



Tempe Sister Cities Monthly



Unexpected Cultures of Faraway Places

Of all the countries in this world perhaps the last place I thought I'd be visiting in my teen life would be China. I've always been interested in the world and how people from New York to New Guinea interact with it given their differences. While the pure size of the world can be staggering, what often is not highlighted is the links between the cultures upon it; and perhaps no country has such a diverse range of lifestyles as China.

Perhaps the first facet of the People's Republic of China to be taken note of is just the massive content it holds, both in its history and physical scope. These two variables are what differentiate it from western cultures, especially the U.S. Simply the amount of time that has passed since the emergence of Chinese culture several thousand years ago has led to a platitude of niches to be established throughout the society. This passage of time coupled with the geography of the land has led to one of the most diverse countries of the modern era, ranging from the bustling streets of modern Shanghai to the ancient towns in western China.



Wu Muye "George" and Lucien Roberson

During my stay in China, I was able to visit a good number of major cities for which I am ever thankful for including Beijing, Shanghai, and Xi'an. While they all had their merits, I noticed that I took a special liking to Xi'an for a reason that was not immediately evident. While Beijing seemed to be the heart of the machine that is China, it seemed as if an individual could be swallowed up by its immensity like a single grain in a whirling sandstorm. While Shanghai seemed to be a capitalist paradise with Rolls Royces and fancy barges, it seemed to be lacking the same vitality felt by the rest of the Chinese world. But Xi'an seemed to possess a certain vigor to it I do not remember feeling in other cities either in China or in the United States.



Temple in Xi'an lit up for a ceremony

To develop a true appreciation for Xi'an, I first had to find something that I thought I'd never find in a country so strict on religion. Sure enough, as I was walking with George, we soon left the major streets for more obscure backstreets, which had its cars replaced

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Student Exchange Program



China continued from page 1...

with bustling throngs of people. But this was nothing new; I had been in Chinese subways before I was now adept in navigating my way through a crowd. However, there were some details that readily became apparent, the first one being that the aroma had quite distinguishably changed from traditional Chinese cuisine to a scent that was full of vibrant spices that filled your nose to the brim with rich fragrances. I also realized that quite a few men were wearing hats that I had only seen Muslims wear. Finally, the nail in the coffin, I saw the remains of a lamb carcass that had been hung and was being butchered for its meat down to the bone as if it were fit for an exhibit in the Smithsonian. Now I had seen a lot of strange foods in my stay up to this point, but safe to say, this was something different from the rest of Chinese cuisine. Now of course taking in these details and me being a super sleuth of culture, three hours later I realized that the area had in fact been a Muslim quadrant of the city. Obviously, my first question had been how did members of the Islamic faith end up in Mainland China, hundreds of miles away from the Middle East, in a country where proselytizing is illegal? The answer however, intrigued me even more; it turns out the Silk Road had run straight to Xi'an, and along with its spices and silk, had brought religion along with it. And that means that this apparent outlet of Islam in the middle of a country of Buddhism and Taoism was not just some random anomaly in the world, but had actually been planted firmly since before my country had ever been founded, nearly ten times over.



Huan Shan Mountains (top) and lamb carcass being butchered (above).

Throughout my time in China, I would continue to experience more instances such as these to help focus my



perspective on the country. However, in a twist I quickly realized that the more I knew about Chinese history the more unfathomable it appeared to me due to the simple immensity of the content. I can say with one hundred percent certainty that after my time there, China has some of the most intricate stories and most diverse people in a single country. Because of all these hidden features, I can say with a strong belief that China is not a country that should be viewed, or looked at from afar, but instead, a culture that is meant to be experienced from within. - Submitted by Lucien Roberson



Youth Group News

At our December youth group meeting we discussed the 2017 Tempe Sister Cities Youth Ambassador Exchange Program. Many youth group members have applied and interviews begin in January. There was also a gingerbread house team building activity.

We are happy to announce our donation of \$1000 to St. Luke's hospital. On Monday December 19th, David Ewen, finance officer for youth group, and Ellie Griffin, member, presented the check to the maternity ward/birthing suites. The donation will allow Tempe St. Luke's to purchase a minimum of ten car seats for needy families who otherwise would not have the funds to be able to take their newborn home safely. The hospital was very appreciative and the teens found it meaningful to deliver the donation. The youth group is involved in two major fundraisers each year with a goal to make a world of difference right here in Tempe with some of our funds.

In other news, we warmly welcomed a visitor Ellie, a sophomore attending Marcos de Niza High school.

A group of ten youth group members entertained members of Sister Cities organization with a homemade Christmas jeopardy game at the annual holiday gathering at the Hackett House. Tables had a competition with the winning table earning global ornaments. - Submitted by Ava Lehner, Youth Group Secretary

Support your TSC Youth Group at these upcoming events:

March 5th Pancake Breakfast

March 25th Feed My Starving Children

April 29th Project Cure

For additional information, please contact Beth Lang blang3bysea@me.com



Weekdays

January 30–February 3

11:30am–1:30pm

at the Hackett House

Lunch with a Mission...

100% of the proceeds go to the Mission campaign that benefits the following organizations: Care 7, TCAA, Tumbleweed, Salvation Army and Bridging Community. All these charities help the homeless.

Lunch includes:

soup, salad, cookie and drink

provided by Wildflower Bread Company

Suggested \$10 donation...more is always welcome



Announcements

Committees are forming for the annual "Making a World of Difference" gala that honors humanitarian service at the global level. In addition, committees are forming to support the new International Center: Design, Activities, Programs, Rentals, Cooperative Programs with ASU, and Fundraising.

Please contact Jane Neuheisel for more information: janeneuheisel@cox.net or 480-838-0437

Hackett House is looking for volunteers for regular shifts in the gift shop (11-2 or 2-5) and for someone to iron the tea napkins and aprons (only 6 times a year) If anyone has a Cuisinart food processor they would like to donate to the HH kitchen...we would greatly appreciate it. The ones we have are really old.

Nominating Committee Members are: Angie Taylor, Dave Robertson, Linda Parrish, Jill Glickman, Ron Etter, Raveen Arora, and Dick Flurer. Board members up for reelection are Dean Gambino, Jennifer Giff, Ralph Goitia, Guy Roll, Chris Rosner and Dolores Salhuana. Michael Curd is up for reelection on the Executive Board.

Sad news to announce. Bob Hlawek passed away on December 23rd. Bob filled many roles with TSC—as Treasurer and Country Coordinator with Elaine for Lower Hutt. He will be missed.

Welcome to these new Tempe Sister Cities members (and Lifetime upgrades):



Lifetime Membership

Mike & Dana O'Hara

Ambassador Membership

Brian Garcia

Individual/Family Membership

James & Mary Ann Lawson

Raul & Gabriella Osorio

Kathleen Schreiner

Mary Jean Sears

David & Evelynn Showers

Ginny Sylvester

Tempe Sister City Corporation (TSC) is in the business of making friends – globally. TSC provides student and educator programs for City of Tempe residents.

Tempe Sister Cities Officers

President	Richard Neuheisel
Vice President	Harry Mitchell
2nd Vice President	Angie Thornton
Secretary	Michael Curd
Treasurer Interim	David Birdsell
Historian	Debbie Duncan

www.tempestercities.org

TSC Monthly Editor: Kris Johnson. Please submit content to damomkj@cox.net by the 20th of each month (or the Fri after the Board Meeting) to be included in the next issue.

Tempe Sister Cities Membership Form

www.tempestercities.org

Join online at www.tempestercities.org/become-a-member, or use this convenient form with your check payable to Tempe Sister Cities Corporation and mail to: **Tempe Sister Cities, 95 W. 4th St., Tempe, AZ 85281.**

Please choose a category:

- \$25 Ambassador/Student
- \$35 Individual/Family
- \$50 Friend of Tempe Sister Cities
- \$200 Corporate Membership
- \$400 Lifetime Membership

names year first joined

address city state/province country zip/postal code

