



2020 - The Year That... Wasn't??

The Year 2020 will have its special place in history - not since 1918 has the world seen the kind of pandemic we're still living through thanks to Covid-19. Even with the promise of vaccines there is no end in sight... and then the demonstrations against racial injustice, the police, you name it and add the contentious presidential election... And so, BSCA, as many other organizations, had to put 'pause' on the usual activities - no student exchange, no summer picnic and yes, no Holiday lunch.

Still there are a few items that deserve to be documented - and the one we are the most happy to share is the SCI Young Artist's Showcase - see below.

Young Artists Showcase 2020 theme - One World: Out of Many, We Are One



We are so pleased to congratulate Haruto Tsuda - his artwork was selected as the winning international entry. The theme this year highlighted the importance of unity and community to transcend differences. As usual, the students were encouraged to draw inspiration from their experience with the many ways that people cultivate relationships across cultures.



Haruto's entry is titled *Morning of Fertility* and he explains: *I got the meaning of the idea that we mutually respect different cultures in the 21st century, which we have not seen enough yet, as the dawn of the world. And I portrayed the situation of the world, which escaped from its dark side history and has begun to move more actively.*

The artwork was returned to Yao, where a happy artist was congratulated by members of Yao city staff and the Yao Sister City Association. We also

thank them for their participation in this program for longer than any of us remember, the entries from Yao often among the finalists. See: <https://sistercities.org/yaas/2020-winners/>

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
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From your Editor

It is not like the new virus should have been a big surprise... and we don't have to look as far back as the Spanish Flu of 1918 - there have been virus outbreaks off and on since then, SARS in 2003 among the most recent. Some countries had taken this threat seriously - Taiwan for one - and had plans of action in place. Unfortunately, that is not what happened here, and it is not surprising that even with the increasing death count, there are still those who believe it is all a hoax. And so, at some time in the future, we will again be able to think about BSCA activities - such as celebrating 30 years of the Liepaja-Bellevue friendship next year - that is, if BSCA does not end up being one of the casualties of this pandemic.

In the meantime we're sharing a few items with you all - and hope this will keep BSCA as something worth participating in when the time comes to become active again.

I wonder how many of you actually missed receiving the newsletter... back when Pat Hale was editor you got it on a monthly basis - there was that much going on and we did have monthly meetings. In the past years we went to bi-monthly or even less as our membership aged and left us. This one comes to document the year of mostly non-events... and we hope it will not be the last.

You might have noticed that there was no dues reminder sent out in March... by the time I got back from my mother's memorial service in Chicago it was March and we knew our usual activities were not to be - and so most of our expenses are on hold, too... you'll be getting the reminder next

Our Yao Maple flaunts its fall colors!



When Council member Janice Zahn took a walk through the Bellevue Botanical Garden to enjoy the fall coolers she made a very special stop at the Yao Garden to check on the maple tree planted during the Yao delegation visit last November. She reports that the tree, planted to celebrate 50 years of Bellevue-Yao friendship, has had a good summer growing and was showing off its fall colors.

Thank you again, Nancy Kartes, for having this special maple in mind for the this occasion and for keeping it safe and healthy for us all to enjoy.



Dr. Zaiga Phillips awarded Honorary Doctorate

Our congratulations to Zaiga - last March she was one of the three recipients of a honorary doctorate awarded by the medical school in Riga for her tireless work in behalf of the students and faculty at the university. This was not the first recognition she has received for her work benefiting the children in Latvia - previously she had been among those recognized for her contributions by the president of Latvia.

And it was due to Zaiga's efforts that Liepaja became Bellevue's third sister city. It was in 1987 during her first visit back to her birth place that she determined to help better the conditions there, and as a pediatrician, her focus was on the health and well being of the children. So, when the headline in the *Journal American* reporting Bellevue seeking additional sister cities caught her attention, she decided one would be in Latvia - and with the help

of the local Latvian community, then BSCA members, especially Dorothy Webb, Liepaja and Bellevue made it official in 1991. And with Zaiga's focus on children, and the participation of school psychologist Ann Knofel, the Liepaja Special School soon became one of our main projects.

Read more about her life from Latvia to the US at: <https://galpal.net/circle-spotlight-dr-phillips/>



Bellevue Receives Coronavirus supplies from Hualien

Last May the City of Bellevue received several boxes from our sister city Hualien, Taiwan, supplies to help protect city essential employees from the virus. Having acted fast the spread of the virus in Taiwan was under control and they were in a position to reach out and offer help to others.

And acting fast was the key... while it was well into March before we become aware of the coming corona

virus crisis, in Taiwan, just 81 miles from mainland China, they already knew in January that the coming crisis was not to be ignored. Having lived through the worst of the SARS outbreak in 2003, Taiwan was prepared to take action, and as soon as the news of the coronavirus began to emerge from Wuhan officials at Taiwan's National Health Command Center moved quickly to respond to the potential threat – its actions a textbook response to this crisis. Their early decisive measures meant that soon it had the situation under control and it could turn to helping other countries Thank you Hualien.

Now there's 'Bellevue Street' in Yao City

There is a beautiful path of cherry blossoms on the Nagase River, loved by everyone in Yao City, which now has been named in honor of Bellevue, Washington, USA. A plaque with 'Bellevue Street' has been installed as testimony of this friendship.



Last year, on the occasion of the delegation visit to commemorate the 50th anniversary of our sister city partnership, Bellevue renamed a street near the Yao Garden as Yao Drive.



Musings of a former summer exchange student now living in Italy.



Caterina Cataneo (Hualien 2013) is in her final year in Milan getting an economics degree from Bocconi University. She writes:

Living abroad, you learn very quickly the cultural differences of a foreign country. Sometimes you learn things that you thought were Italian aren't Italian at all: Alfredo sauce, spaghetti and meatballs, parmesan. (All of these are American inventions... but strangely enough pizza with french fries and hot dog slices is an Italian invention—and yes, Italians call this an American pizza.)

When you get sick your friends will tell you to go the doctor and you ask "why go for a common cold?" Some things stay constant overseas. In the US, Barilla is the most recognized pasta brand, and in Italy too. In the US, the kids are playing Among Us. In Milan, you can find Among Us graffiti. Coca Cola is the best soda in the US, and in Milan Coca Cola sponsored the city center's annual Christmas tree. And of course, a global trend lately has been to always wear a mask. #MaskUp #IndossaLaMascherina

Remembering our past Holiday Luncheons

On a 'normal' year, we would be gathering to enjoy a bit of Holiday cheer together - traditionally this event has been among our best attended... so the best we can do this year is to remember the good times past. Coming soon after the Yao delegation visit, we were pleased to see many new faces at our last year's lunch and hoped it would bring renewed enthusiasm - but that was not to be...



The Club House at Tam o'Shanter Golf Club has been our venue for Holiday lunches the past several years - and so it was again last December and maybe it will be again in 2021.

And remembering some of our Holiday lunches form years past...

Several years of newsletters are available on our website... see more there

