

Salem Ota Cultural Exchange | MINUTES

April 25, 2021 / 7 pm | On ZOOM!

Attendees

Chris & Denise Granniss
Connie Arlander
Peter Dolan
Hugh Stewart
Betty Burke

Kathleen Salas
Ellen Soares
Elizabeth Emery
Marlene Warner
Benjamin Arlander

Agenda topics

30th anniversary celebration in Salem:

Nov. 13 has been approved to host a celebration at the PEM honoring 30 years of the Ota-Salem CE. Hopefully the Taiko Drummers will participate, with City of Salem financial support if possible. As far as other entertainment, Midori offered to present about Edward Morse in the Morse Auditorium. We are also considering highlighting works of art in the Japanese rooms as well as crafts/fan making to entice potential host families with young children. Hopefully by November we will be safely in person with few restrictions! We will videotape any speeches and formalities to share with Ota, and anticipate they will do the same for their own celebratory gathering. We will be sure to use this gathering as a recruitment effort through a sign-up table expressing interest, and perhaps include former host students to speak.

Official invitations with RSVP will be mailed to Ota members and all others who have been involved in various ways, and community members and Japanese residents from around the North Shore are welcome. The Japanese Society of Boston has been terrific about sharing our information t/o Boston as well as t/o the U.S. and will be directly invited.

Connie continues to dedicate time to ensure 70-80 Salem tapestries are ready to be sent to commemorate 30 years of the Ota-Salem Sisterhood. Hopefully they will be sent in advance of November, in part to reciprocate for their New Year's gifts.

Updates from Ota

Leadership changes in Ota City Hall happen every 3-5 years; we are awaiting change on their end, at which time Peter will send a formal welcome letter to congratulate new office holders.

We all agreed an Ota adult trip to Salem in November will not be possible given so many unknowns, including the Summer Olympics proceeding in Japan.

Community Relationships & Momentum

We do not know how many people used the free tickets to the Salem Film Festival last month, but hopefully many enjoyed this generous offer.

Kokeshi Restaurant owners continue to encourage families to visit them to enjoy Japanese cuisine, and especially when Ota students return next year.

Our community is awaiting a new Executive Principal for Salem, and whomever that person is could be help communication with families. We also intend to connect with Dr. Zrike to inform him about the Ota-Salem CE collaboration. It remains important to stay in touch with involved families who may be available to host in the future. At this time, we do not have any formal summer gathering for the Salem Ota community...but we remain open to ideas! Meanwhile please continue to follow/like our Ota Facebook page.

2021 Scholarship Application We have sent emails to the distribution list of host families, local high schools, as well as students who travelled to Japan, but have not received any applications yet. Typically, we receive several the day of its due date, and hope the same will happen by May 7 this year! Students postponing or undecided about college are encouraged to apply, as funds can be deferred for 1 year. 500-750 word essays will be read “blind” prior to award ceremonies at the high schools.

Next Meeting: Monday May 24 7 to 8 pm via Zoom. Stay tuned.