

Food Culture Exchange Event 2023: Roast Turkey and Bōsō Futomaki Matsuri Sushi

On Saturday, November 18th, 2023, blessed with good weather, the CWA held its annual Food Culture Exchange Event at the Chiba City Lifelong Learning Center. A total of 24 participants took part, including three ALTs.

The CWA Steering Committee members assembled at 9:00 a.m. and proceeded with preparations, including putting the turkey in the oven, setting up the venue, and assembling ingredients. After 10:15, the arranged reception time, participants began arriving one after another, and the space gradually became more and more lively.

The menu included turkey and two types of sauce (gravy and cranberry), mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, apple cider, salad, soup, and the ever-popular Bōsō Futomaki Matsuri Sushi. The ALTs were able to try their hands at making two different types of Bōsō Futomaki Matsuri Sushi and assisted in preparing other dishes. Under the guidance of two members of the Chiba Traditional Local Cooking Society; Ms. Minegishi, and Ms. Mitsuhashi, who is also a member of the Steering Committee, everyone was able to make outstanding Bōsō Futomaki Matsuri Sushi.

When the food was ready, each table was filled to the brim, and everyone enjoyed the conversation as they ate. This time, there was a notable difference in the amount of turkey that was consumed at each table, with the young ALTs' table quickly finishing their portion and receiving seconds from other tables.

After the meal was over, all the participants introduced themselves, talking about their hobbies and other trivia. As one of the ALTs mentioned that it was his birthday, once introductions were finished, all the participants sang "Happy Birthday to You," which was a moving experience.

After taking a commemorative photo and cleaning up, the participants promised to meet again for the event next year and concluded the day's festivities.



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Everyone worked together to make a meal!



The food was delicious, and everyone had a great time!



*A video of this event is available on the CWA's website (<https://chiba-wisconsin.net/>).

2023 New ALT Welcome Party and Exchange Event

On Saturday, September 30th, the CWA held a welcome party and exchange event for newly appointed ALTs at the Kaihin-Makuhari Park Barbecue Garden. The event was attended by a total of 24 people, including the new ALTs. With Steering Committee member Abe taking the MC role, the event opened at 11:00 a.m. with an address from Steering Committee Chairperson Moriyama, followed by participants dividing into four groups to begin cooking.

All the barbecue ingredients, including sausages, beef, pork, vegetables, and yakisoba were pre-prepared and vacuum-packed by the Barbecue Garden management. Among all the groups, there was no particular pattern in division of cooking roles, with both men and women taking charge depending on the group. It seemed that each group's situation may reflect the division of household chores in the members' respective families.

The new ALTs, who were meeting many of the participants for the first time, seemed nervous and acted carefully while observing those around them. It is likely that they will be able to open up more as they participate in more of these kinds of events.

Soon after the event started, it began to rain. Though participants initially assumed that it would not affect things too strongly, it soon became a downpour. Because of the tents set up over each barbecue area, there was no disruption to the cooking, but the bags and equipment that had been left around the tents was soaked. The weather gradually turned around, and by the end the summer heat had returned.

By that time, the meat had been cooked, and the participants had had a lively and enjoyable time drinking beer, chūhai, and wine provided by Kikkoman. The final dish was yakisoba, though few of the ALTs seemed to reach for it, perhaps due to unfamiliarity.

After filling their stomachs, the ALTs introduced themselves. They talked about where they went to school, their hobbies, and their favorite foods in either English or Japanese. Some of their favorite Japanese foods included takoyaki, ramen, gyoza, and cold soba. Afterwards, a commemorative photo was taken, the tents were cleaned up, and the participants dispersed. The CWA is looking forward to seeing these ALTs again at future events.



Cooking

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Taking cover from the rain under the tents



Lively conversation with delicious food



ALT self-introductions

※A video of this event is available on the CWA's website (<https://chiba-wisconsin.net/>)

Cancellation of Wisconsin Goodwill Delegation

In order to accept a Culture & Arts Group Goodwill Delegation from Wisconsin in 2023, the CWA had made preparations in cooperation with the International Association of Ichikawa city, which the Delegation would visit. However, in mid-September, not long before the group's scheduled visit (December 2nd-9th), Wisconsin-Chiba Inc. (WCI), the point of contact on the Wisconsin side, informed the CWA that the group would no longer be able to visit. Therefore, the visit to Ichikawa has been cancelled after consultation with the concerned parties there.

The group that was scheduled to visit, Isthmus Brass, had been invited for the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the sister state relationship after consultation with the WCI during the 2019 Goodwill Delegation visit to Wisconsin. At the time, the WCI had been considering other groups, but the CWA requested Isthmus Brass with the thinking that they would be a good fit for the 30th anniversary concert.

Due to the subsequent outbreak and spread of Covid-19, the request for the Delegation's visit was postponed for the following three years, and finally accepted in 2023. However, due to various changes in circumstances over the intervening years, the number of Delegation members had dropped to nearly half, and the 30th anniversary event had been cancelled.

Ichikawa city has made great efforts to host the Culture & Arts Group Delegation, including coordinating exchange visits and host families for the Delegation members. The loss of this opportunity for exchange with the citizens of Ichikawa is deeply regrettable.

The CWA has received the following messages from WCI President Sharon Durtka and Isthmus Brass representative Mike Forbes.

We will continue our efforts to deepen the relationship between Chiba Prefecture and the State of Wisconsin.

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Both WCI and CWA were eagerly looking forward to the 2023 Goodwill Delegation, although the restart was to be with a smaller delegation.

In mid-September WCI and CWA were made aware of the Isthmus Brass Quintet's decision to withdraw as goodwill delegation due to schedules, venues and a concern about Covid.

On behalf of WCI Board of Directors, I offer our deepest apology for the great inconvenience caused by the Isthmus Brass Quintet's decision.

We take full responsibility for their decision which has placed CWA in an embarrassing situation with its host families, school, university and concert performance sites, and the people of Chiba.

We look forward to our future opportunities to work closely together to grow and deepen our thirty-four-year-old sister state relationship between the people of Chiba and the people of Wisconsin.

Sharon RL Durtka,

President, Wisconsin-Chiba, Inc.

We hope you are enjoying this autumn season. Thank you for your kind invitation to visit and perform in Chiba this year.

Unfortunately, due to sudden scheduling conflicts and the continuing uncertainty of the times, we have decided to cancel our trip to Japan. We wish you continued success in building relationships across international borders. Whether through music or other cultural exchanges, we know that personal friendships will become increasingly important in building bridges between countries.

With sincere regret and warm wishes,

Mike Forbes

Introducing the Wisconsin ALTs!

There are many ALTs from Wisconsin teaching at schools in Chiba Prefecture.

ALT, short for “Assistant Language Teacher,” is a foreign language teacher who assists with foreign language education in Japan. Currently, there are ALTs working in elementary, junior, and senior high schools in Chiba for the improvement of English and international understanding. Among them are the following ALTs from Wisconsin:



Inserted Photos (from the Left):	
Grace Burzinski	Prefectural Chiba Higashi High School
Alexis Lipkie	Prefectural Awa High School
John Skendzel	Isumi Municipal Ohara Elementary School, Ohara Junior High School, Choja Elementary School
Front Row (from the Left):	
Maximilian Gumble	Prefectural Board of Education, ALT Program Coordinator
Will Ranheim	Prefectural Sakura High School
Hanna Nam	Prefectural Narita Kokusai High School
Daryan Schultz	Prefectural Togane High School
Carson Holm	Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School
Alexie Bollman	Prefectural Chiba Minami High School
Sarah Kautz	Prefectural Matsuo High School
Aaron Van Den Elzen	Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School

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Back Row (from the Left):	
Liz Xiong	Prefectural Toke High School, Prefectural Chishirodai High School
Max Kortebein	Prefectural Chosei High School, Prefectural Otaki High School
James Aguilo Ramos	Prefectural Kimitu High School
Ben Alden	Prefectural Sosa High School
Libby Sattler	Prefectural Narita Kokusai High School
Tyler Jossart	Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School
Adam Finnessy	Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School
Joseph Simurdiak	Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School
Julie Mae Engelmann	Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School
Madeline Crandell	Prefectural Kashiwai High School

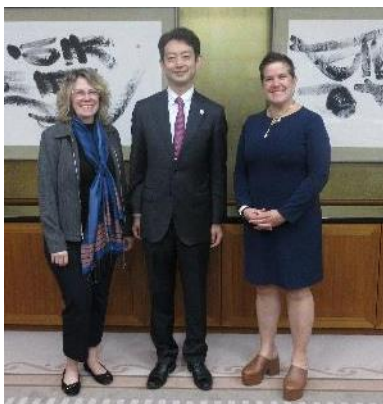
Governor Toshihito Kumagai Meets with Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes of Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

On Monday, October 16th, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes and Vice President of Global Trade and Investment Katy Sinnott paid a visit to CWA Special Advisor and Chiba Prefectural Governor Toshihito Kumagai.

Hughes mentioned that she had come to Japan to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Kikkoman's Wisconsin plant, and was shooting videos for a commemorative program that would include an introduction of the charms of Chiba Prefecture. She continued that she wanted to share the story and history of Wisconsin and Chiba's relationship, and that she was also interested in adding Japanese subtitles to the video in order to make it accessible to the people of Chiba as well.

The Governor expressed that he was pleased that they would be introducing Chiba Prefecture on the occasion of the Wisconsin plant's 50th anniversary, and asked for Wisconsin's cooperation with the Goodwill Delegation that is planned to visit next year. He also mentioned his gratitude for the support of the 20 ALTs from Wisconsin who serve at public high schools in the prefecture.

At the end of the visit, Hughes presented a vase created by a Wisconsin artist.



From left to right: Vice President Sinnott,
Governor Kumagai, Secretary and CEO Hughes

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[Obituary]

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of Mr. Toshinori Nakayama on November 2nd, 2023.

We would like to express our gratitude to him for his contributions and pray that he rest in peace.

[Editor's Note]

Regretfully, the Goodwill Delegation visit announced in the previous issue of CWA NEWS has been cancelled. Though the situation is unfortunate, we are working towards our upcoming exchanges in the next fiscal year. This year we were fortunate to be able to hold a welcome party for new ALTs as well as a food and culture exchange event with the participation of our members.

Moving forward, the CWA will continue to expand our circle of exchange.

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<http://chiba-wisconsin.net/>

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