

Kitakata City  
7244-2 Oshimizuhigashi,  
Kitakata City, Fukushima prefecture,  
966-8601, Japan



Mayor of the city of Wilsonville  
29799 SW Town Center Loop E  
Wilsonville, OR 97070

Dear Ms. Julie Fitzgerald,

I would like to extend my best wishes to you. The citizens of Kitakata and I express our sincerest gratitude for the generous donation from Wilsonville to commemorate the 35th anniversary of our sister city relationship. You may be pleased to know that the donation will be used to add two "Weeping Cherry Blossoms of Friendship" to the 3km line of weeping cherry trees along the former Nicchu Rail Line, a site which our city is very proud of.

I am very pleased that 13 of our students will be participating in the homestay program this year. In the many iterations since we established our sister city relationship, more than 400 student citizens have participated in the homestay program. They have developed international perspective, and by experiencing various activities and traditions with your community, they have broadened their horizons. We are grateful to have been able to deepen our bonds of friendship across the border.

The warmth and kind support shown to the students by you, your staff and the entire Wilsonville community is greatly appreciated. As a token of gratitude, and as a symbol our cities' friendship, I offer a Leather Bekoh. Made locally in Kitakata, it is a leather version of a traditional paper mâché toy called Aka-Bekoh. The Aka-Bekoh is said to ward off illness, and it is my deepest wish that epidemics will never again keep us apart for so long.

I hope for your continued well-being and look forward to growing the relationship between Wilsonville and Kitakata.

Sincerely yours,

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Mayor of Kitakata City