



# Sister City News

Palmer, Alaska - Saroma, Japan

春 Spring

2014

Inside this issue:

Welcome to Saroma - continued 2

Quarterly Calendar of Events 2

11th Annual Alaska Nihongo Contest 3

11th Annual Alaska Nihongo Contest Photos 4

Palmer Student & Teacher Delegation Selected 5

Cultural Corner 5

## Welcome to Saroma

By Saroma High's Writing Class - Many thanks to Tsukada-sensei and her 11th grade students!

To help folks in Palmer learn a little bit about Saroma, Holland-sensei and Tsukada-sensei asked seven Saroma high school students to write about some of their favorite places in Saroma.

### Library - 図書館

I recommend Saroma's library. The Saroma library has a lot of different genres of books. Also it is convenient to study because it is a quiet place. There is a place where we can eat and drink inside. There are a lot of people on weekends and holidays. We can watch DVDs, too. We can concentrate very much there. Please come to the library when you visit Saroma. Please take care of yourself. Thank you.

— by Ryota Kimura



Tsukada-sensei and her students



### STAR / 武道館・プール

There is a training gym, a pool, and a budokan in Saroma. It's called Star. Star is a place where we can move our bodies. We are able to live healthy by moving our bodies here. Therefore many people move their bodies. We can play Japanese traditional sports such

as kendo or karate here, too. Let's move our bodies happily in STAR when you come to Saroma town, by all means. Thanks for reading. — by Yuto Honda

### Gift Shop Minori / みのり

I introduce "Gift shop Minori." It is a roadside station in Saroma. When you go there, you can buy special products of Saroma, such as pumpkins and scallops. Especially pumpkin soft-serve ice cream is very delicious. You should eat it on



Continued on Page 2...





## Quarterly Calendar of Events

### 27th Anniversary of Ed Holmes Day

In January of 1987, the Palmer City Council passed Resolution 732, to honor Edward Holmes, the founder of the Sister City relationship between Palmer and Saroma, Japan. The resolution declared that "May 2, 1987, shall be known as Ed Holmes Day."

### Palmer Student & Teacher Delegation to Visit Saroma

Five students and two teachers, from Palmer High & Jr/Middle Schools, will be visiting Saroma from late June thru early July 2014. While there, they will live with host families, attend school, and participate in many cultural events. To learn more about this year's delegation, see page 5.

### Sister City Events

Palmer Saroma Kai, the City of Palmer, and several other organizations are in the planning phase for several Sister City cultural events this summer. To be notified of upcoming events please join the **Palmer Saroma Kai Facebook Group**.

## Welcome to Saroma (Continued from Page 1)



hot summer days. When summer comes, many sunflowers will bloom outside. And in winter season, a snow figure will be made outside. If you have a chance to visit Saroma, please go to Minoru.  
— by Niina Muroi



### Saroma Town Gym / 体育館

A variety of sports can be played here. For example, you can play badminton, basketball, volleyball, futsal inside, and broomball outside, but it's only in winter time. When snow melts, you can play tennis on a court, and baseball and softball in a stadium. I belong to the tennis club at high school, so I often use this gym for practice. Recently, it was remodeled. Therefore it is very clean. And playing sports surrounded by nature is very fun. When you come to Saroma, shall we play some sports?  
— by Honoka Konishi



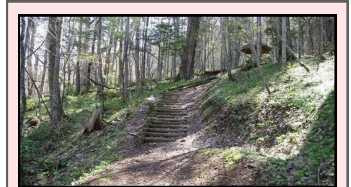
### Honda-ya / ほんだや

This place is a soba restaurant. Soba is a Japanese traditional and popular food. It's like Italian pasta. We eat it in various ways. For example, there are cold noodles with dipping sauce or noodles in hot soup. And there is a seasonal menu, oyster soba in winter. Also you can have a pork cutlet on rice, too. They make homemade flour from buckwheat. Generally, Japanese-style food is healthier than Western-style food. By all means come to eat it!  
— by Takuya Honda



### Mt. Horoiwa / 幌岩山

I would like to introduce Mt. Horoiwa. This mountain is not steep. You may enjoy climbing in a picnic-like atmosphere with friends, but in winter time, please use



snowshoes. If you go up to the top of the mountain, you can see the lake. When you go down the mountain, you can use a sled. If you want to enjoy the nature in Saroma, you should climb Horoiwa-yama. But please be careful not to meet any bears.  
— by Naoya Fukuoka



### Kimuaneppu / キムアネップ

I will introduce Kimuaneppu. It is a cape. You can see glasswort in autumn when you go there. When swans come in winter, you can feed them. You can't miss this season. There are good points of Kimuaneppu not only on the cape but also in a forest. You can camp there during summer. If you camp in July, you may see very beautiful sunset. When you come to Saroma, please visit there.  
— by Rena Ohtsuki

# 11th Annual Alaska Nihongo Contest

By Carla Swick

On Saturday, March 29th, approximately 176 students participated in the 11th Annual Alaska Nihongo Contest at the University of Alaska Anchorage. The goal of the contest, sponsored by the Alaska Association of Teachers of Japanese (AKATJ) and the Consular Office of Japan, Anchorage, is to “bring together all Alaskan students of the Japanese language and give the students an opportunity to share their knowledge, skill, and enthusiasm for Japanese and connect with the Alaskan Japanese community.” Students of all grades-- kindergarten through university level-- had a chance to step outside the comfort and safety of their classrooms and express themselves in Japanese. Students were allowed to compete in two of six categories: Speech (various levels), Poetry, Original Poetry, Original Haiku, Group Skit, and Song.

The Alaska Nihongo Contest is much more than a contest; it is also a day-long celebration of language and cultural events. Participants and audience members tried various cultural activities in the lobby during the competitions for free. Japanese interns from the Anchorage School District's Immersion program taught origami (paper folding) and shodou (Japanese calligraphy), while the Ikenobo Ikebana Society of Anchorage demonstrated the art of Japanese flower arrangement and the Anchorage Go Club gave igo (Japanese chess) lessons. After the competitions, Tanaka Martial Arts, Tomodachi Daiko

(Japanese drumming), and the Alaska Kendo Club each gave special performances prior to the Awards Ceremony.

Each year the Town of Saroma along with the cities of Chitose and Membetsu in Hokkaido, Japan graciously support this contest by donating trophies for the first place winners. This year exchange student Chihiro Hatayama from Saroma High School presented the Saroma Award for the First Place--Song Category to UAA students Maria Labatos and Rosalie Gunawan. They sang the song *Kimi no Koe* (*Your Voice*).

Matsu students showed up in full force ready to entertain and impress. The Colony High School skit *Dango wo Nakushita Obaasan* (*The Grandma Who Lost The Dumplings*) won first place and the Wasilla High School skit *Reizouko no Seikatsu* (*Life In A Refrigerator*) won third place in the Middle/High School/College Non-Heritage Group Skit Category.

Emily Maxwell (CHS) won first place in Elementary Speech and second place in Aurora Speech for her speech titled *Tomato wo Tabeyou!* (*Let's Eat Tomatoes*). Crystal Chincilla's (WHS) speech *Ai wa Itsumade* (*Love is Forever*) won third place in Aurora Speech.

Aurora Sappa (WHS) won first place in Poetry with *Sakura* (*Cherry Blossom*) by Michio Mado and fourth place in Original Haiku with *Happa* (*Leaves*). Finally, Leah Beauvais (WHS) won fourth place in Poetry with the

poem *Ame (Rain)* by Shuntarou Tanikawa.

MSBSD Superintendent Deena Paramo noted in her keynote speech at the closing ceremonies, that she likes and supports competition in life. She added, “It’s not about winning first place, second place, or third place, but about each of you being better today than you were yesterday.” Trophy or not, everyone went home a winner.

If you would like to submerge yourself in the Japanese culture for a day without having to travel to Japan, plan on attending next year’s Alaska Nihongo Contest. It usually takes place the last Saturday of March at UAA, so mark your calendars now. Mata rainen-- See you next year!



Superintendent Deena Paramo presents the Chitose Award for First Place Beginning Speech to Shayenne Thomson.



Maria Labatos and Rosalie Gunawan win this year's Saroma Award - First Place Song.



Tomodachi Daiko perform traditional taiko drumming.

*“It’s not about winning first place, second place, or third place, but about each of you being better today than you were yesterday.”*

MSBSD Superintendent  
Deena Paramo



WHS students Toryn Dodd, Emily Manthey, Rosie Harrington, Melissa Little, and Tyler Champ debut as food items for their skit.



# 11th Annual Alaska Nihongo Contest Photos





# Palmer Student & Teacher Delegation Selected

By Carla Swick, Palmer Students, and Palmer Teachers

The following students and teachers have been chosen to represent The City of Palmer, Palmer Junior Middle School, and Palmer High School this June in Saroma. As ambassadors of Palmer, they will each receive a scholarship from the City of Palmer to put towards their airfare.

**Kaleb DePriest**, a 6th grader, comes from a big family who were some of the original colonists of the Mat-Su Valley. Although a little apprehensive about trying some new foods, he is excited about representing American's culture by just being himself. He wants to share his family stories and his obsession with vehicles with his new friends in Saroma.

**Angelina Koroleva**, a 7th grader, was born and raised in Russia and had to learn English and how to eat hamburgers, which she now enjoys, after moving to Palmer just a few years ago. She overcomes obstacles by never giving up, and hopes to become a marine biologist. Angelina is excited to share American and Russian culture with students in Saroma.

**Jocelyn Zweifel**, a 7th grader, loves basketball, her family, and animals. She wants to be a vet

and travel the world, with her first destination being Saroma. When confronted with awkward situations she doesn't take herself too seriously and laughs about it. Ice cream helps too. Jocelyn has heard stories about Saroma's famous pumpkin-flavored ice cream and can't wait to try it.

**Jenny Tennant**, a math/science/special education teacher at PJMS, will be the trip leader for the middle school delegation. She says, "Japan seems to be a culture embedded with a respect for the sacredness in life, which I find refreshing. I am very excited and honored to be given this opportunity and look forward to the potential for personal growth. I hope to honorably represent our school and country as well as do my best to ensure our students have a safe and life-enriching experience."

**Cameron Mayberry**, a 10th grader, is an avid outdoorsman. In addition to school, he is actively involved in Boy Scouts, 4H, and the Alaska Trapping Association. He wants to share his Palmer Moose Pride and love of Palmer with the students of Saroma High. In return, he hopes his new Saroma friends will teach him Japanese

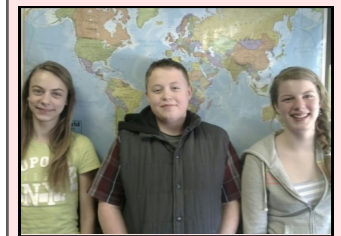
culture and customs. Cameron says, "The reason I want to go to Saroma is because I love learning and experiencing new things."

**Ellen Groseclose**, an 11th grader, loves the outdoors and during the summer you can find her on a four-wheeler, fishing the Kenai, kayaking, or hiking in Hatcher Pass. These are places she would love to share with visiting Saroma students next September. Ellen writes, "I want to be a part of the sister school program because I realize it is a once in a lifetime opportunity. I am fascinated by language and I want to learn firsthand about life in Saroma. I imagine the exchange will also give me a better understanding and appreciation of my own culture as well."

**Kim Akers**, PHS Administrative Secretary and 1988 PHS alumna, will be the trip leader for the high school delegation. She enjoys the outdoors, shrimping, fishing, camping, kayaking, snowmachining, and hiking. Kim wants to share her love of cooking with her Saroma family and adds, "I can't wait to meet the students and staff from Saroma High School and experience Japanese culture firsthand."



Palmer High School Delegation



Palmer Jr/Middle School Delegation



Springtime in Japan is nothing less than magical. From late March to early May, the iconic sakura (cherry blossoms) capture the attention of visitors and locals alike.

*"Earth laughs in flowers."*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Cultural Corner

Japanese poet Michio Mado died February 28, 2014 in Tokyo at the age of 104.

He is best known for his nursery rhymes and songs.

Students in Alaska love reciting his poem, *Sakura*, aka *Cherry Blossom*.

### Cherry Blossom By Michio Mado

*The bud of the cherry blossom has opened*

*And just as I thought that it was already in full bloom*

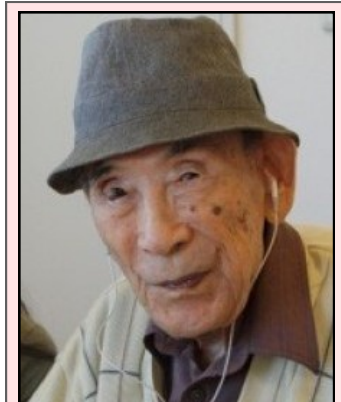
*Oh, how pretty  
Oh, how pretty*

*And just as I thought that it had already completely wilted*

*It happens every year, but I still think about it*

*If only just once I could give them my praises*

*And in the language of the cherry blossom I would celebrate its full bloom*



Michio Mado



**Palmer and Saroma Sister City Churches**

The Sister City Program, established in 1980, works together with the Sister Schools Program in the cities of Palmer, Alaska and Saroma, Japan, to promote cultural enlightenment, student and teacher exchanges, international good will and lasting relationships between cities.

This newsletter is published by Palmer Saroma Kai, an organization that provides encouragement and support for the relationship between the Sister Cities of Palmer, Alaska and Saroma, Japan.



To submit articles, photos, or items of public interest, please contact Carla Swick at [carlaswick2010@gmail.com](mailto:carlaswick2010@gmail.com) or by phone 907-775-0807.

Your comments, suggestions, and constructive feedback are welcome!

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