

# Chigasaki Breeze

Truly great friends are hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget.

No.0005

## THE STAR FESTIVAL

### “TANABATA”

#### 七夕祭



Do you know the two stars in the sky that love each other but are separated by the Milky Way and only allowed to meet on July 7th?

The legend that originated in China says that the Cowherd Star visits the Weaver Star on this day and the custom to celebrate the visit was succeeded by Japanese court nobility at the beginning, calling it *TANABATA*. Since the Edo Period (1603-1867), however, it began to be celebrated by common people at large.

People write their wishes and/or poems on oblong sheets of paper in various colors on the eve of the 7th, and hang them on a bamboo tree. This beautifully decorated bamboo is put out on the street or in the garden for the celebration.

In recent years, the two cities of Sendai and Hiratsuka have attracted tens of thousand of people from all over by decorating their shopping arcades with *TANABATA* decorations on a large scale.

Hiratsuka is the neighboring city, only five minutes by train from Chigasaki, and these decorations are kept there for about a week until July 9th. It would be a great fun to visit Hiratsuka during this period but be aware of the huge crowd.

The Cowherd Star and the Weaver Star may be seen high above in the sky too!

### CONSULTATION FOR FOREIGN RESIDENTS

BUNKA SUISHIN-KA section of the city hall will be receiving phone calls from foreign residents at any time, so either interview or consultation can be arranged based on the reservation. The timing depends on the availability of interpreters but the appointment will need a week or so to be arranged. Visitors should be able to consult not only in English but also in Portuguese, Korean, and Chinese.  
(Tel: 0467-82-1111 extension: 3309)

## HAMAORI-SAI

### FESTIVAL

#### 浜降祭



Photo by Yoshio Ishikawa

On Marine Day or *UMI-NO-HI*, about 40 *MIKOSHI*s or sacred portable shrines representing local shrines in Chigasaki led by Tsurumine shrines and Samukawa area get together at the Chigasaki seashore near Nango district in the early morning, between 5 and 7 o'clock. They are sacred as they hold the soul of the guardian god or *UJIGAMI-SAMA* in them. The festival is called *HAMAORI-SAI*. It's scheduled on July 17 this year when people in some particular clothing carry *MIKOSHI* on their shoulders to the seaside for a fairly long distance shouting "Dokkoisho, Dokkoisho" in a special rhythm.

It is said that in 1838, one of the *MIKOSHI*s was lost when there was a fight between parishioners of Samukawa shrine and the shrines of a neighboring town at a pier on Sagami-gawa river near Samukawa Shrine. The lost *UJIGAMI-SAMA* was found in the sea of Chigasaki by a fisherman of Nango about 10 days later. Then parishioners of Samukawa shrines visited the Chigasaki seashore to express their appreciation of the discovery. This is the origin of the festival at Chigasaki seashore. At around 7 o'clock, all *MIKOSHI*s go into the sea, purify the soul, and have a rite of Shinto praying for the fertility of grains and for people to have an honest and healthy life.

As soon as the ritual finishes, they all return to their original shrines, passing through their hometowns praying also for the well-being, good health and safety of the family. The role of *MIKOSHI* at the *HAMAORI-SAI*, therefore, is to be a vehicle for moving the soul of god to the sea from all the local areas.

After this Festival at dawn is over, a real summer comes to people in Chigasaki.

## CHIGASAKI-KAN AND YASUJIRO OZU



At Nakakaigan in the city, there is a typical old Japanese inn or *ryokan* called *Chigasaki-kan*. The existing building built in 1915 is of Taisho period architecture but there remains a functional bath room which was a part of the first original building built in 1899 in the Meiji period. The garden is nicely set up with old pine trees, and a lot of azalea flowers, etc., in quiet surroundings. It takes only two or three minutes on foot to get to the beach directly from the garden.

*Chigasaki-kan*, itself, is known as a *ryokan* where a world-famous film director **Yasujiro Ozu** stayed from fall to winter every year for 10 years to work out his scenarios. His favorite was room #2 which has been kept with special care in favor of his memory.

**Yasujiro Ozu** is one of the most famous film directors from the time of black-and-white movies. He was born in Kohtoh Ward, Tokyo but he spent his childhood watching many Hollywood films in his father's hometown, Matsuzaka, Mie Prefecture, south of Nagoya. After working as a teacher for a while, he joined one of the largest film companies in Japan: Shochiku Film. He directed 54 films during his life directing and displaying typical family life in Japan. His works include *Banshunn* (Late Spring, 1949), *Tokyo Monogatari* (Tokyo Story, 1953), and *Ukigusa* (Floating Weeds, 1959). He established his unique camera work of shooting the scenes from low angles and as such, he had a great impact on the film industry, so much so that it remains influential even today. His pieces also attracted many fans in foreign countries and finally *Tokyo Monogatari* or *Tokyo Story* gave him the Sutherland Trophy at the London Film Festival in 1958.

Even if you don't stay over night at *Chigasaki-kan*, you can have a good time by enjoying their first class food for lunch and by walking around their beautiful garden as well.

More information is available at: <http://www.chigasaki-kan.co.jp/>

## PREFECTURAL COUNSELING SERVICES

Kanagawa Prefecture offers counseling services that cities like Chigasaki cannot cover and they have systems and facilities to take care of foreign residents in many ways. So, if you have problems that are difficult to deal with, please contact the following offices:

Prefectural Counseling Services for Foreign Residents; Citizens' Voice/Counseling Center.

(Consultation hours: 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

English: 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesdays 045-324-2299

Spanish: Fridays and 2nd Tuesday 045-31207555

Portuguese: Wednesdays 045-322-1444

Korean: 1st, 3rd and 5th Mondays 045-321-1339

Chinese: Thursdays and 4th Tuesday 045-321-1339

Note: Picked up here are offices in Yokohama only.

Legal Counseling (Consultation hours: 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.):

English - 3rd Tuesday

Portuguese - 2nd Wednesday

Chinese - 4th Thursday

Labor Counseling (Consultation hours: 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.):

Spanish: Wednesdays 045-662-1166

Chinese: Fridays 045-662-1103

Other Counseling Services:

\* For domestic violence:

House for Women "Saalaa" 045-901-3527

Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday

\* For consultation on housing:

Kanagawa Housing Support Center for Foreign Residents 045-228-1752

\* If you need an interpreter: MIC Kanagawa 045-900-4675

Information from 'Hello Kanagawa'

## Medical Information Series V

### Doctors Available for Consultation in English

Igarashi Clinic (I,C) Saiwai-cho22-6-202 Tel:87-8282

I-toh Ganka Clinic (O) Higashi-kaigan Kita 1-2-19 Tel:83-7771

Oh-no Clinic (I,D,C) Midori-ga-hama4-29 Tel:88-0330

Kanemoto Ganka Clinic (O) Heiwa-cho4-26 Tel:87-1511

Kanemoto Internal Medicine & Circulatory Organ Clinic (I,C)

Heiwa-cho4-26 Tel:88-1231

Remarks:

I = Internal medicine C = Cardiology Circulatory Organs

O = Ophthalmology D = Digestive Organs

## A Letter from an Exchange Student

On September 30th, 2005, I boarded an airplane that would take me to Japan for the next five months. There had been plenty of hesitation, anxiety, and unpleasantness regarding my fears and doubts about attending Japanese school and living with a family I had never met for the next half of a year, but I am pleased to say that I need not have worried about a thing. The generosity, sincerity and kindness of everyone I met during my stay astounded me more and more each day. After being greeted by bowing women in fluorescent pink airport uniforms, I was taken by bus and train to my new home in Chigasaki where I met my program coordinators and my new host family. The next five months went by faster than I could have imagined, filled with exquisite Japanese cooking, unbelievably cute cell-phone attachments, and enough ridiculous stories and adventures to fill a book with. As I learned about the Japanese language and its people as well as the life of a Japanese high-school student, I was given insight into my own lifestyle and culture, something that will stay with me for a long time to come. The hardest part has been describing the experience to those at home: my morning bicycle ride to school during which I could see Mount Fuji above the cables and rooftops of the town, my host mother singing along to 'Guns n' Roses' while cooking dinner, the hilarity of trying to fit nine people into a *Purikura* booth, and the wide-eyed adoration by Japanese teenagers of all things American. When my return home finally came, I felt like I was leaving a part of me behind. I wish that I could personally thank everyone who I met during my stay, with the most humble and correct Japanese possible. Then I might be able to convey how grateful I am to have been able to visit such a unique and wonderful city. Whether you only get a chance to visit briefly, or live there for a full year, Chigasaki is a city with a life and energy all of its own, and is not easily forgotten.

Chaney Howe, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

## IAC ACTIVITIES

### ● ASSISTANCE TO OVERSEAS



One of the IAC's major activities is to assist overseas children or the younger generation in need of education or training to become basically independent. The countries recently involved include Cambodia, Peru, Nepal, and Laos plus Eastern Ache in Indonesia hit by the Tsunami. Assistance is rendered either directly or indirectly through various Non Profit Organizations. In the past, countries such as Kenya, Sri Lanka, and Kosovo in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been involved. In the case of Kosovo, it was to help a young girl to have a surgery in Japan in 2003. She had a serious injury on her head resulting in the civil war in the country.

The monetary assistance ranges from 50,000 to 200,000 yen per year/case and it comes from the membership, charity concert, and the sale of fancy goods from the Sewing Box Group and IAC T-shirts. The assistance is not large but it's been done consistently every year.

## Embarrassing and strange things for foreigners....?

In the previous issue, we reported that IAC and the city jointly held an event titled "Discussion in Japanese by Foreign Residents". The themes given were: embarrassing and strange things living in Japan. Fifteen foreigners currently living in Chigasaki attended as speakers including two guests and there were about sixty people in the audience including foreigners.

First, the difficulty of communicating in Japanese especially at hospitals was brought up in addition to Japanese customs such as bowing, the uncertainty of *iidesu* (which could mean either okay or no thanks), *seiza* or sitting on the floor in Japanese fashion, jam-packed trains at rush hours, and so forth.

Other strange things they felt were in regards to the patience of Japanese people waiting in line for more than 30 minutes to buy a couple pieces of *manju* or bean paste cakes, sleepers in the train, a wedding ceremony at a Christian church regardless of religion, a fairly rough party beneath the cherry blossoms, a Dutch treat, adults' *Manga*, nude pictures on magazine covers, ladies-only train car, urinating outdoors, the number of crows in town, married priests, doggy bags, full-time housewives, etc.

The panelists this time were from countries such as Malaysia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Peru, and Korea, and the customs and culture are all different. So, it may be natural that they feel embarrassed or think strange as to what is done in Japan. There are a lot of things the Japanese can learn from what the foreigners felt in Japan.

IAC feels that the event was successful and looks forward to making it more meaningful in years to come.



## Confucius says .....

Confucius says a young man must be filial to his parents at home, be obedient to his elders outside of his family, be discreet and faithful, love people and learn to be humane. If he has spare energy after practicing these, he must learn about culture.

Chigasaki Breeze has been issued every other month with the assistance of Chigasaki city. If you wish to subscribe, please send ¥480 in stamps for 6 issues to International Association of Chigasaki c/o Bunka Suishinka, Chigasaki City Hall, 1-1-1 Chigasaki, Chigasaki City 253-0041. Article submissions and items for classified ads are most welcome either via email [chigasaki\\_breeze@7jp.com](mailto:chigasaki_breeze@7jp.com) or by post to the above address.

Chief editor: Yutaka Shimada. Editing staff: Y. Itoh, E. Iwamoto, S. Nakane, A. Sakai, Y. Wada, and H. Yuge

Printed by Taisei Kikaku K.K.