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Sister Cities fountain gets dedication

[Molly McGowan/Times-News](#)

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A symbol of the friendship between Burlington and Soledad, San Luis Potosi, Mexico, has stood in City Park since September of last year, and was formally recognized Thursday, which was appropriately Cinco de Mayo.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Huffman welcomed the roughly 50 onlookers gathered around the fountain, which included members of the Alamance-Burlington Sister Cities group, through which ties in Soledad have been fostered for years, resulting in the recent gift to the city.

"It only seems appropriate that it belongs here in what we refer to as City Park," said Huffman, remarking that many present could recall the different transformations the park had seen over the years. He said, "This park has been cherished by many different generations."

And that's the general sentiment behind the fountain, explained Janyth Fredrickson, president of the group; as a gift from one city to another, the fountain is the "symbol of life" and "represents the life and vibrancy of a town." Fredrickson said in every Mexican city, there is a plaza with a fountain at its center and a church nearby. And now, Burlington has one to match its sister city's.

"It's a little part of Mexico," said Sergio Guzman, who originally had the idea to bring the fountain to Burlington. Guzman studied in San Luis Potosi years ago and has lived in Burlington for 15 years. On the board of the Sister Cities group, Guzman noticed that there is a large Mexican presence in the area. He said, "I love this city so I wanted to do something for it."

Though Guzman had the idea behind the fountain installation, "A project like this isn't done by one person or two – it's done by a group," pointed out by Fredrickson. Carlos Flores Vizcarra, the Mexican consul in Raleigh, recognized all the different ally organizations that put together the project.

Tony Laws, director of the Burlington's recreation and parks department, worked with Living Landscapes to coordinate the fountain's installation, done by Anderson Wells Floorscapes in Burlington, the stonemasonry provided by McAdams Masonry in Burlington and the landscaping donated by the New Leaf Society.

Vizcarra said, "We have the opportunity today to convey a message of friendship." He said just as the water in the Friendship Fountain is flowing, opportunities will flow for the two sister cities. Vizcarra said the fountain represents how communities can raise future generations to respect human life and give everyone the opportunity for "a richer, more stable society here and in San Luis Potosi."

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