



## MINUTES

### International & Multicultural Advisory Committee (IMAC) Meeting

August 6, 2014 \* Board Room \* 7:00 pm

**PRESENT:** Pat Fisher, Jean Salkeld, Priyanka Pandya, Paulomi Desai, Linda Potsiadlo, Debra Paper, Larry Schoen, Steven Di Paula, Susan Di Paula, Zarrin Caldwell, Connie Byler-Sarazin, Laura Smit.

**TRIBUTE TO ZARRIN CALDWELL:** This was Zarrin Caldwell's last meeting as she will be moving out of state. IMAC colleagues expressed their appreciation for Zarrin's leadership and positive contribution to IMAC over the past 4 years and for her steady presence and participation in CA-sponsored community activities.

#### IMAC CHAIR'S REPORT – Pat Fisher

- IMAC Annual Report to CA Board: This is a new requirement for all CA advisory committees. This report will cover activities conducted by Laura and supported by IMAC during CA's FY14 which ran from May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014. It was noted that the draft that was circulated is missing the French Cuisine Exchange that took place here. Laura will update and send to Communications for posting on the CA website.
- Recruiting new IMAC members - IMAC members were asked to invite friends and acquaintances who are interested in international and multicultural events and issues to join IMAC, and to promote IMAC events in their villages. We still need representation from River Hill and Dorsey Search, as well as from HCPSS. Reaching out to additional ethnic communities was encouraged. Laura will send recruiting ad to local papers, blogs, and other venues.
- Elections for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary on Sept 3.
- Beginning in August 2014, IMAC MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month.

#### PROGRAM, MANAGER'S REPORT – Laura Smit

- Laura reported briefly on another successful Sister Cities High School Exchange that ended on July 31. Laura's report on last year's exchange, which was also very successful, is included in the annual report. Among the highlights of the past year are the Sister Cities High School Exchange in the summer, the closing celebration of the Dia de la Familia in September, participation in the 50+ Expo in October, the Cuisine Exchange with visitors from Columbia's French sister city Cergy-Pontoise also in October; Ghana Fest in November to celebrate Columbia's new sister city relationship with Tema, Ghana; the first anniversary celebration of the monthly World Languages Cafés in March, and the monthly gatherings of the International Book Club.

#### PLANS & ACTIVITIES FOR FY15

1. **Creation of "Official" Sister City Committees under IMAC** - Acting on a proposal that had been discussed last year, IMAC created permanent subcommittees that will focus on specific activities relating to each of our sister cities. These Sister Cities subcommittees will seek ad-hoc volunteers in the broader IMAC and Columbia communities for planning and carrying out multicultural events. Any IMAC member is welcome to join any of these subcommittees.

- **Cergy-Pontoise (France) Sister City Committee:** This is an expansion of the Cuisine Exchange Subcommittee, which organized the highly successful culinary and cultural exchange that took place last October. Debra Paper will lead the committee, working closely with Sue and Steve DiPaula, Linda Potsiadlo, Jean Salkeld, and Larry Schoen.
- **Tres Cantos (Spain) Sister City Committee** is a new sub-committee: Pat Fisher and Marcy Gitt will lead, along with Connie Byler Sarazin, Debra Paper, Valerie Montague, and others. This subcommittee will be organizing a Spanish Cuisine Exchange with Tres Cantos volunteers in 2015, modeled on the French adult exchanges.
- **Tema (Ghana) Sister City Committee:** This is a strong sister city committee, with members who are Ghanaian or have an interest in Ghana. Valerie Montague is currently the Chair. Paulomi Desai is interested in joining that committee. It should be noted that our Columbia-Tema relationship has moved from “Friendship City” status to “Sister City”. A letter announcing the change of policy regarding the “Friendship” vs. “Sister” status will be made available at a future date.
- **Haiti Sister City Planning Committee:** This Committee is in the beginning stages, working with Build Haiti Foundation’s Jean Robert (Bob) Anantua and Esther Jean-Louis (HS Exchange chaperone born in Haiti) to recruit community members who will help to develop a Sister City in the Americas - Cap Haitien, which is a United Nations Heritage city on the north side of the island of Haiti.

## 2. Caribbean Fest - Sunday, Sept 28

- We discussed our next big event, the Caribbean Culture Fest which will take place on Sunday, Sept 28. The flier designed by CA was very well received by our Culture Fest partners (Miller Library staff). Laura invited IMAC members to attend the next planning meeting at the East Columbia Library on Monday, Aug 25 from 1-2:30. Laura and Pat Fisher will attend, along with Bob Anantua from the Build Haiti Foundation, who is helping recruit bands, performers, and other participants. IMAC members were invited to attend.
- IMAC members were urged to invite performers and exhibitors they know and to pass on their information to Laura.
- Suggestions for gifts and activities during the Culture Fest included dance lessons, CDs of performers, restaurant and other gift certificates.
- IMAC’s table will again have the “Where in the World” game. Priyanka Pandya is developing questions and answers about food, music, geography and other aspects of the many Caribbean cultures for the game.
- Volunteers who signed up for the event: Connie, Pat, Paulomi, Larry, Debra, Valerie, and a couple of junior volunteers.

## 3. Sister Cities Cuisine & Culture Exchanges: Columbia/HC residents to France or Spain

- Cergy-Pontoise, France, “Cuisine & Culture Exchange” - Oct 9 to 19, 2014 - We went over the Application and info for French Cuisine Exchange Oct 9 - 19. We hosted our exchange visitors last October so this year **16** Columbia & HC residents can go to France for a week of cuisine and culture, and staying with host families. A beautiful flier is already being distributed and posted on line and at several local venues. Laura will send the press release and application. If anyone who has participated in the Cuisine Exchange previously wants to submit a testimonial, please send it to Laura and Debra. They will go on the website and in the Application Packet.

- A proposed “Spanish Cuisine, Wine & Culture Exchange” with Tres Cantos for Fall 2015 would be a fitting way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our sister city relationship. YES, we've been sister cities since 1990! This will be the first task of our newly-formed Tres Cantos Sister City Subcommittee.

#### 4. **New Program: “World Food Passport” – Proposed launch Jan 2015**

- We discussed the new World Food Passport program, which seeks to engage the Columbia and Howard County communities and promote cultural awareness through food. Two possible formats for the “passports” were circulated. Whichever format (or a new one) is chosen, it will have spaces for each participating restaurant to put on its stamp to show that the carrier ate there. People who visit a given number of restaurants will receive a prize. We need to develop the rules of the game, the passport format, stamps, and prizes, and to recruit the ethnic and American restaurants. Any IMAC members interested in helping with this should contact Laura directly. So far, Pat, Debra and Laura are working on this project and will be starting to go to restaurants to invite them and get their input. We hope to kick off the program in January, 2015.

#### 5. **Cultural Arts Fair, Oakland Mills Village Center, Sat, Oct 11**

- IMAC table volunteer Sign-up

#### 6. **IMAC Elections**

At our next IMAC meeting on Wed, Sept 3, we will be electing a new Chair and Vice-Chair for IMAC. So far, Suzanne Waller and Valerie Montague are candidates for Chair. If you would like to be considered at the elections on Sept 3, please Laura know.

We also need a secretary, or two people to share the position.

***\*\* Again, a warm goodbye to Zarrin Caldwell, who has been a long time IMAC member. Zarrin is moving to Oahu, Hawaii, as her husband got a job in Hawaii! Thanks for all your help over the years, Zarrin! Keep in touch! \*\****

#### **Next Meetings, Reports & Ongoing events**

- **IMAC Meetings:** Sept 3, October 1, Nov 5, Dec 3, Feb 4, March 4, April 1.  
All meetings run from 7 – 8:30 pm at CA Headquarters.
- **World Languages Cafe,** August 27 @ Wegmans, 7 – 9pm
- **International Book Club,** Sept 10, *The Sound of Things Falling*, at Columbia Archives, 7:30 pm