

The Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter No. 52



KAWASAKI CITY
川崎市

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(Simple Japanese) <http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/250/page/0000042748.html>

International Festival in Kawasaki

On July 6th, I participated for the first time in a multicultural event at the Kawasaki International Center. (For the Representative Assembly, it was the second time, following on from last year.)

On the day, songs and dances from various countries were performed on the outdoor stage, food from across the world was sold, and the event was very lively. Inside, as well, there were instrumental and dance performances in the hall and on the stage, as well as many activities, such as trying on a yukata.

The representatives also held an enjoyable rock-scissors-paper competition with the children and explained the activities of the Representative Assembly, and I think we were able to raise awareness of the FRA. I was astonished by the number of attendees and the lively atmosphere of the event, and very much enjoyed the day.



(Fongchu Mo)

Taking a city tour

On July 27th 2014, many representatives took the city buses in the height of the summer heat and went on a city tour.

Our first stop was the Fureai-kan. At the Fureai-kan, they actively encourage interaction between Japanese and foreign residents, as residents of the same area, and deepen friendly relationships. It is open for Japanese classes, traditional dance, and as a place for children to play.

Next, we visited the "Kawasaki Education and Culture Center". On the day we were there, they were holding the prefectural school brass band competition, so the atmosphere was quite busy. According to the staff member who showed us around, the Education and Culture Center encourages artistic and cultural activities by city residents, and is used for the activities of local groups. If you register as a user at the reception desk, you can apply online on "Fureai-net" to use meeting rooms, study rooms, and halls.



Finally, we went to the "Tokaido Kawasaki Shuku Koryukan". You can study the history and culture of Kawasaki in this marvelous building. Touch panels show the historical streetscapes of Kawasaki, and you can put on Edo-period travelers' clothes and enter the world of Ukiyo-e prints to have your photograph taken as a souvenir. It is a place well worth visiting.

(Minsuk Gong)

◇ Subcommittee Reports ◇

■ Welfare and Education Subcommittee

In the 10th session, we have decided to deal with the themes of infants and toddlers, schools, elderly people, pensions and insurance, and mother tongues. We plan to take a positive approach through exchanging our views, working with the new members, and respecting everyone's ideas and passion. Furthermore, in order to ensure that we can deeply discuss all these themes, we will advance in accordance with a strategic plan.

It has been decided that I will continue as chair of the subcommittee for the 10th session. Personally, I think that it is first of all important for foreign residents of Kawasaki to get accurate information. Building on my experience and reflection from the 9th session, I hope to guide the discussions in the subcommittee towards even better proposals.

(Welfare and Education Subcommittee Chair, Izumi Beatriz Sonoda)

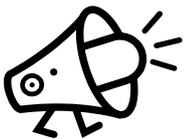
■ Life and Society Subcommittee

I have become the new chair of the Life and Society Subcommittee. The main responsibility of the chair is the progress of the discussions, and over the next two years I will take my responsibilities seriously working to summarize good proposals, through lively discussions with all the members.

At the September meeting, our discussions and investigations centered on the topic of employment support for foreign residents. First, we investigated the current situation, and found out about public support system that foreign residents can use. However, when foreigners apply for work in Japan, it seems that actual job skills are not as important as the ability to speak Japanese. At the meeting, it was suggested that, as foreign residents have many levels of Japanese ability, including the fact that some come from countries that use kanji, and others do not, it would be good to have support not only for the acquisition of basic Japanese, but also for more advanced levels.

We plan to continue our discussions and investigations of each theme from a various points of view, and join them up into concrete proposals.

(Life and Society Subcommittee Chair, Jialin Ren)



Why Not Attend a Meeting?

—Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2014—

Location: Kawasaki International Center (10 minutes' walk from Motosumiyoshi Station)

Map: <http://www.kian.or.jp/accessmap.shtml>

Time: From 2pm to 5pm

4th Session, 1st Day: January 18th (Sunday)

4th Session, 2nd Day: February 15th (Sunday)



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Anyone may come to listen to the discussions of the Assembly, which are held in Japanese. Why don't you come and see the Assembly at work!

Introduction of a new representative

As representative Gajender Sharma has had to resign for personal reasons, Yuheng Tung has been appointed as a new member of the assembly.



◇ Name (Nationality/Region)
Tung Yuheng (Taiwan)

◇ Feelings on Becoming a Representative, and Topics to Discuss

It is a real honor to be chosen as a representative. I have started to participate in the middle of things, but I hope to be able to work with everyone to turn Kawasaki into a better place to live for Japanese and foreign residents, as well as further improve its environment.

◇ Favorite Phrase or Ideal

If you can dream it, you can do it.

Winter in Germany ~Season of Stories~

In Europe, as the days shorten at year's end, the dark and cold winter begins. In such a season, family and relatives gather in the warmth of their homes and warm each other's hearts by sharing stories. The Christmas season in Germany is a season particularly rich in stories.

In this article, I would like to share a story that I often heard before Christmas when I was a child. It is the story of "Auguste, the Christmas Goose", which was popular as a broadcast play in East Germany in the 1980s.

In November an opera singer brought home a living goose he had bought in preparation for the Christmas dinner a month later on Christmas Eve. A goose is a quite expensive dish, but Christmas is a special occasion, so his wife and three children were also excited about it. To make the meal as good as possible, they decided to fatten the goose keeping it in their cellar. However, the children soon became friends with the goose, and called it "Auguste".

The children quickly grew fond of Auguste, and felt sorry for her in the cold cellar, so they took her to their own room. As Christmas Eve approached, the children protested against the idea of eating their beloved Auguste. "You can't turn our Auguste into dinner!" Even so, their father was not ready to give up the roast goose he had been looking forward to, and when Christmas came he started to pluck Auguste out of the children's sight, and get her ready for cooking. Happily, the children caught him out, and were able to save Auguste at the last moment. The children gave Auguste a pullover to cover her lack of feathers, and from that day she lived with the family as their pet.



Sharing stories, like "Auguste", that everyone knows is good, but creating your own stories is also fun. If you share stories you like with your family and friends, you may find that the cold winter is surprisingly warm.

(Daniela Dittmar)

■ Are you ready? Disaster Preparedness in Winter Too!

In Japan, the 1st of September is designated “National Disaster Preparedness Day”, in reference to the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. Across Japan, evacuation exercises and the like have been held every year. After the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011, there is an even bigger awareness for the importance of preparations in all seasons.

Kawasaki City has prepared a pamphlet, “Disaster Preparedness in Kawasaki”, setting out clearly the steps that individuals and families should take to be ready for a disaster, and distributed it to residents. The pamphlet covers many topics, such as a list of earthquake preparations for your home and emergency supplies, points to pay attention to in case of evacuation, what to do if you cannot return from work or other places outside your home, and how to check whether your family is safe. In addition, it shows sources of information for foreign residents. Furthermore, there are “Kawasaki Emergency Evacuation Maps” for each ward, showing evacuation centers, water supply points, and emergency hospitals.

Both are available in “Easy Japanese” and eight foreign languages, and you can get them at ward offices and branch offices. They can also be downloaded from the city webpage. Please use them in your disaster preparations!



(Sunok Kim)

“Disaster Preparedness in Kawasaki”

<http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/160/page/0000015861.html>

<http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/160/page/0000023635.html>

“Emergency Evacuation Map”

<http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/kurashi/category/15-3-13-7-0-0-0-0-0-0.html>



Kawasaki Information

Did you know? “Kawasaki Prevent-Street-Smoking Ordinance”

In Kawasaki, to secure a safe and pleasant environment, places where lots of people pass through continuously, such as roads and public squares in front of stations, are designated “important areas”, and smoking is prohibited in such areas. If you violate this ordinance, you will be fined ¥2,000.

As of March 2014, there are six “important areas”.

1. Around Kawasaki Station
2. Around Musashi Kosugi Station
3. Around Musashi Mizonokuchi Station
4. Around Saginuma Station
5. Around Noborito and Mukaigaokayuen Stations
6. Around Shinyurigaoka Station



* These areas may be subject to changes.

Detailed information is available on the city webpage.

<http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/kurashi/category/24-1-16-3-0-0-0-0-0-0.html>

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