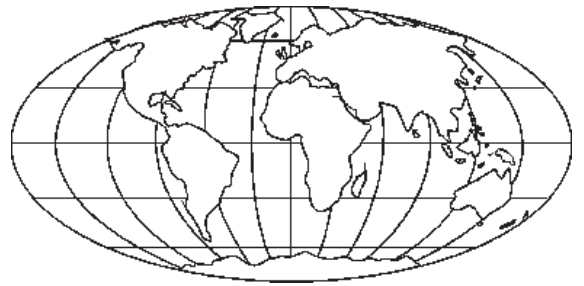


EL CHISME

de Neighbors Abroad



Volume 48, Number 6

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

November-December 2010



Neighbors Abroad *Annual Holiday Gala*

Sunday Dec. 5 from 4 to 7 pm
at the beautiful Hardesty-Parker home
69 Santiago, Atherton

Refreshments
representing each of our six Sister Cities

Entertainment
Back by popular demand!
The Stanford Mariachi Band

\$20.00 donation per person
for Neighbors Abroad Children's Projects.
Call Ruth Carleton 650-326-8885 for
reservations. Mail checks payable
to Neighbors Abroad to Ruth
at 2350 Ross Road,
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Presidents' Message

What a wonderful Japanese Festival on Sunday, October 10! The Tsuchiura committee outdid themselves, involving many community organizations in a day of varied events from archery demonstrations to Zen meditation. The crowds certainly exceeded that of any other Neighbors Abroad event in recent years. Those of you who weren't able to attend missed an exciting festival which was beautifully organized by Keiko Nakajima, Yoriko Kishimoto and the Tsuchiura committee. We were pleased to note that Neighbors Abroad was prominently



featured in publicity about the event. Please enjoy the representative photos on this page and the adjoining page.

Two days after the Japan Tsuchiura Festival, 30 Dutch college students, here to visit various U.S. companies, were treated to a barbecue

hosted by Mary and Roger Ashley and Joe and Barbara Evans with the help of other Neighbors Abroad board members and funds from the Enschede committee. The students were so pleased with this, their only real home visit, that they have asked to show their appreciation of our hospitality with a donation to the Children's Projects of Neighbors Abroad. It was a delight for us to meet and talk with these fine young people. Please see Joni Reid's Enschede report on the preparations for this study tour, and the photos of the event on page 9.

Barbara and Joe Evans



Above, ever-popular face painting at the Japan-Tsuchiura Festival. Below, Tsuchiura Dance Troupe performs in the Community Center courtyard.





A Fabulous First Japan Tsuchiura Festival!



Above and right, A large crowd gathered for the Mochitsuki and Kagami Kai demonstrations. Below left, Zen Master Mitsui and below right, Tsuchiura mayor, Chairman Orimoto, Palo Alto Mayor Patrick Burt, Consul General of Japan and Neighbors Abroad Co-president Joe Evans at the Kagami Wari (ceremonial sake barrel opening).



ALBI

Reviving the Past and Planning for the Future

In previous articles, there were already a few hints about a new web site for Neighbors Abroad being in the works. It is my pleasure to let you know that we are making good progress even though this site is only being developed by volunteers. Contracting with a professional web designer would not be appropriate for a non-profit organization like ours. This does not imply that it will not have a professional look. On the contrary, volunteers with Web experience are giving their best to make it look great and entertaining. I would like to mention in particular Albi Committee member Barb Mackraz who is putting long hours and using her artistic talent and experience to make this happen. Of course this web site, in addition to providing general and up to date information on Neighbors Abroad will cover all six Sister Cities with what is best and specific to each of them. A web-site committee with representatives from all six cities is working hard to provide useful and meaningful content.

For Albi, we are planning, among other things, to offer photo galleries on most major past exchanges with cyclists, painters, sculptors, cuisine chefs, and more. This will bring a lot of fond recollections for those who were



involved and will show newcomers how we managed to accomplish Neighbors Abroad goal to bring people together at the individual level and help them better understand and appreciate each others' culture.

We hope that this also will be an attractive way to reach potential exchange students by showing exciting photo galleries of past exchanges, information on the exchange process and a way to communicate with Neighbors Abroad and eventually register at the click of a mouse via forms embedded in the web site. This is indeed the way students interact with their school today and this should provide a better return than the old-fashioned flyers and class visits we used in the past. In the age of Facebook and Twitter, we need to enter the 21st century.

Stay posted for the announcement when the web site is ready to access. This should happen before the end of the year.

Albi, a World Heritage City

There is not much news from Albi at this time of the year, beside the fact that the registration of the old quarter of Albi to the World Heritage by the UNESCO, as reported in our last article, is generating a lot of enthusiasm in Albi. A well-illustrated booklet has been created by the Albi City Council, which tells of the long process that started back in 1996 and ended on July 31, 2010 at precisely 9:25pm, Brazil time, when the announcement came in Brasilia.

*À bientôt,
Michel Campmas*

Scenes from the Swedish Crayfish Party



Guests enjoying the pleasant outdoor setting.



Gravlax hors d'oeuvres being assembled.

LINKÖPING



Swedes use the opening of crayfish season (usually running August 7 to mid-September) as an excuse to throw parties. Their name for the parties is *Kräftskiva*. The Linköping Committee of Neighbors Abroad held a *Kräftskiva* Sunday, August 15, 2010. The paid attendance was 41 (with a nominal limit of 40.) It was a fine party. It might be claimed that a good time was had by all, but some of the committee members spent much of the time working pretty hard.

Anita Douglas, who is our authority on what is appropriate, and when, and where, and how much, spent a lot of time in the kitchen, first arranging beautiful platters of crayfish, then using the kitchen as a command post. Anita also brought a tray of scalloped potatoes. Anita is the person who knows where crayfish come from, and makes 20 kilos of them appear for us.

Iby Heller made *gravlax* for hors d'oeuvres (delicious) and dragooned George into assembling the hors d'oeuvres from the components. Iby was also the source of a sardine spread and the coffee and cream.

Our reliable Valda Tormey provided two big pots of Swedish meatballs in gravy, and lingonberries to top them with. While she was at IKEA anyhow, she also brought the *knäkebröd* and some cookies.

Barbara Newton (who isn't even on the committee) brought two trays of potatoes. Ruth Huston got the blocks of cheese onto the tables, which seems as though it can be done before-hand, but she still spent much time in the kitchen, helping.

Ruth Carleton, who had spent a lot of time earlier taking the reservations (and receiving the checks) had to sit at the greeting table until all had arrived. (She brought her friend Will to keep her company over there.) Ruth also made one tray of potatoes.

Gabriele Loosen, as "hospitality," had made us all promise to come early and stay late to help with set-up and clean-up. Even with Chris, the custodian, handling the big pieces, there was much to do: table cloths, place settings, ornamental lanterns, etc. Hank Heubach had tubs for cold beverages and brought ice and arranged the ice to have contact with the bottles. I brought the bottled goods, and the cantaloupe and strawberries for dessert.

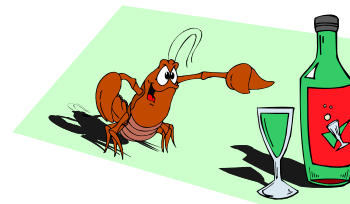
Anita came around and explained to the uninitiated how to use the tiny knives to gain access to the edible parts of a crayfish. Jim Newton and Iby poured aqvavit into our tiny glasses at appropriate times, and one of Anita's sons, wearing a Viking helmet, led us through three verses of "*Helan Går*," a drinking song for *snaps* (shots of aqvavit). The actual Swedish means "first one

gone," second verse," second one gone," etc.

We got an unplanned and unannounced lesson in aqvavit. The first round, left from years before, was Aalborg Jubilæums, Danish, flavored with caraway, dill, and coriander, smooth and pleasant. Second round, bought at the last minute, was Lysholm Linie (Norwegian aqvavit that had ridden by ship across the equator in casks) and was quite good. The last round, (the only real Swedish *snaps* available in the USA), O.P. Anderson, was harsh and unpleasant. Alas, Aalborg Jubilæums seems not available in the USA this year, although it is the most widely exported of Aalborg's 13 varieties.

The weather was almost ideal, near a perfect summer temperature, a bit breezy when we tried to set tables, and becoming a little cool when it was time to go home anyhow. The company was pleasant, food was interesting and abundant. It was a good party. We will have to do this again some time.

Bruce Wilner



Valda Tormey and Anita Douglas working on the presentation of the crayfish platters.

PALO



Mabuhay!

Once again the holiday season approaches and we invite you to the lovely Hardesty-Parker home to enjoy a festive evening of delicious food and musical entertainment! Each of our sister-city committees provides food reminiscent of its locale. France is represented by desserts, the Netherlands by Dutch cheeses, Sweden by meatballs and salmon delights, Mexico by tasty hors d'oeuvres, the Philippines by lumpia and fruit kabobs, and Japan by specialties of the region. The date is Sunday, Dec. 5 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.. Please put this on your calendar now as the season becomes exceedingly busy! Cost is \$20 and all proceeds go to our Children's Projects in Oaxaca and Palo.

Books, books books!

Katy Obringer has been busy collecting books for our Children's Library in Palo. When we have accumulated enough to fill a Balakbayan box [or more] we will pack them and send them to Palo. Our librarians there make a "holiday" out of unpacking them and readying them for the library shelves. Bert Torres has graciously offered to "house" them until ready to be shipped. Thank you so much, Bert and Caridad!

Preparation for the holiday season

Each Christmas time, the city of Palo becomes a fairy land complete with elaborate and usually hand-made "parols", exquisite lanterns which light the homes and streets. Enrico Saboren hosts this lovely event which treats all the children of Palo to seasonal gifts and treats.

Working far from home for Philippine Dreams

O.F.W.=Overseas Filipino workers annually send remittances home to the Philippines each year amounting to \$17.3 billion in 2009—about 10% of the Philippine gross domestic product. Filipinos work in a variety of positions from nursing to construction to service industries.

Critics feel that the government has become overly dependent on remittances neglecting the social costs. Among these are the effects of divided families and the failure of the government to build a strong economy that could provide jobs at home. Many children live with relatives or housekeepers while their parents work overseas perhaps returning once a year for a short time. Many of the children attend expensive private schools but researchers find that they do not do as well as children who have parents at home. Often O.F.W. purchase and furnish large homes incurring debts that ensure longer stays overseas.

A similar problem exists in Mexico. Imagine what American lives would be like without these hard-working people! (Thanks to Norimitsu Onishi of the *New York Times*.)

Mabuhay!

Ruth Carleton



Philippine parols in an open-air shop.

INTEREST FINDER, 2011 OAXACA TRIP

Please return ASAP to Marion Mandell, 250 Parkside Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94306
or email your information to Marion at: marionb@sonic.net

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number on trip— Adults: _____ Children with ages: _____

OAXACA



Please notice that this edition of El Chisme contains another copy of the Interest Finder for the potential 2011 Oaxaca Trip. If you missed it last time but wish to indicate your interest please send in the form or email the info to me ASAP. We have a good show of interest at present but need to know how many more of you have interest since final costs depend on numbers. The official registration form will come to everyone in early January, and will require your sending in a deposit with your sign-up. If you have questions, please call or email me at (650) 493-3798 or marionb@sonic.net

In November please look for your annual Children's Projects letter—Neighbors Abroad's ONCE A YEAR solicitation for funding for the Albergue Infantil Josefino (the orphanage) and the Programa Niño-a-niño (the Child-to-child Health program), both in Oaxaca, Mexico, and the Children's Library and Family Center in Palo, Philippines. As you are probably aware, these projects for children in those two Sister Cities have been extremely successful because of your past generosity. We sincerely hope to help to keep them that way—despite the unfortunate economic situation in both of those countries, plus the United States. When you get your letter, please help us to help them. Thanks!

As most of you know, Palo Alto was able to send three more fire vehicles to Oaxaca recently, for which the Bomberos (fire fighters) are extremely grateful. See the photos included here.

Information on the High School summer student exchange will be available in the schools shortly. Please pass the word on to teenagers you know—there really is no better way to get to know people from other countries than to become a family member there and then share your home with a teen from that place here in Palo Alto.

URGENT! URGENT!
Needed—visitors to Oaxaca to carry suitcases to the Orphanage and the Child-to-child Health Program! We have SO MANY all ready to go! And they REALLY want them now! If you hear of

anyone going, please have them contact me. Thanks. We even have funds to pay the extra fee for a second suitcase!

¡Hasta luego!
Marion Mandell



Above, Oaxaca Fire Chief Manuel Masa is pleased after being presented with a donation from Palo Alto Kivani's for the Oaxaca Bomberos by Marion Mandell. Below, left to right, Palo Alto Police Chief and interim Fire Chief Dennis Burns, Manuel Masa, and Roger Bloom, Deputy Fire Chief display congratulatory mementos in front of the three retired fire trucks donated to Oaxaca by Palo Alto. Neighbors Abroad and Kivani's provide help with transportation costs.



ENSCHEDÉ

Hello from the Netherlands. I arrived in Amsterdam on September 25th and have been happily attending Dutch language school and visiting the numerous museums in Amsterdam and in other cities in Holland.

I went to Enschede on September 24-26th. I attended the "Good-bye borrel" (send-off party) for the University of Twente study tour group that will soon be visiting Palo Alto. I was picked up at the Enschede train station by



Ronald Meijer and his friend and sister and driven to the UT campus where the party was being held. There were lots of students there including Michel Zoontjes who left Palo Alto one week before I did.

I had a chance to speak with one of the

students who is going on the study tour. His name is Jan Wytse. He will be at the BBQ hosted by Barbara and Joe Evans on October 12th. Jan told me the group consists of 30 students and three professors. The fields of study are in IT: Telemetrics, Computer Science, and Business Technology. They are going to Boston, New York, Washington DC, Seattle, "Silicon Valley", and LA. Some of them will extend their trip to travel around the USA after the actual study tour ends. In total their study tour will last three and one-half weeks. They plan to visit 21 companies. WHEW!

I asked Jan why he chose to go on the study tour. Jan said he is interested in computer science, particularly software engineering. This tour gives him the opportunity to see how major technical firms operate. His area of interest is in working with computers which will allow pilots to monitor aircraft more efficiently and safely and react more quickly in the event of an emergency.

I visited Gert and Mirije Koster and their family. Jenna Koster will be seven years old on September 29, but we had a little celebration on Saturday evening. We went to the Enschede Centrum where every Zaterdag a very large open market is held. Crowds of mensen (people) from Enschede and the surrounding area, including Germany, shop at the Enschede market. Gronau Germany is only five or so miles (8 km) from Enschede. I had an opportunity to see Xin Wan and her husband Tian Gang on Sunday September 25. Xin stayed with me a few years ago while

she was doing her internship at Stanford. She and her husband are currently doing their PhDs at the University of Twente. They very kindly picked me up at the Koster home and then we drove to the Castle (Burg) Bentheim



Xin Wan and her husband Tian Gang

in the town of Bad Bentheim Germany. Castle Bentheim is the largest hilltop castle in northwest Germany. It dates back to century 1050. Although for five centuries it has been owned by the Counts and Princes of Bentheim and Steinfurt, in 1895 Queen Emma of the Netherlands and her Princess Wilhelmina were living at Bentheim castle.

I will be traveling to Albi spend the weekend of October 1-3 with Nicole and Philippe Albagnac, my dear friends with whom I stayed several years ago when Neighbors Abroad visited Albi. I will fly to Sweden to see Birgitta Soderfledt and her husband Mats the weekend of October 22. I am going to go back to Enschede on November 4th to see Jos de Smit and on November 5th I will attend the dedication and celebration of the opening of the new Nano-technology lab building on the campus of the University of Twente. Prince Willem is going to be part of the celebration ceremonies. In mid-November I will take the train to see Ginger van der Linden in Berlin.

More to come in the next issue.

**Tot ziens,
Joni Reid**



Pam Evans and son Ray greet the arriving busload of students.

Twente University Study Group Visit



At left, Joni Reid with Twente University Study Group at the departure party in Enschede.

Below, clockwise from top left: Students enjoying the barbeque-style meal on the Evans' patio; Ray Evans and his new Dutch friends; Ruth Carleton and Will Stone talking with a student; another group of students enjoying the pleasant evening and surroundings.





Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

November 2010

Wednesday, 10th, 7:30 p.m. Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting, Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto

Wednesday, 17th, Refreshments, 7:00 p.m., Program, 7:30 p.m. World Affairs Council lecture by Budd MacKenzie, founder and director of Trust in Education, whose organization works on fostering educational opportunities in Afghanistan, especially for girls. They build schools, provide educational materials and resources, and instructional assistance. Los Altos Youth Center, 1 South San Antonio Rd., Los Altos. Free.

December 2010

Sunday, 5th, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Neighbors Abroad Holiday Party, with sister city food and entertainment \$20 per person benefits Children's Projects. Reservations to Ruth Carleton, 2250 Ross Rd. Palo Alto, CA 94303 (650) 326-8124

Saturday-Wednesday, 4th-8th, Noon to 9:00 p.m. daily. 23rd Annual Christmas Creche Exhibit. 450 hand wrought creches from a multitude of countries, continents, and cultures. Live holiday music daily with special musical programs in the evening. 3865 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto 94303. For more information (650) 856-3781 or www.christmascreche.org. Admission is free.

Next El Chisme Deadline: December 1, 2010

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

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 Alto 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