Neighboors Abroad
Annual
Holiday Party

Saturday, December 3, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Hardesty-Parker Home, 69 Santiago Ave., Atherton

featuring food representing each of our 6 sister cities
and an encore performance by the

Neighbors Abroad International Band

$25 Donation per person

All proceeds go to Neighbors Abroad Children’s Projects in Oaxaca and Palo

Reserve by calling Ruth Carleton at 650-324-3635
Checks payable to Neighbors Abroad should be sent to:
Ruth Carleton, 36 Pearce Mitchell, Stanford, CA 94305
President's Report

I want to share the sense of big shoes I step into filling Neighbors Abroad’s presidency. Thanks again to Joe and Barbara for their leadership for so many years. I also appreciate the constancy of Jim Newton’s financial reports.

Neighbors Abroad is a great collection of colleagues working for international culture exchange. I hope to bring more meaningful and stronger alignment to the City of Palo Alto through my tenure as your president.

Let’s see how it goes.

I am trying to focus Board meetings more on discussions and fewer reports. I hope to encourage sister city committee work as well as broader areas of committee work including school coordination, membership, fundraising and external affairs. External affairs encompasses not only our work with the City of Palo Alto, but also Kiwanis International, Sister Cities International and even venues like our United Nations Association. You will see some information about these partner organizations in this issue.

While Neighbors Abroad has a cultural mission, I believe the impact of the organization will grow as we align with our schools and local government. I believe creating new alignments in the schools and with the City can bring more members. We get member interest when we help with language, and we would likely get member interest when we help with sustainability, a core element of Palo Alto. All of this is still mindful to culture, but brings a bit more members. We get member interest when we help with the exchange services.

The Board has created some new committees that allow us to work with our schools and local government. I believe creating new alignments in the schools and with the City can bring more members. We get member interest when we help with language, and we would likely get member interest when we help with sustainability, a core element of Palo Alto. All of this is still mindful to culture, but brings a bit more members. We get member interest when we help with the exchange services.

Schools: This focuses on developing progress within Palo Alto public schools, but also reaching out to local private schools and public schools in neighboring communities. The effort works to coordinate the existing exchanges managed by the city committees.

Partnering and Programs: This collects the activities where we work with other organizations including Kiwanis International, Sister Cities International, United Nations Association, City of Palo Alto and others where we seek to coordinate efforts.

Communications: This collects the various forms we inform and engage with members including El Chisme, the website and Facebook (see our mailing list). This committee will work on messaging, images and sorting out how we serve audiences that like to learn in print or online.

Oxaca Committee: Collecting all the active projects in Oxaca as well as the student exchange.

Asia Committee: This will focus on our Tsuchiura exchange program led by Jennifer and outreach and relations with Palo lead by Chris and Maya, as well as the Smart City connection with the Yagnpu District of Shanghai China.

European Committee: This collects the engagement with Albi, Enschede and Linkoping and European Smart City Heidelberg.

There is a lot of work to be done and we need many people to help. One immediate need is someone to be recording secretary for the Board, and members to join any of the other committees. You are welcome at Board meetings to see how we are progressing, or you may contact me at bob@wenzlau.net or 650-248-4467. I hope to meet many of you at our annual Neighbors Abroad Holiday Party and fundraiser on December 3.

Bob Wenzlau

Kiwanis and Neighbors Abroad

The Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto (KCPA) has been supporting through Neighbors Abroad (NA) children’s projects in Oxaca for more than a decade and has contributed over $16,000 to date. The KCPA has also contributed books and backpacks for the children and has been active in enabling the delivery of Palo Alto’s surplus fire vehicles to Oxaca.

The International Committee (IC) of the KCPA, at the request of NA’s president, is forming the leadership of NA’s new Partners Committee (PC) that is to reach out to local community organizations and businesses in search of synergies among the organizations and NA.

The PC currently has nine members, seven of whom are members of the KCPA. The nine are tasked with reaching out to the City of Palo Alto, the PAUSD, the KCPA, Stanford University, Sister Cities International (SCI), the Northern California chapter of SCI, the United Nations Association gift shop, Avenidas, the YMCA, the Palo Alto Rotary, and the University Rotary. They are working on getting a liaison to the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce. It is anticipated that initial accomplishments will be to open channels of regular communication. Watch this space for more information once this committee gets going.

The Partners Committee is actively seeking NA members who might be helpful with outreach efforts to local community organizations. Interested individuals should contact Hank Heubach via email at heubachh@sbcglobal.net.

STUDENTS WHO WILL BE 15 YEARS OR OLDER BY JUNE OF 2017, AND STUDYING SPANISH, WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING NEXT SUMMER?

It's time to renew your Neighbors Abroad membership. Renewal envelopes went out in September for the upcoming year. Please return with your check. Your label indicates the last time you paid. Your membership shows support for our Sister City program. We appreciate your ongoing support of Neighbors Abroad.

Call or email Joe Evans, 650-856-0618 or evansbanjo@sbcglobal.net if you’ve misplaced your envelope.

The meeting will be on Monday, November 14 at 7:00 P.M. in Room A-3 at Cubberley Community Center, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto.

Application packets will be available and all of your questions will be answered. This is the place to get your information.

The Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto’s United Nations Association Gift Shop continues to showcase a lively, charming collection of painted folk art animals from Oxaca! If you haven’t been in to the shop lately, now might be a good time to check these out. A photo board accompanying the display mentions that Oxaca is one of Palo Alto’s sister cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

UNICEF Christmas cards are also in. As always, for anyone interested in fair trade gift items that help provide a livelihood for artisans from around the world, the shop remains a special place in the hearts of Palo Altans old and young. The store has new vendors from Ghana (textiles), India (handbags, scarves), beautiful vintage blankets and pillows from Peru, and a new shipment of delightful felt toys from Nepal.

UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION GIFT SHOP

GET TO KNOW OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

United Nations Association gift shop

A reminder to Neighbors Abroad members that Palo Alto’s United Nations Association Gift Shop continues to showcase a lively, charming collection of painted folk art animals from Oxaca! If you haven’t been in to the shop lately, now might be a good time to check these out. A photo board accompanying the display mentions that Oxaca is one of Palo Alto’s sister cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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UPCOMING UNA Gift Shop events of note: Basket and Textiles Home Event. On Sunday, November 6, from 10 to 5, shop volunteers will host a special one-day shopping event featuring baskets, textiles, home décor, kitchen and dining items, and linens (hand-dyed placemats, runners, napkins, aprons for children and adults, and more) from artisans around the world. Charming, durable Haitian metal art for walls indoors or out will also be for sale. A few countries whose basketry, wall hangings, pillows, or blankets will be ready for purchase include Ghana (market baskets, Kente cloth), Guatemala, Namibia, Peru, South Africa (Zulu wire in beautiful color combinations) and Swaziland (sisal). The event is free to the public and takes place at the UNA Gift Shop, 552 Emerson St., downtown Palo Alto. With every purchase you help to support artisans directly in the area where they live. Also, for anyone who might be interested in a three-hour weekly shop shift, the shop always welcomes new volunteers.
During my time in Oaxaca, I kept a journal in which I wrote “pro-tips,” or anecdotal stories that I want to shout from the rooftops. There were a lot of ups and downs while I was in Oaxaca. I left with some fantastic stories that I want to share from the rooftops. I left with other stories I would prefer to keep to myself. Like the time I tried to put my best mom shoes on a bag on her desk but used the wrong word and she slapped her face instead. Ultimately, despite the occasional mistakes and embarrassments, I’m very blessed to have been able to go on this exchange. It was an experience like no other and one I will remember for the rest of my life. The dep of childhood seemed so distant to me sometimes I can’t even begin to express. Thank you all those who made it possible at Neighbors Abroad and El Chisme readers.

Pro-tip #52: Learn to cross yourself before coming to Mexico.

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Pro-tip #53: Don’t be afraid to try something new.

Pro-tip #55: Consider changing into your summer wardrobe the moment you come in from the experience, but a learning one as well. I am so thankful my family made the decision to jump, you’re already moving and you know in your head that it’s too late to stop going forward, too late to un-jump, you just have to hold your breath and plunge.

Pro-tip #56: Keep your clothes and shoes for the children at the orphanage.

Pro-tip #57: Be involved in the process—it’s really fun! More on this later!

Pro-tip #58: There’s a lot of ups and downs while I was in Oaxaca. I left with some fantastic stories that I want to share from the rooftops. I left with other stories I would prefer to keep to myself. Like the time I tried to put my best mom shoes on a bag on her desk but used the wrong word and she slapped her face instead. Ultimately, despite the occasional mistakes and embarrassments, I’m very blessed to have been able to go on this exchange. It was an experience like no other and one I will remember for the rest of my life. The dep of childhood seemed so distant to me sometimes I can’t even begin to express. Thank you all those who made it possible at Neighbors Abroad and El Chisme readers.

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Collage of some of Jessica’s sketches of her time in Oaxaca

Student Exchange Letter, continued from page 4

tences, the correct tone to use and the possible responses to my question, but when I tried to say it, the words and conjugations would jumble, and I would feel like a fool. But I was treated with such patience and kindness in response. And I learned so much in what, in the end, felt like such a short time. Some of it was new words, like sandía (watermelon) or trueno (thunder) but overall I gained confidence in my words, and the courage to speak to a perfect stranger, in Spanish, about something more than the cost of an item.

When I was on the aforementioned plane, with nothing left to do but wait, I took out the brand-new sketchbook that my mother had given me the day before, start- ed to draw, and by the time we began our descent, I had finished the page with color. I decided, right there, that that sketchbook was going to be my record. Some of the other students were right behind me, filling the page with color. I felt so much more confident in my words, and the courage to speak to a perfect stranger, in Spanish, about something more than the cost of an item.

During the trip, we went to the beach, played in the pool, and went tubing on the Cape d’Agde. My favorite day of the trip was when we rented a motorboat and went tubing on the Mediterranean Sea.

The Kasumigaura Marathon is an annual race held in our Japanese Sister City Tsuchiura every spring. In 2017 the Marathon will be run on Sunday, April 16.

Each year Tsuchiura extends an invitation to a runner from Palo Alto to participate, and we have just received an invitation for the 2017 race. The invitation is for 5 or 6 days, April 13-18. Tsuchiura will pay for the round trip economy class plane ticket and hotel room for the guest runner.

Palo Alto Vice Mayor Greg Scharff was the guest runner last year and the city of Tsuchiura treated him very well. He had an amazing experience and has been an amazing opportunity for anyone that can run a marathon!

If you have any questions or know a runner who might be interested email or call me: Mobile: 650-224-9539; Email: jbuenrostro@apr.com.

Thank you!

Jennifer Buenrostro, VP for Tsuchiura
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.

Bob Wenzlau, President 248-4467  
Jim Newton, Treasurer 854-4360  
Mary Ashley, Newsletter 494-1829

http://neighborsabroad.org

Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

**Board Meetings** are generally held on the second Wednesday of the month. Schedule and location are currently in transition. Call President Bob Wenzlau (above) for time and location.

**November 14, Monday, 7:00 p.m.**, Family Information meeting for Oaxaca exchange. See notice on page 3 for complete details.

**December 3, Saturday, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.**, Neighbors Abroad Annual Holiday Party. See cover for details and reservations.

**The 29th Annual Christmas Creche Exhibit**  
December 3-7, 2016 Saturday-Wednesday Noon-9:00 p.m. daily  
3865 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto 94303  
**Admission is FREE.** Come and enjoy **350 nativities from around the world** in a festive holiday setting with live holiday music daily and free musical programs in the evening at 7:00 p.m.  
**The Children’s Room** has craft activities, nativity costumes, stories, and marionette shows daily.  
**For more information:**  
www.christmascreche.org

Next El Chisme Deadline—TBD

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