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Yu - Ai

Friendship

The Newsletter of NPO World Friendship Center
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Time to Say Good-bye

By Ron Siney

The older I get the faster time seems to pass and my time at World Friendship Center has been no exception. It seems like only a few weeks ago Barb and I arrived at the Hiroshima train station not sure what was ahead for us or even what to expect. We were greeted by people with warm friendly smiles and a helpful nature. They made us feel welcome and needed.



That feeling is still with us today as we prepare to return to the United States. Japan has been our home for two years now. We have made many close friends. Friendships that will go with us the rest of our lives no matter where we are or what we are doing. We have seen many beautiful places in Japan and experienced a culture that exists nowhere else in the world. I am truly glad we chose to come to Hiroshima.

I would like to thank all of the volunteers, students, and staff for their help and patients and diligence and forgiveness and most of all for your friendship and

love you have shown me. I hope after we are settled in our new home you will come and visit us so we can make **you** feel welcome and needed.

I pray that all of you live a life filled with joy and happiness. You will always be in my thoughts and prayers. You are all family to me.

Peace, love and blessings – Ron

Saying Good-bye

By Barb Siney



We have been at World Friendship Center for nearly 2 years. It's been our allotted time to spend here and, as many have told me, it would seem to fly by. It's a fact, 2 years is a short period of time. But, it's long enough to make friends, and discover a country and a culture.

People have often asked, "What's the best part of being in Japan?" My typical quick answer is that I really like the English classes. That answer is just too simple to tell how I really feel. The English classes are great; we laugh, and sometimes cry. We learn about each other and the students teach me about traditions, festivals, and family life in Japan.

However, there's more to WFC than classes. The guests, activities, events, meetings and even sightseeing, all blend together to build a whole experience. It's impossible to separate one thread from the others in this woven together experience. The result is a remarkable memory of a gracious people generous with their time and resources. It is a people and a land that has changed my perception, which before my time here, was merely geography on a map.

Now it is time to say good-bye. It is something that I have done many times in the past. It is never easy. Saying good-bye well means trying to express gratitude to everyone we have encountered during our time here. Each one has become part of the "woven together memory". My words are tiny compared to the emotion I feel as we prepare to depart. All I can say is "thank you", "I love you", "I will miss you", and "Peace be with you".

A World Family

By Yuko Imada

Thank you very much for all your hard work here in Hiroshima. It was very new to you and you adapted over the two years you have been here. There was a spell of scorching hot last summer last year. We had many events one after another. The 45th anniversary of WFC was celebrated and the Hiroshima & Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremonies were attended. WFC also participated with three Hibakusha in the peace seminar at the University Of Central Missouri even though it was very hot. Both of you have greatly devoted yourselves to WFC. We really appreciate it.

Barb taught us English in the Wednesday afternoon class. Because you (Barb) are almost as old as us, we often get so excited that we forget the fact that you are our English teacher and an American lady. You seemed like one of the girls, and our class often sounded like housewives' funny gossip.

Ms Ogura and I went to WFC to help twice a month, on Sundays. We had a good time then with the WFC guests, as well as our English class. One of my classmates said, "2 years is too short!" I really think so too. And I wish I could go to the USA with you.

All of our classmates had a happy party with Ron and Barb in March. At the time one of us asked, "May I send you an e-mail?" Then Ron answered, "Of course, I'm waiting for it. I think that all the people I met here in Hiroshima are my family members." Barb was nodding at his side.

I hope both of you will be happy for ever.

Good-bye Barbara and Ron

By Kuniaki Shiraogawa

"Ron-san and Barbara-san will leave to the US soon" I said to my wife the other day. My wife showed wonder and said "It means two years has passed already?" That was exactly my feelings.

Tuesdays class member were six when Ron took over the class from Kent two years ago. One of the members got a serious disease and he has been unable to attend for a long time. Another one has been transferred to Kyushu, while yet another former member cannot attend the class regularly because of his working time schedule. I'm very disappointed that the regular number of our class attendance has reduced so remarkably.

In our class, we usually start with free-talking about our own interest or topic of the day, then moved on to some article that Ron has found and copied for us. There is some difference of skill of English speaking among our members; I have to admit that I'm actually the lowest level. Sometimes I can't understand the subject and, at first, I couldn't follow Ron's words well, nor could I express my feelings well. But now I can follow the lesson without giving up. I'm thankful to the patience of Ron. Since I work daytime, I can't attend WFC ceremonies or events often but I am thinking that I will participate in these events as much as possible in the future.

Sometimes guests, who have traveled from various places in the world, join the class and provide us with news from around world and talked about various interesting things.

Among them was the former director Kent, who came back from US, and we had dinner together at "Zen". When Ron's daughter, Wendy, visited Japan recently, we met her in the class. She explained to the class about her job and the purpose of her trip to Japan. She interviewed so many *Hibakusha* during her short stay here and took back to the States a lot of information. We were impressed by her vitality and hard work. We admire also that all of Ron's family contribute to the peace of the world.

Barb and Ron, though your time here in Hiroshima is becoming short, I hope you can enjoy the remaining days in Japan as much as possible. I hope also you are able to go through with your plan to live in New Mexico. We Tuesday class fellows might visit you there sometime.

May you all be blessed with good health and enjoy long life.

Peace and love.

A Letter to Barb

Takaaki Kanda

Dear Barbara,

As a student of Ron's class I have not met with you regularly but we sometimes talked in Ron's calls. I knew that you were avid reader but you could not find many books here in Japan. So I began to lend you books from my paperback collection and brought 2-3 books to WFC when I attended Ron's class.

Since I am a big fan of Nevil Shute, I started from his "On the Beach", "A Town Like Alice", and "Round the Bend" and so on. In addition to that I chose some stories of Tolkien, Dickens, D. Francis, Theroux and et cetera. You returned these books within two or three weeks. Later, because of your comments, I felt your taste in reading was good. I am envious of your speed in reading and you have read almost all of my collection, so I am a little bit relieved now since you are going back to the States?! Admittedly, I'll miss you and miss the chance to talk about books.

Barb, I have been happy to have known you, as one who shares the joy of reading. In the States, you can choose your books easily and can enjoy reading ever more! Thank you, take care, bye!

Intern's Introduction

By Abdallah Habbal

Hello, my name is Abdallah Habbal. On March 8, I arrived in Hiroshima from Chicago, Illinois, USA. I came to Hiroshima for an internship at World Friendship Center and Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. Before I talk about why I'm here or how I ended



up in Hiroshima I would like to talk a little about myself. I was born in Nashville, Tennessee, and spent 7 years of my life there. When I was around 7 years old, we moved to Chicago and I have lived there ever since. As for my family, I must say it is quite the big family. I have 4 siblings and my parents, which altogether is 7 people. I have one brother and three sisters. I am the eldest and the others range from 19 years old to 10 years old.

I went to DePaul University, and my major was International Studies with a minor in Japanese Studies. Within my major I ended up concentrating in nuclear non-proliferation. I found myself very interested in the humanitarian aspects of nuclear weaponry. During my time in university I visited Japan twice. Every time I visited I heard a Hibakusha story and began to realize things I never knew. Growing up I never knew about how bad the nuclear bombs actually were. Many Americans still don't realize the suffering the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki went through. I believe it was because I visited both cities, and heard the stories, that I became interested in this message of nuclear non-proliferation. So I began to do more research and many of my papers in university were about nuclear non-proliferation. Also in my last year of University I met Steven Leeper. He came to Chicago to do a presentation on nuclear non-proliferation to the Universities. At the time I was taking an atomic bomb class with my teacher, Yuki Miyamoto. She asked me if I would like to help her and Mr. Leeper with the presentation. Being able to hear the presentation Mr. Leeper and the Hibakusha Shigeko

Sasamori give was an amazing experience. It was after this that I knew I wanted to find a way to help in this cause.

I graduated from DePaul University last June. After graduating I spent my time trying to find a job, but it seemed like there weren't many jobs out there for me. So I ended up working at Starbucks and then volunteering and interning at many different places. I figured since I was not going to find a job that maybe I can put my knowledge to use. So I searched on Google for any organization that might deal with peace and nuclear non-proliferation and I found the World Friendship Center. I ended up emailing Barb about an internship at the center. I didn't think anything would happen but it was worth a try. A few days after emailing Barb I get an email back from her telling me she is very interested in having me as an intern. After reading that email, I was so happy and excited to see when I can come to Hiroshima intern. Now that I am in Hiroshima, I feel a sense of accomplishment because I can finally get experience in working in the field I want. I want to take all the knowledge I gain here and one day use it to make the world a little better. I hope I can be of help to everyone here as much as they have helped me and I can never repay you enough for this experience.

Thank You,

WFC Welcomes Larry and JoAnn Sims



The Sims will be coming to us in May this year. They currently reside in Oregon. JoAnn taught elementary school for 36 years, earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and is currently an adjunct faculty member of Linfield College. Larry worked in the environmental field for 35 years, is a Registered Professional Engineer, and currently is consulting in wastewater cleanup.

JoAnn & Larry Sims have been peace and justice advocates nearly all their 46 years as a couple. When their two children were 3 & 5 they became foster parents. They founded Youth Care, an organization in Seattle to help young runaways and street kids turn around their lives. Youth Care celebrates its 36th year this spring.

The Sims' have traveled to Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe, the Caribbean, across the USA, Canada, and Mexico. Those trips have been professionally related or family adventures.

Throughout their married life they have hosted numerous Japanese students studying at the University of Washington and Linfield College. Most recently JoAnn & Larry hosted two groups of Japanese peace ambassadors from the World Friendship Center (WFC) located in Hiroshima, Japan. Both groups traveled across the USA sharing their stories of survival and hope.

Last August Larry and JoAnn were WFC PAX participants. It is with great pleasure the WFC will gain the Sims as volunteer Co-directors. Their past experience and passion for peace make them the perfect addition to WFC. Welcome to Larry and JoAnn!

WFC Announces NEW Class!

By Barb Siney

English Arena is now in session. This new class is provided primarily for teachers of fifth and sixth grade elementary students. It is an opportunity for those who are usually on the periphery of the arena to step into the ring and participate in the featured event, speaking English, with confidence.

We are pleased to have introduced the English Arena with model class lessons at WFC that were open to the public. On both Saturday, March 5 and Sunday, March 6 we welcomed perspective students. We received many questions and enjoyed the company of new students in a relaxed classroom setting. Many WFC volunteers participated and prepared fliers, parking directions, welcome

sheets and, assisted with much need translation so that students were assured of easy communication.

The first class took place on Thursday evening, March 24. The class followed an outline that allows time for guided conversation, interactive exercise, and pronunciation practice. We also allow time for Q and A so that we address the specific concerns of the teachers. All of the elements in the class are designed to encourage conversation and practice listening skills. It is our hope that WFC will provide a valuable resource for teachers and young students in our community!

Fun Time in English

By Miho Ikeda

We started a monthly "Fun Time in English" event this January. It is from 1PM to 4PM on the 4th Saturday every month. In the past "Friendship Afternoon" was an event at WFC and we have changed to a new style.

We are planning many fun things to do together in English. We are hoping that movies, music, dancing, crafts, cooking, lectures, etc can be shared. People from neighborhood and others are all welcome to join. There might be some who can't attend the English class every week but are able join us once a month, or less.

At the meeting of January and February, we watched the movie together our directors recommended and talked about it in English. Many attendees said that "we enjoyed a lot watching the movie and talking about it", "the movie was so impressive".

At the March meeting, we talked over what we can do for victims from this tremendous earthquake disaster, how to save on electricity, or the myth that nuclear power plants being completely safe. We chose this subject because WFC is enjoying internship student, Abdallah Habbal, who has knowledge of nuclear issues.

We want to keep this event going easy. We invite members and friends of WFC for their unique ideas and requests that they have always wanted to share at this comfortable time. Let's meet at WFC in the afternoons on the 4th Saturday of the month!!

WFC Awarded "Partners in Service"

By Dan McFadden

The Partners in Service Award was started by Brethren Volunteer Service in 2007 to recognize an individual, project or organization that has demonstrated exceptional commitment with BVS to share Gods love through acts of service. BVS is pleased this year to recognize the World Friendship Center of Hiroshima, Japan. WFC had been a long standing partner with BVS to share with the world the horrors of nuclear war and the critical need for peace in the world. BVS has long appreciated the support of the Riji in Japan and the American committee in the United States for the ongoing opportunities offered the volunteers who have served as the co-directors of the WFC. This award will be presented at the Brethren Volunteer Service luncheon, July 4, 2011, held during the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. BVS is blessed this year to have former WFC directors, Alice and Larry Petry, as the luncheon speakers. A number of other past directors may be present, including Ron and Barb Siney, who are the current directors of the center.

Barbara Reynolds Monument

Fund-raising Campaign

Monument Committee

We are pleased to announce that the long-awaited monument honoring Barbara Reynolds will be erected soon. Friends of World Friendship Center, especially those who love Barbara, are invited to make donations to commemorate her loving concern for *hibakusha* (survivor of the atomic bomb) and citizens of Hiroshima as well as her ardent wish for world peace. We hope that these memories may be passed down to next generations.

Barbara Reynolds, an American, dedicated her life to the cause of "Hiroshima" and world peace. She empathized with *hibakusha*, who desired a safe world, setting aside their own past misery, wretchedness, and anger. She supported *hibakusha* with a strong will and continued an appeal for the abolishment of nuclear weapons. Especially at this time, as Japan struggles with one difficulty after another – the devastating earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima nuclear power plant failure – we are reminded of Barbara's concern for those who have suffered catastrophe.

In October, 1975, Barbara Reynolds became a special honorary citizen of Hiroshima because of her accomplishments. Her endeavors included a voyage to the restricted zone of a nuclear test area off Hawaii on the yacht, "Phoenix of Hiroshima", world tours with *hibakusha* and dispatching Peace Ambassadors between America and Japan. In 1965, as a bastion of peace movements, she founded World Friendship Center. Even now WFC is in operation by the principles that person to person communication is the basis of peace. The

monument is to show younger generations what Barbara did for the sake of world peace.

The Barbara Reynolds Memorial Monument is scheduled to be erected in June of 2011. It is to be placed at the south-eastern corner of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, Japan near the monuments of Norman Cousins and Dr. Marcel Junod.

Friends of WFC and Barbara Reynolds can make contributions toward the cost of the monument that will be placed in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. If you live in North America, and you want to make a donation, please send your check to the treasurer of the American Committee. His address is Dennis Horn, 3953 South Bailey Road, Wabash, IN 46992. Be sure to include 'Barbara's Monument' on the memo line. Thank you for your generous and kind consideration for donations.

