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News from the Consulate

46th Annual NC Cherry Blossom Festival

The 46th Annual Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival was held April 13-14 and April 20-21, 2013, at San Francisco's Japantown. Consul General Hiroshi Inomata and Mrs. Inomata attended a variety of the events, including the Grand Parade. The Consulate had a booth to distribute information about Japan and our sister cities. We were happy to meet the sister city representatives who stopped by our booth!

During the festival on April 13, the Consulate also presented a special showing of "J, Robot: a documentary film about humanoid robots" by Michael Garrigues, who hosted a Q&A session about the film and the current state of humanoid robots in Japan after the screening.

You can find more information and pictures from the event on our website and Facebook page.



News from the Sister Cities



Cupertino Cherry Blossom Festival

The 30th Annual Cupertino Cherry Blossom Festival was held at Cupertino Memorial Park on April 27-28. The two day event consisted of a wide array of Japanese entertainment, performances, demonstrations, cultural exhibits, art, and crafts at both indoor and outdoor venues. There was also a wide selection of Japanese foods.

The festival was hosted by the Cupertino-Toyokawa Sister City Committee. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the establishment of sister city relations between Cupertino and Toyokawa. The next student exchange between Cupertino and Toyokawa will take place this summer, and the 2013 student delegation and chaperones were introduced at the festival on April 27th. *(Student group is pictured at left.)*

Other Past Events



Lindsay-Ono 40th Anniversary Celebration

By Jim Kliegl, Lindsay-Ono Sister City Program Chairman
(Edited for length)

Lindsay, California and Ono, Hyogo, Japan celebrated their 40th anniversary as sister cities in April. The mayor of Ono, Tsutomu Horai, along with five others traveled to Lindsay during Lindsay's Orange Blossom Festival. Mayor Horai was the Grand Marshall in the Orange Blossom Parade on the morning of April 20, and that afternoon, a small plaza in the park, named Friendship Plaza, was dedicated to commemorate the anniversary. A banquet was held that evening to celebrate the 40th anniversary, which more than 100 guests attended.

A delegation from Lindsay, led by Mayor Ramona Padilla, will visit Ono in August during their summer festival. The visitors will also spend several days sight-seeing in this historic town. The highpoint of the visit will be the signing of the 40-year renewal of the Lindsay/Ono Sister City Charter.

Hashimoto, Japan Delegation Visits Rohnert Park

By Holly Melton, Rohnert Park Sister City Relations Committee
(Edited for length)

On April 5th, Rohnert Park and Hashimoto celebrated the 30th anniversary of their sister city relationship at a reception and banquet at the Foxtail Golf Club in Rohnert Park. The dinner was a culmination of a whirlwind two-day visit packed with activities. The Sister City Relations Committee of Rohnert Park hosted a potluck party. The City of Rohnert Park hosted a conference to discuss mutual problems like global warming, population decline, housing issues, and education. The visitors were taken on a tour of local cultural venues and city facilities. The Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco sent a representative to the event at the Foxtail Golf Club. There were many speeches and hopes that Rohnert Park might reciprocate with a visit to Hashimoto in the next few years.

Pictures from the Hashimoto delegation's visit can be found here:

http://guymiller.smugmug.com/Events/Hashimoto-Delegation-Visit-to/28958638_Xggf57#li=2461934959&k=FBJR759

Other Past Events

Santa Clara Student Visit

From March 26 to April 1, 2013, 14 students from Izumo, Japan, visited their sister city of Santa Clara and stayed with host families. While there, they were able to celebrate Easter with their host families and Santa Clara Sister Cities Association members, who put on an Easter egg hunt at Santa Clara Vice Mayor Pat Mahan's home. As most Japanese children have never experienced an Easter egg hunt before, it was a very special experience for the visiting students. In addition to the Easter festivities, the students also visited Santa Clara's city hall, fire department, police station, and the Japanese American Museum in San Jose.

The full article on this visit can be found at:
http://www.santaclaraweekly.com/2013/Issue-14/japanese_visitors_enjoy_easter_in_santa_clara.html

Fun Facts



Proud of Our Logo

By Ron Jones, Rio Vista Sister Cities Association Chairman

Logos can identify and increase recognition of your sister city organization. The Rio Vista Sister Cities Association logo (shown above) represents the connection between Rio Vista, California and Tobishima Village, Japan.

The shape symbolizes the half world that we are apart. At the center of our logo is a distinctive superstructure; the supporting cables of the Meiko West Bridge (Tobishima) overlays the flag of Japan, and the heavy steel of the Helen Medere Bridge (Rio Vista) overlays the star field of the flag of the United States, thus linking our respective communities.

Future Events

Rio Vista Students Going to Japan

By Gary Spear, Rio Vista Sister Cities Association

On June 2, eight students from Riverview School will leave on this year's student exchange trip to Japan. The nine-day trip begins with three days in Kyoto. The group will visit castles and temples to learn about the history and culture of Japan.

They will go by bullet train to Nagoya and then on to Tobishima. In Tobishima, everyone will stay with host families. The students will attend the Tobishima Academy, where they will participate in eighth-grade classes and activities. Staying with families will give our students the opportunity to enjoy family life, and build strong friendships.

Ichifuna & Moreau Catholic: Another Year of Friendship

By Joel Hudelson, Assistant Principal for Student Support,
Moreau Catholic High School

It's been over 20 years now for the sister schools, Ichifuna & Moreau Catholic, and they've always made it fun. Starting shortly after the sister-city relationship between Funabashi and Hayward over 25 years ago, the sister school partnership has seen many groups make their way across the Pacific from each school: basketball teams, dancers, musicians, teachers, and all have enjoyed this rich cultural friendship and learning opportunity.

This year, Moreau Catholic will be sending 7 students and 2 teachers to Funabashi from July 20-29 and then Ichifuna students and their advisor Yoshi Kase-San will visit Hayward & Moreau Catholic from August 14-26.

Event Calendar

May

- 10 San Francisco Sister City Annual Meeting
- 11 Sausalito fundraiser

June

- 8 27th Santa Cruz Japanese Cultural Fair
- 22 Fairfield fundraiser



Summer Exchange Calendar

May	Watsonville to Kawakami
June 10 - 22	San Jose to Okayama
July 1 - 12	Santa Clara to Izumo
July 2 - 15	San Carlos to Omura
	Omura to San Carlos
July 9 - 29	Fairfield to Nirasaki
July 12 - 24	Oakland to Fukuoka
July 22 -	Takko to Gilroy
July 24 - Aug 6	Hercules to Tsushima
July 27 - Aug 8	Oakland to Fukuoka
July 27 - Aug 7	Sausalito to Sakaide



Call for Submissions

Have a story, opinion or event you'd like to share? Submit it for the next issue of the newsletter! The input from your organizations is what makes the newsletter informative! The deadline is **June 20th**. Please direct all submissions to:

katherine.andresen@sr.mofa.go.jp