

HAPPY NEW YEAR

January-February 2016  
Volume 139

新年快樂

新年あけましておめでとうございます

ŠŤASTNÝ NOVÝ ROK

LAIMĪGU JAUNO GADU



### Lunar New Year 2016-Year of the Monkey *Bad Luck year for Moneys??*

According to Chinese astrology, people in their zodiac year are believed to offend Tai Sui, the God of Age, and incur his curse. It is believed to bring nothing but bad luck.

Tai Sui roughly corresponds to Jupiter, which takes 11.86 years to orbit earth, but is an imaginary star that changes position exactly 30 degrees of direction each year orbiting Earth every 12 years exactly.

So - how does one fend off bad luck? The best way is by wearing something red - red is one of the luckiest colors in Chinese culture, standing for prosperity, loyalty, success, and happiness - it can drive away bad luck and evil spirits. But - whatever red you wear it has to be bought for you by your spouse, family member or friend. Wearing jade accessories will also help.

It is also believed that good luck may be brought by adjusting the direction of beds, seats, desks, where you live and work to face away from Tai Sui - which in the year of the Monkey means facing Southwest.

So - if you were born in the year of the Monkey - those of you turning 12, 24, 36, 48. etc... this Lunar Year - be on your best behavior!



### SAVE THE DATE

Annual Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, March 8, 2016 - Bellevue City Hall 7:30 p.m.

### BSCA MISSION STATEMENT

The Bellevue Sister Cities Association (BSCA) is a non-profit organization of citizen diplomats dedicated to fostering understanding, appreciation, and peaceful coexistence among the peoples of our world. BSCA works toward this aim by creating and maintaining people-to-people relationships in an effort to promote cooperation, cultural understanding, humanitarian aid, and economic development at the local level.

President—Gregg Schrader Secretary—Pamela Alspaugh Newsletter Editor—Inta Gotelli  
Check Facebook or our website for updates! <http://www.bellevuesistercities.org/>

YAO, JAPAN

HUALIEN, TAIWAN

LIEPAJA, LATVIA

KLADNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

## From your Editor...

Happy New Year! But for BSCA the fiscal year still has a couple of months to go... it will start March 1st, and as usual, our annual membership meeting will be on the second Tuesday in March - March 8th this year. More information on our finances and overview of the year in our next newsletter.

We will sorely miss two members - both Dorothy Webb and Billie Franklin were part of the core membership during the busiest years for BSCA. While age and health issues slowed their active participation, they still attended our main events - both of them present at our July Picnic just this past summer.

Again this year, our Holiday Luncheon was well attended, the venue friendly and festive. (see back page) The basket raffle raised \$160, and we thank those who added a donation to keep our student exchange funded - the Rogainis, Kusumis, Davidsons. And thank you as well to all those who have previously added a donation along with your annual dues. Without a major fundraiser on the horizon - these donations help.

For a few years now, we have looked for alternatives to a membership meeting in January - too often the weather has not cooperated... In the past we planned a museum visit, participating in other local events - usually with an emphasis on the Lunar New Year celebrations. There are several fun events to attend this month and next - but we could not get a consensus for a 'BSCA' event - so it is up to each of you - look for some of the events in Chinatown and the Luke Wing museum.

The deadline for our Summer Student Exchange is February 20th - updated applications are available on our website. Information is also available on our Facebook page - so please share it with people who might have high school students who might be interested in participating.

## Changes at City Hall

First, congratulations to Claudia Balducci and best wishes as she takes on the responsibilities of her new position on the King County Council. We thank Claudia for her past support - we enjoyed having her and her husband, along with the Deggingers, lead the BSCA delegation visit to Liepaja and Kladno back in 2005.

The City Council at their first January meeting elected John Stokes as Mayor and John Chelminiak as Deputy Mayor to serve for the next two years. Claudia's position will be filled by Dr. Vandana Slatter, community leader and bio-tech and health professional. She was sworn in, along with three returning council members, on Monday night. We look forward to meeting her and filling her in on BSCA activities.

## Fundraising Ideas Anyone???

The mail during the last month of the year seems to be a flurry of requests for money - write that check to get your tax deduction... (assuming you do file a Sch A)... and no, you did not get one from BSCA - other than along with your Holiday Luncheon invitation... but that does not mean that we are not in dire need of additional funds.

Since our last dinner auction back in 2006 we have managed to fund our student exchanges from our dwindling funds and the donations we get from you and sadly, much of these have come as memorial donations for past members. Over the past 10 years - and including the dinner auction (netted \$11,350) the total from 'fundraising' efforts such as the recent basket raffle netted \$14,980. Over the same period the total in donations, and yes, much of it memorial donations, was \$11,345 - enough to keep us going... but not something we want to depend on. We need a real fundraiser soon!

### **BSCA Summer Student Exchange Applications for Summer 2016 - Deadline Approaching!**

With February 20th looming in the horizon, it is time to submit the application to participate in this unique program. Our exchange is a two part program: we match each selected student with a student selected by our Sister City counterparts, The two students spend much of the summer together - half here and half in the Sister City. It also has become very much a family centered program as it involves the whole family.

Since it's inception in 1977 - the first exchange with Yao - 114 high school students have had the opportunity of spending part of their summer in one of our Sister Cities, and an equal number of students from our Sister Cities have visited here.

Applications are available on our website [www.bellevuesistercities.org](http://www.bellevuesistercities.org).

## Vira Willetta Franklin - 1924-2015

### *Billie - We will miss you!*

Back in 1952 Billie decided that the Eastside needed its own travel agency - and thus the beginning of Overlake Travel, the travel agency she owned and worked at until retiring in 2000. No surprise then that when BSCA looked at organizing their first delegation visits to Japan, it was Billie who, not only took charge of planning but also, along with husband Wib, became one of the early BSCA members - and someone who could always be relied on to help.

Even as age and health issues made it difficult for them to participate in all BSCA events, both Billie and Wib still made it to the Yao meetings and to picnics and Holiday parties.

Probably **Florence Metcalf** was closest to Billie of all BSCA members - she writes: It was during the last few months before Billie died that I really got to intimately know her. We laughed over childhood memories - hers on a Midwest farm and mine in the Orient. I think husband Wib was the one who looked forward most to my visits because it meant a BIG bowl of chocolate ice cream would shortly appear...



I know she loved her many Bellevue Sister City friends. She had traveled all over the world with them on delegation visits. She never missed a Yao meeting at Hugh Burleson's home or later at mine. You could always depend on Billie - she would usually arrive with a cake or pie in her hand!! It was useless to say "Please don't bring anything" She was always a great help at picnics and dinners - arriving early and staying until the last person was ready to leave and the last bag of garbage was disposed of in the proper container!

A year ago Billie was still walking three miles a day, up and down the hills around Tam O Shanter. She looked so healthy full of vim and vigor and almost daily visiting her church friends especially those in retirement homes. She was always helping others...VISITING, BAKING.

Then one day she mentioned a severe back pain....and suddenly problems from past reappeared. All too soon they recognized the time had come when additional care was needed. All too soon they had moved to the Woodinville Creekside Center, where daily assistance could be received as needed. I enjoyed two lunches with them in the dining room.... *Then the phone call I will never forget!!*

Now I enjoy Billie Franklins beautiful "peacock" green" Chinese rug. I look at every day in my living room, think of my dear friend throughout the day and treasure our brief friendship.

My New Years message... Cherish the love and happy memories you have of this life, especially of family and friends. Many memories can be remembered.....but not relived. Yes, mine are slowly slipping away!! *Florence Metcalf*



**Zaiga Phillips** shares: I could not believe when I heard that Billie Franklin had passed away. I had just seen her at the BSCA summer picnic stylish as ever, wearing heels, always greeting and smiling, well organized and busily participating in setting out and organizing the food tables. We did exchange comments about her age and how wonderful she looked. I was looking forward in seeing her at our annual Christmas Party.....

Billie was an inspiration with her smile, positivity, ease to talk to and helpfulness. Never complaining. She was the BSCA and my personal travel agent. She organized a memorable BSCA member trip in 1992 through eastern Europe that included Warsaw, Berlin and Prague. The ultimate goal was the visit to the potential future sister cities Kladno and Liepaja. Many more well organized trips followed until Billie retired from Overlake Travel. She and Wib continued to be supportive and welcoming to the exchange students as well as participating in the BSCA events. She is so very much missed .

## Holiday Luncheon 2015



As has been our tradition for longer than any of us remember - our best attended event is our Holiday gathering... Holiday Luncheon for the past several years. Again this year we opted for the friendly atmosphere of the Clubhouse at Tam o'Shanter Golf Club - and again thank Justin and his crew for helping make it a pleasant event.

As people gathered and visited, again this year Florence's daughter Laura treated us to some Christmas music - thank you.

We were pleased to have among us Barbara and Frank Sanchez. Barbara had been the official WA liaison with SCI for several years - she has been looking for someone to replace her - but so far she continues unofficially in that position... some of us know all too well how that goes..

Again this year we raffled off three Christmas baskets - and we were glad to see that Barbara was one of the lucky ones to take one of them home.



## Liepaja Committee - Fanija Matiss Music Scholarships

The memorial donations for Fanija Matiss, who was originally from Liepaja, are to be used to provide talented music students opportunities to attend musical performances - and what best for the first of these to be given to 10 Liepaja students to attend the opening concerts at the new Liepaja concert hall 'Liepais Dzintars' (Great Amber).



Fanijas daughter, Vita Matiss, in conjunction with music faculty at the music high school and also at the High School #1 (where Fanija graduated so many years ago) were asked to write essays telling why Liepaja is to become a center for music in Latvia and why attending the opening concert is such an amazing opportunity. Vita was so impressed with the essays that she doubled the original number of students to be selected - and ten of them joined Vita.

Behind Vita is Helvijs Valcis, the director of the Liepajas 1. gimnazija and also a Liepaja City Council member, to the far left is the composer Eriks Esenvalds, who is one of Latvia's most well known composers today and whose composition

was on the program of the opening concert and also a graduate of the Liepajas 1. gimnazija,