



Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project

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December 2011

Dear Amigos and Amigas of Teosinte,

**Top six things to know about the Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project (ATSCP) this year:**

1. Twenty-two parent volunteers work in Arlington's elementary schools to support the 4<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum about Teosinte.
2. Six of Arlington's fourth grade teachers spent a week in El Salvador last August.
3. Twenty-six youths attend high school and college with financial assistance from ATSCP.
4. The history of our friendship with Teosinte is in a book at the Robbins Library.
5. Fair trade textiles made in Teosinte can be purchased from stores in Arlington.
6. We need new volunteers!

We need your financial help to continue this important work. We invite you to renew your membership or become a first time member of the Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project today. It's easy, just fill out the enclosed Amigo/Amiga form and mail it in with your donation.

It is only with the tax-free donations of supporters like you that we are able to help Teosinte's youth follow their dreams of higher education through our scholarship program. Your support for ATSCP keeps the 24 year old friendship alive between our two communities and supports the volunteer work we do in our schools and community.

Honor a loved one this holiday season by making a contribution to ATSCP in their name. Your loved one will receive a beautiful card acknowledging your generous and thoughtful gift. Give a gift that keeps on giving.

**Arlington's Fourth Grade Curriculum:**

Twenty-two ATSCP volunteers work in Arlington's schools to support the fourth grade Social Studies curriculum that focuses on life in Teosinte and the importance of international friendships. The curriculum culminates with a fun, bilingual concert by Sol y Canto, bringing all of Arlington's 4<sup>th</sup> graders together at the Town Hall. The concert was funded by the town-wide PTO and a grant from the Arlington Cultural Council. With the help of the teachers who recently visited Teosinte, we are exploring different ways of expanding and improving the curriculum.

**Arlington Teachers Travel to Teosinte:**

Thanks to a travel grant from the Arlington Education Foundation and a private donation, six fourth grade teachers were able to experience daily life in Teosinte, learn about the history and culture of El Salvador and enhance their ability to teach the Teosinte curriculum. Having teachers, leaders and role models from our community visit and share time with our sister city continues to expand the dialogue and strengthen the connection Arlington has with Teosinte. *Please read the excerpts from two teachers' accounts at the end of this newsletter to get a flavor for their trip and to learn more about life in*

Teosinte. The full text can soon be found on our website; [www.arlingtonteosinte.org](http://www.arlingtonteosinte.org)

### **Scholarship Program:**

ATSCP continues to raise money for community projects at the discretion of the Teosinte's town council. This year donations were used to support partial scholarships for 26 high school and university students. Education beyond 9<sup>th</sup> grade is extremely expensive and unfeasible for most rural families. Scholarships recipients are selected by a Committee in Teosinte comprised of town council members, parents and student representatives. ATSCP's support of education in Teosinte has helped students graduate from university with degrees such as computer science, social work, nursing and business.

### **Drop by the Library:**

This year, U.S.-El Salvador Sister Cities produced a book titled [Aquí Estamos: Reflections from 25 years of U.S.-El Salvador Sister Cities](#). It includes a chapter about the Arlington-Teosinte sister city friendship. A copy has been donated to Robbins Library and can soon be borrowed. So come on in and check us out!

### **Crafts from Teosinte sold in Arlington:**

Fair trade crafts made by the women's sewing cooperative in Teosinte are sold at the Book Rack, Maxima Art Center and Wood and Strings. Crafts can also be purchased from ATSCP volunteers any time, contact us via email. We have wallets, purses, yoga bags, tote bags, place mats and more. Each is made from hand woven Guatemalan fabric. They make a perfect holiday gift for your friends and family and don't forget your child's teacher!

### **Volunteers Needed:**

We love having new people become involved at whatever level works for them! There are many opportunities, including working in the schools, planning events to learn more about El Salvador, fundraising or visiting Teosinte. What inspires you?

### **Upcoming Events:**

Trips to El Salvador : Dean Stevens is leading a delegation to visit 4 villages in Chalatenango, El Salvador, including Teosinte, in early January. Contact him directly if you are interested: [dean@deanstevens.com](mailto:dean@deanstevens.com). We are also in the early stages of planning a family and a health care delegation. If you are interested in either of these or helping plan your own delegation, please let us know. A trip to Teosinte is a life-changing experience for all ages.

### **Community events:**

Holiday gathering: Join us on December 18<sup>th</sup> as Alex Early and family host a holiday gathering at her home in Arlington. Alex, an AHS graduate, currently works for the Sister City Project in El Salvador and is our liaison with Teosinte. What a small world! This is a great chance to learn more about us. Contact us for details.

Delegation teachers to host a community presentation. The teachers will talk about their experience in El Salvador and how it has affected them both personally and professionally. This event is especially relevant to current and future 4<sup>th</sup> graders and their families. Stay tuned for more information.

### **Don't miss out on Sister City events!**

We are trying to go paperless. Please help by sending your email address to [arlingtonteosinte@gmail.com](mailto:arlingtonteosinte@gmail.com) . You will be added to our e-mail list and receive the most up-to-date information about our events. We are working to update and improve our website, visit us at [www.arlingtonteosinte.org](http://www.arlingtonteosinte.org) .

The friendship between these two communities has been strong for almost 25 years – be a part of it!

Mil gracias,

The Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project Planning Committee;  
Mumtaz Badshah, Evelyne Delori, Elizabeth Dray and Heather Smith

Thank you to our school volunteers, we couldn't do this without you!

Angela Alton, Potoula Angelakis, Elizabeth Dray, Kevin Guiney, Sarah Huber, Sonia Lackey, Milagros Masini, Karen Haessler, Pam Holt-Kane, Amy Hubbard, Eliza Jacob-Dolan, Michelle Jacobo, Christine Kotsifas, Patty Lally, Lisa Sofis, Evelyne Delori, Gwen Ryan, Suzanne Schwartz, Heather Smith, Beth Soltzberg, Sheelah Ward, Karyn Winters

Memories from Brackett 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher AnitaCristina Calcaterra:

*We chopped down stalks with a machete, pulled off ears, piled them in a sack and began the hike down. Arriving back... we began shucking the corn. Then we sliced off the kernels and followed a neighbor down to the mashing machine. The younger children followed us, a few tweens, and a teen or two hung back to watch us all descend into the yard of a villager who had the machine. For \$.50 we mashed the corn and walked back up to the house to begin cooking (riguas)."*

Excerpt from Bishop 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Annette Brubaker's reflections on her experience in Teosinte:

*"We attended a festive welcome celebration and also got to visit the school during a school day. The children were attentive, sweet and playful. At one point they were thrilled that we six teachers agreed to go to the river with them... We swam around, slide down rocks, communicated as best we could with much laughter. On our return we were caught in a heavy downpour and several of us stopped....in one of the local homes to wait it out. What a fun time! The children taught us hand games and chants and there was much hilarity."*

### **Our Mission Statement:**

*The Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project promotes friendship between Arlington, Massachusetts and Teosinte, El Salvador, through dialogue, cultural exchange, and support for each community's priorities. This citizen-to-citizen connection advances global awareness and social justice.*

Member of U.S.-El Salvador Sister Cities Network

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