

# Bridges to the World

*newsletter of the Sarasota Sister Cities Association*

winter 2010-2011

## SSCA Introduces New International Award

On March 10, 2011, the Sarasota Sister Cities Association will present the area's first-ever international award, the One World Award, to a remarkable Sarasota-area organization or individual who has enhanced world understanding and respect through extraordinary work or volunteer service.

The objective of the One World Award is to honor those outstanding individuals/organizations and also the international projects with which they may be affiliated. The award could go to an individual or organization that has been an international leader or is active and devoted to promoting or working to improve understanding and respect among different peoples and cultures.

All members and friends of Sarasota Sister Cities Association and allied organizations will want to be on-hand for the One World Award banquet, to learn the identity of the first winner of this important new award and to show support for the pursuit of international understanding and respect.

Through October 15, SSCA accepted nominations from the public, its own membership, the several local ethnic groups which now sponsor Sarasota's seven sister cities and the SSCA's many alliance members who help out when visiting delegations visit Sarasota.

SSCA President Carla Rayman will present the award to a recipient selected from nominees submitted by SSCA members, alliance members and Sarasota's ethnic and international organizations. While the selection has been

made, the identity of the winner is a closely held secret among the committee.

As the focal point of the One World Award banquet, the nominator will tell the recipient's inspirational story and the recipient will have the opportunity to respond. Each table will be hosted by an SSCA member, enabling the recipient to meet leaders in the Sarasota community.

A select committee received the nominations and has selected the award recipient. That committee includes: Shirley Brown, chair, Sarasota County School Board; Teri Hansen, president, Gulf Coast Community Foundation; Steven Queior, president, Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce; James Shirley, president, Sarasota County Arts Council and Billy Robinson, retired Sarasota city auditor and clerk.

For more information, contact Bill Wallace, chair of SSCA's One World Award Committee.



### **DON'T MISS**

**Mérida Signing Ceremony**  
**Friday, December 10 at the Ringling Museum**  
**followed by Gala Luncheon at the Terrace of**  
**Treviso Restaurant on the Grounds**

Reservations Required ~ Prepayment Required for Luncheon.  
**See back page of this newsletter for details.**

## Sarasota Sister Cities Association

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Lora Bedford, Secretary  
David Pomeranz, Treasurer  
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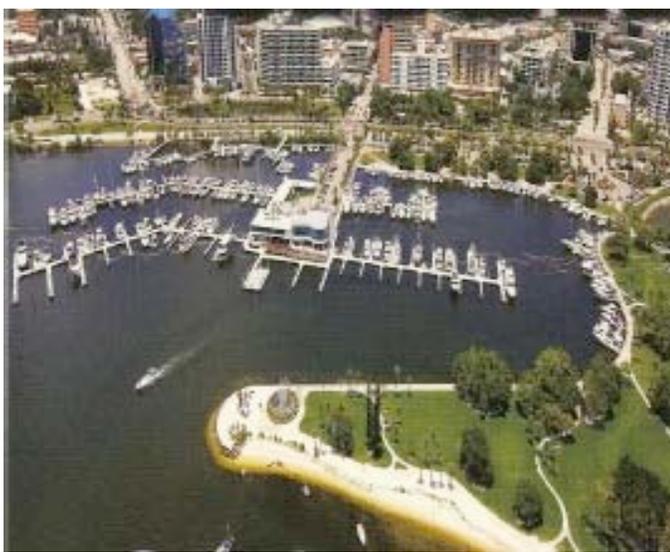
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### City Directors

Dunfermline, Scotland — Bill Wallace  
Hamilton, Canada — Gloria Grenier  
Terry Neuss, Vice City Director  
Perpignan, France — Harry Dunn, City Director  
Siming District (Xiamen), China — Dr. Carolyn Bloomer  
Irene Leung, Vice City Director  
Tel Mond, Israel — Betty Greenspan  
Linda Rosenbluth, Vice City Director  
Treviso Italy — Alexandra DeStefanis  
Vladimir Russia — Gundula Coleman  
Nikolay Safonov, Vice City Director

### ***Building Bridges of Peace & Understanding Since 1963***

**Sarasota Sister Cities Association**  
1565 First Street • Sarasota, Florida 34236  
[www.sarasotasistercities.org](http://www.sarasotasistercities.org)



*Sarasota Sister Cities Walk at City Island in Sarasota features trees planted by delegations from each of our Sister Cities*

## From Our President

There couldn't be a better way to end 2010 and begin 2011 than by adding another Sister City. Welcome/ Bienvenido Mérida, Mexico!

The Mérida relationship began more than two years when we were approached by local non-profit, Latino Excellence. Spearheaded by Javier Curiel, who wouldn't take no for an answer, the group pressed forward with building connections with Mérida and convincing Sarasota Sister Cities that it was a perfect match for business, culture, education and tourism. Sarasota representatives made two official visits to Mérida and government officials from Mérida have visited Sarasota three times already this year.

Mérida, the capital and largest city in the state of Yucatan, is home to 800,000 people. Nick-named "The White City" for the color of its historic buildings, Mérida is a cultural center with numerous museums, art galleries and weekly gatherings where locals and tourists gather in the town plazas for song and dance.

It is thus with great pleasure that the city of Sarasota and the Sarasota Sister Cities organization announce the official signing of our eighth Sister City. The formal signing ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, December 10, in the courtyard of the Ringling Museum. There is no charge for those wishing to participate in this celebration. Following the signing ceremony, a luncheon will be held at the Treviso restaurant on the Ringling property. This is a ticketed event with limited space. Those interested in participating should register at [www.SarasotaSisterCities.org](http://www.SarasotaSisterCities.org). See page 8.

The day will end with a formal dinner, held in conjunction with the Gulf Coast Latin Chamber gala at the Hyatt Regency downtown Sarasota. We are honored to partner with them to commemorate this historical day. This ticketed event will be filled with live music, dancing and dance lessons. Proceeds from the evening will go to the Gulf Coast Latin Chamber Foundation for scholarships. Tickets can be purchased at [www.LatinChamber.org](http://www.LatinChamber.org).

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season!

In peace,  
**Carla**

## Meet a New Board Member: David Harralson, Membership Chair

Dave Harralson, Ph.D., is a native Kentuckian who retired to Sarasota after working for Utica College of Syracuse University for 35 years.

At Utica, he was an English professor who became Dean of the Humanities faculty and later Director of the Library. He spent each January in London for 25 years, conducting a London Theatre Tour for the university.



Later, Harralson taught at a university in Xiamen, Fujian Province, which later became one of Sarasota's Sister Cities. While in China, he offered the first academic lectures on the Bible since the Cultural Revolution to a packed auditorium of university students. After a year teaching there, he conducted tours to China, beginning each trip with a week's stay in Xiamen, where visitors dined in his former students' homes, strolled the streets together, and enjoyed personal conversations about politics, religion and daily life.

Dave and his wife Chloe are avid scuba divers and recently returned from a trip to the Bay Islands of Honduras. They hope to soon dive with the whale sharks that gather around Isla Holbox, close to our soon-to-be Sister City, Mérida, Mexico.

Since moving to Sarasota, Dave has become a active volunteer, not only for Sister Cities, but also at Mote Marine Laboratory, maintaining its media database, and the Sarasota Arts Council, serving on its grants panel.

Best of all, Dave has already been working hard to whip our membership list into shape and to introduce a more established welcoming procedure for new members. He's a welcome addition to our crew!

## A Look Ahead— Updates for Your Calendar

Dates for Sarasota Sister Cities Association events for 2010-2011 events have been updated as follows:

November 17 — Treviso dinner and concert

December 10 — Merida signing ceremony

January 28 — Tel Mond

February 10 — Hamilton, Ontario events

March 10 — One World Award Gala

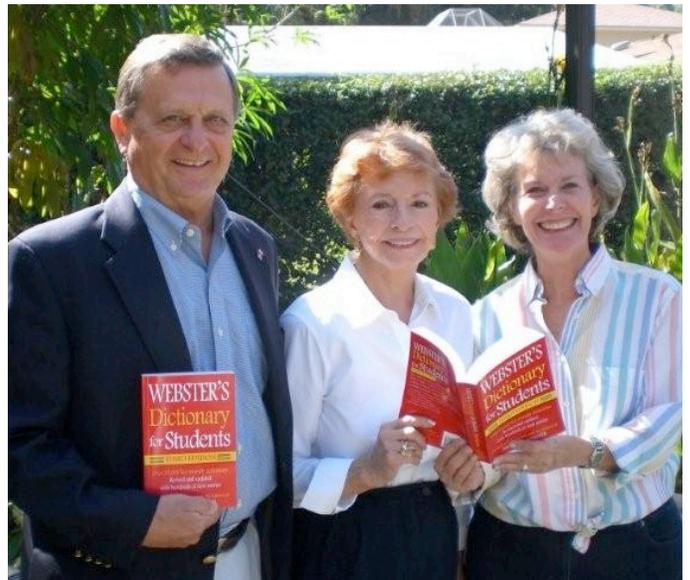
April 7 — Xiamen

April 29 — SSCA Annual Meeting Luncheon

May 14 (weekend) — Florida Studio Theatre Young Playwrights competition events

## Rotary Club Presents Dictionaries

*Liliane Sealy-Schrock (center), president of Rotary Club of Sarasota Keys, presented English-language dictionaries in October to Sarasota Sister Cities representatives Harry Dunn (left) and Linda Rosenbluth (right) for local schools in Perpignan, France, and Tel Mond, Israel.*



# Bridges to the World

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## A Visit to Hamilton, Ontario

by Gloria Grenier, Hamilton City Director

September is a perfect time to visit Ontario. The air is cool and dry, and the foliage is bursting with color. Hamilton, home to a half-million residents, is located at the southwestern corner of Lake Ontario, nestled between Toronto and Niagara Falls. The city, known as the “City of Steel” since two large steel manufacturers are located nearby, is also known as a city of culture and natural beauty.

Its location on the Niagara Escarpment provides perfect geological conditions for waterfalls to occur. Some 140 waterfalls ranging in height from 9 feet to over 150 feet have been identified. The Hamilton Conservation Authority manages the surrounding area around many of them and provides hiking trails and pathways linking spectacular nature scenes.



**Webster Falls**, one of more than 100 waterfalls throughout the Hamilton area, has a 72-foot drop.

Museums abound as well as theaters. Four Canadian National Historic Sites are located in Hamilton, plus several other historic museums, the Museum of Art, a Philharmonic Orchestra and at least 10 theaters.



**Cathcart School**, built in 1845, is one of more than 40 historical structures at Westfield Heritage Village outside of Hamilton.

My visit began with a trip to an annual event, “Telling Tales,” at Westfield Heritage Village. More than 5000 people attended this festival, which promotes literacy, particularly in children. Several well-known Canadian authors were on-hand to autograph their books and read excerpts from them to attentive youths of all ages. The day’s program also included music and an improv theater presentation. Rob Winninger, director of the village, was there in full historical regalia and costumed interpreters were present throughout.

The Royal Botanical Gardens are located in Burlington, adjacent to Hamilton. I was invited to an Ikenobo-Ikebana exhibition and demonstration there where I met several members of the Japanese community as well as an eminent professor of Ikebana from Kyoto, Japan. He created beautiful arrangements before our eyes using local and seasonal materials. His witty comments entertained us while he cut and chopped away at mounds of flowers and branches to produce works of art.

## Events Set for Hamilton Delegation's February Visit

Fieldcote Memorial Park and Museum is a cultural heritage center that emphasizes the collection, preservation and exhibition of local history. Their current exhibit, "From Whence We Came," consists of memorabilia representing 36 different ancestral countries from which members of the local Ancaster population descended, including France, Germany, Grenada, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Scotland, Sweden and others. An attractive park surrounds the museums and provides a restful site for summer concerts.

Griffin House, the home of a former slave who journeyed to freedom via the Underground Railroad, is a spacious two-story home that stands as a testament to the bravery of black men and women.

Hamilton's location is convenient to the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford and the Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Both provide outstanding professional entertainment from April through the end of October. Theater buffs and museum aficionados would also enjoy the diversified city of Toronto only an hour away.

Several vineyards are located between Hamilton and Niagara Falls. Tours are conducted daily as well as wine tastings. Ice wine is a specialty of the region that should not be missed. Several vineyards have adjoining restaurants where visitors can enjoy gourmet food with wine local wine pairings.

The following key events have been scheduled around the upcoming February visit from an official delegation from Hamilton, Ontario. More details will be sent to members in the coming months, so stay tuned.

### Thursday, Feb. 10

Afternoon presentation at Historic Spanish Point followed by reception (includes HSP staff, docents, volunteers and SSCA members)

### Friday, Feb. 11

Tours at Historical Society of Sarasota, Selby Gardens  
Afternoon "Friday Stroll" at Historic Spanish Point (Westfield Heritage Village docents, in period costume, will offer a maple sugar demonstration)  
Evening farewell reception

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## Betty Schoenbaum Visits Tel Mond

Betty Schoenbaum—Sarasota philanthropist and longtime Sister Cities supporter—visited Tel Mond with her family during their trip to Israel in October. Betty and her husband Alex built Tel Mond's Library in 1989.

They toured Tel Mond and met with the library board headed by Ariela Cohen and long-time volunteer Dorit Mogenstern. This is the first time Betty was able to meet Ms Mogenstern, although they have been in contact for more than 10 years.

A dinner was hosted by Tel Mond's city council and Avi Eliyahu, executive director of Tel Mond's Cultural Center, in honor of the Schoenbaum family, with entertainment by the Voices of Tel Mond, the group that visited Sarasota two years ago.

Betty and her family were in Israel for the dedication of the Alex and Betty Schoenbaum Science, Education, Cultural and Sports Campus in Kiryat Yam.

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*At left: Ariela Cohen (left), chief librarian at the Tel Mond Library; Betty Schoenbaum, Sarasota resident and philanthropist; Dorit Mogenstern, "volunteer extraordinaire."*



# Bridges to the World

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## Scottish Art Photography Exhibit Spotlights the Real Florida

Bill Wallace, Sarasota Sister Cities' City Director for Dunfermline, Scotland, was on hand last summer for the opening of a photographic exhibition artistically linking Sarasota and Florida with their Scottish counterparts. "Pictures from Paradise: Photographs of Florida" is an extensive display of photographs taken by David Ewles throughout Florida between 1993 and 2010.

The exhibit is as part of Fife's "Year of Culture" celebration. And opened in August at the Carnegie Birthplace Museum in Dunfermline. The work offers a unique insight into one of America's fastest-growing economies. From millionaires' mansions to soup kitchens, the exhibition includes images that David has selected from his portfolio, to show the diverse culture of this fascinating southern state.

Ewles explained, "My aim is to provide a slightly different aspect of Florida for some Scots who tend to associate Florida with Orlando and the Big Mouse."



**Gator Club, Sarasota:** In 1885, a Scots colony was established in Sarasota by John Hamilton Gillespie, who began to develop the community. He eventually built a hotel and a golf course and became the town's first Mayor. The Gator Club (circa 1913) is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Sarasota.

"Pictures from Paradise" documents this beautiful and sometimes perplexing part of America. It is a uniquely personal view of life in Florida as seen through David's camera lens. The carefully chosen groups of photographs on display, aim to show something of the diversity of culture in Florida, a state which is constantly changing and adapting to diverse factors such as rapid economic development, hurricanes and sometimes manmade disasters such as the BP oil spill in the Gulf.



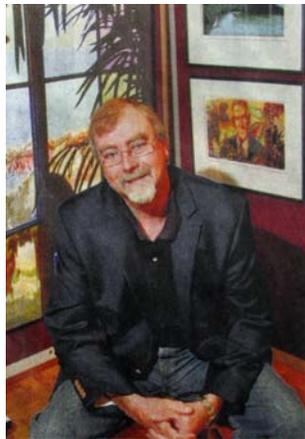
**Ted Smallwood's store, Chokoloskee,** looking onto the bay in the afternoon rain

Ewles grew up in Dunfermline on a diet of American movies, comics and books. While studying creative photography at the London College of Printing, he learned about great American photographers and artists such as Walker Evans and Edward Hopper. His fascination with American culture, in particular Florida, has continued throughout his life. He has been photographing regularly in Florida since 1993 and now lives part of the year in Fort Myers, Florida.

After graduating from the London College of Printing in 1975, Ewles became a member of the British Institute of Professional Photographers in 1977 and started his own company, Visible Means Limited, in 1987. He has photographed in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain, Indonesia and the United States.

As Ewles notes in the brochure that accompanies his exhibit, the term “fine art photography” refers to “photographs that are made to fulfill the creative vision of the artist.” The photographer is the artist. In other words, the photographer is no longer dealing purely with technique and record-making, but is deliberately creates an image that already exists in his mind’s eye. Great photographers have this unique vision. The camera becomes an extension of their creative thinking, a mechanical sketchpad that they use to record their view of the world.

For more information, visit [www.visiblemeans.co.uk](http://www.visiblemeans.co.uk) or eMail [design@visiblemeans.co.uk](mailto:design@visiblemeans.co.uk)



© David Ewles, Visible Means Limited

## COMING SOON: A Matching Program for Exchanges

SSCA is currently developing a family-to-family “matching” exchange program in conjunction with Perpignan, setting up a clearinghouse to match Sarasota families with Perpignan (and other Sarasota Sister City) families to increase exchange flexibility and enable us to implement more exchanges, more often.

Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about this new program.



## Perpignan-Sarasota News

by Harry Dunn, Perpignan City Director

*AARP Magazine* in its 2010 September/October edition named Perpignan as one of five “fun, affordable, stunningly beautiful places to retire abroad.” The British have known how inviting Perpignan is for years, as evidenced by the many homes in Perpignan owned by the British. However, Perpignan and the Languedoc Region in which it is located remain unknown to most Americans.

During the recent Thanksgiving week, Riverview High School students traveled to Perpignan to complete the second phase of an exchange that began last year when 24 French students came to Sarasota to present the results of their study on renewable energy in France. Riverview students presented a report on the cultures of the United States and Sarasota. Riverview teachers Bridget Coughlin and Maggie Jones accompanied the students as they were hosted by the parents of students at Perpignan’s Lycee Pablo Picasso.

In October, SSCA’s Perpignan group held an hors d’oeuvres and wine reception in the *Herald Tribune’s* Community Room. The evening’s focus was the continuing exchange between the two schools. The secret to the success of the exchange is the strong community participation in both cities by teachers, administrators, parents, students, businesses, citizen groups and Sarasota Sister Cities members. Hadda Lamotte, an English language teacher at Picasso, traveled to Sarasota with her family to participate in the evening’s activities.

Perpignan is at the center of the renewable energy community in France. The University of Perpignan hosts the French government’s graduate degree program in renewable energy and the organization that leads European efforts to develop and promote the use of renewable energy, is based in Perpignan.

## Bridges to the World

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You are cordially invited ~

# Sister City Signing Ceremony

Sarasota & Mérida, Mexico

(Sarasota's 8<sup>th</sup> Sister City)

Mable & John Ringling  
Museum of Art

in the Courtyard

Friday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of December

11 am to 12 noon

followed by

Gala Buffet Luncheon

Terrace of Treviso Restaurant



**Signing Ceremony is Free of Charge ~ Luncheon \$35 per person, Reservations & Prepayment Required**  
(contact David Harralson, membership chair, at 870-5516 **immediately** if you wish to attend!)

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**Sarasota Sister Cities Association**

1565 First Street  
Sarasota FL 34236