

Sister City Background Information

Kelowna Veendam Sister City Association

History

- BC Dragoons, an armored reconnaissance reserve regiment based in the Kelowna area, were among the first Allied troops to reach the community of Veendam in the Dutch province of Groningen during the Second World War. The Dragoons eventually liberated the town, and following the war a squadron of the Dragoons was billeted in the community. These military officers helped the community rebuild and worked with them to reconstruct the administrative capacity of the municipality.
- Interesting facts:
 - 1971 - First official visit to Veendam led by LCol JTF Horn from the British Columbia Dragoons
 - 1978 - Kelowna Veendam Sister City Association formed
 - 1979 - Council Resolution to form a Sister City relationship adopted October 23
 - 1980 - A delegation of 40 visitors including Mayor and Council from Veendam visited Kelowna in celebration of our City's 75th anniversary
 - 1985 - in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the liberation of Holland a delegation of 400 residents from Kelowna and the rest of Canada visited Veendam. This delegation included the Pipes and Drums of the Royal Canadian Legion, who performed in other communities in Holland, the Kelowna International Choir presented eight concerts in local churches, and the Hollywood Road Junior Secondary School had five exhibition games against Royal Dutch Basketball teams.
 - 1986 - nearly 100 Veendam and area citizens visited Kelowna to reciprocate the Canadian visit of the year before. *"The public image of the sister city concept has changed, Mayor Boekhoven said, through the increasing involvement of young people and institutions, he spoke of an expansion of student and teacher exchanges to share education, sports and culture."*
 - 1988 - Student Exchange Programs begin with two students being exchanged from each community.
 - Since 2001, two Canadian veterans have been invited annually to Veendam to participate in the liberation ceremonies in May. This program was to continue as long as there were veteran's available to travel. Travel expenses are covered by the City of Veendam.



Projects

- Canadian Cenotaph and Gardens -Veendam
- Sister City Association/Municipal Exchanges
- Veteran's Exchanges
- Student Exchange Program
- Veendam Gardens - City Park

Community Linkages

- School District #23 - student exchange program
- BC Dragoons Regiment - Whizzbang Association - Veteran's Exchange program
- KLO Middle School - new sister school relationship with Winkler Prins School in Veendam.
- Okanagan Military Museum/School District #23 - Veendam Liberation Curriculum development

City Funding

- \$2500.00 matching funding is provided to the Kelowna Veendam Sister City Association for their fundraising efforts. KVSCA raise funds through membership dues, Canada Day participation, annual garage sale and student exchange sponsorship fundraiser (money donated by members).

Staff Involvement

- Facilitated a workshop on future direction of association and governance.
- Assisted in the organization of 2011 delegation visit. Organized city staff meetings with Veendam City staff delegates.
- Assisting with organization of new governance model that will encourage member recruitment and realigning committee roles.

Kelowna Kasugai Sister City Association

History

The Sister City relationship between Kelowna and Kasugai was created 30 years ago in 1981, initially as a cultural exchange between the two communities. On a two-to-three year basis, each community sends a group of representatives to visit the other community. No longer is the association just a cultural exchange; the relationship has been expanded to create additional opportunities for civic engagement, environmental cooperation, educational exchanges, sports exchanges and commerce/trade exchanges.

Projects

- 15 middle schools in Kasugai are involved in the educational exchange program. Winners of an essay competition are sent to Kelowna bi-annually for a five day period. There are also four sister high schools in Kasugai that complete educational exchanges each year.
- There have been soccer sports exchanges and there is an interest in developing an exchange for the sport of Kendo.
- The Taiko Drummers were founded in 2003 with the help of one of the educational exchange students. This drumming group now performs at cultural functions in Kelowna.
- Local Girl Guides and Boy Scouts have participated in cultural exchanges between the two communities.
- There is an active “quilt” exchange group.
- Kelowna Sister City has several fundraising initiatives including the “Taste of Japan”.
- The City of Kelowna chose to build a Japanese garden behind City Hall with Kasugai providing staff assistance.
- The two cities signed an agreement on environmental protection in 2001.
- Economic Development - The Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission were contracted to produce and execute a plan to nurture economic partnerships between Kasugai/Nagano and Kelowna. Current activities are:
 - Hosted Trade Commissioner from the Western Japan Trade Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Met with six local companies interested in developing the Japanese market. These companies are in a diverse range of industries (software, advanced materials, building products, health care products).
 - Hosted representatives from the Vancouver and San Francisco offices of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), which put on a seminar on opportunities in the Japanese ICT Sector. This session was attended by about 10 companies, and was the first seminar held by the Vancouver office of JETRO outside the Metro Vancouver area. JETRO has deep connections on a global scale, and can be an excellent resource for Okanagan companies.

- Hosting the Provincial Trade and Investment Representatives (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation), including the in-country trade representative from Japan.
- Working with companies interested in providing disaster-relief aid to Japan.
- Continuing to work closely with the Kelowna-Kasugai Sister City Association in strengthening ties with Kasugai. A delegation which included musicians from Kasugai, visited Kelowna in May. Members of the delegation included representatives from Nanzan Primary School, which has expressed a strong interest in developing cultural ties with an elementary school here. Continuing to network during these visits with business interests in Kasugai.
- Working one-on-one with new companies and individuals interested in developing the Japanese market (sectors include building products, transportation, and art).

Community Linkages

- School District #23
- First Lutheran Church
- Taiko Drummers
- Quilting Association
- Girl Guides/Boy Scouts
- Soccer League
- Economic Development Commission
- Kelowna Chamber of Commerce

City Funding

The City provides a \$2500.00 matching grant to funds raised by the Society to support programs and activities. This year for example, the organization plan to reprint brochures as well as produce a commemorative book celebrating the 30 year anniversary of our sister city relationship.

Staff Involvement

At this stage staff has had limited involvement in the Kelowna Kasugai committee however there is a standing invitation to attend monthly meetings.

Kelowna/Zambia Partnership

“Why would you be concerned about a rural area in Africa with people you don’t know and have never seen - why would you care? Why? Because these people need you - it is our humanity that joins us together” Emily Sikazwe - Executive Director, Women For Change - Zambia - Meeting with City of Kelowna Mayor, Council Representatives and Staff - February 2011.

History

At the 2006 annual meeting of the Local Government Management Association of B.C. (LGMA) in Kelowna, the keynote speaker, Stephen Lewis, pleaded with municipal officials to respond to the desperate struggle in Africa by volunteering to donate time and professional expertise to communities where local professionals are dead or dying from HIV/AIDS. While some individuals and organizations are donating money, health expertise or drugs, Mr. Lewis stated that:

“What has clearly emerged as the most difficult of issues in Africa is the loss of human capacity. In country after country, the response to the pandemic is sabotaged by the paucity of professional workers. The shortages are overwhelming. Everyone is struggling. Most of the shortage stems from death and illness; some stems from brain-drain and poaching. But whatever the source, we have a problem of staggering dimensions.”

Since 2006, LGMA have endeavored to develop their own program whereby municipal workers in B.C. could volunteer to work in Africa. Several concepts and partners have been approached and at this time there still is not a municipal exchange program in place. LGMA have however made contact with municipal organizations in Tanzania and are currently sharing their knowledge and expertise on setting up a local government association in that country. FCM have a well developed municipal exchange program funded through the Canadian International Development Association (CIDA) however they only provide project support 3 countries/area’s in Africa - Burkina Faso, Mali and Tanzania.

In 2007, Sheila Olcen who worked for the City of Kelowna at the time, approached Senior Management and Council with the idea of forming a sister city relationship with an area in Zambia called Senanga and that we partner with a provincial organization called the Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA) who work directly with another NGO, Women for Change in Zambia. Senanga is a Zambezi River community of approximately 100,000 people located in the Western Province of Zambia. The intent of the relationship would be to engage in mutual sharing, learning and friendship; aiming to improve lives in both of our communities.

On February 11th, 2008 Council endorsed the following recommendations:

THAT Council express support for the work of the Local Government Management Association in establishing the Africa Project;

AND THAT Council endorses the Kelowna Zambia Partnership;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves a municipal sister-city relationship between the City of Kelowna and the District of Senanga, Zambia, with the scope and extent of the relationship to be determined through the research currently underway into the City's present and future sister-city/twinning relationships and opportunities.

The "research underway" referred to a consulting report that was eventually presented to Council in December 2008. The report recommended continuing our sister city relationships with Kasugai, Veendam and Senanga and not expanding sister city relationships further than the three currently in place.

Locally, the Kelowna Zambia Partnership (KaZ) was formed and this organization serves as our sister city association and is the liaison between the City of Kelowna, VIDEA in Victoria, the District Commissioners office in Senanga and Women for Change in Zambia.

Community Projects and Linkages:

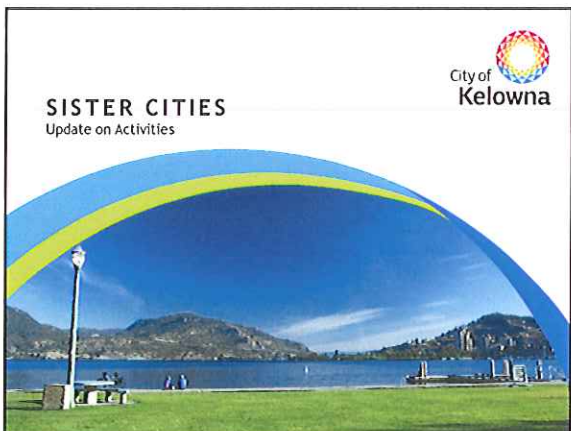
- Glenrosa Middle School - raised \$20,000 to build a community school in Lui Namabunga
- Mt. Boucherie Secondary School - collected used carpentry tools and made tool boxes which were shipped by container to Senanga
- Aberdeen Hall Preparatory School - does an annual art exchange program with youth in Senanga
- Picture Perfect Framing and BC Fruit Packers help market baskets made by a co-operative of 46 weavers in Senanga
- Official sister-city relationships between Kelowna and Senanga and Nelson and Kaoma
- An Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Program that provides primary, middle, high school and university education to over 35 young people in the Kaoma, Senanga, Lundazi and Lusaka districts of Zambia
- Mutual exchanges of knowledge, experience and solidarity through visits to rural Zambia by lead volunteers from BC, and to BC by members of WfC staff
- The development of the Gifts of Solidarity and Friendship Program
- Asset Mapping Project - a partnership project between KaZ, Kelowna Community Resources and the UBCO Faculty of Social Work, the asset mapping project has identified community organizations currently doing international development work in countries around the world. The data is now available through Kelowna Community Resources and will be updated as more organizations and individuals share information. This resource will be used to link volunteers with projects and help to identify groups and individuals that may wish to work together.

City Funding

Funds raised by the Kelowna Zambia Partnership are matched by the City of Kelowna up to \$2500 annually. These funds go to support KaZ initiated programs such as business education for weavers co-operative, supplies for the community schools, carpentry training and youth programs.

Staff Involvement

Staff has been engaged with the Kelowna Zambia Partnership since its inception and is currently developing terms of reference that will clarify the partner's roles in a Sister City relationship.



WHAT IS A SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP?

- ▶ Terms used in other countries - sister cities, twin cities, friendship cities.
- ▶ Sister city programs inherently involve a unique kind of partnership between the local government, business and private voluntary sectors.
- ▶ Anything that goes on in a community can become - and has, in one city or another - become the subject of a sister city project.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIP?

- ▶ The purpose of these exchanges is to create international understanding and goodwill.
- ▶ Citizens from both communities learn about each other's culture and become directly involved in developing unique solutions to common problems.

SISTER CITY VS FRIENDSHIP CITY

- ▶ In the United States a "Friendship City" refers to a partnership that is slightly limited in scope.
- ▶ In B.C. a number of municipalities including the City of Richmond use Friendship agreements as a start to a new relationship.

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF OUR SISTER CITY ASSOCIATIONS

Veendam Sister City Association

- ▶ 2011 Delegation Visit
- ▶ BC Dragoon Centennial Celebration
- ▶ Fundraising & Governance


KASUGAI SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

- 30th Anniversary Commemorative Book
- Artists for Japan Disaster Relief Concert
- Kasugai Gardens Brochure update
- Taste of Japan - November

City of Kelowna

KELOWNA ZAMBIA PARTNERSHIP

- ▶ Visit from Zambia - Emily Sikazwe
- ▶ Fundraising - Teen Vision Conference



kelowna.ca

City of Kelowna

PROJECTS RELATED TO SISTER CITIES

- ▶ Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission - Kelowna Kasugai Initiative.
- ▶ Kelowna Zambia Partnership - Kelowna Community Resources - Asset Mapping Project.

kelowna.ca

City of Kelowna

MOVING FORWARD

Veendam Sister City Association

- ▶ Veterans Exchange Program
- ▶ KLO Middle School & Winkler Prins Sister Schools
- ▶ Municipal staff information sharing

kelowna.ca

City of Kelowna

MOVING FORWARD

Kelowna Zambia Partnership

- ▶ Defining our roles - Municipal Friendship Agreement?



kelowna.ca

City of Kelowna

MUNICIPAL FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENTS

- ▶ <http://www.boulderkisumu.org/>

kelowna.ca