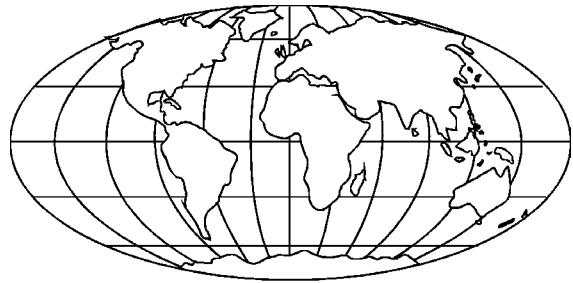


# **EL CHISME**

## **de Neighbors Abroad**



Volume 50, Number 5

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

September-October 2012



## **Palo Alto-Linköping**

### **25 Years of Sister City Cooperation**



**An event recognizing the Anniversary will be held at  
Lucie Stern Community Center, Community Room**

**Thursday, September 13, 6:30 p.m.**

**Meet Mayor Ann-Cathrine Hjerdt and a delegation from  
the city of Linköping, as well as other visiting Swedes.  
(See the Linköping column on page 5 for more details.)**

**We plan to serve barbecued chicken, salads and desserts  
and we'll be asking for help from members who wish to see  
the sister-city relationship with Linköping flourish again.**

**Barbara and Joe Evans will be helping the Linköping  
Committee to organize the meal. Call them at (650) 380-3617  
if you can make a salad, shop for desserts or help serve.**

**Seating for the dinner will be limited. Call Bruce and Elinor  
Wilner at (650) 856-7883 to make a reservation. We encourage  
anyone who is interested in revitalizing this Sister City  
relationship to attend.**

## Presidents' Report

The year 2013 will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Neighbors Abroad. 1963 was the year that Palo Alto acquired its first sister city, Palo in The Philippines. At the same time, Neighbors Abroad was created and organized as a group of volunteers whose job was to facilitate the relationship between the two cities.

Ideas, Ideas, Ideas. Now we need some good ideas for celebrating the upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Should we



plan to have one gala party? If so how do we recognize all our wonderful sister cities and the great events we've experienced together? Should we plan to celebrate each city by recreating some

of the special times we've enjoyed? Should we spread that out throughout the year somehow?

We think that it is important to collect the memories and impressions from all of you who have taken part in past sister-city events. You know what Neighbors Abroad has meant for you; could you translate that into plans for the celebration? Can you join with us in carrying out those plans? We should begin organizing the anniversary events in October. This isn't something that your board can carry out alone. The ideas need to come from all of you who have traveled to a sister city or hosted a visitor or simply attended one of the sister-city events.

And this is a good time to remind everyone in Palo Alto that we have six sister cities and that Neighbors Abroad will facilitate exchanges with and visits to those cities. It is a great benefit to our community to realize that we have six opportunities to reach out directly to someone in another country, to visit them and to welcome them to our homes. And to realize that peace and harmony can begin with as simple a thing as being "sisters".

**Barbara and Joe Evans**



## TSUCHIURA

**Konnichiwa,**

Please enjoy the following reports and photos of the exchange trip to Japan by chaperone Edita Donnelly, and students Emily Hwang and Cory Gong.

**Arigato for your support,**

*Keiko Nakajima*

### Thriving in Tsuchiura

Palo Alto and Tsuchiura, Japan, junior high students participated in a cultural exchange program facilitated by Neighbors Abroad. In March, Tsuchiura students resided with Palo Alto host families and visited Yosemite and San Francisco.

In exchange, 13 Palo Alto Students stayed with Tsuchiura host families and toured Japan the last two weeks of July accompanied by Keiko Nakajima Sensei (teacher) and chaperones,



We stayed at Ryokan Ginkaku in Kyoto. Top to bottom, left to right: (top row) Orion Tran, Kai Gallagher, John Liu, Krishna Kalakkad, (third row) Andy Kotik, Conner Donnelly, Cory Gong, Julian Knott, (second row) Keiko Nakajima, Lisa Wang, Miyako Miller, Emily Hwang, (first row) Claire Parra, Elena Nichols, Ally Zhu.

Claire Parra and me, Edita Donnelly.

We covered a lot of ground, literally. The trip was well choreographed by Nakajima Sensei. We owe many thanks to Sensei, the host families, and many people in Tsuchiura especially Manami Wada, Etsuo Sato, and Atsuko Fujimura who spent many hours and traveled many miles with us.

On our first day, we toured Tokyo Tower, the Edo Tokyo Museum, and the temples at Asakusa. The next few days, Palo Alto students experienced Tsuchiura school and home life with their host families. We sampled many activities in Tsuchiura: a hike at Mount Tsukuba, a boat ride on Lake Kasumigaura, a bike ride down Tsukuba Rin Rin Road, a

*At left: Tsuchiura moms help us get on our way for the two-day bus tour. Upper row on right, Atsuko Fujimura and Manami Wada provide valuable assistance on our travels.*

Shinto celebration in front of the train station, and video games at the Aeon Mall. After a few days in Tsuchiura, Palo Alto students rendezvoused at the train station to embark on a three day tour of Kyoto, Hiroshima, Miyajima, and Himeji. We returned to Tsuchiura to do laundry and repack for another trip, this time with Tsuchiura students.

We spent the next two days on a bus with 28 students, six chaperones and a bus driver. We visited a soy sauce factory followed by zen meditation and a tea ceremony. The evening concluded with a yakisoba barbecue and fireworks as the after dinner treat. Tsuchiura is known for their beautiful fireworks. Everyone spent the night at the Youth Center and we were back on the bus the next morning to visit the shrines and temples at Nikko.

Our travels finished with a soba noodle making workshop and an appreciation party hosted by Palo Alto students.

*Edita Donnelly*

### Memorable Trip

The trip I took to Japan is the most memorable experience in my life thus far. I never thought that I would be able to travel to a whole new country, with a whole new culture. We arrived in Narita Airport, Japan at 3:50 pm and as I stepped out of the plane, I felt Japan's heat and humidity. We checked in at the Tobu Holiday Inn, and

grabbed a quick dinner at the Aeon Mall. I had a Tempura rice combo with seafood. The next day we went to the Tokyo Tower and the Edo Tokyo Museum. After a full day of sight-seeing, we arrived in



Cory with Ryosuke, his host, in the center and his friends outside Aeon Center



Tsuchiura students join Palo Alto students for a two-day bus tour.

Tsuchiura which is where we met our host families. It was great to see Ryosuke again! We have been communicating ever since he left Palo Alto after his homestay with me.

The next two days we went to our host family's school. The schools are much different than the schools in the United States. Not only did we have to change to our indoor shoes, we also wore a uniform of pants and shirts – even during the summer. There are also sinks in the hallway where everyone brushed their teeth after lunch. I went to school number six and the teachers and staff were all really supportive and respectful. The schools have an English learning class, which was the easiest class for me. The school also has similar classes such as math, PE, and art.

We spent five days away from the host family's house to go on a big tour around famous places in Japan. We went to Kyoto which is where I visited Kinkakuji and Ryoanji. Kinkakuji is the golden palace in Japan. Made mostly of pure gold! Ryoanji is a rock garden where there are fifteen stones, and at any place where you look, you only see fourteen. The only way you see all fifteen is if you are enlightened. That night, we stayed at the Ryokan Ginkaku hotel. Ryokan is a very traditional Japanese hotel and all the meals are very beautiful and delicious. The next day we went to Hiroshima where the atomic bomb, "Little Boy" was dropped by the United States. We folded 1000 cranes and presented them at the temple to respect the city. We visited the least damaged building as well as the museum,



Cory, center, with his Japanese classmates

refurnishing where the main castle is refitted with new tiles and paint, etc. We never got to go into the castle but just being there made it priceless. My 94-year old aunt told me before the trip that she climbed to the top of Himeji Castle over sixty years ago. To be at the same location as my great aunt was very special. The next day, we toured Nikko which is where the Shrine is in the water and where there are cute deer that literally walk up to you. I also learned how to make Soba (buckwheat noodles) during a demonstration. The highlight of my trip was when my host family took me to Tokyo Disneyland. Tokyo Disneyland was so big and is mostly like the U.S.'s Disneyland which is not what I expected at all. The Tokyo Disneyland had all the

*continued on next page*

same rides and food too! We had great fun together.

My host family was very gracious and made me feel so welcome at their home as part of their family. Mrs. Yoshida got up early each day at 6:00 am to cook for me a variety of hearty dishes which included curry and rice, rice balls, onion soup, sliced fruit, toast with chocolate sauce, udon and soba. The hardest part of this trip was saying goodbye. It was tough. This trip was an experience I will never forget and I hope to visit Japan again!

*Cory Gong*

こんにちは!

My name is Emily Hwang and I am an eighth grade student at JLS Middle School. I recently participated in the exchange program to Tsuchiura City, Japan this July. Going to Japan as a foreign exchange student was definitely one of the best and most memorable experiences I have ever had, especially in terms of exposure to a different culture. I learned so much about Japan while I was on this trip, probably because our schedule was so packed. We visited schools, lived in Japanese homes, did new things (tea ceremony, zen meditation), ate delicious food, and traveled to exciting cities and places (Tokyo, Kyoto, Himeji, Hiroshima, Miyajima, Nikko). My Japanese got a lot better, and I even made a bunch of cool friends along the way, people that I will try to see again and probably keep in touch with the rest of my life. I became so close with my host family and my host that I was crying my eyes out when it was finally time to leave. I didn't even want to go back home. Almost everything feels different there, but I could literally name more than a thousand things I absolutely love about Japan. It is a spectacular place with so many amazing people. The memories I made in Japan will keep with me forever, and I feel lucky that I was able to take part in this once-in-a-lifetime trip at such a young age.

*Emily Hwang*



## PALO



### Mabuhay!

#### News from Palo

The GIANTS Club is diligently pursuing an up-date of the Meeting Room in the Children's Library. Plans for fund-raising for the project are underway. The librarians await moments when the weather co-operates to continue visiting the barangays to share books from the Library. Rain and flooding often make this a daunting task.

#### Disaster Prone

According to the Epidemiology of Disasters and Hilaire Rappler, the Philippines is "the most disaster prone" area in Asia. The Representative of the United Nations Secretary General is urging the president of the Philippines to prioritize disaster detection. In 2011, 1430 lives were lost in disasters (largely due to typhoons and flooding). This figure is much greater than in China, India, Indonesia, or Japan. Recently Typhoon Saola caused massive flooding in the Manila area.

### Mabuhay!

*Ruth Carleton*



Above, Emily, center, with her Japanese classmates



At left, Group in Yukata after dinner in Kyoto



## LINKÖPING

The Mayor of Linköping will come to Palo Alto with a small delegation of her city officials September 9, departing September 14. There will be an official welcoming at the City Council meeting on September 10.

The people from Linköping have shown interest in reinvigorating the sister-city relationship and September 13, Thursday, has been designated for an event to celebrate 25 years of our Sister Cities relationship. We will hold the Celebration at Lucie Stern Community Room beginning at 6:30. Please see the cover for more information, and to sign up for this event.

The Linköping group are apparently only a spearhead, as they bring with them people from the state around them, Östergötland, and others resident here. We are warned that as many as 35 may come to the September 13 gathering. So seating for the dinner will be limited. But we encourage anyone who is interested in rebuilding this relationship to attend. Call Bruce and Elinor Wilner at (650) 856-7883.

The stated purpose of the mayor's visit is to examine areas of mutual interest. Examples cited are economic development (how to go from ideas to implementation), drug prevention, sustainability, volunteer programs, and developing entrepreneurial skills at schools. Of course we wish them luck, but do either we or they teach entrepreneurial skill at school?

The delegation is meeting with Thomas Fehrenbach, Palo Alto development director, and other Palo Alto City officials. Members who are in business locally may appreciate the chance to meet the Swedish representatives. It is hoped there may be an interest in various future exchanges also.

**Bruce Wilner**



Entertaining our Guests at the Bastille Day picnic.

## ALBI



### Bastille Day Celebration at Mitchell Park

As indicated in our previous article, this year we celebrated Bastille Day (*fête du 14 juillet* for the French) on the eve of July 14th as is often the tradition in France. As every year, this was a great success and everyone enjoyed the good food and the pleasure of being together again for this event. Of course all were waiting for the special moment of this celebration: singing together old French songs! We started with *Sur Le Pont d'Avignon*, a very ancient song dating from the 12th century when the famous bridge was built in Avignon over the Rhone River. This was followed by *Frère Jacques* always sung in rounds, *Alouette*, *Au Clair de la Lune...* to end with *La Marseillaise*, the French Anthem which was created during the French Revolution of 1789. In addition to all the Francophiles of Neighbors Abroad, we were blessed to have some guests who had heard about the event by word of mouth and they indeed enjoyed the show!

### Amateur Photograph Exchange

As you may remember we are trying to put together an adult exchange of amateurs interested in photography. We have identified a club in Palo Alto who has showed great interest. On the French side, my correspondent, Jean Pierre Remazeilhes recently indicated to me that he had some initial contact with a local club. Let's hope this will take shape and add to a long tradition of successful exchanges with Albi, the last one being with our cyclist friends in 2011.

**À bientôt,  
Michel Campmas**



*A l'année Prochaine (See you all next year on July 14th)*



## ENSCHENDE

### **Hallo Vrienden:**

We have had three sets of visitors in the past few months from Enschede. In July Henk Blokland, a professor of environment, urban policy and regional planning at Saxion University in Enschede, visited Palo Alto. Henk met with Palo Alto city officials to explore environmental issues such as energy savings, building "green" buildings, and bicycle transportation. Henk also visited two of his

Saxion University students who are doing their internships in conjunction with the Dutch consulate in SF. Madeleine Smeets joined Henk and me for dinner and conversation during his visit to Palo Alto.

Paul Bijleveld and Hilda Ferwerda and their son Hugo have been in Palo Alto for two weeks this August for both vacation and pleasure. Hugo attended and had a great time going to the Hidden Villa Day Camp in Los Altos. I had the pleasure of the Bijleveld family's company at my home for an evening of lively conversation and dinner.



*Paul, Hugo, and Hilda Bijleveld*

Paul is also a regional planning professor at Saxion University. While in Palo Alto, Paul met with Thomas Fehrenbach (the economic

development manager for the City of Palo Alto) and James Keene (Palo Alto's city manager.) I met the three of them at our city hall for a "photo op." Paul met with San Jose



*Henk Blokland and Madeleine Smeets*

city officials and with professors at San Jose State and San Francisco State Universities regarding urban and regional planning policies.

Both Henk and Paul visited Palo Alto as partners of the Economic Alliance established in 2007 between Enschede and Palo Alto.

Also from Enschede Matthias Wessling and Marion Hemsing and their children Marie and Marten visited Palo Alto. They have been in the Palo Alto area since the middle of July. The Wessling family was here last year as well.

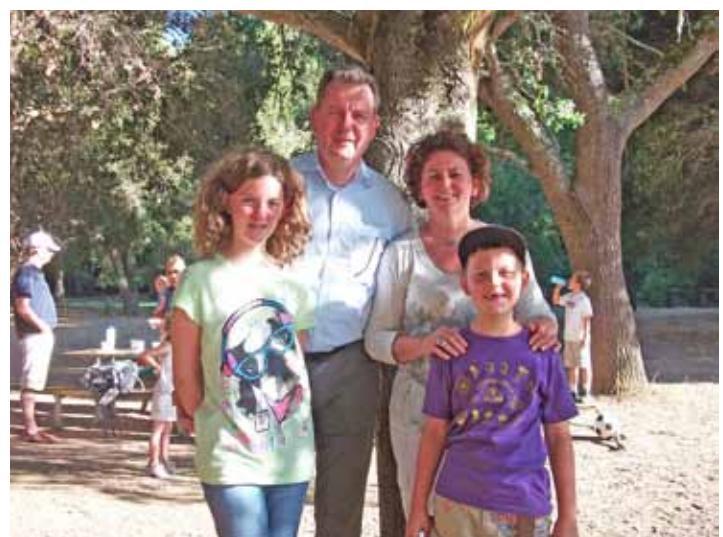
Marten joined Hugo at Hidden Villa Day camp.

On Monday August 6, the Bijleveld and Wessling families and I spent a fun evening picnicking at Palo Alto's Foothill Park. As the sun went down we watched the deer come out of the hills and graze on the grassy area not far from the picnic tables.

**Tot Ziens,  
Joni Reid**



*Paul Bijleveld, Tom Fehrenbach and Jim Keene at PA city hall*



*Mattias, Marin, Marie and Marten Wessling at Foothills Park*



*Counterclockwise from top left:  
Oaxaca Comite and students  
at City Council welcome in  
Oaxaca;*

*Students present suitcases  
from Palo Alto at the orphanage  
to committee members,  
Madre Alicia, and children.  
Birthday cake for USA at  
Fourth of July picnic celebra-  
tion in Oaxaca;*

*Airport welcome for Oaxa-  
cans at SFO;*

*Neighbors  
Abroad wel-  
come picnic for  
the students at  
Mitchell Park  
Oaxacans and  
Palo Altans  
with PA Mayor  
Yiaway Yeh  
at the Sister  
Cities kiosk  
outside City  
Hall.*



## OAXACA

Be sure to check out the student exchange photos following here—both from the time spent in Oaxaca and the time spent in Palo Alto. Students and adults in both cities enjoyed the experience. We hope even more young people will apply next year.

We received a really cute video of the residents in the Albergue (orphanage) which I hope you all can view some time soon. Also a very nice letter accompanied the video thanking Neighbors Abroad for all the help, both monetary and with all the great suitcases of clothing, shoes, and other items for the children which we send them. So, yeah, always remember to alert anyone you know who is going to Oaxaca that we have MANY ready-packed suitcases for the children that are waiting to go there with travelers. Call or email me: (650) 493-3798 or marionb@sonic.net

**¡Hasta luego!**  
*Marion Mandell*





# Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

## September 2012

Wednesday, 12th, 7:30 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting. Cubberley Community Center, Room A6, 4000 Middlefield Rd. Palo Alto

Thursday, 13th, 6:30 p.m.

Reception and dinner with Linköping/Swedish Delegation. Lucie Stern Center Community Room 1305 Middlefield Rd. Palo Alto  
Call Bruce & Elinor Wilner for reservations:  
650-856-7883. Call Barbara & Joe Evans to volunteer:  
650-380-3617.

Sunday, September 23rd, 2:30 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad members and friends are invited to the Peninsula Chapter-World Affairs Council Kickoff on Sunday, September 23rd with Karl Eikenberry, former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan and Commander of the Coalition Forces, speaking on "Afghanistan: The End Game and Prospects for the Future in the Region". Private estate, 75 Tuscaloosa Ave., Atherton with a wine/hors d'oeuvres reception to follow the program. Check in: 2:30 pm; Program: 3:00 pm; Reception: 4:30 pm. Council Members: \$10; Non-members: \$15; Students: \$5. Make reservations by Sept. 20th. To register, call (415) 293-4600.

## October 2012

Wednesday, 10th, 7:30 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting. Cubberley Community Center, Room A6, 4000 Middlefield Rd. Palo Alto

**Next El Chisme Deadline—October 10, 2012**

- Send your articles to Mary Ashley
- E-mail: [meashley@pacbell.net](mailto: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 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