

## Let's eat!

In the fine tradition of the Bloomington Sister City Organization (BSCO), we are once again planning a series of outings designed to tease your palate, entertain you, and promote the fellowship we have come to cherish.

### Annual Dinner

Leading off will be our annual dinner and silent auction to be held on Friday evening, April 12, at the Radisson Hotel South and Plaza Tower. The menu for the evening includes miso soup, filet of beef fanned teriyaki style, grilled boneless breast of chicken with nori and fermented soy bean paste and wasabi mashed potatoes. Akemi Shinpo, Koto Musician, will provide entertainment during dinner.

The raffle this year is for round-trip tickets on Northwest Airlines and a Toro lawn mower. Tickets are \$2 each and can be purchased from any board member as well as from members of the Bloomington high school's Japanese Club. A portion of the proceeds from those tickets sold by students go into the stu-

dent's BSCO account and the funds can be used to pay for any BSCO event, such as the Annual Dinner and the student delegation to Izumi in June. To purchase raffle tickets, please call the BSCO office at 952-563-8712.

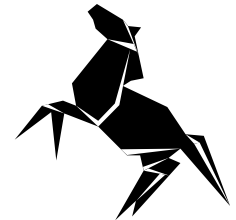
In addition to the raffle, a silent auction will be held. Items offered include pearl jewelry from our friends in Izumi in addition to many other items at our silent auction.

Annual Dinner tickets are \$38 per person and reservations can be made by sending your check, payable to "Bloomington Sister City Organization" to:

Bloomington Sister City Organization  
2215 W. Old Shakopee Rd.  
Bloomington, MN 55431

### Taste of Japan

On September 21, the BSCO will present "A Taste of Japan". This event, designed for the entire family, will feature a variety of booths offering various taste treats from Japan, games and exhibits, and souvenirs celebrating our sister city. The festival will



*Celebrate the Year of the Horse at the BSCO Annual Dinner and Fundraiser.*

**Friday, April 12 - 5 p.m.**  
**Radisson South Hotel**  
**7800 Normandale Boulevard**

be held in the beautiful new banquet center at Assembly's of God Church, 8600 Bloomington Avenue South.

### Dinner Series

Filling out the balance of the year will be the continuation of the traveling quarterly dinner series. Each quarter, dinner and entertainment will be hosted by selected members of the board at various locations.

Watch your mail for further updates. ♦

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*Sister City News* is published bi-monthly for the members, volunteers and supporters of the Bloomington Sister City Organization (BSCO).



Bloomington Sister City Organization  
2215 W. Old Shakopee Rd.  
Bloomington, MN 55431

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#### Board Members

Steve Abrahamson  
Bronwyn Ewers  
Steve Hance  
Denny Havlicek  
Gordy Holm, *Treasurer*  
Karla Holmquist  
Robert Imrie  
Laure Lesperance  
Lorinda Pearson  
Cliff Phibbs  
Tony Taniguchi  
Flora Tsukayama  
Lisanne Wilcox  
Vern Wilcox, *President*



#### Founding Members

Bloomington Chamber of Commerce ♦ Bloomington Convention and Visitor's Bureau ♦ City of Bloomington ♦ Kodo and Toshi Kawamura ♦ Larkin, Hoffman, Daly & Lindgren, Ltd. ♦ Normandale Community College Japanese Garden Committee ♦ Wells Fargo, Bloomington Branch ♦ Radisson Hotel South & Plaza Towers ♦ Dale and Sondra Simonson ♦ Thermo King Corporation



#### Honorary Sponsors

Mark Bernhardson ♦ Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau ♦ Burnet Title Company ♦ Coral and John Houle ♦ Radisson Hotel South and Plaza Tower ♦ The Toro Company

## Focus for 2002

As we work on the calendar of events for 2002, we are reminded of the loss of our past president and retiring directors. As we wish our past president, Jeff Andrews, the best of luck with his new career, we will surely miss his leadership and sincere efforts. This also applies to retiring directors Eleanor Gaines, Pat Reichert and Charlie Cheesebrough. We thank them for their dedication and stewardship. We will also be losing Flora Tsukayama this year following the student delegation in June. It is hard to imagine our board without Flora. Her many years of service and dedication are an inspiration to us all.

We are also very excited about the new additions to our board. Bronwyn Ewers, who worked with us last year, brings a youthful energy and perspective bound to inspire us all. My daughter, Lisanne Wilcox, in addition to helping with administrative duties, will be taking over our Web site and responsibility for its update and maintenance. Our latest

addition from the Mall of America, Robert Imrie, is an accomplished author and marketing executive. Rob's many years of living in Japan and his knowledge of their customs and traditions will be a great asset to our group. We have also been advised that Ms. Phyllis Larsen will be working with us from the Normandale Japanese Garden Committee. We look forward to her joining our group.

Armed with all this new talent and the remaining dedicated directors, our goals this year, in addition to our traditional dinners and activities, will be to:

- Grow memberships concentrating on businesses and families
- Increase self-sufficiency by actively renewing memberships and growing participation at all activities.
- Offer activities to involve the entire family such as "Taste of Japan", Kite Day and Bloomington Loves its Kids.

- Improve communications with delegation contacts and relationships formed by past and current delegations.
- Increase the visual image of the Sister City Organization and its goals and beliefs.

In addition to our high school delegation going to Izumi in June, plans are in process for a middle school delegation and an adult business delegation, both going in October of this year. The adult delegation will be unique as we are planning a number of business tours and sights off of the normal tourist paths in addition to the usual parades and festivities.

All in all, 2002 promises to be an exciting and challenging year, so be sure your memberships are current and watch your mailbox and newsletters for additional details. The success of our year depends on your involvement. ♦

Vern Wilcox  
*President*  
2002

A special "Thank you" to Carl and Susan Klein of Glen Prairie Press for their generous donation of printing the Annual Dinner invitations.

## Introducing . . .

At the February meeting of the BSCO, three board members were appointed.

### Bronwyn Ewers

Bronwyn joined the BSCO last year and immediately became involved by volunteering her time. She enjoys meeting people from Japan and exploring Japanese culture. Previously, she was a student at the Minnesota State University in Akita, Japan for a semester. This experience peaked her interest in Japan, and she returned to Aomori, Japan for a year to teach English in public schools with the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme.

Bronwyn will return to Japan this August to again teach English at public schools, this time through a government program connected with Earlham College in Indiana.

Bronwyn is currently work-

ing with the BSCO Board in planning exciting and educational events for this year. While Bronwyn's term on the Board will be interrupted by her return to Japan this summer, she hopes to continue her connection with the BSCO while in Japan by sharing stories of Japan in upcoming newsletters and notices.

### Robert Imrie

Robert has written over 250 articles for Japanese newspapers and magazines on business, history and international relations. His book *Japan Money Matters* (Business World Books, 1992), was a bestseller in Japan. In 1999 he accompanied Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura on his trade mission to Tokyo and Osaka.

A graduate of Union College in New York and Kansai University of Foreign Studies in Osaka, Rob lived

for 17 years in Japan, working for such multinational corporations as Citibank and Northwest Airlines. In his current position in the Marketing Department of Mall of America, Rob works with tour operators in Japan to develop travel packages that include visits to the Mall. He lives in Saint Louis Park with his wife, pianist Reiko Imrie.

### Lisanne Wilcox

Lisanne grew up in Bloomington and is a graduate of Kennedy High School. In addition to working on her law degree, Lisanne has worked on local political campaigns, is a freelance media designer, runs the Twin Cities Chapter of Webgrlls International, and is launching her own computer support network for women. The Organization is fortunate to be able to tap Lisanne's web skills to update the BSCO web site. ♦

## Member news

Craig Plekkenpol, **Plekkenpol Builders** was elected president of the 1,400 member Builders Association of the Twin Cities. Craig and his wife Judy founded Plekkenpol Builders, located in Bloomington, more than 30 years ago. Plekkenpol does both remodeling and new construction. ♦♦♦ **Rob Imrie's**

book *Fallen Flower* (iUniverse, 2001) was recently reviewed by a notable newspaper, the multiple Pulitzer Prize winning Pioneer Press (St Paul, MN). This mystery novel is an intriguing tale of Japanese and Americans, corruption, crime, and cross-cultural (mis) communication. It's available at

Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com.

If you have news you'd like to share with the membership, please contact Laure Lesperance at 952-563-8712 or llesperance@ci.bloomington.mn.us. ♦

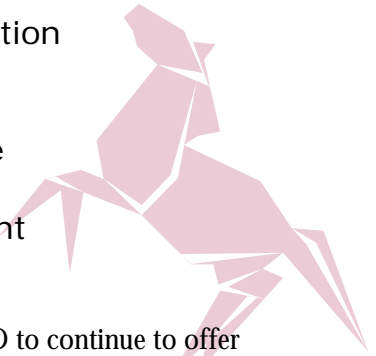
"*Fallen Flower* is a police 'whodunit' complete with red herrings, recalcitrant witnesses and deductive brilliance in the search for the murderer of a beautiful American woman in Osaka, Japan."

*Excerpt from Amazon.com*

# Calendar of Events



Bloomington Sister City Organization  
Annual Dinner and Fundraiser  
Friday, April 12  
5 p.m. - Silent Auction and Raffle  
6:30 p.m. - Welcome  
7 p.m. - Dinner and Entertainment  
\$38 per person



Fundraising events such as this allow the BSCCO to continue to offer programs such as Kite Day, Dinner Series and delegations to and from Izumi City, Japan.



Festival of Nations  
RiverCentre, St. Paul  
April 26—4 to 10 p.m.  
April 27—10 a.m. to 10 p.m.  
April 28—11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

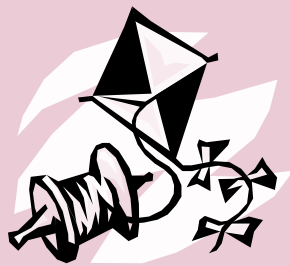
Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of Festival of Nations in 2002.



Bloomington Sister City Presents:

# Kite Day 2002

## Celebrate the Student



**May 4, 2002**

**Noon to 4:00 p.m.**  
(Rain date - May 11)

**Valley View Playfields  
90th & Portland  
Bloomington**

**Bring Your Own  
Make Your Own or  
Buy on Site**

Kites for Sale on Site by Air  
Traffic Kites & Games

**Free!  
Everyone Invited!  
Prizes!**

Minnesota Kite Society  
will demonstrate kite  
dancing to music and will help  
you fly your kite!

**For information, call 952-563-8712  
TTY users 952-563-8740**

Co-sponsored by: Bloomington Sister City Organization, City of Bloomington,  
Normandale Community College, Normandale Japanese Garden, Coldwell Banker Burnet  
Realty, Dean Schiffler—Burnet Home Loans, Bloomington School District 271.

## Out and about

Sister City participated in the 14th Annual **Bloomington Loves Its Kids** celebration held February 23 at the Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington. Sister City staffed its display booth and gave away 2002 Izumi City/Bloomington calendars and kites, courtesy of Strout

Plastics, to promote Kite Day 2002. Hundreds of families visited the booth and received information about Sister City and opportunities to participate with the organization. ♦♦♦ Sister City also participated at the 2002 **Japan America Society of Minnesota's** (JASM) New Year's Celebration.

The event was held January 13 at the Landmark Center in St. Paul. Sister City featured its display booth and introduced its new 2002 Izumi City/Bloomington poster calendars! We thank JASM for inviting us to attend. ♦



## Senshu Marathoners return

For the past five years the BSCO has selected two experienced marathon runners to compete in the Senshu International Mara-

thon in Japan. Bloomington representatives for 2002, Scott Labat and Kara Rebeck, have returned.

In the next *Sister City News*

Scott and Kara will share their experiences and thanks for the opportunity to participate in the marathon. ♦

## Izumi Choir cancels trip

Due to lingering safety concerns, the Izumi Boys and Girls Choir cancelled their March 21-26 visit. This would have been

the first cultural exchange group to visit Bloomington. It is hoped that the visit can be rescheduled in the near future. ♦

## Under construction

The BSCO Web site, [www.bloomington-izumi.org](http://www.bloomington-izumi.org), is under construction. Once the site is moved to its new server location, the information will not only be updated,

but enhanced. Past issues of *Sister City News* and related materials will be posted for your convenience.

The site will be updated monthly and will serve as a

resource for events and activities of Sister City members. It will also serve as place to communicate with other members. ♦

## Japan Bowl 2002

Japan Bowl was held at Normandale College on February 23. Jefferson and Kennedy High Schools sent a combined five teams to compete. The BSCO sponsored the teams.

Teams from Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa traveled to compete for the honor of representing our region at the National Japan Bowl Competition.

We had high hopes this year since we had a close race last year and our students had been studying seriously to present a challenge. The preliminary round consisted

of a quiz-bowl style competition, similar to the final round, and a written section. The questions, which had been provided by the National Japan Bowl committee in Washington, DC, were challenging. Questions covered grammar, culture, Kanji characters, Katakana, onomatopoeic expression and idioms. Only the top three teams at each level were advanced.

In addition to the stress of competition, the program ran long and the final toss-up round had to be held outside because the building

had to be closed!

The team of Emeka, Nehn and Dam made it to the final round. I had confidence they had what it takes to win. It was exceedingly disappointing to come in second place. I believe the students showed good sportsmanship and flexibility. I hope that all the students had fun meeting other high school students who are studying Japanese while participating in this unique experience. ♦

*Frances Bressman-Egan  
Japanese teacher  
Jefferson/Kennedy*

### Japan Bowl Teams

#### **Kennedy**

##### *2nd Year Team A*

Chris Clausen  
Trang Phan  
Ben Gunderson

##### *Team B*

Dennis Som  
Pat Tranberg  
Brandon Vilay

##### *3rd Year*

Michelle Yee  
Sharon Choi  
Vu Le

##### *4th Year*

James Renier  
Rachael Kojetin  
Tu Nguyen

#### **Jefferson**

##### *4th Year Team A*

Ny Dam  
Misse Emeka  
Kelly Neher

##### *Team B*

Joel Hage  
Huy Nguyen  
Jake Westergard

## June delegation selected

On June 18, fourteen Bloomington high school students will depart for a two week visit in our sister city, Izumi, Japan. The lucky individuals who applied and were chosen to represent Bloomington are:

**Michael Crawford**  
**Nikole Gamble**  
**David Giberson**  
**Daniel Gurska**  
**Joel Hage**  
**Andrew McMullen**  
**Jonathan Muncher**  
**Kelly Neher**  
**Neal Nelson**

**Pat Tandberg**  
**Andrew To**  
**Edmund To**  
**Jenny Vuong**  
**Thomas Young**

The group will be chaperoned by **Tim Anderson**, a Social Studies teacher at Jefferson High School, and **Bill Neher**, a business manager and business consultant. Bill teaches Japanese martial arts in the Goju-Shorei Ryu tradition.

The safety of the delegation members is a top priority and chaperones will be par-

ticularly strict about what can and cannot be in student's luggage. Martial arts paraphernalia, such as souvenir swords, will not be allowed.

The delegation returns July 2 and will share their impressions of the trip with you through future issues of *Sister City News*. ♦

## Bloomington Sister City Organization

2215 West Old Shakopee Road  
Bloomington, MN 55431-3096

Phone: 952-563-8712  
www.bloomington-izumi.org

*Since 1993, promoting international understanding through the exchange of people, information and ideas.*

Place address label here

### Bloomington Sister City Organization Membership Renewal Form

Check One	Membership Classification	Cost/Year	Membership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic	\$20	Newsletter, membership card and gift.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic-Plus	\$35	Newsletter, membership card, gift and 10 percent discount on all events for family members.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Honorary Sponsor	\$150	Newsletter, membership card and plaque, gift, 10 percent discount on all events for family members and recognition on Sister City printed materials.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Service/ Merchandise Sponsor	Donations	Suggested donations: refreshments, printing, mailings, advertising and merchandise. Membership package at value of contribution.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am interested in volunteering my time in consideration for membership benefits the following year.		

As a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation, your contribution to the Bloomington Sister City Organization is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.



Please send this form along with your check to: Bloomington Sister City Organization, Inc., 2215 W. Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington, MN 55431-3096.

Name:

Address:

Phone: