



Annual Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 13, 2012

Bellevue City Hall 7:30 p.m.

Bellevue-Liepaja look back at 20 years of friendship

Zaiga Phillips and Cheryl Kuhn



The year was 1989 and the members of BSCA had enjoyed over 20 years of various exchanges with Yao, only a few years before had added a second Sister City—Hualien, Taiwan. Now their attention was shifting eastward... a couple of sister cities in Europe—England? Germany?? The discussions went back and forth between BSCA, Bellevue City Council and the City Manager's office... finally all agreed to look at Eastern Europe.

When an article about Bellevue's search for sister cities in Eastern Europe appeared in the now defunct *Journal American*, Zaiga Phillips, a local Latvian pediatrician could not get the idea of suggesting a city in her native country out of her mind.

Soon she was canvassing the local Latvian population, getting them on board, and deciding on the best fit—it had to be a port city—and Liepaja fit the bill perfectly. Next, a consultation with the officials in Liepaja... they were not sure what this all entailed, but were happy to give it their go ahead.

But all was not smooth sailing. When in 1989 Zaiga met with then BSCA president and search committee chair, Dorothy Webb, Latvia was still under the Soviet Union, and there were those Bellevue officials who were concerned about the unstable political climate at that time. Fortunately, this did not deter either BSCA or the local Latvian committee for Liepaja—over the next few years there were many events held to acquaint Bellevue with Latvia and Liepaja in particular. The collapse of the Soviet Union finally dispelled all doubts and the affiliation proclamation was signed on December 14, 1991.

During this year there will be several activities highlighting past and present activities and events, as well as looking forward to many more and culminating with a special event in December.

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's Message

As the saying goes, "hope springs eternal." Especially for an old optimist like yours truly. Especially because BSCA's budgetary and activities year begin with spring. Despite some snowflakes in the air, we can hope for a warm, positive response from you to our appeals to participate in the year's programs.

First, your attendance at the March meeting featuring Dr. Zaiga Philips, "godmother" of our city's affiliation with Liepaja, and Cheryl Kuhn, then City liaison to BSCA, describing the special circumstances that led to that active tie.

Second, I am assigning tasks for each of you, besides attending general meetings. As an all-volunteer organization of local citizens, BSCA lives and breathes with your *active* involvement, or it fades away and dies from member apathy. BSCA's vigor and health truly depend on *you*. So, put the BSCA meeting dates on your calendar—2nd Tuesdays of January, March, May, September and November, plus the July potluck and the December holiday party. A bold black BSCA in a red circle on your calendar should keep you aware of the dates.

Another task: recruiting new members. You know that many of our original members have passed from the scene – the most recent – Daniel Parks. So, look over your friends and kinfolk, especially the younger ones, and urge the likely ones to join BSCA. That can help ensure the lively continuation of BSCA.

Finally, you may have heard me refer to myself as "the illegal" president of BSCA. Our by-laws say the president, V.P., treasurer and secretary can only serve two consecutive 2-year terms. Our treasurer, Inta Gotelli and I are way overdue to be replaced by new officers, with new ideas and new energy. How about stepping forward to take on such responsibility yourself?

Hugh Burleson

Dues for fiscal year March 1, 2011– Feb. 28, 2012 are now due. Your treasurer will be out of town next month and hopes you will send in your dues without the usual reminder notice: Dues are **\$30 individual or \$50 family** with an extra \$10 for additional committees. Please make your check out to BSCA and mail to.

Inta Gotelli, 18911 SE 44th Way,
Issaquah, WA 98027

Changing of the Guard

Mr. Chin Hsing (Andy Chin) took over in January as the new **Director-General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office**. The Taipei Office has been a steadfast supporter of BSCA, its representatives often be seen at BSCA functions.

Mr. Chin has been with the Taipei Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1993, and his previous assignments include the Taipei Missions in Sweden and the Commonwealth of Dominica. More recently he served as the First Secretary and later the Senior Secretary of the Taipei Mission in the Republic of Latvia. It is during the five years that he and his wife spent in Riga that daughter Liga was born. They now reside in Bellevue and we hope to meet the Director-General and his family sometime soon.

From your Treasurer

March marks the beginning of our fiscal year, and enclosed with this newsletter is the year end statement for last year and the budget for the coming year. Some of this year's activities netted us some income – a handful of us volunteered at the Macy's Community Day fundraiser in May, we hosted the Washington State Sister Cities Conference in October, and by catering our own Holiday luncheon we added to our bottom line.

We partnered with the Highland Community Center for their Zumba fundraiser for Japan in the aftermath of the earthquake – and donated an additional \$1,000 to Peace Winds America.

Along with the WA State conference, and partnering with the City of Bellevue we held a dinner celebrating the many years of Sister City friendships between Washington State and Japan – a well attended event and we appreciated the sponsorship funds of several local American Japanese companies – but we did cover a considerable amount of the final expenses.

Along with our declining membership and increasing expenses we are drawing down on the funds we have available for our projects – especially our summer student exchange. When you return the annual membership renewal forms, do consider adding a donation to your dues – every bit helps to put off the day we will again need to think about a major fundraiser.

Part of our March Annual Membership meeting is a brief business meeting to go over our finances and approve the budget for next year. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, e-mail our treasurer: intabg@comcast.net

Conrad Lee elected Bellevue Mayor



As every other year, at their first meeting in January, the Bellevue City Council elected a new Mayor from among its members. Conrad, who is presently serving his fifth term (he was first elected in 1994) and was Deputy Mayor the past two years, will now serve as Mayor for the next two. We extend our best wishes to him, express our appreciation for the years his support for BSCA, and hope he'll be leading a delegation on a visit to our Sister Cities in Europe in the coming years.

Conrad was born in Kunming, Yunnan province, China, in 1939. The events of WWII and its aftermath upended what might have been. His family was well to do, his father was a banker. At the age of 9, he found himself in Hong Kong living with his widowed mother. It was she who encouraged Conrad to seek an education in the US. In 1958 he arrived in Seattle, beginning his studies at the Seattle Pacific College and going on for a degree in Engineering from the University of Michigan. Back in Seattle, he worked at Boeing. In 1978 he went back get his

MBA at UW and to work for the City of Seattle as a project manager in its

solid waste management. It is his experience working with local government that prompted him to run for the City Council.



Conrad has been the owner and managing partner of a property-management business, has helped small businesses with international trade, and served as the Regional Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Conrad has attended many BSCA functions, he joined the BSCA delegation in Yao in 2003 (above) and led the 2008 delegation.

Our congratulations also to Jennifer Robertson who was elected Deputy Mayor. She first joined the City Council in 2009 to complete Phil Noble's term and was reelected last November.

Remembering Dan Parks

Daniel Parks and his wife Betty joined BSCA in the early 80s – his career as an aeronautical engineer with Boeing, where he worked in Customer support, took him to Singapore as Director for the East Asia and Pacific Region. This led to extensive travel throughout Australasia including multiple visits to China. It is no surprise then that back in Bellevue he joined BSCA at the time that Hualien became

Bellevue's second Sister City. He served as president in 1986-88 and again in 1992-93, and continued being active until the death of his wife in 2003 and his declining health made it problematical.

It was during Dan's second time as BSCA president that Liepaja and Bellevue signed their affiliation declaration—at left he's holding the banner welcoming the official visitors for the ceremony. Although it had been many years since Dan Parks was an active BSCA member, up until the last he kept his membership current and always added an extra donation to support student exchange.



Besides his interest in BSCA, Dan did volunteer work for several other community organizations, including serving as a docent at the Air and Space museum for many years. He spent his last years at the Bayview Retirement Community on Queen Ann Hill, a memorial service will be held there on March 15th, his 93rd birthday.

Our January meeting at SAM

A group of BSCA members and friends spent a very enjoyable and educational Saturday morning touring the Luminous exhibit at SAM under the guidance of docent Deborah Prince—among our members were some that seldom have an opportunity to attend our regular evening meetings. After the tour we had a chance to visit over coffee and talk about upcoming events... one of those, as you can see from the March program, the 20-year anniversary of the Bellevue -Liepaja affiliation which will be followed next year by 20 years for Bellevue-Kladno. Some fun and interesting events coming up!



Bellevue-Liepaja 20th Anniversary Celebration

Members of the Liepaja committee recently met at Zaiga Phillips' home to plan for a year of activities celebrating 20 years of friendship. Starting with the March program, where Zaiga and Cheryl Kuhn will recount the very beginning of the Bellevue-Liepaja affiliation. A series of events and activities is envisioned. It was tentatively agreed to plan for a dinner reception Friday, December 14th in conjunction with BSCA's traditional Holiday party and to extend invitations to past members, exchange student families, staff exchange participants and the Bellevue community.

The committee hopes to organize other events and activities to bring attention, not only to the Liepaja connection, but to BSCA as a whole. The plans include featuring Latvian arts and crafts and inviting the local Latvian folk dance group to perform at one or more events. What we are asking from all is suggestions for activities or displays. Some good suggestions were made by board members at the last meeting - we want more input!

Areas where we would like your ideas: Venues for a display of Latvian arts and crafts as well as BSCA information to be open to the public for at least 1-2 weeks. A suggestion was also made to have Latvian articles - amber jewelry, linens, pottery, etc. on sale possibly in conjunction with an exhibit. Please contact Zaiga Phillips at zap@uw.edu with your suggestions.

BSCA Has a Website!

Thanks to Gary Winchester BSCA is now on line at <http://www.bellevuesistercities.org/>. Add this site to your favorites—not only will this keep you up on the latest events, but there you can also find all our newsletters from the past year—a glance through these will remind you of our many activities during the year. .

Also on our website you will find information about our **summer student exchange**, the flyer summarizing the exchange and the application forms. Please forward this information to interested students of your acquaintance.

Besides reading up on our latest news there you can also find BSCA on Facebook and Twitter! We welcome suggestions as to additions and improvements. Thank you to Gary for his efforts to have us join the internet community!

Thank you, Heidi!

Not only has Heidi Ressler been an active BSCA member, but her employer, State Farm Insurance, matched her many volunteer hours with a \$500 contribution. Besides her participation on the board, and her work with our student exchange, Heidi volunteered at our Macy's Community Fundraiser, participated in the Washington State Sister Cities conference and was one of the 'caterers' for our Holiday Luncheon.

Hugo House theatre Seattle— March 22—April 7, 2012

Playwrights' Theatre will present the world premier of **River Ice** at Hugo House theatre in Seattle, beginning March 22, 2012 through April 7, 2012. **River Ice** is set in Prague in June of 1942, and is based on the lives of the Czech parachutists who assassinated Reinhard Heydrich, the Nazi head of the occupation of Czechoslovakia. The play reveals the historical tragedy of Lidice, and details the last 2 hours of the lives of two of the parachutists who are trapped in the crypt of the church of St Cyril and Methodius on Resslova street in Prague.