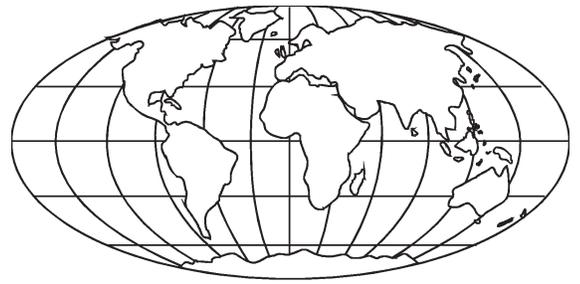


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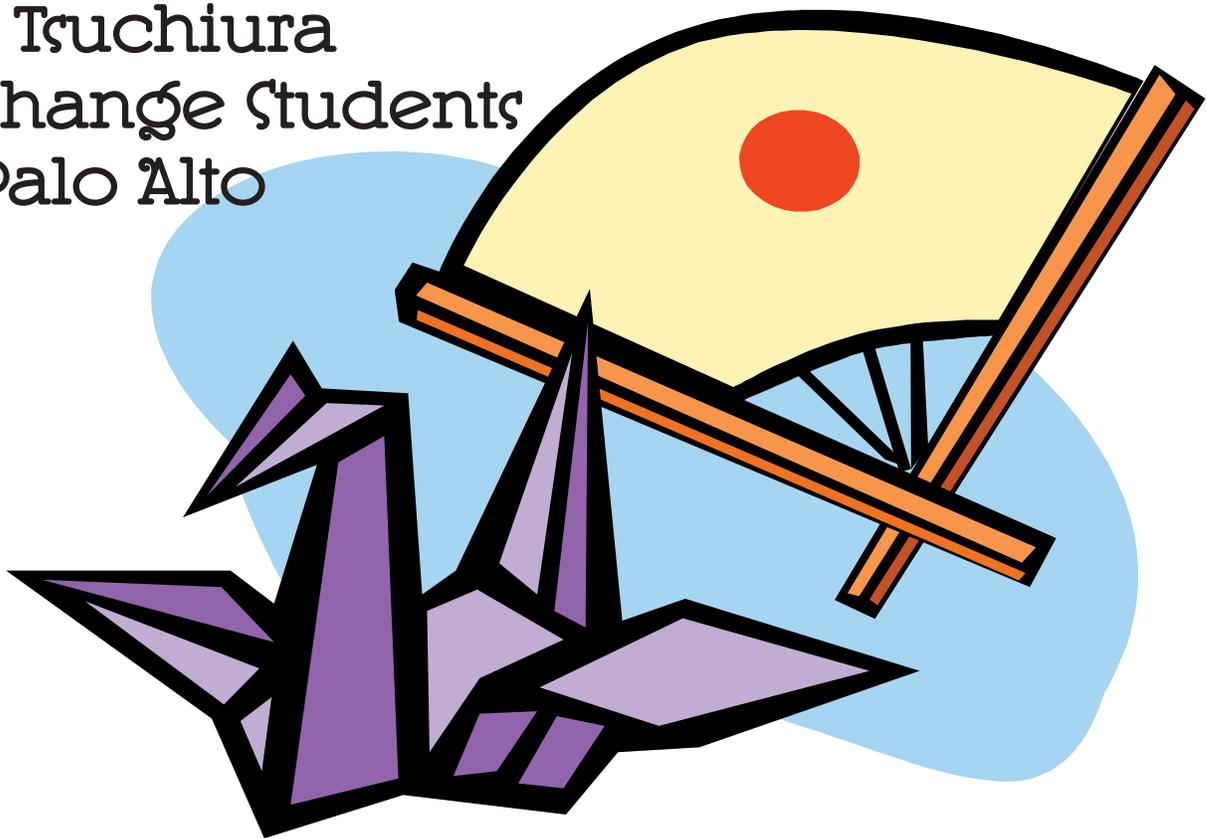


Volume 49, Number 2

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

March-April 2011

Help Welcome
the
2011 Truchiura
Exchange Students
to Palo Alto



Saturday, March 12, 4 to 6 pm.
JLS Cafetorium
480 East Meadow Drive
Palo Alto

Come meet the sixteen 2011 exchange students from our sister city of Truchiura and join in the festivities. Attendees are asked to bring a dish of their choice for the potluck dinner.

Presidents' Report

On Friday, February 4, Heidi and Martin Berndt did their usual fantastic job in arranging the Winter Potluck. They set up tables and chairs and decorated the Art Center auditorium to transform it into eating space for 48 Neighbors Abroad members and guests. Mary and Roger Ashley helped on the setup process as did Keiko Nakajima. Betty Gerard worked at the name tag table, trying to see that no one escaped without being properly "tagged".

After we had gone several times around the serving tables to make sure we sampled all the great food it was time for music. A group of India-born Palo Alto residents entertained us with a program of Bengali folk music. The themes were diverse, some based on Hindu mythology and the stories of the lascivious actions of the God Krishna, others reflecting the songs of the Muslim boatmen in the Ganges delta or telling of young people's nostalgia when far away from their Calcutta home. Yet another, written by the renowned Indian poet,



Left to right: Musicians Nikhil Ghosh, Brinda Govindan, Ritu Das and Bhaskar Ghosh entertain with Bengali music.

Rhabindranath Tagore, was based on a Robert Burns tune that he heard during his stay in Scotland.



After the concert a number of audience members had a chance to talk further with the musicians. Some of us were surprised to hear that they did not know about Neighbors Abroad being Palo Alto's sister-city organization. It seems to us that this is a strong indication of our need for outreach, especially to all young families in our neighborhoods. Whether we do this on an individual basis or devise some community-wide publicity, we should make this a priority. Not only the future of the exchange programs, but the very existence of Neighbors Abroad as an active concern in the years ahead depends on continuing to broaden our base of support within the community.

Barbara and Joe Evans

Below: Our 2009 Visitors from Albi.



ALBI

Cyclist and non-Cyclist Trip to the Albi Region

It is my pleasure to announce that the decision has been made: We will have an Adult Exchange with a group of bikers and non-bikers going to France in September of this year. Robert Bousquet, the leader of the cyclist group who came to visit us in 2009 has invited us to come and visit their beautiful Tarn region. Barbara Eandi will lead the Western Wheeler cyclists and I will coordinate the group of non-cyclists. The idea is to accomplish something similar to what we did in 2009 and proved extremely successful: we will put together an itinerary where there would be bicycle trips for the bikers and visits for the non-bikers with



From left to right, trip leaders Barbara Eandi, Robert and Carmen Bousquet

common meeting points at the end of the day to enjoy the evening all together. Of course, some days would be dedicated to visits or stay in host families for the whole group. All the details, including the exact dates of the trip still need to be nailed down. The only thing we have already planned to do is to go visit the world famous prehistoric caves of Lascaux, a journey way back in time.

When you read this article, the first preparation meeting should already have taken place and more information will be available soon. All the Neighbors Abroad members who helped organize the 2009 exchange, hosted our visitors and participated in the tour will have priority in joining the group. There will be a limited number of opening to all Neighbors

Abroad members. So, if you are interested please let me know by email (michel@dmctrans.com) or phone (650-856-2214) as soon as possible. Some of our guests in 2009 only knew a few words of English: still they tremendously enjoyed their stay as there were always enough people around to give a friendly hand to bridge the language barrier. Therefore it is not necessary to speak French to participate; the only thing required is a genuine sharing of Neighbors Abroad core values which are to promote friendship and openness to other cultures.

Student Exchange with Albi

Jean-Pierre Remazeilhes, our Neighbors Abroad main contact in Albi, indicated

to us that there is a young student named Ayliss Gillet who would be delighted to find a brother or sister in Palo Alto interested for an exchange this summer. Her family is ready to welcome and host a student in July and Ayliss would like to come to the US in August. Ayliss is 17 years old and you can see her picture next to this article. If you know a family who would be interested in having their son or daughter goes to Albi and host Ayliss here in the US, please let me know as soon as possible at the email address or phone number indicated earlier in this article. I will be able to provide more details and help coordinate the exchange.



Potential exchange student Ayliss Gillet

**À bientôt,
Michel Campmas**



French and American Cyclists in 2009

ENSCHEDÉ



Sorry to say there is no news from Enschede to print in this El Chisme. I do have some photos of the weather in December in Enschede. There are photos of the weather because of the amount of snow Enschede received at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011. Below at left is one taken by Gertjan Koster—the Old Market Square in Enschede, and the one on the right is taken by Gerwin Hassink of a field covered with snow with the old University of Twente physics building in the background.

I went to the annual Gunn High School Summer Opportunities Program at Gunn High School on January 26th. Over 300 parents and students were present. I was given the opportunity of speaking about the Neighbors Abroad Summer Student Exchange program. All the flyers I made were taken and about 10 parents and students came over to me at the end of the evening came to the table to talk to me about the program.

As a reminder to the aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends of teen-agers 15 to 18 years old, the Neighbors Abroad Summer Student exchange Program is unique and highly worthwhile. It is also very inexpensive compared to the programs that are commonly advertised.

Please see the interesting article on page 7 that will give you a sense of how and when the Dutch work. It is reprinted from *New York Times/Expatica/The Record.com*

Tot ziens,
Joni Reid

LINKÖPING



The main item for this report is what might have been. We had been in correspondence with a brass band in Linköping which calls itself Filadelfia Brass. Last year they had planned a tour along the US West Coast, but had to cancel. This year they revived the plan, and were to be “here” (their schedule said San Francisco) the weekend of Easter. Ever hopeful, I reserved a space for our Linköping Day event for April 23 (Holy Saturday.) Now, alas, they cannot fit all the pieces together, and there will be no tour. So we are left with a place and time for Linköping Day, but no program. Now we must scramble for music and speaker.

What might have been was very good. They sent me their CD, and they make a marvelous sound. The downside would have been finding overnight accommodations for 32 travelers. I would have needed to ask all of you to forego visiting Jackie in Cleveland for Easter, so that you might stay here to host the band. And, though the performance would come at no charge, you would have been expected to buy your own copy of the CD.

Other than the aborted brass-band tour, we have heard very little from our Linköping colleagues. We got a photo of snow a month back, when they had lots of it, but recently even the weather is unremarkable: partly cloudy, temperatures just above and just below freezing, suggesting icy streets in the morning. I did brag about our sunny January, but I didn't rub it in.

Bruce Wilner



TSUCHIURA



Konnichiwa!!

Sixteen Japanese students and three chaperones are going to visit Palo Alto from March 12 through March 20. These students are going to home stay with ten JLS Japanese Language class students and six Jordan students and their families. I am so grateful for the generosity and hospitality of these host families. We are going to throw our warmest welcoming party yet at the JLS Cafetorium on March 12, at 4:00-6:00! Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend. Please bring food. It's a potluck party. If you have any questions, email me at tymm4@yahoo.com.

I am also very happy to announce that Tim Wong, a Palo Alto resident, is going to participate in the annual "Kasumigaura International Marathon" on April 17, 2011 in Tsuchiura. Tim is an avid runner. Read a little about him below. Please join with me to wish him the very best luck. Go Tim!!

Arigato,
Keiko Nakajima

Knight Journalism Fellow Elizabeth Duff-Brown will be speaking to the Palo Alto AAUW on Saturday, March 5 at the First Baptist Church, 305 N. California.

Ms. Duff-Brown is Deputy Editor for Southeast Asian Issues for the Associated Press. Non-AAUW-members are cordially invited to come at 12:45 to hear Ms. Duff-Brown and enjoy desserts afterward. This is a free event with no registration needed unless you plan to bring a large group. In that case please call me, Barbara Evans, at 650-856-0618 to ensure sufficient seating.

Tim Wong to represent Palo Alto in Tsuchiura Marathon

Timothy Wong will represent Palo Alto in the April 17 Kasumigaura Marathon in Tsuchiura City, Japan. Originally from New York, Tim has worked in banking and finance in London and Hong Kong. He and his family are new neighbors in Palo Alto, having moved here from Hong Kong in 2010. They have a son and daughter in Jordan Middle School.

Tim only started running about six years ago, but loves the sport and has run marathons in Hong Kong, Beijing, Singapore and most recently in California. He says that he is also a tennis player and is now training for a future triathlon by adding swimming and cycling to his workout routine. He says that Palo Alto "is a great place to exercise body and mind". We hope he has a great time in Tsuchiura, in both senses of the word!



OAXACA



By now you should have all received your copy of the letter and brochure about the June 14 - 25 Oaxaca trip, which includes a reservation form and requests a deposit be sent in to hold your place. It has shaped up to be a terrific visit with some old and some new places to see. If you have questions please call or email me (650) 493-3798 or marionb@sonic.net. Remember that we are always happy to have children and grandchildren along, they're part of the fun. Oh, and by the way, remember the youth band that had hoped to visit Palo Alto last fall but were not granted their visas? Well, we'll meet them in THEIR town, when we go to visit San Martín Tilcajete, the wood-carving village where they live, and will get a chance to hear them play and have lunch together. Please send in your trip reservations ASAP so we can tell the hotel a more exact number of rooms needed. Thanks!

Almost the same time that our group is in Oaxaca there will be a group of students from Lauren Cory's Social Studies class at Gunn High School going to work on service projects in Oaxaca, about half of them volunteering at the orphanage and the other half working with Niño-a-niño. They are all very excited about their trip and are busy making plans. Their dates are June 13 - 23. We'll no doubt see them around town while we're all there, and we're also looking forward to having them tell Neighbors Abroad about their experiences when we all get back.

For those of you who like to put things on your calendar in advance, this Fall will be another Family Fun Day International Fair that we hold every two years. This year it will be Sunday, October 2, at the Lucie Stern main courtyard, as usual. Along with many activities, we will again have the famous International Store, with items from all around the world, all donated by YOU! So start looking through your treasures to see what you would like to give us for someone new to enjoy! Also, mark the date so you can volunteer to help at the event—lots of different kinds of help are needed. Thanks!

¡Hasta Luego!
Marion

PALO



Mabuhay! Concert

By the time you receive this message we will have enjoyed an amazing concert by Carmencita Aspiras, pianist, playing Brahms and Chopin. Once again Nancy Hardesty and John Parker opened their lovely home for what came to be a truly "salon" experience—one that we rarely have an opportunity enjoy. We heartily thank our generous sponsors, Stanley Jacobs who created the program, and those who provided delicious desserts. The Children's Library of Palo benefits from this outstanding event.

A Bridge near Palo

Our beloved Pabbles Dolina wrote to us about a motor trip around half of the island of Leyte. This trip featured a stop at the newly constructed bridge "Agas-Agus" designed by a Japanese architect. This bridge, about 110 kilometers south east of Palo, connects two mountains and is the highest bridge in the Visayas region. Pabbles says "Boulders below the size of army jeeps look like pebbles. The virgin forest around both mountains is a sight to see!"

A Reminder

Along with the recent weeks' tumultuous events in Egypt, news commentators have reminded us of the events surrounding the downfall of Ferdinand Marcos after twenty years of rule in the Philippines from 1966 to 1986. Known for the probable murder of a political rival and an iron-fisted rule, Marcos fought in WWII at the Battle of Bataan and was subsequently imprisoned in Luzon.

When he became president in 1965 he quickly declared martial law aimed at protests by students, re-emergence of the Philippine Communist Party and the separatist movement in the south. Civil liberties were suspended. Deeply implicated in the assassination of Benigno Aquino in 1983, Marcos continued his rule until Aug. 13, 1985 when 50 members of Parliament called for his impeachment for graft, corruption and other high crimes. Following a hotly contested election Corazon Aquino was declared winner. Marcos and his family went into exile in Hawaii.

Shorter work week alters rhythm of Dutch life

"Working four days a week is now the rule rather than the exception among my friends," said a Dutch lawyer who began taking a "daddy day" in 2006.

Within a year, all the other male lawyers with young children followed suit. On average, men still increase their hours when they have children. But with one in three Dutch men now either working part time or squeezing a full-time job into four days, the "Papa dag," or "Daddy day," has become part of the country's language. Nearly a quarter of Dutch men have reduced hours, compared with 10 per cent across the European Union and in the United States.

For reasons that blend tradition and modernity, three in four working Dutch women already work part time. Female-dominated sectors like health and education operate almost entirely on job-sharing; even childless women and mothers of grown children trade income for time off. That has exacted an enduring price on women's financial independence.

But at the same time, in just a few years, the four-day workweek here has ceased being a woman's prerogative and become a powerful tool to attract and retain talent — male and female — in a competitive Dutch labour market.

The Dutch culture of part-time work offers a peek at challenges — and potential solutions — facing nations with aging workforces and skills shortages.

"The next generation is already doing it," she said, pointing to a growing trend toward more

In 1984 Ronald Reagan who had been a close personal ally of Marcos began to distance himself from the Marcos regime which previous American presidents had favored even after the declaration of martial law. Previously Pres. Carter had condemned the Philippines for human rights violations during Marcos' time in power. Under pressure from his former allies, Marcos called for the afore-mentioned election which was won by Corazon Aquino. The "People Power" movement was heartily endorsed by the American people.

Mabuhay!

Ruth Carleton

flexible work practices. "They are turning our part-time culture from a weakness into strength."

The first part-time jobs for married women came with early labour shortages in the 1950s. But it was not until 1996 that the government gave part-time employees equal status with full-timers; in 2000 came the statutory right for all workers to determine the number of hours they work. An employer can object, but must demonstrate serious obstacles. Requests are rarely declined, at least overtly.

The head of talent recruitment at the largest Dutch insurance company breakfasts and dines with his family and plays soccer on Wednesday afternoons. He still works a 40-hour week.

At his 19-story office building, employees have smart phones, laptops and lockers, but no designated desks. The seven work spaces for every 10 staff workers will drop to six next year.

Aspects of this "new world of work" concept have been exported to other Microsoft offices, including Norway, France and Australia, but the flexibility remains broadest in the Netherlands. Ninety-five per cent of Dutch Microsoft employees work from home at least one day a week; a full quarter do so four out of five days. Online communication and conference calls save time, gas and paper.

Seventy-five per cent of Dutch women who work are part-timers 23 per cent in the United States, according to the Netherlands Institute for Social Research.

Of the 85 specialists at the Ziekenhuis Amstelland Jewish Hospital south of Amsterdam, 31 are female and two-thirds work part time. Some surgeons even train part time, meaning a daily struggle to unify treatment of patients by several doctors.

"This would have been unthinkable even 10 years ago," said the hospital's chair. "But if we insisted on full-time surgeons, we would have a personnel problem: Three in four of our junior doctors are female."

New York Times/Expatica/The Record.com 12/2010



Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

March 2011

Friday, 4th, 7:00 p.m.

Piano recital by Carmencita Aspiras. Fundraiser for Palo Library. Hardesty-Parker Home. 69 Santiago, Atherton. \$25.00. Call Ruth Carleton for reservations. 650-326-8885.

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

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto.

Wednesday, 16th, 7:30 p.m.

World Affairs Council Program entitled "Women's Rights and Leadership across the Asia-Pacific Region" with Anasuya Sengupta, Regional Director for Asia/Oceania, Global Fund for

Women. Site: Los Altos Youth Center, One South San Antonio Rd., Los Altos. Refreshments: 7:00 pm; Program: 7:30 - 9:00 pm. Free Admission. For info., call Carol Stevens, (650) 494-0757.

April 2011

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

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto.

Next El Chisme Deadline—April 1, 2011

- 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 |