SAUSALITO/VINA DEL MAR SISTER CITY PROGRAM

2014 ANNUAL BOARD REPORT

Program Focus/Objectives

* Mentoring Entrepreneurial Women with small businesses in Vina del Mar, Chile
* To orchestrate artistic exchanges between the two sister cities
* A bi-lingual, elementary school pen pal program between Willow Creek students in Sausalito and Sagrada Familia students in Vina del Mar
* To work within our means and continue to be financially self-sustaining. We get no financial assistance from the city and are a totally volunteer organization – there is no paid staff – even though some of us often work on an almost full-time basis
* To be strategic in our review of existing programs, making them more effective and the best use of resources, and to look at other opportunities for making a difference and enhancing the sister city relationship – being sensitive not to over-extend ourselves
* To bring value to the city of Sausalito businesses and residents and satisfy the city’s sister city agreement, as well as to continue the spirit of the “person to person” program launched by President Eisenhower in the 1950’s to promote international relations and good will

Strategies

* To maintain a close working relationship with the Chilean Consul General in San Francisco who has been instrumental in providing invaluable local as well as Chilean connections for our group
* To continue to recruit new and talented council members
* To stage ONE hugely successful fundraiser a year to underwrite program expenses – an event that continues to engage new constituents in our community
* To secure business sponsorships that supplement the program budget
* To generate positive publicity and PR for the Vina del Mar program, raising awareness regarding the success of our programs, thus cultivating additional understanding and support

Program Overview

**Business Mentoring**

While we have worked primarily with the AGEP-V woman’s organization there for the past two years, we are expanding our outreach and also met and connected with several other business woman organizations this past year: Mujeres Lideres and Comunidad Mujer.

A delegation of Sausalito civic and business leaders traveled to Vina del Mar for the second year and a delegation of AGEP-V business women came to Sausalito. Program reports and itineraries from both these visits are attached. Both visits are also showcased in the PPT presentation that was previously sent.

**Artist Exchange**

In 2013, a Chilean artist was hosted at the Sausalito Art Festival (SAF). While the SAF extended this invitation to us again this year, we were unable to mobilize an artist in time for the event. We have been offered the same opportunity in 2015.

We did extensive research this year, working with our local Vina del Mar contacts, to locate galleries and other potential venues in Chile for a Sausalito Art Show featuring 2-3 local artists. Artist Suzie Buckholtz has provided input and guidance on this venture and is willing to take a lead on the project with adequate time.

**Pen Pal Program**

This continues to be a “feel-good” exchange between the Chilean students who write letters in English and the Sausalito kids who write back in Spanish. The program is hindered only by the Chilean mail service; all the letters have to be hand-delivered. Lizzie & Andy Jeremi have spearheaded this delivery program! Our VDM delegation actually visited the school on this visit, met with the principal, teachers and students. Our primary contact has left the school, but we are in the process of determining a replacement contact.

Ancillary Programs

The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito and the Vina del Mar Sister City program is providing strategic support (not financial support) for the development of an **Aquatic Animal Center in Vina del Mar, Chile.** As and when appropriate, letters of support will be provided to the Mayor of Vina del Mar and potential supporters. The AGEP-V ladies will also mobilize resources and seek support on a local level.

**Merchandise exchange/trade:** we are investigating the possibility of Vina del Mar artisans selling their wares in Sausalito and vice a versa.

Promoting International Relations & Possible Trade/Business Development in Sausalito

We have worked to establish ongoing relationships with AMCHAM in Santiago, Chile, the U.S. Embassy in Santiago and with the Chilean Ambassador to North America who is also based in Santiago as well. There are numerous ways that these entities can support our efforts in Vina del Mar and there may be long-term opportunities to facilitate Chilean business ventures doing business in Sausalito.

Si Se Puede -- Successes to Date

The **Sister City agreement** with Vina del Mar that had been extended for only 2 years, was enthusiastically renewed in perpetuity, by Vina del Mar Mayor Virginia Reginato and Sausalito Mayor Ray Withy

The **mentoring program** has been very rewarding and successful.

* After one year of working with the AGEP-V women they staged a symposium for 500 women in Vina Del Mar during the Sausalito delegation visit this year, demonstrating that they understood the value of growing their organization and bringing our messages to many more business women.
* We are also very proud of their efforts to put our marketing advice into practice; many of them have worked to enhance their marketing materials, websites and retail signage and merchandising; several of the women have opened up a storefront shop; they have secured ongoing funding from Sercotec for their travel to the U.S. and other programs; they were recently featured on a Chilean television show and several of them have won awards for excellence in business.

Our **fashion show fundraiser** was a huge success – something new and different that actively involved civic and business leaders. A new venue, local celebrity models, a three-hour event that was fast paced and

Future Goals

We have been succeeded in making a real difference in the lives and businesses of a handful of women in the AGEP-V organization; we would like to take the same programs/workshops/training to a LARGER group. It’s just as much work to present to 12 as it is 120. When we do training in VDM, let’s present to larger group.

We see an opportunity to have entrepreneurial Bay Area women join our Chilean guests for training workshops, to share their experiences and learn as well from what we have to offer. While we would still like our Chilean guests to visit numerous women-owned businesses in Sausalito, many of our local entrepreneurs could also benefit from the training we do.

In order to effectively stage an art show in VDM featuring several Sausalito artists, we need to actively engage a liaison on the ground in VDM who can assist with this (a replacement for Jose Miguel Gil, the mayor’s former operative). This same VDM contact could help us to recruit an artist(s) for the Sausalito Art Festival.

Consider doing our business woman exchange on an every-other-year basis – we go there one year; they come here one year; likewise the artist exchange.

Grow the Operations Council to include more worker bees and businesses with resources (sponsorship dollars, graphic design) and/or a vested interest (like the Chilean wine importers in town)

Since we are slated to elect officers in October, I would like to engage the new officers in a similar retreat conversation and change the bylaws to allow for vice-chairs, as the volunteer work load is excessive for one person.

Calendar\* & Budget

**2014**

November 9 Fond Farewell to Rolando Ortega -- Marty Allen’s home/Sausalito

**2015**

May 1 007 Fashion Show Fundraiser

June 28– July 5 AGEP-V Delegation visits Sausalito

September4-7 Chilean artists in Sausalito Art Festival

October 11-18 Sausalito Delegation to Vina del Mar – 15th Anniversary of AGEP-V

Sausalito Artists to Vina del Mar for gallery show

**Budget**

$10,000 – to cover artist exchanges, AGEP-V delegation visit & training, possible visit from Mayor of Vina del Mar

\*Dates are tentative, but time frames are pretty solid