



Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Association



Volume 6, Issue 2

Newsletter

August 2016

2016 Yokkaichi Trio Cultural Exchange

Under the leadership of Yokkaichi Mayor Sukenori Hirata and Long Beach Mayor Edwin Wade, the Trio Cultural Exchange Program was established in 1965 to better understand the cultures of each other's cities. In alternate years each city sends a teacher and two high school students as goodwill ambassadors.

On July 22, 2016, teacher Arisa Nishio and high school students, Akiho Tanaka and Hiroki Yoshikawa, arrived in Long Beach for an 18-day cultural exchange tour of our city and its surrounding areas.

Cultural Exchange Tour

Kicking off the cultural tour was the official introduction of the Trio at a welcome dinner held at the beautiful Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden at California State University at Long Beach (CSULB).



LBYSKA Board President Frank Tabar with Trio students Akiho Tanaka and Hiroki Yoshikawa; Mayor Robert Garcia; and teacher Arisa Nishio.

One of the Trio's official duties was a visit to City Hall where they were introduced to Mayor Robert Garcia and City Council Members. The Trio presented gifts from Yokkaichi City Mayor Toshiyuki Tanaka to Mayor Garcia.

The Trio's busy schedule included attending a class at the American Language Institute at CSULB, a tour

of the campus, and of the historic landmark, Rancho Los Alamitos.

They took in the scenic views of Long Beach from Signal Hill Park; toured the Queen Mary; explored the California Science Center; and learned about the Japanese-American experience during WWII at the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles.



Attending a class at the American Language Institute (ALI), CSULB.

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Reports from Environmental Summit Team

The 2016 Environmental Summit team recently returned to Long Beach after a 10-day study trip to our sister city, Yokkaichi, Japan. L.B. Polytechnic High School students Grace Armendariz, Michaela Gonzales, Fatima Nunez, and Courtney Yeh took part in a discussion and solutions finding program at the International Center for Environmental Technology Transfer (ICETT).

Chaperone and advisor Taylor Peck emailed daily reports of each day's activities, but due to space constraints, a summary of their activities is below. Visit the LBYSKA website for Ms. Peck's complete reports.

The Environmental Summit team arrived in Yokkaichi on August 1st where they checked into their individual dorm rooms at ICETT (International Center for Environmental Technology Transfer) and went straight to sleep after an exhausting day of travel.

The next day, they were introduced to the other summit participants/students and interpreters from Tianjin, China and Japan. After lunch at ICETT, they went to downtown Yokkaichi's City Hall to meet Yokkaichi Mayor Toshiyuki Tanaka, Environmental Chairman Shigeo Murayama, and other officials in a formal room with fantastic views of the city.



City Councilman Shigeo Murayama, Urban & Environmental Committee Chairman and Yokkaichi City Mayor Toshiyuki Tanaka. Environmental Summit Students: L.B. Team (blue & red shirts) and Chinese and Japanese teams.

After exchanging gifts with the Mayor, the teams headed to the Yokkaichi Pollution and Environmental Museum for Future Awareness and Planetarium where they learned of the effects that World War II had on the city, and the causes and damages of the city's previous fatal air quality. Due to the largest lawsuit in Yokkaichi's history, a variety of measures

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2016 Yokkaichi Trio—*Cont'd from p1*

Having Fun

The LBYSCA hosted a beach party at Cabrillo Beach in San Pedro for the Trio, their host families, and the 2016 Environmental Summit team members. The Trio enjoyed roasting marshmallows and making S'mores for the very first time.

They were thrilled to attend a Dodgers game featuring Japanese pitcher, **Kenta Maeda** (by the way, the Dodgers won!); spending all day at Disneyland; and enjoying the Aquarium of the Pacific. A special treat was a trip via Amtrak to the San Juan Capistrano Mission.



The trio visited Pacific Wind Arts to paint a souvenir tile to remind themselves of Long Beach; and at the Kokoro Taiko studio, they were taught to play taiko (drums)- something they had not experienced in Japan.



Their taste buds were on overload when they tried many non-Japanese foods from chicken and waffles, burgers at In-N-Out (a favorite), self-serve yogurt at Belmont Shore's Yogurtland, to the outrageous foods offered at the Orange County Fair.

After an exhausting 18 days, which also included tours to places by the Trio's host families, it was time to say goodbye. At a farewell gathering, each Trio member shared their most memorable experiences in Long Beach and expressed their gratitude to LBYSCA and especially to their host families.

— *Special Acknowledgements* —

The success of the Trio program would not be possible without the contributions of many organizations and individuals. To the six host families who generously opened their homes to provide a warm and caring environment and a learning and cultural experience for the Trio, words cannot express the gratitude of LBYSCA: Joe, Kristen and Luke Aihara; Leticia, Hector and Emilio; Martha Garcia, Hans and Sebastiaan Blom; Trisha, Jim, Joshua, Joseph and Alyssa Krug; Laura, Michael, Addison and John Plantenga; and Jennifer, Steven, Jack and Kate Sarantos.

Thank you to Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia and Long Beach City Council Members for taking time to meet and greet our Trio.

Thank you, thank you, to the following for their contributions: **Sharon Weissman** (Senior Advisor to Mayor Robert Garcia); **Dr. Allison Blizzard** (CSULB Director American Language Institute); **Jeanne Costello** (Resource & Procurement Manager at Disneyland), **Jon Meyer** (LBUSD President); **Diana Craighead** and **Dr. Fenton Williams** (LBUSD Board Members); **Trace Fukuhara** (Pacific Wind Arts); **Victor Fukuhara** (Kokoro Taiko); **Shige Higashi** (Publisher, Cultural News); **Robert and Harriet Hiji** (Dodgers); **Roger Horn** (Disneyland); **Jeff Inui** (LB Polytechnic High School teacher and facilitator, Center for International Curriculum); and CSULB student and former Environmental Summit member, **Colin Keiko Mullen**.

And thank you to the following organizations: **The Port of Long Beach**; **The Aquarium of the Pacific**; **CSULB**; **Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden**; **Japanese American National Museum**; **The Queen Mary**; and **Rancho Los Alamitos and Staff**.

Arigato to the **City of Yokkaichi**, especially to **Yasumasa Oono** (city staff member and LB-Yokkaichi liaison). Thank you to the LBYSCA Trio Committee and Board members who were avail-

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2016 Environmental Summit Reports—*Cont'd from p1*

were made to improve the environment and help make the air quality as good as it is today.

After a delicious, authentic Japanese dinner in the ICETT cafeteria, the students exchanged gifts with one another and played Ping-Pong in the game room.

The next few days included a tour of Ishihara Sangyo Kaisha Chemical Plant, whose systems help prevent air pollution and water contamination, and the Isozu Monitoring Station where the teams were able to see the data on the air quality improvement compared to the poor air quality of over 60 years ago. The state-of-the-art and environmentally friendly processing of garbage disposal at Yokkaichi's Clean Center impressed everyone.

Students at the Kaisei Catholic Senior High School, an all boys school known for their talented baseball teams, presented what they had learned about environmental issues in Yokkaichi and the rest of the world, as well as solutions for these issues.



View from the Yokkaichi Port Building.

At the port, the teams boarded a tour boat and cruised Yokkaichi's three industrial complexes. A visit to the top of the Port Building, the tallest building in Yokkaichi, gave a breathtaking 360° view of the city.

A change of pace included a marvelous trip to Akame 48 Falls in Nabari City for an International Ecology Tour.

An entire day at ICETT was a lecture titled, "Toward the Realization of Comfortable Living Environment", which summarized much of what the team learned on their environmental tours in Long Beach prior to their visit to Yokkaichi.

Not all activities and trips were based around the environment. The teams were able to visit a green tea farm house, where they learned the different ways of consuming green tea; enjoy eating Nagashi Somen (cool, refreshing noodles) prepared by the women of the Yokkaichi Association; and shown how to properly wear *yukatas* (summer kimonos) that the teams wore at the Yokkaichi Summer Festival.

A visit to the Ninja Museum of Igaryu in Iga City was very interesting. They learned about secret hiding places and trick doors in a ninja spy's house and enjoyed a ninja show where ninjas used weapons such as swords, ninja stars, and poisonous darts to trick and attack their enemies.

During the evenings back at ICETT, the students paired with their teams to prepare their environmental presentations for the last day of the summit.



Visiting a green tea farm in Yokkaichi (from front): Fatima Nunez, Michaela Gonzales, Grace Armendariz, Taylor Peck (chaperone/advisor), and Courtney Yeh.

Final Day of the Summit

In front of journalists and city officials the students from Long Beach, Tianjin, and Yokkaichi presented what they learned during the summit at the Yokkaichi Pollution and Environmental Museum for Future Awareness.

The students worked extremely hard on their PowerPoint presentations and reports were that they did an exceptional job.

After the presentations the students changed into their *yukatas* and worked their way through the crowds to the annual Yokkaichi Festival where they enjoyed dance performances, drum shows, and many tasty food.

Back at ICETT, the teams attended a farewell dinner, which was a very sentimental experience. Plenty of pictures were taken and sad goodbyes were expressed and, although everyone spoke different languages and came from different cultural backgrounds, strong bonds were made between every individual involved in the summit. —*excerpts from Ms. Peck's Reports.*



The students pose with their certificates of accomplishment.

The formation of the Environmental Summit Program was the idea of former **Yokkaichi Mayor Tetsuo Inoue** in 2007 to bring together students from China, Japan and Long Beach to study the negative effects of pollution on the environment and discuss solutions. With the support of the **Port of Long Beach**, the program has been a success because it goes beyond the environmental study by implementing the sister city principle to create friendships and global relationships.

Congratulations and thank you to the **LBYSKA Environmental Summit Chair, Bonnie Sharp Stoeppelman**, and **Co-Chair, Scott Warren**, for all their hard work preparing and culturally educating the Summit Team, and the many hours planning and coordinating their travel to Japan.

LBYSKA's 4 Programs

1. YOKKAICHI ENGLISH FELLOWSHIPS (YEF)

This program, which began in 1985, provides an opportunity for Long Beach teachers or Cal State Long Beach graduates to serve as assistant language teachers at the elementary and middle school levels in Yokkaichi, Japan.

Selected teachers or new graduates will work at a paid position in the Yokkaichi School System for two years. This is an English immersion program for the students and speaking Japanese is not required.

Applicants must have a current passport, be a citizen of good character, and have no visible tattoos.

2. TRIO CULTURAL EXCHANGE*

Every alternate year, LBYSKA selects one teacher and two high school students for a three-week cultural visit in Yokkaichi, Japan. Each member of the Trio will stay with a family for 9 days and move to the next host family for the remaining 9. This program began in 1965.

2017 will be the year that trio applicants will be selected from Long Beach. Applicants must be Long Beach residents and/or Long Beach Unified School District students, citizens of the United States, possess a record of good citizenship in school and community, and have no visible tattoos.

Expenses, including partial airfare, are supported by the Association and the city of Yokkaichi. All applicants must have a current passport.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT EXCHANGE*

Each summer four high school students and a chaperone from Long Beach take part in a one-week environmental study program with students from Yokkaichi and China. This program began in 2008.

Expenses, including round-trip airfare, are the responsibility of the students and chaperone. All applicants must have a current passport and have no visible tattoos.

4. PHYSICIANS EXCHANGE

Since 2003 doctors from Yokkaichi Hospital visit Long Beach to study medical procedures at Long Beach hospitals.

*Application forms are available around the beginning of each year and interviews are held in March or April. Please check our website for additional information and requirements at <http://longbeach-yokkaichi.org>.

Website: <http://longbeach-yokkaichi.org>



See MORE pictures on Facebook at Yokkaichi-Long Beach Sister City.

2016 Yokkaichi Trio—*Cont'd from p2*

able to escort the Trio or who worked behind the scenes at the many events: Joe Aihara, Suzan Al Shammari, Victor Fukuhara, Jeanne Karatsu, Trisha and Jim Krug, Janet Mullen, Jeanette Schelin, Bonnie Stoeppelman, Frank and Mariko Tabar, Aki and Mike Vaughn, Scott Warren, and Roy Wood.

And finally, kudos to the unflappable Yoko Pusavat, the Trio Exchange Program Chair, who planned the Trio schedule, worked tirelessly to secure host families, and coordinated the Trio's trip from the day of their arrival to the day of their departure. She deserves a gold medal for her Olympian efforts!

LBYSKA's mission statement is "Creating Leaders for the 21st Century" and the Trio Program not only impacts the Trio teacher and students, but all those with whom they interact during their visit. The city of Yokkaichi sent three very fine young people who represented their city well as goodwill ambassadors and LBYSKA was delighted to have them here in Long Beach. ///



2016 Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Association

Board Members

Joe Aihara	Patricia McMaster	Frank Tabar
Suzan Al Shammari	Janet Mullen	Mariko Tabar
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Jim Krug	Jeanette Schelin	Scott Warren
Trisha Krug	Lee Schelin	James Wells, MD
John McMaster	Bonnie Stoeppelman	Karen Wells
		Roy Wood

— 2016 LBYSKA Board Officers —

Frank Tabar, President	Yoko Pusavat, Vice President
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