



Membership Meeting Tuesday, September 12, 2017 Bellevue City Hall 7:30 pm

Welcome Back our Summer Exchange Students

We look forward to hearing from both Sophie Sceats and Blake Ostrem about their summer experiences as they got to know their exchange partners and their families - see page 3 for a bit of what they will be sharing with us.



While we are pleased to make this opportunity available to high school students in our area, we really need to thank the families both here and in Kladno and Yao. It is they who, not only shared their homes, but went the extra mile to make sure that the visiting students got to know, not only our area, but even took them on trips to some of their favorite vacation places. THANK YOU!!!



Seasonal "CHABANA" Exhibition Invitation to Japanese Tea Ceremony Flower Arrangement Sunday, September 10th - 10am-4pm Bellevue Botanical Garden

In Japan there are various flower arranging traditions- in some myriad flowers are used, in others, only a few flowers are selected. Chabana, the flower arrangement for the tea ceremony, uses a minimum number of flowers, even as few as one or two.

The Sasebo Branch of To-cha Koten Seminar was established in 2000 to deepen the understanding and appreciation of Chabana with the objective both to study Chabana and to share this unique living tradition with others. Sasebo Branch participates in workshops with the grand master of To-cha Koten Seminar and hosts one annual exhibition - this year's exhibition in Bellevue.

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/>

From your editor

The summer again comes to an end, and with it this year's student exchange - a big thank you to Sophie Sceats and Blake Ostrem and their families for making this possible. We enjoyed meeting them all at one or the other of our two summer picnics - this year the Yao one actually hosted by Blake's parents. Thank you again.

We look forward to hearing about both student's experiences at the September meeting - while hosting their counterpart as well as in our sister cities. We hope that the friendships they made this summer will last and lead to many more visits.

It is always great to hear from past students - especially when it comes as a complete surprise - as hearing from one of our Kladno students back from 1997 (see next page) on our Facebook page!

It reminded me of the enthusiasm with which our members welcomed the exchange students and how much more involved we were in planning activities for them - a few days at the Webb's cabin near Mt. Rainier usually one outing. Below - the 1997 students from all four sister cities...



State of Washington to host the 2018 Japan/America Grassroots Summit September 18-25, 2018

The Japan-America Grassroots Summit is an annual large-scale meeting of Japanese and American citizens, held alternately in Japan and America. For about a week the hosts share their homes and the unique features of their communities with their guests. More than 100 people usually participate as guests, enjoying sight-seeing, cultural activities, welcome and closing ceremonies, and staying with a host family.

The Grassroots Summit celebrates the historic friendship between Nakahama Manjiro and Captain William Whitfield. Whitfield rescued the marooned Manjiro in 1841 and shared his own home with him. Later, Manjiro's rare command of English and salutary experience in America became pivotal to the Japan/US relationship after Perry's arrival in 1853.

The grassroots Summit is unique in that its focus is on homesays for the guests - after a day of welcome and opening ceremonies the guests meet their homestay hosts with whom they will spend the next four days, then followed by closing ceremonies and a farewell program.

The Japan-America Society of the State of Washington has approached the City of Bellevue and BSCA to participate in the Summit. This would involve recruiting volunteers to organize the activities as well as finding host families for the Japanese guests. This is an opportunity for us to work with the JASSW and other WA cities but our involvement will depend on volunteers and host families - are you interested to participate?

Liepaja Committee helps Erlands attend Kursa

Earlier this year we received a request to help Erlands Griezitis with the expenses to attend the West Coast Latvian High School summer camp in Shelton. Since back in 1973, Kursa has given Latvian high school students the opportunity to connect with their cultural heritage through Latvian language, cultural activities, thus also creating life-long friendships. During the four year program, besides language and history, various activities are available to the students, and all participate in music and folk dance. While most of the students come from the west coast, those coming from other states and especially Latvia add to the diversity of experiences to be shared. Last year Erlands, whose home town is Liepaja, was one of these, and he was determined to continue in the program, sharing his experiences and learning from his colleagues. <http://kursa.rklic.org/en/>

In the past the Liepaja committee has funded most of the travel expenses for exchange students coming from Latvia - but the last exchange was in 2012, and the committee decided that supporting Erlands would be a good use for some of these funds. In the picture: While Evija Zagare, teacher at the Liepaja special school, was visiting, we took the opportunity to stop by and meet Erlands.



Summer Student Exchange 2017



Kladno, Czech Republic - Sophie Sceats shares her experiences with Lenka Cernohorska from Kladno:

My exchange was really fun. In Bellevue, I took Lenka to see the highlights of Seattle, including the Space Needle, the Chihuly Museum, and the MoPop. We went biking, paddle boarding, canoeing, and swimming. She came to my school, and met many of my friends. We had lots of different food, visiting the Crossroads food court a couple of times.

In Kladno, I experienced Czech food, Czech culture, and saw some famous monuments. We visited the Prague Zoo, Karlstejn castle, the Kladno Aquapark, a park for rescue birds, Charles Bridge, the Prague planetarium, and a festival in Holasovice, near the Austrian and German borders. We made Czech fruit dumplings, mushroom goulash out of mushrooms we picked in the forest, and ate lots of ice cream.

I learned some Czech, and spent time with Lenka's relatives on several overnight trips. We blew glass, went on a treetop walkway, and did some shopping. My favorite part was spending time with Lenka; going geocaching, painting our nails, and watching Netflix together. I enjoyed meeting her family, and seeing lots of dogs all over the Czech Republic. Lenka and I became very good friends, and I hope that we will see each other sometime in the future.



Yao, Japan. Blake Ostrem shares some of his experiences with Mana Kasa and her family:

We visited the annual Yao Summer Festival at a Buddhist Temple. This celebration includes amazing food trucks, carnival games, and religious rituals. I was able to partake in a Mikoshi carrying ritual where a group of men carry and parade the shrine around the festival for two hours. Afterwards, I attended a party at the Yao volunteer fire department with my host parents.

We visited the Osaka castle, one of Japan's most famous landmarks. I hiked here with Mana after we went to the peace museum, which had a lot of information of World War 2. While walking from the peace museum to the castle we stopped at a food truck and bought some green tea ice cream.

I stayed at a hotel in Okinawa for five days with my host family. While the beach was beautiful, it was almost too hot for comfort at 100 degrees F with high humidity. We enjoyed a lot of traditional Okinawan food. The most interesting part of Okinawa is that more than 1/3 of the island is a U.S. military base.



Student Exchange... back in 1997...

Last June, this message appeared on our Facebook page...

Dear Madame/Sir, it has been 20 years since our exchange student programme between Bellevue and Kladno. It was such a great experience for me to be part of it and visit the lovely city Bellevue. Here are some photos of the memories from summer 97 with Heather Houston. Thank you very much for such a great time. With best regards, Jana Lorencova (Pavlickova).

Jana and her husband have a travel agency and travel a lot. She still keeps in touch with Heather and hopes to meet up with her next year, as well as with Imants Jansons who was the exchange student from Liepaja that same year.



Summer Picnics 2017

As for several years now, our first Summer picnic was held at the Lewis Creek Park visitor center and as usual, the weather was with us, the day sunny and warm. We had the pleasure of meeting our Kladno exchange students and Sophie's family as well as Blake's - our Yao student - mom.



And as for several years, at a second gathering we had the opportunity to meet both of our Yao exchange students - this time it was Blake's family - Tracy and Todd Ostrem who invited BSCA members and friends to their home for an afternoon barbeque. Thank you for your hospitality and for all the effort you put into making this a great experience for Mana.



Japan Week at Bellevue College - October 2-7, 2017

The Japanese culture club and faculty member Anne Matsumoto Stewart felt the loss of the annual "Aki Matsuri" festival on campus last year and will be sponsoring a similar event on campus. This will be a school-sponsored event with exhibits focusing on education and cultural awareness of Japan and it will conclude with an all-day festival ("MATSURI") which is open to the public on Saturday, October 7.
<http://studentweb.bellevuecollege.edu/japan-week/>