

Torrance Sister City Association



<http://torrancesistercity.org/>

February 2014

President's Message

Our Alumni Reunion on January 11th was well attended with over 100 guests and kicked off the start of a busy year for TSCA. Special thanks to Reiko Higa and Shirley Tanaka for co-chairing the event and to Donna Dunlap, Butch Ihde, Steve Ihde, Werner Willoughby and Kerry Cababa for their assistance in setting up. It was great seeing old friends gather and new families welcomed.

Bunka Sai is just two months away and we're busy obtaining donations for the raffle drawing on Sunday, April 27 at the end of Bunka Sai. If you can help us obtain donations of restaurant gift certificates, movie and theater tickets, flowers and

plants or hair/nail salon services, please go to our website to download a form for more information. Bunka Sai program ads also help us raise funds and we need support in selling ads to local businesses and professionals. A form for program ad sales is also on the website.

Last month I had the privilege of attending the Eagle Scout Ceremony for one of our 2013 exchange students, Jay Matsumoto, a senior at South High. It was a beautiful ceremony with heartfelt tributes by Jay's brother, a friend and scouting officials. We truly have some outstanding students in our midst and all but two of his fellow delegates were also in attendance to

help celebrate Jay's achievement with his family and friends.

We're looking for an English teacher to work at Kashiwa Municipal High School beginning in August. This is a great opportunity to promote cultural understanding, learn Japanese and travel through a full-time position working with students and staff. Please see the flier inside for more details.



Lori Chong Eurich,
TSCA President

Bunka Sai Help Needed

Spring is in the air! It's time to clean out your closets for all those items you've stashed away for the Bunka Sai Gift Booth!

Please donate new or like-new items, Japanese items are especially appreciated. Kitchen wares, decorative items, toys, that thing you got for Christmas that'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? Please contact our **volunteer coordinator, Patsy Shintani**, at 310-995-9882 or shintani4@earthlink.net to get your

preferred time slot! Include day, time, and area that you'd like to help.

Volunteers needed on:

4/25, Friday (12 pm to 6 pm)
4/26, Saturday (8 am to 6 pm)
4/27, Sunday (8am to 6pm)

Items to donate – great! Bring them to a TSCA meeting on February 10th, March 10th or April 14th in the West Annex of City Hall from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, or contact Jill Maroney at 310-951-7502 or mnjmaroney@aol.com or Reiko Higa at reikookinawa@gmail.com to arrange for delivery or pick-up.

Thanks, we couldn't do it without you!

Upcoming Events

February 8

TSCA Yard Sale
Kuwahara CPA
8 am to 12 pm
22426 PV Blvd., Torrance, CA

February 7, 12, 17 & 21

City Hall closed

March 16

Cherry Blossom Festival
Columbia Park
11:00 am to 4:00 pm

March 22

Torrance Craft Faire
9:30 am to 5:30 pm

April 26-27

Bunka Sai Festival



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TSCA Partnership Award 2014



Bonsai men Partnership Award at the Alumni Reunion January 11, 2014

Congratulations to the Bonsai Club of Koyu Kai for being selected as the TSCA Partnership Award Recipient for 2014.

Each year at Bunka-Sai, the beautiful Bonsai displays reflect the time and dedication that these gentlemen have devoted to this art form of dwarfing and shaping trees and shrubs. Some of their creations contain plants that may be over one hundred years old as they have been collected from natural settings in the

mountains where the time of their initial growth is unknown.

At Bunka-Sai Koyu Kai has shared their works with other aspects of Japanese culture to the amazement and enjoyment of the audiences. They were originally known as the Gardena Valley Bonsai Koyu Kai. Over the years they have also displayed their trees at the Gardena City Japanese Festival, California State University at Long Beach, the Palos Verdes Library and the

South Coast Botanic Garden. Over the last two years, they have taken their time during Bunka-Sai to give demonstrations on how to start with a small tree that will eventually become an actual Bonsai.

We would like to thank the gentlemen of Koyu Kai for their support of the Torrance Sister City's Bunka-Sai for over 30 years by sharing their hobby and passion of Bonsai.

- Werner Willoughby



Student Club meeting January 18, 2014

Student Club 2014 Kick-off

This January, we had our first Student Club meeting of the year! On Saturday, January 18th we gathered at Wilson Park for a small mixer where this year's candidates and friends talked to members of the previous delegation and got to know each

other. Games of "Sardines", "Ninja", and "Pterodactyl" ensued, many Japanese snacks were eaten, and good vibes floated about.

Overall, it was a successful first meeting and I'm really glad everyone could come out! If you or a friend (or

both of you!) would like to join us at meetings, please contact me via Facebook; our next meeting will be on February 8th with more details to be announced.

Thanks again everyone, see you at the next meeting!

- Emiko Kranz
Student Club President

Alumni Reunion 2014

More than 100 persons gathered at the Ken Miller Recreation Center on January 11 for an afternoon of looking back, and anticipating the future. Joining members in attendance were former TSCA exchange students, adult leaders, and officers, as well as student applicants for 2014 and their families. City Council officials were well represented, with Councilmen Gene Barnett, Tom Brewer, Pat Furey, Bill Sutherland and Kurt Weideman; Sue Herbers, City Clerk; and Dana Cortez, City Treasurer.

Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi was also in attendance.

After a welcome by TSCA President Lori Chong Eurich, greetings were delivered by Councilman Tom Brewer, standing in for Mayor Frank Scotto.

City Clerk Sue Herbers installed the new officers for 2014, as follows: Lori Chong Eurich, president; Donna Dunlap, vice president; Erin Moriwaki, secretary; Bryce Yamauchi, treasurer.

Together, Sue Herbers and Donna Dunlap recognized outgoing officers and Board members: Werner Willoughby, Steven Ihde,

Gary Kuwahara, Mona Wong, Joe Rust, Tiffany Yoshida, Rachel Todd, and Kristen Inouye.

Donna Dunlap presented the Partnership Award to Koyu Kai-Bonsai, a group of men who have brought their expertise in the art of bonsai to our Bunka-Sai festivals for many years. Five members of the group were present to accept the award.

Steven Ihde, Student Selection Committee chairperson, introduced the twelve applicants for the 2014 student exchange program. The applicants in turn said something about themselves and introduced members of their family who

were present.

May Cambra gave the reunion roll call, recognizing past presidents, adult leaders, and those who had gone on TSCA Anniversary trips.

After a pictorial presentation put together by student Jay Matsumoto, all present were invited to join in the Kashiwa Odori.

Many thanks to Shirley Tanaka and Reiko Higa event co-chairs and their committee Butch Ihde, Donna Dunlap, Steven Ihde and Kerry Cababa for putting together this annual event, and for all the people who brought the tasty dishes for another famous TSCA potluck.

- Gail Roulette

The Way This Wheel Keeps Working

Every year since 1995, the Japanese Kanji Proficiency Society (財団法人日本漢字能力検定協会) hosts a national ballot to select an annual representative Kanji of the Year (今年の漢字). Over the last 18 years, kanji depicting everything from major disasters and war (災 - *sai*, 2004; 戦 - *sen*, 2001) to life (命 - *inochi*, 2006), love (愛 - *ai*, 2005) and relationships (絆 - *kizuna*, 2011) have been chosen.

This year, among the nominees were kanji representing the celebration (樂, 喜) of the return (倍) of the strength of the Japanese economy (富) and the Japanese way (東, 風). However, by a narrow 0.56% margin, the committee selected 輪 (*rin/wa*)—wheel—to epitomize the spirit of 2013.



Voters noted the cyclical nature of economics and the completion of large-scale building projects and the consolidation of corporate programs as images of oneness and wholeness, as well as the eventual reward for patience and diligence as best typified by a simple wheel.

But overwhelmingly, respondents pointed to the kanji's second reading of *ring* and Tokyo's successful bid to host

the 2020 Summer Olympic Games—a parallel to its symbolic five, interlocking rings—as representative of Japan's return to the international stage.

As a critical, end-of-the-year exercise, I particularly enjoy this one. With all New Year's activities, this activity helps create space in which we can look back on our year and place ourselves, contextually, within a larger understanding of growth and change, personally and socially. But by anchoring the self-assessment to a tangible product, the goal of writing kanji becomes a focal point that gives the exercise direction and creates a touchstone for reflection from which to begin to think about the coming year.

今年の漢字 has become one of my go-to topics for English conversation classes and one reflective exercise that I genuinely enjoy participating in, as well as, our third-year students during their last month at school before they begin their two-month 'college preparation' period. We require them to brainstorm about the three most important events over the past school year and then pick the kanji that best represents their experience as seniors.

For their 今年(度)の漢字, many students pick 恋 or 愛 to signify newly found relationships borne out of club retirement. Some go with 全 or 最 as the culmination of their years of work, or 自 or 選 for the hard-fought freedoms that come with graduation. Some select 働 or 進 to signify the perpetuity of a body of work not yet finished.

To describe her senior year, Izumi picked 戦, *battle*, while Kayo went with 頑 because *gan* represented the firmness and stubbornness required to survive. Similarly, Yuka opted to go with 疲—*exhausted, tired* or *weary*—to illustrate the overall stultification of senioritis. "It pains me even to think of it," she writes.

On the other hand, Masahiro chose 初, *beginning*, because 2013 was the year he caught his first fish and set a new personal record in track-and-field, which allowed him to compete in the Takeyaryou Tournament for the first time. *Sho* signified a new beginning for him, as he was able to pass his entrance exam to Dokkyou University.

Yuki selected 大 for all of the big things he did and Shunya picked 成 because of the ways he felt he grew throughout the year.

For me, I would probably choose 挑 (チョウ/いどむ - *chou*), *challenge*, to summarize the way we approached and accomplished unexpected presentations and speeches at work, the 頑張れ-spirit of new hobbies and extra-curricular activities, and the mindset with which I will approach the last few months of this school year before I start wrapping up my final term here at Ichikashi.

At which point I hope to have a whole different set of kanji to choose from.



Kevin Butt, English Teacher

Third Annual Cherry Blossom Festival

The newly-selected student exchange delegation will be promoting TSCA and our major fundraiser Bunka-Sai by distributing event fliers, selling raffle tickets and displaying photos of many past visits to Kashiwa.

Come out and enjoy the food available for purchase, entertainment featuring Japanese

music, dance, martial arts and other cultural activities. Stop by the TSCA booth and meet the new student delegates and their Adult Leader David Gelbaum. Don't miss this opportunity to bring your family and friends to enjoy these beautiful cherry trees with a picnic. Hope to see you there!

- Werner Willoughby

SUNDAY, MARCH 16TH

THE CITY OF TORRANCE WILL BE PRESENTING ITS THIRD ANNUAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL AT COLUMBIA PARK FROM 11 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

Members joining or renewing before March 15 will be listed in the directory. 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.

Membership News

- Ashcraft, Dan & Heidi (F)
- Charroux, Dolores (I)
- Gallagher, Ann (I)
- Gelbaum, Ilene & Mark (F)
- Goodrich, Marjorie (I)
- Hardison, Dee & Lowell (F)
- Hargrove, Eunice (F)
- Heidebrecht, Bill & Kathy (F)
- Herbers, Sue & Jerry (F)
- Heredia, Michelle (I)
- Hofer, Gary & Fusae (F)
- Ihde, Butch & Donna Dunlap (F)
- Ihde, Steven (I)
- Inouye, Kevin, Margie & Kristen (F)
- Jordan, Adam (F)
- Kranz, Dave and Linda (F)
- Kuo, Leane (F)
- Laidoner, Gail (I)
- Lee, Alicia (I)
- Lee, Jaquie (I)
- Lin, Fergus (F)
- Lobo Family (F)
- Miles, Frank and Lyn (S)
- Mori, Chris (I)
- Muratsuchi, Al (I)
- Nishi, Kikuko & Katsuhisa (F)
- Nishimura, Terri, Scott & Kyle (S)
- O'Donnel, Maureen (I)
- Oliveros, Megan (F)
- Park, Anne (F)
- Reeve, Ron & Susan (F)
- Robbins, Steve & Carol (F)
- Rodov, Andrew (F)
- Sargent, Dave and Toni (F)
- Tanimoto, Bert (F)
- Weideman, Kurt (I)

David Gelbaum Elected to Board



David Gelbaum

At the January TSCA meeting David Gelbaum was elected to fill the remaining term of Tammy Johnson, who is no longer a Board member.

David, a Middle School Music/Technology Teacher in the TUSD, is the Adult Leader for the group of Torrance exchange students going to Kashiwa in 2014. A graduate of West High School in Torrance, he was a TSCA exchange student in 1993, as well as being part of the 30th adult delegation to our sister city in 2002. In addition, David is a second generation leader from the well known Gelbaum family in which mother Ilene was

adult leader in 1997. Mark and Ilene were members of adult delegations several years and have served as hosts par excellence numerous times.

The affable leader and his wife, Randi, were a host family in 2012 and 2013. David has helped at Bunka Sai the past several years, as well as, being part of the Student August Activities committee in 2013. Their two young children, Dylan and Skylar, round out the family picture.

David received his B.A. in Music Education at Cal State Northridge, his teaching credential at Cal State Dominguez, and is working

on his M.A. in Educational Leadership at the American College of Education. David, who has achieved Eagle Scout ranking, has been a counselor for the Boy Scouts music merit badge, and been marching band coach and performer at community festivals and fundraisers.

Besides music (including playing tuba), his other interests are basketball, family, movies, and traveling. Many European and Asian countries are on his list of places traveled.

Welcome, David, to the TSCA Board!

- Donna Dunlap



Jay Matsumoto Earns Eagle Scout

Former exchange student, Jay Matsumoto was officially recognized for earning the rank of Eagle Scout at a court of honor held on January 18 at the Riviera Methodist Church. In attendance were 2013 delegates (l-r) Emiko Kranz, Melanie Nomiya, Matthew

Tiansay, Ken Shrivastava, and Cindy Chan, 2013 Adult Leader and fellow Eagle Scout Steven Ihde, TSCA President Lori Chong Eurich, and Werner and Aileen Willoughby.

Way to go Jay!

- Steven Ihde

Student Orientation, Getting Ready to go to Kashiwa

Each year, the selected students and their adult leader go through a series of eight student orientation meetings to prepare them for their three weeks in Kashiwa in July. The first orientation guide was written by Dr. Amy Coury and Masako Matsunaga in 1995. That masterpiece is being revised to include updated information and website sources for research.

The current committee members of this revision project are Dr. Amy Coury, Lori Chong Eurich, Werner Willoughby, Reiko Higa, Steven Ihde, and Hazel Taniguchi.

Steven Ihde and Hazel Taniguchi will lead this year's meetings. Language

lessons will be taught by Reiko Higa. Past students Emiko Kranz and Melanie Nomiya will teach the Kashiwa odori (dance). Resource persons will attend selected sessions and discuss various Japanese culture-related topics and Torrance facts. Many current resource materials were received from the Japanese Consul General's office in Los Angeles. Parents will attend the first and last meetings.

Orientation is a requirement, and the committee looks forward to working with the 2014 student exchange group.

- Hazel Taniguchi



Photo credit: Emiko Kranz

KIRA's New Year Party and New Officers



The party was held at Suzumean soba restaurant. Torrance Committee members, Matthew Medlock, Mr. and Mrs. Takauye and city hall staffs were present. Karl Takauye prepared for the party an interesting game related to Kashiwa and Torrance.



Our new officers are, from the left, Vice President Yuko Ishibashi, President Etsuko Kawamura, Liaison Masahiko Arai, and Treasurer Yoko Kaneko.

Kashiwa Memories of Steven Ihde

Based on my research and also from previous conversations with Kashiwa exchange students, I gathered that the importance of blood type in Japan cannot be underestimated...that a significant percentage of the Japanese population believes that their personalities, traits, and temperament are predestined according to their blood type.

However, neither of my host families said that blood type played a role in their daily lives. My first host mother, whose hobby is matchmaking and fortune collecting, said that she does not believe that personality is determined by blood type and does not consider it a suitable means for finding

the perfect mate.

My first host father explained that in recent years there have been problems with discrimination and unfair stereotyping in schools and in the workplace. He said that businesses are no longer allowed to base hiring on blood type, although some companies disregard this law.

The importance of this belief system seems to be waning, that it may just be a trend on its way out. But honestly, who knows? After all, I am type AB—critical and skeptical.

- The last in the series of reports summarized by Gail Roulette



Steven Ihde, 2013 Adult Leader



Teach English In Kashiwa, Japan

The Torrance Sister City Association seeks qualified applicants for one high school English teacher at Kashiwa Municipal High School in Kashiwa, Japan, the Sister City of Torrance. A minimum one-year contract runs from August 1, 2014 to July 31, 2015. The contract is renewable for a maximum three year assignment.

Duties: Create and deliver engaging lessons in English conversation and composition, assist with coordinating campus visits by parents, administrators and junior high students, provide support to Japanese teachers of English and extra-curricular activities as specified by the Principal including: judging and assisting with speech contests, serving as advisor to the English Conversation Club, business trips and coaching students for college interviews. Volunteer work with KIRA (Kashiwa International Relations Association) and other city groups may also be required.

Qualifications

Applicants must:

1. Live or work in Torrance
2. Be fluent in written and spoken English
3. Hold a Bachelor's degree plus a teaching credential or have demonstrated teaching experience (verified in recommendation letter)
4. Possess a keen interest in the Japanese language and culture
5. Represent the Torrance Sister City Association and foster the goals and objectives of the English Teacher Exchange Program

Compensation

1. Annual salary of approximately 4,800,000 Japanese yen
2. One-way airfare from Los Angeles to Tokyo, Japan
3. National health insurance (deducted from monthly salary)
4. Subsidized housing and transportation allowance
5. Paid Japanese holidays and personal days

Please send detailed resume, cover letter, and two letters of recommendation by U.S. mail only postmarked by **April 4, 2014 and received by April 11, 2014** to:

Lori Chong Eurich, Chair
TSCA English Teacher Selection Committee
Attn: Community Services Dept.
c/o 3031 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90503

Please discuss your connection to Torrance in cover letter. Qualified applicants will be scheduled for panel interviews held in May.

For further information call: Lori Eurich at (310) 373-6146 or Dan Fichtner at (310) 316-6092.



Newsletter Editor-in-Chief: Linda Kranz

Newsletter Distribution: Donna Dunlap



42nd Annual **Bunka-Sai**

Japanese Cultural Festival

Saturday & Sunday
April 26 & 27, 2014
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Ken Miller Recreation Center
3341 Torrance Boulevard (At Madrona Avenue)

- New This Year
Kamishibai Storytelling
- Aikido, Judo, Kendo, Naginata, Karate
- Koto, Taiko, Minyo, Shamisen,
Odori (Classical Dance)
- Ikebana & Bonsai
- Shodo Calligraphy & Tea Ceremony
- Origami, Roketsu, Kimekomi Ningyo Dolls
- BBQ Plate Lunch, Shave Ice, Yakisoba,
*Okinawa Dango, Curry and Rice,
Cotton Candy, Desserts, Drinks*
- Arts & Crafts Boutique
- Games for children
- Hourly drawings

**Program subject to change without notice*

Presented by **The Torrance Sister City Association**
TorranceSisterCity.org

Artwork credit:
Emiko Kranz

Proceeds to benefit the student cultural exchange program

City of Torrance • Community Services Department • 310-618-2930



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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.

TSCA meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, except in August and December, at the Civic Center West Annex Commission Room 7:00 p.m.