

Torrance Sister City Association



<http://torrancesistercity.org/>

November 2015

President's Message

With the exciting summer exchange behind us, we still have many other activities to look forward to this fall. In just a couple of weeks, TSCA will be operating a café at the Torrance Crafters Guild Holiday Fair at the Ken Miller Rec Center. Shirley Tanaka and her army of TSCA members will be selling food to the vendors and anyone attending the show. This is another opportunity to raise money for the student exchange program. Come join us! Browse the locally made crafts, get some holiday shopping done and enjoy our homemade Spam Musubi.

We are actively searching for our next adult leader that will lead another group of excited high school students to Kashiwa in the summer of 2016. If interested, see the flyer included in this edition of the newsletter.

The process has started to inform students about next summer's exchange program. An informative video showcasing the 2015 exchange, made by Alex Ito, will be presented at each high school. Lori Eurich and Marilyn Rubin will be visiting the local high schools. We are looking for former student ambassadors who are willing to join them to speak at their school to help promote TSCA. A new flyer designed by Lori will be handed out and Marilyn will deliver a copy to each principal to be distributed electronically. Thank you to all involved in the beginning stages of the Student Selection Committee.

Our Nominating Committee, headed by Jill Maroney and assisted by Dan Fichtner, Cindy Scotto, Donna Dunlap and David Gelbaum, have announced five willing volunteers to serve on the board for the next three years. Congratulations and thank you to Sherri Crowson, Wendy Ito, Bryce Yamauchi, and David Gelbaum for volunteering to join me on the board.

The next task for this hard working Nominating Committee is to find four board members that are willing to serve on the executive board for a two year term. Those offering to be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer will be announced at the November Association Meeting.

TSCA is saddened with the announcement that Frances Matsumoto will no longer be able to serve on the board due to family issues that will take a lot of her time. But when Frances is in town, she promises to help out whenever time permits. Thank you Frances for being a vital part of TSCA.

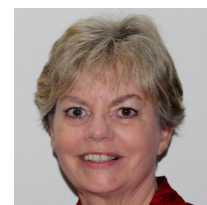
Another huge loss for TSCA is Linda Kranz, who is stepping down from her position as the newsletter editor. We are asking anyone in TSCA to consider volunteering to be the editor. If you, like all of us, would like to see the newsletter in your mailbox in December, you must contact someone in TSCA ASAP. The monthly newsletter is an important

means of communication and we appreciate anyone willing to fill in this position. No need to panic, Linda is willing to thoroughly train the new editor. Thank you Linda for your dedication and expertise.

Put January 9, 2016 on your calendar to join us at the annual Alumni Reunion Potluck. We will meet the new students who have applied to be the 2016 delegates and their families. The new board members will be installed and the executive board will be sworn in. Best of all, there will be scrumptious food to eat and lots of fun visiting with other TSCA members and meeting new friends.

November is the month to count our blessings. We all have many, but I challenge each of you to think of at least one person for which you are grateful. Call or write that special person, tell them why you are glad they are in your life, and ask them to do the same for someone else. We are members of an organization that promotes peace and understanding. Let us spread thankfulness around and make the world a better place for us all.

- Donna Dunlap,
TSCA President



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Upcoming Events

November 11, 13, 26, & 27
City Hall closed

November 9
TSCA Association Meeting

Membership News

New or renewed memberships:

Carla Grace (I for 2014, 2015, 2016)

Roy Nyberg (I for 2016)

It's time to renew your membership for 2016. Please fill out the application form on the back of the newsletter or

download a form from our web site and submit it with your dues payment. The membership committee needs 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 Reiko Higa at tscamembership@gmail.com

Alumni News

Congratulations to **Emiko Kranz** (2013 delegate) for her acceptance into the Kakehashi Project coordinated by the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), and supported by funding from the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The goal of the Kakehashi Project is to build cooperation between Japanese Americans/Asian Americans and Japan by providing students with a better understanding of Japan



Emiko Kranz (2013 delegate)

advocates in enhancing U.S. – Japan relations.

through a variety of fields, including politics, economics, and culture. Kakehashi Project alumni are encouraged to become effective

Participants will attend a 9-day trip to Japan in December where they will visit a number of historical and educational sites, experience traditional and cultural activities, and participate in lectures and workshops.

TSCA Announcements

Thanks to the hard work of Donna Dunlap, Dan Fichtner, David Gelbaum, Cindy Scotto and myself, the TSCA Nominating Committee is proud to announce the newest members of the Board of Directors: Sherri Crowson, Donna Dunlap, Wendy Ito, Marilyn

Rubin, and Bryce Yamauchi. Welcome to the brand new members, and welcome back to those who are completing a second term.

The Executive Board will be presented next month.

- Jill Maroney

TSCA Café is coming!

The Torrance Holiday Craft Faire is coming up on Saturday/Sunday **November 21 and 22**, at the Torrance Cultural Arts Center. Our TSCA Cafe chair, **Shirley Tanaka** needs volunteers in the refreshment booth to sell food and drink, assist with food preparation in the Ken Miller Recreation Center and more between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Helping hands also needed for Cafe set-up Friday, November 20 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Shifts are flexible and any support is much appreciated. Please email to Shirley Tanaka, ksitanaka3@yahoo.com and indicate day(s) and preferred hours. Proceeds from the TSCA Cafe support our student cultural exchange program.

Focus on Member: Aki Deloyd

Happy Birthday wishes are in order for Aki Deloyd as she turns 92 on November 17. Aki, a TSCA member for many, many years is special to us for several reasons. For one thing, she regularly worked the gift booth each Bunkasai with her friend Fuzzy Ishikawa. The main reason, though, is her ability to be a one-woman fundraiser. For many years she took it upon herself to sell an unbelievable number of raffle tickets for Bunkasai. It was normal for her to sell 500 tickets each year, but her best year she sold 800! When March and April rolled around, her many friends would anticipate the request for

supporting TSCA, and they obliged. She elicits that kind of commitment from people who know her.

Aki was born in the small asparagus-growing community of Lone, California, in Amador County in the Sierra Nevada. As a young person she was hospitalized with TB for 3-1/2 years. One would expect her to have bad memories about that, but in fact she has a good memory: the head nurse of the hospital visited her every Sunday of her confinement. She has never forgotten that gesture of kindness.

As a nonagenarian, Aki admits to

needing a hearing aid and is dealing with cancer. She gets chemo at Kaiser Hospital every three weeks. She and Tom, her husband of 40 years, still live in their comfortable home in West Torrance. Tom is 93, and is it any wonder she says they both tire easily. But they continue to perk along and stay in our memory of those who have contributed selflessly to TSCA.

Thank you, Aki, and a very Happy Birthday to you!

- Gail Roulette

Kashiwa News

On October 18th, the 2015 delegates' reporting session was held. They gave wonderful speeches, they were so fascinated by

their unforgettable and magnificent experience of their 2015 summer in Torrance.

- Mike Arai



2015 Kashiwa delegates with Mayor Akiyama (center)



Mr. Tanaka, English teacher at Ichikashi (Kashiwa Municipal high school) took these photos of Stephanie Mikamo and Amie Komae teaching students who are coming to North High school in November for a week-long exchange trip. Their lessons covered how to ask how much something costs and learning that prices don't include sales tax. Our teachers also work with the Kashiwa students who come for the TSCA summer cultural exchange program. Mr. Tanaka and Mr. Mashiko will be leading the group of 27 students.

- Lori Chong Eurich



Amie Komae (pictured center)



Stephanie Mikamo (left) and Amie Komae (right) with students

Student Reports: Memories of Japan

Part of the exchange learning experience is for the students and adult leader to select a topic of interest to them, research, and write

a report on their findings. After their return from Kashiwa, they write another report describing what they have learned. For the next few TSCA

newsletters, we will present summaries from their experiences based on their post-trip reports as edited by Gail Roulette.

Leisure Time: Japan vs. America

Similarities outweigh the differences in use of leisure time between the two countries.

Japan has become more westernized, with outings to the mall and watching TV. In America karaoke is becoming more and more popular.

I made many new discoveries while in Japan, one of those being health volleyball. This is a variation of volleyball in which players use a huge, inflated, football-shaped ball. In Japan I played this game with people ranging from ages a few years younger than me to people over 40 years old. The game is played inside a gym with a reserved court and has a structured beginning and end time.

I also enjoyed *hanabi* with both my host families. *Hanabi* is the word for fireworks, which are easily accessible in Japanese convenience stores. My host families were shocked to learn



Julie (left) with Kashiwa friends

fireworks are illegal in Torrance. Another activity I enjoyed most in my free time was *purikua*. *Purikua* is like a photo booth with a Japanese spin on it. There are set poses you can choose from categories like cute or hot. I found variations on *purikua* in an arcade game and another one in which the participants wore costumes.

The glaring difference that I found is

just how little time people in Japan have to themselves compared to the U.S. In Japan students' days do not just end with school. They have after-school club commitments, study school, and homework. One host sister rode the train to school for an hour, leaving at 6:00 a.m. Another one did school work even during dinner time. A whole week went by before I met my host father because of his work schedule.

I look forward to experiencing more new and exciting activities on my next visit to Japan.

- Julia Tokeshi

The Art of Kabuki

In watching the art of kabuki performed on a real-life stage, I have come to the realization that I don't think I will experience such an intensely fascinating theater production again in the near future. The theater was huge, at least 3000 in attendance. Many guests had to stand in the back for the hour-and-a-half popular performance.

Loud drums signal the beginning of the event. Two men, a narrator, and a shamisen performer, sit at the edge of the stage. The narrator speaks in a wavering, almost song-like voice, and although I was provided with an English translation tablet, I still had trouble trying to figure out what was happening in the story. My host father said the emotions within the story are more important than the story itself.

Each performer uses a variation of the wavering voice. The shamisen is played constantly – almost always in a



Nikola performing a koto at a tea ceremony

mourning, mellow manner – except at the conclusion of the play when it becomes quick and forceful.

Kabuki is different from American theatre in many respects. During the performance, audience members will randomly shout to the stage; whether they are meant for the characters or actors, or even positive or negative I have no idea. They do give the show an interactive, more personal feel, however. Masked men clad in black

periodically enter the stage, moving props or scenery. The black symbolizes their invisibility.

The show was intense, slow, long, and complex. Nevertheless, its value is that it expressed and defined the beauty of Japanese culture, which is exactly what I had set out to see.

- Nikola Stojcic

ADULT LEADER NEEDED FOR STUDENT CULTURAL EXCHANGE



TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

Have You Considered Being an Adult Leader for the TSCA Student Cultural Exchange Program?

- Accompany up to eight high school students to Torrance's sister city, Kashiwa, Japan in July 2016
- Learn about the Student Cultural Exchange Program and Japanese Culture
- Spend up to three exciting weeks in Japan as an Ambassador of goodwill

Qualifications:

- Be at least 26 years of age at the time of the trip
- Reside or work in Torrance
- Have a background working with youth in at least one of the following areas:
 - ▶ Education, counseling, behavioral sciences, or
 - ▶ Youth activities, chaperone for school trips

INTERESTED?

Contact: Stephanie Ewing Warner, chair Adult Leader Selection Committee at sewingwar@aol.com by November 15, 2015 or mail a brief letter of intent to apply for the position, giving TSCA a brief personal background.

Deadline for applications is November 15, 2015. Send your completed application by U.S. mail.

Qualified applicants will be called for a panel interview with the Adult Leader Selection Committee.



Please see website for more details at www.TorranceSisterCity.org

Mail all material to:

Torrance Sister City Association
c/o Cultural Services Division
3031 Torrance Blvd. • Torrance, CA 90503
Attention: Adult Leader Program

Summer Trip to Tottori

Four years ago, my grandfather's cousin, her daughter, and grandson visited the United States. We held a welcome party for them while they were visiting Torrance. Despite having taken Japanese classes in high school and at university, my level of Japanese wasn't that great. However, when they came, I was the main translator between my family and our family from Japan. Growing up, I was unaware that we had any family in Japan since I am a 4th generation Japanese-American. Having our family from Japan in our home was a great exchange of two cultures and how much wider our family is than I initially believed it to be.

When I moved to Japan last year, I made contact with my grandfather's cousin. They live in Tottori which is the least populated prefecture in Japan and located in the Chugoku region. Since it's a bit of a trek away from Kashiwa, I promised I would visit in August when I had more time.

Once the day came, I was extremely nervous; none of my relatives speak any English, my Japanese is passable to say the least, and it was my first time seeing them since they came to visit my family in the states. I wasn't sure if they'd remember me and how well we could communicate because of the language barrier.

I took an overnight bus from Shinjuku to Yonago City, which is where they live. I arrived around 6:00 in the morning with no one in sight. Unsure of what to do, I walked toward Yonago Station. Right as I was about to enter the station, I got a call from my grandfather's cousin. We found each other and I was immediately greeted with a hug and warm words of welcome.

The first day was a whirlwind filled with visiting my great-grandfather's

ふるさと *furusato* (hometown) where he grew up. The house he grew up is



The monument Stephanie's great-grandfather built.

still there, and a monument that he built when he visited Japan. We also visited my distant relatives, who were so warm in welcoming me and interested to know about my life here in Japan and how I've adjusted. In the afternoon we visited 大山 (Mt. Daisen), the highest mountain amongst the Chugoku mountains. Then we ended the day with a BBQ at my grandfather's nephew's house.

The rest of my time there was spent sightseeing, from the great sand dunes of Tottori, to the sea port of Sakaiminato, to Matus Castle in the neighboring prefecture of Shimane. I was lucky enough to visit my grandfather's cousin's daughter and



Tottori Sand Dunes

her grandson's kendo practice.

What I appreciated the most about my trip to Tottori was the little moments I got to spend with them.

Whether it was taking 休憩 *kyuukei* (a break) at their house, driving to



Stephanie (far right) with her grandfather's cousin, her daughter, and grandson.

and from places, I loved learning more about their life in Tottori and about our family history in Japan. I was blown away by the fact that while I was growing up in the States, I had *family* in Japan also leading their own lives as well. Moreover, I was surprised at how little of a language barrier there was since we were able to mostly communicate in Japanese! A few of my co-workers joked I should make a trip every so often to improve my Japanese. ;)

The night before my return to Kashiwa, I promised that I would visit again soon. (I'm actually visiting them again in December with my sister who will be visiting!) As I boarded the plane, I was comforted by the fact that even though I moved to Japan by myself from California, I wasn't the only Mikamo in Japan. Even though it's hundreds of miles away, just knowing that I have family here is so reassuring. No matter what people say about Tottori being very 田舎 *inaka* (countryside), it will always hold a special place in my heart.

- Stephanie Mikamo, English Teacher

Newsletter Editor-in-Chief: Linda Kranz

Newsletter Distribution: Donna Dunlap

We welcome your comments and submissions to the TSCA newsletter.

Please send them to: tscanewsletter@gmail.com

Thank You to Bunkasai Supporters

The following businesses and families generously supported the 2015 Bunkasai Festival by purchasing ads in the program booklet. We are sincerely grateful!

AHTKY Insurance Agency, LLC
All Yellow Taxi
American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
Andes Florists
Arts Council of Torrance
Bando Hidesomi Nihon Buyo
Bistro Miyoda Ichiriki Restaurant
Bluff Cove Olive Oil Co.
Bothwell Complete Automotive & Electrical
Cabrillo Chevron
Central Mobil
Del Amo Car Wash
Doubletree Hotel, Torrance
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Miyamoto, Dr. Richard
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Torrance Bakery
Torrance Certified Farmer's Market
Torrance Kendo Club
Torrance Memorial Medical Center
Uchima Corporation
Walteria Florists & Gifts
Yanase, Dr. Rex
Yoshioka, Dr. Wayne

EXPERIENCE JAPAN



TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

Torrance Sister City Association 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.

- 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
- Experience Hiroshima
- Make lifelong friends and much, much more!

Download application at our website

APPLICATION must be postmarked by Thursday, DECEMBER 17, 2015 • TorranceSisterCity.org



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ASSOCIATION
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TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

2016 Membership Application

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

Name _____ Individual \$20 per year
Address _____ Family \$40 per year
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Supporting \$75+ per year
Benefactor \$125+ per year
Life member \$2000+(one time donation)
Telephone () _____ e-mail address _____

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 email Reiko Higa
at tscamembership@gmail.com

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.