

PEOPLE IN TOWN

Morgan Paul Williams From UK

I love the ocean breeze, Chigasaki's Aloha Spirit, and that I can see Mt Fuji from my window.....



Morgan Paul Williams is from Cardiff, Wales (UK). He came to Japan in 1986 when he was 27, a few years after graduating from University of Wales. He lived 13 years in the Hiroshima area, teaching English at local universities and at his own school. He's also a musician, and played music with his own band there for more than 10 years.

In the UK, he played semi-pro soccer for 11 years, ending when he came to Japan. He has also lived on the U.S. East Coast for one year in 1981/1982, in France in 1983, and in Hawaii, on the island of Kauai, from 1999 through 2006. In Hawaii, he worked as a healing therapist and full-time musician, playing mainly Irish/Celtic Folk Songs. He was also a member of the Kauai soccer team that competed in the Hawaii State Championships in Honolulu in 2000~2003. After coming back to Japan in 2006, he lived in central Tokyo for a couple of years before moving to Samukawa on June 6 this year.

In this way, Paul is much talented, internationalized, with a very reasonable understanding of the cultures of different countries. He is quite new in this area but he knows about Japan and the Japanese very well, speaking fluent Japanese. What motivated Paul to move to Samukawa was mainly work, though he liked the proximity to the ocean and the breeze that he experienced as soon as he first set foot here. He was also looking for a slower paced environment in Japan, more akin to the one he enjoyed in his 7 years in Hawaii.

Paul thinks Japanese are generally kind people, have good hearts and real integrity, and he appreciates the safety aspect of life here. He also says food is great, good quality and very healthy. A couple of things he's not so keen on however are the very expensive car inspection fees and the cost of moving into an apartment, which is very different from Hawaii and the UK.

When he came to Japan, the economy was in the middle of the bubble era. Since then to this date, he has noticed many changes, one very noticeable one being that many people, especially kids, are no longer wowed by the sight of a foreigner. This was far from the case when he arrived in Japan for the first time. He says people seem to have lost a kind of innocence, though personally he feels it's nicer to be able to go about without the attention.

At the present time he is in the process of writing a book about Crystal Healing Therapy, of which he is a therapist and teacher. He is also working to set up English lessons, as well as looking for places to play music in this area. He currently plays regularly in Irish pubs in Tokyo and other cities in Japan.

RESPECT-FOR-THE-AGED DAY

けいろう ひ
敬老の日

This year, the National Holiday called Respect-for-the-Aged Day or *Keirō-no-hi* falls on September 21, as it's always held on the third Monday of the month.

This holiday is a day to honor older people, celebrate their long life and pray for their good health in the future, in addition to fostering a deeper understanding of the welfare issues affecting senior citizens. In addition, 131 *Jichikai* or neighborhood organizations in Chigasaki and local Senior Citizen Support groups will stage many events such as variety shows, and they will be donating mementos. Also, volunteers in each district will make courtesy visits to the homes of senior citizens.

Now, September 23 is also a National Holiday, called *Shūbun-no-hi* or Autumn Equinox, and so the day between these two celebration days has become a holiday too. This makes it four consecutive holidays from September 20 through September 23. *Shūbun-no-hi* is the day when the length of both the day and the night are the same, just like the Spring Equinox, and it marks the change of seasons, the end of the summer heat and the coming of the cool fall.

Japan has the world's longest life expectancy, and the percentage of elderly people within the total population will definitely increase over the next 10~15 years. Therefore, this holiday will become more and more meaningful.

IAC ACTIVITY

CROSS-CULTURAL EVENTS AT THE KAIGAN YOUTH HALL

かいがんせいしゅうねんかいがん いぶんかこうりゅう
海岸青少年会館での異文化交流



With the aim of creating a cross-cultural exchange opportunity for young local students and foreign visitors/residents to enjoy calligraphy and Japanese *sumi-e* together, the Kaigan Youth Hall and the IAC worked together to stage events on July 18 and August 8.

On July 18 six university students from France and a few other foreign residents from Vietnam learned how to use a *fude*, Japanese writing brush, while on August 8 twelve foreign residents of the city from Indonesia and Vietnam enjoyed practicing *sumi-e*. It was a challenging study for many of these non-Japanese people and they seemed they really enjoyed themselves.



Each day they spent about an hour in their studies, and then enjoyed making, cooking, and eating Japanese dishes such as shaved ice, *maki-zushi* (rolled sushi), *udon*, and vegetables using soy sauce and other seasonings prepared by the IAC's volunteer staff. On both days there were about 30 participants in all and they especially seemed like making *maki-zushi*. Using a Japanese writing brush is quite a new thing for people from overseas, and they had a lot of fun practicing the characters for 'bamboo', 'mountain', 'river', and so forth, on *washi*, Japanese paper.

August 8 was the day of the firework display at nearby Southern Beach, and they particularly enjoyed watching the fireworks from one of the rooms on the 3rd floor. The calligraphy they created will be displayed on the walls of the Youth Hall

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FROM THAILAND VISITING IN OCTOBER

From October 16 to 18, a party of university students from Thailand will visit Chigasaki in connection with Bunkyo University. The group will consist of eight girls and two boys and the IAC has been asked to find host families for them for two nights.

On the morning of October 16, IAC plans to introduce some Japanese culture at *Shorai-an*; tea ceremony, kimono wearing, etc.

Shorai-an is a Japanese style wooden flat house surrounded by trees and a pond and is located next to the Municipal Library.

No other details on their activity have been confirmed as yet.

CITIZEN'S FESTIVAL

SHIMIN FUREAI-MATSURI

しみん
市民ふれあいまつり

On November 3, Culture Day, a festival called Shimin-Fréai Matsuri will be held at Chigasaki Chuō Kōen, Central Park, near the City Hall. Every year tens of thousands of people come to take a look around this festival.

There is a stage where many groups of both children and adults perform music or dance, and there are also about a hundred booths operated by NPOs selling food, pottery, wooden furniture, various arts and crafts, antiques, etc. as well as displaying information about their own activities. There will be the booths with games and health corners as well.

IAC's "Sewing-box" group will also have a booth at the festival and will display and sell their attractive handicrafts with proceeds going to a Japanese NPO working voluntarily in Cambodia to support children's education in that country.

If you visit the Chuo Kōen, you may be surprised at the large number of people it will attract, as they browse through the many different kinds of goods on offer and enjoy the performances on the stage.

The festival is open from 10:00 through 15:30.