



KCC Newsletter

November, 2025

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Announcement

*Exchange Programs with
Sister & Friendship Cities of Kashiwa*

2025 Kashiwa City Sister and Friendship Cities Activity Report Meeting

High school and university students who visited Torrance, Camden, and Chengde this year will share their experiences and impressions through photos and videos.

In addition, there will be a session where the dispatched students will have a chance to ask questions directly to the Deputy Mayor and exchange opinions.

As for Guam, they will introduce both past exchange dispatch programs and ongoing exchange programs.

Everyone is welcome to join us — please feel free to attend!

D Sunday, November 16, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. (Reception starts at 1:00 p.m.)

P Raccolta Kashiwa (Central Public Hall), 5th Floor Auditorium

A Not required. Please come directly to the venue on the day.

Visiting Sumo Dojo in Kashiwa

Let's watch junior sumo players practicing and learn various things about sumo from the instructor.

D Saturday, November 22, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. **P** Sumo Hall, Kashiwa Chuo Gymnasium

Note: Please come directly to the site. Please inquire for more information.

F ¥ 300 **N** Residents of Kashiwa or nearby areas (first 15 applicants)

A 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 1, apply directly at the KCC office or by email to boshu-1@kira-kira.jp.



Online International Exchange Salon

Make communication fun with “questioning skills”!

Learn how to rephrase Japanese expressions that are difficult for foreigners to understand.

D Thursday, November 20, 8:00 – 9:00 p.m. **L** Ms. Tomoe Uchida, Japanese Language Instructor

How to participate: Online (via Zoom)

F Free

N First 30 applicants

A Please apply to the KCC office directly or by email to boshu-1@kira-kira.jp. by Wednesday, November 19.

A participation URL will be sent to applicants on the day of the event.



Online International Exchange Salon

Syria Today after the Collapse of the Assad Regime (9/18)

Ms. Momoko Doku, a volunteer working with a refugee support organization in Syria and other countries, gave a talk about the current situation in Syria.

Afterward, we had a conversation with a Syrian man living in Japan, who shared his personal experiences in Syria and the current state of the country after the collapse of the Assad regime. He spoke of the fall of the regime as an unbelievable and dreamlike event for Syrian citizens. Syria is still far from being a democratic nation. However, he expressed hope that Syrians could learn from Japan's resilience in overcoming disasters such as earthquakes and floods, and that they will continue working toward national reconstruction.

He also said he wants to move forward hand in hand with Japan, have more people to take an interest in Syria, and to have faith in the country.

We felt strongly that continuing to pay attention to Syria and showing our interest is an important responsibility for all of us.

<Request> When applying via email, please be sure to include the event name, your name, and phone number.

D Date & Time **P** Place **F** Fee **N** Number of applicants **L** Lecturer **C** Contents **A** Application **R** Reservation.

Guam Outreach Class (9/11)

At Takayanagi Junior High School in Kashiwa City, a special outreach class was held to learn about Guam and its culture.

Although the youth exchange program between Kashiwa and Guam has been suspended, online exchanges between junior high schools in Kashiwa and Guam have continued for the past three years. Since last year, with support from the Japan Office of the Guam Visitors Bureau, "Guam Outreach Classes" have been conducted to deepen students' understanding of Guam.

The lesson began with its geographical features, followed by the charm of Chamorro culture and the beauty of its natural environment. The students participated enthusiastically with bright smiles throughout the session.

We sincerely hope that through this understanding and interest in Guam, exchanges fostering friendship will resume with young people visiting Guam at this stage of their lives, interacting with residents, and deepening bonds.



Outreach class

World Barbecue Party (9/20)

At Mizushiro Orchard in Nagareyama City, 24 foreign residents and 30 Japanese participants gathered for a fun barbecue exchange. The menu included Indonesian fried rice prepared by KIRA members, Thai spicy glass noodle salad, Filipino grilled chicken and pork, fruit salad, Brazilian hot dogs, Chinese and Taiwanese grilled beef, Peruvian beef heart skewers, potatoes seasoned with chili sauce, and Japanese yakisoba. Everyone was delighted with the variety and flavors. After the meal, participants enjoyed an Indonesian fried rice cracker-eating race, instead of a bread-eating race. A bingo game was well-received, with prizes donated by staff members.



Rice cracker eating race

Shonan Japanese Class – Extracurricular Lesson (9/28)

As the first extracurricular activity, an origami workshop was held, led by Mr. Higashi Katsukawa, an origami artist from Kashiwa. 23 participants, from preschoolers to adults, took part and enjoyed the class together. Foreign participants showed great interest in Japanese origami and looked forward to the event. Mr. Katsukawa also showed some of his intricate works, which greatly impressed everyone. He talked about why origami became so popular in Japan. Participants from Sri Lanka and Vietnam shared photos of their own countries' origami-like crafts made from leaves. We also learned that while origami has some rules of folding, it can be in any shape regardless of the rules, and sometimes it can be folded by imagination. We tried it, but found it quite challenging. It was a time filled with surprise, admiration, and enjoyment. Many participants expressed a desire to learn more about origami after this experience.



Origami is fun!

Fijian Junior High Students Experience Japanese Culture (9/25)

Eight junior high school students from the Republic of Fiji, visiting Japan for training at the Yoshida Memorial Tennis Training Center, experienced Japan's traditional culture, including origami, calligraphy, and tea ceremony. A tea ceremony was held at Hakusentei, a Japanese garden, in Akebonoyama Park, Kashiwa. Since sitting in the formal "seiza" position was difficult for some, it was conducted in the "ryūrei style," where both host and guests use chairs. Following a brief explanation of tea ceremony history, a demonstration of preparing thin tea (usucha) took place. Then the students took turns practicing the three roles — making, serving, and drinking tea — saying the traditional phrases, "Oshōban itashimasu (I will join you)," "Osaki ni chō dai itashimasu (I will take mine first)," and "Otemae chō dai itashimasu (I will receive the tea)." Three participants also challenged themselves with thick tea (koicha). Later, we received a letter from the organizer stating that the students greatly enjoyed the Japanese cultural experiences of calligraphy, origami, and tea ceremony.



Visitors from Fiji experience a tea ceremony.

Upcoming Events (from January 2026)

New Year's Party (January, date and time undecided)	Japanese Language Class Speech Presentation (1/31)
15th English Speech Contest (2/14)	10th Japanese Speech Contest (2/15)
Cross-cultural Teatime "Niger" (2/28)	



Reunited after 47 Years with a 1978 Torrance Student Delegate

Mutsuko Tsukamoto, 1978 Kashiwa Adult Leader

On June 29th, in the lobby of the Keio Plaza Hotel in Shinjuku, Takashi Oshima (1978 Kashiwa delegate) and I were waiting for Ken Sakamoto (1978 delegate from Torrance), holding a sign that read “Ken, Welcome Back to Japan!” Then there he was — Ken, the very embodiment of American food culture with no trace of the shapely image of his high school days. Without that welcome board, we might never have recognized each other.

Early June this year, an unexpected email came to the KCC office: “Hello. My name is Ken Sakamoto from Torrance, California. In 1978, I was the lucky one chosen to visit our sister city Kashiwa as a student delegate. (Text omitted) Would someone please reply to my email?” The office contacted me, as I was the adult leader of the 1978 delegation.

Since I still exchange New Year's cards with the 1978 Kashiwa delegates, I immediately contacted Takashi Oshima. It turned out the Oshima family had hosted both Ken and his mother, May (1982 Adult Leader). Takashi took the lead in arranging a meeting date and time with Ken. Then, some of the former members of the “Student Club” gathered at an izakaya in Shinjuku. The Student Club was formed by the former delegates who were actively participated in the sister city program in those days. Those joined the gathering on that day were Takao Aoki (1976, and the Student Club first chair), Isao Takada (1977), Yutaka Shibuya (1978), Takashi Oshima (1978), Mutsumi Takada (1979), and Ken and his wife, along with their two high school daughters.

We all enjoyed izakaya dishes in such a warm, friendly atmosphere that it felt like no time had passed since we last met 47 years ago, sharing smiles and lively conversation. The bond between the Kashiwa and Torrance delegates has continued this long.



Ken Sakamoto with a welcoming plate



Origami Magic in Guam

Origami Artist, Higashi Katsukawa (2014 Student Delegate to Camden)

Guam Japan Festival

On April 12th, I conducted a stage performance and a booth event featuring origami as part of the Japanese Consulate General's program at the Guam Japan Festival. It was a great honor for me that origami took the spotlight at the festival with tens of thousands of attendees—a truly grand stage. The performance, in which the familiar paper crane transformed into an unseen dragon in a matter of minutes, symbolized both cultural and artistic aspects of origami. At the Consulate General's booth, I taught participants how to fold a Ko'ko' Bird, Guam's typical living creature. Its origami pattern is an adaptation of the traditional origami bird and was appreciated by people of all ages and genders.

Special Presentation

On April 14th, I also taught students in the Japanese class at St. John High School how to make the Ko'ko' Bird. While showing them the finished piece, I explained mathematical properties of origami and design concepts, allowing them to engage more deeply with the origami. I hope this serves as an opportunity for them to discover an interest in academic pursuits.

Origami connects without tearing

The opportunity for this project came from Kashiwa. Consul General Ueda, who took office last November, is originally from Kashiwa, and I had the chance to meet him before his appointment. Although it was a different occasion from the friendship city program, I felt a special bond between Guam and Kashiwa. While Guam and Japan have an ongoing cultural and tourism connection, its background was not positive. I was reassured that origami transcends time and place, offering positivity to those around us. I hope Japan continues to maintain its good relations with other countries, and that origami can become something like one of the bridge pillars connecting them.



Higashi Katsukawa performing Origami

November Events

Japanese Shonan Classes		
Online Classes		
Sun	10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo, Primary II; Chukyu kara Manabu Nihongo</i>
Sun	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo, Primary II</i>
In-person Classes (Shonan Kinrin Center(former Shonan Hoken Center))		
Thu	10:00 a.m. - noon	<i>Minna no Nihongo, Primary I(3 classes) Primary II</i>
Sun	10:00 a.m. - noon	<i>Minna no Nihongo, Primary I(3 classes)</i>
Japanese Kashiwa/Kashiwanoha Classes		
Online Classes		
Tue	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo Primary II (Unit 38-)</i>
Wed	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 7-)</i>
Thu	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Conversation Elementary
Fri	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo Primary II (Unit 36-)</i>
In-person Classes (Palette Kashiwa)		
Tue	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 1-/Unit 14 - /Unit 24-), Minna no Nihongo Primary II (Unit 36 -)</i>
Wed	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Elementary & Intermediate
Fri	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 11 -)</i>
Sat	10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	<i>Hiragana, Katakana; Minna no Nihongo Primary 1(Unit 4-/Unit 16 -); Minna no Nihongo Primary 2(Unit 28-)</i>
In-person Classes (Thu: Kashiwanoha Service Corner, Sat: Kenmin Plaza)		
Thu	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Elementary (first half/second half)
Thu	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Hiragana, Katakana
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Intermediate

Free Legal Advice and Administrative Procedure Support for Foreign Residents

To foreign residents. Are you in need of help? Lawyers and administrative procedure specialists are available for consultation. You can ask for specialists' advice on issues such as family or partner violence, divorce, visa procedures, and problems at work. Reservation necessary

D Wednesday, November 26, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. **P** Palette Kashiwa MTR A **R** the KCC Office

<Announcements from Other Organizations>

●Members Wanted! Kashiwa International Relations Association (KIRA)

Would you like to join us and take part in international exchange activities? Let's plan and organize various events while interacting with people from different countries! For more details, please visit our website.



Information for Foreign Residents from Kashiwa City

Consultation for Foreign Residents

Available in English (Thu), Chinese (Wed and Fri), Spanish (Mon), and Korean (2nd and 4th Tue) from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Consultation Counter for Foreign Residents (City Hall Main Office Building, 3rd floor).
Tel: 04 - 7168 - 1033
No reservation required.

Email distribution service from Kashiwa City

Sign up to receive email announcement from the city, such as information on natural disasters, crimes, and fires of your area in the language of your choice. Scan the QR code and register!



Multilingual "Koho Kashiwa," monthly official city bulletin

Scan the QR code and select your language under "Foreign Language" to read the official city bulletin, "Koho Kashiwa," selected and translated for foreign residents.



NHK World-JAPAN's website has been renewed. Available in multiple languages.

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/multilingual_links/



Questions?
Please contact the office of
Kashiwa Cross-cultural Center (KCC)

Tel: 04-7157-0281 Fax: 04-7165-7321
Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.
Closed on Sundays and national holidays