

The Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter Issue No. 47



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Thinking Together about Multicultural Life <Open Forum Report>

The Open Forum for FY 2012 was held on December 9 at the Industrial Promotion Hall - Kawasaki. One of the aims of this Forum is to hear the voices of those who are not on the Representative Assembly and to reflect their opinions in the deliberations. It provides an opportunity to share information about the Representative Assembly, and a place for foreign residents to meet each other, as well for foreign residents and Japanese residents. Before to the Open Forum, over about a month, the representatives visited the Japanese classes within the city to speak to the foreign residents participating as students. Approximately 110 people came to the Open Forum and discussions continued for three hours from 14:00 through 17:00. During the first half of the Open Forum, the representatives first gave brief greetings in their native languages and then introduced themselves in Japanese.

A lecture on disaster preparedness was given by Mr. Tsunoda, of the Kawasaki City Administration Office Crisis Preparedness Room. The participants eagerly asked questions after his lecture – perhaps they had recognized how dreadful earthquakes can be from the handouts and movies shown.

The latter half of the Open Forum was divided into the “Welfare and Education Session” and the “Life and Society Session.” The session for Welfare and Education focused primarily on education at home, native language education, and multicultural exchange, while the session for Life and Society focused on the topics of transmission of information and involvement in local community activities. We received valuable comments and opinions from the participants in the Forum.

We also invited Professor Chikako Kashiwazaki, Department of Economics, Keio University and Professor Yuji Nakano, Department of Law, Komazawa University to these sessions as commentators. The sessions were followed by a plenary meeting, in which an active discussion took place, particularly on the topic of multicultural exchange. An informal reception was held after the closing ceremony.

With the valuable opinions we received in this Open Forum, we will continue to strive to help develop Kawasaki City into a better place to live. The Representative Assembly is always open to your opinions and comments through comments from observers, email, or fax. Please feel free to tell us what you think.

(GAN, Leong Yeun)



Participants' Opinions at the Open Forum (Partial List)

Welfare and Education Session

- Please provide a place for communication between parents who are Japanese residents and those who are foreign residents – we ought to share common issues such as the problems that arise between parents and children in a family.
- Please discuss ways for the city to provide support for education at home.

Life and Society Session

- It may be more helpful if information about disaster prevention training administered by local communities were made publicly available by the city.
- If there are residents who are able to communicate in foreign languages, then it may be helpful to attach translated summaries to the notices distributed among the households within a local neighborhood association
- It would be a good idea for the Representative Assembly to conduct on-site lectures at high schools and universities in Kawasaki.



Participation in Multicultural Festa Mizonokuchi



On October 20, 2012, the annual event “Multicultural Festa Mizonokuchi” was held on the rooftop of the Kawasaki City Takatsu Civic Center. This event aims to develop a harmonious multicultural community by nurturing mutual understanding and friendship among a wide variety of individuals, including those with disabilities, foreign residents, children, the elderly, and those in position to support the others. The Representative Assembly setup a multicultural food stall. The food menu included Chinese sesame balls, Thai curry noodles, Korean chijimi, and Brazilian pastel.



The representatives were split into two different groups: One did the cooking, and the other took care of the sales. Shortly after the cooking started, fresh and piping hot food began to line up on the table. The



sales group worked just as hard as the cooking group and called out to potential customers. Our food sold very well, and we exchanged many smiles and communicated in various languages, so this was also a good opportunity to share information about the Representative Assembly. I was truly grateful for being able to offer food from our home countries that we had prepared ourselves.
(YANG Yi)



Participation in the Kawasaki Citizens' Festival



The 35th Kawasaki Citizens' Festival was held from November 2, 2012 through November 4, 2012 at Fujimi Park.

The Representative Assembly prepared a booth with a display of dolls and instruments from different countries, along with a collection of photographs showing the history of the Assembly. Many customers stopped by our booth to try out beverages such as teas and juices of Brazil, Korea, and China. As always, we had many children participate in the “World Quiz” this year.

The most successful event was the fishing game. Sweets, candies and stationery goods were packed into “fish” made of paper bags – children and adults joined together in this fishing game (taking it very seriously!), using fishing rods made from disposable wooden

chopsticks and hooks.

Folk dances and traditional music from various different countries were performed on the main stage. The foreign representatives then came on to the stage to introduce themselves in their native languages, and shared some of the activities of the Representative Assembly.

The representatives also participated in the parade held on the 4th in beautiful national costumes. The spectators on the streets cheered and waved, and applauded with smiles as the parade passed by.

The weather was perfect during this year's Citizens' Festival, and it turned out to be a great success. There were a total of 880 visitors to the Representative Assembly's booth. We would like to continue to participate in this Festival every year to further deepen our contacts with the citizens of Kawasaki. (WU, Qun)

A Look Inside the Deliberations

Life and Society Section

Deliberations on three topics have been completed within the Life and Society Section. The first topic was on family based immigration issues for the foreign residents living in Japan. For those foreign residents with a Japanese spouse, the current immigration system is structured in such a way that it is virtually impossible to bring their elderly parents to Japan in order to look after them. We agreed that we would like this situation to be improved. Next, on the topic of consultation / public services, we reached the conclusion that it would be useful if documents issued by the city were available in various languages, particularly in cases where one may need to submit them in foreign countries. This would not only benefit foreign residents, but also Japanese citizens working overseas. Lastly, on the topic of local community activities, although we believe that getting involved would greatly benefit both Japanese and foreign residents, some of us were unsure of what to do and where to go in order to get involved. It was said that the participation rate of the Japanese residents in such activities are also dropping. Therefore, we concluded that each of us should make efforts to promote awareness of involvement in local community activities at the individual level. We are currently conducting deliberations over “attraction of enterprises and promotion of social contributions” and “transmission of information.”



(David CHART, Section Leader)

Welfare and Education Section

A total of eight topics of deliberation were categorized as follows within the Welfare and Education Section:

Time-consuming topics: education at home, native language education, and multicultural exchange.

Non-time-consuming topics: support for parents and guardians, bullying problems, welfare services for elderly, support services for raising infants, and medical care.

During deliberations on the topic of home education, we had an opportunity to invite and listen to a staff member from the Lifelong Learning Promotion Division, Board of Education and to listen to the diverse opinions of the participants in the Open Forum. Taking into consideration members' experiences, thoughts, enthusiasm, and a variety of information sources, the following recommendations have been reached: 1) Provide multilingual information sessions and reference materials on the education system, 2) Provide a common place for contact between foreign resident parents and guardians, and 3) Set up opportunities to hear the views of children with connections to foreign countries. Further deliberations will be held on the topics of native language education and multicultural exchange, and on the five non-time-consuming topics. The Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, and the fourteen members of the Section are diligently working together to offer proposals to the Mayor in order to make life richer for the foreign residents of Kawasaki.



(Izumi Beatriz SONODA, Section Leader)

A new version of “For Foreign Residents of Kawasaki” is available.

Do you know about the booklet “For Foreign Residents of Kawasaki”? You can find useful information about schools, moving, taxes, hospitals, etc., in multiple languages (English, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog). The 2012 version is pocket size (A5), and easy to hold. This booklet is available in ward offices, public services corners, civic halls, libraries etc. (free of charge).

If you don't have it, please take a look.

In addition, please tell your acquaintances, friends, and family members about it.



Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents -- FY2013 Meeting Schedule --



Anyone is welcome to come and observe the meetings!

Location: Kawasaki International Center

(Nearest Station: Tokyu Toyoko Line, Motsumiyoshi Station)

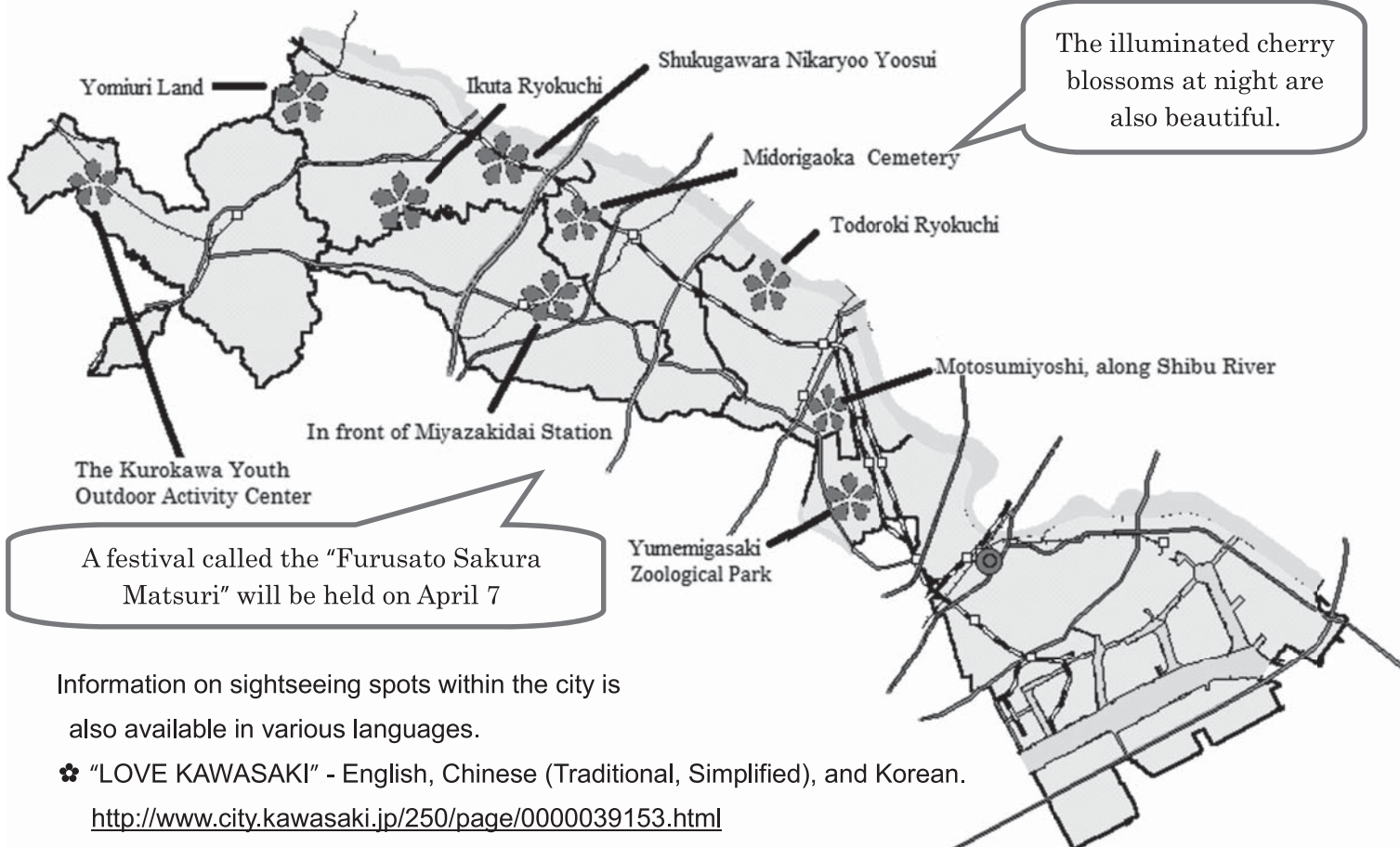
Time: 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

1st Meeting:	Day 1 – Sunday, April 21	Day 2 – Sunday, May 26
2nd Meeting:	Day 1 – Sunday, June 23	Day 2 – Sunday, September 8
3rd Meeting:	Day 1 – Sunday, October 6	Day 2 – Sunday, December 8
4th Meeting:	Day 1 – Sunday, January 19	Day 2 – Sunday, February 16

Useful information for Foreign Residents #7

Let's Enjoy Kawasaki! Places to See Cherry Blossoms in Kawasaki.

Mid-to-late spring is an exciting time in Japan. This is the time when Yoshino Cherry trees (*Prunus x yedonis*) blossom. Here is a list of several popular sites where one can take in these beautiful and fragrant flowers. The blossoms usually start to bloom in late March, and last until early April here in Kawasaki.



The illuminated cherry blossoms at night are also beautiful.

A festival called the "Furusato Sakura Matsuri" will be held on April 7

Information on sightseeing spots within the city is also available in various languages.

- ❁ "LOVE KAWASAKI" - English, Chinese (Traditional, Simplified), and Korean.
<http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/250/page/0000039153.html>
(Kawasaki City Home Page)
- ❁ "Discover Kawasaki" - English, Chinese (Traditional, Simplified), and Korean.
<http://www.travelkawasaki.com/> (Kawasaki City Tourist Association Home Page)

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Your opinions regarding this newsletter and/or the Assembly are always welcome.