



Spring 2019
Volume 154

Annual Membership Meeting Tuesday, April 16, 2019 Bellevue City Hall 7:30 pm

Our Bicycling Adventures... local and more...

Gregg Schrader and Abigail Westbrook will share some of their adventures

Over the past several years Gregg and Abigail have been out on their bicycles every spare moment – during the summer they ride the many roads and trails in the Cascade Mountains, but their bicycling adventures have taken them not only to explore places in the US = Austin, Boise, Charleston, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, San Antonio, San Diego, and Washington DC as well as Vancouver and Victoria in Canada – but to cities in several other countries - Beijing, Luxembourg City, Paris, Prague, Stockholm, Taipei.



When, in late March, Abigail attended an educational law conference in downtown Philadelphia, Gregg joined her on the trip. He explored the city on a rented bike waiting for Abigail to finish her conference so she could join him for more bicycling. They will be sharing this - their most recent adventure - as well as highlights of others. Please join us for an entertaining evening!



BUT... before we hear from Gregg and Abigail we have work to do

Please remember that this is our only business meeting each year – this is when we report on the activities of the past year and share 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. More information follows and the end of year financial report for both association and committees is attached.

NOTE: there is a large event scheduled in the concourse for this evening and parking will be a problem... A parking overflow map is attached - overflow to the Meydenbauer surface lot.

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

From your Editor

As we plan celebrations for our 50 year anniversary we also remember the many people who worked to establish the first sister city affiliation with Yao, as well as all those who in the years following brought their enthusiasm and hard work to the many projects that were undertaken. Keep their legacy alive by participating and please send in your membership dues to keep our projects - especially our summer student exchange ongoing.

The Annual meeting is the time to approve our financials and the budget for the coming fiscal year - March to February for BSCA. Attached is the year end report - on one side the Association on the other the total for all four committees. In the past we have relied on a 'generic' budget since our income and expenses don't change much year to year - this year we have the delegation to plan for.

The income from dues barely covers our operating expenses and we thank all those who add a donation to their dues - however the problem of our dwindling funds remains. We need to look at ways to raise the funds we will be needing this year to host the delegation from Yao and to keep our student exchange funded = all ideas are welcome!

So - as we start this new fiscal year it is time to renew your BSCA membership. Dues continue to be \$30 individual or \$50 family credited to the Association funds to cover operating expenses. Please use the form on the last page to send in your dues and any additional donations to association or to the committee of choice. For those of you who joined lately - your dues are current. Thank you.

This is the year that was...

This past year was the most uneventful in our history... not only did we see another low in our membership renewals, but attendance at our events was very disappointing...

On the positive side: the one big event that BSCA took part in - mostly due to Gregg Schrader's work with the City - was the Japan-America Grassroots Summit. A few of us did have a chance to meet and host some of the visitors from Japan, and the Glatz family joined BSCA after participating in this event.

Also - as for more years than we can remember, we received an art entry from Yao to forward to the Young Artist's Showcase at SCI and it was among the top contenders.

Although nowhere near the usual attendance our Holiday Luncheon was a fun and friendly event.

Planning for the year to come...

Let's start if off by all of you sending in your membership dues - but more than that, by planning to attend our meetings and events...

The **BIG EVENT** this year will be the delegation visit from Yao scheduled for November.

We also have 3 great candidates for our summer exchange and we hope to meet them and families at our Summer Picnic.

And the art entry from Yao has been forwarded to SCI - see next page.

Delegation visit from Yao, Japan - November 6-8, 2019



With the dates for a 10 member delegation visit confirmed we now need to start planning the schedule of events as well as how to find the funding for these. It has been some years since we have hosted a delegation and the memories of past participants would be a welcome aid to the planning. And we welcome any suggestions for fund-raising.

We expect that among the scheduled events will be a visit to the Bellevue Botanical Garden and the Yao Garden there. There will be tours of City Hall and Bellevue and surroundings. And last - the traditional farewell dinner - the venue for that most likely the concourse at City Hall as for several of our events in the past.

There will be meetings at City Hall and meetings with BSCA members which will include the usual exchange of gifts - and much thought goes into choosing something that represents our cities. Back in 2003 then BSCA president Vilis Barevics and Hugh Burleson presented a metal sculpture by one of our local artists - receiving was Iishi Fujii from Yao Sister Cities - all three of them are no longer with us

We Will Miss Them Dagmara Bitneres (1927-2019) and Imants Bitners (1923-2019)

It had been nearly 20 years since the City of Bellevue and the City of Yao, Japan had joined the Sister Cities, Hualien had recently come on board and the Bellevue City Council decided it is time to search for another sister city - this time maybe in Europe. This is when Zaig Phillips got busy - she hoped that this new city would be in Latvia and reached out to the Latvian community for support. Among those responding were Dagmara and Imants Bitners. (Imants front left, Dagmara behind him)



Zaiga remembers: I really got to know Dagmara and Imants Bitners when they both became the greatest supporters for Liepaja, Latvia to become a sister city to Bellevue. Their support and voices were heard and respected. They participated in all the organizational meetings, (above), were participants in the packing and shipping the medical supplies to Liepaja and, as long as they were



able, they continued to be supportive. Through his company Imants provided packing materials and together with others provided the manpower lifting the heavy boxes. Even in close to freezing temps in my garage we had a lot of chats and happy laughter. They enjoyed and participated in many delegation visits, helped with student, teacher and staff exchanges often acting as translators. Dagmara loved music and managed to arrange for a Latvian opera singer to participate at master class with Seattle Opera. both Dagmara and Imants were instrumental in founding the Bellevue and Liepaja, Latvia sister City relationship. We thank them and will miss them forever.

Imants and Dagmara were always delighted to spend time with visitors from Liepaja. Imants himself was born in Liepaja and so he and Dagmara were front and center when



2019 Young Artists and Authors Showcase *Theme: Global Citizens: Resilient Communities*

Again this year we are forwarding an entry from Yao to SCI - this year the theme asked the young artists to represent how communities around the world face an increasing number of challenges be they political or due to natural causes - earthquakes, storms, the expected problems associated with climate change - the question is: How well can a community face these challenges?

Rinca Kondo titles her work "Let's plant a bright future" She explains: *What inspired me to create this work: When I heard the word 'resilience' the first thing that I came up with was 'plants resilience'. I put the thought into my work that we human beings should go forward with a strong mind, never giving in to natural disasters just as plants recover with a strong vitality no matter how devastated their habitats are. I also expressed the importance of creating communities surrounded by natural environment where people are willing to preserve nature and increase greenery.*

Ten finalists will be selected—five US and 5 international. One U.S. artist and one international artist will be the Grand Prize Winners - and awarded \$1,000.

**It has been 50 years since Bellevue joined the Sister City family
Bellevue Sister Cities Association NEEDS YOU to help celebrate!**

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 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 any longer, 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

RENEW YOUR BSCA MEMBERSHIP - BE PART OF THE SISTER CITY COMMUNITY

**BELLEVUE SISTER CITIES ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

Fiscal year March 1, 2019 to February 28, 2020

Please complete the information below:

Name: _____

Primary committee: _____

Address: _____

Additional committees: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home phone: _____

home e-mail: _____

Work phone: _____

work e-mail: _____

Cell phone: _____

Membership categories:

Individual \$30 (all to Association)..... _____

Spouse \$20 (all to Association)..... _____

Youth \$5 (\$5 to Committee) _____

Business members ...(\$50- to Assoc)..... _____

Donations:

To Association (for student exchange)..... _____

To Association (general purpose funds)..... _____

To Committee (please specify committee)..... _____

Total enclosed: _____

Comments?

Please make checks payable to **BSCA** and mail to:
BSCA c/o Inta Gotelli, 18911 SE 44th Way, Issaquah, WA 98027-9761