

TSCA NEWS

TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION



www.torrancesistercity.org

June 2016

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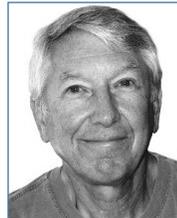
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TSCA Host Family Interest Form

Why Host? Flyer and
Host Family Spotlight

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

The positive comments keep coming in regarding Bunka-Sai, so I must pass along a job well done to all who devoted themselves to the event, whether for just a couple of hours or for the long haul....the entire weekend. Yes, there were people whose weekend began Friday morning and did not end until after sundown on Sunday!

TSCA and the Torrance Committee are starting to exchange student and family information in preparation for this year's student cultural exchange, commencing when the Torrance students leave for Kashiwa on July 12 and ending when we all bid sayonara on August 25 to the Kashiwa students as they return home. The time will fly, but the experiences will last a lifetime.

I would like to take a moment now to address a new topic: the transition of our *TSCA Update* newsletter that is printed by a press, assembled, collated, stapled, addressed, tabbed, sorted, and delivered by hand to your home, school, or business to a digital newsletter. Yes, an e-newsletter!

We are very grateful to the City of Torrance and, more specifically, the Central Services Department for printing and preparing our newsletter each month. TSCA would like to do our share in promoting this cost- and labor-saving endeavor.

This move will save on time, labor, and the cost of materials provided by the City of Torrance's Central Services, as well as the time to sort and prepare it for bulk mailing by TSCA for the U.S. Postal Service.

From the completion of the newsletter by our editor to delivering it to you each month will be just a push of the button. Shortly after we hit the Send button, you will see it in your Inbox, saving the cost of bulk mailing, plus you will see the pictorial coverage of our events and activities in COLOR!

The board of directors and a few other members have seen two issues in this color format. They realize the logistical and monetary advantages, but they are really impressed with the aesthetics of the color and its impact upon the reader.

We are working on the logistics and mechanics of this transition and will hopefully begin gathering information within several months.

For those not on email, we have not forgotten about you. The U.S. Postal Service will still deliver your newsletter as usual.

Stay tuned! ☘

CALENDAR

JUNE 10 & 24

City Hall Closed

JUNE 13

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

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

Family (\$40/year)

Mizuguchi, Lori
Tsudama, Geoff and Mickie

Individual (\$20/year)

Heredia, Michelle

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

TSCA Donors in 2015

The Torrance Sister City Association would like to thank the following donors for supporting our organization's mission and programs, including our annual Student Cultural Exchange Program with Kashiwa, Japan.

\$2,000-\$2,000+

Chan, Kenneth and Janice

\$1,000-\$1,999

Allred, Ted and Nikki

\$500-\$999

MGM Resorts for Craig Bauer
Yamauchi, Bryce and Cheryl

\$200-\$499

Boeing Company for John Ito
Hedges, David and Patti
Palos Verdes High School -
Japanese National Honor Society
Northrop Grumman Corporation
for Cheryl Yamauchi

\$10-\$199

Griffith, Kay
Hattori, Lisa
Kaneshiro, Myrtle
Kircher, Ellen
Lee, Jacqueline
Miles, Frank
Stojcic, Goran
Sueyoshi, Steven
Todd, Edwin and Mayumi
Tokeshi, Jon
Ueki, Mas and Sumi
Willoughby, Werner
Yoshida, Gary ☘

ConGRADulations!

Best wishes to current and former TSCA Student Delegates who have been accepted to the following universities:

Erika Clark (2016): Brigham Young University - Idaho

Anna Wheeler (2016): Mississippi State University

Chris Hsiao (2015): New York University

Nikola Stojcic (2015): University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Adam Jordan (2014): Graduated from El Camino College and accepted to UCLA ☘



MEET THE 2016 STUDENT DELEGATES FROM KASHIWA, JAPAN

For three weeks in August, these eight Student Delegates from Kashiwa, Japan, will visit Torrance and stay with local host families. Through this experience and a packed daily itinerary with the Torrance Sister City Association, they will experience firsthand life in the United States.



Seichi Miyata
Adult Leader



Miki Akita
Higashi Katsushika High School
12th Grade



Megumi Arai
Seikei University
Freshman



Minori Hisanaga
Reitaku High School
11th Grade



Yuki Katsuma
Juntendo University
Freshman



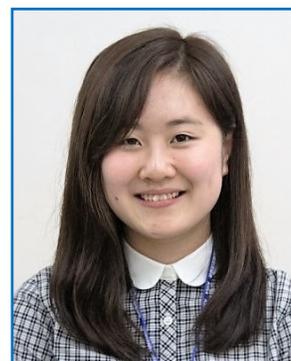
Shiori Murakami
Nishogakusha Kashiwa High School
11th Grade



Karin Osawa
Chiba High School
11th Grade



Kanami Tsukada
Kashiwa Minami High School
11th Grade



Rina Yamada
Chiba University
Sophomore



Member Spotlight

Mariko Namimoto

By Gail Roulette

If you have ever had the pleasure of eating yakisoba at Bunka-Sai in the last 16 years, you have Mariko Namimoto to thank. She and TSCA member Sumi Ueki have co-chaired that booth all these years, together with the help of their husbands and others.

Mariko was born in Kawasaki City, Japan, and grew up there. She went to a private girls high school in Tokyo, then came to the United States and attended college in Minneapolis, where she majored in English. Shortly after returning to Japan in 1979, she decided to return to the U.S. and moved to Los Angeles. She has lived in Torrance 29 years.

Mariko currently works at Honda Trading America Corporation, a subsidiary of American Honda Motors.

This July will be her 30th anniversary of working at Honda. She loves to cook and watch movies, hike with friends and listen to jazz music. For 15 years, Mariko read books to children at Carson Elementary School's Rolling Readers program.



Mariko Namimoto at Bunka-Sai 2015

After a few moments of talking, he somehow convinced me to sign up for the U.S. trip. This moment changed my life forever...

She met her husband, Jim Namimoto, at a friend's birthday party in LA. They have been married for 33 years and have three children. All of their children have been fortunate enough to visit Kashiwa through TSCA's student exchange program: Kristin (2000), Keri (2004), and Derek (2008).

One day in 1999 while at the Torrance Library, Mariko found the TSCA student exchange flier. That was the beginning of her family's connection with TSCA. That year they hosted Kana, a student delegate from Kashiwa, and they hosted for the next

10 consecutive years! The rest is history, as they say. But Mariko's history of how she got to the U.S. is quite fascinating.

Here is Mariko's story in her own words:

"When I was 21 years old, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life....I knew I wasn't ready to get married yet. I wanted to travel the world and do something different than most other people in Japan at the time.

"One morning while reading Asahi Newspaper, I saw an ad for a youth exchange program. The next day I contacted them and went to visit their offices. They offered exchange programs in many different countries, and I really wanted to go to Australia.

They informed me that the person in front of me filled the last spot on the Australia exchange program...I thanked them for their time and turned around to leave....The person helping me tried to convince me to go to the U.S. instead, but I was disappointed and told him I wasn't interested....After a few moments of talking, he somehow convinced me to sign up for the U.S. trip. This moment changed my life forever....

"The trip was 50 days long and we started off in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and traveled to the West Coast by bus, staying with several host families. I connected immediately and very deeply with my first host family in Minnesota. We got along so well and stayed in touch. After 40 years of visiting each other and talking on the phone almost every week, I consider them my second family.

"Since I had such a wonderful exchange experience, it was so important to me to share this with my own children....I'm so grateful for TSCA and for all of the wonderful experiences and memories we and our children have been able to make."

Mariko, you are a great testimony to the value of TSCA's exchange student program. Thank you for your wonderful story. Australia's loss was certainly Torrance's gain! ☘



Thank you to Bunka-Sai Volunteers!

Sweet Treats at the Desserts and Cotton Candy Booths



Our wholehearted thanks to TSCA members and friends for the many dessert creations and sales support at Bunka-Sai 2016. With 70 batches of mochi, cookies, and chocolate-covered strawberries made over the three days of the festival, we aimed to satisfy every sweet tooth in the crowd!

*Kudos to the bustling baking team: **Mayuri, Linda, Susan, Marilyn, Pam, Shanli, Kim, Lori, Natasha, and Ruchi.***

*Kudos to a superb sales team: **Kruttika, Dick, Ada, Anna, and James.***

*And more Kudos for the valuable cotton candy support: **Alex, Sherwin, Yoshiko, and Steve.***

We are most grateful for the enthusiastic student volunteers from local high schools. They were very helpful both in the kitchen and at the booths. And, they made amazing-looking cotton candy!

Thank you again for helping at Bunka-Sai. It was a pleasure working with you all!

~ By Shirley and Keith Tanaka, Dessert and Cotton Candy Booth Chairs

Student Club

This year's Bunka-Sai was a fantastic event filled with traditional performances, artwork, food, and music.



The TSCA Student Club, sponsored by the 2015 exchange delegation, hosted the Bunka-Sai Kids Corner filled with arts and crafts and games. This year, the water yo-yos (see photo) were a huge hit, selling out by mid-morning on Sunday. The kids enjoyed creating their own hand fans and pinwheels and fishing for prizes.

Thank you to all of the amazing volunteers, including the middle school and high school volunteers!

~ By Sherri Crowson, Adult Leader 2015

Cultural Performances

This year's Bunka-Sai performers entertained and enlightened hundreds of guests with their expertise in taiko, koto, shakuhachi (flute), shamisen (string instrument), vocal music, dance, martial arts, tea ceremony, kimono, and calligraphy. The 20 individuals and groups showcased are experts in their art and have all studied under highly skilled teachers in the U.S. and Japan, achieving formal stage names and specific ranks. New this year was entertainment held outdoors on Torino Plaza, including hula, taiko, judo, and karate.

Some of these distinguished performers have been supporting Bunka-Sai for over 20 years! We would like to thank all of them for their wonderful performances and look forward to their return next year.

Special thanks to **Tricia Takasugi** and **Steve Warner** for serving as emcees and sharing details about the performers.

~ By Lori Chong Eurich, Cultural Performances Chair



English Teacher Report

By Stephanie Mikamo

Being a Teacher

There are obvious responsibilities you have as a teacher.

As a teacher, you should:

- teach your students new material and help them gain a better understanding of it
- encourage your students to do the best that they can
- be as accessible to your students as possible.

I didn't realize how many other aspects there are to being a teacher. Before starting this job, I thought most of my title centered on my students and the materials I taught. However, there's so much more to it than that. Yes, I have to teach students new material, but I also have to master it beforehand. I do have to encourage my students to do their best, but I also have to remind myself to do the best that I can as well. I have to be accessible to my students, but I also have to be accessible to the other teachers as well.

This is the first time in my life where I've felt like I'm on the right track to what I should be doing.

I've learned that being a teacher isn't strictly about being in the classroom with students, but it's also the relationships you build up with the other teachers in your



Here I am (center) on a typical day with my class of high school students.

department, outside of your department, and your bosses. Being a teacher isn't restricted to standing in front of the classroom, but it also includes asking students how they've been doing, building up rapport with coworkers, and going to parties that are work-related since you're a part of a department. Teachers wear so many different hats that I wasn't even aware of.

Teaching isn't the easiest of jobs, but I'm finding it's one of the most rewarding. I find myself loving the students more and more as I get to know them and spend more time with them. I love getting to know my coworkers in between classes

and outside of school. I also love going to the various activities that my students are a part of and seeing them shine outside of the classroom.

I am definitely a people person, and I find myself investing so much of myself into the people at school. Even though this job has been difficult at times and there are moments when I question if this is really what I should be doing, I want to continue on. This is the first time in my life where I've felt like I'm on the right track to what I should be doing. Although this might not be forever, I feel like it's the start of discovering something great to come. ☘

Alumni Update



Alan Matsumoto, wife Cheryl, and sons Caden and Garrett at Anza Elementary School's "Local Heroes Day" in May.

Alan Matsumoto was a TSCA student delegate in 1984. The adult leader of his delegation was our very own **Donna Dunlap!** (Alan and Donna were able to reconnect after many years and meet each other's families at this year's Bunka-Sai Festival!)

Alan is a Paramedic/Firefighter. He has been with the LA County Fire Department for 25 years, and is currently with Fire Station #6 in the city of Lomita.

After graduating from Torrance High School in 1984, Alan attained his bachelor's degree in psychology at UCLA. The Matsumotos reside in Torrance and Alan has told us that going to Kashiwa as a TSCA student delegate was one of the best experiences of his life! ☘



Do you have any Alumni Updates to share? If so, please contact Gail Roulette so she can include the news in this column. Send an email to gailroulette@yahoo.com.

Member Update



During a spring break visit to Japan in March, TSCA member **Lori Chong Eurich** (front row, second from right) and her family (Dane and Ryan) were warmly welcomed by KIRA Torrance Committee members. The family toured the Yoshida estate and Kashiwa Municipal High School, and enjoyed dinner with past KIRA adult leaders, Torrance Committee leaders, and English teachers **Amie Komae** (front row, second from left) and **Stephanie Mikamo** (front row, far right). ☘



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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

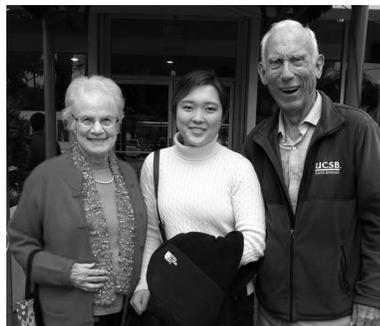
TSCA meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, except in August and December, at the Civic Center West Annex Commission Room, 7 pm



Expand your Cultural Horizons

Host a student from Kashiwa, Japan, for 1 week in August

(August 8-15 or August 18-25)



Share our American culture with a student from Kashiwa for the experience of a lifetime!

The students stay with two host families during their 18-day stay in Torrance.

All daytime activities are planned and hosted by the Torrance Sister City Association (TSCA).

Host families are responsible for transporting their students to and from the West Annex at City Hall each morning and late afternoon. Some weeknight activities are planned and host families are welcome to join the fun!

At all other times, the host families will arrange their own activities and meals with their exchange student in accordance with TSCA guidelines. Each host family will have one weekend to plan their own activities.

Kashiwa students are able to communicate in English.

An orientation meeting for all Host Families will be held in late June or early July.

QUESTIONS? Please call Host Family Chair MICHELLE HEREDIA at (310) 480-6691



TORRANCE SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION, INC.



HOST FAMILY INTEREST FORM

All first-time applicants will be screened by TSCA

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____ Emergency/Daytime Phone _____

We would prefer to host a Boy _____ Girl _____ Either _____

We would prefer to host a student from August 8-15 _____ August 18-25 _____ Either week _____

Number in household _____ Pets _____

Name of Adults _____ Occupation _____

_____ Occupation _____

Children _____ M / F Age _____ M / F Age _____

_____ M / F Age _____ M / F Age _____

Others _____

Our family has participated in these TSCA Activities: Bunka-Sai _____ Student Exchange Program _____ Host Family Program _____ Other _____

Please mail form to **Torrance Sister City Association, Attn: Host Family Program, 3031 Torrance Blvd, Torrance, CA 90503**



Torrance Sister City Association Host Family Program

Why Host?

Here are a few reasons...

- Learn about another language and culture with a very SHORT (1 week) time commitment
- Gain a broader perspective on the world and learn more about geography (especially great for host family kids)
- Have the opportunity to serve as an international “ambassador,” creating goodwill and positive impressions about Americans and the United States
- Make a new friend from a different county and enjoy seeing things with a fresh perspective
- Enjoy a rewarding, life-changing experience!

Host Family Spotlight: The Ito Family

Initially we were hesitant to host a student in our humble home, but it turned out fine! We thoroughly enjoyed being a host family and having Hiroki stay with us. Beyond simply getting to know this Kashiwa student and learning about his lifestyle in Japan, we also gained a new appreciation for Torrance and Southern California! It was fun to experience things like going to a regular restaurant with a fresh perspective and doing excursions we wouldn't ordinarily do, like getting up close to the Hollywood Sign. Hiroki loves basketball and sports activities so we took him to the Staples Center for a professional Slam-Dunk Contest and we went standup paddle boarding. It was great fun! We hope to visit Japan and reconnect with Hiroki sometime in the near future!



From left, Wendy Ito, son Alex, Kashiwa student Hiroki, and John Ito enjoy an Italian dinner at a local restaurant.