

NEWSLETTER ... August 2004

# Oklahoma City International Visitors Council

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Website: [www.ivcokc.org](http://www.ivcokc.org)



“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you”

-- Dale Carnegie

## NEXT IVC MEETING

THURSDAY,

August 5

11:30 – 1:00

International House

Oklahoma City University  
Corner of N.W. 27 & Blackwelder  
297-8973

## City Government

**Our speaker at the August IVC meeting will be Willa Johnson**, who was elected to her first term as Ward 7 Councilwoman in April, 1993.

She serves on the City's Finance, Econ. Dev., 5-year Capital Improvement Committees and is chairperson of the Neighborhood Conservation Committee. She maintains an active role with Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS), MAPS for Kids, and Neighborhood Initiative Program.

She is a Trustee to the Zoo Trust, OKC Riverfront Re-development Authority, Water Trust, OKC Museum of Art, and OK. Health Foundation. She is a Board member of ACOG, YMCA Achievers, OKC Leadership and chairperson for the Local Elected Officials Board of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Program. She is a member of the OKC and the South OKC Chambers of Commerce.

Ms. Johnson is a working member of the Oklahoma Municipal League and was elected to a two year term on the NLC Board of Directors in 2002.

She is active in a number of community and professional organizations and is a long time member of St. John's Missionary Baptist Church.

Ms. Johnson was instrumental in the redevelopment of the Eastern Golf Course, now known as the James E. Stewart Golf Course, in providing for expanded public transportation in far northeast OKC, the rehabilitation of most N.E. youth community centers, improvements to numerous N. E. streets, drainage channels, and traffic improvements, clean up of Superfund toxic sites, the implementation of the Empowerment Zone program, the development and implementation of the Youth Council of OKC, development of The First Tee Program, and the revitalization of NE 23rd Street.

## Help needed

**Olga Aceska needs homes for Korean students for the 2004-2005 school year.** These students have been accepted in several metro school districts. Call ECI at 810-8314.

**Lois Crooks needs volunteers for English conversation with ELS students 1 or 2 days a month. 721-3345**

**Friendship families are needed for FAA students.** Call Lois Crooks – 721-3345

## Many thanks to Police Lt. Robert Mercer for the July presentation

Lt. Mercer is the commander of the OKC Police Department's newly formed Bilingual Unit. For 3 years, he has worked to convince the department of the need for a unit composed solely of 2<sup>nd</sup>-language-speaking officers in order to better understand and serve the many multi-national communities and residents of our city.

With 96,000 Hispanics, 8,000 Vietnamese, 3,000 Germans, and 2,000 Chinese in the OKC area, there is a real need to understand these cultures. The “Bilingual Unit” is comprised of 19 Spanish-speaking officers and 2 Vietnamese speaking officers. Current projects include offering an in-depth, intensive six-month Spanish school for police officers and a total immersion in the Mexican culture with 2 officers traveling to Puebla in September. Because of this need, Lt. Mercer became aware of OKC's Sister City relationship with Puebla and has become very active in the Sister City organization.

Lt. Mercer also discussed human trafficking in Oklahoma – not a problem that many of us know anything about.

## State Department Delegations July and August

**July 8 – 13 Public Health and Infectious Disease: A Leadership Project for Africa:**

Countries included: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, France (radio correspondent for Africa), Rwanda, Senegal, and Togo. This group will meet with the State Health Department, OMRF and visited the Chickasaw Indian Health Hospital in Ada. They were able to attend a powwow in Stroud and enjoyed a visit to the Express Ranch to

see the Clydesdales. They also were honored at the 1<sup>st</sup> Global Fusion evening coordinated by Sister Cities OKC. **Thanks to Ruth Green for all of her assistance with hospitality for the visitors.**

**July 28 – 31. Multi-Regional Humanitarian Responses to Crises and Disasters: OKC will host 7 participants – from Algeria, Gambia, Indonesia, Kenya, Panama, Tanzania, and Turkey.**

Appointments will include the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, the Red Cross, Catholic Charities, the Oklahoma Baptist Convention and the Volunteer Center.

**August 22-25 Peoples Republic of China**

**Mr. Yunlong LI** -- Professor, Institute for International Strategic Studies, Central Party School

**August 25 – 28 A Single Country Project for Ghana -- "U.S. Judicial Ethics and Reform"**

These appointments are being coordinated by Judge Vicki Miles-LeGrange

## IVC Representatives

Melissa Graffigna, Deanna Bradley, Kay Bickham, Vera Mann and Ruth Green will represent the OKC IVC at the NCIV Southern Regional meeting in Dallas August 5 – 7.

## OKC Chamber International

The Counsel General of Luxembourg is expected in OKC during the first week of August. -- Richard Biwer and his assistant Dick Davies.

## For your calendar

- **Viva Oklahoma – Hispanic Chamber EXPO 2004**  
Saturday, July 31 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
State Fairgrounds – Transportation Bldg.  
**Open to the Public – Free Admission**  
Lots of food and entertainment.
- **Global Oklahoma – a festival of cultures 16<sup>th</sup> annual festival: Saturday, October 2**
- **September 2 – World Neighbors President, Melanie Macdonald will be the IVC speaker.**

## FYI: the buffalos

Hope everyone has been enjoying the more than 100 life size buffalos around town. They are part of The Nature Conservancy's Spirit of the Buffalo public art project. It's a way to raising awareness of the conservancy's mission to protect natural landscapes and streams in Oklahoma. To see photos: check out [www.spiritofthebuffalo.org](http://www.spiritofthebuffalo.org)

## Memo from Sister Cities

A delegation of eight are expected from our Sister City in China for 2 days in late August. The delegation will include officials from the Chamber of Commerce of Haikou City, the Overseas Affairs Office as

well as from the government and education bureaus. If anyone is interested in meeting with them, please let Melissa know.

New Sister City members Kathy Kirk and Laura Massant have agreed to work with Simon Hsu on the China Committee will co-chair the Haikou Committee for Sister Cities. Kathy's email is [kdkirk3350@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdkirk3350@sbcglobal.net). The first project will be to fix the playroom in the Haikou Orphanage where we (SCI partnering with Love Without Boundaries) have successfully completed six cleft palate surgeries and have two heart surgeries planned for completion this month. The playroom is in pretty bad shape, so the plan is to raise the money to fix it up (paint, wall paper, etc..) and then take a group of volunteers to Haikou with toys, blankets, music, books and we'll work with them to do all the required work to make this a great playroom for our kids.

## Global Fusion

The first of the monthly event was held on Monday, July 12 at the Hilton Inn, Northwest and was a resounding success! -- 120 participants at the first Global Fusion - great for the first time on four days notice! -- The state department visitors from Africa and a trade delegation from Brazil were spotlighted.

The next SCI OKC meeting is Thursday Aug 12 from 2:00 to 3:00pm and Global Fusion II starts at 6:00 until 10:00 pm same day. We always meet the second Thursday of every month at the South OKC Chamber of Commerce and the meetings are open to the public. Global Fusion rotates location but also is on the second Thursday at 6:00. Invitations will be sent out soon with this month's location. I highly encourage you to come with your friends and your ideas. You are all certainly welcome!

## To confirm the Critical value of the IVP and International Exchanges.

Zahreddine Tayebi, a journalist for *Al Hadath Asharki* in Morocco's far eastern town of Oujda, and a participant in an IVP on "Foreign Policy Decision-Making Processes" (February 9-28, 2004), has published four very positive articles on his IV program. The articles were published once a week for four weeks following his return to Morocco and recounted various thoughts and impressions of American Arabs, American life and American-style democracy. Tayebi was so deeply impressed by his American experience that he has decided to publish a new series about his trip -- 15 articles entitled "Lahadat Charida" ("Wandering Moments"), which he will publish as a small book.

*"There is nothing wrong with America that the faith, love of freedom, intelligence and energy of her citizens cannot cure." – President Dwight D. Eisenhower*