



Sister City News

Palmer, Alaska - Saroma, Japan

秋 Fall 2012

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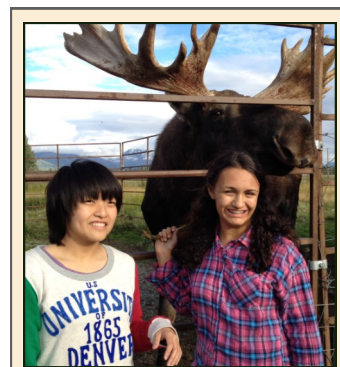
Being a Host Family

By Liz Crowley

After Katie visited Saroma our family was very eager to host a student ourselves. Katie had such a great experience that we wanted to return the hospitality and have a chance to learn more about Saroma, the people, and the culture. The fact that we got to host Nanami, Katie's host from Saroma, made it extra exciting. We could hardly wait for her to arrive!

The whole experience was amazing, I can't say enough

positive things about it. We were able to show Nanami many uniquely Alaskan things such as the Williams Reindeer Farm, the Butte, and the Alaska Wildberry Factory. The best parts though were probably just sharing our regular activities like dinner with friends, campfires, playing games, and talking late into the night. Having Nanami was such a unique experience and privilege; it even ended up bringing our family closer



Nanami Kaibe & Katie Crowley

together. Anyone who has the opportunity to host an exchange student should absolutely take it. It was wonderful.

A Long History

By Yuko Hirouchi

My aha moment in Palmer was when I happened to meet someone who had long ago been connected to the sister city program. I knew I would see friends who previously

visited Saroma, but I also met the siblings, parents, and teachers of people who had visited Saroma. It was fun to talk with them and feel the history of the sister city program.



Yuko Hirouchi and Mayor Johnson

A Saroma Teacher's Perspective of Palmer

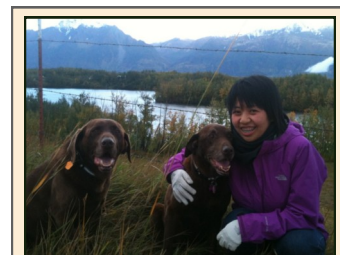
By Yoshie Holland

My visit to Palmer was totally different this time from my last two visits. Previously I had visited family in Palmer but this time I was a member of the Saroma delegation and the experiences were very different. I liked meeting new people and I love everyone who is supporting this exchange program, including

host families and of course the school kids. The kids in Palmer were smart, friendly, helpful, and enthusiastic about getting to know us. I found they were as great as kids in Saroma.

I want to say thank you to all of you in Palmer, especially my host Kirsten Koivunen. Thank you for the great time. I prom-

ise I will treat the Palmer delegation next year like you did us.



Yoshie Holland



Quarterly Calendar of Events

Applications Available Now for 2013 Student Delegation to Saroma

Students from Palmer Jr/ Middle School and Palmer High School will be visiting Saroma from June 20- July 1, 2013. Applications are currently available. Please contact Assistant Principal Claudia Berkley at PJMS OR Assistant Principal Garth Morgan at PHS for more information.

Japanese Language Classes

Mat-Su College is offering First Year Japanese II this spring from 1/14/13 through 5/06/13 on Mon & Wed from 7pm to 8:50pm.

For more info visit:

<http://matsu.alaska.edu/>

Japanese Winter Festival

The Japanese Society of Alaska is coordinating the Mochi Tsuki Taikai (Winter Festival). It will be Sunday Dec 9, 2012 from 3p-6p at the Asian Culture Center (adjacent to Northwood Elementary, off International Airport Rd). Admission is FREE but bring \$\$ for food.
www.jsak.org

News From Saroma

By Sean Holland

AET Position Moving into the Future

Former Assistant English Teachers (AETs) will be excited to know that the AET desk at the town hall has a new PC. The old Windows 98 machine was replaced with a "thin client" that runs programs straight from the server. It takes up much less space. The town also came and cut down the large trees around the AET house, to protect power lines in case of a storm. It's sunnier, but has lost its boreal charm.

Mayoral Election and New Vice Mayor

Mayor Kawane was reelected to another four year term. However, the former vice mayor, Mr. Yamamoto retired. The new vice mayor is Mr. Kawamata, the former head of the planning department. Vice Mayor Kawamata has been to Palmer once, and as head of the planning department, was in charge of the Saroma's sister city program.

School Lessons

October and November are school play season as well as Halloween season. At elementary schools, Halloween lessons were simple this year, with younger learners making their own paper pumpkins, as well as guessing the number of chocolate eyeballs in a mason jar. Preschoolers practiced scaring each other, in English, of course as well as playing a cutthroat game of Halloween musical chairs.



1st Palmer Saroma Kai Annual Meeting

By Heather Kelley

Palmer Saroma Kai's 1st Annual Meeting was held on August 18, 2012 at the Palmer Museum of History & Art.

The meeting included a display of Sister City artifacts, a wonderful presentation and question/answer session with the Palmer student delegation that visited Saroma in July 2012, reports from the president and treasurer, and a potluck dinner.

The meeting also included board nominations and elections.

Members of the 1st elected board for Palmer Saroma Kai are: Carla Swick (president), Shunji Ninoyu (vice-president), Lee Henrikson (secretary), Linda Combs (treasurer), Mike Chmielewski, Steve Johnson, & Heather Kelley.

Palmer Saroma Kai thanks Selena & Richard Ortega-Chiolero and Kendra White-Hunt at the Palmer Museum of History & Art who kindly hosted the event.

Palmer Saroma Kai was formed in 2011 to provide encouragement and support for the relationship between the Sister Cities of Palmer, Alaska and Saroma, Japan.



Language Corner

By Carla Swick

While Palmer's giant cabbages are the pride of the Valley, Saroma's pumpkins take center stage in the fall. Saroma is known as the pumpkin-producing town of Japan.



Here are three new sentences to add to your Japanese study:

Saroma no kabocha wa _____ desu.

さろまのかばちは _____ です。

Saroma's pumpkins are _____.

OOKII

おおきい

Big

ORENJI

オレンジ

Orange

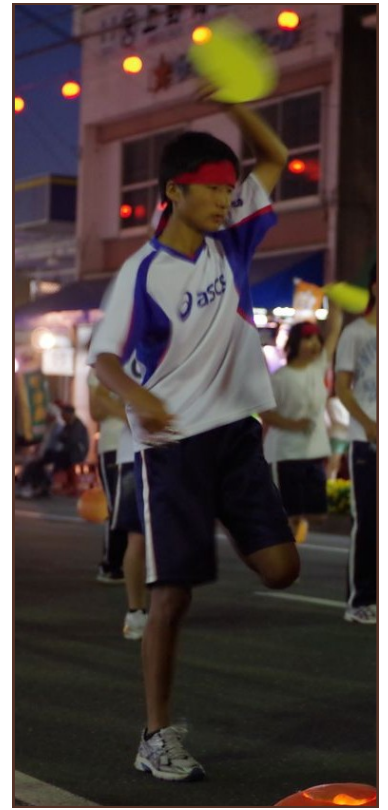
OISHII

おいしい

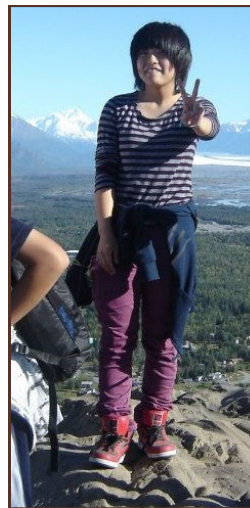
Delicious

Saroma Pumpkin Festival Photos

Photos by Sean Holland



Photos from Saroma Student Visit to Palmer



SISTER CITIES: SAROMA, JAPAN and PALMER, ALASKA
Celebrating 32 Years!
During the month of September, Mayor DeLena welcomes visitors from Palmer's sister city, Saroma, Japan. Three middle school students and chaperones...



Saroma Students' Favorite Memories of Palmer

By Saroma Students

Four Saroma students and two chaperons visited Palmer in September 2012. Here are some favorite memories the students shared with us.

Renya Sukuoka

The first day was at PJMS. We danced in front of so many people, so I was super nervous. But when we finished, we got such incredible applause, it made me really happy.

The morning we went on the radio, I was asked what my most enjoyable experience in Palmer was. I wanted to say "everything," but I just talked about my great birthday party at the water park.

On our last day in Palmer, we spent the day at PJMS. Nothing there had changed, but just thinking it was our last day there made me so sad.

Nanami Kaibe

The most fun I had was at the BBQ party at Katie's friend's house. The food was great, but I was most surprised at their hangar with an airplane and also a bowling alley, darts, a pool table, and other fun things.

While in Alaska, I got used to the different food, made a lot of friends, and did a lot of things I could definitely never do in Japan. There were so many people in Palmer who want to come to Saroma, so I really want this exchange to continue.

Sayuki Tsuchimoto

One of the really great things was going to the house with the bowling alley, ping pong and pool tables. Compared to Japan, I think the size is really

different.

My life at my host family's house was really fun because I got to stay with Kimberly, who had already been to Saroma once. In the evenings, we played lots of different board games, and when I wasn't eating very much, they even took me to a sushi restaurant.

Chiharu Abe

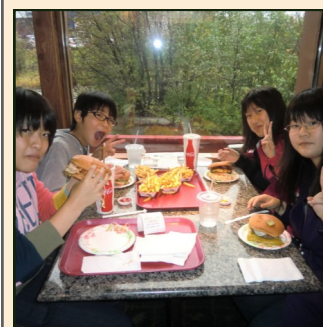
On this trip, I realized how different America is from what I had imagined. I expected everything to be a lot scarier, but I met so many friendly people who took such good care of me, including my great host family. I think this exchange between our two countries allows us to overcome our prejudices and have truly great experiences. I think it's a great thing to have participated in.



Sayuki and Kimberly



Nanami and Chiharu at H2Oasis



Lunch at Arctic Roadrunner

Saroma JHS Culture Festival

Saroma Junior High held their annual culture festival in October. Each grade presented a play, performed in a chorus competition, and designed

large banners for their classes. Different groups of students also created exhibits in the classrooms. Most impressive was a portrait of silver medal

By Sean Holland

winner in women's team table tennis, Kasumi Ishikawa, that was made from **100,000 dyed toothpicks**.



Cultural Corner

By Carla Swick & Sean Holland

Saroma celebrates its KABOCHA OMATSURI or "Pumpkin Festival" the first weekend of September, which is like a mix of Halloween & the Cinderella story. Saroma citizens put in countless hours creating their unique floats and costumes for the evening parade. The pumpkin weigh-off is

a crowd pleaser in Saroma, similar to the giant cabbage contest at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer. Saroma had a decent growing season this year, and so pumpkins lined the main street of town for the Cinderella Parade once again. Last year, the parade was cancelled due to a typhoon, so all

of the performances had taken place inside and the town. This year the weather was great (and hot) and more than made up for the bad luck last year. A new record was set in the pumpkin weigh-off contest - 398.8 kilograms, or 879 pounds!



"SHINDERERA YUME" or Cinderella Dream.



Palmer Alaska

Number of Public Schools: 5

High School: Palmer High
(photo above)

Middle School: Palmer Jr/Mid. School

Elementary Schools: Sherrod Elementary
Swanson Elementary

Charter Schools: Academy Charter



Saroma, Japan

Number of Public Schools: 5

High School: Saroma High
(photo above)

Middle School: Saroma Junior High

Elementary Schools: Saroma Elementary
Hamasaroma Elementary
Wakasa Elementary

The Palmer Sister City Program , established in 1980, works together with the Palmer 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 or by phone 907-775-0807.

Your comments, suggestions, and constructive feedback are welcome!

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