



# Sister City Journal



Winter 2009

*"Dedicated to fostering global awareness and appreciation through cultural exchanges and shared experiences"*

## Hanamaki students visit Hot Springs next month

The annual delegation of students and chaperones from Hanamaki, Japan will be in Hot Springs January 5-9, 2010. When the group arrives at around 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 5, they will be welcomed with a reception for students and host families at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 228 Spring Street in downtown Hot Springs. The visitors and their host families will spend some time getting to know each other with the help of volunteer interpreters. During the next three days, the students will attend school in Lakeside, Hot Springs, Lake Hamilton, Fountain Lake and Jessieville school districts, interacting with local students in their own cultural exchanges. The students will spend time experiencing American life as a Hot Springs teenager would.

On Thursday evening, the students and host families will attend a dinner hosted by Langston Aerospace and Environmental School.

The group will join parents from Langston for their parent involvement night and share foods from different cultures, some of which will be prepared by the visiting students and chaperones.

The departure will be held on Saturday at noon at First Christian Church, 1806 Central Avenue. It is the Japanese tradition to have a big group gather to "wave them off." Please come join the host families as we bid farewell to our new friends from our Sister City.

For more information on how you can be involved as a volunteer during the upcoming visit, contact Sister City Program Coordinator Mary Neilson at (501) 545-6960 or [hotspringssistercity@yahoo.com](mailto:hotspringssistercity@yahoo.com) ♦

## Thanks for giving: a special Thanksgiving celebration

Those who have been involved in the Sister City Program during the past 16 years were excited to welcome Mr. Ichiro Fudai to Hot Springs November 18-23. This was his first visit to Hot Springs since being reassigned to Hanamaki City's taxation division after serving as the coordinator for Hanamaki's Sister City Program for several years.

His involvement has been strong from the beginning of the program in 1993, when was the first city official from Hanamaki to take part in an exchange after the Sister City agreement was signed between the two cities. He continues to be very active in the Sister City Program as a member of the Sister City Foundation Board of Directors.

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Teacher scholarship recipient Sarah Riley and former Sister City Foundation president Donna Casparian designed and printed special T-shirts for the 26 members of **Team Fudai**.

## Coordinator to continue progress in 2010

The Hot Springs Sister City Program is a public-private partnership. The private partner is the Sister City Foundation, a non-profit organization that funds such activities as student and teacher scholarships. The public partner is the City of Hot Springs, which funds the Sister City Program Coordinator to help facilitate the program and provides staff support from the Public Information Department to promote and market the program's activities. The city's 2010 budget will include some major cuts. One of these is the Sister City Program's entire \$26,000 city budget.

Here's the good news: Fund raising by the Sister City Foundation, combined with additional budget cuts offered by Public Information and a small amount provided by the City of Hot Springs is expected to cover the coordinator's contract only for 2010. Many citizens rallied to express support for the program and for retaining the Sister City Program Coordinator's position in order to keep the program viable and active.

Although the *Sister City Journal* will not be printed and mailed in 2010, it's easy to e-subscribe and receive email reminders each time a new issue is available. Simply visit [cityhs.net](http://cityhs.net) and click on the [Services](#) tab to subscribe. A bonus: we're saving trees and going **green!** ♦

## Sister City Foundation news



**Ron Luckow**  
HSSCF  
President

Ichiro Fudai's recent visit has been very exciting for the Foundation. We were able to raise donations for the Ichiro Fudai Scholarship Fund as well as general donations. Although our focus was on hosting and giving to Mr. Fudai, in characteristic Japanese fashion, he offered a sizeable donation to the Foundation during his visit. Both in Hanamaki and in Hot Springs, Mr. Fudai has taught me about the giving nature of the Japanese people. I am constantly humbled and amazed at how the Japanese will always give back more than they receive. Hot Springs couldn't have better friends than those we have in Hanamaki.

The student travel program is the other big item on the Foundation's agenda. At the Nov. 5 quarterly meeting, the board selected Janis Bremer to chaperone the student group going to Hanamaki next September. Janis is a past teacher exchange scholarship recipient and a principal at Jessieville High School; she has previously taken three groups of students to Europe. Also, the student application has been finalized, and we should be able to distribute the applications to the schools in January. To help us send students to Hanamaki, we ask you to consider a donation to the Hot Springs National Park Sister City Foundation. One inexpensive way to donate is to become a member of the Foundation. Membership rates and information can be viewed at the new Foundation Web site at [hotspringsconnect.wikispaces.com](http://hotspringsconnect.wikispaces.com) ♦

## 2010 student travel to Sister City

Applications are now available for Hot Springs area students wanting to be part of the 2010 student delegation visit to Hanamaki in September 2010. The group will travel in September so they can attend the Hanamaki Festival, an event whose tradition dates back more than 400 years. The celebration takes place the second weekend in September, and the students will only miss four days of school due to the Labor Day holiday. The students will travel with chaperon Janis Bremer (see column below for more background details). Applications will be reviewed by the Sister City Foundation Education Committee. Full and/or partial scholarships are available for eligible students; other students may pay their own way. Applications are due by April 1, 2010. After students are chosen, they will meet with the chaperon in order to prepare for the experience. A field of study will be chosen so that an educational exchange can take place while the students are in Hanamaki.

During the visit, the students will stay with host families, visit area schools, museums, and experience the Japanese culture first-hand. The students will attend the Hanamaki Festival parade and take part in the festivities of this ancient celebration of the harvest. Interested students are advised to begin preparing early. The application to be part of this delegation is detailed and requires references. This is a very unique opportunity to learn about the Japanese culture, make friends, and experiences that will last a lifetime. For more information or to download an application, visit the Sister City Foundation Web site at [hotspringsconnect.wikispaces.com](http://hotspringsconnect.wikispaces.com) ♦



*The Kimura family in Hanamaki pose with Hot Springs musicians Deleen Davidson and Hee-Kyung Juhn, whom they hosted in September. The Kimura family has hosted numerous visitors from Hot Springs.*



**Top**

*Ichiro Fudai and Donna Casparian proudly display their medals.*

**Top right**

*City Directors Pat McCabe and Elaine Jones presented Mr. Fudai with a Key to the City during his stay.*



**Right**

*Mr. Fudai visits with Laura and Richard Rosenberg about connections between the Hot Springs Music Festival and the Sister City Program.*



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Many events were scheduled during his visit including *Team Fudai*, a Sister City team that participated in the Spa 5k race held in downtown Hot Springs. Twenty-six members of the team either ran, walked or came down to cheer on the team. Mr. Fudai was thrilled to win a 3<sup>rd</sup> place medal in his age division. “Team Fudai” members Donna Casparian and Conner Cheek also won medals in their age divisions. A post-race lunch was held at the home of Michelle Harrison, where everyone celebrated the team’s participation and accomplishments. That evening, the Sister City Foundation Board sponsored a Thanksgiving-themed dinner. Each brought their traditional family favorite dish in thanks for the Sister City Program and Mr. Fudai’s contributions to it. That evening, Mr. Fudai received a big surprise. The Foundation had been collecting contributions for the Ichiro Fudai Student Scholarship Fund, a perpetual scholarship which will pay the way for one Hot Springs area student’s travel to Hanamaki each summer. He was overwhelmed that a scholarship was named in his honor. The following day, there was great turnout for a public event at Entergy Park, where everyone enjoyed grilled hot dogs, homemade chili, good friends and a beautiful day. While in Hot Springs, Mr. Fudai attended services at the Salvation Army; toured Heifer Ranch in Perryville; visited Oaklawn Jockey Club’s new addition; and strolled through Garvan Woodland Gardens’ holiday light display. Those wishing to make a contribution to the Ichiro Fudai Student Scholarship fund can earmark the memo line of their check and mail it to: HSNP Sister City Foundation, P.O. Box 700, Hot Springs, AR 71902. ♦

**Japanese Language Classes begin in January**

Have you ever wanted to learn another language? Well, you can! Beginning Japanese Language classes will resume on January 8. The classes will be held at 6:30 p.m. each Thursday at National Park Medical Center at a cost of \$20 per month. Instructor Joel Railsback has spent more than 20 years in Japan. He has 40 years’ experience teaching language in areas including Tasmania, Laos and Arkansas, and has served the Sister City Program as a volunteer interpreter. “Language learning is never a one-dimensional experience,” Mr. Railsback said. Besides learning communication skills in our weekly lessons, we’ll also examine social and cultural expectations that go with a new language.” To register, contact Mr. Railsback at (501) 623-7180.



### Hot Springs Sister City Program

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## Upcoming events

### January 5 - 9

Hanamaki Student Delegation Visits Hot Springs

### January 5

7 p.m. arrival dinner at St. Luke's

### January 7

6 p.m. "Until We Meet Again" dinner at Langston Intermediate  
6:30 p.m. Japanese Language classes begin at National Park Medical Center and continue each Thursday evening

### January 9

Noon departure of Hanamaki student delegation

### April 1

Deadline for student applications for September educational exchange

## Sister City Program on

**facebook**

If you are a member of Facebook, please check out and make additions to the Sister City Program's Facebook fan page. Just type "Hot Springs Sister City Program" in the search field.

### Sister City Scholarship fund raiser

The Sister City Foundation is planning a major fund raiser to be held this winter or early spring to raise money for the Sister City Scholarship Fund. If you're interested in assisting with this event, please contact Carla Mouton at (501) 627-2809 for more information.



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