



Yu - Ai

Friendship

Newsletter of NPO World Friendship Center

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Goodbye Message from Director Maggie Phoenix

As our two-year stint at World Friendship Center comes to a close, we have so many special memories to take back with us. Some of the best are where WFC Riji, staff, members, and students generously gave their time and knowledge to help us or to introduce us to Japanese culture and particular areas of Japan.

Thank you to everyone who helped us with doctor and dentist appointments, travel instructions, and locating such things as a new mattress, bicycles, and Carp tickets! The mattress made us more comfortable so we could handle our daily workload. The bicycles helped us get some exercise and get around the city even though we didn't have a car. We really enjoyed seeing what a Japanese baseball game was like!

We had many excursions into the scenic Japanese countryside as well as a couple of trips each year to see Cherry Blossoms. This year, the trip to Iwakuni to see Kintaikyo Bridge and the Cherry Blossoms was incredible. Another trip to Noro Mountain was unique as it was an overnight trip staying at a ryokan. A bus trip to the gorgeous Adachi Museum and the famous Izumo Taisha shrine included a wonderful steamed lunch. We took a trip by auto to the Sandankyo Gorge, where we had a vigorous hike and a short boat ride, ate unbelievably good bentou lunches, and viewed spectacular waterfalls.

Then there were the many times we were treated to delicious meals. Italian restaurants with beautiful views and a tofu restaurant with a serene garden were exceptional treats.

And how can I forget the many times we went to Karaoke? Not only did we enjoy singing with an enthusiastic group of friends, but we were able to eat and drink at the same time!

Thank you everyone. We won't forget you and our time in Hiroshima.



Bernd and Maggie

Goodbye Message from Director Bernd Phoenix

It has been a wonderful, busy 2 years. What I will always remember about my 2 years at WFC are the breakfasts with our guests from all over the world. Some were young, some not so young. Some came in large groups or whole families. Others were alone or with a partner. Some stayed just one night and others a week or a month. But what they all had in common was a deep desire for peace in the world and to make the world a better place.

At our morning discussions, we talked about Barbara Reynolds, the purpose of the Center to educate others on the dangers of nuclear weapons, and also nuclear energy. Many times we reached quite deep and emotional places.

We realized that humanity deserves a better future without energy being tied up in the absurd war machinery, which results in endless war. We can have a world that is clean and provides everything in abundance for a happy life. The technology exists; we just have to use it.

Then there were the countless remarks left by our guests on our logs or on TripAdvisor. From “This stay has profoundly affected me.” to “Being here has changed my life,” we have seen so many moving comments. I can only say it changed my own life, too! Profoundly.

Also, there were the English classes with so many wonderful students of different ages. So much joy and laughter, but also sometimes quite serious subjects. Another great memory.

Thank you so much to Naomi-san and Miho-san without whom we could not have functioned. They will always be treasured in our hearts.



Bernd, Maggie, and friend Iku

Goodbye Message from a Student by Soh Horie, Friday English class

Dear Bernd: Two years passed very quickly. Friday was a special day to me every week. Though I had to take time for preparation, the two-hour class was always informative and full of fun. I am thankful for your advice about my hibakusha accounts and correction of my English pronunciation.

You taught me about Depleted Uranium for my testimonies. It is surprising that it is still used in Syria by the U.S. They should know that American soldiers are affected, too. It's so unbelievable to me. I checked it out on the Internet soon after you told me. Every time I talk about my A-bomb experiences, I ask the guests if they know the difference between conventional weapons and nuclear weapons. Though Depleted Uranium ammunition is not a nuclear weapon, it is a horrible weapon that causes internal radiation exposure.

It is more than ten years since I started coming to WFC, but it is the first time for me to go to the barber's and ramen noodle shops along with the director so frequently.

I am most grateful and delighted about the fact that you joined in as a plaintiff of the Hiroshima Court trial against the Ikata Nuclear Power Plant. It was very encouraging for the plaintiff group to get the support of foreigners in Hiroshima. You also gave a special lecture at the workshop. What you told us was very significant and not only our group but also all Japanese should keep it in mind.

Please take a rest for a while. I sincerely hope you will have a healthy and happy life.



Soh-san, Maggie, and Bernd

Korean PAX: Life Changing Experience in Hiroshima

by Soyoung Choi and Yongjin Jeong

When we unpacked our trunks after coming back home from Hiroshima on Tuesday (9 May 2017) late afternoon, we found out there are many memories and thoughts we brought from Japan. The trunks were full of hospitality, friendship, warm hearts, the passion of peace, and Japan as well.

Before Hiroshima, frankly, we, like other Koreans, had no idea of Japan and Japanese culture but a big bias that our nation had planted into our mind through education: "Japan invaded us so they are our enemy." Come to think of it, we, Korea and Japan, are indeed the closest countries in this planet, but at the same time, the furthest countries ever. We don't know each other but we keep learning how to be hostile toward each other instead of being hospitable toward each other. This is a tragedy.

Through this PAX Hiroshima, however, Soyoung and I could have a precious chance to be able to escape this tragedy. We could meet many people who treated us as their true friends and family, not enemies. I have no choice but to say that all experiences in Hiroshima like the food, island, culture, and history was wonderful but among them the best was the people. Especially, I can't forget that night when we sang songs together in various languages. I felt we were like one big family beyond the barriers of language, age, race, and nationality. Talking with Hitoshi-san without a common language, Mieko having a pure heart like a girl, Michiko, the walking library, the kind and soft voice of Mikiko, Keiko with the passion of peace, the moment with Bernd naked in the hot springs, and beautiful Maggie and Dalya, and also the touching moment with Michiko and Shizuo in Miyajima ... everything, everyone is still vivid in my eyes.

While staying in Hiroshima and on the way back home to Korea, I realized that a nation is just a nation. We are just humans living our daily lives, the same as people in each country. Precisely, we, both of us peoples are the victims of war, victims of history, and victims of our nations. Therefore we are brothers and sisters who share similar hurts.

It's true that cold reason never beat a warm heart. Even though we have been learning how to hate each other for a long time, I believe that we can overcome this obstacle and start over with learning how to love each other through this little step, PAX.



Yongjin Jeong and Soyoung Choi

Peace Hiroshima (PAX) by Hyo-Jin Chang

For Golden Week, the trip to Hiroshima was a big reward after many days of hard work. Before I went to Hiroshima, I didn't have a full understanding of what the PAX program was. Now I'm back from Hiroshima, I can tell PAX is for friendship, learning, love and peace at a very intimate level.

There are many memories that I want to keep for many years, but getting to know people from WFC was the most precious moment. Besides Michiko, Mikiko, and Jim, there were always other WFC members who joined us and spent time with us. During the sightseeing, potluck meeting, and at the host's house, I met and talked to different WFC members and got to know them. It was so good to hear their stories and how they got to be involved in peace activities. The most impressive part was many of the WFC members have been with WFC for so many years! They have now become role models who will always give me motivation to pursue peace on my journey of peacemaking.

As Hiroshima is a symbol of peace, visiting there was a valuable experience for me as a teacher. I remember in world history class when I was a school student, I learned the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which eventually led to the end of the war. In the textbook, it was described as neutral fact and it didn't lead me to think what happened to people who lived there after the bomb. At the Peace Museum, as I listened to the story from a hibakusha lady, those days became so close and real to me. And I was thinking my students also need to listen to these stories, so they know war should not happen in the future. I will plan a lesson on peace and tell my students about wars that happened in the past and why we should pursue peace.

PAX Hiroshima came to me as an unexpected event but was very meaningful in my journey to peace. I will always remember the warm hospitality that I got from WFC and I want to live life like the people I met there who are actively involved in peacemaking.



Hyo-Jin Chang



Korean PAX Members and Japanese Hosts at Miyajima

Introduction of New Directors by Barbara Shenk and Dannie Otto

For Barbara Shenk, moving to Hiroshima to the World Friendship Center will almost be a homecoming. When she was four years old, her family moved to Tokyo where her parents began language studies to prepare to be Mennonite missionaries. Barbara spent most of her growing up years in Hokkaido in the towns of Shibechea and Kushiro.

Prior to coming to Hiroshima, Barbara has had three careers. After college, she was a music teacher and choir director in Pennsylvania and Oregon. For her second career, she worked for 13 years at the University of Illinois as a curriculum development specialist for high school teachers of Japanese. Most recently, Barbara has been a Special Education teacher for grades 3 to 5 in the public-school system.

Barbara's interest in Hiroshima and the effects of the bomb goes back to her early childhood in Japan in the late 1950s when her family arrived in Japan. She first visited Hiroshima as a teenager and has returned several times since. She took each of her two children to Hiroshima when they were in primary school. As a teacher, she used the story of Sadako and the paper cranes with her students each year and taught the students to fold paper cranes, which were mailed to the Peace Park. Barbara will be bringing the cranes from her final class of students when she moves to Hiroshima in August.

Dannie Otto's life also made a major change when he was four years old, although the move was not geographical. He was born into an Old Order Amish family in Illinois and at the age of four, his family changed churches and became Mennonite. Dannie thought he had left farm life for good when he left home for university studies. His graduate studies in the history of philosophy took him to Notre Dame University, the University of Toronto, and the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies.

With the birth of their son, Eli, Barbara and Dannie moved back to central Illinois to the farm where Dannie grew up. For 17 years they operated a 500 acre grain farm while each simultaneously pursued other careers. For Dannie, that included teaching philosophy for 23 years at Eastern Illinois University. Their daughter, Sophia, was born on this farm. Sophia is currently teaching English in Sapporo with the JET program but will be leaving Japan, as her parents arrive, to pursue graduate studies in Brussels, Belgium.

For Dannie, interest in Japan developed with his relationship with Barbara and her family. In 1984, the second year of their marriage, they spent four months together in Japan, which included a trip to Nagasaki to see the bomb memorial there. Dannie is also a lifelong, committed pacifist and coming to serve at the World Friendship Center will allow him an opportunity to continue to educate on the folly of war.

Both Barbara and Dannie look forward to serving for two years at the World Friendship Center.



Dannie Otto and Barb Shenk

Intern Spotlight: Lindsey Peters

Hello, my name is Lindsey and I will be going into my third year as a student at Illinois Wesleyan University. My school is in Illinois, which is just two hours south of Chicago. In school, I study Spanish as well as Environmental Studies with a concentration in International Sustainability. To clarify, I study how countries manage their resources and how they interact with other countries regarding environmental problems, such as climate change. In the long term, I would like to work with animals in either zoo management or animal conservation (protecting endangered animal species).

All my life I have loved animals. At one point, I worked with a summer camp that had its own zoo of over 400 animal species. I was able to work with many different kinds of animals, such as sugar gliders, kookaburras, foxes, pot belly pigs, lizards, as well as many others. Two of my favorite classes that I taught were “Yoga with the Llamas” and “Yoga with the Lemurs.” In these classes, I would take a group of children in either a llama or ringtail lemur enclosure and teach them basic yoga positions and yoga flows. The llamas continued with their own business, yet the lemurs would occasionally hop on the kids’ backs or wander close to see what these strange humans were doing.

Since I was a child, I have had a large variety of pets: guinea pigs, rats, lizards, cats, dogs, a bird, and a fish. Currently, I have two dogs named Poco and Bert, a cat named Holly, a fish named Moby and a ball python named Nagini. Nagini is my personal pet and is staying with my boyfriend while I’m in Japan. I have had Nagini for about eight years now and she is between eight and nine years old. I feed her a rat once a week and keep a three-pack of rats in my freezer until it is time to feed her. She has never bitten anybody and is very easy to take care of. Of all my pets, she is the most low-maintenance. She eats once a week and I only need to clean her cage once a month. The only other things she requires are two heat lamps, as well as moisture in her cage to keep it hot and humid for her. I love my snake and my other pets very much and miss them when I am away. Many times I have been asked, “Why do you like snakes so much?” However, I do not prefer snakes over any other type of animal. I simply haven’t met an animal I didn’t like.



Lindsey, 2017 IWU Intern (with snake)

Intern Spotlight: Josie Blumberg

My name is Josie Blumberg. I will be a junior at Illinois Wesleyan University this fall. I am an International Studies Major with a minor in Economics and Computer Science.

One of my favorite things to do is to travel. My family has travelled all around the United States and I have been outside of the country three times. I have been to the Bahamas, to Germany, and now to Japan. I chose my major not only because I wanted to learn more about other countries and the relationships between countries, but also because I wanted to travel more. I was in the Bahamas for a vacation with my family. In May of last year, I went to Germany to study German for four weeks at the Universität Bremen. Now I am in Japan as an intern at the World Friendship Center and I have been so happy to be able to stay in Japan for seven weeks.

I am hoping to visit other Asian countries in the future. My boyfriend is Chinese. His name is Bradley and his family is from Taiwan. However, he was born in the United States and so is able to fluently speak both English and Mandarin. He has also been to many states around the United States and enjoys travelling as well. We are planning to go to Taiwan sometime in the future together. As he can speak fluent Mandarin, he will be a perfect guide and we will be able to get around easily. Since he has also been to Taiwan many times to visit family, he is excited to be able to show me around Taiwan. One thing that is also on our bucket list is to visit Sicily, Italy. My grandfather is Italian and his family came over to the United States from Italy, so it is a place I would really love to visit.

We also plan on exploring other states in the U.S., as well. Bradley's home town is in Washington near Seattle, so we will travel there next spring to visit his family and see where he grew up. We both love exploring different parks and other interesting places wherever we go. On my birthday, we hiked through a state park. There was a beautiful river running through the park, so we hiked towards it and sat on the rocks listening to the river.

I look forward to be able to travel to more countries because it is said that the more places you visit, the better understanding you have of the world and all of the people in it.



Josie, 2017 IWU Intern (with Bradley)

Creativity for Peace by Dalya Yohai

Creativity for Peace is a Peace organization in Santa Fe, New Mexico that prepares the next generation of female leaders and peacemakers in Israel and Palestine.

Its mission is to train young Palestinian and Israeli women to partner as leaders by transforming anger and prejudice to mutual respect, facilitating and understanding the other and inspiring action to promote equality and peace.

A three-week intensive camp focused on dialogue and art making is the introduction to the work. Sixteen high school girls from Palestine and Israel build friendships, heal from the suffering of war and find their voices.

Next comes home country gatherings, young leader training, and women building the politics of peace. There is also an outreach to American youth.

Many volunteers from the larger community of Santa Fe and New Mexico help to make this organization an enduring success.

You can check them out at their website: creativityforpeace.com



Dalya Yohai

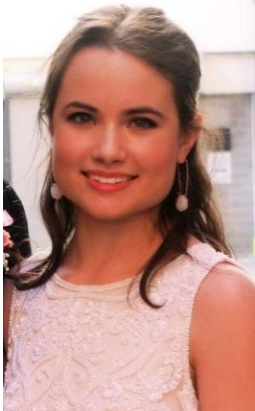
August 2017 American PAX Participant Bios



Dr. Ursula McTaggart: I am an Associate Professor of English at Wilmington College, originally from Kalamazoo, Michigan. I study twentieth-century American literature, especially literature and language relating to social justice. I applied for PAX Hiroshima because I believe in building peace, and I oppose the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons. I also love to travel and am eager to experience the culture and landscape of Japan.



Jillia Cook: I am a sophomore at Wilmington College. I am an Athletic Training major with a coaching minor. Also, I am a member of the Wilmington College softball team where I received 2nd team All-OAC honors. I am originally from Canton, Ohio. The reason I wanted to be a part of the PAX was because of the unique and wonderful opportunity it presented to me. I am looking forward to all of the exciting adventures ahead with it!



Lily Beane: I will be entering my Sophomore year at Wilmington College this coming fall. My major is Early Childhood Intervention specialist, and I am very passionate about educating children, particularly in fields revolving around peace and conflict resolution, as I believe it is essential to lead a positive lifestyle. I am so thankful and excited for this opportunity to visit Japan. During the past school year, I had the opportunity to intern at Wilmington College's Peace Resource Center, where I had access to ample resources regarding the atomic bomb and Japan's rich history. I have become incredibly interested in the stories of survivors and solutions to maintaining a peaceful global society.



Carly Pritchard: I am a Senior at Wilmington College studying Spanish, Marketing, and Economics. I love to travel and learn about other cultures and was thrilled for the opportunity to do so in Japan this summer. Motivated by my interest in peace and nonviolence, I applied to PAX Exchange to experience life in Hiroshima and learn how to be a catalyst for nonviolent conflict resolution. In my free time, I enjoy rock climbing, writing, and salsa dancing (but I don't dance well ☺).

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