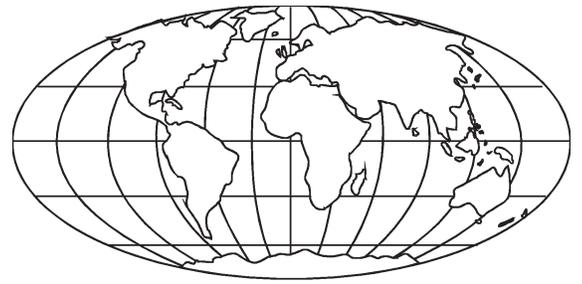


# EL CHISME

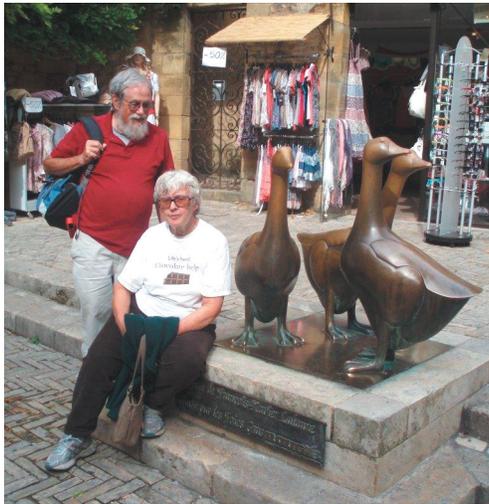
## de Neighbors Abroad



Volume 50, Number 1

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

January-February 2012



## Presidents' Report

You have recently received our annual appeal for the Children's Projects in Oaxaca, Mexico and Palo, The Philippines. These projects are partially financed by membership dues but primarily by fund-raising both through the annual appeal, Family Fund day, the holiday party and occasional concerts. The total of all these, however, does not cover all the funds that we have been providing and for several years the board has been drawing upon reserves from previous, larger-scale fund-raising. In several years that reserve will be exhausted. Rather than waiting for that time, we feel that we need to have a dialogue with the membership that emphasizes the financial need while examining the place of service projects as part of our mission.

Up to now we have relied almost exclusively on various appeals to our membership for contributions to these very worthwhile programs. Now, if we are to continue to support these service projects, we need to find additional sources of funds, probably an extra amount of at least \$6000 each year. And, lest all the that fund-raising fall upon our members, it is necessary to find a regular, annual fund raising event that can appeal to the wider community. A running or cycling event would attract a large number in the community and could also spotlight our other activities. These require a great deal of planning and work. For that kind of event have to have leaders who are passionate about the organization and its goals and willing to put in the time and effort required. It would be wonderful if we could find people who would commit to that. In any case, we need to somehow involve the wider Palo Alto community in aiding these sister cities.

None of us like the idea of reducing our support to the Children's Projects but we think that the time has come to consider them in the context of the whole mission of Neighbors Abroad. We only remain vital as an organization if we emphasize all the goals of NA: exchange programs for both adults and students, welcoming visitors from overseas and spotlighting the culture of our sister cities. Even to continue limited support for the Children's Projects, we need to expand our membership through exchange programs and other activities that attract participation. Our very attractive website, designed and built by Michel Campmas and Barb Mackraz is an excellent first step. It is up to us members to spread the word—look at [www.neighborsabroad.org](http://www.neighborsabroad.org)!

We will be getting a little more of this well-needed publicity in the coming spring when we will be the "community partner" of the Palo Alto Adult School for the spring quarter. This program of the adult school highlights a local organization that has logical ties to the adult school curriculum, in our case the language department where French, Japanese and Spanish classes are taught. Look for the spring quarter catalog with our logo!

*Barbara and Joe Evans*

## ALBI

### About the 2011 Cyclist Exchange

By the time you read this article, the Albi section of the Neighbors Abroad Web Site <[www.neighborsabroad.org](http://www.neighborsabroad.org)> will host an animated picture show about last year's trip to Albi and the Dordogne region. Do not hesitate to browse to it: Jim Monjillo, from the Western Wheelers Cycling Club here in Palo Alto, has been doing his magic again and has put together a very artistic picture show based on selected photos gathered from the trip participants and presented with some beautiful and surprising transition effects.

I would also like to share with you that before we returned to Palo Alto, there were discussions about a potential cyclist trip to Palo Alto in the 2013 timeframe. Stay posted!

### Potential Adult Exchange Ideas

While I was in Albi during our trip back in October, I also started discussing potential new adult exchange ideas with Jean Pierre Remazeilhes, my correspondent from Terre d'Union. One idea we have both started to work on would be an exchange involving *amateur photographers*. As you all know our region has many many famous and hidden gorgeous sceneries and this would be a delight for any serious amateur. We would also reciprocate as the Albi region has also its share of beautiful places. If you are interested or know someone who would be, please send me an email at [michel.campmas@gmail.com](mailto:michel.campmas@gmail.com). This is of course very preliminary but we are starting to investigate this possibility.

À bientôt,  
Michel Campmas



## ENSCHEDÉ

### Hallo Vrienden:

Before I left Palo Alto in August I met with Mark Dungan, Gunn High School's Jazz Band teacher/leader. I proposed and he was interested in participating in a Jazz Band exchange with Bart Bijleveld's Jazz band The Fraggles. I recently received an email from Mark that the band is considering a trip to Enschede in June 2012.

In early summer I met Monique LeConge, Palo Alto's Library Director, at the opening of the newly renovated Downtown Library. I asked her about the possibility of a Librarian exchange between Palo Alto and Enschede.



Jos de Smit in the Enschede Library

Interestingly, Monique's ancestors are from Holland. While I was in Enschede Jos and I had a meeting with the Director of Enschede's Public Library System, Gerard Kocx, which went quite well. Gerard did seem interested in exploring the possibility of a librarian exchange with Palo Alto. Enschede is planning on building a new main library. I told him about Palo Alto's five public libraries and that a new Mitchell Park library was in the process of being built and would open in the Fall of 2012. I mentioned the main library was next in line to be renovated. He was very impressed that a city of about 65,000 people had five libraries.

Via email I kept Monique apprised of my meeting with Gerard Kocx. Monique agreed a Librarian exchange between Palo Alto and Enschede is possible, but is in the early planning stages. I am hopeful such an exchange will take place in 2012 or 2013. There are many details to be worked out.

On Friday October 14<sup>th</sup> I went to Enschede again to see Gert and Mirije



Gert and Jenna Koster

Koster and their children Jenna and Owen. Gert and Mirije lived in Mountain View for many years and have been featured in *El Chisme* in past issues. They invited me to a concert of Verdi's Requiem at the Enschede Music Theater Auditorium in which Mirije sang.

On Saturday we walked around Enschede and visited the not-yet-completed renovation of Enschede's Roombeek area. I wrote about the firework explosion in the Roombeek area in 2000. The explosion occurred on 13 May 2000.

I noticed a large street poster (see photo) which described what you can find within the city of Enschede (Binnenstad):



*A poster of the Roombeek area in Enschede*

Translation: You are now crossing the culture mile: The Rozendaal: a special building where the remaining parts of the old, dilapidated textile mill are included in the contemporary architecture. In Rozendaal are artists' workshops, the Center for Visual Art and a museum restaurant; the Rijksmuseum; the Music Quarter which included a new Music Hall and music school; and the Old Market.

I spent Saturday with Matthias Wessling and Marion Hemsing and their two children. We drove to the Haar-muhler Mill in Alsatte Germany. It is less than a 30 minute car ride from Enschede. It is a lovely restaurant redesigned from a 350 year old farm with a water mill over the river



*Dave Blank, Matthias Wessling, Marten Wessling, Marie Wessling, Marion Mensing, Joni Reid*

taught at the University of Twente and is now a Chemical Engineering professor at Aachen University, Germany.

That evening Dave Blank met us for dinner in Enschede. In February 2011 Dave was appointed Captain of Science by the Minister of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands. Dave also serves as the nanotechnology advisor to the

Netherlands' Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. As a bit of history in 1998 Dave received a Grant to be a visiting scientist at Stanford University. The connections between Palo Alto, Stanford and Enschede have a long history and are multi-faceted.

On Friday October 28 I returned to Enschede and was picked up at the train station by Michel Zoontjes who stayed with me last year when he did his internship in physics at Stanford. Michel is now studying for his PhD at UT.

Before I left California I received an email from Xin Wan inviting me to the PhD promotion of her husband Tian Gang. Xin stayed with me for six months when she was a University of Twente



*Tian Gang and Xin Wan at Tian's PhD presentation*

physics intern at Stanford University in 2008. Tian visited for one month. On September 11, 2011 Xin and Tian had a baby boy who they named Kevin.

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, I attended Tian's promotion at the University of Twente. Tian was granted his PhD cum laude—a rarely granted achievement.

On Saturday evening I stayed with Edip and Sylvia Can.



*Edip, Sylvia and baby Samuel Can*

Edip stayed with me for four months when he was an intern at Stanford University in 2003. Edip and Sylvia had a baby boy, Samuel, last May. Edip is a physics teacher and researcher at Saxion University in Enschede.

Neighbors Abroad's friends have many definitions depending on the activities of each of the sister cities. The number of new friends in Enschede is growing, and old friends are still in touch. It was a great pleasure to see the young men and women who were interns at Stanford when I first met them and to find them highly productive, intelligent adults with families and pursuing higher degrees. They are a successful group of friends.

*Ik hoop dat jullie een gezond en succesvol nieuw jaar-2012-hebben. (I hope you have a healthy 2012 new year.)*

**Tot Ziens,  
Joni Reid**

## LINKÖPING



Once again we have heard nothing from Linköping, so the committee sits around discussing herring for the holiday party and asking how we could lure some younger members. We are fairly sure that Stanford harbors visiting scholars from Linköping University, but these days it does “harbor” them, and we have no easy way to track them down. Visting Scholars tend to go back to Sweden after a year, but it had been nice to have some contact during their year.

After a long period of silence, I got a note from the Linköping chairman, Anders Lindkvist, after the deadline for this item. He says that they regard 2012 as the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the relationship (we seem out of phase) and would expect to sent a delegation here in 2012. Anders thinks it would be in August, likely late August. He would like us to arrange some relatively large-scale gathering so people can meet, and would like to sweep in other existing organizations. He suggests Rotary...

I'm sure we can accommodate, though I haven't yet begun to prepare a reply. It is good to know there is still official interest there.

*Bruce Wilner*



## PALO



**Mabuhay!**

### A Time of Thanks

Thanksgiving is over but it is always a good time to thank our wonderful volunteers who give so much to Neighbors Abroad! Starting with the usual lovely Nancy Hardesty-John Parker holiday party, continuing with the hard work of Marion Mandell who worked endlessly to send out our annual Children's Projects Appeal, to each of our Sister-City Chairs—Michel, Keiko, Joni, Marion, Bruce, Ruth, great thanks to Joe and Barbara Evans our diligent co-chairs and last but not least each of our special volunteers who have contributed whenever there is a job to be done we give heartfelt thanks!

### And Thanks to Palo

We must also give huge thanks to our counterparts in Palo, the GIANTS Club. With the financial crisis striking Neighbors Abroad, their group is taking financial responsibility for three of our nine scholarships. Bravo! We are faced with other financial reductions and realize this is a global difficulty affecting us all. Further thanks are due to our dedicated Librarians—Rebecca Maglinte and Sheilane Cabbag.

### Did You Know?

The Philippines have overtaken India as the hub of Call Centers. The rise of the Philippines as the forerunner of the call center business includes some 400,000 Filipinos now talking to mostly American consumers. Companies such as AT&T, Chase and Expedia have established call centers there. Fluency with American English is one of their advantages. Wages are higher in the Philippines than those of India which still boasts the largest outsourcing for software. Needless to say, this is also a source of discontent in the U.S. because of job loss with many Americans struggling to find work.

Happy New Year to you all!

**Mabuhay!**

*Ruth Carleton*

## TSUCHIURA



### Konnichiwa,

I have two wonderful items of news to share with you today.

First, Keith Bechtol, a graduate student at Stanford University accepted an invitation from Mayor Nakagawa to participate in the 22nd Kasumigaura International Marathon on April 15, 2012. Mayor Espinosa had received an invitation letter from the Tsuchiura Mayor in November and his office looked for a possible runner from Palo Alto. Keith's best marathon time is 2:16:44, run this past June in Duluth, Minnesota. Congratulations and very best wishes to Keith.

Secondly, Vice Consul Takemichi Nagaoka from the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco wrote:

"Nakajima Sensei,

The Government of Japan is very pleased to announce a special 2012 cherry blossom tree planting to symbolize the friendship between Japan and the United States.

100 years ago, the people of Japan gave 3000 cherry blossom trees, a beloved symbol of Japan, to the United States as a gesture of good will. The trees were planted in Washington DC's Tidal Basin, where they still blossom today, as part of First Lady Nellie Taft's efforts to beautify the nation's capital. Together with the Statue of Liberty, the cherry blossom trees represent the largest foreign gifts ever made to the United States.

As part of the centennial commemoration of this gift, Japan is once again donating cherry blossom trees to locations with significance to the friendship between the US and Japan. We would like to explore the possibility with Palo Alto Neighbors Abroad of planting a special commemorative tree at City Hall or another good place in Palo Alto. Because you have given a huge support to Tsuchiura, your sister city, during their difficult time after the March 11 disaster, we think that this may be a good timing and good way for our thanking your support and, at the same time, celebrating your effort to bring closer both citizens.

We will be distributing seedlings through our Embassy and Consulates throughout the United States, in conjunction with American Forests, a conservation nonprofit. Tree recipients need only to provide a caring environment for the trees for future generations to enjoy. We hope that a commemorative planting event can be held to mark this special anniversary in Japan-US relations.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this proposed tree planting. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide you with any additional information."

We are very honored to be chosen as a recipient of this gift. Mayor Espinosa has been discussing with Canopy officials when and where to plant those cherry blossom trees

**Arigato for your continuous support,  
Keiko Nakajima**

## Marathon in Tsuchiura

*by Yasuo Kishimoto*

Our sister city, Tsuchiura, has a long history of sponsoring marathons. As mentioned in the last issue, Tsuchiura is located by Lake Kasumigaura, the second largest fresh water lake in Japan. The marathon route circles around the lake, hence it is named the Kasumigaura marathon. It was inaugurated in 1991 commemorating the 50th anniversary of establishing the city. Concerning deteriorating water quality of the lake, its main theme was established as "Rise again, Kasumigaura, as water is the source of all sports." Since then, the marathon has been an annual event, except last year, when the huge earthquake and tsunami hit the area. In 1996, the International Blind Person Marathon was held simultaneously with this marathon. The marathon for visually impaired persons also became an annual event sponsored by the City of Tsuchiura. The marathon section of the International Sports Championship for the Blind was also held in Tsuchiura.

In addition to the full marathon and blind person marathon, it now includes a 10 mile run, 5 kilometer run, and a wheelchair marathon.

The annual event of 2012 will be held on April 15. Anticipated participants will be limited to 18,000 runners for the full marathon, 5,000 for 10 miles, 2,000 for 5 kilometers, and 15 wheelchair marathon participants. The marathon for the blind will have no limit. Best time for the marathon since its inception is 2 hrs 17 min. 47 sec. established in 2002 for men and 2 hrs 42 min. 17 sec. for women (1997). Nine well-recognized marathon runners were invited for the next year. These include the Olympic silver medal winner and the Boston Marathon winner.

Last year, the City of Tsuchiura invited one marathon runner from Palo Alto with all expenses included. With help from the City of Palo Alto and Neighbors Abroad, Tim Wong was selected. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, the marathon was canceled due to the natural disaster. The City of Tsuchiura is again extending an invitation to a citizen of Palo Alto. Keith Bechtol of Stanford has been selected. We hope he will enjoy running together with Japanese friends.



# Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

## January 2012

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

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Cubberley Community Center, Room A3, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

## February 2012

Wednesday, 8th, 7:30 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Cubberley Community Center, Room A3, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

Wednesday, February 15th, 7:30 p.m.

World Affairs Council lecture "The Global Economy: The Connections and Steps Forward" with Dr. Reuven Glick, Group Vice President of the International Research Group of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco and former Professor of Economics at UC Berkeley. Los Altos Youth Center, 1 South San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Refreshments at 7:00 p.m. Program: 7:30–9:00 pm. Free Admission to all. For information, call Carol Stevens (650) 494-0757.

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

- 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 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>