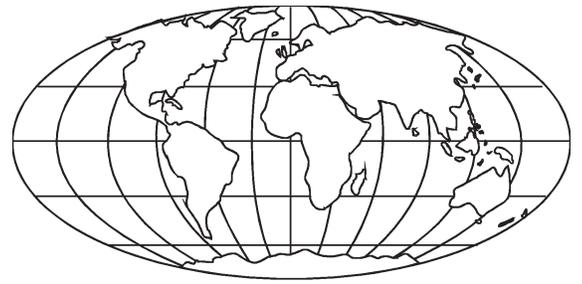


EL CHISME

de Neighbors Abroad



Volume 53, Number 5

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

September-October 2015

Family Fun Day

International Fair

Sunday, October 4, 11 am to 5 pm
Lucie Stern Community Center Courtyard
1305 Middlefield Road. Palo Alto

Games

**Face
Painting**

Storytelling

**International
Food**

**International
Fashion Show**



Crafts

Pocket Lady

**International
Store**
*(items from
around the world)*

and MORE!

Come have FUN while you help to raise funds for the children's projects of your Sister Cities: the Child-to-Child Health Program and the Children's Orphanage in Oaxaca, Mexico, and the Children's Library in Palo, Philippines.

Co-sponsored by Neighbors Abroad and the City of Palo Alto. Questions? Call 650-493-3798

Presidents' Report

June in Enschede

Having often heard the enthusiastic reports from Enschede Committee Vice President Joni Reid, Joe and I decided to make a long over-due visit to this sister city in the Netherlands. We were warmly rewarded for that decision.



Neighbors Abroad Co-presidents Joe and Barbara in the bride and groom seats in the Wedding Hall of the Enschede City Hall.

Enschede is simply a lovely town. The large auto-free downtown makes it feel very special and I might say tranquil except for the busy cyclists zooming through town and the general air of busy activity.

We were told that the name "Enschede" meant "on the edge" and referred to its proximity to Germany. It is

true that we saw German products and enjoyed our stay at the new Intercity Hotel, which has German backing but the flavor of the city is very individual and I'm sure, very Dutch.

Although we arrived during the record-breaking heat of late June, the ambience of the town with its many sidewalk cafes, made us grateful to be there instead of being in the heat and smog of a bigger city. Not that Enschede is small—its population is more than twice that of Palo Alto—but they obviously treasure the old while embracing much that is new in terms of business and



Joe and Barbara enjoying coffee at a sidewalk café with Enschede city officials Dayenne Smolders and Quirin Prenger

technology. An example of that outlook is the reverence they feel for their beautiful Art Deco city hall. I'm sure there must be auxiliary city buildings used for some of the administration, but the heart of the city is still represented by this handsome building with its windows depicting scenes from history and local industries.

Dayenne Smolders, Enschede's Senior Advisor, International Relations, and Quirin Prenger from the Mayor's staff showed us through that lovely building. They invited us to sit in the "bride and groom" seats in the handsome wedding hall. After the tour we enjoyed coffee in one the many cafés in the church square.

On a day's walk through Roombeek, the area of the city destroyed by a fireworks blast in 2000, we admired the rebuilt residential area. As we returned toward the center of town, we had the chance to visit the exhibits at the Rijksmuseum Twente. One of the most appealing to me was called "Sublime Landscapes" and was a collection of graphics from video games. The otherworldly quality of some of these paintings resembled the work of the artists from our youth who illustrated the magazine covers of *Fantasy* and similar publications

Barbara and Joe Evans

More Pictures of Enschede from Joni



Joni Reid, (center) with Dayenne Smolders (left) and Patrick Welman with his son (right), an Enschede Alderman planning to visit Palo Alto this fall.

Quirin Prenger (left), Marieke ter Brugge (center) and Dayenne Smolders (right) at the Enschede Art in the Park Festival





ENSCHEDA

Groetjes Vrienden:

This is the second installment of my trip to Enschede in summer 2015.

On the weekend of June 13th and 14th I returned to Enschede specifically

to attend the *Kunst in Het Volkspark* (Art in the Park) Festival. I thought that would be an interesting event about which to report to Neighbors Abroad.

This is the 22nd year of the festival and each year it attracts more and more people from the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium. Melina McKim and Henk de Poot graciously invited me to stay at their home for the week-end.

The festival was initiated by the *Twentsche Courant Tubantia* (the local newspaper) with the intent to showcase artists in the greater Enschede community and to utilize art in an effort to bring the common interests of the artists and the people together. From the beginning the success of the festival has met all expectations. It is estimated the average number of visitors is over 30,000 people.

Volkspark is the main park in the city of Enschede and is a beautiful and expansive park. Trees abound, walking paths meander throughout the park, ducks (mostly mallards) swim and carouse in the ponds. It is a heavily used park at all times of the year. Families unhurriedly stroll in the park. There is the constant sound of conversation and laughter.

This year 150 artists presented their works to a most admiring public. People of all ages leisurely strolled in and around the exhibits; all stopping to look and comment and many to purchase their favorite pieces of art directly from the artists. The exhibited art is eclectic—from “street art” to sculpture, painting, leather works of the most intriguing designs and colors, fine line drawings, photography—to

name a few.

Pieces by Mozart and Beethoven wafted through the air performed by the Dutch National Symphony. Local bands enlivened the crowd with live music. Food and drink were in abundance. The weather cooperated; although the sky was a bit cloudy, it did not rain.

I went to the festival with Jeroen Huijben (Jeroen stayed with me in 2001 while he completed his internship at Stanford in physics) his partner Anita and their two



The Huijben family

little girls Elena and Amy. Along the way I happily met Dave Blank who was very instrumental in initiating the festival (Dave not only heads the scientific group MESA +, he is an artist in his own right). Dave is still involved in the dynamics of the festival. He heads the jury that awards the first, second and third prizes to the selected artists.

Before I left California I had made arrangements to see Bart Bijleveld at the festival. Bart and the Fraggles Jazz Band were setting up to play for the public and we stayed to listen. It was well worth while; they are still a super jazz band. You may recall Bart and the band visited our fair city and entertained Palo Altans in 2005.

Later in the afternoon I met Dayenne Smolders, Quirin Prenger (Advisor External Relations-Gemeente Enschede) and Marieke ter Brugge (Manager of Promotions for the City of Enschede). We shared information about our respective cities and I was given a cloth bag with the

Enschede logo which included information about Enschede and an Enschede coffee mug. My morning coffee tastes great in an Enschede mug.

Enschede is a city that enjoys festivals and bringing people together. I am always impressed by the super ease that festivals in Enschede seem to arise. Enschede is a lively, innovative and interesting city.

I returned to Amsterdam that evening. It is a two hour train ride, and it was very relaxing. What a wonderful week-end I spent in Enschede.

**Tot Ziens,
Joni Reid**



Bart Bijleveld and the Fraggles Jazz Band



OAXACA

Well, summer is over and schools are in session again, so I guess it must be Fall! And fall every two years means time for another FAMILY FUN DAY INTERNATIONAL FAIR outside in the Lucie Stern Main Courtyard. This

event not only acquaints the public with Neighbors Abroad and all of its many activities but is also a fund raiser for the Children's Projects which Neighbors Abroad helps to support in our Sister Cities of Oaxaca, Mexico, and Palo Leyte, Philippines. So put SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, on your calendar NOW and plan to come both to enjoy the activities and to volunteer to help with the games for children, face painting, art projects, refreshment tables, entertainment activities and of course the FAMOUS INTERNATIONAL STORE which offers items from all around the world! All of these hundreds of items have been donated by people like you to be sold at the STORE! They are literally a true international collection of items which travelers (perhaps like you!) have brought home from trips abroad through the years, have enjoyed, and now are willing to contribute to the store so others can purchase and enjoy them.

If you have not yet had a chance to go through your "treasures", please do so as soon as possible! We are gathering all of the donations NOW so we have time to sort and arrange the collection. You may even want to help with the sorting and tagging. Or you may want to help in the store on the day of the sale. But the urgent job now is for you to look through your treasures from other countries, think about which you would like to donate for someone else to enjoy, and call or email me—650-493-3798 or marionb@sonic.net. You may bring your donations to my house or we will have someone pick them up. Donated items do not need to be from one of our Sister Cities—other countries of the world are fine too!

Just to get you started thinking while you search, here are some categories of donations we have had in the past:

Clothing, hats, shoes, for adults and children;

—costumes from other countries

Ceramics, glass and pottery

Woven goods

Artwork

Table runners, cloths, napkins

International dolls

Wood carvings

Jewelry

Books from or about other countries

—for adults and children

Recipes and cookbooks

AND LOTS MORE! This is an incomplete list...

Please contact me about your donations or to volunteer to help at the Fair. We always need lots of helpers the day of the Fair to set up, work in the booths and clean up at the end. Thanks!

¡Hasta luego!

Marion Mandell

LINKÖPING

No information from Linköping for this issue.

Bruce Wilner



Experiencing a Japanese middle school classroom complete with wearing a uniform.



Dean with his Japanese host and younger sister at at Disney Sea in Tokyo.



TSUCHIURA

Konnichiwa!

In this issue we have a report and some photos from one of the middle school students who experienced the student exchange in June.

**Arigato for your support,
Jennifer Buenrostro**



Martial arts lesson with Japanese host students.



Entire group of Palo Alto visitors wearing Yukata having a traditional Japanese dinner in at their ryokan.(inn).

My Japan Trip Experience

By Dean Casey

My trip to Japan was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. Everything from the host family, attending the school, and the cultural trips were incredible. The trip was twelve days long from June 9th to June 21st 2015.

My host Katsumura family was extremely nice and gave me a wonderful experience in Japan. The family consisted of the mother, the father, my host student, the younger sister, and the grandmother, who all took great care of me. On the host days, they took me to Disney Sea, a mall where I had delicious ramen, and watched Keisuke-kun in a judo tournament. They even welcomed my family for a nice dinner at their house.

I had a great time at #3 middle school meeting students, teachers, and the principal. I was immediately surrounded by other students who fired questions in Japanese at me rapidly. I even got to practice with the school baseball team which was very intense and fast paced. Even though my stay was short, the class made a very nice photo album that I can remember this experience by forever.

On our Tokyo tour, we went to the Tokyo Sky Tree, Asakusa and the Edo Tokyo Museum where we had an audio guide for the exhibits. We also took a full day trip to Nikko where we visited shrines and temples on a misty day.

With a fast bullet train ride, we went to Kyoto for a tour of Kingkakuji and Ryon-Ji Temples. I had my first ryokan experience where I got to take a big bath and eat traditional Japanese food. We then went to Hiroshima where we visited the Dome and the Museum based on the atomic bombing of World War II. We also dropped off the one thousand cranes we had made. We took a ferry to Miyajima where we had lunch and saw a couple of deer. Finally, we went to Himeji and walked to the castle and had a group tour.

In Tsuchiura, we had fun making soba noodles. At Kojo-an we experienced Zen Meditation and a Tea Ceremony. The final day, everyone said their goodbyes at the farewell party. It was emotional with many tears, and as we departed for Narita on the bus, some of the host students followed us for a while by running or on bike.

Everyone had a great time and an experience they will never forget. We will miss our host students and family dearly, but we will stay in touch and see them someday soon!





ALBI

Bastille Day Celebration

As mentioned in our previous article, this year we celebrated Bastille Day at Mitchell Park. This was a great success and everyone enjoyed the good food and the pleasure of being together again for this event. All were waiting for the special moment of this celebration: singing together old French Songs! And as for many years, past-Albi VP Carol Stevens, who is a chorister, helped greatly lead the singing. 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, as is the tradition, with "La Marseillaise," the French Anthem which was created during the French Revolution of 1789.

A Great Student Exchange...

Over the last couple months an opportunity arised to have a student exchange. But let me have Lee Merkle-Raymond, the American Exchange Student Mom, tell the story in her own words:

Our daughter Nikki wants to go France to study in a regular school. We searched several programs, but they were either very expensive or summer only. We know that our Duveneck neighbors have gone to Japan through Neighbors Abroad, and I asked whether the sister city in Albi, France had any exchanges. Diana Nemet connected me to Barbara Evans, who has been active in Neighbors Abroad for over 20 years. After Barbara and I met to talk about our interest, I wrote an email outlining how we'd like to do an exchange. Barbara contacted a woman in Albi who was also active in the Palo Alto — Albi relationship years ago, Agnes Mouysset. Agnes forwarded my email to a French colleague who has two daughters, one Nikki's age, who was very interested in coming to Palo Alto. Incredibly, we made a very good connection with Agnes



Hélène (left) and Nikki with the Evans

knowing just the right family on her first attempt!

Hélène arrived at the end of July for one month, and has been a delightful addition to our

family. The plan is for Hélène to attend the first 2 weeks of Palo Alto High School with Nikki, then for Nikki to go to Albi to live with Hélène's family and study at the local high school. We are still sorting out what credits Nikki will receive at Paly towards graduation, but we think it will be worth the effort and the likely required summer school.

This exchange has only been possible because of the prior years of exchanges coordinated by Carol Stevens and more recently by Michel Campmas, the Vice President of the Albi Committee for Palo Alto's Neighbors Abroad.

Thanks to Barbara and Joe Evans for hosting a barbecue for all who have been active with the Albi Neighbors Abroad program. It was a wonderful opportunity for my family, including the girls in the exchange, Nikki and Hélène, to meet the key board members of Neighbors Abroad.

How delightful!

Farewell...

It has been ten years since I took over the vice-presidency of the Albi Sister City Committee, in the footsteps of Carol Stevens who initiated this relationship back in 1994, and I have made the decision that it is time for me to retire and let some new blood drive the Albi relationship. This has been for me a long and beautiful journey packed with great events and wonderful memories.

We are currently looking for a candidate and will keep you posted.

**Au revoir,
Michel Campmas**



Having a good time (Lee, Nikki's mother, is 3rd from left)



PALO

Mabuhay!

For those who may be new to Neighbors Abroad, the city of



Palo, Leyte, Philippines is a third class municipality in the province of Leyte, Philippines. According to the 2010 census, the city has a population of 62,727 people, which is close to the size of Palo Alto, CA. Palo is located in the northeastern part of Leyte and is about 8 miles from the capital city of Tacloban.



Since Typhoon Haiyan hit the province in 2013, Palo and other surrounding areas have had a long road to recovery. Our communications with our counterparts there have been inconsistent and we have not heard from them lately.

In lieu of an update from Palo, Ruth has suggested that I (Chris Torres) tell everyone a little bit about my family. My name is Christopher Torres and both my parents immigrated to the United States from the province of Bataan, Philippines. Many of you may be familiar with Bataan, as it was well known for the "Bataan Death March" during World War II. I am the oldest of three boys and we were all born and raised in the United States. I was born in St. Louis, Missouri and we moved to California when I was about a year and a half old. Both of my brothers were born in San Jose, California.

We moved to Palo Alto from San Jose in 1990, where I went to Nixon Elementary, then on to JLS, then Jordan, and on to Paly. I graduated from Paly and went to college at UC Davis. After graduating from college, I moved back to the Bay Area and have spent time in Palo Alto and San Jose.

My parents never let us forget where they came from. They both come from small villages in the province of Bataan. My brothers and I have been fortunate to have been able to visit the villages where our parents came from. Some things I remember from their villages are that not every place has running water or full plumbing inside their house. Sometimes, villagers had to share a communal "free flow faucet," which is like an artesian well where the water flows freely 24/7. Villagers would take

their buckets there to collect water and bring them back to their houses.

Despite some of the tough living conditions many villagers endured, everyone was always kind and hospitable. When you visit the Philippines, relatives near and far come to welcome you and make you feel at home. I would imagine that even though I am not from Palo, if any one of us were to visit there, we would be well taken care of. That is one of the enduring qualities that Filipinos all over the world share. We love to get together to spend time with friends and family.

I hope that sometime in the future, a group of us from Neighbors Abroad in Palo Alto can visit our sister city in Palo, Leyte. I am certain that the people of Palo will welcome us with open arms and show us what their city has to offer. I will end this column with a phrase you can take to the Philippines one day:

"Sige na!" (*Bye for now*)
Chris Torres

Morocco Library Project

Those of us in attendance at the Neighbors Abroad Annual Meeting on August 30 heard an interesting and inspiring report from Neighbors Abroad member Barb Mackraz on the Morocco Library Project. This growing endeavor began in 2013 with a chance meeting with an educator in a the small town of Erfuod while Barb and a friend were touring in Morocco. The first library opened in April 2015, in Erfoud, and more are in the works.

The mission of this new venture is to "inspire and support English literacy and love of learning in Morocco and to build a lasting bridge of friendship and peace between East and West."



That's certainly something needed these days! Barb is a dynamo of creativity and enthusiasm. Take a look at the website: www.morocolibraries.org to find out more about this new project and how to support it.

Neighbors Abroad members have also experienced the value of providing access to books and libraries to youth in areas where such things are rare, and the long-term benefits and friendships that continue to build with our sister cities. We hope this project continues to grow and prosper.

EL CHISME

de Neighbors Abroad

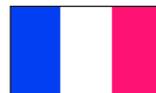


Neighbors Abroad
P. O. Box 52004
Palo Alto, CA 94303
U.S. A.

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>



Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

September 2015

Wednesday, 9th, 7:30 p.m.

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

Sunday, 27th, 2:30 p.m.

Peninsula Chapter of the World Affairs Council fall kick-off at a lovely Atherton estate with a lecture and wine/hors d'oeuvres reception. Michael Armacost, former Ambassador to Japan and the Philippines, and President of Brookings Institution, will speak on "Asia and the United States: Geopolitical, Economic and Security Challenges". Registration: 2:30 pm; Program: 3:00 pm; Reception: 4:30 pm. Members: \$10; Students: \$5; Nonmembers: \$15. Please make reservations by Thursday, Sept. 24 by visiting worldaffairs.org or calling (415) 293-4600. Site: 75 Tuscaloosa Ave., Atherton.

October 2015

Sunday, 4th, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Family Fun Day and International Fair. Lucie Stern Community Center Courtyard, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. See cover for details.

Friday, 9th, 7:30 p.m.

The Cathedral Choir of Stavanger, Norway will be performing on Friday, October 9 at 7:30 pm at Grace Lutheran Church, 3149 Waverley Street in Palo Alto, as part of their U.S tour. Admission by free will offering. Stavanger Cathedral (Lutheran) is the seat of the Norwegian State Church Diocese of Stavanger and is Scandinavia's oldest cathedral, in continuous use since the 12th century. Grace Lutheran is also looking for bed and breakfast in local homes for singers on Oct. 9. Contact Mary Ashley 650-494-1829 meashley@pacbell.net or Tim Getz at Grace Lutheran Church 650-494-1212 tim@gracepa.org. if you need more information.

Wednesday, 14th, 7:30 p.m.

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

Next El Chisme Deadline—October 15, 2015

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