



March-April 2014
Volume 128

Annual Membership Meeting Tuesday, March 11, 2014 Bellevue City Hall 7:30 p.m.

It has been three years since the last major earthquake devastated a large part of Japan. Since then much has been done towards recovery yet much still remains to be done. We will join the Japan-America Society of Washington to remember those affected by this disaster as well as the volunteers who are still helping with the recovery. See below for the event sponsored by JASSW on Sunday, March 9th. At our meeting we will show again the film featured that that event.

FEATURE FILM "*LIGHT UP NIPPON*" 日本を照らした奇跡の花火

LIGHT UP NIPPON documents the trials and triumphs of dedicated volunteers led by Yoshitake Takada. Just five months after the devastating Great East Japan Earthquake, they lit up the skies in 10 locations over the Tohoku region of Japan with fireworks to buoy the spirits of the survivors.

This documentary takes you on a whimsical and fantastic journey, where these magnificent fireworks displays captured the thoughts, prayers, hopes and dreams of so many people in Japan.

ACT for Japan

Third Annual Aid Benefit Concert for the Great Tohoku Earthquake Disaster

Sunday March 09, 2014—1:45pm-5:15pm

University Temple United Methodist Church: 1415 NE 43rd St., Seattle WA 98105

Remember. Prepare. Rebuild.

Although three years past, there is still much that needs to be rebuilt in the Tohoku area of Japan after the March 11, 2011 Earthquake. For the people there recovery is far from over. Let us give them new hope and reassure them that they are not forgotten. And send them messages of our continuing support from Seattle!

At the event JASSW will feature a panel discussion on the current situation of the Tohoku region of Japan. Also, there will be movies, booths, live radio broadcast, arts & crafts, bake sale!

<http://www.jassw.info/Default.aspx?pageId=1398183&eventId=828677&EventViewMode=EventDetails>

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—Gary Winchester Newsletter Editor—Inta Gotelli
Check Facebook or our website for updates! <http://www.bellevuesistercities.org/>

From your Board:

March marks the beginning of our fiscal year, and at the March meeting our treasurer will present last year's financials and ask for approval of the budget for the coming year— see back page.

It is also a time to look back at the year that was and forward to make plans for the coming year.

First a look at our accomplishments—and the event that stands out is the July delegation visit from Hualien and the long awaited 'awakening' of the Foo Dogs. Partnering with the City, TECO and with the encouragement from Bellevue Mayor Conrad Lee and the support of the local Taiwanese community this was a real community celebration—a great way to commemorate 30 years of friendship.

We observed 20 years of friendship between Bellevue and Kladno with speaker Wayne Jehlik, founder and president of the Center for Czech Education and Culture. And we were present at the official opening of the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Seattle and Wayne's official confirmation as Honorary Consul for Washington State.

September saw a small delegation, led by Bellevue Deputy Mayor Jennifer Robertson, head to our European sister cities. We again enjoyed the red carpet treatment, were updated on events in both cities, visited social and historic places and consolidated our friendships.

And there were the usual membership gatherings—our Summer Picnic and the Holiday luncheon—the latter this year also a venue for presenting our retiring president, Hugh Burleson, commendations from the City as well as from SCI for his many years of service.

Last and not least, BSCA for the first time participated in the Celebration of the Lunar New Year at Westminster Chapel in Bellevue—and we hope to be there again next year.

One regret—there was no student exchange last summer... but we're looking to it this summer.

Also in the planning stages is a delegation visit to our Asian sister cities—we have a preliminary go ahead from the City Council and will be working on dates and itineraries.

BSCA Elections coming up!

And this year it is also time to elect or confirm our board members for the next two years—see below a list of people who have agreed to continue in their positions. Please feel free to contact the board with additional suggestions/nominations (that includes yourself if you'd like to join the board).

President - Gregg Schrader took over Hugh Burleson's position and is agreeable to continue as our chief officer

Vice-president - this position has been open for several years...

Secretary - Gary Winchester has agreed to continue

Treasurer - Inta Gotelli will keep track of our funds for a bit longer

Yao Chair - Florence Metcalf will continue

Hualien Chair - Eureka Lim will continue

Kladno Chair - Heidi Ressler would like to have someone else take over this job

Liepaja Chair - position has been open for some time

Director - Hugh Burleson, as past president, has agreed to continue his valuable input in this less demanding position



From Liepaja—Silva Golde will be Missed

During our past delegation visit in Liepaja there was one person we missed seeing - Deputy Mayor Silva Golde. For the past year Silva had been suffering from a serious illness - she passed away on Dec. 31. Silva spent many years involved in Latvian politics serving several terms in the Saima (Latvian parliament) part of the time as Minister of Education and Science. Returning to Liepaja in 2005 she was elected to the City Council serving as Deputy Mayor with education as one of her areas for the last several years.

During her visit to Lativa in 2011 Inta Gotelli and past exchange student Agita Drulle Kurzeme met with her discussed some of our common interests - summer student exchange for one - and reiterated our continuing support for the Liepaja Special School. She was very supportive of the Liepaja Special School parent organization which met often with her to discuss problems or ask for support of their projects. She will be missed.



BSCA Celebrated the Lunar New Year

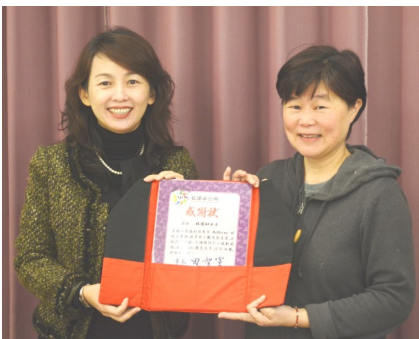
The Lunar New Year celebration at Westminster Chapel in Bellevue was in its 11th year and this year BSCA joined the celebration with a colorful and well attended booth. The City of Bellevue was also represented by the Parks and Recreation Department and its Cultural Diversity program with Kevin Henry fielding questions.

The BSCA booth featured a small part of Florence Metcalf's *hashioki* (chopstick holders) collection as well as other items highlighting our sister city Yao,

Japan and a collage poster of last summer's delegation visit from Hualien and the 'awakening' of the Foo Dogs. A huge thank you to those who spent the afternoon at the booth—our president Gregg Schrader and friend Abigail, past president Hugh Burlison and secretary Gary Winchester, to Inta Gotelli for creating the poster and to Florence Metcalf for sharing her Japanese treasures.

This is not the first time that Florence has shared her collection of *hashioki* with us— a much larger part of her collection was featured in our booth at the Japanese Festival last September at Bellevue College, and those visiting her home can see the display that takes up most of a living room wall.

Florence grew up in Japan in a missionary family and in 1946 during the Occupation, shortly after the surrender of Japan and the end of WWII, was working in Tokyo at GHQ - Translation Section. Through her work there she met a Japanese woman who had lost most of her possessions during the bombing of that city. They spent many hours together sipping tea, sharing memories and dreams of the future. One day her new friend gently placed a small Noritaki bone china object in Florence's hand – a narcissus with green leaves. *Nani mo nai desu ga... dozo...* she whispered – "this is so very small but please accept this as a token of my friendship"... and so started Florence's interest in the symbolic and folklore *hashioki* and a collection which now numbers over 850 many of which she has described in a book she shared with us.



And from HUALIEN It had been a long time since Eureka and Vern Lim had been in Hualien during the Chinese Lunar New Year holidays. They celebrated with family, ate traditional Lunar New year foods and also received a red envelope (an new year tradition with money inside) from Eureka's sister.

Hualien is a tourist town and streets and many famous places were crowded. A special visit was an exhibit at the local museum of a table of delicacy banquet dinner set all made of Hualien Jade.

While they were there, Eureka also had an opportunity to have lunch with the mayor of Hualien, the mayor's wife and his staff. He would like to invite BSCA come to visit Hualien next year. This year he is busy campaigning for his re-election which will held in Dec. 2014. We wish him best on his election campaign.

Czechoslovak Bohemian Boudoir Special Event at Tacoma Museum of Glass

Sunday, April 13, 2014 10:30-noon—Free Entrance

Kladno Committee member, Rosie Bodien is happy TO ANNOUNCE THIS SPECIAL EVENT AT THE MUSEUM OF GLASS! We will have the whole museum to ourselves 'til Noon. At 11:30 I will give a short talk about the Bohemian Boudoir Exhibit. There are 95 items in the exhibit! Come mingle with other folks interested in the Czechoslovak culture!!

Parking below the museum is \$5 3 hours or free parking at the Tacoma Dome Parking Garage. Take the free Street car (Made in the CR) to the museum district and walk over the Chihuly Bridge. See more: <http://museumofglass3.reachlocal.net/pages/bohemian-boudoir>

RIGA 2014 - European Capital of Culture

The idea to each year designate a European city as the Capital of Culture originated in 1985 as a way to bring Europeans closer together by highlighting the richness and diversity of European cultures and to raise awareness of their common history and values. It has since been a catalyst for the cultural development and the transformation of the city as well as having a beneficial socio-economic and development impact. The first cities to be so named were Athens, Florence, Amsterdam, Berlin and Paris. Since then one or more cities have shared a year of cultural events with their citizens and visitors – and this year it is Riga, Latvia that is one of two to do so. It will be Latvia's turn again in 2027—maybe Liepaja next time? See more: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Capital_of_Culture



Riga, Latvia was officially unveiled as a 2014 European Capital of Culture on January 17 to 19, 2014, with one of the main events being a human chain transferring books from hand to hand, from the old National Library of Latvia building to the new “Gaismas Pils” (Palace of Light) National Library building on January 18. Over 1400 people lined the streets in freezing weather as they handed the plastic wrapped books down the chain – through Old town and across the bridge—stopping often for pictures. Among those participating was the president, several deputies and many representatives of foreign embassies including



USA. The enthusiasm of the crowds can be seen in the many posts on youtube such as: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWsrSvxdkuw>

There is a yearlong schedule of events - see: <http://www.latvia.travel/en/article/riga-will-become-european-capital-culture-2014> and check out the Facebook page at:

It is not too late to be part of it - Liepaja Special School Playground

With the additional incentive to match an anonymous donor's \$2000 challenge we are close enough to our goal to proceed towards the next step to completion of the playground—ordering the main piece of equipment. Additional contributions will make it possible to do more... the rubber surface, additional smaller pieces of equipment, etc... We will be closing down the Projekt Karma site soon, but contributions can be sent to PO Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012 or directly to our treasurer. <http://www.projektkarma.com/projekts/page/pid/91>.

We thank all those who have contributed—some more than once—to this project: on the Karma site: Dr. Juris Cilnis, Dr. Eriks Lusis, Ilana A Petersons, Rita Seja, Liga Gonzalez, Mirdza Neiders, Tom and Sarma Davidson, Gunta Cepurits, Larry and Christine Fry, Gunta Emmons, Janis and Mary Pelekis and directly to BSCA: Elmars Zemgalis, Dr. Janis Dimants, Ruta Bekeris, Dr. Vivita Krievs Leonard, Imants and Maija Ikkstrums, Shogo and Fusko Kusumi, Janis and Mary Pelekis.

From your Treasurer

Along with this newsletter you are receiving an End of fiscal year financial report and a budget for the coming year – both these need membership approval at the March meeting. At that time we will have additional information to present, but feel free to contact me anytime if you have questions.

In the past we have split dues between Association and committees – unfortunately with our membership having declined from over 100 members to around 60, we need to make adjustments to make sure we do cover the operating expenses from our dues – the main one being the insurance the City requires us to carry. Dues will remain the same \$30 individual and \$50 family, but for the next year all dues will go to Association—we do request an additional donation to your committee.

A bigger problem is our dwindling project funds – mostly for our summer student exchange. We have known for several years that a fundraiser is needed... we know we don't have the people to do another dinner auction. One option might be a raffle – but for that we need some major items... your board welcomes any ideas and help to raise some funds. Inta Gotelli—intabg@comcast.net