

April, 2024

EPSCA NEWS



Quarterly Newsletter - <https://www.epsistercities.org>

We're going back to Monteverde!

By Susan Taylor, EPSCA Board Member

After a long COVID-induced hiatus, residents of Estes Park are returning to Monteverde!

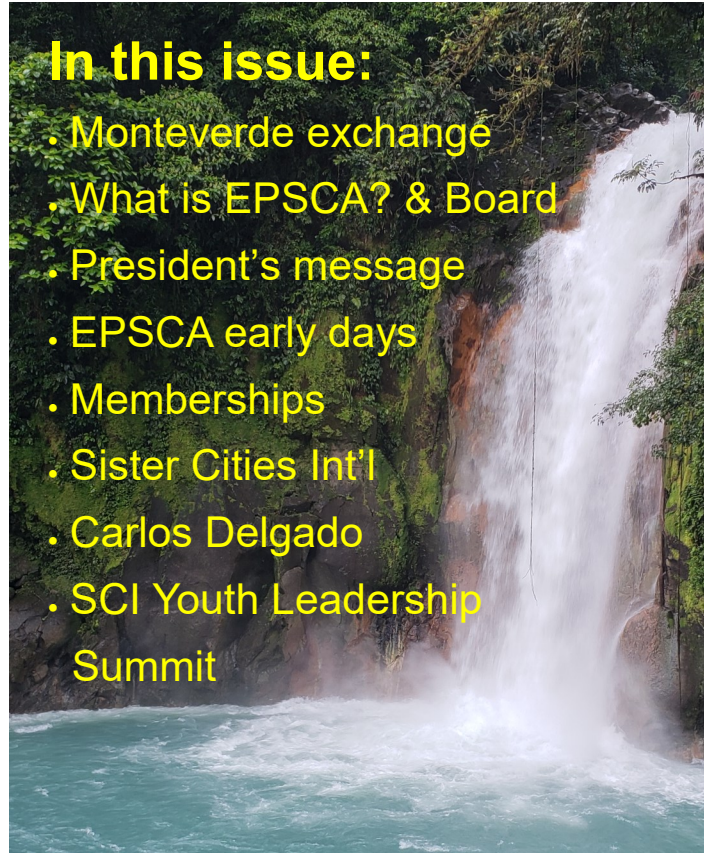
Through conversations with our partners in Monteverde, which include town staff, environmental scientists, and other community members, we are planning an exchange from July 13 to 20, 2024. This exchange will be one of reacquaintance, where ambassadors from both towns can form connections and provide a solid foundation for future endeavors.

Exchanges are the heart of the sister cities mission, as they provide opportunity for cultural education, new ideas, and to extend local impacts in a global world. Estes Park Sister Cities Association (EPSCA) hopes to engage in exchanges that benefit teachers and students, our libraries, our business and tourism industry, and our relationships to the natural environment.

The exchange this July will see a handful of board members, teachers, and other interested persons travel to Monteverde to tour facilities, establish relationships, and plan for future program opportunities. It will include meetings

In this issue:

- Monteverde exchange
- What is EPSCA? & Board
- President's message
- EPSCA early days
- Memberships
- Sister Cities Int'l
- Carlos Delgado
- SCI Youth Leadership Summit



"EPSCA hopes to engage in exchanges that benefit teachers and students, libraries, business & tourism, and our relationships to the natural environment."

between schools, with library staff, tours of the cloud forest, and business and tourism introductions. Attendance on this exchange is limited to EPSCA members. If you are interested in being part of this exchange, please notify a board member by May 1.



What is Estes Park Sister Cities Association?

- We are a nonprofit organization of volunteers and citizen diplomats whose purpose is to connect Estes Park community members with global partners by building relationships that promote peace and strengthen local communities.

How are Sister City partnerships formed?

- A municipality and community members form a sister city partnership through a partnership agreement. The mayors of both cities sign a proclamation, memorandum of understanding or a resolution that is received and recorded by Sister Cities International.

What is Sister Cities International?

- SCI is the organizing entity for US cities and their international partners. It provides assistance through state, regional and country representatives. It offers many resources. Currently SCI has 458 US cities with 2800 global partnerships in 140 countries.

Sister City Programs

- So far EPSCA has focused on high school student exchanges and scientific research.

EPSCA Board of Directors:



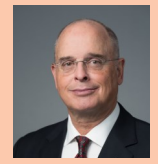
Carlie Bangs
President



Dave Thomas
Vice President



Sean Jurgens
Secretary



Mike Harris
Treasurer



Cynda Basch



Chuck Scott



Susan Taylor



**Barbara
Werner**

Sister City programs can also include internships for young professionals and entrepreneurs as well as cultural, health and sports exchanges. Mutual aid may be offered in times of emergency.

Colorado Sister Cities

- As of 2021, 25 Colorado cities were partnered with 68 cities around the world and one US Native American tribe. Four Colorado cities have 7 or more sister cities:
 - * Aspen - 7
 - * Boulder - 10
 - * Colorado Springs - 7
 - * Denver - 10 through SCI, 3 Friendship Cities
 - * Fort Collins has a Friendship City Partnership with San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, México - a program similar to Sister Cities.

EPSCA President's message

Hey there!

I'm eager to fill you in on the exciting things happening with the Sister Cities board this year! We've been super busy planning our first exchange, which is coming up in July. The Program

Committee, made up of Cynda Basch, Susan Taylor, and Chuck Scott, has been working closely with school leadership to identify teachers who want to get involved in student exchanges. We've also formed a Student Advisory Committee, which will be made up of high school students. If you're a member of the Estes Park Sister Cities Association, we would love for you to consider joining the Program Committee. We're looking for people who are interested in hosting a delegate, chaperoning a student exchange, or just helping us develop awesome programs!

In July, a delegation from Estes Park will be heading off to Monteverde to engage in citizen diplomacy and re-establish programming that existed before the pandemic. The group will include local leaders in tourism and business, government officials, Sister Cities board members, and staff and teachers from the Estes Park School District. We're all really excited to learn more about Monteverde's government leadership, local economy, and education systems so that we can prepare for future adult and student exchanges.



Carlie Bangs

In the past, our exchanges have focused on student science exchanges. High school students from both Estes Park and Monteverde have had the opportunity to visit the partner city to learn about their local ecosystem. Monteverde is the "gateway" community to the Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Reserve and depends on eco-tourism, which is similar to Estes Park's relationship with Rocky Mountain National Park. During previous student visits, they got to collect data and observe the various ecosystems each location offered. However, we're committed to expanding to other areas like arts, culture, government and political science, as well as tourism management. We want to include educators and passionate leaders from the Estes Park School District, which is why we're thrilled that seven teachers, who primarily teach Spanish, have expressed an interest in participating in the development of programs and exchange experiences.

We're over the moon that we're starting these exchanges again! It's been a huge effort from all of our board members to get the Estes Park Sister Cities Association back up and running. We're so passionate about the opportunity this organization has to increase social, cultural, and educational awareness.

With gratitude,

Carlie Bangs, EPSCA President

EPSCA: early days

Foundation

2001

Initial meeting of local residents organized by Mayor John Baudek to discuss starting a Sister City relationship.

1

SISTER CITY: MONTEVERDE

2

First steps

2002

Monteverde CR established as municipal government for Santa Elena, Cerro Plano and Monteverde. First mayor: Marcony Suárez

Matching

2002-2004

EPSCA organized with 501(c)3 nonprofit status. Search for a suitable sister city. Monteverde and Estes Park explore a relationship.

3

4

Official

2005

Documents signed to formally establish EP & Monteverde as Sister Cities. Children's bilingual book program helped to start a public library in Monteverde.

Awareness

2006

EPSCA co-sponsored a 33-minute film to spread awareness in both communities about the sister city relationship. Also, first Costa Rica dinner with Chef Carlos Delgado

5

6

Alliance

2007

EP Museum exhibit on Monteverde viewed by 1,400 people. Costa Rica Minister of Tourism visit to EP timed with Frontier Airlines' first nonstop service from Denver to San Jose.



To be continued...

EPSCA membership categories:

Individual Membership

Student/Teacher \$10.00

Individual \$25.00

Family (max 4 people) \$50.00

"Cerro Amigo" \$100.00

Organizational Membership

Organization/corporate \$200.00



All Americas
SUMMIT
SisterCities
INTERNATIONAL

May 28-31, 2024

**San Antonio TX
USA**

<https://allamericassummit.sistercities.org>

The All-Americas Sister Cities Summit will advance the shared missions of Sister Cities International and the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and the newly created department of subnational diplomacy. This summit is dedicated to cultivating people-to-people ties to foster mutual understanding and peace with other countries and states.

SCI ALL AMERICAS SUMMIT GOALS:

- Bring together elected officials, citizen diplomats, and other key stakeholders from 35 countries across the Western

Hemisphere in the spirit of friendship, mutual respect, and opportunity.

- Strengthen, celebrate, and build new partnerships with the United States' closest neighbors.
- Demonstrate the power of partnerships in trade, diplomacy, and peace across the Americas.
- Spotlight unique ways city-to-city partnerships can flourish through mutual topics of interest such as tourism, trade, gastronomy, education, culture, and more.

Looking back with Carlos Delgado



In 2001, when Carlos Delgado Torres was the *intendente* of a village called Monteverde, Costa Rica, he and other community leaders became aware that other towns in their Central American country had

established fraternal relationships with towns in other countries, including the United States. In the Spanish-speaking world, being “intendente” is like being a “mayor” of a small town. That same year, former Rocky Mountain National Park superintendent Jim Thompson and his wife Jan vacationed in Costa Rica. While there, they reached out to local community leaders – including Carlos Delgado – and the idea of a “sister city” partnership between Estes Park and Monteverde was born.

At about the same time, Estes Park’s then-mayor John Baudek convened a group of local people to look into starting a formal “Sister City” partnership under the auspices of Sister Cities International. The concept was launched in 1956 when President Dwight Eisenhower proposed linking U.S. cities and towns with cities and towns in other countries to promote peace through citizen diplomacy.

As the equivalent of a “mayor,” Carlos Delgado was on the ground floor of Monteverde’s Sister City partnership with Estes Park. He and his wife, Elieth Solano, were involved from the very beginning. They came to Estes Park on one of the first exchange trips in 2002, being met at the Denver airport by Jim Thompson and Christine Hall, who was then president of EPSCA. The 8-member Monteverde delegation met local school district superintendent Linda Chapman and visited schools, the hospital, police and fire departments, the visitor center, and Rocky Mountain National Park. The visiting group stayed in host homes, so Carlos and Elieth enjoyed a homestay with Rev. Rex Rorex, who at the time was the priest of St. Francis of Assisi Anglican Church.

From the start, community leaders in both towns sought to share ideas about tourism, education, environmental issues, and even the management of sewage treatment. The respectful relationship has provided opportunities for mutual learning, cultural understanding, and personal friendships. And Carlos Delgado says, “I’m so glad that the Sister City connection is being rekindled now, after the pandemic caused a suspension for a few years.” He’s looking forward to getting involved in EPSCA again.



August 4-10, 2024, in Washington, D.C. An unforgettable time of leadership training, diplomacy insights, and cultural activities