



Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Association



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Newsletter

July-August 2011

2011 Trio Represents Long Beach in Yokkaichi

Every other year, the Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Association selects one male student and one female student and a teacher for a three-week cultural visit. This delegation of three Long Beach ambassadors travels as a group and follows an itinerary developed by officials of Yokkaichi.

2011 marks the 47th Annual Trio Exchange and this year Long Beach high school students, **Alyssa Krug** and **Sean Rickter**, and **Melinda Ramsey**, a teacher in the Long Beach Unified School District, were selected as goodwill ambassadors to represent the City of Long Beach in its Sister City of Yokkaichi, Japan, for three weeks this summer.

The Long Beach association pays all roundtrip transportation expenses to Yokkaichi and the host city, Yokkaichi, or the Japanese host families, provide the trio's transportation, food and lodging while they are in Japan.

Krug, a junior at the California Academy of Math and Science, plays basketball and volleyball and is on the yearbook's staff. She volunteers at her church, a library and a YMCA dinner program and assists her mother, who's a teacher.

"I have always wanted to go to Japan and learn about another culture so this is a wonderful opportunity and I am very excited," noted Krug, a Lakewood resident.

Rickter is a member of the chorus, math team and men's cross country

and track team at Long Beach Polytechnic High School where he's a senior. Recently, he joined the school's swimming team and in his freshman year was part of the YMCA Youth Institute.

"I feel honored and privileged to have been selected as a Trio member," said Rickter, a Long Beach resident. "I hope to bring back something significant from Yokkaichi to share with the Long Beach community."

Ramsey, who teaches Algebra at the Jordan Freshman Academy, has been with the Long Beach Unified School District for five years. She earned a Liberal Studies degree with a Literature Depth while completing 32 upper division credits in mathematics at the University of California, Irvine. She also holds three teaching credentials.

"I am looking forward to sharing all the wonders of Japan with the students of north Long Beach as the students and I exchange the customs, commonalities and differences each culture has to offer and share with the other," shared Ramsey, who enjoys recreational running as a hobby.

The Trio left July 20 and returned August 8.

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See page 4 for information on the Trio and YEF Programs.

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2011 Environmental Summit Students Visit Yokkaichi

In 2007 former Yokkaichi **Mayor Inouye** proposed that a delegation of Long Beach students go to Yokkaichi to discuss environmental problems and solutions with students from Japan and China in cooperation with the Port of Long Beach and other environmental groups.

Each summer four students and a teacher from Long Beach take part in this annual environmental summit.

This year's selections are all from Long Beach Polytechnic High School: **Kyan Jain** is a junior in the PACE Program with a goal towards becoming a Biochemical Engineer/Researcher. **Madison Kerst**, a junior, and **Violet Ranson**, a senior, are also in the PACE Program and both have plans of becoming Environmental Engineers. **Kevin Melvin** is a junior at Poly; and teacher, **Anne Gundry**, is

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2011 Yokkaichi English Fellows (YEF) Named

CSULB graduates **Bryan Duran** and **Michael Kushman** were named as Yokkaichi English Fellows and began teaching English in Long Beach's Sister City of Yokkaichi, Japan, in August. They were selected by the Yokkaichi City Board of Education to serve as assistant language teachers at the elementary and junior high school level for two years.

Duran earned a B.A. in Japanese and a B.A. in studio art from CSULB in 2011. He studied abroad in Osaka, Japan, during the 2007-08 school year and had the opportunity to live with two host families. Duran

has experience tutoring in both Japanese and Spanish. Also, for three years he served as president of the Chinese/Japanese Calligraphy Club on campus.

"This program allows me to give back to the city of Long Beach and my university which has given me so much in the past six years," said the Gardena resident. "Plus, I want to teach Japanese kids things they would otherwise not learn through Japanese teachers."

Kushman completed a bachelor of arts degree in film in 2010. He tu-

tored junior high and elementary school children for several years and was a peer tutor for students nearer to his grade level. Also, the Long Beach resident supervised children in after school and extracurricular activities on a daily basis.

"I love working with children and experiencing the mutual sense of accomplishment when a child is able to master something for which they have been working very hard," Kushman noted. "I hope to become a real member of the Yokkaichi community and learn and grow as much as all of the children I will assist."

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YEF Celebrates 25th Anniversary—July 29, 2011

The Earl Burns Miller Japanese Garden at Cal State Long Beach was the beautiful setting for the Yokkaichi English Fellows (YEF) 25th Anniversary Party.

Past YEFs were welcomed to the event by the Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Board Members, along with long-time supporter, former **Long Beach Mayor Eunice Sato**.

After cocktails and a sumptuous dinner, the party was treated to a presentation that showed photos of YEFs from 1985 to 2010.

Devan Nielsen and **David Reinsvold** were asked to say a few words of their Yokkaichi experiences as YEF teachers and how those experiences have affected their lives today.

Fond memories and friendships were renewed and a good time was had by all.

Special thanks to **Jeanette Schelin** and her terrific staff for all that you do.

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2011 Environmental Summit

(Continued from page 1)

on the Long Beach Poly faculty where she teaches Accelerated Biology and AP Biology.

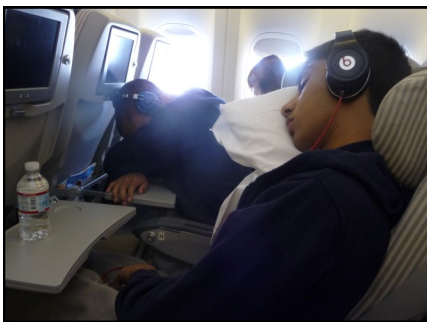
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Below is an e-mail from **Anne Gundry** reporting on the delegates' first day in Yokkaichi.

August 1, 2011

Greetings from Yokkaichi!

I'm sure you have already heard that we made it to Yokkaichi. The students are good travelers—uncomplaining and positive! The students slept on the airplane—I snapped a photo of **Kevin** and **Kyan**!



Today was our first full day in Japan. We met the other delegations, were instructed on how to use the laptops they are lending us, learned about global water supplies, and visited the Yokkaichi Environmental Studies Center where we learned just how polluted Yokkaichi became after industrialization and the legal process that led to the clean-up efforts.



We met with the Yokkaichi Mayor **Toshiyuki Tanaka** and Speaker of the City Assembly, **Akio Mouri**. A



large thanks to the LB-Yokkaichi Sister City Association for the blue polo shirts with the Association seal on them. We wore khaki pants and our blue polo shirts and looked very nice.

After introductions and formal greetings, gifts were given and received. **Kevin** and **Madison** presented the gifts to the Mayor and the Chairman. **Kyan** received gifts on behalf of our delegation.

The Opening Ceremonies of the Environmental Summit took

place afterwards. **Violet** gave a very nice introduction for our group. The students presented gifts to the dignitaries.

Throughout the day, we posed for many pictures at the various places we visited. All of the participants are getting very good at leaning in close together, making sure everyone can be seen, and smiling for the various photographers!

The students are quite outgoing and inclusive,

seeking out the Japanese and Chinese students to sit with on the bus or at meals.



Just before one meal, they organized a giant game of UNO with all the students (and no interpreters!), pushing cafeteria tables together to form one large group. It is terrific to see all the students interacting together.

Tomorrow, we are going on a tour of the Port of Yokkaichi. I'm very interested to see how it compares to Long Beach's port.

—Anne Gundry

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YEF Program

One of the highlights of the Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Association is the Yokkaichi English Fellows (YEF) program. This very successful program provides an opportunity for Long Beach teachers or Cal State Long Beach graduates to serve for two years as assistant language teachers at the elementary and middle school levels in Yokkaichi, Japan.

This is an English immersion program for the students. Speaking Japanese is not required.

Selected teachers or new graduates will work at a paid position in the Yokkaichi School System for two years. A total of seven YEFs are at the school system each year and are replaced on a rotating basis so that the 2nd year YEFs may assist the new arrivals.

Applications are due in February and forms may be downloaded from our website at:

<http://longbeach-yokkaichi.org>.

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Trio Program

In alternate years, one teacher and two students from Long Beach are selected to visit Yokkaichi, Japan as goodwill ambassadors for a three-week cultural exchange. In alternate years, Long Beach hosts a trio from Yokkaichi.

Trio applicants must be Long Beach residents and/or Long Beach Unified School District students and citizens of the United States, possess a record of good citizenship in school and community, have participated in school and community activities and have an interest in being an official

Joe Aihara Takes Basketball Team to Japan

Joe Aihara, a board member of the Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Association, was selected to coach the Yonsei Basketball boys' team that traveled to Japan this summer from July 31-August 9. This is Yonsei Basketball's 18th year. There is both a boys and girls team. The games were played on Aug. 2, 4 and 6 in Tamana City in Kumamoto Prefecture.

"This is my first experience with the organization," said Aihara, who teaches at Western High School and also is the varsity coach for Western's boys' basketball team. "I was asked to provide not just coaching for the boys, but to help enhance their experience in Japan culturally since I have chaperoned a few times with the Anaheim Sister City Commission. We will be playing three basketball games but also be visiting the Hiroshima Peace Park."

The cultural experience involves a home stay visit with a Japanese family. Parents and siblings accompanied the team members, but stayed in a hotel.

The boys, who will be ninth graders this fall, were selected on several criteria, not just basketball. The Yonsei 18 team competed in bas-

ketball games against teams selected by their hosts.

Founded in 1993, the Yonsei Association consists of specially selected young men and women active in Japanese-American Youth Basketball throughout Southern California. The association's vision is "to provide our American youth with a glimpse of their rich heritage through immersion in the Japanese culture by staying with a local Japanese family and participating in their daily lives. Basketball is the medium through which we endeavor to bridge the gap."

###

Domo Arigato!

Many thanks to the Association committee chairs and co-chairs for their invaluable time and efforts in making our programs so successful:

YEF: Jeanne Karatsu, Barbara Parks and Jeanette Schelin

Trio: Yoko Pusavat and Bonnie Sharp Stoeppelman

Environmental Summit: Bonnie Sharp Stoeppelman and Yoko Pusavat.



2011 Long Beach-Yokkaichi Sister City Board Members

Kari Milton	Barbara Parks
Joe Aihara	Yoko Pusavat
Jeanne Costello	Ed Rickter
Bruce Easley	Jeanette Schelin
Victor Fukuhara	Yumi Shibasaki
Larry Hill	Bonnie Stoeppelman
Jeffrey Inui	Elisa Turien
Jeanne Karatsu	Chizuru Vancil
Pat McMaster	Mike Vaughn
	Roy Wood

Contact & Mailing Address

Mike Vaughn, President
 17011 Beach Blvd., Suite 900
 Huntington Beach, CA 92647
 562-592-9350
mike@vaughnlawoffice.com

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