

Torrance Sister City Newsletter



Torrance, California



Torrance Sister City Association



Kashiwa, Japan

<http://torrancesistercity.org/>

Newsletter Editor: Mona Wong

March 2013

Newsletter Mailing: Steven Ihde

President's Message

By Werner Willoughby

A big thank you to all that have renewed their memberships, TSCA appreciates your commitment to continuing the promotion of friendship and cultural awareness with Kashiwa.

If you have not renewed your membership yet please use the form on the outside of the newsletter.

Bunka-Sai, our biggest fundraiser is approaching next month, and we need your help! Last year the list of volunteers organized and compiled by Patsy Shintani exceeded 100 volunteers. Another thank you to those that helped make Bunka-Sai such a success last year. Your time, hard work and commitment to this activity insures TSCA presenting a first class student exchange program with Kashiwa each year. If you know an exchange student from the past and listened to their stories you know how important Bunka-Sai is and the value to the almost 300 students that TSCA has sent to Kashiwa since 1974. I sincerely hope that you help us with this years event and are able to attend this years Bunka-Sai on April 20 and 21st at the Torrance Cultural Arts Center. Come to not only enjoy the many events that weekend but take the time to talk with our eight students that will travel to Kashiwa in July and you will understand why the exchange program is so important, these are Torrance's very best!! You will be able to recognize them as they will be wearing the new purple Happi coats donated to us by the Torrance Committee of KIRA. If you helped last year we will be contacting you within weeks if we haven't already, to ask for your assistance. If you are "new" to the event or were not able to help last year, please contact Patsy Shintani who is the Chair of the volunteers at shintani4@earthlink.net. She will find a job for you that is rewarding, fun and insure that you work with some great TSCA members. Whether a couple of hours or a whole day you will make possible the "trip of a lifetime" for our eight students this year.

This month you will receive two books of tickets for the big raffle at Bunka-Sai. The grand prize is \$250 with a great number of prizes donated by businesses and individuals in Torrance. You do not have to be present at the time of the drawing, the donation is \$1.00 per ticket or \$10.00 for a book of 12 tickets. As with all proceeds from Bunka-Sai they will support the student exchange program.

On February 10th at the Armstrong Theater I had the pleasure of presenting a token of acknowledgement and appreciation from TSCA to Master Haniyagi Shunto as the guest performer in the celebratory recital for Haniyagi Wakana's 80th birthday. Haniyagi Shunto has a studio in Kashiwa and is recognized as one of the leading dancers of the Haniyagi School.

On February 16 there was an Alumni Reunion for all Kashiwa students which was organized by Mutsumi Takada '79, and Hirofumi Takikawa 2011. According to Akiko Nobusawa



there were about 100 people in attendance including the first exchange student Masako Noguchi. The opening address was given by Hirofumi as it was his idea to reunite all of the exchange students. A toast was given by Ms Akemi Kosuge during the informal wining and dining accompanied by a brief history of the program via DVD. They all enjoyed some Bingo followed by group pictures. Ms. Nobusawa credits Hirofumi's initiative and the help Ms. Takada and Ms. Kikuchi for the success of the reunion. On behalf of TSCA I would like to congratulate Hirofumi on his courage to pursue such an event, and with the support of Ms. Takada and Ms. Kikuchi, in bringing together former Kashiwa students to share past memories, and confirm the importance of such a wonderful exchange program.

I look forward to working with you at Bunka-Sai!

BON VOYAGE 40TH ANNIVERSARY DELEGATES!

Have a wonderful trip to Kashiwa.

Thank you for representing TSCA and the City of Torrance.



March Calendar

March	8	City Hall Closed
	9	Cherry Blossom Festival
	11	Association Meeting 7:00 p.m. West Annex Commission Room
	16	Craftsmen's Guild Fair
	22	40th Anniversary delegates leave for Kashiwa
	22	City Hall Closed

SAVE THE DATES

BUNKA-SAI

IS COMING SOON

APRIL 20 AND 21, 2013

Volunteers!! We need your help!!

We have fun, laughter, good food, great entertainment,
and renewed friendships

If you can donate a few hours to help with Bunka Sai this year,
please give me a call or send me an email

Help needed on the following:

Friday night-April 19

Saturday-April 20

Sunday-April 21

Looking forward to another successful year!!!

Thank you,

Patsy Shintani

Volunteer chairperson

Email: shintani4@earthlink.net

Cell: 310 995-9882

Membership News

Membership Chairman: Ron Kimmel

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2013, there are a few days left to renew and be listed in the directory.

New and renewed memberships for 2013:

Ando, Francis (I)
Coble, Michael and Maggie (F)
Conlon Family (F)
Deloyd, Aki (I)
Diaz, Frank Patty and Anthony (F)
Fisher, Eric and Doris (F)
Flynn, Janet and John (F)
Griffith, Kay (I)
Hirayama, Dale and Joyce (F)
Hofer, Gary and Fusae (F)
Ichikawa, Christie (I)
Ihde, Butch, Dunlap, Donna and Cara (F)
Ihde, Steven (I)
Kircher, Ellen and Bob (F)
Larue, Julie (F)

Lobo, Ann (F)
Lorenze Family (F)
Martinez, Alexandra Amaris (F)
McGee, John and Carmen (F)
Medlock Family (F)
Miike, Kenny, Jen, Pat and Pam (F)
Moriwaki, Erin (F)
Mullowney, Pamela (I)
Mundy, Christine and Nate (F)
Namimoto, Jim and Mariko (F)
Nguyen, Manda (F)
Scotto, Frank and Cindy (F)
Shintani, Patsy, Ron, and Melissa (F)
Smisek, Richard and Ada (F)
Snider, Thomas and Allison (F)
Van Belleham, Edith (I)
Wong, Andrew, Mona and Margaret (F)
Yamauchi, Bryce and Cheryl (S)
Yoshida, Gary (I)

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



Second Annual Cherry Blossom Festival

The festival will be held at Columbia Park on March 9th from 10 am to 3 pm. Columbia Park is located near the corner of 190th and Prairie Ave. The Park has over 110 cherry blossom trees which have been donated by Soka Gakkai International – USA. In Japan cherry blossoms or Sakura, are a symbol of hope, virtue and a new beginning.

Entertainment during the festival will be provided by a variety of Asian dance, music and martial arts groups. TSCA will have a booth to publicize the organization, Bunka-Sai and sell raffle tickets. The Torrance Craftsmen's Guild will exhibit their artwork and snacks will also be available for purchase. So bring your blankets to sit on and picnic lunches to eat under the blossoms.

By Kevin Butt

English Language Teacher in Kashiwa



On February 20, 2013, Kashiwa, Chiba and Torrance, California will have celebrated the 40th anniversary of their sister-city relationship. And while the Teaching Exchange Program between the two international-relations organizations has not yet quite hit 40 years itself, with the hiring of Matthew Medlock, Kashiwa Municipal High School (Ichikashi) has seen 40 different exchange teachers since the program's institution in 1979.

As Matthew and I enter into the second year of the fortieth cycle of the Teaching Exchange Program, especially in respect to the upcoming 40th anniversary celebration, we have taken a bit of time to look back at how things have changed since the late 1970s.

At the center of our program still remains cultural exchange and language training. The preponderance of our curriculum focuses on general composition for third-year students, as well as advanced-level preparatory college language training for exams and interviews. Additionally, we instruct two separate units of oral communication for specific purposes for second-year students, the first being an elective general study, while the second is an intensive language training class for Ichikashi's second-year International Studies course (国際科) and their corresponding school excursion to America in November.

Since arriving in Kashiwa to assume my post at the head of these classes, I have continually been astounded by the incredible level of support that we receive from our administration. For all the passion the city has at the political level for the Teaching Exchange Program, the practicalities are a burden to bear upon the heart of the local administration for hosting the exchange teachers. And here at Ichikashi, we have been blessed to have had Mr. Hideo Suda as principal (校長) for the last three years.

It has been Suda-先生's goal in his tenure at Kashiwa Municipal to increase the exposure and impact of exchange programs upon Ichikashi's student body. Since his arrival, he has made it a priority to ensure the viability of Ichikashi's student exchange programs, not just with Torrance, but with their sister cities in Australia and China.

Likewise, it has been under Suda-先生's guidance that the Kashiwa Teaching Exchange Program has undergone its most drastic transformation away from assistant language teaching.

Whereas in the old days, all classes would be taught in tandem with a Japanese language-native homeroom teacher, currently the Exchange Program instructors conduct classes without the assistance of such a "JLT," leading lessons of their own design, transitioning the role from an "Assistant Language Teacher" to a full-fledged "English Language Teacher." In fact, many of Ichikashi's flagship programs for the International Course, such as the annual English Camp, have been placed completely under the purview of the ELTs.

Over the years, the Teaching Exchange Program has provided Ichikashi with a high level of student output, by palpably increasing student performance in standardized tests, in addition to helping to place graduates in international schools and prestigious universities throughout Japan, all while maintaining national excellence in sports and the arts.

Since 2005, we have had 208 students take and pass at least one of any of the five levels of the Eiken English Proficiency

Exam. And while the overall number of our students who pass any level of the Eiken has declined recently (from 29 and 34 in 2005 and '06 to 19 and 25 in 2010 and '11), the percentage of students who have taken and passed the highest levels of the Eiken (for our purposes, Pre-1st and 2nd Grade) has gradually been increasing. There is a thought that the curriculum change in 2009 to accommodate a larger emphasis on sports clubs has adversely affected interest and preparation for the Eiken. However, the proportion of students who successfully take Eiken Grade-2--the language requirement for second-tier schools such as Kanda--has remained relatively consistent throughout the years.

Similarly, over the last four years there has been an increase in the number of students (82.7% - 87.4%, +4.7%) who attend college after leaving Ichikashi (either a 4-year college, 2-year college, or specialty vocational/trade school--専門学校), including an upward trend within the Foreign Language Department (80.4% - 92.5%, +12.1%).

Upon matriculation, with regularity, these students can expect to be prepared with an education worthy of entrance into the top 25-30th percentile of private universities in Japan, which includes acceptance to schools such as Kanda Gaigo and Komazawa, with many of our top students finding acceptance in top-tier universities, including admission to Aoyama Gakuin, Tokodai and Waseda.

Figuring that the effectiveness of the program is rooted in the cultural experience of an American-education sensibility in consultation with the copious native resources at the English language teachers' disposal, such consistent, high-level output has been rewarded, administratively, with trust and a hands-off approach. And while this may be the dream arrangement for many educators, often it is not without struggle and confusion for the ELTs, some of whom arrive at the front doors of Ichikashi with very limited experience in lesson or program planning.

Even more so, such institutional freedom is not limited to the academic aspect of high school education. Once settled into the routine of lesson planning, teaching, and managing the campus English Conversation Club, the ELTs are encouraged to pursue as many avenues for cultural exchange and education for personal growth as time would allow.

Not only do we find a ready conversation in English with the 11 other teachers in the Foreign Language Department, just about everyone on campus is more than willing to share with us their little piece of Japan, whether that be their slice of the office in the home economics hall, weekly contemplation on their hobbies and crafts like 書道 or 生け花, or personal travel recommendations for trips to and around hometowns. It is actively promoted that we ingratiate ourselves into the communal fabric of Ichikashi, and not just in the teachers' office.

If given the interest and wherewithal, Ichikashi ELTs are highly encouraged and soundly welcomed to incorporate themselves into club activities. My predecessor, Geoff, regularly participated in basketball practices and even Matthew has begun contemplating visiting the volleyball club at the request of the boys' head volleyball coach. I find myself in the 柔道場 most weekdays and just about every weekend, where my duties include assisting the coach with clerical duties and chaperoning, impromptu English quizzes in vocabulary and culture, and even training for my own 黒帯試合.

For as much as this opportunity continues to offer us personal and professional challenges that will undoubtedly benefit us in whatever careers we pursue in the near future, it is our desire to do our part to ensure that the Exchange Teaching Program

continues to grow, as the campus itself continues to expand with new classrooms and athletic facilities to suit the ever changing needs of education in the twenty-first century.

Certainly, Ichikashi has long been an attractive destination among Kanto high schools for its specialty clubs, drawing students from all over Chiba and Tokyo for sports and music, some who commute two hours by bike, train and bus from places like Tokyo to come to Ichikashi. Ichikashi is also well positioned to take advantage of its unique access to resources in terms of English language and intercultural exchange, and as such, we look to continue to challenge the ELT program to grow into an international-education program befitting a campus of Ichikashi's stature.

In addition to attempting to solidify a reusable lesson cycle for the composition and oral communication courses, a main target we have is to see the expansion of the ELTs and the English Conversation Club footprint locally and in the broader Kashiwa community. For example, at school, twice a week we lead "Lunch with Kevin and Matthew," a focused English conversation opportunity for every student enrolled in the International Course. Recently, we have tasked the ECC with leading these discussions, creating safe spaces on campus for language exploration and exercise for non-ECC students.

Off campus, we are looking to improve Ichikashi's standing within the community by pursuing programs such as ECC English tutoring to positively impact the area through English education. Additionally, we have turned an eye to improving Ichikashi's standing in the academic sphere by increasing participation in community academic events such as speech contests and the Eiken Exam, which will be done in tandem with reviewing best teaching practices to more directly and accurately target English for the specific purposes of testing.

Individually, as instructors, we are continuing to build the credibility of Ichikashi in the community at large by participating in Kashiwa city functions, as well as being active members of community groups such as the Kashiwa International Relations Organization by teaching weekend English classes, judging speech contests, or helping out at their annual matsuri.

And yet, just as importantly, we seek to diligently remember to act as a bridge between the ALTs and ELTs that came before us by setting up means and relationships through which we can pass on what knowledge and experience we gained to those that are yet to come. After all, a target goal of the program should be to train the Exchange Teachers for life after Ichikashi.

While a member of the Ichikashi community, a mentorship objective should be assiduously pointing its teachers forward in the anticipation of the expiration of their maximum three-term contract. This not only entails providing on-the-job training in both teaching and lesson planning, but also provide experience in administrative tasks such as program planning (from conception to coordination to completion to review) and management for both professional and personal development.

The Kashiwa Teaching Exchange Program has historically acted as a springboard for its constituents, seeing former employees move on to rewarding careers in and out of education as teachers, professors, counselors, administrators, businessmen, and entrepreneurs.

Every day we are exposed to the benefits of cultural exchange, how students' lives are impacted and influenced by the work of TSCA and KIRA by bringing two distant and distinct parts of the world together. We are excited by the privilege and

honored by the responsibility of being included in the historic tradition of the Teaching Exchange Program passed on to us as by those that came before. Likewise, we look forward to the day when we too will hand off the privilege and responsibility of ELT instruction to those that will come after us and hope that we have done our part as stewards to usher the program into its next 40 years.



Yard Sale a Big Success

By Lori C. Eurich

Chair, Student Selection Committee

Our annual yard sale to raise funds for the summer student exchange program was a big success last month thanks to the generous donations from the student candidates and TSCA members. The students and their parents helped organize all of the various items and painted colorful signs and banners that were displayed at the sale and nearby. We raised nearly \$600 through our collective efforts which also included the sale of hot coffee and doughnuts from local shops.

A special note of appreciation to our treasurer, Gary Kuwahara, CPA who hosted our sale on the front lawn of his office on Palos Verdes Boulevard providing terrific drive-by visibility for lots of customers. Thank you to Teri Kuwahara for her advice and cashiering assistance at the sale, too.



Maroney Wedding

By Gail Roulette

Best Wishes to Rachel Maroney and Farris Ain who were recently married. The couple took part in a nuptial mass on January 19, 2013, in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. Then they traveled to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, where they repeated their wedding vows on February 1, 2013, in an outdoor setting. Rachel and Farris have since returned to their loft home in downtown Los Angeles.

Rachel was an exchange student to Kashiwa in 2001. Adrian Maroney, who went to Kashiwa in 2007, served her sister as Maid of Honor. Mother of the Bride, Jill Maroney, was an adult leader in 2005 and has been TSCA vice president and served on numerous committees. You will often find her in the gift booth at Bunka-Sai.

Among the 98 friends and family present in Cabo, were the Kaneko and Kiguchi families from Kashiwa. The Kiguchis were Rachel's host family, and the Kanekos were Adrian's host family, as well as Gina Landon's when she went to Kashiwa in 2001. The Kashiwa families and Maroneys have visited back and forth several times. The Kanekos went to Gina's wedding in Hawaii a year or two ago. Jill and her mother Ann Smisek went to Japan for Daisuke Kaneko's wedding several years ago.

These families prove how sister city relationships can endure! We celebrate with this fine TSCA family and wish the newlyweds much happiness.



Jill, Farris, Rachel, Mark, Adrian



From the left: Mina Kaneko, Adrian, Yoko Kaneko, Rachel, Naoya Kaneko, Masako Kiguchi and Haruo Kiguchi

TSCA Cafe at Torrance Craft Faire!

We will be selling refreshments at the TCG Craft Faire on March 16. Proceeds will go toward the exchange program. This is our first time, so we want to make it a big success! Please drop by to see and shop the wonderful crafts, say hi, and grab a bite to eat!

Would you volunteer to work a shift? Snack donations are also welcome. Please call/text to Shirley Tanaka, 310-293-8600, or email to ksjtanaka3@yahoo.com.

Thank you!

Torrance Craftsmen Guild's Arts and Crafts Faire
Ken Miller Recreation Center
Saturday, March 16, 2013
9 am to 4 pm

The Gift Booth Needs Your Help

Spring is in the air... That means it's time to clean out your drawers and closets for all those items you stashed away for the Bunka Sai Gift Booth!

Please donate new or like-new items to sell. Japanese items are especially appreciated. Kitchen wares, decorative items, toys, that thing you got for Christmas or your birthday and it's just not you... Donate them and we'll turn them into money to help fund our Student Exchange Program!

Interested in helping at the Gift Booth? Fantastic! Please contact our volunteer coordinator, Patsy Shintani, at 310-995-9882 or shintani4@earthlink.net to get your preferred time slot!

Items to donate – great! You can bring them to a TSCA meeting on March 11th or April 8th in the West Annex of City Hall 7 to 9pm, or contact Jill Maroney at 310-951-7502 or mjmaroney@aol.com to arrange for delivery or pick-up.

Thanks, we couldn't do it without you!

Torrance Sister City Association Bunka-Sai 2013 (Japanese Cultural Festival)

Supporting the Student Cultural Exchange program

When: Saturday, April 20, and Sunday, April 21, 2013
Where: The 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 their adult leader to Kashiwa, Japan, for 3 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

Objectives: **To support the Student Cultural Exchange Program**
To advertise your company

Cost (no change in years): Full-page ad.....\$200
Half-page ad.....\$100
One-fourth page ad.....\$50
Business card size ad.....\$25

Specifics: Must be no larger than 8 1/2 " x 11". **Must be camera ready.**

Deadline: March 22, 2013 in order to meet the printing deadline

Checks payable to: The Torrance Sister City Association or TSCA

Questions? Please call/text _Patsy Shintani (310) 995-9882 or e-mail to TSCA2013Ads@gmail.com.

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

Company Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Person _____ Phone # _____ E-Mail _____

Ad information: Size _____ Cost _____ 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.
Torrance, CA 90503**

Thank you for your support!



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TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

2013 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.