

# EXCHANGES

Independence  
Sister City Committee

September/October  
2010 Issue

## Annual Festival Brings In Funds For Exchange

**S**anta-Cali-Gon Days, the City of Independence's annual Labor Day Festival, is a special time for both fair-goers and those who depend upon it as a source of funding their programs.

It features 12 main stage concerts, 24 community performances, a gospel stage, professional carnival and craft tents.

Both artists and shoppers travel many miles to participate in the event. Vendor booths offering artistic, craft and product choices are mingled with community service booths located around the city square.

Food booths and parking lots bring in fund raising money for community organizations and churches.

Japanese Sister City Committee (JSCC) volunteers raise money to support the Sister City Exchange Program by parking cars in nearby lots donated for charitable use by local banks.

On the right, happy to have a full lot is Debbie Lovewell and Mary Ann Polina working the event.



**Above: Cameo Lovewell, Anna Price & Shayla Jarman, who find it fun to help on several shifts**

**A**lumni of the Exchange Program, help raise money to support JSCC programs and services. It is a 15 member committee composed of 14 dedicated volunteers, the Mayor and a City Council Liaison.

Additionally, Friends of Sister City, made up of prior committee members, host families and interested people helps provide financial and volunteer assistance for the group.

All of this support makes possible holding an annual Cherry Blossom Festival which also raises money for the exchange while showcasing Japanese culture, arts and food.



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### Special Person Spot!

#### Mayor Don Reimal

The citizens of Independence enjoy their Mayor and are glad to know that he will be giving of his time for another term. Before becoming Mayor, Don and his wife, Jo, were active with the JSCC and their daughter went on the Student Exchange. Today they help at the parking lot, work at the Cherry Blossom festival, attend student campfires and put on a dinner for the appreciation of the students. The Reimals also went to Japan, kindling friendship with Mayor Watanabe and the HIFA leadership. Mayor Reimal makes good decisions and is appreciated by the citizens. The JSCC and Friends of the JSCC want to extend our Congratulations!

## Excited Students Interview for 2011 Exchange With Interview Committee Comments

It seems as though we just waved good-bye to our Japanese students and we are already preparing for the next student exchange.

The JSCC has recently updated the Student Delegate Conduct Agreement. This document outlines delegate and JSCC responsibilities and behavioral protocols that both student and parents sign to become an Ambassador for America, Independence, their school and the JSCC as well.

Ten students met at Glendale Elementary, home of the Elementary Sister School and place of employment for both President Jeannae Segura-Brown and Vice President John

Seeley who are pictured below. Others on this committee, were Alumni Jared Seeley and Susan



Peoples, the escort, Ken Mulliken, a friend of the JSCC, Sue Valentine and Alreda Adams who is the Jr. High Sister School Chair.

Members took turns asking students such questions as, "How do you integrate yourself into a group of unfamiliar people?" This question was pertinent because it's not

easy going home with a strange family, who speak a strange language, all after enduring a 14 hour plane trip. Thinking about how you reach out to that family, is something to reflect on and makes this a good question.

At the end of the day the committee was happy with the time they spent talking to the student applicants who represented several local high schools and colleges.



## Meet the 2011 Student Exchange Adult Escort



An experienced professor for the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth, Kansas doesn't sound like a likely candidate for the Missouri-based Sister City Exchange Program, but Ken Mulliken wears

many hats and is actually an excellent choice for the 2011 Adult Escort.

Not only does Ken live in Independence, he is an alumni of the trip in 1982. He is a married family man, and on his Facebook Page you can enjoy the funny photos that his

family provided.

He has also been selected as the new Lawrence D. Starr Global Studies Institute Director for the University. "Ken is widely respect-

ed by both his students and faculty", and is climbing the charts with the JSCC. He is professional but fun and a perfect choice to lead the ten students in the coming year; showing concern for both the individual and whole exchange group.



## Two Mayors ~ Two Friends ~ Two Countries ~ One Heart

There was a changing of the guard in 1994 as the former Independence Mayor stepped down and Ron Stewart stepped into the new position that he would hold for twelve years. At the same time, Bill Shaw was giving the presidency of the JSCC to David Ragan. In response to these changes and with a desire to further cement a positive relationship with Independence, Higashimurayama decided to do something special in planning for celebrating their transformation from a village to a city 30 years earlier.

For this event, then Mayor Kazuo Ichikawa, invited and hosted Mayor Ron Stewart and his wife, Marilyn. "Nothing about this trip was like the Adult Anniversary trip." remembers David Ragan, who was also invited with his wife Ann to the celebration. "It was because of the nature of the events that made it spectacular."

Not only was it the city anniversary but it was also the 100 year anniversary of one of the train stations in Higashimurayama. Lana White, who also was invited to attend, commented, "The Japanese paid for all of this for the six of us. It was a lot of money!" But the City of Higashimurayama felt it was imperative that the citizens in their American Sister City were represented. The two mayors became good friends and Ichikawa later came to Independence, staying with the Stewarts.

This year when the American students were in Japan, former Mayor Ichikawa became ill and passed away. Then, while the Japanese students were in Independence, former Mayor Stewart became ill and passed away.

We were all so touched at how two friends, two mayors, in two counties passed away in such a manner that we couldn't help but note the importance of these two men and the symbolism of



these occurrences.

We need to remember that men and women have gone before us to establish the friendship that we so freely share today and the importance of Independence as the home of President Harry Truman. President Dwight Eisenhower, after WWII, said that people who know and care about each other do not want to fight each other. Consequently, he initiated unique programs designed to develop relationships between countries on a personal level, resulting in the creation of such popular programs as People to People and Sister Cities.

Lysle Weeks noted at an Anniversary Party that the program has lasted over the years because members are truly acting as Ambassadors of the City. It is that spirit of cooperation, friendship and respect for each other that marks the relationship between our two cities so unique and special among the hundreds of Sister Cities worldwide. It has now been over 30 years of a wonderful friendship, and we thank people like these mayors for its rich heritage and bright future.

**Independence  
Sister City Committee**

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**FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO SHARE THEIR  
LIFE WITH OTHERS!**

**JAPAN FESTIVAL 2011  
Must Go On...**



Two days before the Japan Festival Lana White fell, breaking two ribs. The Sister City was immediately concerned but Lana insisted that the sales at the festival could still go on. She had everything already prepared to leave her house and having done it for three years past, Sandy Peoples took charge with new helpers. Below: Connie McQuain and her nephew, Elijah, joined at noon,



Above: Shayla Jarman, alumni 2010, arrives at the festival at the map of Japan. She points to our Sister City (yellow arrow in photo upper-right) knowing that Higashimurayama is home to the only building in [Western Tokyo](#) prefecture registered as a [National Treasure of Japan](#); the [Izuo](#) hall in the temple of [Shōfuku-ji](#). Not many know that it is also home of the [Hachikokuyama National Hansen's Disease Museum \(Japan\)JR](#). Having been in Japan, the feel of the sun, the color of the leaves on a bright summer day, the cool water in the reservoir and the smiles of the citizens are things that Shayla will always remember when she points out her second home.

Below: Sally Folley, who once was a good customer, is a top seller of our donated kimonos! Thanks to all!!!



Above: Carolyn Hinkle process items she donated, while Sally Foley works at a table and Sandy Peoples takes photos. Below: John Killip, a long-standing Friend of the JSCC, prices items.

**JSCC Events and Happenings**

The Independence Parade October 30th, the Mayors Breakfast November 18th and the Volunteer Breakfast November 13th are three of the city activities the JSCC participate in this autumn. Also we will have a garden clean up after the volunteer breakfast, Saturday, November 13th.

**January 2011**  
 Celebrate a New Year for the Japanese Sister City Commission of Independence, on Saturday, January 29th at the Truman Memorial Building. Previous es-

corts, alumni, 2011 students, parents of students, host families, committee members and Friends of the JSCC are invited to attend; as well as those that are interesting in getting involved in the up-and-coming year. This is to celebrate the anniversary of the formed sisterhood January 25, 1978. Contact Jeannae to help plan this event.

**April 2011**  
 Sunday, April 17th, from 10: am to 4 pm, come to the Cherry Blossom Festival at the Sermon Center, Independence: Share in the en-

tainment, exhibits, sales and services offered from the Japanese Sister City Committee. The Festival is an educational tool and fund raiser for the Student Exchange Program, View the [Cherry Blossom](#) page on our website for details.

**July & August 2011**  
 Join in on activities with the Students who will have city tours, pot-luck parties, swimming, boating, baseball game, Worlds of Fun, biking, bowling and many more activities in order to experience American culture, home and family life, and Independence Past and Present.

