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City of Concord News Release

March 22, 2011

"1,000 Cranes for Japan" candlelight vigil March 31 in Concord

The Concord Ambassadors, the non-profit organization sponsoring Concord's Sister City Program, will hold a "1,000 Cranes for Japan" candlelight vigil and fundraiser on Thursday, March 31, at 7 p.m. in Todos Santos Plaza in downtown Concord.

Concord's Sister City, Kitakami, was spared heavy damage but is suffering shortages and other impacts after the recent earthquake and tsunami, as are many cities in Northern Japan. The Ambassadors will be accepting donations to the [Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund](#) at the event.

An ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will be granted a wish, such as long life or recovery from illness or injury. Organizers are asking people who attend the vigil to bring an origami crane along with their donation, or make a crane at the event.

The Ambassadors' wish is for the full recovery of Japan and the organization plans to collect 10,000 cranes in 30 days, starting with the March 31 event. Collection boxes will be provided during the month of April at businesses around Todos Santos Plaza. The cranes will become part of an art piece that will commemorate Concord's support for its sister city.

Donations can be made anytime to the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California - Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund (1840 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115 via Union Bank) <http://www.jccnc.org>, the Japan Society of Northern California, <http://give2asia.org/japansociety>, the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco, http://www.sf.us.emb-japan.go.jp/e_top.htm, the Salvation Army, Red Cross or any of the other international organizations mobilizing to assist Japan. The Consulate website also includes the latest developments and contacts for those seeking more information.

Contra Costa Times

Concord to hold vigil for Japan Thursday

By Paul Thissen

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CONCORD -- The Concord Ambassadors, a nonprofit that runs the sister-city program linking Concord with Kitakami, Japan, will host a candlelight vigil and fundraiser Thursday for Japan's relief efforts.

Kitakami was spared heavy damage, but nearby towns were not so lucky.

Organizers aim to collect 1,000 origami cranes; Japanese folklore promises a wish to anyone who folds 1,000 cranes. Attendees can either bring their own origami crane or fold one at the event.

The vigil will take place at 7 p.m. in Todos Santos Plaza. More information on the vigil is available at www.cityofconcord.org.

Donations at the event will go to the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, organized by the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California. Donations can also be made online at www.jcccnc.org.

City of Concord News Release

March 16, 2011

Friends of Concord's Japanese Sister City relieved, seeking donations

Concord, CA-- Messages received from residents of Kitakami, Japan, Concord's sister city, are miraculously reporting no loss of life or widespread destruction to the city, located only 89 miles northwest of Sendai, the coastal city located closest to last week's earthquake. Food, water and gasoline, in Kitakami, however, are in short supply, and all train transportation has been stopped. Emergency centers have been set up for those in need.

“We are relieved to hear that Kitakami survived the worst of the destruction,” said Concord Ambassadors President Mike Pastrick. Members of the Concord Ambassadors support the City’s Sister City Program in Kitakami.

“While Kitakami was spared, our hearts go out to the people of Japan in areas not so fortunate. Less than 40 miles away from Kitakami, the people of the Iwate coast suffered horrendous losses. Many generous people have asked what they can do. At this time, the best way to offer assistance is to make a donation to one of the many charities sending aid to Japan,” he said.

The Ambassadors and the Japanese American Cultural Center in Concord are discussing what further actions are possible when the situation is more stable.

Pastrick suggests donations to the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California - Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund (1840 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115 via Union Bank) <http://www.icccnc.org>, the Japan Society of Northern California, <http://give2asia.org/japansociety>, the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco, http://www.sf.us.emb-japan.go.jp/e_top.htm, the Salvation Army, Red Cross or any of the other international organizations mobilizing to assist Japan. The Consulate website also includes the latest developments and contacts for those seeking more information.

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