



EDMONDS SISTER CITY COMMISSION

2017 – Fall Newsletter



THANK YOU!

Thank you to our host families who generously opened their homes to our Hekinan delegates. Our exchange was a success because of you!



Crossing Communities: The 2017 Edmonds – Hekinan Exchange

By Chaperone Katherine Diefendorf

Our trip to Hekinan, Japan was absolutely amazing. The Hekinan community was incredibly kind and welcoming. Each day was an action-packed adventure; we got to see many beautiful historic sites, eat delicious food, and experience Japanese art and culture.

For example, on the first day in Japan we began our morning by meditating at the serene Rinsenji Temple. We then went to the Tatsukichi Museum of Contemporary Art and afterwards ate a traditional Japanese lunch out of bento boxes. The art was exquisite and the Japanese food was sublime. Later in the day we took a tour of the Chubu Thermal Power Station, which was fascinating. Next, we arrived at the AOI Park where we got to garden and pick our own fresh veggies to take to our host families. After we had a coffee break, we then went to the welcome dinner party at the Hekinan Cultural Hall. All of our host families and our Hekinan delegates attended this fabulous event and each of the Edmonds delegates got to wear yukatas (a Japanese garment) during the party. What fun we had!

Other highlights of the trip included: going to Kyoto to see the Kiyomizu Temple, meeting the mayor of Hekinan, going to the Hekinan Seaside Aquarium where we got to touch a shark, touring a Toyota manufacturing plant, visiting the Okazaki Castle, the Ieyasu and Mikawa Bushi Museum, doing calligraphy, and participating in the Genkiss Parade and Mugaen Green Tea Ceremony. We even took a tour of the Tokoname Pottery Footpath. We met the local artists and then later got to create our own pottery. This truly was an opportunity of a lifetime. We treasure our memories of our trip to Hekinan and hope to return soon!

I've been involved with the Edmonds Sister City program since high school, befriending and hosting many of the people who came to visit. I visited Japan for the first time in 2013 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Edmonds/Hekinan Sister City relationship. It was an unforgettable experience to finally see what home was for my friends on the other side of the Pacific. Everything about the town was wonderful, but what stood out to me most was the warm hospitality everyone showed during my stay in Hekinan.

*-- Michelle Rockstead, Edmonds Sister City Commission
Assistant Language Teacher in Hekinan, Japan*

Japanese Events Nearby

With the colors beginning to change, the Seattle Japanese Garden is the perfect place to visit. Located right outside of Capitol Hill, the garden consists of 3.5 acres of detailed beauty, including; stones, water, lanterns, bridges, plants and animals. The colors are constantly changing, so no visit will be like the last. Admission is free on Thursdays after 3:00pm.

The garden hosts tea ceremonies – also called Chado – most Saturdays from April through October. For more information please visit their website at www.seattlejapanesegarden.org.

Additionally, the beautiful exhibit featuring Japanese art from the Edo period will continue to be on display at the Seattle Art Museum until October 22, 2017.

What's next?

We will begin to recruit for the Summer 2018 student delegation to Hekinan later this Fall! If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity for travel or volunteering, please visit our website at <http://www.edmondswa.gov/sister-city-exchange-programs.html> or e-mail us at sister.city@edmondswa.gov.



Join our Commission!

Are you passionate about Japanese culture and want to share that with the community? Do you want to facilitate cultural experiences for teens in both Edmonds and Hekinan? The City of Edmonds Sister City Commission is looking for volunteers for our team! Established in 1988, our mission is to promote international communication and understanding through exchanges of people, ideas and culture. Commissioners serve three-year terms with no term limits. Adult and student commissioner opportunities are available. You would have the opportunity to play a part in fundraising, and program management. Learn more by e-mailing Carolyn LaFave at carolyn.lafave@edmondswa.gov.

2017 Sister City Commissioners

Pamela Erickson – Michele Fellows – Marlene Friend
Karyn Heinekin – Iyoko Okano – Laura Otto
Patrick Sweeney – Dar Williams
Staff Liaison: Carolyn LaFave

