

# Torrance Sister City Newsletter



Torrance, California



Torrance Sister City Association



Kashiwa, Japan

<http://torrancesistercity.org/>

Newsletter Editor: Mona Wong

December 2013

Newsletter Mailing: Steven Ihde

Please let me remind all members that the names, addresses and phone numbers that appear in our Membership Directory as well as the email addresses from our e-blasts and other TSCA communications are for the exclusive use of the officers, board members and members at large for TSCA business only. Use of this information by members and nonmembers for private and public communications is not authorized by TSCA. This information is very valuable for us to function as an organization, please do not abuse these resources. As a nonprofit organization we do not endorse individuals, businesses or organizations unless so stated in our publications. Any of the above that purchase an ad or are mentioned in our Bunka-Sai program, this is for their exposure and recognition and again not an endorsement by TSCA.

## December Calendar

December	9	Association Meeting 7:00 p.m. West Annex Commission Room Meeting of Outgoing and Incoming Officers
	13	City Hall Closed
	19	Deadline for 2014 student and 2015 adult leader applications
	24&25	City Hall Closed - Holidays
	27	City Hall Closed
	31	City Hall Closed - New Year's Eve Holiday
January	1	City Hall Closed - New Year's Day Holiday
	10	City Hall Closed
	11	Alumni Reunion
	13	Association Meeting 7:00 p.m. West Annex Commission Room
	20	City Hall Closed - Martin Luther King Day
	24	City Hall Closed

***Since we were not able to find a president or vice president, we will be adding a general meeting of the Association in December.***

***All TSCA members may attend the December meeting to vote on the slate of officers.***

## President's Message

By Werner Willoughby

As my two-year term ends this month, I wanted to express my great pleasure and honor in serving as your president. It has given me the opportunity to work with many individuals within TSCA as well as those outside of the organization who have made my experience so rewarding. These include TSCA board members and officers; Torrance exchange students and their parents; committee chairpersons; volunteers at the activities; Torrance city personnel and elected officials; vendors; employees at local businesses; Kashiwa city officials; members of the Kashiwa International Relations Assn (KIRA); officials in Kashiwa; Torrance Committee members in Kashiwa; and Kashiwa exchange students and their adult leaders.

A special thank you to Akiko Maruta and Makiyo Doi, the liaisons in Kashiwa who were so diligent and timely with their correspondences. I always felt their sincere support in communicating the needs of TSCA, the Torrance Committee (in Kashiwa) and its presidents



Akiko Nobusawa and Etsuko Kawamura.

I'm indebted to the following TSCA past presidents who were always available to answer my emails, lend an ear, and provide some advice and guidance: Teri Kuwahara, Hazel Taniguchi, Ray and Gail Roulette and May Cambra. Doomo arigatoo gozaimashita.

Again, I extend my deepest gratitude to all the volunteers who made the 2013 Bunka-Sai possibly the most financially successful one ever.

Many thanks, also, to the small but dedicated committee which has worked with me over the past three years to make the August Activities so enjoyable for the Kashiwa students' visits. For me, this started with a 3-ring binder full of phone and email contacts and advice from Stephanie Ewing-Warner, the previous chair. Thanks, Stephanie! To the Activity Leaders, translators, treasurers (Cheryl and Gary), bus drivers, the City Transportation Dept., thank you so much.

A big thank you and congratulations goes to Shirley Tanaka who chaired and coordinated the concession stand, known as the TSCA Café, at the Torrance Crafters Guild Fair. Shirley was supported by a great group of TSCA volunteers and many members of her family in providing a wide range of food items to over 90 vendors and the customers who were shopping at the Fair. The president of the Guild and many of the vendors expressed how grateful and pleased they were with Shirley's efforts in coordinating the TSCA Café. Thanks again, Shirley!

Thanks and good luck to Lori Eurich and her team on their presentations at all of the high schools in Torrance as the recruitment for the 2014 group of exchange students begins. If you know a Torrance student who has that desire to experience Japanese culture first-hand, this is their opportunity. Refer them to our website, watch the video from 2013, see peers from their own school, visualize them wearing yukatas, playing taiko drums, making sushi, interacting with the deer on Miyajima, listening to the awesome Kashiwa Municipal High School Band, walking on the grounds of beautiful temples, dancing in the Kashiwa Matsuri and experiencing daily life in Kashiwa while being hosted by two families.

On behalf of TSCA, another big thank you to our outgoing Newsletter editor, Mona Wong, for her patience and dedication.

And who attends every Association meeting, is the go-to person for connections and services in the City of Torrance, has a wealth of knowledge of TSCA and the City, listens to potential problems, makes candid suggestions for solutions, and sees off every bus with Torrance and Kashiwa students each morning during August? Suzie Wand, TSCA's Liaison with the city. Many thanks for your support to me over the last two years!!

Working quietly behind the scenes but very valuable to TSCA is Mr. Ron Kimmel. Ron compiles our membership, makes changes in mailing addresses, sends a corrected list of address labels to Central Services almost monthly, assembles and updates the Membership Directory each year, and in his friendly manner, reminds all of us to renew our dues. It's been a pleasure working with you, Ron! Thank you very much!

**Please note that there will be a special meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup> in the West Annex's Commissioners Room to address the issue of nominating and voting on a president and vice president for 2014. This meeting and vote is open to all TSCA members. Following that meeting, the outgoing and incoming officers will work on a budget for 2014. The budget will be presented for approval at the January 13, 2014 meeting.**

To all TSCA Friends,



**I Miss You**

*Can I see you at the Alumni  
Reunion, Saturday,  
January 11, 2014  
Save the date!*

*Information: 310 532-7562  
Kerry Cababa*



**SAVE THE DATES**

**BUNKA-SAI**

**IS COMING SOON**

**April 26 and 27, 2014**

## Adult Leader Wanted for 2015 Cultural Exchange Trip

By Lori Chong Eurich

Applicants interested in applying for the 2015 Adult Leader position that will accompany the student delegates are now being sought. Please submit a letter of interest, detailed resume and two letters of reference. One letter must be on letterhead from your current employer and the second letter must verify experience working with youth. For questions, please contact Stephanie Ewing-Warner, committee chair at (310) 530-0354. Deadline to apply is December 19, 2013. Send documents to: TSCA, % Community Services Dept., Adult Leader Committee; 3031 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503.

# Cultural Exchange

By Kevin Butt

Foreign Language Lecturer in Kashiwa



A few weeks ago, 2A-Oral Communication left for their Language Training excursion in Torrance, CA. And every week leading up to that since mid-spring, Matthew and I were tasked to provide the students with conversational and cultural instruction that would be beneficial to their experience in America. And though, early on, because the trip seemed so far off in the future, they would struggle to pay any attention to what we had to say, by the time it dawned on them that they would actually be flying to America, they felt under-prepared and overwhelmed by the burden of international travel and cross-cultural interaction.

Over and over again, the students would tell us that they were embarrassed that they could not speak English like a native speaker, that they were afraid that the Americans would think that they were dumb and ignorant about many facets of American culture.

We would listen patiently, nodding in understanding, having shared acutely our own daily experience with the very stress they dread, from shopping at the convenience store, to ordering dinner, to getting haircuts, or trying to schedule weekend activities. No matter how much Japanese we learn, no matter how Japanese we may feel, there are always aspects of Japanese culture that we are not yet privy to, in a way that makes cross-cultural understanding seem more like sifting through quicksand than checking off lessons listed in a textbook.

But, on the other hand, I want to yell at them. What they were dreading was the prospect of being uncomfortable, the mere “likelihood” of misunderstanding. Firmly rooted in their fear of unknowing, I want to shake them out of their risk-adverse hesitancy because, guess what: Surprise! They aren’t native English speakers and, double surprise! They don’t know anything about American culture. And double-plus surprise! Their host families already know that.

But, as such, we tell them that this is their golden opportunity to 遠慮しない, to act without reservation. That while international travel is scary and cross-cultural exchange is intimidating, a study-abroad trip is the time to explore those scary and intimidating things with as little risk as possible because everyone there knows you came to learn. So there is no shame in ignorance. There is no shame in not knowing. Because you came to learn.

So if they have a question, they should feel free to ask it. If they have a curiosity, they should feel free to explore it. Ask freely, explore freely: the host families sighed up because they want to share their culture as much as they want to learn about Japan.

So that should be our target framework.

One thing that I wanted Matthew to be conscious of as we designed our 2A prep classes is that our goal should be to remove the barriers that the 2A students may face when going to America. We want to facilitate the cultural exchange experience. So whether that be by lowering stress levels by teaching students how not to get lost or “randomly selected” for inspection by TSA at the airport, or teaching them about refrigerator rights or how Americans join the toilet room and the shower room in one, all-encompassing mega-room called the “bathroom,” our target is to prepare them for their stay with their host families, because it is their experience with

their host families that will teach them more about culture and the value of exchange than we ever could.

We want to facilitate the cultural exchange experience, not replicate it or replace it.

Rather, I believe that if we teach them everything there is about American schools and American eating habits before they leave for America, we’re taking valuable exchange experiences away from our students and their host families.

I don’t care so much to give them the answers to all of the questions about America before they get there. What I want to teach them before they go is how to ask those questions of their host families and then have to be asked those same questions of themselves.

So we teach them how to talk about their opinions and express their desires. We have them practice how to ask and then listen to the answers. We show them some of the things they will see and do in the hopes that they will start thinking about what they will experience and what they can talk about. All in an attempt to reframe their approach to the exchange program from “risk” to “opportunity.”

But no matter how many times we yell at them not to be afraid to take the chance and use their English, that is a decision that they have to make. One we hope they decide to make before they go to America, and not on their way back.

## Membership News

**Membership Chairman:**  
Ron Kimmel



New and renewed memberships:

Exxon Mobil (B)

Cornwall, Rich (I)

Hedges, David (B)

Koga, Robert and Yvonne (F)

Matsuda, John S (I)

Mizuguchi, Toshiko (S)

Nakano, George (I)

Shrivastava, Ken (F)

Tanaka, Frank and Yae (F)

Willoughby, Werner and Aileen (S)

All membership applications received will be for 2014. An application form should be filled out and submitted with your dues payment so that the membership committee has a record with your current information. Please circle the type of membership and check any changes on the Directory Update line.

If you have any questions, call Ron Kimmel at (310) 530-2382.

# TSCA Café a Big Success at Craft Faire

by Shirley Tanaka

This was the first time we operated the Refreshments Table for two straight days, but thanks to our hard working members and family, TSCA Café was a big success. The café provided a variety of lunch entrees and snacks to over 90 vendors and many visitors of the Torrance Craftsmen's Guild Holiday Faire on November 16 and 17. Giuliano's sandwiches, Ladybug's teriyaki chicken, homemade spam musubi, hot dogs, and chili rice were popular requests. This year we offered freshly baked cookies, which were sold as quickly as we could take them out of the oven!

Many thanks to the best crew ever— Aileen, Barbie, Cheryl, Colleen, Dana, Donna, Hazel, Janet, Jenny, Jill, Joe, Katie, Keith, Kerry, Kevin, Leslie, Marilyn, May, Pam, Pindi, Reiko, Steven, Teri, and Werner. Special thanks to our super student assistants— Ann, Janet, Lindsay, Madison, Matt, Natasha, and Noelle. All of you made this possible!



## Cultural Exchange Applications Due

By Lori Chong Eurich, Chair  
Student Selection Committee

Applications for the 2014 student cultural exchange program to Kashiwa are *due December 19, 2013* at the Community Services Department in the West Annex of City Hall. Applications must include a head shot, two letters of recommendation, completed forms, and student and parent letters. The \$40 application fee includes a one-year membership in TSCA. Applicants must be a full-time resident of Torrance and be in 10, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

David Gelbaum, the 2014 Adult Leader will accompany the delegation and depart for Kashiwa on July 8 and return on July 29 via direct flights between Los Angeles and Narita. The program fee of \$900 helps to pay for part of the round-trip airfare.

The selection process begins on Saturday, January 11, 2014 at the Alumni Reunion Potluck at the Ken Miller Recreation Center at 11:00 a.m. This event is the first of seven activities that will give the Selection Committee an opportunity to learn about the students and their families. Student candidates will also meet past delegates to learn more about their experiences.

Applications are available at the counseling office of each high school and on the TSCA website at: [www.torrancesistercity.org](http://www.torrancesistercity.org). For questions about the application, selection process and program, please contact me at 310-373-6146.

## Website Update & Kashiwa Trip Video

By Lori Chong Eurich

The TSCA website will be upgraded in the next few months to make it more up-to-date, informative and include more photos of our various programs. Nancy Hayata of South Bay Online is the new website designer selected by the Board to create a dynamic and interesting site. Our website now has a link to the new Kashiwa "Trip of a Lifetime" video created by 2013 student delegate Jay Matsumoto. This video was played at presentations made at the four public high schools in Torrance and Bishop Montgomery high school last month to promote the student cultural exchange program. Jay's video features instrumental music the delegation played during key events and gives viewers a terrific glimpse of the three-week trip.

## English Teacher Program Change

By Lori Chong Eurich  
Chair, English Teacher Selection Committee

For over 40 years TSCA has had English language teachers in Kashiwa at Ichikashi (Kashiwa Municipal high school) working as Assistant Language Teachers helping Japanese teachers with lessons, planning and oral communication. Recently, however, the administration at Ichikashi recognized that our teachers are more experienced and asked them to take on additional responsibilities by conducting their own classes. Accordingly, our teachers Kevin Butt and Matthew Medlock have a *new job title* of "Foreign Language Lecturer" instead of Assistant Language Teacher. In addition to their teaching responsibilities they also advise the English Club, support students going on exchange trips, judge speech contests, attend functions at Kashiwa International Relations Association and much more. We are proud of the fine work these gentlemen do!

The next opening for a teaching position at Ichikashi is in August 2014 after Kevin Butt completes his third and final year.

# Experience Japan!



**Become  
a Cultural  
Ambassador for  
the adventure  
of a lifetime!**

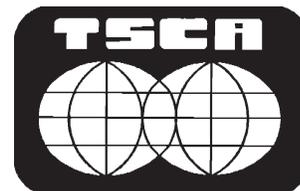
## **Torrance Sister City Association (TSCA)**

is looking for highly-motivated Torrance residents who are high school sophomores through college freshmen, 19 years old and younger, to serve as cultural ambassadors in the Student Cultural Exchange Program.

Since 1974, TSCA has sponsored hundreds of students to represent the highest qualities of American youth in Kashiwa, Japan, our sister city, for three unforgettable weeks in July.

Pick up an application in your school's Counseling Office or call the Torrance Community Services Department at 310/618-2930.

- ◆ Here's your chance to represent the best of Torrance youth
- ◆ Promote international friendship and understanding
- ◆ Become part of a family in Kashiwa, Japan
- ◆ Visit modern Tokyo and the ancient temples of Kyoto
- ◆ Gain understanding of Japanese customs & daily life
- ◆ Participate in an authentic tea ceremony & martial arts
- ◆ Experience Hiroshima
- ◆ Make lifelong friends and much, much more!



**APPLICATION MUST  
BE POSTMARKED BY  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2013**

**[TorranceSisterCity.org](http://TorranceSisterCity.org)**

# Memories of Japan

## The Third in a mini-series of reports from the 2013 Kashiwa exchange group Compiled by Gail Roulette

Each summer TSCA sends a student delegation to our sister city Kashiwa. Before they go, we give them eight two-hour orientation sessions to prepare them for the trip. Each of these students, usually high-school age, and their adult leader selects a particular topic to research. They write their findings prior to going, then write a report after the trip describing what they have learned. For the next few issues we will present excerpts from their experiences based on their post-trip reports.

### Softball In Japan

By Cindy Chan

There are many similarities and differences in softball between our two countries. To my delight, my host family took me to watch a tournament between Nishihara and Nichu Junior High Schools. One difference I noticed was that the ball was white (ours are bright green leather) – and it seemed to go a lot farther than seemed possible for these petite Japanese girls. I later found out that the ball was made of rubber. I also noticed that the pitcher from both teams “crow-hopped,” which is when you jump before releasing the ball to gain speed. This is allowed for the girls who are younger. As the players get older, more official rules are applied.



One difference that made a lasting impression, though, was at the end of the game. The players lined up, but all at once, they bowed to each other! I couldn't understand the words that they said, but it gave me warm feelings inside because even through sports, Japanese people uphold their emblematic respect for one another.

It was exciting to observe the similarities between American and Japanese softball too, as: taking lead-offs when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand; the drop third strike rule; cheering to encourage fellow players.

At the game, I met a past Kashiwa delegate's grandma, who told me the most information about Japanese softball. She also introduced me to other high school students who used to play softball, and after the game even asked a coach if I could have one of the softballs! Yuko, one of the main leaders of KIRA, had played softball in junior high school. She told me of the rising popularity of softball in Japan.

From now on I will not only play for my love of the game, but I will also play with the thought in mind that there are people miles away that feel the same way. In a sense, I feel like it connects these countries because of this simple common love. And that to me is just so darn wonderful.



### The Japanese celebration

By Vanessa Barragan

Japan's government honors 15 national holidays. They are: New Year's Day, Coming of Age Day, Foundation Day, Vernal Equinox Day, Showa Day, Constitution Memorial Day, Greenery Day, Children's Day, Marine Day, Respect-for-the-Aged Day, Autumnal Equinox Day, Health and Sports Day, Culture Day, Labour Thanksgiving Day, and The Emperor's Birthday.

According to my second host father, the most important holiday is said to be New Year's Day. His family celebrates like many families in Japan do by getting together with grandparents and parents and go to shrines to pray and then have a feast. I felt that was similar to how my family celebrates Christmas by going to church and getting together to have dinner.

Many Japanese people idealize a lot of American people and other parts of American culture. In my first host family the daughter Mina and her brother were both studying to be English teachers and they were very big on American culture. My host mom from the Marushima family did decorative paintings. Many of her paintings were of American holidays like Christmas and Halloween. Their family tries to celebrate as many American holidays as possible but in a smaller way. Mina's favorite American holiday is Christmas because they exchange small gifts with one another.



I really found this trip to be amazing and the Japanese people incredible. I will never forget my summer of having the experience of a lifetime in Japan.



# TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION STUDENT CLUB



## WHAT IS THE STUDENT CLUB?

This group exists to keep contact between past and present TSCA delegates as well as to provide insight and experience for prospective delegates of the student ambassador program.

## WHO CAN JOIN?

Any Torrance school student is eligible to join! This includes students from Torrance, North, South, West, CAMS, and Bishop Montgomery.

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Contact Emiko Kranz to receive emails or to be added to the Facebook page. Meetings are every second Saturday of the month with times TBA.

Learn more about the annual TSCA exchange and selection process and the host family program in November or go online to [torrancesistercity.org](http://torrancesistercity.org) for more information. See you at the next TSCA Student Club meeting!

Emiko Kranz, Student Club President

Please message me on Facebook with any questions and/or comments.





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# TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

## 2014 Membership Application

Except for the Life Membership, all dues are in effect from January 1st to December 31st.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Individual	\$20 per year
Family	\$40 per year
Supporting	\$75+ per year
Benefactor	\$125+ per year
Life member	\$2000+(one time donation)

My membership is:     NEW     RENEWAL     I do not want to be listed in the TSCA directory

Directory Update: New address\_\_ New telephone number\_\_ New e-mail address\_\_

I am interested in participating in TSCA activities. \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a donation to TSCA (in addition to my annual dues) in the amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to TSCA and mail with this form to: The Torrance Sister City Association  
c/o The Community Services Department  
3031 Torrance Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90503

If you have any questions about your membership, please call Ron Kimmel at 310-530-2382.