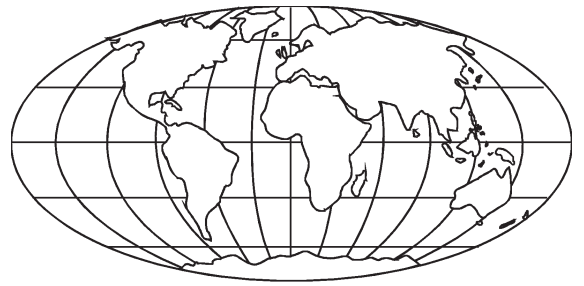


EL CHISME

de Neighbors Abroad



Volume 54, Number 3

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

May-June 2016

Welcome Picnic/Barbecue **to honor** **Exchange Students** **from Oaxaca** **and their local** **Palo Alto** **counterparts**

Mitchell Park, Arbor Area
(near East Meadow entrance to park)

Thursday, July 14

6:00 - 8:00 P.M.



Attendees please bring a large salad or dessert to share. Neighbors Abroad will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, soft drinks, plates, cups, napkins, and utensils.

Please contact Rachel Golden, rgolden626@gmail.com or 310-710-6732 to say who you are, how many are in your party and what you will bring to share.

Presidents' Report

We are very happy to announce that Bob Wenzlau has accepted nomination to the position of President of Neighbors Abroad beginning in September 2016. Bob has been a very active member of the Oaxaca



committee of Neighbors Abroad. He has been instrumental in facilitating the donation of Palo Alto's surplus fire trucks and ambulances to our sister city. In his

role as President-elect, Bob will travel to Oaxaca with the Palo Alto students and will be able to present the donated vehicles to the City of Oaxaca at that time.

We are happy to step down and see a new generation of leadership become active on the Neighbors Abroad board. At the same time as we ask for a vote confirming Bob Wenzlau to the office of President, we will be asking that the membership also vote on approving three year Board terms for two persons who have recently been appointed as Vice Presidents:

Maya Escudero (Palo, the Philippines) and Lee Merkel-Raymond (Albi, France) join a board that has already been enriched during our time in office by the addition of Laurence Albet-Khatib, Jennifer Buenrostro, Hank Heubach, Diana Nemet, Luz Sanchez and Chris Torres.

While we are happy that the board openings created by the retirements of long time Vice President for the Philippines, Ruth Carleton, and veteran Albi Vice President Michel Campmas are being filled, we are pleased that both of them are willing to stay on as board members at large. We are very happy to continue to benefit from their insights and experience.

Unfortunately we have not yet found a new board member to represent Enschede, our sister city in the Netherlands. Joni Reid who resigned from the board this spring has had a long history of engagement with the Netherlands, having had many student visitors and even boarders from the Enschede area. We will not find it easy to replace her, but the relationship between the city of Enschede and Palo Alto remains a strong one and I know many of us are anxious to continue to build on that relationship.

Barbara and Joe Evans



ENSCHEDA

To the NA Board:

I have been a member of Neighbors Abroad since 1994.

I served as the recording secretary of the Board.

I was the first to serve as president for more than one year—I served for three years.

I became the Vice President of the Enschede committee in 2001 when Ginger van der Linden moved to Berlin.

I have had 30 plus students stay in my house, most of them from The Netherlands.

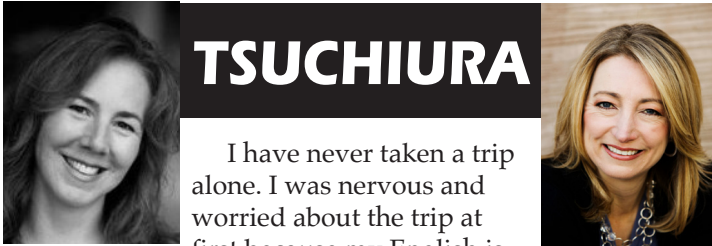
In 2005, with my Dutch counterpart, the Enschede Jazz Band "The Fraggles" came to Palo Alto and performed in Palo Alto and in San Juan Bautista. Enschede's Music School's Multiple Voice Choir visited Palo Alto and delighted Palo Alto audiences on three occasions.

After previous Palo Alto City Council member Hillary Freeman introduced the Neighbors Abroad Board to the Japanese city of Niihari, and brought and hosted Niihari educators and city council members to Palo Alto, I introduced myself to Keiko Nakajima—the now retired Japanese language teacher for the PAUSD—and suggested to her that much would be gained by working with me to make Niihari a Neighbors Abroad sister city.

Keiko and I met with educators from Tsuchiura and after much contention in the Neighbors Abroad Board, the Japanese federal government "folded" Niihari into the city of Tsuchiura Japan. In 2009, the Japanese city of Tsuchiura became Neighbors Abroad's sixth sister city. The traditional annual middle school student exchange has continued from the inception of Tsuchiura joining the constellation of Neighbors Abroad's sister cities.

I herby submit to the Neighbors Abroad Board my letter of resignation as the Vice President of the Enschede Committee.

Cheers,
Joni Reid



TSUCHIURA

I have never taken a trip alone. I was nervous and worried about the trip at first because my English is

very limited and I was afraid of no one understanding my English so I would be unable to communicate with people.

I had over 9 hours of flight from Japan to San Francisco. By the time I got to the welcome party, I was tired. However, when I arrived to Palo Alto, the negative thoughts that once worried me were blown away by people I had never met, telling me "Welcome to America" with big smiles. My host family was very caring and kind. Host mother was worried that I was not feeling well so she carried my big suitcase for me. I immediately bonded with the family. I spent the next 10 days having lots of fun and smiles with my host family.

My host family took me to restaurants every night. The restaurants are so different from Japanese restaurants. One night, we went to a restaurant, but even the same size of drink, the American Medium and Japanese Medium sizes are much different. The American restaurant where you can eat and watch many different sports. I have never been to a restaurant as such in Japan. I really enjoyed it because I like sports. I felt I could have stayed there all day and enjoyed watching sports and eat. I was also surprised to see the volume of the foods they serve in America. We have Starbucks in Japanese size was twice bigger than the Japanese size. I wish Japanese restaurants have sizes as big as America.

Daily routines were different from Japanese life style. Americans do laundry only once or twice a week. Most Japanese mothers do laundry almost every day and hang all the clothes outside to dry instead of putting them in a dryer. I take a bath in the tub almost everyday but Americans take showers instead. It was a great experience firsthand the differences between the two countries.

On the fifth day of homestay, it was Japanese student cooking night. I was asked to make a Japanese dish for my host family. I made Yakisoba which is a stir fried noodle with many kinds of vegetables. My host family liked my Yakisoba, they even took it to lunch the next day.

At school, I shadowed my host student for two days. Everyone was very kind to me. Of course, I did not understand anything in class but they tried to use Google translator to help me understand, and some of them said some jokes to keep me entertained. Many students said hi and tried to talk to me. I felt very welcomed.

From this trip, I learned so many things. It was difficult to communicate in English but I enjoyed speaking English. This experience also motivated me even more to study English and one day, I would like to come back and be able to communicate in English without any difficulties.

I greatly appreciate everyone giving me this opportunity to make this trip possible. From the cities of Tsuchiura and Palo Alto, to the host family, and new friends in Palo Alto, and my parents. I cannot thank them enough for this once in a lifetime experience. It became one of my treasures to keep.

**Arigato-gozaimasu,
Koki Utsuno (Tsuchiura Exchange Student)**

Thank you from Tsuchiura Teacher/Chaperone

Our ten days that we spent in Palo Alto passed by so quick and they were very fulfilling. When we first got to Palo Alto, we were very nervous being overseas, however, the host families and Neighbors Abroad, welcomed us with warm open arms. I remember how comfortable and excited it made us feel for the next ten days.

Through this trip, we learned about Palo Alto city and the relationship between Tsuchiura and Palo Alto.

Palo Alto is surrounded by rich nature and high tech companies. Also, the community values education and is involved in local middle and high schools. We were very impressed by the city of Palo Alto.

I also learned that Tsuchiura and Palo Alto has a long lasting relationship. There were a number of former Japanese and American students who once participated in this exchange program. Of these former participants, I met a former Tsuchiura student who participated in this program when she was a high school student and it changed her life. She decided to come back to Palo Alto as a college student and she has been living and studying in Palo Alto for a year now. I also heard about a student who came to Tsuchiura when he was in high school and after graduating from Gunn High School, he moved to Japan and became one of the most popular singers in Japan. I was reminded how this program has an impact on each individual by meeting with the former Tsuchiura student. I hope this program continues to grow and brings a positive experience to our students.

I am grateful being able to participate in this wonderful program and I cannot thank the people of Palo Alto, Neighbors Abroad, and the Host Families enough for all you have done.

I look forward seeing you this summer in Tsuchiura,
Sakkurai



OAXACA

In the last edition of *El Chisme* you got to "meet" and read about the local students who were going to Oaxaca to stay for four weeks with a Oaxacan family. This edition I will give you the names of the six Oaxacans who will be coming to our area to spend four weeks with our own students. I hope you will want to meet them and welcome them to our area. Plan on coming to the Welcome Party on July 14, described on the cover of this *El Chisme*. Please remember to respond that you are coming so we will know how many to expect. Reply info is on the cover of this edition of *El Chisme*.

Daniel Berresconi Vargas will be staying with Andrew Hansen. Juan Emiliano Lopez Lena Vargas will be the Oaxacan brother of Shaan Singh. Aranza Rodriguez Cruz will stay with Natania Jones Mitchell, Karisma Akal Campos Zamora is the Oaxacan sister of Carolyn Moor, Karla Paola Cruz Herrera will join the family of Jessalyn Grant-Bier, and Sahori Abigail Solana Gomez will go to Springfield, Missouri to join the family of Katie Cardoza.

Please remember that there is a constant need for travelers to volunteer to take one (or more) of our ready-packed suitcases to either of our projects in Oaxaca—the Albergue infantil Josefino (Orphanage) and the Programa Niño-a-niño (Health Program).

Call or email me before you go—(650) 493-3798 or marionb@sonic.net.

Hasta luego,
Marion



We recently received the sad news that Martha Zamora de Pérez, of Oaxaca, whom many of you here in Palo Alto have known for MANY, MANY years, passed away April 29. Martha was an active member of the Sister City Committee in Oaxaca for more than forty years, probably closer to fifty. She was a good, loyal friend to all, both in Oaxaca and in Palo Alto and will be sorely missed. All of us in Neighbors Abroad extend our heart-felt condolences to her whole family, most of whom have also been greatly involved in the Oaxaca/ Palo Alto Sister City Program .

If anyone wishes to send a card or letter to the family, the address is: Familia Pérez Zamora, Matamoros #401, Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico, 68000. A faster alternative is the email address of her two daughters: Rebeca at rpzamora50@gmail.com or Maria Eugenia at marupezam@gmail.com

Former Neighbors Abroad Vice President for Albi Michel Campmas has been busy in his retirement. He recently spent time in Oaxaca improving his Spanish at a language school there, and of course volunteered to bring a suitcase to the orphanage. Here are some pictures of the visit to deliver the suitcase (at right and bottom) and a lunch with the sister city committee (below).



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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

May 2016

Wednesday, 11th, 7:30 p.m.

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

June 2016

Wednesday, 13th, 7:30 p.m.

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

Coming in July:

Thursday, July 14th, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Welcome Picnic for Oaxaca and Palo Alto
Exchange Students. Arbor Picnic Area, Mitchell
Park, 600 East Meadow Dr., Palo Alto. SEE
COVER FOR DETAILS

Next El Chisme Deadline—June 15, 2016

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