

久留米筑水高等学校

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Left to right, Fanny D'Amelio, Fuziko Hashimoto, Noriko Motomura, and Dan D'Amelio gather for a picture after the girls returned from a day at Loma Linda University.

Japanese girls visit Yucaipa

"Oh, look," said 16-year-old Noriko Motomura. "A 7-Eleven!"

Noriko is a visitor from Japan staying with Dan and Fanny D'Amelio of Yucaipa. Noriko lives in Fukuoka on the southern Japanese island of Kyushu, and across from Noriko's home is a 7-Eleven.

In addition to 7-Eleven, the D'Amelios learned, Fukuoka boasts, among other fast-food places, McDonald's, Mister Donut, Burger King, KFC and Pizza Hut.

Also staying with the D'Amelios is Fuziko Hashimoto, who is 16, too, and a good friend of Noriko. Both girls are here as part of the Pacific American Cultural Exchange program, a non-profit educational foundation headquartered in Redlands. According to the program's Host Family Handbook, the aim is to "give foreign students and American families the unforgettable experi-

ence of sharing their cultures, languages and hearts with one another."

The two girls arrived in California with other cultural exchange students on July 20 and will head back on July 29. There will be more students coming during the rest of the summer.

Already, in just a few days, Fuziko and Noriko have packed in a variety of our life. Among other things they visited Wal-Mart, admired the wide assortment of birds at the Bracken Bird Farm in Redlands, toured Redlands University and Crafton Hills College, visited the Yucaipa Library where they watched with fascination as a boy played games on a computer, and enjoyed the beautiful view atop Flag Hill Veterans Memorial Park.

Later this week the two girls will picnic with the D'Amelios at Oak Glen, hike the nature trail at Los

Rios Ranch and attend a concert at the Redlands Bowl and Wildwood Park — the two girls are fond of music.

The girls also like sports. Fuziko belongs to the basketball club at school. To get to school on time, they get up at 6 a.m. and for much of the year, they attend classes six days a week. Like most Japanese students, Noriko and Fuziko study English at school. It is a required subject. The girls are far from fluent in the language, but they manage to make themselves understood.

Last Sunday night Fuziko and Noriko prepared a Japanese meal for their hosts, which included rice (the girls brought from Japan); a beef, carrot and potato stew, seasoned with spices (also brought from Japan); and a Japanese-style potato salad. How was it? "Delicious!" chorused the D'Amelios.