



## 1969-2019 - Bellevue and Yao Celebrate Fifty Years of Friendship Volunteer to help plan the celebration

The people-to-people program proposed by President Eisenhower in 1956 soon grew in popularity, eventually Sister Cities International becoming a separate non-profit corporation. Numerous US cities have partnered with cities in other countries in hopes that through friendship would come understanding of other cultures thus leading towards world peace. It is no surprise then, that during and International Junior Chamber of Commerce convention in 1963 Ken Fletcher from Bellevue and Ichi Fujii from Yao decided that their cities should join this effort.



It took a few years but in both cities citizen organizations were formed, the city government involved, and on November 16, 1969 the proclamation was signed by the then mayors of both cities making the affiliation as sister cities official and joining the many other US cities as part of Sister Cities International.

It has been 50 years and none of the people to whom we owe the beginnings of BSCA are around anymore, but their presence will be felt as we look back at the last 50 years and look forward to hosting a delegation from Yao in November. If you would like to be part of the planning, please let Gregg Schrader know - E-mail: [GSchrader@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:GSchrader@bellevuewa.gov)

***Please note the change of date and Save the date!***

**Annual Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, April 16, 2019**

Our March Annual Membership meeting is usually held the second Tuesday in March, but this year due to several scheduling conflicts, the board has opted to move it to April. Please remember that this is our only business meeting each year - we will share a report on the activities of the past year and the financial statements that go with them. It is also the time we approve the budget for the coming fiscal year—which for BSCA is March 1 to February 28 (or 29) for the next year. We will also have a program to go with the financial updates - more in the next newsletter.

### 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/>

YAO, JAPAN

HUALIEN, TAIWAN

LIEPAJA, LATVIA

KLADNO, CZECH REPUBLIC



## Kung hei fat choy! Happy Lunar New Year!

When the clock strikes midnight on February 5th millions of people around the world ring in the Lunar New Year but - unlike the way much of the world celebrates on December 31 - Lunar New Year is a lengthy holiday marathon filled with traditions and rituals starting a week prior and lasting for 15 days. The culminating event is the Lantern Festival. It is a time for family visits and shared meals with a menus carefully chosen for its lucky meanings.

Again this year, Eureka and Vern headed to Hualien to join family there, this year with daughter Connie along. Their special Lunar New Year menu included a big pot of greens and clams a 'long life vegetable', and pig leg and sausage which are a must on New Year menus. Dessert was rice cakes which symbolize advancement.



On New Year's day the elders will be handing out red envelopes with money symbolizing good fortune. The next several days will be spent visiting relatives and friends and eating many big meals.



We more often hear the term Chinese New Year used - but as someone pointed out to me several years ago, China is only one of the many Asian countries that celebrate the New Year on a lunar calendar... In Japan there still are many who will be celebration a Lunar New Year even if the country as a whole celebrates the new year on the Georgian calendar like most of us.

### A few local events celebrating the Lunar New Year:

#### Feb 9<sup>th</sup> - [52nd Annual Lunar New Year Gala](#)

Eat traditional Lunar New Year treats, win prizes, see live performances, and more at the Chinese Student Association at the University of Washington's annual Lunar New Year celebration.  
*Kane Hall Room 130, University District*

#### Feb 9<sup>th</sup> - [Lunar New Year Celebration](#)

Welcome the Year of the Pig with traditional lion and dragon dances, other cultural performances, and food at Chinatown's annual Lunar New Year celebration.  
*Hing Hay Park, Chinatown-International District*

#### Feb 24 - [Bellevue Collection Lunar New Year](#)

Experience Lunar New Year traditions from China, Taiwan, and beyond with martial arts demonstrations, music and dancing, food, visual arts, and more all-ages activities.  
*Bellevue Collection*

## Holiday Luncheon 2018 - at Wild Fin in Issaquah



Some years are busier than others - and this year we had a small but fun group gather at the Wild Fin restaurant in Issaquah for our annual Holiday Luncheon.

We were very much pleased that councilmember Janice Zahn joined us as well as Sara and Dan Glarz who participated in the Japan-America Grassroots summit and even more pleased to have them join BSCA.

We are all looking forward to planning for the 50th anniversary celebration...

## Glatz family - Welcome to BSCA !



The Glatz family enjoyed their Grassroots Japanese visitors and have joined BSCA - Sara writes:

First let me say, hosting the Shintani Family this past summer was so much fun! We loved getting to know Asaha and Kensuke! Our children were excited to introduce our new Japanese friends to American culture and we filled their weekend visit with all kinds of adventures. Saying goodbye at the end of the visit was so hard, but we have stayed in touch and frequently text/chat with them. *With Japanese visitors at left*

About family: We are Dan and Sara Glatz. Our children are Brannon (18), Daryl (17), Evan (15) and Megan (10). We lived in Japan, in Kanagawa-ken, for 15 years. Dan

was in the Navy and stationed at Yokosuka Naval Base. We lived off the base in Zushi-shi. Sara taught conversational English and a children's culture class for 6 years and then worked as a cultural mediator for internationals giving birth in Japan.

Three of our four children were born in Japan. We raised all of them to speak Japanese and embrace the culture they lived in. We placed all four of our children in Japanese kindergarten where they picked up the basics of culture and language. They graduated and moved on to Numama Shougakkou (Numama Elementary School). Our oldest three graduated from elementary school - fully fluent in Japanese. Their mother tongue was Japanese. Although they have moved on to a traditional American school, they remain fluent in Japanese.

In fall of 2016 we moved to Bellevue. It was quite a change adjusting to life in America, but as soon as we were settled our friends from Japan began visiting. Over the past two years we have maintained our close friendships in Japan as well as making new friends here. We look forward to sharing both cultures with all we meet!

## BSCA Summer Student Exchange Deadline to apply for Summer 2019 approaching!

This long standing program is our most important contribution to international friendship-the first exchange back to 1977. Our exchange is a two part program: we match each selected student with a student selected by our Sister City counterparts and the two spend much of the summer together - half here and half in the Sister City. It also has become very much a family centered program - not only is the selected student involved, but so is the whole family leading to long lasting friendships.

Most of our applicants hear about this program from past exchange students, friends or family members or from BSCA members such as you - the flyer and applications should be available on our website [www.bellevuesistercities.org](http://www.bellevuesistercities.org).



## Liepaja – Fanija Matiss memorial fund for music lovers

Music was the great love of Fanija Matiss' life and in her memory her daughters chose BSCA to make music available to people in her native Liepaja. The first to enjoy her legacy were music students – this past October it was the older generation.



Working with Natalija Vecvagare at Liepaja city hall, her daughter Vita Matiss made it possible for 20 pensioners from the Liepāja Politiski represēto klubs (an association of pensioners who were deported to Siberia) to attend the October 6<sup>th</sup> concert at the "Lielais Dzintars" concert hall, where the Liepaja National Symphonic Orchestra premiered a work by Peteris Vasks. They also met with the director of the LNSO and Vasks himself. Pictured - in center Vita with Peter Vasks behind her and joined by other LNSO members and those pensioners who had arrived early.

Peteris Vasks works will be featured February 5-10th in Seattle - the final concert at the new Nordic Museum on Sunday, Feb 10th at 2:00pm See more at: <http://nordicmuseum.org/events/168238>

## Exchange students... Liepaja 2011



When Karen Corbitt met Samanta Kaleja for the first time at SeaTac airport those of us watching thought they were long lost friends... the connection was immediate and they even looked like sisters.

It was a welcome surprise to get an e-mail from Karen's mother - they all have stayed in contact all these years and with Karen in England a visit to Latvia was a must. Karen



writes:

*I was doing an internship with Deloitte in US Business Tax. I lived in England for 3.5 months and was able to visit Samantha for one of the weekends. We met in Riga (since Liepaja is a bit further out) and had an amazing time! Her sister and boyfriend also came along and we were able to spend a couple days exploring the beautiful city with its castles and sea, and also enjoying each other's company.*

*Thank you so much again for giving me the opportunity 7 years ago to visit Latvia, one of the most beautiful countries in the world, and to meet Samanta, whom I honestly consider family.*

These days Samanta is a talented and trained graphic artist – she does logos, maps and photo enhancements, 3-D renderings and advertising.

**From your Editor**... again it has been a while in between newsletters – but I need items from our members, friends and exchange students to fill these pages... I can only find or make up so much stuff... and BSCA has not been very active this last year.

I hope that with the Bellevue-Yao 50 year celebration this will change – but that is up to every one of us. Keep news items in mind and get them to me... and plan on attending the next meeting in April – and contact Gregg to volunteer help in planning the celebration in November.