

## *Eureka & its sister cities*

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

In Nineteen Ninety Seven, a "sister city" relationship was founded between the cities of Kamisu, Japan and Eureka to promote goodwill between Japan and the United States and the exchange of Art, Culture, Education and Commerce between the two cities. Numerous visits were organized, including the exchange of high school students, a wonderful thing to happen between two different cultures, promoting friendship and understanding of one another. The last official visit to Eureka by delegates from Kamisu took place in October of Two Thousand Eight. I was happy to be a part of that event as I was the delegation's driver for the three days they were here. As a result, I became friends with members of the delegation and have stayed in touch with some of them. I was contacted earlier this year by one of the gentlemen and asked if I could assist with re-establishing communication between the two cities. The Kamisu officials had been planning another visit to Eureka prior to the deadly tsunami that ravaged much of the Japanese coast north of Kamisu. Although the city did receive some damage, it was not as deadly for them as it was further north. Needless to say, the event caused the city to put such things as foreign visits on "hold". When Kamisu was ready to reestablish communications, they failed to receive any reply from Eureka and my friend sent me an e-mail to that effect. I called Eureka city hall a number of times, leaving messages and receiving no reply. I telephoned four of the people, who were involved in the Two Thousand Eight Eureka visit, with two failing to return my calls. I did talk with Mayor Jager and he was interested in continuing the sister city relationship. He found that our present City Council members were also interested, but evidently no one wanted to get directly involved, hoping for someone else to take over the task of reorganizing the relationship. Sadly, I had to let my Japanese friend know that I could be of no further assistance under such conditions. The world is full of hatred and misunderstanding. When we have a chance to strengthen our relationship with people in other countries with minimal and peaceful effort we should pursue it. When you have people in other parts of the world seriously wanting to become friends, don't turn your back on them. I also wonder about Eureka's present relationship with the other sister city, Nelson, New Zealand. If we are to establish such ties let's strive a bit harder to honor and keep them, otherwise let's just call it quits. Friends are precious and should be treated as such. On a lighter note, my wife and I thoroughly enjoyed the recent Humboldt Light Opera production of "Cinderella". Cast and crew were great. At the show's end, all the little costumed "Cinderella's" in the audience were asked to parade on stage, a nice "added" touch.

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