



Spokane Nishinomiya News

QUARTERLY REPORT OF THE SISTER CITY ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAM UPDATE

Volume 20 No. 2

Website: spokane-nishinomiya.org

December, 2017

A Message From the President



Rol Herriges

Of course it's that time of year again when we look back at our activities of the current year and forward to a new one. So, we hope that all had a great Thanksgiving holiday and will have an even greater Christ-

mas/New Year celebration.

With education as one of the three "reasons-for-being" of the Society, the year saw quite an amount of activity along that line: a fund-raising program at the Annual Meeting, three students being selected to spend six weeks in Nishinomiya; a send-off and welcome back during the summer, then a welcome of three Japanese students to Spokane for a six-week visit with homestay families here.

We have been notified that space for our Sister Cities "Connections Garden" in Riverfront Park will be available next spring so we can continue with readying that for various art works. Our architect, Don Trail, is drawing up the plans for a replica of the Imazu lighthouse, which we have chosen as our artistic addition to

the garden.

Now then, it is my special pleasure to report that the new Executive Vice President of Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute, Mr. Akihiro Nakahara, is settled into his job at the school at the old Fort Wright location on Spokane's west side. He's no stranger to Spokane, having visited here in 1985 in a Rotary Exchange program; has been President of the Nishinomiya-Spokane Sister City Society, and possibly best of all, married a Spokane woman, Dian Egner, daughter of our long-time board members Misako and Dick Egner.

In addition to the cultural activities offered at the school's Japanese Cultural Center, the new VP says, "I would like to thank all who continue to support MFWI through their visits to the JCC, as home-stay families, supporting (our) students at various community events and showing kindness to them as they explore Spokane."

Welcome, Mr. Nakahara!



◀ And a meeting with his honor (l-r Shuhei Tsutsui, Sidney Travis, Jessica Harper, Mayor David Condon, Satomi Sunakoshi, Michiko Valerie-Lewington and Yulien Priddy.

When Will Our ‘Garden’ Grow?

There is an adage somewhere about getting good things if you wait patiently.

For our “Connections” Sister Cities Garden in Riverfront Park our patience may be on the near horizon – we hope.

We had some generous donations in cash and in-kind several years ago, leading to a ground-breaking ceremony in May 2014. That was the 40th anniversary of Expo and our site is on the former Japanese Pavilion location.

But Parks folks ask us to wait for revisions of the entire Riverfront redesign. Then we were asked some more time as our Garden site was used to store large equipment to build for the new ice rink, carousel and south end of the Howard Street bridge.

We thought the wait would continue as the “Blue Bridge” middle span of Howard would be reconstructed. But that span only needs repairs, so now we are told we can proceed again with Garden plans.

At this point, we are told that prep work can resume on the garden and concrete plaza.

As plans continue for Sister Cities statuary in the Garden, the Irish-Limerick harp is completed and work is mov-

ing fast on the Nishinomia lighthouse. Plans also are moving forward for the Jechon, Jilin, Cagli and San Luis Potosi concepts.

Kathy Swehla of Land Expressions has developed an excellent Garden plan. With luck, and some help from new donors, we hope to continue the site work during spring, summer and fall for the prep site, including infrastructure.

Estimated costs for the Garden is about \$150,000 to \$175,000, not including the statuary.

Our new site is slightly smaller than our original “footprint.” But the Riverfront plan puts us right in the crossroads of the south-to-north Howard Promenade and the west-to-east Havermale Promenade. For visibility, our site could not be at a better spot.

If Phase One of the Garden continues, and ample funding grows, we hope to open late next fall or, more likely, early spring of 2019.

If patience is a virtue, all of you have been saints about waiting this long. We just hope that our patience will soon be rewarded.

Chuck Rehberg



▲ The southwest portion of the redesigned Riverfront Park is developing nicely. The Ice Palace and Ice Rink (altered after this earlier master plan version) opens Dec. 8. Next spring, the carousel and administration annex will open. If adequate funding is secured, work in spring The “Connections” Sister Cities Garden will begin in Phase One. The Garden is at the key junction of the Howard and Havermale promenades.

Events Are Many and Varied



▲ A sizable group gathered to say sayonara (farewell) to our exchange students as they prepare to return to their homes in Nishinomiya. They had spent six weeks in Spokane, attending high school classes, a homecoming celebration, Halloween and a host of other activities.



▲ Our three visiting exchange students and their host families as they arrive at Spokane International Airport in late September.

Because education is such an important part of our Society's activities, our visiting exchange students also met with the Superintendent of the Spokane Schools, Shelley Redinger, for a conversation and gift exchange. (l-r) Shuhei, Supt. Redinger, Michiko, and Satomi. The Society has a close association with Spokane system, including sister schools on the elementary and middle school levels.



Pictures by Hiroko Hill, Society board member

Lighthouse Computer Plans Readied



Spokane architect Don Trail demonstrates with a model of the Imazu lighthouse how he transfers images to paper (the model is a proportionate replica of the actual light house in Nishinomiya) for working drawings needed for construction of the artwork which will be erected for the “Connections Garden” in Spokane’s Riverfront Park. The garden site (see Garden story on page 2) will be available in the spring of 2018 to the various Sister City Societies of Spokane for renovation work. While Don has done the original paper work, his daughter Sarah utilizes the magic of CAD-CAM for the necessities of actual construction. A huge “thank you” is in order.

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