

**July 2022**

## **Entre Amigos: Sister City representatives celebrate 4th of July in Ashland**



Guanajuato festival queen Cecilia Galindo sits aboard the antique car that will carry her from Triangle Park to the end of the Fourth of July parade near the Ashland Plaza. Ashland Amigo Club photo

# 50-year tradition picks up again after two years off due to pandemic

By Kernan Turner

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Sister City Guanajuato, Mexico, sent its summer festival queen and five other representatives to Ashland to participate in Ashland Fourth of July celebrations, resuming a 50-year tradition derailed in 2020 and 2021 by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Standing on Main Street after the Fourth of July Parade passes by are (foreground) Guanajuato festival queen Cecilia Galindo and (back row, l-r) Andrea Guardado Ramirez, the 2020-2021 Guanajuato summer festival queen; Ashland Amigo Club President Betzabe “Mina” Turner; Amigo Club board members Catherine and Sean VanAusdall; Guanajuato municipal



finance director Stefani “Fanny” Marlene Martinez Armendariz; and Guanajuato city ambassador Casandra Jimenez Verver y Vargas. Ashland Amigo Club photo

Ashland Amigo Club members hosted the visitors and worked with city, university, religious and civic organizations to arrange a calendar of events while they were in town from June 28 through July 5.

Mayor Julie Akins, Southern Oregon University President Richard Baily, Temple Emek Shalom, and Our Lady of the Mountain Catholic Church each hosted breakfasts for the Sister City guests.



Guanajuato Municipal Finance Director Stefani “Fanny” Marlene Martinez Armendariz sits in the driver’s seat of an Ashland fire truck while visiting the downtown station. Ashland Amigo Club photo



The six visitors from Sister City Guanajuato pose after the Fourth of July parade passes their viewpoint near the Ashland Plaza. Pictured from left are Monica Ayala Ortega with her daughter, summer festival queen Cecilia Galindo; Guanajuato Municipal Finance Director Stefani “Fanny” Marlene Martinez Armendariz; Guanajuato city ambassadors Casandra Jimenez Verver y Vargas and Andrea Guardado Ramirez (the 2020-2021 summer festival queen), and Carmelita Ortega (Queen Cecilia’s grandmother, representing the Guanajuato Amigo Club). Ashland Amigo Club photo

They rode antique cars in the Ashland Chamber’s 4th of July Parade, attended a Lions Club chicken barbecue and a Rotary Club winery luncheon, toured the city and its water reservoir and purification plant high in the hills above Lithia Park, sailed at Lake of the Woods, rafted down the Rogue River, participated in the Amigo Club’s annual Spanish-language poetry recital, and watched an Oregon Shakespeare Festival musical. They attended post-parade activities at the Lithia Park bandshell, where they were introduced to the public by Amigo

Club founder Señora Chela Tapp-Kocks, received an Ashland City Band salute, sang the Mexican National Anthem, and addressed spectators on behalf of the City of Guanajuato.

Guanajuato Municipal Finance Director Stefani “Fanny” Marlene Martinez Armendariz led the delegation, representing Guanajuato Mayor (presidente municipal) Alejandro Navarro. With her were summer festival queen Cecilia Galindo and her mother, Monica Ayala Ortega, and grandmother, Carmelita Ortega (representing the Guanajuato Amigo Club), and two Sister City-designated ambassadors, Casandra Jimenez Verver y Vargas and Andrea Guardado Ramirez (the 2020-2021 summer festival queen).

In between activities, Amigo Club members opened their doors, providing meals and lodging for the Guanajuato guests. The hosts included Ashland Amigo Club treasurer Sean Van Ausdall and wife Catherine, Amigo Club secretary Lynn Lamoree and husband Tom, Amigo Club members Marian Telerski and John Morrison, and Amigo Club President Betzabe “Mina” Turner and husband Kernan.





Ashland Amigo Club board member Sean VanAusdall waves after taking the Guanajuato visitors sailing on his Hobie Car at Lake of the Woods. Seated on the catamaran are, from left, Carmelita Ortega, her daughter, Monica Ayala Ortega and granddaughter festival queen Cecilia Galindo; Guanajuato ambassadors Casandra Jimenez Verver y Vargas and Andrea Guardado; and Municipal Finance Director Stefani “Fanny” Marlene Martinez Armendariz. Ashland Amigo Club photo

*Amigo Club’s Entre Amigos (Between Friends) column about Ashland ties to its sister city Guanajuato, Mexico, appears monthly. Longtime AP reporter and bureau chief Kernan Turner is an Ashland resident and Amigo Club member.*