November 2020 Volume 1, Issue 3

MINNIBARAKI

Our Fortieth Year

Minneapolis Ibaraki Sister City Association

The refurbished "Bell of Two Friends"

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Zen Box Izakaya

Zenbox Izakaya Restaurant had been the location for the MISCA Board meetings until the Covid Pandemic shut down their indoor operations. Board members loved not only the wonderful selection of Japanese dishes that people in Japan would typically eat at home, but also the wonderful service and reasonable prices.

The restaurant is located at 602 South Washington Avenue, not far from the Guthrie Theater and has been operating since 2012.

Although the restaurant reopened with takeout and the outdoor patio when the lock-down was eased, business has still been down – due to the fewer number of people downtown for either business or pleasure.

Now with colder weather approaching the outdoor patio area is closing on November 1st.

However, they will still be offering Take-out service and also have delivery service currently through Bite Squad and soon also through Door Dash. Hours of operation are 4 – 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Until they can fully reopen, we encourage you to support Zenbox by ordering lunch/dinner for takeout and or delivery.

You can find their menu and more information at: zenbox.com

More about Zenbox on page 4

Friends of the Bell of Two Friends

Diamond Friends
Bill Deef
Michael Rainville
Karl Reinhard

Platinum Friends
Jack Sattel and Karen Sontag Sattel
Mary Witkus & Werner Kohler

Gold Friends
Jessica Manivasager

Silver Friends
Richard & Marie-Rose Lundgren
Dan Rolf

Bronze Friends
Carol Austermann
Sharon Balke
Carter Clapsadle & Julia Baugnet
Richard Kathrine Fournier
Mirja Hanson
Cynthia & Brian Haskell
Jim & Reiko Hoffman
Brenda Langton & Tim Kane
Helane Monsour
Doug & Addona Rivord
James & Norma Solstad
Claire & Paul Spilseth
Richard & Carol Stahl
Vernon Wetternach

The Sculptures at the Ibaraki Central Library

By Mary Witkus

Planning for the new Ibaraki Central Library in 1991 included commissioning two Minneapolis artists; Harriet Bart and Leila Denecke, to each create an art piece for the building. We in Minneapolis are very fortunate to be so well represented by these two exceptional women. I wish I had known about these pieces when we went to the Ibaraki Central Library to visit our friends' English class.

The last time we traveled to Ibaraki was in the spring of 2019, just last year! It seems so long ago that we enjoyed the companionship and hospitality of our dear friends in Ibaraki. The cherry blossoms – sakura – were at their peak!

Shortly after returning, I was at a small luncheon and shared my enthusiasm about Ibaraki. One of the guests was Harriet Bart, who I know as a book artist. She surprised me in that she also has had experiences in Ibaraki. She created a bronze sculpture for the Ibaraki Central Library in 1992. Wow, how had I missed that? She shared stories of friendship and hospitality similar to what we all experience.

Harriet Bart's sculpture outside the Ibaraki Library

Curious to see what the sculpture looked like, I emailed a friend in Ibaraki to take a photo of the piece. She promptly responded using her iPhone on the way into the library for her English class.

On the left a model of Ms. Bart's sculpture, on the right Mary with Ms. Bart.

I furthered my experience with Harriet and "Helicon Volumes" early in 2020, while attending the opening of the Weisman Art Museum's exhibition of the extensive lifetime work of Harriet Bart. It included a scale model of her Ibaraki piece. She also signed my copy of the book about the exhibition, Abracadabra, which I am reading to learn more about this work. It is composed of 650 individually cast bronze books that are arranged in a spiral inviting people to enter the library and explore the wonder of books.

Sculptures continued on page 4

2021 Haiku Contest

The Annual Haiku Contest is one program that will not be postponed or canceled due to the pandemic!

However there will be a few changes, with entries submitted via a Google Form or email, as few students are actually in their classrooms at this time.

The Haiku Contest has been going on since the 1990's with Minneapolis students submitting around a thousand entries each year. MISCA board members look forward to January each year, when they get to read through all the entries and try to narrow them down to what they feel are the thirty best in each age category.

Those selected are then sent to Ibaraki City for final judging to determine first, second and third place winners, as well as five honorable mentions, in each age category.

For those unfamiliar with Haiku, they are a type of Japanese poem. Each Haiku is made up of three lines, with five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line and the five syllables in the third and final line.

Haiku often refer to the seasons of the year and should evoke images in nature. Use of repetition of sounds, alliterations, and words with multiple meanings and homonyms are often found in Haiku.

Each year the Emperor selects a theme for Haiku poets. This year's theme is Nozomi (望み), which translates to "Hope" meaning wish or desire.

Minneapolis Public School students and staff, as well as Minneapolis city officials are invited to enter this year's contest. Entries must be received by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, December 16th, 2020.

Haiku Contest continued on page 6

Greetings from IFAI

Hello everyone in Minneapolis.

I am Sei Shirotani, the president of International Friendship Association of Ibaraki (IFAI).

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the sister city relationship between Minneapolis and Ibaraki. We would have visited each other's cities in this memorable year to celebrate our 40 yearlong friendship, but due to the global pandemic of the COVID-19, the wish has not come true. It is our great regret.

Under these circumstances, we are very grateful to MISCA members for publishing MINNIBARAKI and celebrating our 40th anniversary.

I read MINNIBARAKI and learned of your efforts to restore "Bell of Two Friends", a symbol of friendship between our cities. When I saw the photo of the restored "Bell of Two Friends" after a successful fundraising campaign, I was very impressed by the feelings of you in taking good care of "Bell of Two Friends" and of friendship with our city.

In retrospect, the sister city agreement with Minneapolis dates back to 1980. At that time, the momentum to join one of the international cities had increased in Ibaraki City for the future, and through the relationship with International Multi Foods, we signed the sister city declaration with Minneapolis.

Greetings continued on page 5

Zenbox, continued from page 1

Zen Box Izakaya" Overview
by Lina Goh:

"In 1996 an architectural student in San Francisco (John Ng) met a financial student (Lina Goh) in New Zealand in an online chat-room. A long-distance relationship maintained through emails, postcards, and a first meeting in San Francisco in 1997 finally resulted in the two getting married in 1999. Being apart for so long has created a dynamic that has allowed them to work in complement. Each bringing both of their skill sets and strengths together, they work as a team.

At the behest of friends and family, in 2004 they found the community and support to open their first restaurant focusing on bento in downtown Minneapolis' financial district.

With the expansion and opening of Zen Box Izakaya as their latest location in 2012, John and Lina have since realized their dream to share the many complexities and nuances of Japanese cuisine and ramen with their loyal fans and guests.

Both in and out of the kitchen, architecture has always been John's outlook and aesthetic. While the bento serves as a constant study in harmony and structure, his passion is ignited in ramen.

Chef Ng's style, both, works and is indeed his own style, because of a firm understanding of the importance of structure, yet the drive to challenge and redefine that same structure. In creating a new space, the architect must consider every space that has come before. Ramen, too, is indebted to and steeped in the same tradition. Every facet of design is an extension of his own self, from his restaurant spaces to his signature ramen; it is from this platform that Chef Ng begins a new creation. Each bowl of ramen is the consideration of all possibilities – this is the style of the Ramen Architect."

Sculputures, continued from page 2

Leila Denecke's work for the Library is a ceramic monument called, "Stele Mississippi". Denecke is a ceramic sculptor and potter who has studied extensively in Japan. She is known locally as an instructor at Northern Clay in Minneapolis and shows her work there as well as other venues. These photos are taken from her web site.

Ms. Denecke's sculpture " Stele Mississippi on the left, Ms. Denecke is in the photo on the right.

Now I am ever so eager to return to our sister city. The Ibaraki Central Library is definitely on the itinerary, second only to seeing friends and renewing acquaintances. Just writing about Ibaraki evokes warms remembrances. Thank you people of Ibaraki for making us all feel so welcome.

Greetings, continued from page 3

The declaration says; we pledge ourselves to promote closer friendly relations between our two cities by means of mutual interchange of culture, deeper understanding of both citizens, and mutual diplomatic activities by the citizens, and we are also determined to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the both Cities, and also between the United States and Japan.

In the 40 years since then, in the spirit of this declaration, our cities have continued to make mutual visits in a wide range of fields, including sports such as youth baseball, soccer, and tennis, cultural such as tea and flower arrangement, folk music and dance, and choral music, as well as study abroad and homestay programs for high school students from both cities. We have deepened the ties between the two cities since 1980.

We, the members of IFAI, will work to further deepen and continue the bonds and friendships that have been built between our cities over the past 40 years through the efforts of many people.

In conclusion, I wish the people of Minneapolis good health and success in their endeavors and wish you all the best.

Thank you.

ミネアポリス市の皆さんこんにちは。

茨木市国際親善都市協会会長の城谷星です

本年はミネアポリス市（貴市）と茨木市が姉妹都市を締結し、40 年の記念すべき年です。本来であれば、この記念すべき年に、お互いの市民がそれぞれの都市を訪れ、40 年の長きにわたる交流を祝福するはずでしたが、新型コロナウイルスの世界的な流行により、その希望は叶わぬものとなったこと、非常に残念に思っております。

このような中、MISCA のみなさんが MINNIBARAKI を発刊され、40 周年の節目を祝福してくださること、大変感謝いたしております。

MINNIBARAKI を拝見し、両市の友情の象徴である「双珠の鐘」の修復に皆様がご尽力いただいていることを知りました。募金キャンペーンを成功させ、修理を終えた「双珠の鐘」の写真を見たときに、私はミネアポリス市の皆さんの「双珠の鐘」を大切にしてくださるお気持ち、我が市との友情に対する思いに大変感銘を受けた次第でございます。

思い返せば、ミネアポリス市との姉妹都市締結のきっかけは、1980 年にまでさかのぼります。当時、茨木市は今後の将来を考え、国際都市の仲間入りをしていく機運が高まり、インターナショナルマルチフーズ社とのご縁から、ミネアポリス市と姉妹都市を締結いたしました。その時、両市は両市間の市民文化の交流を深め、両市民の理解と連帯を密にし、相互の友好親善と市民外交が促進され、両市市勢の伸展と市民福祉の向上に寄与することを念願するとともに、日米両国ひいては、世界の平和と人類の福祉に貢献することを確信し、盟約の宣言を行いました。

それから 40 年、両市はこの宣言の精神に則り、少年野球やサッカー、テニスなどのスポーツ、茶華道や民謡・民舞、合唱などの文化、両市高校生の留学やホームステイなど、老若男女問わない様々な世代、幅広い分野において相互訪問を積み重ね、活発な交流を行うことによって、両市間の絆を深めてまいりました。

我々、茨木市国際親善都市協会のメンバーは、40 年の間に様々な人たちの思いによって築かれた両市間の絆や友情をさらに深め、継続していくために活動してまいりたいと思います。

結びに、ミネアポリス市の皆様のご健勝とご活躍を祈念し、メッセージとさせていただきます。

ありがとうございます。

Youth Exchange Appeal

Teachers, do you have any ideas for possible youth exchanges with Ibaraki City? MISCA is looking for ideas to help Minneapolis students get a better understanding of Ibaraki city/Japanese History and Culture while at the same time helping Japanese students get a better idea of Minneapolis/Minnesota/American History and culture.

Haiku Contest, continued from page 3

Entries can be submitted as follows:

Via Google Form (Best):

https://forms.gle/YP1SSC8xRZZS7tuZ8

Via email to: misca.info@gmail.com

Remember that how wonderful your poem may sound to the MISCA judges, if it doesn't follow the 5-7-5 syllable pattern it will be rejected!

Once the final results are back from Ibaraki, winners and runners up will be notified; this should be around late March.

In April we will hold an awards ceremony. If the pandemic has eased by then, we will hold the ceremony at the downtown Central Library. If that is not possible, we will hold the ceremony via a Zoom meeting for the winners. Parents, families and teachers will be able to view the ceremony, as it will be live streamed as well on MISCA's Facebook page.

We are looking forward to reading all the wonderful haikus!

Easy as Pie

By Cynthia Haskell

When I was young, you would occasionally hear the phrase "easy as pie". It was used to describe a task as being simple to do. "How was your math homework?" Reply - "Easy as pie."

This was confusing to me because I thought making a pie crust was very difficult. Cut the butter into the flour. Add just the right amount of water. Roll out the dough. If it were not done exactly right, the crust wouldn't taste good after baking. I wondered why didn't people say "easy as cake" instead? To make cake you just have to mix everything together and bake it. That is much simpler, right?

It wasn't until a few years ago when I visited Fort Snelling History Center that I heard an explanation that made sense. Back in the days of wood burning stoves, maintaining an exact oven temperature was very difficult. A cake needs to bake at an exact temperature for a prolonged period in order to turn out.

A pie, however, can with stand a range of temperatures and baking times. Back in those days, people made pies more frequently at home and were able to develop the "knack" (a special skill, talent, or aptitude) for making pie crusts. Now that the weather is turning cooler, we are making both sweet and savory homemade pies.

Fortunately Brian has a knack for pie crusts.

Kamishibai

MISCA board member has a kamishibai (kah-mee-shee-bye) set that she has used to put on shows for children. Unfortunately she has been unable to do so for us due to the pandemic. We hope she will be able to soon.

In the mean time for those unfamiliar with kamishibai, here is a short explanation:

Kamishibai means paper play – it would consist of storyboards that were placed into a miniature stage and then narrated by the storyteller as he/she changed the boards.

This type of storytelling was popular during the 1920's to the 1950's until television came along.

The kamishibai man would travel by bicycle around town to tell his story to the local children, as well as sell them some sweets. Those who bought sweets got to stand in the front, while those who didn't had to stand in the back.

The MINNIBARAKI newsletter is published quarterly (February, May, August and November) by the Minneapolis-Ibaraki Sister City Association.

MINNEAPOLIS IBARAKI SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

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Facebook: Search for MISCA

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MINNEAPOLIS-IBARAKI SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

Upcoming Board Meetings:

Monday, November 9, 2020

Monday, December 14, 2020

Board meetings are usually held at ZenBox Izakaya

602 South Washington Ave

Social time 5:30 – 6:15

Business meeting starts at 6:15

However at this time meetings are being held virtually. If you would like to participate, please email Karl Reinhard at:

Kreinhard1957@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

We are hoping to resume our events later this year.

HAIKU Contest
(November)
Will take place!

Holidazzle
(December)
Has been canceled for 2020