

TSCA NEWS

TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION



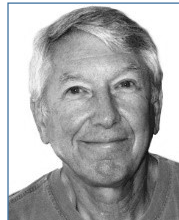
May 2016

www.torrancesistercity.org

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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

By Werner Willoughby

On behalf of the Torrance Sister City Association, a BIG THANK YOU to all who contributed to the success of Bunka-Sai through their time, expertise, passion, and financial support.

The inside back cover of the Bunka-Sai program identified the committee chairpersons, and this article would be too lengthy to identify all volunteers by name, but I wanted to mention that there are many unsung heroes supporting the effort—those many individuals who worked in anonymity in the kitchens from Friday through Sunday.

The majority of revenue from the Bunka-Sai comes from the food booths, so these efforts were critical. While we were enjoying the BBQ beef, chicken and steelhead trout; yakisoba; Spam musubi; chicken curry; dango donuts; and desserts, there were crews laboring over the indoor and outdoor hot grills, assembling plates in the kitchens and tents, and watching over the hot oil for the dango and the burners for the curry, taking an occasional break for a drink of water now and then. Then there were the volunteers cooking the yakisoba on an open grill, the dessert people adjusting the temperamental ovens to produce delicious desserts, those cooking hundreds of slices of Spam in large pans over open flames, and those deboning Costco chickens for the curry. While you probably never saw these volunteers except the ones working the BBQ grill outside, we are grateful for their dedication at our most demanding of events. Many of these people return year after year, experts at their tasks, working alongside their friends from the past while forming new friendships.

Changes in the festival this year included an online volunteer site, expanded performances and sound on the outdoor stage, new vendors, enhanced signage and decorations, as well as a new design for the program.

I've seen what other programs offer in the Los Angeles area, and I honestly think that we have the most diverse Japanese cultural festival. Thank you to all the groups that share Japanese culture through performances, demonstrations, and exhibits.

For those who assumed responsibility for the many aspects of the festival and to the hundreds of student and adult volunteers, please accept TSCA's heartfelt ARIGATO. Your efforts have enabled another year of our very successful student cultural exchange program with Kashiwa to make a difference in the lives of the participants, promote friendship, goodwill and understanding between the cities, and give eight high-school students from Torrance a trip of a lifetime. ☘

CALENDAR

MAY 9

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

MAY 13 & 27

Torrance City Hall Closed

Torrance Sister City Association

PRESIDENT

Werner Willoughby

VICE PRESIDENT

David Gelbaum

SECRETARY

Dana Cortez

TREASURER

Cindy Scotto

Newsletter Editor

Summer Nagano Gray

Newsletter Distribution

Donna Dunlap

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)

Exxon Mobil
Goodrich, Tim

Supporting (\$75/year)

Hadley, David F. and Suzanne

Family (\$40/year)

Albitz, Phil and Velma
Lorenz, Larry and Sarah
Miike, Pamela

Individual (\$20/year)

Johns, Patricia
Laidoner, Gail

Donations

Exxon Mobil (\$125)
Albitz, Phil and Velma (\$10)

Thank you for joining or renewing your membership for 2016. For any questions about membership, contact Reiko Higa at reikookinawa@gmail.com. ☘

TSCA at Cherry Blossom Festival

On April 3, the recently selected 2016 Student Delegates and past Adult Leaders **Sherri Crowson** and **David Gelbaum** staffed a booth at the City of Torrance's 5th Annual Cherry Blossom Festival.

Their goal was to advertise for the TSCA's April 16-17 Bunka-Sai Festival and sell tickets for the big raffle at the end of Bunka-Sai.

By the conclusion of the Cherry Blossom Festival, a whopping 334 tickets were sold!

Great job everyone!



Kashiwa News

By Masahiko Arai



As part of its Student Delegate selection process, the Kashiwa Torrance Committee held its annual Explanatory Meeting on March 27 for prospective candidates from Kashiwa. There were many interested students and parents in attendance. As part of the meeting, last year's student delegates shared their knowledge about Torrance and their home-stay experience using PowerPoint presentations.



Thank you to Bunka-Sai Volunteers!

By **Wendy Ito**, Bunka-Sai Volunteer Coordinator

*On behalf of TSCA, **thank you** to our amazing volunteers—over 200 individuals(!)—who donated their time and energy and provided much-needed help at Bunka-Sai 2016! The festival and our cultural exchange program would not be possible without this community of support. **Domo arigato gozaimashita** to everyone who helped, including the following organizations for providing volunteers:*

Girl Scouts Troops #3075 and #3125 ♦ Jefferson Middle School - Students of Mr. David Gelbaum
 Malaga Bank ♦ Nikkei Credit Union ♦ North High School - CSF, J's & V's and Key Clubs
 Palos Verdes Peninsula High School - Japanese Club
 Torrance High School - Lady Tartars and Tartar Knights
 West High School - CSF, Interact, Japanese, Key, and Robotics Clubs



Thanks to Bunka-Sai Gift Booth Donors and Volunteers

Thank you to all of the generous people who donated items for the Gift Booth at Bunka-Sai! We had many interesting items to sell and were once again successful at raising funds to help send our student delegation to Kashiwa. Big thanks as well to all of the volunteers who worked at the booth. It is very much appreciated!

~ **Jill Maroney**, Bunka-Sai Gift Booth Chair

Thank you, Werner!

*And last, but certainly not least, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You to TSCA President **Werner Willoughby**, who has served as Bunka-Sai Chairman for the 4th year in a row!*

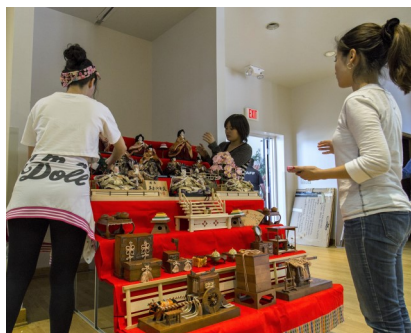
Without his leadership, experience, countless hours, and attention to detail, this year's Bunka-Sai would not have been the great success that it was.

Domo arigato, Werner! ㊗



Scenes from Bunka-Sai 2016

Photos by Linda Kranz and Summer Nagano Gray



Scenes from Bunka-Sai 2016

Photos by Linda Kranz and Summer Nagano Gray





Anime Contest Winners at Bunka-Sai

By Sherri Crowson, TSCA Adult Leader 2015

Congratulations to all of the participants of the second annual TSCA Bunka-Sai Anime Contest! This year, we had two age brackets: middle school and high school. We also had three categories: Cutest, Most Dramatic, and Best Representation of Japanese Culture. Overall, there were 21 fantastic participants, which made the judging very difficult! The judges met on Saturday morning, April 16, to review all of the drawings and the winners were announced later that day.

Congratulations to the following winners:



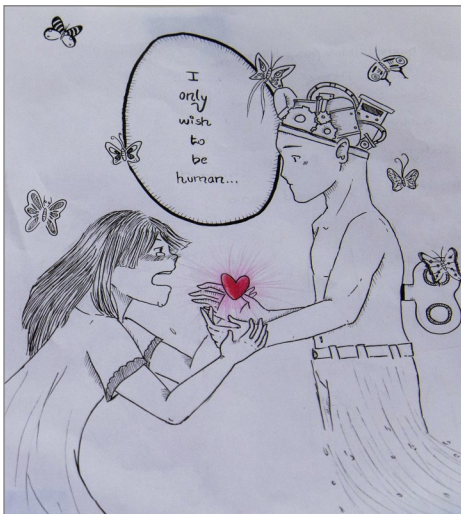
Overall Winner
Sarah Donaldson
West High School



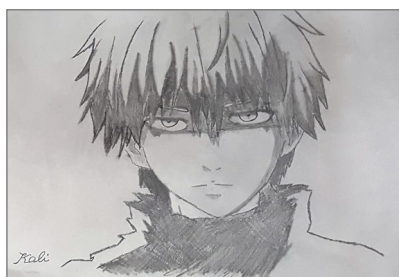
Cutest
Melia Ewing
Palos Verdes Peninsula High School



Cutest
Crystal Ma
Richardson Middle School



Most Dramatic
Moye Mishra
West High School



Most Dramatic
Kali Haakensen
Jefferson Middle School



Best Representation of Japanese Culture
Miki Ignacio
Madrona Middle School



Best Representation of Japanese Culture
Sinjae Kwan
South High School



English Teacher Report

By Amie Komae

Life Lessons from Jacaranda and Sakura Trees

There are three big Jacaranda trees in front of my parent's house. As a child I grew up under their shade and when the bright purple flowers on their branches were fully bloomed, I knew it was summertime.

As beautiful as the purple flowers are, they ironically produce one major problem: sap. As a kid, the sap didn't bother me one bit. I would roll all over the falling leaves imagining I was swimming in a purple sea of Kool-Aid or growing a garden of berries. Inevitably, I would spend the evening plucking sticky flowers off the soles of my shoes before coming in to dinner, but it was all part of the adventure for me.

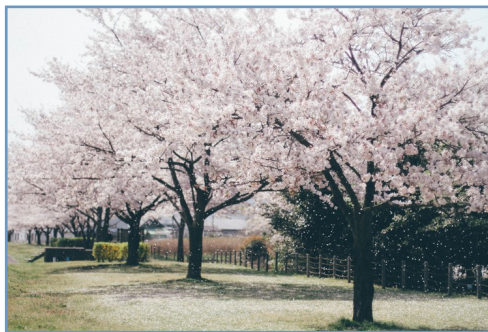
As an adult, the contradiction of such beautiful flowers possessing such a potent weapon became all the more real when it came to parking. The few good spots under the shade of the trees became danger zones for a downpour of sap on top of my car, and purple flowers perpetually stuck to my windshield wipers. I learned that beauty could be defined in many different ways, and that what one possesses on the inside is often times more important than what appears on the outside.

For me, Jacaranda trees trigger memories of summer days, hot sun, childhood freedom, cold Popsicles, sticky shoes, tan skin, and the smell of my mother's kitchen. These trees mean a lot of things to me and reflecting upon their symbolism in my life has given me a new insight into the recent topic of discussion all across the country of Japan: Sakura.

Cherry trees, better known as Sakura in Japan, symbolize beauty,



Jacaranda trees in Torrance



Cherry trees (Sakura) in Japan

fresh starts, hanami (gatherings to view the trees), springtime and the beginning of a new school year.

On every news station, charts and maps of the flowers' blooming schedule are displayed and people wait in anticipation for the flowers to be at "mankai" or full bloom.

Similar to the sap that comes with Jacaranda trees, Sakura trees come with their own beautiful fault: time. Sakura trees are notorious for blooming only about one week, and then blowing away in the wind. The falling pink and white petals create a magically snowy atmosphere that seems to be from another world. The fleeting nature of Sakura trees have sparked a multitude of songs, poems, and other artwork. Most of these

tributes focus on the fragility of Sakura trees and how they so accurately depict the reality of life being incredibly beautiful, as well as tragically short.

Here at Ichikashi municipal high school in Kashiwa, we hold an annual ceremony for teachers who are retiring or moving to new schools, and we welcome all the new teachers. At the end of the assembly, there is a moment where all of the faculty, staff, and students sing a song titled "Sakura" to the teachers who are leaving.

The lyrics, translated into English, read as...

*cherry blossoms
now flying in the air
eternally rustling
awash in light
farewell my friend
let's meet again here
on the street scattered with
cherry blossoms*

Hearing this song being sung by over 900 students, faculty, and staff was truly a moving experience. Sakura trees embody the heartbeat of Japan at this time of year, with all of the bittersweet goodbyes and the exciting start of all things new.

It seems as if flowers are more than just beautiful petals to look at and admire. Both the Jacaranda tree and Sakura tree have given me, as well as many other people, deep insight into valuable life lessons. I have no doubt that their symbolism will continue to withstand the changing seasons. ☘



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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