



The Bridge

Winter 2022

Roseburg Sister Cities, Inc.

Friendship & Understanding since 1993 – Roseburg, Oregon & Kuki City, Japan

The President's Corner



Dear Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! The last two years have tested our stress levels, as well as our health and welfare! Let's hope that 2022 will bring improvements and we may gather together again in person!

For 35 years, our alternating year Student Exchanges have taken place, paused only for a year when the SARS concerns prevented Roseburg Students from their scheduled visit to Japan and they had to wait until the following year to make their visit. Unfortunately, the Student Team scheduled to visit Japan in Summer of 2020 has been unable to make their visit and it is doubtful that they will be able to visit this year. The Student Exchange Director for the past 10 years, Paul Whitworth, has resigned from his position as Director and as a Board Member. We appreciate all the years of time, service, and dedication he invested to keep the Student Exchanges happening and wish him well as he pursues new avenues.

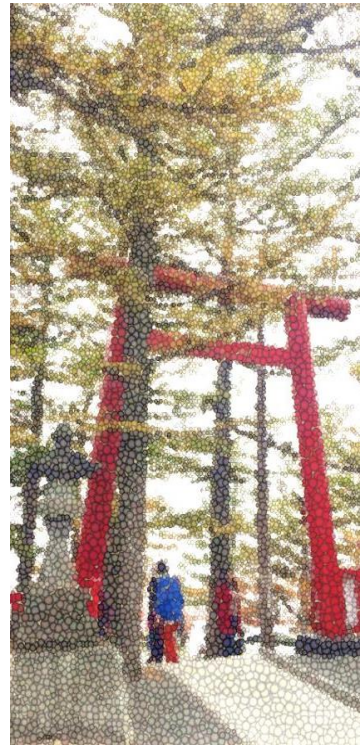
I have appointed a Search Committee to find a new Director and School Liaisons for the Student program and am pleased that Lee Paterson, Elizabeth Clawson, Marliene (Winfield) Swanson, Steve Erickson, and Akiyo Riggs – who have extensive experience as past Leaders of the Exchanges - and Emily Brandt, Board Member, and the New Umpqua Valley Arts Center Director, have agreed to serve on this Committee. With their enthusiasm and support, I'm confident we will be successful in moving forward as soon as Kuki City is in a position to welcome our students again! We are committed to support the 2020 students and future exchanges and work closely with Kuki City, so they can participate in this amazing life experience! Please let me know of anyone who may consider the Director position.

For 30 years, the Adult Delegations have been exchanging visits. The Japan Delegation last visited in 2018 but were unable to visit in 2020 and are still not able to travel outside of Japan. We thought you would like to learn how some of our long time Association members have been affected by Covid and are sharing their messages in this newsletter. We have reached out to them recently but so far International travel outside of Japan in 2022 is doubtful. We will keep you posted if anything changes.

RSC has participated in the "Celebration of Literacy" for many years. Marliene Swanson and Akiyo Riggs are busy preparing and seeking Volunteers to help with the Booth this year on Saturday, February 19th at Wildlife Safari. Please let them know if you can help them with this worthwhile project that gives our organization some great Community exposure and benefits our community youth!

This spring we will be looking for Volunteers to help with the Friendship Garden clean up and hope you will consider joining us to keep the Garden maintained and inviting! Please Let Steve Erickson know if you would like to be contacted for the clean up dates.

- continued on page 2



- Calendar of Events -

February 19, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm: Celebration of Literacy @ Wildlife Safari (See article, pg 5)

**March 8, 5:00 pm,
April 12, 5:00 pm, and
May 10, 5:00 pm**
RSC Board Meetings
2nd Tuesdays.





Roseburg Sister Cities Board of Directors:

President: Janet Johnston
 Vice President: Steve Erickson
 Secretary: Emily Brandt
 Treasurer: Debbie Fields

Board Members:

Charlotte Carter, Joanie Chambers, Karsha Owen, Jo Ann Pico, Akiyo Riggs, Rosemarie Wess, & Maureen Williams

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Newsletter Editor:
 Katherine Elisar, 541.670.4221

RSC Annual Meeting was held November 7, 2021

RSC held their Annual Meeting at Umpqua Valley Arts. The event was planned by Joanie Chambers, with table decorations by Akiyo Riggs and Katherine Elisar, dinner planned by Maureen Williams with COVID-19 protocols followed. Sake was served by Marliene Swanson. President Janet Johnston presented Thomas McGregor with a plaque honoring his many years of service as the past Board President. Board members were elected & reports heard.

New Board Member: Rosemarie Wess



My life's experiences are as varied as the breeds of shelter dogs we've adopted over the years. Prior to marrying in the mid-1970s, I have had the good fortune of living in Germany, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Taiwan.

We have lived in Oregon since 1999. Prior to retiring from local county government in 2019, I worked at SSA headquarters; Honeywell, and, after earning my BS degree, NASA and MCI. My interests include learning to speak new languages and meeting people with backgrounds that differ from my own.

After befriending a person from Japan in Taiwan, I have always wanted to visit Japan - but I wasn't certain how to go about doing so since I'd never visited before. Then I learned about the Roseburg Sister Cities (RSC) organization and immediately saw the benefit of my joining this non-profit. Now I will have the opportunity to immerse myself in centuries-old Japanese culture first-hand and not do it alone!

Welcome, Rosemarie!

L to R: front row – Beverly Paulson, Akiyo Riggs, Maureen Williams, Back row – Kevin Carson, Katherine Elisar, Janet Johnston, Debbie Fields, Nancy Pittman, Steve Erickson.



Continued from page 1:

If you have not already done so, please consider renewing your 2022 RSC Membership, so we can build up our funding for future Exchanges and cover ongoing costs of this Volunteer Non Profit Organization. Costs of hosting continue to increase, so we want to be prepared to host the next Delegation from Kuki City as soon as travel is possible.

Domo Arigato Goziamasu (Thank you),

*Janet Johnston, President
 Roseburg Sister Cities, Inc.*

Janetsmail77@gmail.com, 541-430-2885



2021 RSC Annual Meeting



Outgoing Treasurer Kevin Carson with Incoming Treasurer Debbie Fields welcoming members.



President Janet Johnston presenting plaque to long-time past President Thomas McGregor with his family looking on.



Akiyo Riggs presenting our card & flowers to Thelma Sayers for her 101st birthday!



RSC Vice President, Steve Erickson, gave an inspiring Kampai.



Thelma Sayers with Beverly Paulson



Kevin Carson leading the Shime!



Martha Scott with her great granddaughter, Tessa Armstrong.



Taiko at City Hall



On November 16, 2021, Aki and Jon Riggs, CJ Bryant (Phoenix School Teacher) and Noriko Corrado, city employee, set our Taiko drum in a new acrylic protective case at the Roseburg City Hall.

The Taiko Drum was a gift from Shobu, Japan in 1998 to commemorate the first five years of the Sister Cities' Exchange Program. Phoenix School donated all of the materials and labor for making the case.

Thank you to Phoenix School and CJ Bryant for this beautiful case!



Thank you to Akiyo Riggs for coordinating with the City & Phoenix School!



Passing of Longtime RSC Supporter Judy Wood

Judy Wood of Roseburg died on February 2, 2021 at age 88 of complications of polymyositis, a condition she had fought for decades.

Judy and her husband, Wiley, who died in 2001, visited Shobu, Japan several times as part of the RSC program and also hosted guests in their home.

Judy and her husband named the street that leads to their home Shobu Lane and were proud of their Japanese-style garden and pond, which Chiaki Koyama, seen above with his wife, Yasuko Koyama, helped to design.

Judy was born in 1932 in Ferndale, Michigan. She majored in Education at the University of California, Boise State in 1971 and from the U of O in 1978. She worked at UCC from 1971 to 1994 as an associate professor and the lead writing instructor in the Developmental Education Department.

Judy is survived by her six daughters and 43 grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren.

A memorial was held on August 14, 2021 at the Discovery Garden which her husband and Mr. Koyama designed.



Upcoming Events



- Spring Garage Sale –

SAVE items to bring to RSC member, Debbie Field's home!

** Contact Debbie for more information:*

541-643-7824

Fred Meyer Community Rewards

Roseburg Sister Cities is a part of this program! If you shop at Fred Meyer, you can still sign up. It doesn't cost you a thing, but a percentage of your purchase amount is donated to RSC. We would love to have more families involved!

To Use the Fred Meyer Community Rewards :

Customers must have a registered Fred Meyer rewards card account that is linked to our organization. **To do this**, visit

<https://www.fredmeyer.com>. Log into your account (if you already have one). Once logged in, go to My Account and Community Rewards. You can search for Roseburg Sister Cities either by name or by our non-profit organization number **TU186** and then click **'Enroll'**.

New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a rewards card.

Any transactions using your Rewards Card number associated with your digital account will be applied to the program, at no added cost to you.

Roseburg Sister Cities thanks you!

Celebration of Literacy

Saturday, February 19

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Wildlife Safari Village Area



Roseburg Sister Cities will have an activity booth with information and activities for families in the Wildlife Safari Village area.

Volunteers will be assisting children in simple origami folding!



If you would like to join in the festivities, please contact RSC member Marliene Swanson: martam2@charter.net.



RSC FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

During this past year, RSC members were busy with the RSC Friendship Garden which is located between the City of Roseburg Library and Deer Creek. Together with City of Roseburg Horticulturist, Tracy Pope, and her crew, who freshened up the garden and replanted several plantings, RSC volunteers held a 'Friendship Garden Homage Day' on Arbor Day, April 30th with an information table to reacquaint visitors as well as having new signage and brochures.

Thank you to Joanie Chambers, Kevin Carson, Katherine Elisar, Janet Johnston, Beverly Paulson, Charlotte Carter, and Maureen Williams, as well as, the Library Director Kris Wiley and her staff who picked up signage!



Charlotte Carter & Maureen Williams in the Garden.



Joanie Chambers & Steve Erickson greeting visitors!



Life in the Friendship Garden is moving along well with the seasons. While the plants in the garden remain dormant overall, buds are appearing and beginning to swell on the trees and shrubs. Most likely the first blossoms to appear will grace the Camellias.

Tracy Pope, horticulturist for the City of Roseburg, who has helped with coordinating and overseeing the implementation of the garden, reports that there have been few wildlife sightings in the garden other than an occasional White Egret. The local beavers have demanded attention in the form of the Japanese maples being replaced and replanted. These maples will eventually require further care in some form of protection from future incursions by our industrious friends.

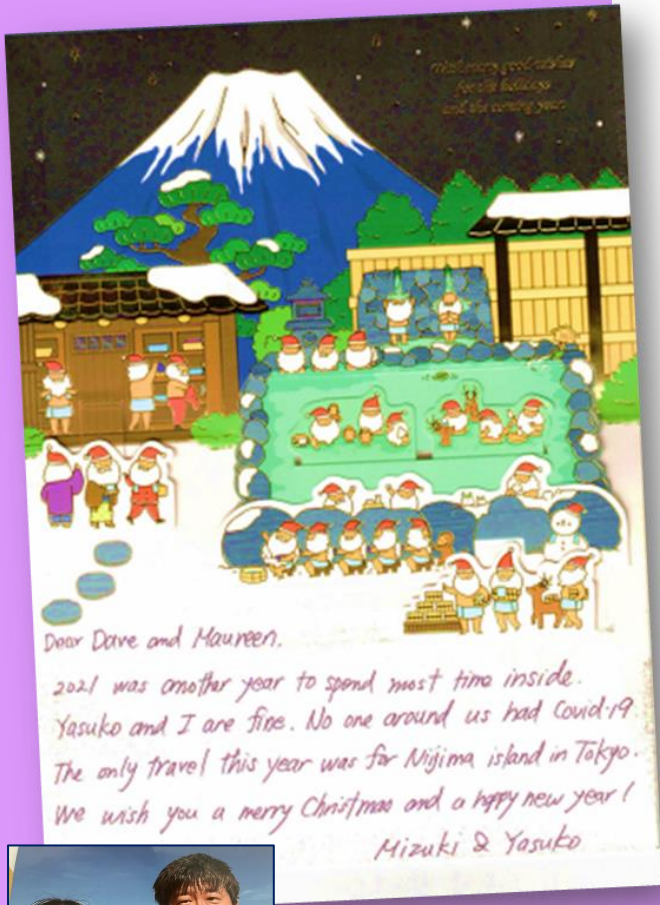
The organization and planning of a springtime work party is in the works and will most likely materialize some time after the first of March.

Above: Katherine Elisar & Kevin Carson;
Below: Janet Johnston & Beverly Paulson

For more information on upcoming garden events please contact Steve Erickson, scerickson48@gmail.com



Holiday Letters



Mizuki & Yasuko
Fukami

Dave and Maureen Williams went with the 2017 RSC Delegation to Kuki City, Japan. Here they generously share their recent Holiday cards and letters!

13th Dec 2021

Dear Dave and Maureen,

Thank you for sending us a wonderful Christmas card. We enjoyed reading it. It was nice to know that you and your family are healthy, and I could see it from your lovely photo.

The situation here, I feel safe. The covid-19 was a big problem in this summer. I saw some infected people around us, and some of them were close to us. It was scary, but now, the number of infected people is decreasing rapidly. We don't know why. It is good, but still we have to be careful, wearing mask, washing a hand.

This year, my son became a high school student, and my daughter became a junior high school student. They have new friends and enjoy their school life. They grow up so fast.

Recently, I love riding my bicycle. I sometime ride over 100 miles a day. Do you remember Nikko where Shogun's grave was? I went there by bicycle. I send you my garage photo. This place was built for the car, but now, there is no space for car. I go out on the weekend, and week day. I ride indoor.

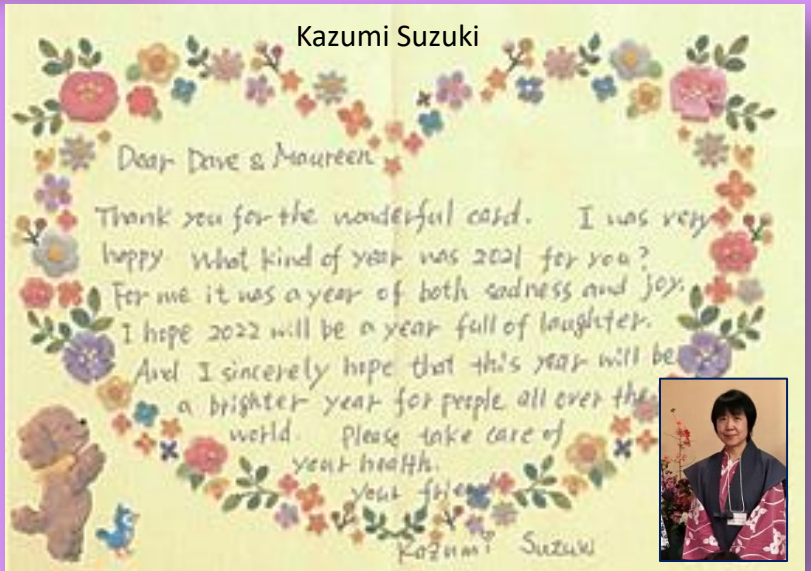
This card is for your granddaughter. This is about the Japanese doll's festival. We call it Hinamatsuri. This is an occasion to pray for young girl's growth and happiness. It is celebrated each year on March 3rd.

I hope covid-19 will disappear, and we can visit each other. Please keep in touch, and I am looking forward hearing your good news.

This letter is from the son of Hiroko Kojima whom the Williams stayed with in 2017.




Best wishes
Ryo
Kojima
Hiroko Kojima's
son



Messages from Japan During the Pandemic

Protecting Ourselves in Kuki City



The Omicron variant is spreading in various parts of the world. Even in Japan, the number of infected people is increasing day by day at a high speed. The number of infected people in Tokyo yesterday has exceeded 7,000 (1/19). The number of infected people in Saitama also exceeds 2000. During the three months from the beginning of October last year to the beginning of this month, the number of infected people was less than 100 every day, so you can see the strength of the infectivity.

Now, some prefectures have issued a semi-state of emergency. This is one step before the state of emergency, but at the discretion of each prefecture, we will limit the business hours of restaurants and the provision of alcoholic beverages.

In any case, it is important for each of us to continue to wear a mask and wash our hands and gargle to protect ourselves. This long corona life has made the mask a part of my body. When I go out, I naturally wear a mask just like wearing a coat. And when I go out, I never see someone without a mask.

Also, there is always a disinfectant in every place, and everyone who passes through it uses it on their own.

As for vaccines, about 80% of Japanese people have finished two vaccines. The third vaccination began on December 1, 2021 for healthcare professionals nationwide. There seems to be some trouble with compulsory vaccination in other countries, but in Japan most people follow the method decided by the government and there is no big trouble.

However, many young people think more lightly about the fear of corona than adults.

I would like young people to be careful enough to protect their families.

I hope that this situation will be resolved as soon as possible and that people all over the world will live in peace.

- Submitted by Kazumi Suzuki

Choryuji Kindergarten Owner/Director's Perspective



The number of people infected with COVID increases every day in Japan. As of 1/23/22 the number of persons infected in Tokyo: was 9699, Saitama 2405, and Kuki 50.

At our kindergarten, we check children's body temperature. All of us wear a mask, wash our hands and disinfect. All staff have been vaccinated twice. I'll get a third vaccination on 2/14 because I'm an elderly person. Children can't get the vaccine.

When children (including teachers) eat and also when we draw pictures on the table, we use dividers. For parents, we have a child care visit in small groups. Shops, restaurants (no alcohol) have to close at 8:00 pm, pubs at 9:00 pm.

It's difficult for me, and it's especially difficult for shop owners.

- Submitted by Tomoko Shimazaki



Longtime Interpreter/Liaison Experience of COVID



Sanae Kawamoto, Roseburg Sister Cities' longtime interpreter/liaison recently relayed her experience of COVID-19:

My two sons and my daughter all got Covid.

One of my sons who lives in Tokyo got positive last summer and was close to dying. He is fine now. First, he had a fever and his wife and 4-year-old son immediately moved out to a hotel to avoid infection. They were negative. My son had to spend a few days isolated at home because there was no accommodation or medical treatment facility for him. It was not so serious at first. When he took a fever

reducer, his temperature went down so that he was able to eat food and drink some water. But he got worse day by day and the medicine didn't work anymore.

Eventually, he got into a facility that had some nurses, but he was completely isolated in a room with no contact from anybody. The nurses periodically called him on the phone to check on his condition. Three meals per day and some drinks were provided but he couldn't take anything anymore. His temperature went up over 105 Fahrenheit, and it was difficult for him to breathe. Still, there was no bed in any hospital at that time. He was almost dying. Finally, he was taken to a hospital by an ambulance. He survived and is now completely fine. This happened before he was vaccinated.

My daughter got a positive test last fall. She was not as serious. She got a fever and coughed a lot. But she just stayed at her apartment in Tokyo for a week and recovered. I went to her apartment and left some food and drinks for her outside of the door.

Now, the other son who lives in Nagoya (250 miles away from Saitama), has Omicron. He is currently in a care facility. His wife and three children are staying at home. Since they were negative, I was planning to go to their house for a few days to help them out and cheer them up. I was about to get on the Shinkansen to go there when I got a phone call from my daughter-in-law. She said that my 6-year-old granddaughter got a fever so don't come. Of course, I am very concerned about all of them.

I have attached some photos. The Japanese government provides food for COVID positive people and their families while they are isolated. The supplies are all different, it depends on where you live.

Me? Completely fine, Covid free so far.



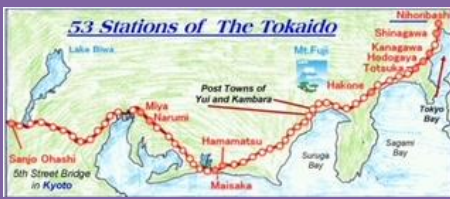
Regards,
Sanae

Update a few days later:

My 6 year old granddaughter got a positive test, and now the baby has a fever.



Historic Pathways of Trade & Communication



A time honored tradition for exploring the history of a country is to investigate its historic pathways of trade and communication. Modern examples for this popular type of travel include: Rhine River tours, following the Appian Way of ancient Rome, and ancient Asian and African caravan trade routes for silk, salt, or gold.

For almost 30 years, Roseburg Sister Cities' members have been able to enjoy two inside information pathways regarding the history and exploration of Japan through our exchange visits with our Sister City - Kuki, Saitama Prefecture, Japan.

During these years, RSC members have shared not only outstanding person to person times with host families, they have also been able to 'time travel' into past Japanese history and culture while on side-trips along some of the major highways developed over the centuries in Japan.

In the early 1600s, the new Tokugawa government mandated updating and developing along five major



travel routes - collectively called the Gokaido. The Tokaido route was the most important of the 5 and lead from Kyoto to Edo. Official Post Towns (Shukuba) were established at regular intervals for along these routes offering travelers (originally – mostly government couriers), lodging, food, and supplies.

The Japanese wood block prints shown below are just two of the prints from the collection, 'The Fifty-Three Stations of the 'Tokaido' by Utagawa Hiroshige created over 180 years ago. Post Station town images from all over Japan have inspired artists for centuries. Besides Hiroshige, other world famous names creating wood block prints (Ukiyo-e) of the various highways and stations include Katsushika Hokusai (The Sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaido) and Keisai Eisen (69 Views of the Nakasendo).

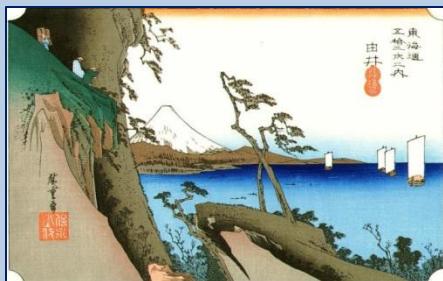
Rarely in history has any culture provided us with so many contemporary, semi-realistic, "color postcards from the past" which allow us to see what life was like across three centuries. These print collections do just that - allowing us to see a window into the past that many travelers to Japan may miss.

Before the pandemic interrupted travels, the 2019 RSC delegation trip to visit Kuki included a 3-day bus trip along part of the old Tokaido route (now named Japan Highway #1). The photo below shows 20 Roseburg delegates with 7 volunteer host-leaders from the Kuki-Roseburg Association accompanying them. They are waiting for the approaching ferryboat to take them to Izu Peninsula.



In the background you can just make out Mt. Fuji with some early snow on the top - just like that shown in the two Hiroshige prints to the left of this column. Happy Traveling!

- Submitted by David Johnston



Walking the Historic Pathways



Please enjoy this holiday letter from friends in Japan to each of the Johnston's, David and Janet:

Dear Friends,

I hope you and your family are having a wonderful holiday season. It looks like the pandemic has blown over here. How is it at your place?

I have never thought we were forced to stay at home such a long time and that I would be able to stay at home for such a long time. However, when I think about others, all people in the world have struggled with the same invader, the Covid virus.

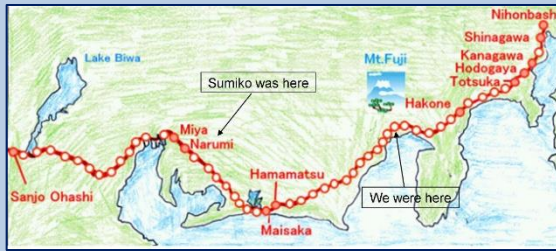
My nephews, one is working in Vietnam at a Japanese company's local branch, one is working in Miyazaki, Kyushu Island, the other is in Shizuoka. All of them left their family in Tokyo and couldn't have a homecoming for about two years. Although they can talk via internet every day, I feel very sorry for them. Not only them, many people had experienced similar inconveniences.

One of the high-light of this 2021 was, in the midst of the pandemic, Tokyo held the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games and ended successfully. My town, Ina, planned to do Australia Judo team's host town. But no players were allowed to stay outside of the Olympic Village. We cheered the team on through the TV!

Once a month, a few friends and I have been walking on Old-highway for about 6 years. We covered Nakasen-do, Nikkou-kaido. Now we are walking Tokaido since 2019. It suspended at 37th post station "Fujikawa" at February 2020 because of a state-of-emergency declaration. Happily, the number of the carrier has decreased in Japan now; we restarted walking this November 25th and after two days from 37th post station to 40th station "Narumi" in Aichi Prefecture. The Tokai-do has 53 post stations, so, we will be able to get the last station, Kyoto, at April. We are excited to get to Kyoto at cherry blossom season!

Have a very merry Christmas, and we wish you all the best in the new year too!

Ryu and Sumiko Komatsu





Thank you to this
Roseburg Sister Cities'
Supporting Business

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For a RSC Storage Unit for
another year!



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cascadestorageroseburg.com

Please Remember to Renew RSC Membership for 2022!

___ \$30. New Household Membership
___ \$30. Renew Household Membership

(RSC is a 501-C3 tax-exempt charitable organization.)

Make checks payable to: Roseburg Sister Cities, Inc.

Mail to: P.O. Box 1643, Roseburg, OR 97470

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Check below your areas of special interest:

- Friendship Garden** (behind Douglas Co. Library)
___ Committee, ___ Helper
- Future Delegation Hosting:** Help w/visitor events, dinners, sightseeing, etc. (usually 4-7 days in June)
___ Serve as Host Family, ___ Helper
- ___ **Travel as a Future RSC Delegate to Japan**
(usually 9-12 days)
- Special Committees:**
 - ___ Future Board Member
 - ___ Membership
 - ___ Speaker Bureau member
 - ___ Displays-help do
 - ___ Plan activities
 - ___ Japanese Language Interpreter
 - ___ Japanese Film Festival
 - ___ Annual Dinner helper
 - ___ Newsletter Helper
 - ___ Historian/Scrapbook

Right: 2015 memories at the Choryuji Kindergarten.
Below: Shrine at Mt. Fuji.

