

# In Friendship

The Newsletter of the Worthington International Friendship Association

Summer 1996

## Organization Outlines Plans for the Year

**C**ontinuing to build the Friendship City relationship with Sayama, Japan, and initiating new local intercultural activities are priorities for WIFA in 1996.

WIFA has invited SIFA members to visit the community in August when they will be able to enjoy many local events, including the Worthington Folklife Festival, the Ohio State Fair and evening concerts at the Polaris Amphitheater. To support WIFA's efforts, the Worthington Arts Council is planning an exchange of art exhibits with Sayama, through SIFA (Sayama International Friendship Association).

New officers were elected and seven committees were created at WIFA's first meetings of 1996. The officers are: Barbara Avery, president, and Janine Degitz, president-elect, (two year terms) and Robin Wigney, recording secretary. Sadicka Thomas and Lou Briggs will continue as corresponding secretary and treasurer, respectively.

WIFA's new by-laws adopted in January established four standing committees and chairpersons are: Finance, Lou Briggs; Program, Janine Degitz; Nominating; and Membership, Sadicka Thomas.

The following subcommittees were created to carry out WIFA's programs:

- International Nights, Barbara Stovall.
- Russian Visitors, David Elder.
- Homestays, Courtney Chapman; Public Reception, Carol Ottolenghi-Barga; Orientation: Barbara Avery.
- Newsletter, John Butterfield.
- Sayama Relations, Robin Wigney.
- Worthington Arts Council Projects, Jeanne Earhart.

Committee chairpersons are still needed for the Local Intercultural, Sayama Visit and High School Support Committees. More members are welcome

on all committees.

If you are interested in joining WIFA and participating in the organization's activities, please call Ms. Thomas at the Worthington Municipal Bldg. 436-3100.



Members of the WIFA Board, from front left, Jeanne Earhart, Barbara Stovall, Christy Morgan, Janine Degitz; second row, Lou Briggs, Emi Yamagata, Dave Elder, Sadicka Thomas; back row, Dale Friday, Barbara Avery, Jean Sickles and Eli Jones

## WIFA Delegates Reflect on October Visit to Sayama

**T**he four Worthington community members who traveled to Sayama last October will never forget their experiences or the kindness of the people who hosted them and saw to their needs during their six-day visit.

Community arts leaders Jim Mowery, president of the Worthington Arts Council's board of directors, and Jeanne Earhart, executive director of the arts group, along with Jane Trucksis of the Worthington Historical Society and Christy Morgan, a Thomas Worthington High School student who is studying Japanese enthusiastically accepted the invitation of the Sayama International Friendship Association (SIFA) to visit their city.

During their stay the Worthington

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## WIFA Welcomes Russian Visitors

**W**IFA joined the Worthington City Council and other local organizations in April in welcoming 20 Russian students and three faculty members from School 555 in Moscow. The group was here for a month's visit as part of a Russian-American Exchange Program involving Worthington Kilbourne High School, one of two high schools in the community.

A similar-sized group of Worthington Kilbourne students and staff visited Russia for three weeks in October and November. All participants in the program are housed with host families in Russia and the United States.

The purpose of the program, approved under the federal government's Freedom Support Act and School Linkages Project, is to increase the exchange of ideas and knowledge related to the technical preparation necessary for employment in

a democratic, market-driven economy. The program emphasizes basic principles of democratization in the world of work and everyday life, including a focus on language development, business and economics and selected areas of technology common to the curriculum of the paired schools.

WIFA president Barbara Avery, City Council President Lou Goorey and Vice President Lou Briggs officially greeted the Russian delegation at the Council's April 15 meeting. Each visitor received a welcoming resolution and a Worthington mug. School 555 Director Alexander Komarov told the officials he was overwhelmed by the friendliness of the city and the accessibility of city leaders to its citizens. He presented the city with a flag of Moscow. "We will take back what we learn from your country to make ours a

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WORTHINGTON ROOM

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# WIFA to Host Nine Guests from Sayama in August

**T**welve Worthington-area families and a number of WIFA members are eagerly preparing for the second exchange visit with members of SIFA.

The delegation, due to arrive on August 1, includes four students – two in high school, one in middle school and one in college – and four adults. The visitors will be in Worthington until August 8.

The first delegation of SIFA members, six adults, visited Worthington in October 1994. Two delegations from Worthington have already visited Sayama.

Courtney Chapman, who made the arrangements for the hosts, said the guests will share time with two families to give them an opportunity for a variety of experiences during their visit. The host families handle the visitors' accommodations and food during their stay and help

acquaint the guests with the community and the American way of life.

Mino Orita, a retiree, will be hosted by Frank and June White, 44 Campus View Blvd. W., and Barbara Avery and Courtney Chapman, 488 Greenglade Ave. The Whites, along with Larry and Jeanne Earhart, 4503 Ravine Dr., will also host Etsuji Shimada, a teacher.

Tomoko Suganuma, who works in an office in Sayama, will stay with Jane Trucksis, 359 W. South St., and Tom and Ann DiMarco, 7163 Bluffstream Ct. Kimono consultant Sonoko Eiki will also stay with these families.

Tomoko Suzuki, a 12th-grade student, will stay with Robert and Kathryn Paugh, 1112 Welwyn Dr., and with Sadicka and Mea Thomas, 917 Philadelphia Dr. The Thomases will also host Sanae

Yamashita, who is a university student. She will also be the guest of OSU student Emi Yamagata, 596 B Everwood Ave.

Eleventh grader Takeshi Ushikubo will stay with Richard and Lillian Macer, 214 Abbot Ave., and Mark and Cindy Keller, 30 E. South St. Frank and Clara Bunk, 5757 Dover Ct. will host Michiko Oshima, a homemaker. She will also stay with Judy Wagner, 104 Linabary Ave.

Eighth grader Ryuji Eiki will be hosted by Robert and Debbie Morgan and Christy Morgan, 1572 Buckshot Ct., as well as by the Keller family.

WIFA has planned several group excursions for the visitors, and other community members have organized activities tailored to the interests of the guests.

## Reflections on Sayama

visitors exchanged gifts with Sayama's mayor, met local artists and shared information about the two cities and cultures.

For Mowery, the conversations with newly made Japanese friends was the most enjoyable part of his visit. He found that talking on a one-to-one basis assured good communications even though he could not speak the language. "It was clear to me that my friendship was

important to them as was the relationship between Sayama and Worthington," Mowery explained.

Mowery learned that social interaction on a face-to-face level is extremely

important to the Japanese people because it enhances the understanding and knowledge of the other person. "Since the Japanese rely upon one another to work cooperatively, great emphasis is placed upon the predictability of each person's behavior," Mowery observes. "They strive to maintain a shared value system which works toward the collective good for the people as a whole and much less for the individual."

Earhart's visit to Kyoto and Sayama

strengthened her appreciation for the Japanese sense of beauty and style. She found this sense reflected throughout their culture, and particularly in their presentation of food. One of her favorite destinations while visiting was the public gardens, each having a history in the religious or ruling hierarchy of the country. The seemingly natural but intricate designs are punctuated with architectural treasures.

Earhart particularly enjoyed the people who, upon her arrival were "Japanese," but on her departure were "people." "And what lovely people they are," she adds.

Trucksis also cited the most enjoyable part of her trip as being with the "wonderful people of SIFA." Although she was unable to converse in Japanese, Trucksis said she and her hosts found a common language, speaking with their hearts and with humor. "We were adding to the global pyramid of friendship and understanding," she said.

With the exception of the entry to a home with its bookcase for shoes and slippers and the ceremonial room with its



From left, Jim Mowery, Jeanne Earhart, Christy Morgan, Mayor Junichi Machida and Jane Trucksis.

## Thank You

**On behalf of my fellow travelers, I wish to convey the warmest feelings of friendship to our many friends in Sayama. We were overwhelmed with the enthusiasm and harmony experienced while visiting your city. We hope that our visit is another step in our journey to a better understanding between the people of our two cities. We eagerly look forward to many cultural exchanges being planned for the future. We hope there can be more face to face meetings of our people so there can be a higher degree of understanding between us.**

**Your Friend,  
James S. Mowery, Jr.**

mat-covered floor, Trucksis found the furnishings in the modern Japanese house to be similar to homes in Worthington. The homes she visited had upholstered davenports and coffee tables, tables and chairs in the dining area and even computers.

Christy liked the time she spent in school. She felt privileged to be able to participate in Sports Day and enjoyed learning about the organization of their high schools. In Japan students stay in the same classroom throughout the school day and the teachers rotate from class to class.

She also has fond memories of the night she was given a beautiful kimono to wear. She looks forward to returning someday to Sayama to see her new-found friends again.

## Russians Visitors

better place for our people," he said.

But official ceremonies were only one of the ways WIFA extended its hospitality to the Russian visitors. City Manager Dave Elder, who served as the chairperson of the Russian Visitors Committee, arranged a bowling and pizza party for the guests. While some had seen bowling on Russian television, most of the visitors had never bowled before. Even though many balls ended in the gutter, the students had fun and liked the food.

Toward the end of their stay, WIFA hosted a cookout and dessert party for the Russians at the home of Avery and Courtney Chapman. WIFA board members and other Worthington-area residents told stories of how and why their ancestors came to America. The Russian students and their teachers shared information about their families' background.

Avery described the various waves of immigration to the United States, starting with the migration of Native Americans from eastern Russia, Siberia, Mongolia and places further west to the late 20th century immigration of non-Europeans.



Russian student Julia Borissova learns about the city's fire services from the driver's seat of a fire truck.

Among the reasons for immigration she cited were greed, free land, revolution, war, forced emigration, famine, desire for work opportunities, escape from military service, opportunities for better education, and desire for religious and political freedom.

Floyd Shepherd told how his African-American ancestors, probably from western Africa, were captured, packed tightly into ships and brought to America as slaves. One of his slave ancestors escaped and ran to a Native American settlement, where he or she was sheltered and may have joined the tribe.

Jane Trucksis and Avery told of their English and German ancestry; Chapman described his English ancestors and City Councilman John Duffey related how his great grandfather left Ireland after the Great Potato Famine to work in America. Bonnie Michael, also serving on City Council, talked about her Hungarian grandparents

who were Catholic and her German grandparents who were Jewish.

Janyce Katz, also Jewish, told how her grandparents left Russia for Cincinnati, Ohio, to avoid persecution for their religious belief under the Czar's rule. Eung and Kay Lee left South Korea for the United States to study in American colleges. Eung abandoned North Korea for South Korea during the Korean War.

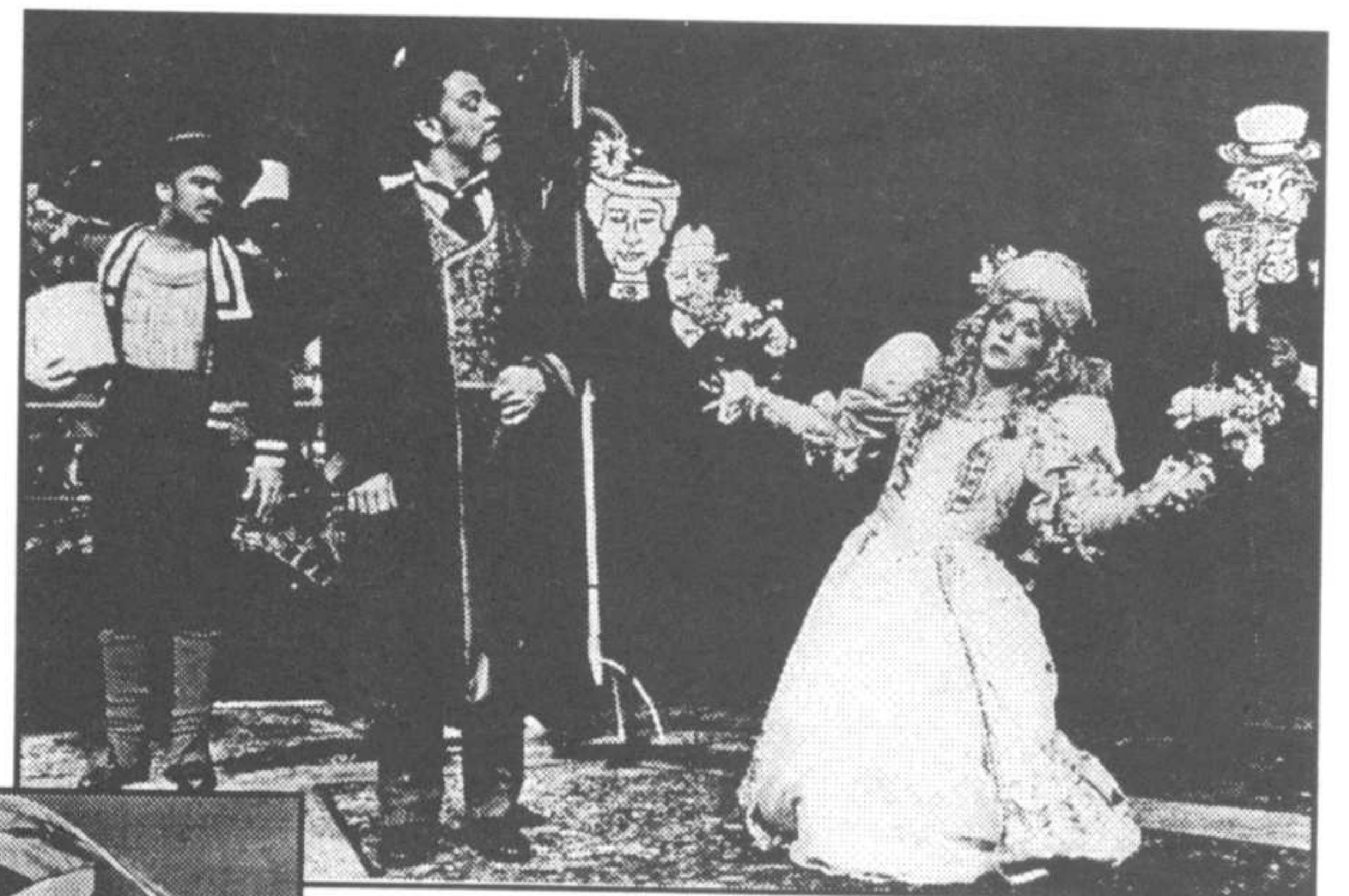
Rohini Mulchandani, born near Bombay, also left India to obtain an advanced degree in an American university. Emi Yamagata, a student at Ohio State University, came to Worthington when her father was transferred to the Honda America Plant in Marysville, Ohio.

## Arts Council's Programming Reflects Community's Interest in Cultures, Diversity

**The 1995-96 Performance Series of the Worthington Arts Council featured programs that represented cultural significance as well as excellent entertainment. Three national touring companies presented performances in the auditorium of Thomas Worthington High School.**



(Clockwise from top right) Using a combination of spoken word and sign language, the National Theatre of the Deaf performed "An Italian Straw Hat," a comedy of mistaken identities, impossible situations and close calls. The Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company blended Chinese classical dance with Western-influenced modern choreography. The ensemble Troupe America



presented *Mahalia*, the story of Mahalia Jackson, who became the musical voice of the entire civil rights movement in America. Songs, such as "We Shall Overcome" and "Precious Lord, Take My Hand," helped trace the life of Mahalia from her humble birth in a three-room shanty in New Orleans to her performances before American presidents and European royalty.

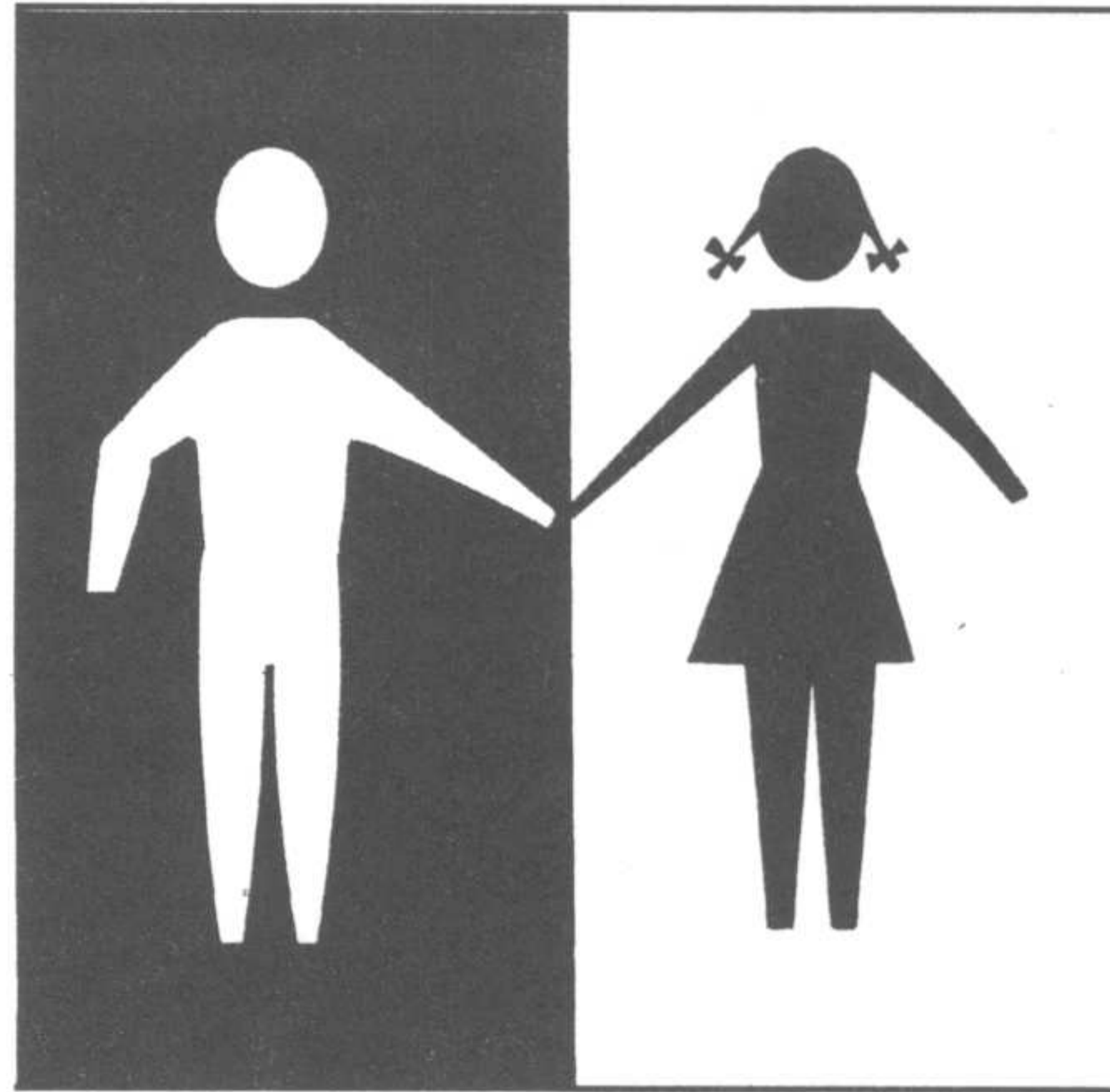
# Students and Community Celebrate Diversity

Approximately 600 students, parents and community members celebrated diversity and recognized student writers at a special event in May, sponsored by the school district and the Worthington Alliance of Black Parents.

At the Multicultural Writing and Diversity Celebration school officials presented this year's edition of the district's multicultural writing project, *Shared Visions*. The booklet is a collaboration of the school district and the Alliance. It is also funded by the Worthington Community Relations Commission, Huntington National Bank and Wendy's International.

The 328-page book features the writings and art work of more than 400 Worthington students from kindergarten through the 12th grade. Students wrote about the traditions, roles and contribu-

tions of women in various cultures, national origins, and the value of African Americans and Native Americans and their impact on Ohio history. In addition,



students in middle and high schools wrote about themes traditionally found in African American poetry, prose and drama, including struggle, uplift, oppression, resistance, injustice, survival and triumph.

Approximately 45 students read their writings. Children from Liberty Elementary School sang a multicultural song they wrote, and the Thomas Worthington High School Jazz Band performed. In addition, there was a demonstration of how technology is being used by students in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to communicate to others through the World Wide Web. A group of ESL students from Bluffsvew Elementary School also sang "It's a Small World After All."

## A Sample of Writings from *Shared Visions*

### Diversity

Diversity is different.  
Diversity is strange.  
Diversity is what  
makes people change.  
Diversity-  
Think about that.

The "D" is for  
"Difference,"  
The "I" is for  
"Individuals,"  
The "V" is for  
"Variety,"  
The "E" is for  
"Equality,"  
The "R" is for  
"Rights,"  
The "S" is for  
"Special,"  
The "I" is for  
"Important,"  
the "T" is for  
"Together,"  
The "Y" is for  
"you."

Diversity is us!

Erin Hay, Grade 4,  
Colonial Hills Elementary School

### Different, Yet the Same

His skin is red, hers is yellow,  
his black, and mine is white.  
We all go to the same school  
and are glad to be friends.

We do not care about our  
differences, but like to see  
how we are alike. We all  
have a heart and the ability to  
have great ideas.

As we look back at the past  
we do not understand how  
such cruelties could have  
been done to and by our  
ancestors. Back then Negroes  
were whipped, Native  
Americans were  
robbed of their land, and  
immigrants were often  
treated with little respect.

Then they only saw people's  
differences. Now we like to  
see how we are alike.

Krisitn Rudibaugh, Grade 5,  
Worthington Park Elementary School

### The Importance of Diversity

I came to the United States two years ago from  
Japan. Almost 99 percent of the Japanese popula-  
tion is Japanese. I suppose that was not an un-  
usual situation. I know that the world has many  
races in some countries, like the United States, but  
I couldn't imagine it, and if I hadn't come to the  
United States, I still could not imagine it.

I came to the United States for my dad's job. And  
now, I think I'm a lucky boy, because the United  
States has much diversity. I think diversity will  
become more important when I'm older, because I  
think all people will need to live together in the  
whole world. At that time, I think people who  
have not experienced diversity will not live well.  
For example, I could not do everything well two  
years ago. Since I'm young, I became used to  
living here soon, but my mother still has some  
problems. My mother can't talk on the telephone  
well; She can't understand the news on T.V.

I think coming to the United States has shown me  
a broad culture, and I want to use that experience  
to live for the future. I think my being in the  
United States will be a good memory and a good  
experience for me.

Kazuki Mori, Grade 9, Thomas Worthington High School