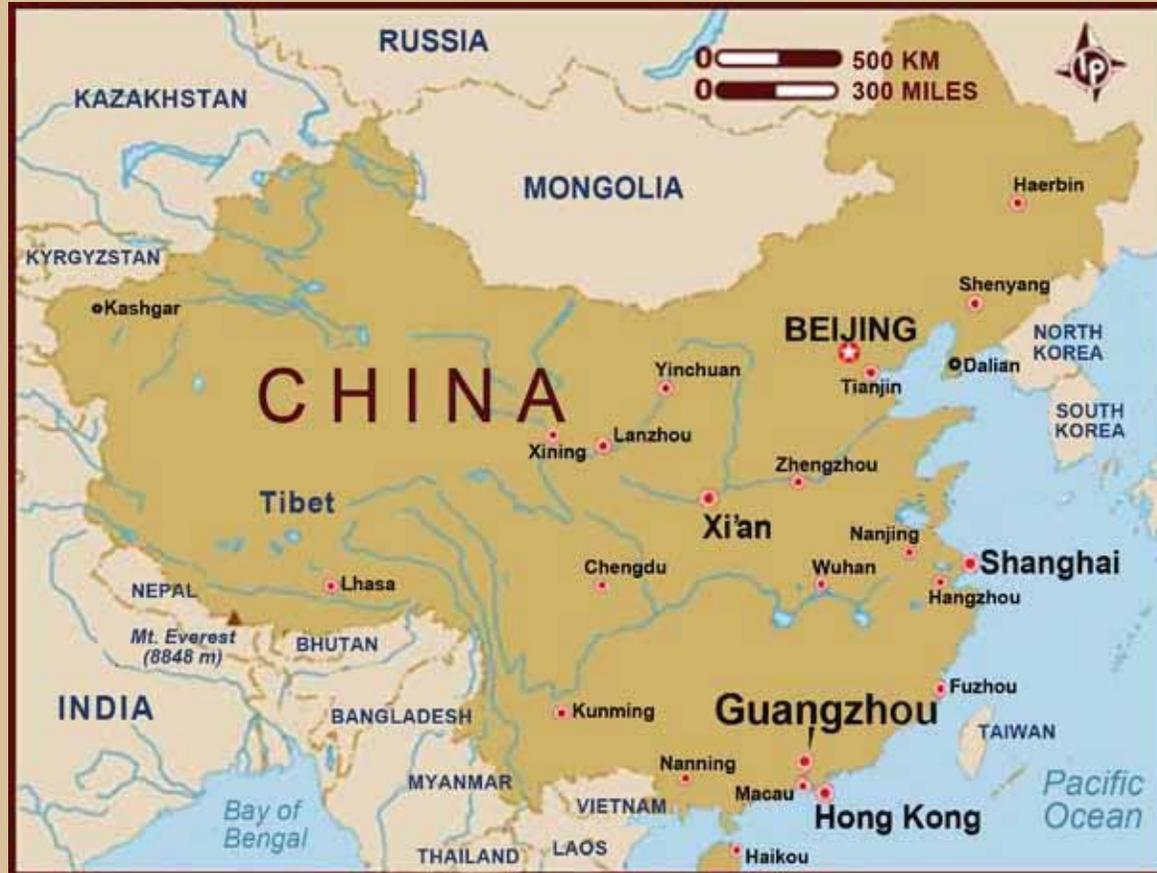


**Urbana  
Sister Cities Program  
Trip to China**

Haizhu District of Guangzhou City,  
People's Republic of China  
July 17 – 31, 2013



Six 'Citizen Diplomats' from Urbana journeyed to Haizhu District of Guangzhou City, China, to establish stronger ties with our newest sister city and to invite them to participate in the Sino-African Initiative grant recently awarded to Urbana by Sister Cities International.

This is our first visit to our Sister City in China.



We arrived in Hong Kong and got our first view of Chinese culture. We traveled by ferry, bus, and tram car to the top of Victoria Peak, the highest spot in Hong Kong.



We enjoyed our first Cantonese style meal, began the mastery of handling chop sticks, and were saddened by the demise of "Gill," a rather large fish.



A Hong Kong street scene at night.



July 19: We arrive in Haizhu District, Guangzhou City, and meet our hosts Ms. Chen, her daughter Wendy, and Joseph. All work with the Foreign Affairs office of Haizhu. First stop: Canton Tower, Built in 2010, at 600 meters tall, it is the third tallest structure in the world. Naturally, we go to the top.



At the very top we ride the bubble cars around the very edge. Great views of the entire city.  
Back inside we visit the highest post office in the world to mail post cards.



We are taken to a beautiful wetlands park near the Pear River where 153 trees are dedicated to each city who participated in the City of Guangzhou's Municipal Innovation Award contest last year. We found Urbana's tree: No. 111! —*Chorisia speciosa* ( "Silk Floss Tree" common to S. America ).



We learn how old "Canton" grew from a sleepy fishing village into a bustling international port and trade center during the 1800's while visiting a local cultural heritage museum.





Sunday is devoted to renewing friendship with Kathy He, Human Relations officer for the Guangzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau and resident of Haizhu District, who visited Urbana last year during a visit to Chicago, toured the U of I Police Training Institute with Chief Connolly, and had dinner with us at a local restaurant.



Kathy showed us many sights in Guangzhou including the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall and the Commander House he used as a residence. Lunch was enjoyed at "The Happy Fish" Restaurant..



All this was capped by a night cruise on the Pearl River, hosted by Kathy.





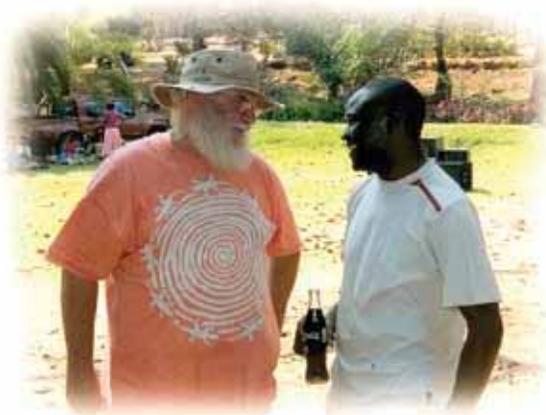




Serious work for our delegation began Monday July 22, when we met with the staff and leadership of Haizhu District, lead by Mr. Jianjain Yao, Secretary General of the Guangzhou Communist Party leadership. We watched a seven minute video on Guangzhou City and then were invited to make our presentations to the District leaders. Our talks focused on municipal sustainable practices and mutual efforts of future cooperation.



Mayor Prussing presented gifts to Mr. Yao including a book on Abraham Lincoln and his times, a Lincoln quotation coaster on the value of friendships from the Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Urbana, a history of our city, a photo book by Larry Kanfer, and a book on downtown Chicago published in Chinese.



通过国际友好项目搭建理解的桥梁：



### 姐妹城市地方成员组织

美国的姐妹城市地方成员组织是在本市政府的领导的支持下，由普通市民组成的志愿组织，旨在与外国人民与城市建立长期的友好关系。每个友好城市地方组织都是独立运作的。这些组织根据本市的需求与友好城市开展政府、商业、贸易、教育与文化方面的交流活动。

国际姐妹城市联盟亦致力于青少年文化交流与发展。所开展的项目包括高中生家庭生活体验交流、青年大使、学生领导营、青年艺术家与作家作品展示等。这些项目帮助参加者建立了长久的友谊，也增进了见识。

The delegation also presented a sixteen page booklet published in Chinese on the history and programs of the Urbana Sister Cities Committee. The booklet included information on the book donation program in Malawi, the medical supplies given to Zomba Central Hospital, and the *African Urban Poverty Alleviation Program* (AUPAP) grant successfully completed in 2012 with Sister Cities International (an Ablution Block at the Zomba Central Hospital and VIP toilet buildings built at three primary schools in Zomba). It invites Haizhu District to partner with Urbana in the *Sino-African Initiative* with our Sister City of Zomba, Malawi.



Christopher Stohr presented a letter of invitation from the Ali Phiri, the new Chief Executive Officer of Zomba, Malawi, to visit Zomba and participate in the Sino-African Initiative (SAI) program, which is to build a model solid waste collection, separation, and composting program in Zomba with the help of a grant from Sister Cities International awarded to Urbana in 2012. This grant envisions cooperation and exchange between representatives from Haizhu District in China, Zomba, Malawi, and Urbana, Illinois.

We received word that our first exchange, sending Professor Kairong Lin from Sun Yat-sen University to Malawi, and two individuals from Zomba Malawi to Haizhu District, will take place in the coming months.



More formal group photos followed, in the main entrance of the municipal building.

After exchanging various gifts with Director Yao, formal group photos were taken.





More formal group photos followed. In the main entranceway of the municipal building.



At the banquet which followed, gifts were exchanged and toasts were made to our growing Sister City / Friendship City partnership with Haizhu.



In the afternoon we toured the Lie De and the Li Yao waste water disposal facilities in Haizhu, following up on the SAI grant program objectives. We met the staff and toured the sewage processing facility. The Lie De plant is the largest in Guanzhou and serves an area of 141 sq. km, 2.13 million citizens, and process 1.2 million tons of sewage.



Laurel Prussing looks at the extensive site plan of the Lie De water treatment plant in Haizhu. The plant has been able to sustain a A/B water quality rating, exceeding their own quality criteria. The grounds are tree shaded and attractive.



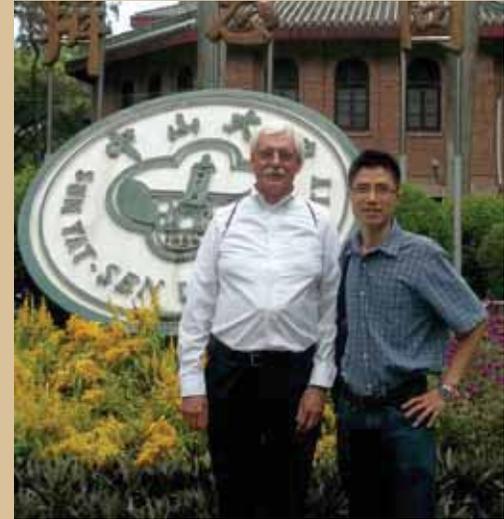
Thursday morning, July 23, Urbana delegates met Mr. Hank Baker, from the economic development office of the US Consulate in Guangzhou, and his staff. We were briefed on programs and issues relating to the US, Illinois, and local business.



We next visited our friend Kairong Lin, professor of water hydrology at the Geology Department of Sun Yat-sen University. He took us to lunch and showed us the university campus.



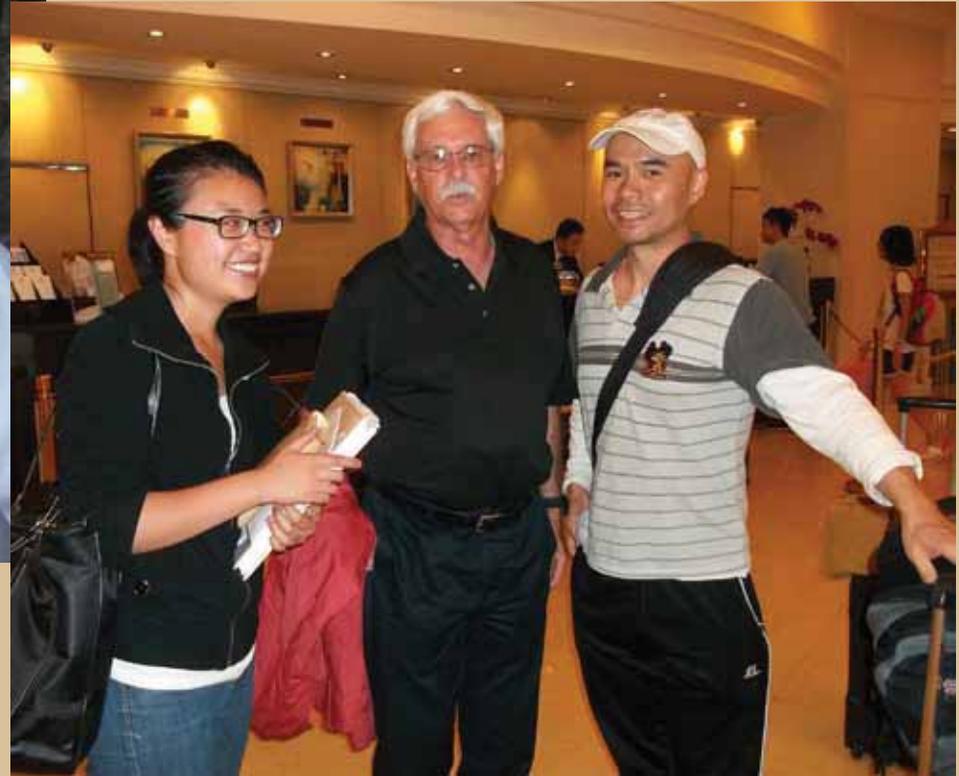
Sun Yat-sen University campus.





Kairong Lin introduced us to the Director of the Geology Department of Sun Yat-sen University, Mr. Zhang Qiang. We exchanged gifts and received permission for Kairong to work with Chris Stohr on the SAI program in Africa.





Some of the people who made the trip a great success:

Above left: Professor Ping Chen (Eastern Illinois University) and Chris Stohr (University of Illinois); above right: Lula Chen (Sister Cities International) and Tang Xiaoyang (Tsinghua University, Beijing) with Chris; and below left: Peter Qinjian Fu businessman, Mayor Prussing, and Helen Shen, Shanghai host and translator.