

Living on

SHAKY GROUND

HOW TO SURVIVE EARTHQUAKES AND TSUNAMIS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

How a Tsunami and a Small Boat Connected Two Cities on Opposite Sides of the Pacific

Before 2013, the people of Crescent City in Del Norte County didn't realize there was a similar city in Japan. Rikuzentakata is located along the remote Tohoku region coast where the people take pride in their fisheries, forests and beautiful scenery. Del Norte County is also known for fishing and spectacular vistas.



Del Norte County coast



Tohoku coast

THE 2011 JAPAN TSUNAMI CHANGED LIFE IN BOTH OF THESE COASTAL CITIES.

Rikuzentakata was devastated by the tsunami that destroyed most of the city. Tsunami surges reached Crescent City nearly ten hours later. The tsunami was much smaller than in Japan but was still strong enough to destroy the harbor.

TWO YEARS AFTER THE TSUNAMI, THE BOAT KAMOME BEACHED IN CRESCENT CITY.

It belonged to a high school in Rikuzentakata. Del Norte High School students worked to return the boat to Japan, beginning an exchange that continues to this day.



Del Norte students visit Japan in 2014



Japanese students in Del Norte County in 2015

CRESCENT CITY AND RIKUZENTAKATA OFFICIALLY BECAME SISTER CITIES IN 2018.

It was the first time a Sister City bond was the result of a tsunami. Both communities pledged to become more resilient to future disasters by learning from each other.



Officials from Crescent City and Rikuzentakata celebrate becoming Sister Cities in April, 2018.

