

TSCA NEWS

TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION



March 2016

www.torrancesistercity.org

What's Inside

- 2** Calendar
 - Membership News
 - Remembering Gloria Jacobs
- 3** Adult Leader Report
 - Alumni Update
- 4** Kashiwa News
- 5** Focus on Member:
 - Marilyn Rubin
 - Bunka-Sai Volunteer Sign Up
- 6** English Teacher Report
- 7** Student Club Activities
 - Student Selection Committee News
- 8** Membership Application

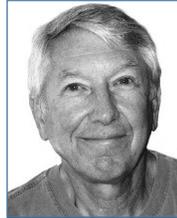
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Bunka-Sai Event Flyer

Bunka-Sai Gift Booth

TSCA Café at Torrance Crafts Faire
South Bay JACL Rascals Fundraiser

Since 1973, the cities of Torrance, California, and Kashiwa, Japan, have enjoyed a sister city partnership, with the goal of furthering international friendship across cultures.



President's Message

Werner Willoughby

Please remember to mark your calendar for Bunka-Sai, April 16 and 17, at the Torrance Cultural Arts Center.

This year there will be more performances on the outdoor stage as well as continuous performances inside the Ken Miller Recreation Center auditorium and in the Assembly room. The kids will have fun with the games and crafts at the booths run by the Student Club members. This year the number of arts and craft vendors has increased, with everything from jewelry, books, pottery, bonsai, greeting cards, clothes, and more. Japanese culture will be on display between 11am-5pm. From the fine arts to the martial arts, come and enjoy the skills and talents of the artisans and performers. If you have not met our new student delegates and their adult leader, this is your opportunity. They will be easy to spot in their bright purple happi coats, a gift from the Torrance Committee in Kashiwa to TSCA. The students and their parents will be hard at work for the entire weekend, as this is the major fundraiser for their "trip of a lifetime."

During March, you will receive two books of Opportunity Drawing tickets in the mail. This is another Bunka-Sai event that supports the students' cultural exchange. Well over 50 restaurants and local businesses donate prizes, which includes a \$250 grand prize. Even if you are unable to attend Bunka-Sai, consider purchasing tickets since the winner need not be present.

If you worked Bunka-Sai before, thank you! If you have volunteered in the past but have not heard from a booth chair by the time you read this, please visit torrancesistercity.org and sign up to help in the booth and time slot of your choice. Wendy Ito, co-chair of volunteers, gets a big Thank You for suggesting and organizing this volunteer site.

While at the website, view the photos and videos produced by our exchange students from 2012-2015. This will help you understand what drives this cultural exchange program and why so much effort is invested in Bunka-Sai! Thanks to **Lori Chong-Eurich**, chair of our website, and **Nancy Hayata**, our webmaster, for making it a functional and visually engaging experience.

Finally, a big thank you to **Bryce** and **Cheryl Yamauchi**, **Butch Ihde**, **Donna Dunlap**, **Lori Chong-Eurich** and **David Gelbaum**, as we took inventory, removed the old shelves, installed new shelves, consolidated supplies, and organized the storage unit for Bunka-Sai. ☸

CALENDAR

MARCH 2

Bunka-Sai Planning Meeting (7-8:45 pm)
Katy Geissert Library
Meeting Room, 1st Floor
Contact: Werner Willoughby
w.p.willoughby@gmail.com

MARCH 4 & 18

City Hall Closed

MARCH 14

TSCA Association Meeting (7-9 pm)
City Hall West Annex
Commission Room
3031 Torrance Blvd
Torrance, CA 90503
Contact: Werner Willoughby
w.p.willoughby@gmail.com

MARCH 30

Bunka-Sai Planning Meeting (7-8:45 pm)
Katy Geissert Library
Meeting Room, 1st Floor
Contact: Werner Willoughby
w.p.willoughby@gmail.com

Torrance Sister City Association

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Comments or submissions?

Please send an email to
tscanewsletter@gmail.com

Membership News

By Reiko Higa, Membership Chair

NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERSHIPS

Benefactor (\$125/year)

Yamauchi, Bryce and Family

Family (\$40/year)

Dunlap, Donna and Ihde, Butch
and Cara

Frichtel, Mikaela

Kranz, Dave and Linda

LaRue, Julie

London, Emily and Tokeshi Jon

Tanaka, Keith, Shirley and Jenny

Nowatka, Paul and Family

Thompson, Bruce

Ujimori, Harvey and Kay

Individual (\$20/year)

Chan, Anna

Griffith, Kay

Griffiths, Mike

Ichikawa, Christie

Mikamo, Stephanie

Donations

Dunlap, Donna and Ihde, Butch
and Cara (\$10)

Griffith, Kay (\$5)

Ichikawa, Christie (\$40) ☘

Remembering Gloria Jacobs

By Hazel Taniguchi

Gloria Jacobs, a longtime, active member of the Torrance Sister City Association, passed away on January 23, 2016. Her husband, Ernest (who predeceased her), served as TSCA treasurer for several years and was the TSCA president in 2000.

Gloria returned to college after her children started school and earned a bachelor of arts degree in Cultural Anthropology from Cal State University, Dominguez Hills. She worked part time as a tax preparer. She also loved teaching and worked with older adults through the Omnilore Program in Torrance.

Gloria was an avid community volunteer. In addition to being involved with TSCA, she also volunteered her time with Friends of Madrona Marsh, the Torrance Cultural Arts Foundation, and the Riviera Garden Club.

Gloria and Ernie were very interested in the Japanese culture. They had a Japanese garden in their yard and many Japanese art items in their home. In 1992, Gloria and Ernie were part of the Torrance anniversary delegation to Kashiwa, Japan. There, Gloria purchased a kimono, which she proudly wore on appropriate occasions. Ernie always remembered that visit to Kashiwa by saying he almost caused an international incident when he tried to pull off and buy just one banana from a nicely wrapped bunch.

TSCA was fortunate to have volunteers like Gloria and Ernie! ☘





Adult Leader Report

By Sherri Crowson, Adult Leader 2015

Shinto and Buddhism in Japan

The Japanese today, while open to various religions, actually practice a blend of Shinto and Buddhism. Both religions believe in living in harmony, connecting with nature, and respecting life and others. I did not speak with anyone who actually practiced a religion. What I can say is that the Japanese way of life, and the actions and hearts of the Japanese people as a whole embrace their overall beliefs without having to go to a specific place of worship. Many do, however, attend family ceremonies, celebrate Obon, Coming of Age days, Boys' festival, and Shichi-Go-San, as well as special blessings at weddings and births. I did witness the blessing of a newborn at a shrine. Many Japanese also practice many Buddhist beliefs for funerals.

Of the many temples and shrines visited in Japan, I have two favorites. The first is Ryōan-ji in Kyoto. While the rains brought on by Typhoon No. 11 poured all around us, we sat under a canopy to view an amazing Zen garden. The experience was breathtaking. My second favorite was Sanjūsangendō. This is a Buddhist temple that features 1,001 golden statues of Kannon, the goddess of mercy.

The thought-inducing cleansing rituals before entering a Shinto shrine is something that must be experienced to be fully appreciated.

Since I come from a background of several different religions, I have found myself aligned more closely with the Japanese belief systems. I see the Japanese people as leading a simple life of doing the right thing. This is their religion – their way of life. I will be forever grateful to TSCA for the opportunity to revisit Japan and learn more about the practices of Japanese religions today. ☸



Alumni Update



Congratulations to Margaret Wong (student delegate in 2006), who married Nicholas Wong on January 9, 2016. They were wed at the Crystal Springs Golf Course in Burlingame, California.

They live in San Jose, where Margaret works as a consultant and Nicholas as an engineer.

Best wishes to the newlyweds for a long and happy life together! ☸

Do you have any Alumni Updates to share? If so, please send an email to Gail Roulette at gailroulette@yahoo.com.



The Kashiwa International Relations Association (KIRA) Torrance Committee celebrated the New Year with a fun party!



Introducing the 2016 Board Members of the KIRA Torrance Committee. From left: Vice-chair Ms. Makiyo Doi; Liaison Mr. Hisataka Takikawa; Chair Ms. Akiko Maruta; and Treasurer Ms. Mitsuko Tsukuda. This new cabinet will begin its term in April 2016. *Congratulations!*



Welcome to 2016 KIRA Adult Leader Mr. Seiji Miyata!

Focus on Member

MARILYN RUBIN

By Gail Roulette

The value of TSCA member **Marilyn Rubin** cannot be exaggerated. Marilyn has been a member of the Student Selection Committee for the past six years, helping to decide which students will serve as delegates to Kashiwa. Therefore, it's important that we learn more about this special lady.



Although Marilyn was born in Chicago, her family moved to California when she was a baby so she feels like a native Californian. She grew up in Newport Beach and graduated from Newport Harbor High School. Her studies continued at UCLA, where she earned her lifetime teaching credential. She became an elementary school teacher in the Torrance Unified School District, the majority of time at Arnold Elementary School. After 40 years, she decided to retire.

While at UCLA, Marilyn met her husband of 47 years, Sherwin, over guacamole dip while at a friend's engagement party. They have lived in Torrance all 47 years, even with the same phone number! The Rubins have two sons whom, in Marilyn's words "we LOVE (of course) but whom we also LIKE." Sandler, the elder son, was a TSCA exchange student in 1995. He and his Japanese wife, Tomoko, are expecting their first child (a boy) in March. Their younger son, Larry, works in collections management at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

One of Marilyn's passions is gardening. She has served in leadership positions in the Riviera Garden Club and

maintains a vegetable plot in Torrance's Lago Seco Park community garden. Further, the Rubins maintain compost bins and recently redesigned their home landscape to include a lovely and water-wise front yard.

Among Marilyn's other interests are cooking (she has won prizes in the annual TSCA chili cook-off several times) and collecting rocks, minerals, and beach shells—a throwback to her

early days in Newport Beach. An interesting pastime is Marilyn's ability to spot coins on her daily walks. She collects those treasures in a piggy bank and at the end of the year buys something special with her found money.

You might also find Marilyn playing Scrabble or going to yard sales, where she often finds items for Bunka-Sai resale booths.

The Rubins became involved with TSCA in the 1990s when they first hosted Kashiwa exchange students. Reports from many of those students indicate delight in making jam or other homemade delicacies during their stay. To support the exchange program, Marilyn sells ads for the Bunka-Sai program book and solicits local businesses for raffle donations. She has been on the TSCA board for nearly two years. She and Sherwin traveled to Kashiwa with the 40th Anniversary delegation in 2013.

Thank you, Marilyn, for your many contributions to TSCA. We sincerely appreciate you! ☘

Torrance Sister City Association

Bunka-Sai 2016 Volunteer Sign Up

All hands on deck for TSCA's biggest fundraising event of the year!

Can you help for just a couple of hours on the weekend of April 16-17?

Sign up online with SignUpGenius. It's easier than ever!

View open slots now and just click to select a shift.

Simply log on to <http://bit.ly/bunkasai2016>





English Teacher Report

By Amie Komae

A True Taste of Japan: Lunch in the 1st Grade

During this time of year in Japan, high school seniors finish up their final exams and are given time off of school to prepare for university, work, or various vocational schools. Here at Ichikashi, I teach mostly senior writing classes. Since my students are preparing for their transition out of high school, I had time to visit a few places that truly embody the essence of Japanese culture: *elementary schools*.

Upon arriving at the first (of six) elementary schools I would teach at, I was formally greeted by the Principal and given a nice hot cup of green tea. I looked out the window and saw the students in their white t-shirts, blue shorts, and matching red and white caps standing in perfect formation and jumping through a jump rope one by one. My fellow Ichikashi teacher (Stephanie) and I taught three first-grade classes that day and had a blast. The kids were eager to shout out “Good morning, how are you?” and hear about our favorite Japanese foods as well as sports we like to play. Teaching English to these students was fun, but by far the best part of visiting any elementary schools in Japan is...*Kyushoku! School lunch!*

I doubt if there is a more clear representation of the efficiency, teamwork, and cooperation of Japanese culture than *Kyushoku*. Lunchtime goes something like this: Fresh food is cooked every morning by kitchen staff and placed on designated carts that are sent to every classroom. The students put on aprons, kitchen caps, and masks, and serve food to their classmates on lunch trays. Everyone is expected to finish all their food (yes, every grain of rice) and stack up their dishes.

During my first *Kyushoku* experience, I sat there in disbelief. I couldn't believe I was witnessing first-graders serve food with such efficiency. Not to mention the fact that the food the kids are served is truly appetizing: beef curry with rice, veggie salad, an apple, and a carton of milk. At another school, we were served tofu steak in ginger sauce, spinach, bean sprouts, corn salad, and potato and onion soup—*yum!* After scarfing down their veggies with ease, drinking their milk, stacking their trays, brushing their teeth (yes indeed!), and putting their desks back in order, the students head out to the playground to run off all their energy.

I felt honored to step into the world of Japanese elementary school students for a day. After witnessing the amazing daily event of *Kyushoku*, I began to understand a lot more about the high school students I work with at Ichikashi and the way they grew up in the Japanese school system. They are taught to be hard workers and helpers from the very start of their educational experience and it echoes throughout the years as they eventually make their way through high school.

If you ever get the opportunity to visit an elementary school in Japan, I highly suggest you stay for lunch. It is the epitome of the Japanese experience. ☘



Kyushoku - School Lunch

At lunchtime, first-graders in Japan put on aprons, caps, and masks and serve lunch to their classmates. This teaches them to be hard workers and helpers from the very start of their educational experience.

Student Club Activities

By Alex Ito, TSCA Student Board Member

On January 16, the Student Club took the TSCA Exchange Student applicants to Wilson Park to experience a Mochi Pounding event. Asano Taiko USA's "Mochi Mochi Club" staged the event, which allowed bystanders to try their hand at mochi pounding. Mochi rice cakes are a Japanese staple and the applicants were able to enjoy a small taste of the Japanese culture right here in Torrance.

Afterward, everyone gathered at Gable House Bowl. We spent hours knocking down pins, getting to know each other better, and having fun. Of course, we enjoyed shooting balls down each other's lanes, too! After bowling was over, we walked to the mall and had dinner. Everyone had a great time, and we're all excited for the next Student Club event! ☘



Student Selection Committee News

By David Gelbaum, Chair, Student Selection Committee

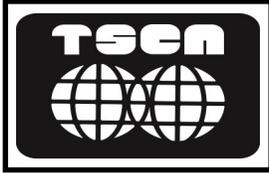


On Saturday, February 6, the student applicants, parents, and student selection committee members woke up bright and early to host the annual TSCA Garage Sale.

Thank you **Gary** and **Teri Kuwahara** for letting us take over your lawn and driveway! The student applicants helped sell many different types of items, like books, toys, electronics, clothing, kitchenware, and even furniture. They also had a chance to hold up signs and exercise their vocal cords by shouting at cars to attract shoppers. At the end of the day, the students raised \$465, which will be used to support the summer exchange program. **THANK YOU, ALL!**

The student selection committee is about halfway done with the selection process. We are currently completing home visits, taking a field trip to Mitsuwa Market, having a picnic, and then we will make the final selection. By the March board meeting, we will have selected the eight student delegates for 2016, and they will be introduced at the meeting.

Thank you to all of the committee members for working so hard throughout this process and for helping to make this important decision.



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TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION 2016 Membership Application

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

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	\$2,000+ (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:

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 pm

44th Annual **Bunka-Sai**

Japanese Cultural Festival

Saturday & Sunday

April 16 and 17, 2016

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

Ken Miller Recreation Center

3341 Torrance Boulevard (At Madrona Avenue)



FREE
Admission
&
Parking



Presented by
The Torrance Sister City Association
TorranceSisterCity.org

Proceeds to benefit the student cultural exchange program

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

Bunka-Sai Gift Booth Needs Donated Items and Volunteers

Spring is in the air...almost! That means it's time to clean out your drawers and closets for all those items you stashed away for the 2016 Bunka-Sai Gift Booth!

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

You can bring items to an upcoming TSCA meeting (March 14 or April 11) in the West Annex of City Hall from 7 to 9 pm, or contact **Jill Maroney** at mjmaroney@aol.com or **Reiko Higa** at reikookinawa@gmail.com to arrange for delivery or pickup. *Thanks, we couldn't do it without you!*

Volunteers: Interested in helping at the Gift Booth? It's the best spot for shopping and a lot of fun! Send an email to Jill at mjmaroney@aol.com or sign up on our Bunka-Sai Volunteer website at <http://bit.ly/bunkasai2016>.



Torrance Craftsmen's Guild 17th Annual Spring Arts & Crafts Faire

March 19, 2016 | 10 am to 4 pm
Torrance Cultural Arts Center, Madrona & Torrance Blvd.

TSCA Café at Torrance Crafts Faire

Bring your family and friends to TSCA's Café during this event and help support our Student Exchange Program. There will a variety of refreshments and food items, including the always popular Spam musubi!

Save the Date
Saturday, March 19, 2016

Volunteers are still needed. If you are able to assist with food prep, food sales, or lunch delivery to vendors, please contact **Shirley Tanaka** at ksjtanaka@msn.com.

Please Support the South Bay JACL Fundraiser RASCALS TERIYAKI GRILL

Wednesday, March 23, 2016

11 AM - 9 PM

AT ALL RASCALS LOCATIONS



Torrance
5111 Torrance Blvd
Torrance, CA 90503
310/542-0022

Gardena
1540 W Artesia Blvd
Gardena, CA 90248
310/516-8814

Long Beach
1760 Bellflower Blvd
Long Beach, CA 90815
562/431-7777



Present this FLYER when ordering and **15%**
of all proceeds will be donated to South Bay JACL