



The Dispatch

Monthly News From Neighbors Abroad

The Dispatch -- June 2019

Welcome to The Dispatch, a monthly newsletter from Neighbors Abroad of Palo Alto. This Dispatch brings current news from some of our sister cities: an update on the children's library in Palo, Philippines; a 25th anniversary sister city celebration for Albi, France; a postcard from Yangpu District, China; and musings on international impact of our plastic and paper waste.

Thank you for your membership renewals. A powerful and rewarding way to extend your engagement is to join a sister city committee.



 **Palo
Philippines**

Building Our Palo Committee

Our Palo, Philippines sister city committee took on the opportunities to support the children's library in

Palo. Ruth Carleton hosted our discussion joined by Chris Torres, Hank Heubach, Perl Novotny, Bob Wenzlau, Mary Ashley and Betty Duran.

"We are still occupying the old library" reported Librarian Sheilane Cabag for the GIANTS. It is open to the public. However, many of the books have been brought, temporarily, to Palo Central School where Rebecca Maglente is taking charge of the library. Sheilane further stated that construction of the Municipal Library will hopefully be completed in August. If not, the Library will stay at the school where a room has also been provided for storage of tables, chairs, bookshelves, etc.

The Committee is collecting interactive, innovative and engaging learning materials to get students interested in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) and to help increase public understanding of those disciplines. These books and our excitement are shared in pictures above. Lastly, there are 5 scholars Neighbors Abroad supports this school year that started June 3rd.

Palo elected a new Mayor in May, Ann Petilla, who will assume office July 1. Berny Salazar, an Elementary school teacher, is the new 1st GIANT, our local sister city committee. He took over leadership from Pypes Ygrubay who won as Municipal Councilor in the May elections.



Singers and a 25 Year Anniversary Visit to Albi

This "picture" shows a recent virtual meeting to plan the Albi - Palo Alto 25th year celebration now scheduled for September 5th and 6th in Albi. Karine

Hanevy, and Marie-Eve Cortes of the Albi local government chatted via the Internet with Neighbors Abroad Vice President Lee Merkle-Raymond, Council member Liz Kniss and Chantal Cotton-Gaines, Assistant to the Palo Alto City Manager. The work of sister cities is often done with the web. With these tools the friendship between Albi and Palo Alto is rekindled.

The Albi delegation welcomes any Neighbors Abroad member to visit for the event in September. We plan to celebrate our anniversary, meet with the community, visit schools, discuss "Smart City" technology, and of course tour Albi.

In July, a group of 32 singers from Albi will join the Aurora Singers for a 10-day tour of Northern California, including concerts, wine tasting and home stays with Palo Alto Host families. The group arrives Saturday, July 13, and will meet their host families at a simple reception. We have scheduled an official welcome with the City of Palo Alto to kick off the week before the group heads out to Sacramento and Napa, including touring and concerts. The groups will perform together on **Sunday, July 21, at the Portola Valley Church at 4pm**. Mark your calendars for the concert (tickets at the door).

Please contact leemerkleraymond@gmail.com if you wish to visit Albi during the anniversary or if you can help or attend the July 13 evening welcome celebration.



📍 Yangpu District Shanghai China

A Yangpu Postcard

Board member Bing Wei shared a quick note from on her trip to our newest sister city.

"We are in Shanghai for four days, and the two Palo Alto girls - Annie Edwards and Michaela Seah are learning to use Mandarin to order their own lunches and purchase their own books...(each managed five ¥1000 for ten days to budget their spending in a foreign currency which they have to do much math daily to compare US-China prices and value for goods).

The picture shows the visit to Shanghai Film Studio and tour by the director who

showed us how to use VR/drone to make movies. We were also in Shanghai TV's current affairs newsroom for their "news anchor gig".

The Palo Alto students spent a half day in Yangpu as little American Ambassadors-to strengthen the relationship with our Sister City in Shanghai. It is Innovation Week in China, and most of the people are out busy, but the Home Valley where Yangpu's International Friendship Association is located hosted the two Palo Alto high-schoolers. The girls interviewed two Chinese American women CEOs (in their early 30's) who started their enterprise in Silicon Valley and are now expanding in China. They are learning women in leadership in today's global economy. The girls also talked to a young German Entrepreneur who is 25 years old setting up his trading company in Yangpu starting last year, using his Chinese language skills.

Then the Palo Alto girls went to Top of the World am- Shanghai Tower, where then-Mayor Kniss and our Palo Alto City Delegation visited in September 2018. On the Shanghai Tower (125th Floor), they learnt how the building could sustain wind and earthquakes though a damper system. They debated whether a skyscraper with less use of land is a more sustainable urbanization



Sister City Musings - A President's Note

As President of Neighbors Abroad, I have sought to introduce sustainability into our sister city dialogues and engagement. The global impact of our plastic and paper waste has drawn my focus as relevant to Neighbors Abroad's mission. When we recycle, much of our plastics and paper are destined to southeast Asia, and as such, form a component of how our city relates to the world.

Recently, I wrote [an opinion](#) for the **Palo Alto Weekly**, and was quoted by **The Guardian** in their [coverage](#) of the international plastic crisis. Our network of sister cities reveals innovative approaches to managing plastics that can inform Palo Alto. Linköping, Sweden is converting their plastics and paper waste to energy, and across Europe waste generation is much less. Oaxaca, Mexico struggles with the impact of plastic, as the inset picture shows on a highway. Business introduced plastics as a component of "modern" commerce causing a transformation from organic degradable packaging to the plastic packaging that persists in environment.

I am pleased that Linköping will work with Palo Alto to help identify across our sister city network environmental challenges and successes. We hope to host a web meeting on this topic across our sister city network in September. I am hopeful that our challenges with plastics and waste paper can be introduced into this discussion, and that we all mutually benefit.

In closing, let us know if you would like The Dispatch mailed to you. We will do our best to accommodate this request. Please fulfill your membership renewals if not yet completed.



Checkout the Neighbors Abroad Shop

Add to your wardrobe with Neighbors Abroad threads. Lynn Grant created a fresh Neighbors Abroad logo that now adorns shirts, sweatshirts and bags. Each garment brings a small contribution to Neighbors Abroad and the children's programs.



Neighbors Abroad

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