



WVMSCA

SPRING 2014

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **President's message**
- **Zach Davies' "The Good Life" article**
- **Meet your 2014 WVMSCA Delegates**

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A message from your president

Where Are Our Japanese Friends?

It is very strange to have Apple Blossom time without our Japanese guests from Misawa. I feel like I should be scheduling tours of the area. However, I do understand their desire to cut back to one visit a year in order to provide more financial help for students wishing to visit the Wenatchee Valley. We look forward to 10 students and 8 adult delegates who plan to visit us for Wings and Wheels this fall!

Meanwhile, we have 16 delegates from here getting ready to visit Japan in August. Judy and I will begin orientation meetings in June. We'll encourage our delegates to practice basic Japanese phrases and learn about Japanese customs and geography. We know that the best part of the trip will be the time with families in Misawa. Our Wenatchee Valley delegates will be ready to share meals, enjoy the Misawa countryside, and understand the differences that will make this such a

special trip.

I want to say a special thank you to our volunteers who are already working to prepare for the Wings and Wheels visit. Thank you also to those members and companies who support the Sister City Association with their memberships and efforts to welcome our Japanese visitors. Our special and ongoing relationship with Misawa enriches everyone.

David Kelts
WVMSCA President

Trivia Quiz

1. You have just gotten off your flight, and you are on Japan's largest island. Where are you?
A. Chugoku Sanchi B. Honshu C. Hokkaido D. Nilihama
2. You don't speak Japanese, but an English speaking passer-by tells you you are in Japan's largest city. Where are You? A. Osaka B. Yokohama C. Tokyo D. Nagoya
3. You have just rented a Japanese rental car and drive north to city of Sapporo. What island are you on? A. Hokkaido B. Kyushu C. Chugoku Sanchi D. Honshu
4. You feel like a history lesson, so you decide to fly from Sapporo to Hiroshima. On your way you notice you are flying over a vast body of water. You know you are on a straight flight, so you pull out your map, and you find the body of water is..... A. The Korean Sea B. The Sea of Japan C. The South China Sea D. The Pacific Ocean
5. After your visit to Hiroshima you went to Osaka. From Osaka to Tokyo you took a very famous train ride at 350 kmh. What famous train are you on? (Two Words)
6. You arrive in Tokyo, and you look at a menu. Oh my goodness, it's 50,000 Yen for a plate of sushi! You think to yourself, "this must be the most expensive cities in the world." Are you right?

A Plane Connection

By Zach Davies, WVMSCA Board Member

Our bullet train was cruising at 200 mph and heading north from Tokyo on a cool, windy November afternoon. I sipped my iced coffee, purchased from incredibly efficient worker pushing the food cart and watched the Japanese countryside whiz by, its forests of deciduous trees which were turning lovely shades of orange and yellow streaking to a blur outside the window. In this moment of pure Zen, I thought about how this trip to the north of Japan had come about. Sometimes when thinking about the events that led us in a certain direction, it is amazing to ponder how lucky it is that everything lined up so perfectly.

When Tomoko, my wife, and I moved to Wenatchee ten years ago from Osaka, Japan, we thought we had come to a place that had very little connection to what we had known in Osaka. For example, Osaka is known for its lively atmosphere and night-life, due to its dynamic food culture. It was not uncommon for us to come home after midnight on a weekday. In Wenatchee, we felt like genuine night owls if we ate out for dinner at 8 pm on weekend. It made it somewhat difficult to adjust to our new lives.

Surprisingly to us, though, we ended up meeting many people in the Wenatchee area that had some connection to Japan. We met business people, former servicemen and women, second-generation Japanese and a large number of people that mentioned a trip to Misawa, Japan.

We wondered why so many people in this valley had a connection to a city in Japan we hadn't really heard of. We slowly learned about the history behind the Wenatchee Valley relationship with Misawa. The two places shared the common thread of being both ends of the first nonstop trans-Pacific flight by Clyde Pangborn and Hugh Herndon in their plane, Miss Veedol, in 1931. Upon further study, Pangborn and Herndon were under suspicion of being spies by the Japanese government and were arrested. They were held for 58 days in Japan before reluctantly given the green light to takeoff for their trans-Pacific attempt. They originally planned to leave from Tokyo, but leaving from Misawa gave their heavy airplane a better chance of making it to the other side of Pacific. Shortly after taking off, Pangborn dropped their landing gear to make the plane lighter. Part of the landing gear didn't drop as he had expected, so Clyde had to climb out of the plane while it was 14,000 feet in the air to jar the stubborn part loose. They had planned on landing in Boise or Spokane, but both were fogged in.

Pangborn, being originally from Bridgeport, knew that Fancher Field (currently Fancher Heights) rarely got fog. The plane, sans landing gear, belly-flopped in the Wenatchee Valley. Misawa and the Wenatchee Valley now had a connection that would lay dormant for 50 years.

In 1981, the two places decided to begin a sister city relationship. Through the dedication of many people on both sides of the Pacific, the relationship has flourished and friendships have grown numerous. A Misawa delegation alternates visits once a year between the Wings and Wheels Festival in East Wenatchee in October and the Apple Blossom Festival in May. This year, they will be coming for the week of Wings and Wheels. A delegation from the Wenatchee Valley visits Misawa in August for the Misawa Summer Festival.

My wife and I have never been able to make the Wenatchee Valley delegation trip to Misawa, but, for the last several years, we have become active in the local Wenatchee Valley Misawa Sister City Association. We have hosted adults from the Misawa delegation and have had a wonderful time. Last year, I had the nerve-racking task of helping with translation for the Misawa Junior High School students' visits to Wenatchee Valley elementary schools. Considering that my Japanese skills are the equivalent to that of a three-year-old added extra pressure. However, the day turned out just fine and now more children in our valley have a better understanding of Japanese culture. They now can also do some pretty nifty origami animals and shapes, too, thanks to their Japanese teachers!

Thanks to Clyde and Hugh, the Japanese government, fog in Boise and Spokane, hard-working people in Misawa and the Wenatchee Valley Misawa Sister City Association and truly wonderful experiences with the numerous delegations from Misawa, we found ourselves on the bullet train from Tokyo. The final leg of our trip was on an extremely cute, small train to Misawa Station, where we were greeted by our good friend Shindo-san ("san", pronounced sahn, is the equivalent of Mr. or Mrs. in Japanese).

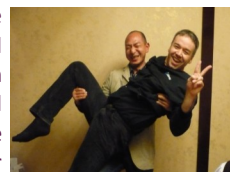
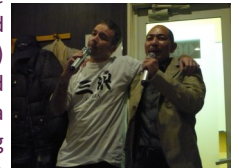
Before I go any further, there is a Japanese word that everyone should learn. The word is "Omotenashi" (Oh-moe-tey-nah-she), which means hospitality. I have travelled to many countries in my life, but I have not found people that take hospitality as seriously as the

Japanese. No matter where you go - a restaurant, someone's home, a taxi, or the consumer heaven that is the Japanese convenience store - you will find an absolute wealth of hospitality.

After the short lesson interlude, let's get back to our tale. Shindo-san helped us check into our hotel and then drove us to a restaurant for our "Welcome Party." They had rounded up all of our friends that we had made over the years. It was incredibly moving to see everyone again at the same time and feel the warm welcome of the whole group. We took loads of pictures, laughed and caught up. It felt like we were actually a part of this group, not just visitors from faraway. Afterwards, we went to a nearby six-story building, full of small rooms to have a private karaoke (pronounced Kah-rah-oh-kay) party. I managed to butcher a Japanese song and offend the Beatles with my off-key version of "I Saw Her Standing There." Needless to say, many lifelong memories were made that first day.

The next day we woke up to the first snow of the year in Misawa. However, the sun was out and, determined to not let the white stuff ruin our adventure, we went on a full day tour to see the sights. We visited the amazing Misawa Aviation and Science Museum, toured the port that is still damaged from the massive tsunami in 2011 and took in Sabishiro Beach, the sight of the departure of the Miss Veedol in 1931.

As has probably become rather apparent, Misawa and airplanes fits together like an all-you-can-eat buffet and a sumo wrestler. Misawa takes pride in their nickname, "Sky City." The Aviation and Science Museum contains an exact replica of the Miss Veedol and while at the museum you can enjoy scores of fun science related activities and try



your flying skills with helicopter and airplane simulators. Misawa is also home to the Misawa Air Base, which houses a combined effort of US military and Japan Self Defense forces. Misawa Airport is also connected to the air base, which means that your passenger plane might pull up alongside an F-16. Few things can make your flying the friendly skies more exciting than feeling like you're in a scene from Top Gun. The bottom line is that airplanes have been a big part of Misawa's history and, with their gigantic Aviation and Science Museum, they don't try to hide it.

We then had dinner with Hori-san, the first person we hosted at our home seven years ago and his family and concluded the evening with a soak at one of the many hot springs in the area. Nothing feels better on a cold November night than a Japanese hot spring. The Japanese have developed hot spring enjoyment down to a science. One can choose between different pools with jets that



massage your back, soles of your feet, or neck. If you want to sweat out your stress, head for the sauna. Still more pools are located outside so that your eyes can soak in the night sky just as your body soaks in the clean, naturally-hot water.

The next morning, our departure day, we were greeted outside the hotel by several of our friends. Three of them accompanied us to the train station, which has an entire staircase mural celebrating the Wenatchee Valley's flying version of the Miss Veedol coming to Misawa three years ago. They walked us out to the train platform, where hugs were given and goodbyes were said. As our train pulled away, it reminded me that it is indeed the people that make the places we love special.

I encourage you to take the first step in creating your own link to Japan and see just how real and special the connection can be. The Wenatchee Valley Misawa Sister City Association is now accepting applications for the upcoming trip to Misawa from August 15th



– 24th. They are encouraging interested adults as well as children between the ages of 12 to 17 to apply. (FYI—The application process for the 2014 delegation trip to Misawa ended March 15th.) Simply go to www.wenatcheevalleymisawa.org to begin exploring this wonderful opportunity. We have been blessed to be a part of this Association, with unforgettable experiences and friendships that will last a lifetime. If you are expecting the experience to be an adventure, you will not be disappointed! Won't you join us?

Zach Davies, originally from the village of Orondo, WA, now lives in Wenatchee with his wife, Tomoko. When he is not studying to improve his mediocre Japanese or following the latest in the world of sumo wrestling or soccer, he works as a Certified Financial Planner® in Wenatchee.



(Originally published in "The Good Life" January 2014)

Meet Your 2014 Delegation to Misawa



Delegation Leader
Tim Detering
East Wenatchee
City Councilman



Travel Coordinators
David & Judy Kelts



Apple Blossom
Princess
Caroline Dahl



Apple Blossom
Royalty Chaperone
Lori Reed



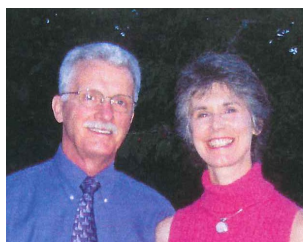
Lily League
Student



Danie Meadows
Student



Jim Russell Karen Russell



Don & Donna Payne



Sandra Whitley



Sarah Murray
Student



Max Wirth
Student



Mikel Stanaway



Shayne Stanaway
Student



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Mission Statement:

The mission of the Wenatchee Valley Misawa Sister City Association is to strengthen the climate of friendship between the cities of Misawa, Wenatchee and East Wenatchee by promoting cultural exchange. The Association is dedicated to furthering the historical significance of the first non-stop Trans-Pacific flight by Clyde Pangborn and Hugh Herndon in October 1931.



We're on the web:
wenatcheevalleymisawa.org

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