

Twenty-five years ago a Proclamation was signed establishing the Sister City relationship between Kittitas County and Sanda City.

Throughout the past 25 years the Sister City relationship has brought a wide variety of exchanges which have benefited people of all ages. Some of the exchanges have included cultural, sporting, educational, music, arts, and economic programs. With each experience the Sister City relationship has proven to be invaluable and resulted in lifelong friendships.

In the summer of 2012, I visited Sanda City with my son Daniel and husband Kevin. Daniel was a member of the Blue Rocks baseball team and my husband was one of the coaches. During our time in Sanda City, Daniel stayed with a host family who lived just outside of Sanda City. From the moment he and his host family were introduced they treated him as though he was a member of their own family. Although there was a slight language barrier, that did not matter as they got along perfectly and bonded immediately. The Ideguchi family provided him with opportunities of a lifetime that he will never forget. Whether it was spending time together going for walks, site seeing in Osaka, or having dinner together with friends, those memories will remain one of the best times of Daniel's life. It's been 5 years since our visit and if someone were to ask Daniel where he'd like to go if he could visit anywhere in the world, without hesitation his answer would be Sanda City. He hopes to one day go back to visit and stay with his "family" and see the many friends he made. From this exchange the Ideguchi's were not only Daniel's host family, but they became his "family" on the other side of the world.

Throughout my involvement with the Sister City relationship I have been very blessed to have met so many wonderful people from Sanda City and I am honored to call each one of them my "friend". Between the shared experiences, knowledge of our respective cultures, and continued learning from one another, our Sister City relationship has become invaluable. The recognition of our commonalities illustrates what a truly small world it is and if we continue to support one another together, we can make a difference and bring peace to our world. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to everyone in Sanda City who take time out of their busy lives to help ensure our Sister City relationship continues to grow stronger with each and every year.

Julie Kjorsvik, CMC  
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