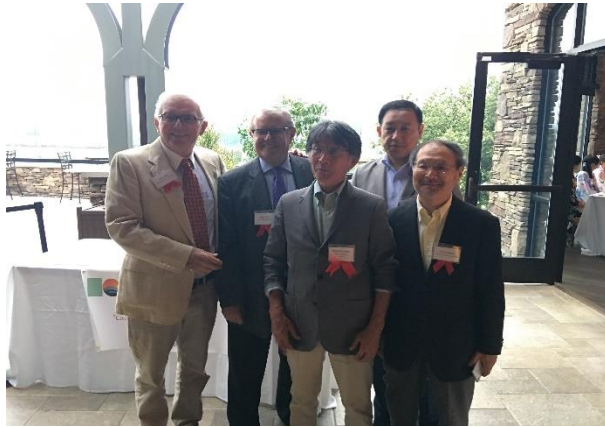


Thursday, August 23, 2018

Carlsbad, Japanese city celebrate their connection with weekend of events



LOLA SHERMAN SEASIDE MUSINGS

It's hard to say which people — hosts or guests — had the most fun celebrating the 30th anniversary of Carlsbad's sistercity affiliation with Futtsu, Japan, last weekend.

An eight-member delegation — Vice Mayor Yoshiyuki Koizumi, a council member, two Sister City leaders, an agriculture official and three teenage middle-school students came from Futtsu for the quick trip — arriving Friday and leaving Monday. (They stayed in Los Angeles a couple more days, flying home on Wednesday.) Polly Yu of Asia Getaway in Carlsbad helped with arrangements.

Locally, the visitors were honored at a reception Friday evening at the city-owned Crossings at Carlsbad, at a party Sunday and a City Hall program Monday with the Japanese consul-general from Los Angeles. Sunday evening's farewell event took place at Heron's House, home of Peder and Julie Norby overlooking the Agua Hedionda Lagoon. Peder Norby made pizzas in his professional-grade oven in their backyard.

The touches were more international than just the U.S.-Japanese connection. At the Norbys, besides Italian pizza and pasta, the dinner fare included Mexican chips and salsa and entertainment — songs in Spanish — by the 13-member Mariachi Juvenil from the University of San Diego. A dozen members of the robotics club at Sage Creek High School in Carlsbad staged a demonstration of their competitive robots.

The two daughters, Erika, 12, and Leanna, 10, of sister-city Ambassador Bill Ishii and two of their friends, Violet Britton, 12, and Chloe Slee, 10, danced for the guests. On Friday, members of "Three," violinists and cellists led by Bridget Dolkas and including precocious 3-year-old Luna Macchi, enthusiastically bowing her downsized violin, played for the visitors.





The Japanese, in turn, entertained their American hosts. In colorful kimonos, the students performed a Japanese dance. The adult Japanese men in the delegation did likewise and performed magic tricks as well. One, Hitoshi Hirano, played a medley of Western songs, ending with “Amazing Grace,” on an ocarina. When asked Sunday evening what he liked most about his short visit, Hirano said everything.”

Mayor Matt Hall was at both events, presenting a framed proclamation to the Futtsu vice mayor on Friday. Councilman Mark Packard also attended, and Rick Shea, a member of the county Board of Education and president of Encinitas’ Sister City program, which also is celebrating its 30th anniversary (with the Japanese city of Amakusa, formerly Hondo), attended both events as well. Shea spoke of the educational importance of the international hookups to students. Anthony Al-Jamie of Anaheim, president of the Sister Cities of Southern California, read a welcome to the visitors in Japanese.

Also included in the festivities was a beach party for the students and, for some of the adults, a trip to Petco Park to see the San Diego Padres play Saturday evening. There were about 30 people at Friday’s event, probably more Sunday.

Both events were emceed by Tom Hersant, head of the Carlsbad Sister City Ambassadors. Hersant noted that at each exchange visit, a two-part painting of a tree by Carlsbad elementary students is divided with Carlsbad taking the top half and Futtsu the roots and vice versa.



Hall said the Futtsu connection had been supported by Jupiter Corporation, founded by Yoshiro Fujimura, a hero for trying to end World War II diplomatically before the atomic bomb did so dramatically. Jupiter approached Carlsbad’s mayor, then the late Bud Lewis, suggesting a hookup of the two coastal cities of similar size. Futtsu sits across Tokyo Bay from the Japanese capital. The connection was formalized in 1998. Steve Komine from Jupiter was a participant in the festivities here.

Trips to Futtsu — and Carlsbad’s other sister city, Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic — are planned next year. Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad in German when it was part of Bohemia) is a spa with waters that reportedly have the same mineral content as those found originally in local Carlsbad, hence the city’s name.

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