest action, it has the complete opposite effect – closing a vital and, oftentimes, last channel of communication with vulnerable or isolated populations." We believe that it is important to keep intact the connections that have endured the turbulence of conflict over time.

The Bloomington-Normal Vladimir Canterbury Sister City Association was first formed at the end of the Cold War for the express purpose of preserving peace one individual, and one community at a time. Our organization is not political nor is it connected to any government entity. We facilitate our communication through cultural and medical exchanges and citizen diplomacy. Our members have formed longstanding personal and diplomatic relationships with our sister cities, and for more than 30 years we have each placed emphasis on how we all share in our humanity.

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A Note from Marina and Tatyana in Vladimir

This week (first week of March) we are celebrating Maslenitsa (Shrovetide or Pancake week). All this week is full of lovely events and activities. March 6th we are saying farewell to winter and eating pancakes with sour cream, condensed milk and honey (all produced in our Vladimir Region, very delicious).

Today in Suzdal, in the Museum of Wooden Architecture a lot of activities, funny games, contests, puppet show, performances with dances and songs for children and adults are organized. All day long people are having fun.

From Vladimir with love,
Marina and Tatyana



Garden Committee

The images at McGraw Park, Bloomington, are fading. Orly is working with the city to correct the situation. The garden on Constitution Trail, Normal, needs hoeing. Bob Hathaway is willing to help. We need volunteers to complete the work. The Town of Normal will provide the mulch and are looking for an English Oak to replace the one that died.

Summer Picnic

Our Summer picnic will be held on July 12th, 6:00 at Shepard Park. More details will be forthcoming.

Sister City Zoom talks on May 11, 2022

Members of the Vladimir Canterbury Sister City Association were invited to enjoy two lectures by local history experts in Vladimir and Canterbury. Marina Semenova is an active member of the sister city association in Vladimir and an expert in local history. She presented a very interesting illustrated talk on two of Vladimir's famous architects: Sergey Zharov and

Leonid Zotow. Zharov designed most of his Vladimir buildings in the early 1900's when he was Vladimir's City Architect. One of his famous Vladimir landmarks is the red water tower which now houses a museum. Leonid Zotow is a Soviet era architect who designed apartment houses for the growing population, public buildings, and Vladimir's main stadium.

Doreen Rosman is a local historian in Canterbury who presented an historical overview of 2000 years of Canterbury architecture from its beginnings as a small Roman city of 50-60 thousand inhabitants up to its present-day population of almost 67,000. Many outstanding historical buildings are still to be seen today. A remnant of the old Roman city wall, St. Martin's Church which was originally a Roman building, the magnificent Canterbury Cathedral where Sir Thomas Beckett was murdered, and the 12th century Eastbridge Hospital which has an unusual knapped flint façade are just a few of the architectural treasures of Canterbury. One of the newer additions to the architectural landscape of Canterbury is the Marlowe Theater built in 2011 which houses world class theater, opera, music performances, pantomime, and dance

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Sept 14, 2022	Arthur Pillsbury, architect, by McLean County Museum of History staff member, Susan Hartzold
October, 2022	On-line Conference on International Perspectives on Teacher Training, VSU & ISU
October 12, 2022 Wednesday, 11 am	<i>David Davis & Abraham Lincoln</i> lecture George Coyne of Canterbury will give the lecture
November 16, 2022 Wednesday 10 am	<i>A Civil War in Abraham Lincoln's Hometown</i> by Cammie Quinn, VCSCA member

