



EDMONDS SISTER CITY COMMISSION

2018 – Spring Newsletter



Above: group photo at Kiyomizudera Temple in Kyoto

Below: The dogwood tree planted by former Edmonds Mayor Gary Haakenson (2012)



Edmonds and Hekinan Celebrate 30th Anniversary of Sister City Partnership

By David E. Huneke

2018 marks the 30th year of Edmonds and Hekinan as sister cities. It also was the 70th anniversary of Hekinan becoming a city. Our delegation of Mayor Earling and his wife Susan, Iyoko Okano our guide and translator, and six Edmonds' residents made the trip in early April to celebrate these two occasions.

The Sister City Reception was at the Kinuura Grand Hotel ballroom. This hotel was home for us during our stay in Hekinan. Before the reception started the official photo was taken with the city leader of Hekinan, our delegation, and the delegation of Pula Croatia. Pula is another sister city of Hekinan. Around 250 people attended the reception. Many of Hekinan Sister City organization attended as did many present and former city officials. Mayor Earling and Mayor Negita exchanged gifts. Mayor Earling presented an original piece of Northwest Art to Mayor Negita. Mayor Negita gave Mayor Earling a painting of Fujiyama or Mount Fuji. Speeches were made by the head of the various delegations and other Japanese Officials.

We were honored with an old traditional Japanese puppet show. The puppets were over three hundred years old and one of the last puppets of this tradition. Some of us had our picture taken holding the puppet. The highlight was meeting and talking to the Japanese people. Many of them had been to the United States and some had been in the Seattle area. A few had visited Edmonds. Almost all said that they wanted to come to Edmonds in October when Hekinan sends a delegation that will be here for Halloween. The food was delicious with a never ending supply of sushi, beer, and sake.

The next day was the Official 70th Anniversary Ceremony at the city's reception hall with about 500 people attending. We were greeted by the mayor and his staff. They were dressed very formal with striped pants, morning coats, and white gloves. The ceremony started with a duet of two ladies, one playing the clarinet and saxophone and the other played the piano. A group of high school aged students presented a slide show of Hekinan that they produced. This slide show was also a book that was given to us. Mayor Negita, Mayor Earling, Mayor Miletic of

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Pula all addressed the attendees. The ceremony was very impressive.

Once our visit was over I stayed in Japan for another week visiting Tokyo where I saw the Meiji Shrine, the Imperial Gardens, Tsukiji fish market, Tokyo Tower, the stadium where the opening ceremony of the 2020 Olympic will be held, the Sky Tree, and the sites of Ginza. The highlight for me was visiting Nanzan University in Nagoya a school that I attended 43 years ago as an exchange student. I was able to meet my Japanese Language teacher, and she still had her grade book. I was also able to see the priest that was in charge of my dorm. I was honored to represent the city of Edmonds and strongly recommend a trip to Japan.

What's next?

We will be hosting our Hekinan delegates this fall from October 29th to November 3rd. We have a busy schedule of activities for our guests including a trip to the State Capitol and Whidbey Island, Downtown Edmonds Trick or Treat Night, and a visit to the City Council meeting on Tuesday, October 30th for the reading of a 30th Anniversary Proclamation.

We will begin to recruit for the Summer 2019 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. We currently have one Commissioner opening and one opening for a student representative. 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.



2018 Sister City Commissioners

Lindsey Crawford – Michele Fellows – Marlene Friend
Karyn Heinekin – Greg Lange – Gillian Lim – Gabe Longoria
Iyoko Okano – Laura Otto – Patrick Sweeney – Dar Williams

Staff Liaison: Carolyn LaFave