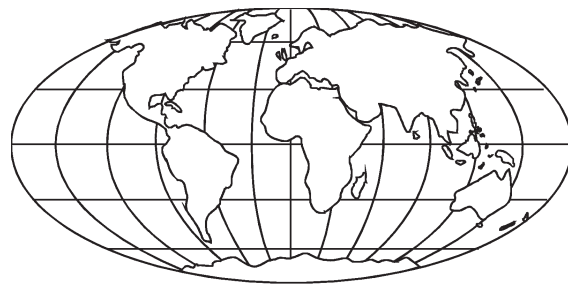


# EL CHISME

de Neighbors Abroad



Volume 54, Number 2

SISTER CITY PROGRAM ■ PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA U.S.A.

March-April 2016



*You are invited to join host families, city officials and others to greet the 2016 exchange students from Tsuchiura, Japan and welcome them to Palo Alto.*



**Saturday, March 12th**

**12 noon**

**Pine Grove Picnic Area**

**Mitchell Park**

**600 East Meadow Drive**

**Palo Alto**

*In case of rain, the welcome will move to Lucie Stern Community Center, Community Room and Patio  
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto*

## Presidents' Report

With spring comes daffodils and blossoming trees but also the pleasure of the annual visit of our young friends from Tsuchiura, Japan. Jennifer and Diana will give you the details in their column but you are all invited to come to the welcoming party on March



12. It is always a joy to meet these wonderful young people and to observe the excitement with which the Palo Alto and Tsuchiura students greet their new "sisters" and "brothers".

On the same day we will be honoring Vice Mayor Greg Scharff who has been invited to take part in the Kasumigaura Marathon in Tsuchiura. Vice Mayor Scharff will be traveling to Tsuchiura in April to run in the marathon.

Earlier this year we were approached by members of the BEAM club at Gunn High School. BEAM stands for "Business, Entrepreneurship And Math" and these students were seeking possible projects in which they could apply, to community organizations or small businesses, the business knowledge that they are acquiring in the club. We approached them with a request that they help us to introduce other young people to our sister city student exchanges and the possibility of taking part in them. We had hoped that getting interest at the student level would strengthen the programs of Neighbors Abroad and lead to greater understanding and support of the aims of sister city relationships.

On February 3, the students from the BEAM club at Gunn High School presented the Neighbors Abroad board with a proposal that included preparing a survey of student interest in and attitudes toward possible exchanges and also suggestions for increasing the use of social media by Neighbors Abroad, especially in outreach to younger people.

They are looking for information about our past and current experience with student exchanges, so they will be expecting help from the various sister-city VPs. We are grateful to the Gunn students for this proposal and know that if we meet them half-way, the image of Neighbors Abroad will be greatly enhanced by their activities.

*Barbara and Joe Evans*



## TSUCHIURA



Palo Alto host families are buzzing with excitement as we prepare for our upcoming visit from fifteen Tsuchiura-Middle-

School students and their three adult chaperones. Our Japanese guests will visit Palo Alto from Saturday, March 12 through Sunday, March 20, 2016.

Please join us in greeting our visitors at our Welcome Party scheduled from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 12th at the Pine Grove Picnic Area at Mitchell Park.

We have an eventful schedule planned for our Japanese guests' visit. In addition to shadowing the Palo Alto students during their daily activities and visiting local, Bay Area sites with their host families, their schedule includes the following:

- Monday, 3/14: Visit to City Council Meeting to receive a proclamation from the Mayor of Palo Alto
- Wednesday, 3/16: Morning tour of Stanford University and evening Cooking Night when Japanese students will prepare a meal for their host family
- Thursday, 3/17-Friday, 3/18: Overnight trip to Yosemite National Park
- Friday, 3/18: Bingo Night including a pizza dinner
- Sunday, 3/20: Appreciation and Farewell Party—Tsuchiura guests will host a banquet brunch to express their gratitude to their host families

Additionally, the Tsuchiura students will spend two full days attending either JLS or Jordan Middle School with their host student. They'll have an opportunity to experience daily life as a Palo Alto student.

Our guests will depart for a tour of San Francisco after our Farewell Party and will return to Japan on Monday, March 21.

Vice Mayor Greg Scharff will represent Palo Alto in the Kasumigaura Marathon in Tsuchiura in April. Each year, our sister city Tsuchiura invites Palo Alto to select someone from our community to travel to Tsuchiura and compete. Greg has this to say about the upcoming competition:

"This will be my first marathon. I have run several half marathons and have been running seriously for about 5 years. I have also done several Spartan races and I recently ran the Urbanathlon in San Francisco. This is my 7th year on the city council. I was Mayor in 2013 and am currently Vice Mayor of Palo Alto."

We are very proud of Greg and we wish him all the best! We look forward to hearing about his experience when he returns.

*Jennifer Buenrostro and Diana Nemet*



## ENSCHEDÉ

### Hallo Vrienden,

This Enschede report is filled with good news:

I had a great visit on January 2<sup>nd</sup> with Melina and Henk de Poot. They

came from Enschede to spend holiday time with Melina's

family in Los Altos. They were delighted to leave the Dutch weather in Enschede.

A few weeks later, after they returned to Enschede they called to announce their engagement. It

is delightful news, I am so happy for them.

Carlijn Soer, who completed an internship in the city of Palo Alto from March to May 2014, was a student at the Saxion University in Enschede. Carlijn emailed me that she has completed her studies at Saxion University and she will be attending her graduation ceremony on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

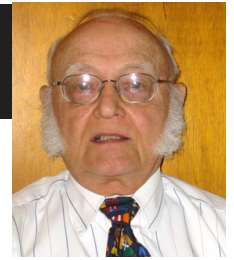
Carlijn will continue her studies for a Masters degree in Business Administration at the University of Twente with two majors: one in Leadership and Entrepreneurship and the other in Marketing and Strategy. It is a challenging program.



CONGRATULATIONS TO CARLIJN!

Carlijn is a smart and resourceful young scholar and there is no doubt she will be as successful in this new course of study as she has been in earning her Bachelor's degree from Saxion University.

## LINKÖPING



There has been no correspondence with my (supposed) contacts in Linköping. I sent a note yesterday, but it had little content, and there has been no time to respond.

We all think that Swedes are the epitome of broadmindedness and equalitarianism, but the newspaper notes that one of the smaller political parties is making a lot of noise about cutting off immigration to keep the Syrians out. Considering the events in France and Italy, they may sweep together a lot of sympathizers. It seems very difficult to imagine a reliable system to sort Islamic State terrorists from Syrian citizens trying to escape the chaos.

*Bruce Wilner*

## ALBI

No Report



I am pleased to tell you that our friend Paul Bijleveld is feeling much better and is back to work at Saxion University, albeit on a part time basis for now. We wish him a continued and speeding recovery.

On February 21<sup>st</sup> Barbara Evans, Thomas Fehrenbach and I received an email from Barbara Verbeek:

"I am the official at the Education Department of the City of Enschede responsible for the internationalization of our education systems." She is interested in "looking for opportunities to intensify the student exchanges and knowledge of the educational systems" of each of the cities, and she is "exploring the different contacts in Palo Alto at a high school student level."

Apparently there is a "student's project 'comparing high schools' in Palo Alto and Enschede." The students are preparing a presentation for Enschede's Alderman of Education in May. The project has been initiated by students who are 14 and 15 years old. The students are interested in visiting Palo Alto in the future.

*Dat is het nieuws voor nu uit Enschede.*

**Tot ziens,**  
*Joni Reid*



## OAXACA

In this edition of *El Chisme* I would like to introduce to you the exchange students who will be going to Oaxaca in June 2016 to spend four weeks with a Oaxacan family and then return home with their Oaxacan "brother" or "sister", who will spend the next four weeks here. This terrific exchange has gone on for over fifty years. The six students are:



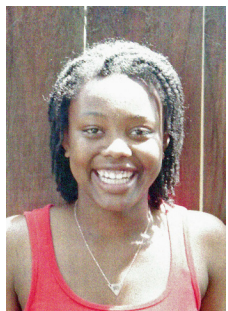
Jessalyn Grant-Bier is a sixteen-year-old who attends Gunn High School. Jessalyn and her whole family went on the 50th Anniversary Trip to Oaxaca in 2014 and she wants to go back to become a real member of a family there in a "total immersion experience." not just as a tourist. She really enjoys the Spanish language and culture and wants to become completely bilingual, beyond what

one learns in a high school language class. She is also interested in the customs and traditions of a new place. In school Jessalyn likes the sciences, especially biology. She plays the flute in the school band, and enjoys drawing, writing stories and reading. Jessalyn also is active in sports, especially basketball and swimming, and in winter skiing and snowboarding. And, as a plus: she likes Mexican food.

Andrew Hansen, fifteen years old, also attends Gunn High School. He thinks that learning about other cultures first hand is an amazing experience. It's "the real deal" to actually live in another culture and language. One can get a different view of family dynamics in other cultures. He's also looking forward to sharing his "California Lifestyle" when he returns with his Oaxacan brother. Andrew is very social and likes to make new friends. He likes all sports except swimming. He likes computers and technical devices and enjoys tutoring other students who need help in a variety of subjects.



Natania Jones Mitchell, sixteen, lives in Palo Alto, but attends Notre Dame High School in San Jose. She plays on the volleyball, basketball and cheer-leading teams at her school. Her leisure time activities include art, singing, dancing, swimming, hiking and visiting museums and historical events. Natania loves to experience new things. She has been dreaming about going to Oaxaca ever since hearing her father talking about his exchange experience in Oaxaca many years ago when



he was in high school. Two years ago Natania's older sister, Nirel, went on the Oaxaca exchange and now Natania is so eager to experience it herself, sharing her home and life here with her own Oaxacan "Sister."

Carolyn Moor, also sixteen years old, attends Mountain View High School. She loves to play lacrosse and has been playing since she was in third grade. She serves as an official with the Northern California Junior Lacrosse Association, and plays with both her high school team and the Stanford Club Lacrosse team. As an exchange student to Oaxaca she expects to greatly improve her Spanish through total immersion with a family. She also is very excited about the opportunity to show her Oaxacan "sister" around the Bay Area and forming a lifetime friendship with her Oaxacan family. Carolyn also likes reading and plays the trumpet in her school band.



Shaan Singh, another sixteen year old, also attends Gunn High School. He participates in cross country, track and drama at school, and also likes basketball, music (plays drums) and movies. Shaan not only wants to go to Oaxaca because his older brother went several years ago and loved it, as did the whole family, but because he wants to meet another family and live in a different

culture. He really enjoys meeting new people. Shaan likes doing service projects to help others and serving as a counselor at children's camps. He is very eager to meet his Oaxacan brother and have him become a member of his Palo Alto family as he will do in Oaxaca with his exchange family.

Katie (Catherine) Cardoza is the granddaughter of Paul Cardoza, whom many of you knew well during his MANY years of activity and service with Neighbors Abroad. She lives in Springfield, Missouri and will host her Oaxacan sister there after the students complete their four weeks in Oaxaca. Katie is sixteen years old and attends Central High School in Springfield. She likes most sports and plays volleyball, swims and does tae kwon do. She also likes reading, especially science fiction and fantasies. When she grows up she would like to be an ambassador. Katie is not only eager to meet and live with her Oaxacan sister, but is looking forward to showing her around Missouri.



I hope that many of you can meet the students, both the U.S. ones and the Mexicans, during the exchange time.

**!Hasta luego!**  
*Marion*



# PALO



We are happy to welcome Maya Escudero as Co-Vice President for Palo with Chris Torres. A little bit about Maya:

Maya Ong Escudero has lived in Palo Alto for the past 36 years, with her husband Nick Selby. Their children Ben and Ruth grew up in Palo Alto and are now residents of Manhattan, NY and San Francisco, CA, respectively. Maya is a native of Zamboanga City, the Philippines, and regards Cebu City as her "home" when she visits her parents who retired there.

Maya is active with Philippine American Writers and Artists (PAWA), Inc., a San Francisco nonprofit that encourages and showcases the creation of Filipino American literature and arts. PAWA hosts the International Fil/Am Book Festival at the San Francisco Public Library every other year in October, the first in 2011 and the third in 2015. PAWA engages the Fil/Am communities in the San Francisco Bay Area during the book festival and for the first Sunday in October yearly celebration of Fil/Am culture and heritage at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco.

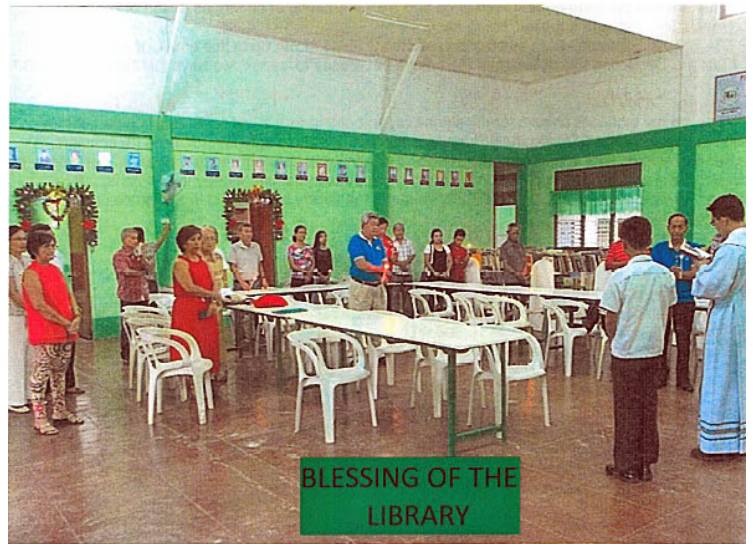
Maya is eager to reconnect with her roots in Neighbors Abroad, which she joined shortly after she arrived in Palo Alto in 1979. Her good friends Sally and Ed Kiester, now deceased, encouraged her participation in Neighbors Abroad and were instrumental in Maya's involvement in UNICEF-Palo Alto and with Stanford's Bechtel International Center.

Maya has visited Paló, Leyte in the early '90s and has a brother in Tacloban, Leyte and a sister in Catbalogan, Samar.

Chris has received a detailed report from 1st GIANT Frank Villaganas on the Library interior rehabilitation, which is now complete, and plans for the future work on the exterior. A blessing ceremony of all five rooms was held in December as part of a Christmas Party. See pictures at right.

*Chris Torres and Maya Escudero*

*At right, the former scholars of Neighbors Abroad, who are now professionals: From left, Marc Yancha–Civil Engineer; Yeahan May Onida–Social Worker; Geraldo Dacillo–Elementary Teaher; Berny Salazar–Elementary Teacher; Ma. Sheilane Cabag–our Librarian; Rebecca Maglinte–our Librarian; Abegail Movilla–High School Teacher; Jengky Peneda–Accountant; Jay Collera–Sales Representative.*



# EL CHISME

## de Neighbors Abroad



Neighbors Abroad  
P. O. Box 52004  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
U.S. A.

NEIGHBORS ABROAD is a volunteer organization which maintains and carries out the activities of the City of Palo Alto's officially recognized Sister City Program with Palo in the province of Leyte in the Philippines, Oaxaca in Mexico, Enschede in the Netherlands, Linköping in Sweden, Albi in France, and Tsuchiura in Japan. Its activities have served and continue to serve the community interests of international and intercultural understanding.

Barbara & Joe Evans, Co-Presidents	856-0618
Jim Newton, Treasurer	854-4360
Mary Ashley, Newsletter	494-1829

<http://neighborsabroad.org>



## Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

### March 2016

Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Cubberley  
Comm. Center, A3, 4000 Middlefield Rd. PA

Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon

Welcome Picnic for Tsuchiura Exchange Students. Pine  
Grove Picnic Area, Mitchell Park, 600 East Meadow Dr.,  
Palo Alto

### April 2016

Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Cubberley  
Comm. Center, A3, 4000 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto

Neighbors Abroad members and friends are invited to a free public lecture sponsored by the Peninsula Chapter of the World Affairs Council and the American Red Cross on Wednesday, March 2nd on the topic "International Humanitarian Law: Refugee Children" with Sergio Medina, CEO and Founder of Refugee and Immigrant Services (RISE). Refreshments: 7:00 pm; Program: 7:30 - 9:00 pm  
Site: Los Altos Youth Center, 1 North San Antonio Rd., Los Altos. For information, call Carol Stevens (650) 494-0757.

**Next El Chisme Deadline—April 15, 2016**

- Send your articles to Mary Ashley
- E-mail: [meashley@pacbell.net](mailto:meashley@pacbell.net)
- 3114 Cowper St., Palo Alto, CA 94306