

# ようこそ-Welcome

Newsletter of the Okayama Committee, Pacific Neighbors  
April 2004

## General Committee Meetings:

None

## Sub Committee Activities:

### \* Nikkei Matsuri

Ralph Butterworth and Gloria Stern have coordinated the preparation for this program. The date of the event is Sunday May 2. Volunteers are needed to staff the booth

Bob Green prepared information requested by the Nikkei Matsuri group for their web site (<http://www.nikkeimatsuri.org>).

Planning underway for booth details and signage.

### \* Planning

Group met at the home of Gloria Stern to settle on final activities plan for FY 03-04. Original was submitted to PN leaders in the fall.

Gloria Stern has begun planning the activities required to sponsor a 50th Anniversary celebration with Okayama. It is hoped to interleave with the other notable dates in the Pacific Neighbors calendar.

## Other Activities:

In January, Kazuko Miura was personally invited to the home of the San Francisco Japanese Consul to join in the celebration of the New Year (Shin Nen Kai). This year, beginning in April (the Japanese fiscal year) there will be a new Consul. The recent Consul is moving on to a new assignment. He came to San Francisco from London England. His wife and daughter were with him here, an older child had remained in England to finish school. Kazuko is well known by the Consulate office for her work with Pacific Neighbors and Okayama.

### \* Member Outreach

This newsletter will be issued every 3 months. For a copy, please send email address or, if none, a fax number or mailing address.

A web site for the Okayama Committee is in development. The URL will be:  
<http://www.sj-okayama.org>.

An Okayama committee membership reminder and recruiting letter has been created by K. Miura with the expectation of adding members. Mailing and E-mailing will be in early April.

Continued:

\* Public Activities

John Lozano reports that there was a successful exchange by 18 Okayama students to Silvercreek and Homestead High. He also reported that a group from Silvercreek has gone to Okayama during spring break. Another Homestead High group will be visiting Japan in the summer, but will not be going to Okayama.

Bob Green gained agreement with the City of Okayama to sponsor the visit of a local resident to Okayama. The target date is the fall of 2004. A subcommittee is being formed to set the program and solicit applications.

\* Future events:

May 2 (Sunday), Japantown Nikkei Matsuri, Okayama Committee will sponsor and staff a food booth. 9:30 - 4:00. Come out and have fun and lend a hand while you're there. Call Ralph Butterworth (224-8365) for details.

May 10 (+ Week of) Dedication of new gate at Kelly Park Japanese Friendship Garden. Early evening. Contact Joe Hedges at the City of San Jose (277-3439) for details. A delegation from Okayama will attend. The Okayama committee is planning a reception. Call Kazuko Miura (249 3939) for details.

\* Other Japan related items

In March we noted the 150th anniversary of the first agreement between the US and Japan. This was not a trade agreement and the US pressured Japan to sign. But the result is what President Bush said: "Today, America has no closer ally than Japan and our alliance brings peace, stability and hope for a better future to people of the two countries and around the world."

In April, the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington DC will be the largest ever held. Beginning with the gift of several thousand trees, there are currently 3750 cherry trees blooming near the Washington Monument and reflecting pool.

In March there was a display of very old Japanese scroll paintings at the Silicon Valley Asian Art Center located near Saratoga Ave and Stevens Creek at 3777 Stevens Creek (Central Bldg).

Several travel agents are offering Spring and Fall trips to Japan. Bob Green comments he wants to go on a "hanabi" (fireworks) tour or an "Iron Chef" tour. He thinks the Hanabi displays (up to 240,000 devices!!!) rival any in the world. The reason for Hanabi?: It's summer and it's hot! The Iron Chef series is still playing on the Food Channel (although the series is no longer produced in Japan). It is noted that in 1997, we noticed that one of the competitors was the head chef at the Okayama International Hotel where the Pacific Neighbors 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary visit stayed. Anyone else?

Pacific Neighbors news

President Dennis King assisted by Adel Olivera worked hard to complete the remaining documentation for the San Jose contract. The City is in agreement with the plans for all of the groups. Pacific Neighbors is fortunate to be able to continue with City funding. Plans for the fiscal year 2005 (beginning in July) will have to be created soon.