

## President's Message

By Karen Wheeler



Hello, everyone! I hope some happy news from the Torrance Sister City Association will bring a smile to your face and warm up your winter days, both here and in Kashiwa.

In January, we enjoyed a wonderful Reunion and got off to a great start in seeking Student Ambassadors for our Summer Trip to Kashiwa.

Fifteen high school students applied, and our Student Selection Committee, headed by Lori Eurich, has begun to get to know them. Selecting only eight of these well qualified and talented young people will be a challenging process, extending into March.

We are pleased to announce our Board of Directors is now complete, with the recent inclusion of Keith Glassman. The complete list of members is on our website, [torrancesistercity.org](http://torrancesistercity.org).

Because we are affiliated with the City of Torrance, we have a contribution to make to our city. So, we throw a big party for the public every year—the **Bunka-Sai Japanese Cultural Festival**. It's coming up on the weekend of **April 20-21, 2024**. There are a few months of preparation, and then we share Japanese food, music, art and culture with everybody. The other key goal of Bunka-Sai is

to raise money to support our summer student exchange program. But it's far more than a fundraiser or a party. It is a celebration of Japanese American heritage that our city is uniquely situated to do. To make this festival happen, we need **volunteers**. Please jump in and help us! I promise you will find it fun and meaningful. Sign up for shifts helping with various things like serving food, welcoming volunteers and visitors, ticket sales, helping performers and vendors, and even pre-event publicity.

Email us at [bunkasaivolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:bunkasaivolunteer@gmail.com), or call Sumi at 310-594-4792.

Also, the next **Bunka Sai planning meeting** is **Tuesday 3/12/2024, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, at the Katy Geissert Library**. Be there, if you would like to weigh in on plans and decide how to help. Besides, there are usually tasty snacks at Bunka-Sai prep meetings. (Should I have mentioned that sooner?) We look forward to seeing you.

Peruse the rest of the Newsletter for the latest on our English Teachers in Kashiwa, pictures of recent events, and other good stuff.

Thank you so very much for your continued interest and support.

Karen Wheeler  
President,  
Torrance Sister City Association

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## NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERSHIPS

### APRIL 7, 2024

Cherry Blossom Festival; 11:00 am.-4:00 pm.,  
Columbia Park

### APRIL 8, 2024

Association meeting; 7:00 pm. West Annex  
commission room

### APRIL 19, 2024

Bunka-sai Cultural Festival set-up 3:00 pm.  
Ken Miller Recreation Center

### APRIL 20 & 21, 2024

Bunka-sai Cultural Festival 11:00 am.-5:00 pm,  
Ken Miller Recreation Center

We are looking for a

## Newsletter Editor

Please contact

[tscanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:tscanewsletter@gmail.com)

for more information

Beard, Mallory  
Brock, Renae  
Chin, Sue-Yan  
Chow, Isabella  
Diederich, Brian  
Ernst, Ameneh  
Fitzgibbon, Zoe  
Ghuman, Anoop  
Haneda, Leo  
Hong, Phillip  
Hong, Kenneth

Hong, Samuel  
Kisiler, Jordan  
Lee, Leon  
Nadsady, Maria  
Nakamoto, Scott  
Reynolds, Aidan  
Segovia, Mia  
Sugano, Joshua  
Villarie, Yoshie  
Vuong, Artemis  
Welsch, Colin

If you haven't paid your  
2024 membership dues yet,  
it's not too late!

See the Membership form  
in this newsletter or  
pay online at

[https://torrancesistercity.org/  
membership\\_join.html](https://torrancesistercity.org/membership_join.html)

*Thank you for your support!*



## Torrance Sister City Association

### PRESIDENT

Karen Wheeler

### VICE PRESIDENT

Werner Willoughby

### SECRETARY

Amie Campbell

### TREASURER

Stephanie Ewing-Warner

### Newsletter Editor

Nancy Hayata

### Newsletter Distribution

Donna Dunlap

### Comments or submissions?

Please send an email to

[tscanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:tscanewsletter@gmail.com)

## TSCA GIFT BOOTH

The TSCA Gift Booth at Bunka-Sai Festival is collecting  
your new or gently used Japanese items to raise funds for the  
TSCA Student Cultural Exchange Program.

Wanted: Home goods (dishes, ceramics, chopsticks, figurines, dish  
towels), books (travel guides, Japanese/English textbooks,  
cookbooks), posters, prints, banners, art, dolls, cases, apparel  
(t-shirts, yukata, kimono, scarves, accessories, purses), toys, music,  
stationery, school supplies

Your donations will be loved by new owners who seek out our  
treasures every year. Receipts available for tax purposes.

Contact [torrancesistercityinfo@gmail.com](mailto:torrancesistercityinfo@gmail.com) or  
[bobandkaren@earthlink.net](mailto:bobandkaren@earthlink.net) to arrange for drop-off  
to our coordinator, Karen Wheeler.

# English Teacher Report

## By Chris Pigao

Happy New Year! First off, I would like to say thank you to everyone involved at the TSCA Alumni Luncheon last month. I was able to surprise everyone by attending the event and it was wonderful seeing most of you there (including getting a shout-out by Mayor George Chen). Congratulations to Karen Wheeler, our new TSCA President, and all of the wonderful cabinet members (both returning and retiring).

Now, since it's the beginning of our Gregorian Calendar, we often find ourselves wondering "How are we going to start the New Year off?" For my 3rd year students, their mindset is on a much different track because as we begin our calendar year, they are at the end of their high school careers.

If you are unaware, the Japanese school system starts in April and ends in March. Our 3rd year students at Ichikashi take their final exams at the end of January, leaving the whole month of February to prepare for their future. Some students are busy with university orientations, interviewing for jobs, getting their driver's license, or some even take the time to travel around Japan. Last year, I had one student travel to Okinawa during this transitional period.

This time around, my students that are about to graduate are the ones that I've grown most close to. The graduating 3A class, led by Mami Takeda-Sensei, are the smallest out of all of the class tracks - 14 students total. I remember meeting them when they were 2nd year students, and boy have they changed so much!

My first impression of the class will always stick in my memories. They were just full of this energy that I definitely felt before. I remember thinking, "Oh Geez, this class reminds me of all of the students back in the States" since most of the initial classes I had were shy and polite. From that first moment when I had my self-introduction presentation, to watching them create music videos for an



assignment, seeing them being hosts for the North High Students - these students were able to experience these pivotal events amidst the duration of the pandemic.

All of the laughter, frustrations, and moments of sadness will forever be etched in my memories. Our final class as "student-and-teacher" was on January 24th, where I personally gave my last lecture before the bell rang - echoing the sentiment of a TV show drama. I remember tearing up, saying "I left my friends, my family, my life back home to come teach here. You all made this worthwhile, and I can never thank you enough. MD told me one time that he never saw me as a teacher; he saw me as a friend. I hope you all know that I did the same as well."

To Hinako, Emi, Junpei, Joy, Nozomu, Sechan, Dani, Hisashi, Koyomi, Chenghao, Hiyori, Jenn, MD, and Jave - congratulations on graduating High School. To the rest of the 3rd year students, best of luck in the future! Mark Twain famously once said "Don't let schooling interfere with your education." Just because you're done at Ichikashi, does not mean that your education stops here. You will still be learning way more than you will ever know. So maybe this might not be the end per se, but a new beginning for their next part of life. Best of luck, friends!

# 49th Annual Bunka-Sai

Japanese Cultural Festival

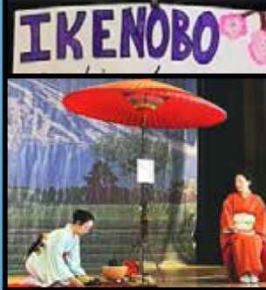
Saturday & Sunday

April 20 and 21, 2024

11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Ken Miller Recreation Center

3341 Torrance Boulevard (At Madrona Avenue)



Enjoy tasty plate lunches, sweets, arts and craft items, cultural performances, dance, music, martial arts, exhibitions, demonstrations



Presented by  
The Torrance Sister City Association  
[TorranceSisterCity.org](http://TorranceSisterCity.org)

Proceeds to benefit the student cultural exchange program  
*\*Please leave your pets at home, authorized service animals are exempt.*

[TorranceSisterCityInfo@gmail.com](mailto:TorranceSisterCityInfo@gmail.com)



Torrance Sister City Association's  
**8th Annual  
ANIME ART  
CONTEST 2024!**

**BUNKA-SAI**  
JAPANESE CULTURAL  
FESTIVAL!  
April 20-21



2023 Winners: Erika N, Angelina S, Sakura N, Rhiley P, Naoko G, Hanaka K

### DIVISIONS

Middle School & High School

### CATEGORIES

Hand Drawn & Digital Art

Separate prizes for middle  
& high school by category  
Winner \$30 | Runner Up \$20

All participants receive certificates

### RULES

- Entries must be on 8½" x 11" paper
- Format: Portrait (vertical) or Landscape (horizontal)
- Entries may be in Color or Black & White
- Only one entry per person
- No violent or dark themes, such as death and funerals
- Entries must include a Release Form signed by the artist and parent/guardian (if a minor)

Entries must be submitted **IN PERSON** on Friday, **APRIL 19, 2024**, 4pm – 6pm  
Ken Miller Recreation Center (3341 Torrance Blvd, Torrance, CA 90503)  
*Winners will be announced on Saturday, April 20 at 12:15 pm*

Forms and more info at [www.torrancesistercity.org](http://www.torrancesistercity.org)

# 2024 Membership & Donation List

## LIFE (\$2,000+)

Tsuji-Ihde Family

## BENEFACTOR (\$125+)

Warner, Steve and Stephanie Ewing-Warner

## SUPPORTING (\$75+)

Miles, Frank and Marilyn

## FAMILY (\$40)

Albitz, Phil and Velma

Arreygue, Julio and Aimee

Bothwell Automotive (Gil Bothwell)

Brock Family, Renae

Carr, Rae Ann, Eric and Reagan Owen Galinato

Chen, George and Amy

Chou, Wibawa and Lusieng Siau

Chow Family, Isabella

Dial Family, Emmanuel

Donaldson, Dan and Janet

Druten, Jason, Yoko, & Max

Ernst Family, Steven

Evans, Earl and Jayne Okazaki

Flynn, Janet and John

Gallagher, Ann & Marty

Gelbaum, Mark and Ilene

Gray, Bob, Summer and Jeremy

Han, Dai Sup And Jill

Hart, Gillian And Jay

Hong Family, Kenneth

Hong Family, Samuel

Jones, Brad and Eleanor

Kikuchi, Larry, Alice, Kaitlyn, and Breanna

Kisiler Family, Jordan

London and John Tokeshi, Emily

Maroney, Mark and Jill

Martel, Lou and Lori

Nakamoto Family, Kyra

Namimoto, Jim and Mariko

Peck Family, James

Reeve, Ron and Susan

Sargent, Dave and Toni

Scotto, Frank and Cindy

Segovia Family, Felipe

Shetti, Mayoore, Navin, Jeena and Ruchi

Sugano Family, Joshua

Tanaka, Keith and Shirley

## FAMILY (\$40) continued

Toya, George And May

Tsudama, Geoff, Mickie, Meisa, Reymi

Uchima, Ray

Ueki, Masaki and Sumi

Ujimori, Harvey and Kay

Villarie, Jack and Yoshie

Vuong Family, Artemis

Welsch Family, Colin

Yorizane, Eddie and Eileen

## INDIVIDUAL (\$20)

Abina, Pedro

Allen, Sheila

Ando, Jennifer

Beard, Mallory

Chien, Jessica Haugen

Glassman, Keith

Griffiths, Mike

Haneda, Leo

Hayata, Nancy

Higa, Reiko

Little, Vera

McIntyre, Hugh

Mealins, Kathy

Numark, Clifford

O'Donnell, Maureen

Perez, Ayako

Sakamoto, May

Tabata, Lynn

## DONATIONS

\$100 Scotto, Frank and Cindy

\$60 Albitz, Phil and Velma

\$60 Villarie, Jack and Yoshie

\$35 Nakamoto Family, Kyra

\$30 Sakamoto, May

\$30 Tabata, Lynn

\$25 Miles, Frank and Marilyn

\$20 Ando, Jennifer

\$10 Shetti, Mayoore, Navin, Jeena, and Ruchi

\$10 Gallagher, Ann and Marty

\$5 Segovia Family, Felipe



**TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
 3031 Torrance Boulevard Torrance, CA 90503

**Torrance Sister City Association  
 Bunka-Sai 2024 Japanese Cultural Festival  
 Supporting the Student Cultural Exchange program**

When: Saturday, April 20 and Sunday, April 21, 2024  
 Where: Ken Miller Recreation Center, the Toyota Meeting Hall, and the Torino Plaza  
 Objectives: To help the community learn about the Japanese culture  
**To raise funds for the Student Cultural Exchange Program**

**The Student Cultural Exchange Program is.....**

a cultural exchange program that takes place each year in July and August. Since 1974, Torrance sends a maximum of eight students and an adult leader to Kashiwa, Japan for three weeks in July. Kashiwa sends a similar group to Torrance in August. This program is often referred to as "the gem" of the Sister City Program.

**Please help us by placing an ad in our festival program booklet**

- Your ad will promote your company/business and support the Student Cultural Exchange Program.
- Personal ads are encouraged!
- Your ad will appear in the program booklet that will be distributed to an expected 2,000+ visitors over the weekend.

Ad fees:  
 Full-page ad.....\$200  
 Half-page ad.....\$100  
 One-fourth page ad.....\$50  
 Business card size ad.....\$25

Specifics: **Camera ready copy** to be no larger than 8 1/2"x11". May be in color.  
 Electronic copy may be emailed to [TSCAads@gmail.com](mailto:TSCAads@gmail.com).

**Deadline: March 29, 2024** in order to meet the printing deadline.  
 Please make checks payable to: Torrance Sister City Association or TSCA

**Any Questions? Please email [TSCAads@gmail.com](mailto:TSCAads@gmail.com).**

\*\*\*\*\* **Complete and return the section below**\*\*\*\*\*

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ad information: Size \_\_\_\_\_ Cost \_\_\_\_\_ Use last year's ad? \_\_\_\_\_  
 New? \_\_\_\_\_ Camera ready copy enclosed? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Specific instructions \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this portion, your ad, and check to:

**Torrance Sister City Association  
 3031 Torrance Blvd. Attn: Community Services Dept.  
 Torrance, CA 90503**

***Thank you for your support!***

Except for the Lifetime Membership\*  
all dues are in effect from  
January 1 to  
December 31

## Member Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

My membership is:     New                                     Renewal

TSCA Directory Update:

- New Address             New Telephone Number             New Email Address  
 I do not want to be listed in the TSCA Directory

TSCA Activities:

- I am interested in participating in TSCA activities

### Mail your check and this form to:

Torrance Sister City Association  
c/o Community Services Department  
3031 Torrance Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90503

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual           | \$20     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family               | \$40     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting           | \$75+    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor           | \$125+   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate            | \$200+   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Membership* | \$2,000+ |

Enclosed is a donation to  
TSCA (in addition to \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
annual dues)  
Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to TSCA

TSCA meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, except in August  
and December, at the Civic center West Annex Commission from 7:00 p.m.  
[TorranceSisterCity.org](http://TorranceSisterCity.org)

*If you have  
any questions  
about your membership,  
please email Alyssa Yamauchi at  
[tscamembership@gmail.com](mailto:tscamembership@gmail.com)*

[www.torrancesistercity.org](http://www.torrancesistercity.org)



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Association**

3031 Torrance Boulevard  
Torrance, CA 90503