

March-April 2011

Volume 111



## Annual Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 8, 2011  
Bellevue City Hall 7:30 p.m.

Taiwan's Recent Developments and its International Participations  
Director General Daniel Liao, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle  
*Rescheduled from our January meeting*



*We appreciate the willingness of Director General Liao to reschedule his talk to us. This year, as too often in the past, January weather led to canceling our meeting—too many of our members already are loath to drive after dark and with the weather predicting a snow storm on the way... we played it safe.*

Director General Daniel Liao's experience over 30 years has taken him to many parts of the world in various capacities representing the government of Taiwan, and we are pleased to have him update us on the present issues facing the Taiwanese government and its people. The global economic crisis has meant for Taiwan, as for most countries, a rethinking of how it develops its economy as also how this relates to its economic relations with the United States and mainland China. He will focus on Taiwan's recent trade agreement with mainland China, as well as the upcoming trade talks between Taiwan and the United States and Taiwan's government procurement opportunities for American companies. He will also fill us in on Taiwan's participation in the international organizations such as International Civil Aviation Organization as well as touch on the many cultural events that are provided by the Chinese Cultural Center in Seattle.

***Also remember that this is your annual meeting and we will have a bit of business to conduct prior to this talk. Please see the enclosed financial reports.***

***Note: There is a Transportation Department "East Link Public Meeting" on this date 5:00-7:00 p.m. at City Hall so those of you arriving early might need to circle to find parking or park nearby.***

### 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—Hugh Burleson    Secretary—Gary Winchester    Newsletter Editor—Inta Gotelli

## President's Message

The season is under way! Messages are flying back and forth to develop plans for –

A March visit of debate students from Osaka

This summer's student exchanges

BSCA delegation to our European sister cities

This year's BSCA fund-raiser

And more new activities appear on our radar screen (iPhone screen?) all the time.

Amid all this, I wonder about the lack of activity and participation by so many of our members. Are you satisfied simply to pay your dues once a year, and then go on with other things? You know you have the talent and knowledge to contribute much more.

So, this is an urgent call, first, to the committee chairs to schedule regular meetings of those signed up as interested in Kladno, or Hualien or Liepaja. Our oldest committee—the Yao committee—historically the first among our four sister-city committees also has some of the oldest members in age, and some of the youngest. It keeps going with monthly meetings that, if nothing else, keep its members informed on what BSCA is doing. By meeting regularly, the Yao committee also builds esprit and social cohesion and commitment to the whole organization. We meet in the chairperson's home and always end with a social hour and snacks. Good idea for your committee, too?

So long as I am president, I promise to assist this activation process by attending as many of your meetings as possible and helping to build this sense of involvement. How about phoning other members to get such activity going in your committee, too? This is what all-volunteer non-profits do to remain viable. Spring is just around the corner. Let's spring into action!

## From Your Treasurer

March 1st marks the beginning of our next fiscal year and soon you'll be receiving membership renewal forms. Besides promptly sending in your dues, do also encourage friends who might be interested in our activities to join.

Included with this newsletter is the financial statement for this past year and the proposed budget for the coming year as approved by the board. Please go over these so that we can further discuss them prior to approving them at the annual membership meeting on March 8th or send me an e-mail me with any questions prior to the meeting at [intabg@comcast.net](mailto:intabg@comcast.net)

## Our New Faces at City Hall

We look forward to working with **Susan Barber** as our new liaison with City Hall. While BSCA is a new responsibility for her, as Senior Administrative Assistant for the Department of Economic Development, she has many years of working with international visitors. She is the one that handles all of office management, conference space and seminar scheduling, special events planning, and communication needs for the department. Part of her job is organizing both large and small events including meetings and receptions with foreign embassy and business leaders. Susan first joined the City of Bellevue staff in 2006 to work on the *Transforming Local Government* conference. And working in the international sphere was not new to Susan – during her many years as an upper manager for Nordstrom stores she not only traveled all over the US but also internationally.



**NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2011**

## Newport Debate Club to Host Yao Students

We are pleased that the debate team at Newport High School and their coach, John Julian, will be hosting the three students from Yao—the winners of the Yao Lions Club English debate contest. The three students, Chen Yenan, Misato Takamiya, Iori Kimura will be staying with families of the debate team members, and will join them for the club activities during their stay in Bellevue. Mr. Julian has also arranged for them to shadow their host student at school for one day.

A debate including the Yao students is planned, the format to be finalized once the students arrive. The present proposal is 2 student teams with a Yao student on each one—and the topic suggested by Yao is "Is school uniform needed?" - and idea that will be interesting to see developed once the Yao students see what passes for school attire in our schools these days.

The students will be here from March 22—April 2 and the above mentioned debate is scheduled for Friday, March 25th with a party to follow.

## In Memoriam Vilis M Barevics

It was 1992 when a delegation from Bellevue headed to visit our about to be new Sister City, Liepaja in Latvia. Among the 20 delegates were the then City Manager, Phil Kushlan and Terry Lukens representing the City of Bellevue and three BSCA members of Latvian background – Zaiga Phillips, Imants Bitners and Vilis Barevics. This was the first of many visits Vilis was to pay to Liepaja over the next many years, some as a member of a



visiting delegation, more often making Liepaja one of his stops during his annual visits to Latvia. Vilis was always willing to help out with translating for visiting exchange staff or other visitors from Liepaja. He enjoyed spending time with our summer

exchange students and our visiting teachers. Often his trips to Liepaja included meeting these new acquaintances, and lunch with some of our past summer exchange students was always a treat for him.

Even before he retired from Boeing in 1999 he found time for Liepaja committee activities. He was serving as chair of the Liepaja committee when in 2000 Max Clark, then BSCA president, moved to Boise, and was asked to take over for Max. Vilis served as president until 2004. Along with Pat Hale he attended the 2002 SCI Conference and

was pleased to be the one to receive the award for Innovation in Education presented to the Liepaja Committee's project with the Liepaja Special School. During his tenure Bellevue celebrated its 50 year incorporation and BSCA was there to help

host visiting Sister City representatives. And in 2003 Vilis, along with then Mayor Connie Marshall led our delegation to Hualien and Yao.



But his major contribution to BSCA was overseeing the implementation of the new bylaws restructuring BSCA into our present committee groupings, and our present financial structure which allows each committee

discretion over their funds. His continued financial guidance throughout the years was much appreciated. We will miss him!



## Remembering our Past Members

Over the years we have much appreciated that the families of our past members have requested memorial contributions to be sent to BSCA. Some of these contributions have been earmarked for a specific committee or even for a specified purpose. One such is the \$8,000 plus received in memory of Ann Knofel to be used for the Liepaja Special School, funds which will help pay for an outdoor playground for the school.

Over the past ten years other memorial funds to committees amount to over \$2,800, and contributions to the general fund to almost \$5,000. We have kept a record of these funds, and several times have discussed some way of using them to best to commemorate our past members.

We are saddened by the death of one more person important to **BSCA-Vija Rekevics**, owner of OPUS 204, passed away on February 2nd. An overflowing crowd attended the memorial service held at the Latvian Center on the 25th – a tribute to her one-of-a-kind persona.

Some ideas have been put forward – one we have been following up on is some way of indicating that Bellevue does have four Sister Cities in the Concourse at City Hall. There are now 4 display cases in the hallway to the City Manger's offices on the second floor – but few of the general public actually go up there. How else might we use these funds to make BSCA more visible to Bellevue citizens? Or record the past history of BSCA and the contributions of so many?

## Our new Kladno Chair—Heidi Ressler



Heidi's first introduction to BSCA was back in 2006 when a student at Interlake School and family participated in our summer exchange with Yao. The following year her daughter, Loren, was selected for the Kladno exchange and the family spent a month learning about the Czech Republic from the Kladno student, David. Then followed the month Lauren spent with David and his family in Kladno including a bus trip with David's mother to Paris - a highlight for Lauren! Heidi's memory of Lauren's return was her increased confidence and improved Spanish, as David's mother could only speak Czech, German or Spanish.

Lauren has moved on to college and continued her international explorations with a 4-month study abroad in 2009 to Ecuador. (see picture) Heidi joined her for 10 days at the end of term to meet her host family and explore the country. Lauren graduates this year from Seattle U with degree in Environmental Studies. She has maintained her friendship with David and other Czech students she met in 2007 via Facebook.

Heidi is ready to become an active member of BSCA having completed a 2-year term with City of Bellevue's Network on Aging. She is taking a break from Bellevue Schools PTA activities which included chairing "Reflections" artistic program at Highland M.S & Interlake H.S. , as well as Scholarship co-chair at Interlake H.S., following as Bellevue District co-chair in 2010. Heidi maintains close ties to Interlake H.S., the only Bellevue school to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum and was actively involved in the parent group from 2003-2007 during a period the district was considering discontinuing the program. On a daily basis Heidi works in personal insurance (home/auto) in Bellevue and enjoys the fact her commute to work is about 4 miles. Her husband, Brendon, works in Seattle and son, Quinn, attends Bellevue College.

### Delegation Visit—September

Finally things are falling into place and looks like our delegation trip to our European sister cities is a go—we have heard both from Kladno and Liepaja and will now be working to finalize dates—mid to late September with the visit to Liepaja first and then on to Kladno.

From the response of those members interested in joining the delegation when we first broached the subject, a majority indicated that fall might work best for them as well as for our hosts.

As we plan for our visit there are several options we can consider—including a tour either at the end of the visit or even in between the city visits. In the past, some members have joined the group in Europe or stayed on to do additional touring—let us know your preferences!

A first pass on a schedule is below—the flights either on KLM or Lufthansa and Czech Airlines—SAS no longer flies from Seattle...

Tues. Sept 13—depart Seattle for Riga via either Amsterdam or Frankfurt  
Wed. Sept 14th arrive Riga and to Liepaja  
Thurs-Fri. Sept. 15-16 in Liepaja  
Sat-Sun. Sept 17-18 weekend in Riga  
Mon. Sept 19th flight to Prague  
Tue.-Wed. Sept 20-21 in Kladno  
Thus—Sat. Sept. possible tour  
Sun. Sept. 25—Return to Seattle.

Another option might be to fly via Reykjavik on Icelandair, the fare might be better but that means extra changes of plane and an overnight in Iceland on the way home...

We will again be working with Elise at Rainier World Travel to get group rates.

### Reminder to all—Summer Student Exchange Applications Available

Please share the information about our summer student exchange program with students and their families who might be interested in participating. The application and additional information can be found on line at the City of Bellevue website under the Manager's office information—or go to:

[http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/pdf/Manager/STUDENT\\_EXCHANGE\\_PROGRAM.pdf](http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/pdf/Manager/STUDENT_EXCHANGE_PROGRAM.pdf)