



Tsuru Island

James Card: Editor

A Visit to Kyoto by Jim Card

Sometimes a place may turn out to be more than you thought it would be. That is what actually happened to me during our recent visit to Kyoto in October 2017.

For years I have talked to people that have been to Kyoto. I have read a number of books and seen hundreds of picture. I have followed Kyoto on Pintrest and the *Journal of Japanese Gardens*. Nothing was like actually experiencing the real thing. It was better than what I imagined.

The streets lined with cherry trees are unimaginable until you get the effect of walking among them and see how they complement the street and the businesses and/or homes around them.

There are temples everywhere you go. They can be next to a convenience store, through a gate in the center of a very narrow street or on some acreage in the suburbs. Some are inconspicuous and others are bright orange/red or yellow. Some have exquisite gardens and others are quite plain.

Katey and I visited a temple close to our hotel and visible for blocks. It was a Shinto Shrine which contained many small temples after entering the gate. We saw some with very well kept plant materials and lots of very large granite lanterns placed in front of the shrine.

The Japanese gardens we visited were gardens associated with a temple or castle of an emperor or shogun. 600-700 years ago the garden was a symbol of power and wealth.

I have to struggle to imagine these buildings and gardens being 300 to 700 years old. Not just the fact that they are still there but how they look after time has passed. Many of the gardens were beyond mature. Everything was old and graceful, big and spreading, little and precise. Moss, grasses, pines and azaleas are most popular in our culture for a terrific Japanese garden. That that what I observed in these ancient gardens.

What I saw in Kyoto was the accumulation of many cultural entities over many centuries. Including techniques for joining wood, for finishing wood, styles of art and how it was used, plant propagation and garden design with techniques that were applied. A garden unlike a house or furniture, never gets outdated, if maintained and kept to the intended scale, will look as good after 700 years as it did the year it was put in.





The Plaza

For several months discussions have taken place about the area in front of the Resource Center. One of the challenges has been the emergency lane that runs through this area. Expanding the paved area would include the fire lane and part of the grass area. The addition of cherry trees would also add to our cultural goal for Tsuru Island. As seen in the Japanese culture, hundreds of cherry trees are planted in and around Kyoto. These trees signal to the people that spring is coming which is a new beginning. The site is beautiful when they are in bloom and when they are in leaf they provide a shaded environment that invites sitting and enjoying the area.

12 Akebono cherry trees have been graciously donated by our friends at J. Frank Schmidt Nursery, to fill the area around the pavement and the benches. Just imagine coming through the park or walking along the Springwater Trail and seeing this site.

The project will require more pavers than those left by other city projects. A grant is in the works to provide the pavers and hopeful the installation of the paver foundation with the volunteers providing the labor. Now that there is a plan, the drawing, the OK to proceed, the trees and the pavers, there are still additional items such as benches, plant materials, soils, boulders and mulch to dress the planting areas.

The benches will be made from the old bridge wood. The plan/drawing of the dimensions and procedures to make these Asian style benches are available and the process will be started soon. The soil, mulch and boulders will be moved from other City locations. The plantings have been donated and currently in the greenhouse. This will be completed within 1 year.

This area is considered a plaza. Since visiting Ebetsu it seemed fitting to establish the name Ebetsu Puraza which is a modern Japanese word for plaza. It is an acknowledgment of the 40 years of association with Ebetsu.

In November, Gresham's sister city, Ebetsu is sending a delegation to Gresham to celebrate the 40th anniversary. After giving a tour of Tsuru Island, they will be escorted to the puraza area. A tree planting ceremony will take place and a dedication plaque will be given to the two mayors.

For more information contact gresham.japanese.garden@gmail.com.

Volunteer Position Available

Bicycle Repair Person

The community of volunteers at Main City Park wish to establish a bicycle workshop program. The day and time is flexible as long as it is consistent. Space is available at Main City Park provided by the City of Gresham and the Gresham Japanese Garden.

Volunteer requirements include basic knowledge of bicycles, parts, bike functions, wheels, braking systems and safety.

The concept of the program is to include time for workshops to teach others about bicycles. A basic knowledge should be made available to the community to make emergency repairs, tools to carry, tire and tube repairs.

Workshops will be presented at the Tsuru Island Resource Center, actual repairs can be made at the "City Maintenance Facility" located at the park.

Just When You Think by Jim Card

Feedback is so important. The realization that sometimes what you say or do really does have an effect. A recent event is one of those times that "just when you think" nobody is paying attention, I got a letter that made me think again.

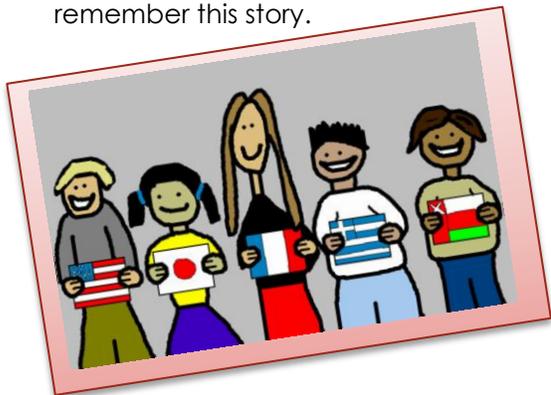
While in Ebetsu, we were invited to an event called the World Fest. A woman named Makiko Numata specifically sought me out and handed me an envelope. She had given a speech the day before at the foreign student exchange luncheon. A copy of the speech was in the envelope along with a little red envelope containing two small iron on patches to be placed on a shirt pocket You should have seen me smiling

Just a few days ago I opened the envelope containing the copy of the speech and found a letter to me telling me that she had been to Gresham in 2015. She was part of the group tour of Tsuru Island. She remembered everything I said about the Garden. The letter went on to tell me that several years ago she had been an exchange student herself and the experience had confirmed the kindness and caring of her host family. She also expressed her confidence in our exchange program and how grateful she was to have been a part of it.

But wait, there is more, she also had a daughter that was recently part of the exchange program. She had wanted her daughter to experience the same things that she had when coming to Gresham. The Gresham Ebetsu Sister City Association and host family went out of their way to make the daughter's visit a wonderful experience.

The take away is that you never know who is paying attention. Makiko is one of the chosen few that went out of her way to let us know how she felt and how we made their lives memorable

JUST WHEN YOU THINK no one is paying attention remember this story.



Volunteer Position is Available

Greeter

Looking for approximately 5 individuals for a volunteer greeter position at Tsuru Island garden. One person to manage a shift from 2pm until dusk when the weather is pleasing. There is no need to be onsite during inclement weather.

The garden is a public place with no admission. Individuals and groups are present most every day. Guidelines for visitors are posted but sometimes they need to be reminded to stay on the path and adhere to the posted requests.

There are no other duties expected.

Volunteer positions are coordinated with the Garden Director and/or the Volunteer Coordinator.

The Gresham Japanese Garden, Tsuru Island, is located in Main City Park and is part of the Gresham-Ebetsu Sister City Association.

The Garden is operated and maintained by volunteers in the community. All projects, maintenance and programs are undertaken by the volunteers and donors that dedicate themselves to the Garden.

