



Annual Membership Meeting

Tuesday, May 10, 2011
Bellevue City Hall 7:30 p.m.

Washington Responds to the Disaster in Japan Dr. Charles Aanenson, CEO, Peace Winds America



Just as BSCA reached out to Japan back at the time of the earthquake in Kobe, after this major earthquake rocked Japan, we looked at ways to again help our to our friends. How best to help? Your board voted to contribute \$1,000—but where? And when the Highland Center decided to hold its Zumba for Japan fundraiser they asked the same question. The Japan-America Society of the State of Washington had several suggestions—the one that appealed most to us was Peace Winds of America and its counterpart in Japan—Peace Winds Japan.

Peace Winds America was founded in 2008 by Dr. Charles Aanenson, who brings over 30 years of experience in the field of international aid and development. During his post at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, Dr. Aanenson identified a critical gap in disaster preparedness and humanitarian assistance in

the Asia Pacific. While many organizations provide disaster relief in this region, he saw a great need for better planning and collaboration to reduce the impact of natural disasters and to promote long-term sustainability for affected populations. Dr. Aanenson founded PWA to address these urgent needs.

Dr. Aanenson arrived in Tokyo on March 15th to support Peace Winds disaster relief operations and will be returning to Japan shortly—we look forward to is sharing his experiences with us.



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 - stories we like...

I recently heard from Barb Surdi, mother of Connor Surdi our exchange student to Yao a few years ago and now a senior at Newport High. She was asking as to the best way to send money most directly to the disaster victims in Japan.

Apparently she and Connor were to have gone to Japan in mid-March to look into a universities there; but the great earthquake and tsunamis beached that plan. Instead, just days after the earthquake, Connor had devised little stickers appealing for aid and prayers for the victims. Within the first 24 hours, he had raised \$1,200 selling the stickers for 5 cents each. After the first month, he has raised \$15,000 selling the stickers, key chains and T-shirts!

They heard about the Zumba event at Bellevue's Highland Community Center and arranged to have a table there selling some more of these items. So, just as our BSCA donation to Japan and the Zumba event funds, Connor's hoard will also go to Peace Winds America, an affiliate of Peace Winds Japan, which was sending truck convoys of relief supplies into the devastated north-eastern area as soon as roads and bridges were passable and is still in there further helping the displaced residents (such as by building bath-houses for those still in refugee centers in the area's schools).

Connor's interest in Japan and Japanese culture had been sparked long before by interaction with Japanese exchange students attending Bellevue College whom his parents hosted for 18 years. He went to Yao after his freshman year, for during his middle-school years he had been taking Japanese language at Bellevue High and so already had three years of high-school Japanese under his belt. Connor was a special hit in Yao in part because he had played catch with Ichiro when he and his dad were down in Arizona to visit the Mariners during the off season. Back home he stopped his mother just in time from washing the sneakers he wore. We heard he had those sneakers hanging in his bedroom.

Connor hopes to attend college in Tokyo. His goal beyond college? Well, he's an avid photographer and hopes to get a job with Canon Cameras. Hail, Connor!

**BSCA ANNUAL PICNIC
SATURDAY, JULY 9, 2011
Bellevue Botanical Garden**



★ macy's
Bellevue Square
Saturday, May 14, 2011

**Buy a \$10 ticket and help support the programs of
Bellevue Sister Cities Association!**

Your ticket entitles you to a 10-20% discount off almost
EVERYTHING at Macy's Bellevue Square and an additional \$10
off of one purchase of \$25 or more on Saturday, May 14, 2011.

Plus, you can enter for a chance to win a \$500 Macy's
Shopping Spree!

ALL proceeds from tickets sold by Bellevue Sister Cities
Association volunteers will be donated to Bellevue Sister
Cities Association.

This is an opportunity for us to raise some funds and at the same time have some visibility for BSCA—we will have an informational booth at this event and will need volunteers to help—our booth time is 3-8pm. Contact Inta (425-957-1363 or intabg@comcast.net) to volunteer and/or get some tickets to offer your relatives and friends!

This and That...

Membership dues—thank-you to all of you (about half!) who sent in your dues within days of receiving the notices! Please remember to send in your dues—they cover our operating expenses leaving more funds for our projects. Questions? E-mail Inta intabg@comcast.net

Summer Student Exchange—Eureka Lim, Heidi Ressler, Cheryl Kuhn and Florence Metcalf have been busy interviewing candidates for this program and are finalizing their selections for all four of our Sister Cities. More next month!

Annual Summer Picnic—to have a chance to meet some of our exchange students before they take off for the second part of the exchange, the picnic will be a bit earlier this year—so mark your calendars for Saturday July 9th.

Delegation Trip to Liepaja and Kladno—we have assurance from the City Council that there will be a representative joining us on this visit. Now for flight reservations—and with the major changes the airlines are instituting that has been a bigger issue than in the past—we are waiting to hear more options for flights soon.

High Energy Fundraising at Highland Center

Zumba??? If you are not into aerobic fitness you might not have heard of it—but it is the newest “fitness-party” craze—and on this Saturday afternoon both Highland Center’s largest rooms were filled with people following the instructors to the red-hot Latin-inspired music.

Highland Community Center’s programs aim is to give Bellevue’s people with disabilities a special place—and in order to raise extra funds they already had two Zumba fundraisers this year—so



with the earthquake disaster in Japan—a Zumba fundraiser for Japan was decided on. Since Bellevue has a Sister City in Japan—and even though Yao is not in the affected area—we were asked to partner with them on this event. *And high energy it really was!!* Heidi Ressler and Inta

Gotelli helped out with registration and handling the funds—not only donations from the attendees—but many people just stopped by to drop off a check. The final total raised including employer matches was almost \$9,000—and Monica Huston, administrative assistant for the Center, and Inta visited the Peace Winds America offices in Seattle to personally deliver the funds raised.

In addition, Inta delivered the \$1,000 that your board, at the March board meeting, voted to contribute to the Japan recovery effort.

ZUMBA® FOR JAPAN
NO DANCE EXPERIENCE REQUIRED, JUST BRING YOUR SMILE

SATURDAY, APRIL 9 • 2 - 4 P.M.

\$ 20 MINIMUM DONATION
100% OF PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO DISASTER RELIEF IN JAPAN
»»» THROUGH PEACE WINDS AMERICA «««

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14424 BEL RED ROAD • BELLEVUE • WA 98007
PARKING IS LIMITED, NEARBY PARKING AVAILABLE
NO ONSITE DAYCARE AVAILABLE

QUESTIONS?
CALL MONICA HOUSTON AT 425.452.7686
www.peacewindsamerica.org

BELLEVUE
Sister City



Yao Lions Send us Their Student Debaters

On March 20, many months of communications between BSCA and the Yao Lions Club brought culmination to the Lions’ project to link their fall debate contest to the Yao-Bellevue sister city affiliation. Last summer, the Lions Club had developed plans to hold an English language debate for Yao for high school students in October and reward the top three debaters with an all-expenses-paid trip to Bellevue during their spring break. BSCA’s Yao Committee agreed to cooperate by lining up home stays here for the students and planning some events for the three students.

As it turned out, excellent tips from Eureka Lim’s son (a senior at Newport High School), led us to contact Newport’s very active debate club and its dynamic debate coach, John Julian. Mr. Julian jumped at the opportunity to enlist the club in this project and continued to do much of the “heavy lifting” on this project for us—lining up host families—our thanks to John and Jana Julian, Leslie Lu and Jane Su, and Kenny and Faye Wu—and arranging for a debate and other interaction between the Newport club and the visiting students.

In Bellevue March 20~April 1, the Yao students had several get-togethers with their Newport counterparts and on March 25 met at the high school auditorium to debate the issue of whether school uniforms should be required. Due to the Japanese students’ fairly limited fluency in English, they made prepared statements rather than ad-libbing their arguments; but the debate was enjoyed by all attending—the high school debate students, host parents and BSCA members alike.

As part of the event Yao Lions president Ikeda came to Bellevue for two days, was treated to some sightseeing around Bellevue by BSCA president Hugh Bursleson and attended the debate at Newport High. Mr. Ikeda brought with him generous honoraria for the host families, and relished the pizza party we held at the school after the debate. And as for the Newport HS debate students—some asked if there will be another exchange such as this next year... maybe... and maybe we might even try for some of our other Sister City High School debate teams.



BSCA, Yao Committee expresses our sympathy to our friends in Japan:

To Mayor Tanaka Seita, our friends of the Yao Sister City organization and all citizens of Yao-shi:

This is a year and especially a month that all the world will long remember, the scenes on our TV screens and in our newspapers and magazines of utter disaster in the Tohoku area from the incredibly powerful earthquake, the awful tsunami and unfolding problems at the nuclear power facilities in Fukushima, but also of the intrepid response and resilience of the people in that area. We are saddened and very concerned about the welfare of the residents of the destroyed towns and cities, but relieved that Osaka was far enough to have been spared. Our prayers and hopes for recovery are with you.

Just as after the Pacific War, we see that life goes on and the Japanese spirit is strong! We have great hopes for Japan's future and remain dedicated to further strengthening the bonds between the citizens of Yao and Bellevue. We treasure our memories of our delegation's visit to Yao in 2008 and especially of the great visit in 2009 with the Yao delegation led by Mayor Tanaka. We hope it will be possible for a Bellevue delegation to visit you next year. We are delighted to hear that a Yao student, Hatashita Ranna-san, has been selected for this summer's high-school student exchange, and hope soon to have our counterpart student selected also. For, it is by continuing such priority activities that we all can continue to build this great relationship and the friendships that give it substance.

Florence Metcalf, Chairperson
Bellevue-Yao Committee of the Bellevue Sister Cities Association.

Our friends in Yao: I am happy to endorse Metcalf-san's message, with my own warm greetings and hopes for further positive development in our bilateral ties. We have worked on this relationship for over 40 years now and are proud that it continues to demonstrate how close peoples of different nations can become even though they are thousands of miles apart. With modern transportation and the electronic media shrinking the distances between us, we know that ever better understanding and closer friendship are assured in these fine bonds between our citizens.

Hugh Burleson, BSCA president

**To BSCA president, Hugh Burleson,
Chairperson, Bellevue-Yao Committee of the Bellevue Sister Cities Association, Florence Metcalf**

Thank you for dear BSCA members' anxiety about the earthquake that occurred in the Tohoku regions in Japan this time. I would like to express my gratitude for getting a dispatch of the rescue party and other many kinds of help from your country. These warm hearted aids and assistances have given us Japanese a strong power to recover loses, famine and the strength to life.

Japan is now confronted with unprecedented damage, and the difficult situation has been continuing since then but Japanese will do the very best in reconstruction. I'm most grateful for the consideration shown to us by you. I do hope that the bonds of the friendship that Yao and Bellevue have built up so far will deepen further.

Mayor Tanaka Seita, YSCA president, Hajime Uchino

2011 Young Artists Showcase *Shaping Your Community for a Greener Future*



We have forwarded entries from Yao and Liepaja to DC. This year's theme focused on the environment, on the ways they, their community or their sister city is working to protect the local environment

From Liepaja (pictured)—Jevgenijs Perchatkins—*when I wake up and look through the window I always see the same miserable picture which time to time becomes worse: asphalt road passing cars factories pipes emitting acrid smoke and flying garbage pumping up by the wind. I have got a small sister and I always think and ask myself; what can she see in 10 years?*

From Yao—Haruka Ikeda *expressed the world where children in the world were able to coexist with animals and plants peacefully. Children can live freely. I want animals and plants not to be threatened by the extinction.*