



Fredericksburg, Virginia
Fréjus, France
Sister Cities Since 1980



NEWSLETTER – April 24, 2022 Visit us on Facebook: Fredericksburg association (fsca)
Visit our website: fredericksburgfrejus.com

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Craig Vasey – President cvasey@umw.edu

The **All Sister City Potluck Dinner** is returning after a two year hiatus due to Covid. 6 PM, Thursday, May 19 at the Dorothy Hart Community Center. The Schwetzingen group is organizing and hosting it this year. All members of SCA’s are invited. Admission is \$15, and please bring a dish to share. I will be bringing Cassoulet, and Brooke diLauro will be bringing Coq au vin. So, contributions like French bread, cheeses, paté, and desserts would be most welcome! We hope to see you there!

You should know that only 100 tickets/seats are available, and you can buy them online at **Eventbrite**. We cannot guarantee that tickets will be available at the door.

We are hosting students from Fréjus this summer, but at the moment, we are lacking host families for two. They’ll be arriving July 11 for a two week stay.

Please contact Jack East or me if you can help with this.

We also plan to host a delegation from Fréjus in September to celebrate the 40th anniversary of our Sister City agreement and relations (two years late). Plans are still up in the air, but we will be asking our members to consider hosting our visitors in their homes. More to come...

Our City-wide party for *le 14 juillet* (known to Americans as “**Bastille Day**”) will be back this year at Market Square on July 14. Join us at 6 PM for an evening of French camaraderie, food, drinks

and music. Crepes by Renée will be featured.

The war in Ukraine has generated an understandable anti-Russian backlash. But it is not the Russian people who are attacking Ukraine; it is Putin. The following communication from Sister Cities International about a Sister City program with Leningrad is worth thinking about:

Dear Fellow Citizen Diplomats,

Witnessing the horrific events of the past week in Ukraine, leaders in our communities – instinctively and understandably – want to say something, to do something, and to act towards a collective disapproval of this assault on humankind; endeavoring to make a positive difference at this critical juncture in our global discourse.

Yet, suspending or ending a sister city relationship with a Russian city partner should not be one such action.

As citizen diplomats, we must be alert to counsel and remind our elected officials as well as our local municipal leaders of the critical role that Sister Cities International and each local sister city relationship offers, especially in times of conflict. We applaud those sister cities programs and citizens around the globe, including in Russia, who have voiced their support of an independent Ukraine and reaffirmed their belief in peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

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.

As a result, we reemphasize and underscore that our policy remains to encourage our members and U.S. communities to keep their sister city relationship active, especially now when the political issues and actions of the

day threaten to disrupt the positive, constructive relationships that have been made, over many years, at the people-to-people and community-to-community levels. We ask each of you to reaffirm this policy in all your interactions within your communities.

Should you have any questions or need any assistance, please contact our SCI National Headquarters. Thank you for your continued support of Sister Cities International and our mission to "Promote Peace through Mutual Respect, Understanding, and Cooperation – one individual, one community at a time."

Sincerely,

Leroy R. Allala | **President and CEO**

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VACANCY

I'm writing this newsletter in order to get some information out to our members, but ideally we would have a **Newsletter Editor** who would handle this. If you are willing and interested, please be in touch with me. The longer we go without a competent Newsletter Editor, the longer the newsletter will look like this one does!

VACANCY

We also are in need of a **Secretary on our Board**. Our secretary relocated to Richmond and has a new baby, so it made sense for her to resign. Please let me know if you are willing – it involves attending our monthly meetings and taking the minutes. Currently this is being done by Kristin Moeller—a former exchange student who now lives in Texas!—thanks to the new norm of meeting via Zoom. We thank Kristin for her spirit and support of FSCA, and her continuing service in this role.

FSCA has had to move out of current office at UMW Farmer Hall in April. We're hoping that the plans to renovate the first floor of the Executive Plaza (popularly known as "the Big Ugly") into new Visitors Center will provide space for all the Sister City groups to be represented and to have meeting space.

Before and after photos of our office at UMW on April 19:



And that's just one end of the space!

Thanks to all the members of the Board who showed up April 19 to help pack up our files and scrapbooks and posters. They are all in storage now at UMW (and we thank UMW for providing office space for us for the last 11 years) and we hope the City will soon be providing office space that all five Sister City groups can share.

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Bob Bugno continues holding monthly French discussion group meetings (third Thursdays)

7 PM

Falls Run Community Center

101 Bridgewater Circle

FBG, VA 22406

For information you can reach Bob at robbugno@gmail.com



Maryse Rigoulot
Director of Fredericksburg Section

NEWS FROM FRÉJUS

New Year's Greetings to our friends in Fredericksburg

I read the Fréjus Newsletter every month, and this month the story about *la Bravade* caught my eye. Fréjus names one of its citizens each year to be the General of the Bravade. I wrote to Maryse in Fréjus and asked her what this was about. She replied and also sent along a history of it (which you can find by Google).

It has to do with the Plague, and goes back to the plague of 1480. It appears that St Francois de Paule landed at Fréjus in 1483 and was told by the sole old woman living there that the plague had killed or driven away everyone else three years earlier. He promised to eliminate it forever, and the epidemics of 1629 and 1720 actually left Fréjus unaffected. Probably this was because of sanitary measures taken by the Consuls and the Bishops, but the City saw it as due to the protection of St. Francois de Paule. To thank him after the plague of 1629, they began an annual religious procession. The procession is called "une bravade" and involves marchers in military dress, carrying and occasionally firing off arms. This military aspect of the procession derives from medieval times when Saracens terrorized the south of France with raids on villages, even on holy days or festivals, so the townspeople kept themselves armed even on such occasions. Every year the City names a General, as well as a Colonel of the Bravade, who lead the procession, which takes place on the third Sunday after Easter. Supposedly, it nearly always rains the night before, and this is seen as testing their resolve and commitment; it is feared that if they failed to carry out the procession because of rain, the plague would come back. Here is a photo of the naming of the



General of the Bravade this month.

Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming events:

May 19 All Sister City Potluck 6 PM Bring something to share!

July 14 Bastille Day at Market Square

Membership dues: Member dues were exempted for 2021 for those members who paid dues in 2020. **Beginning in January we will be collecting dues for 2022.** Any extra donations or contributions to FSCA are always greatly appreciated. Just go to our website, fredericksburgfrejus.com and use the membership application that is there to pay dues and to make any donations. Nancie Lightner – Membership Chairwoman nclightner2014@Yahoo.com or call me at 434-378-1556.

FSCA DIRECTORS elected for 2022-2023

President – Craig Vasey cvasey@umw.edu

1st VP, Student Exchange – John East eastjack1@outlook.com

2nd VP, Membership – Nancie Lightner nclightner2014@yahoo.com

Secretary –

Treasurer – Wilbur Brown wbrow53399@aol.com

Public Relations - Mandy Carr monbar123@aol.com

Thomas Baer – Website tfbaer@hotmail.com

Robert Bugno - RobBugno@gmail.com

Carol Butler – butlercarolle@gmail.com

Brooke DiLauro - bdilauro@umw.edu

Cathy Herndon - herndoncathy@gmail.com

Judith Hansen – Ex-officio - Immediate Past President judyhansen@yahoo.com

Bill Beck - Ex-officio - Anniversary Advisor bill@becksantiques.com

Newsletter Editor: _____ Craig Vasey _____
