

ONE FOR ALL, ALL FOR ONE: WHY WE ARE CRAZY ABOUT HAKONE EKIDEN

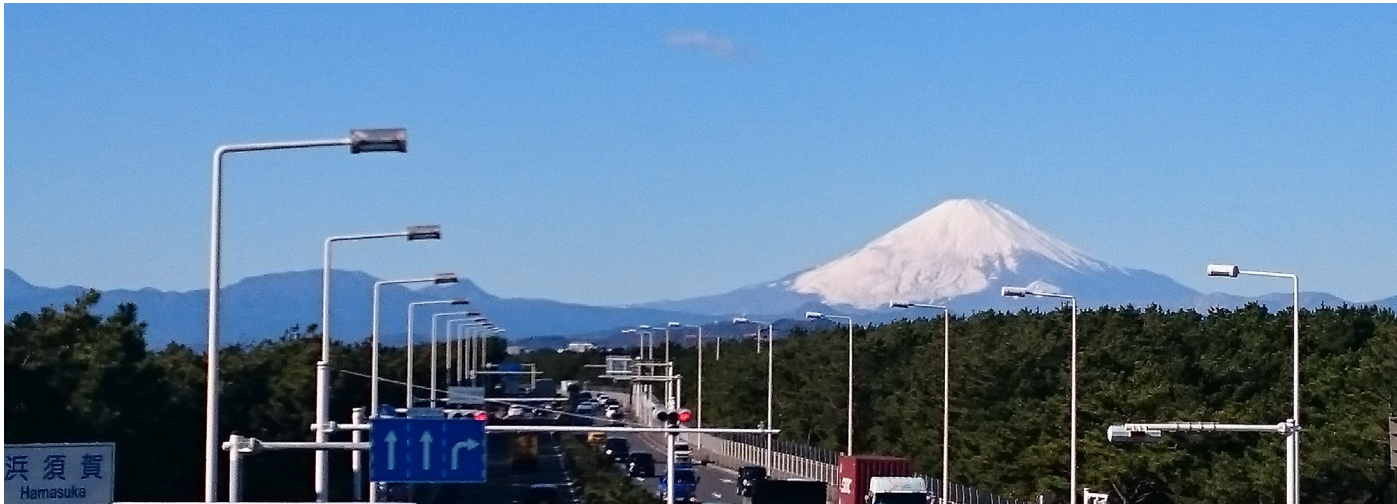


Photo: Makiko Sato

Every new year holiday in Chigasaki, many people line the streets along the coastal road on Route 134 to watch the Tokyo-Hakone Round-Trip College Ekiden Race (Hakone Ekiden), a two-day, round-trip race annually held between Tokyo and Hakone. They cheer on their favorite teams, raising school banners and waving flags along the road.

The 218 km Hakone Ekiden is the longest and most important relay race in Japan. On Jan. 2, runners head from sea-level central Tokyo up to Lake Ashi on top of Mt. Hakone, then run back the following day.

The race has its origins in the communication system of delivering messages from one place to another that was created in the Nara era (710-794 A.D). Then in 1920, Shiso Kanakuri, who is known as the father of the Japanese marathon, established the Hakone Ekiden.

Only 21 qualified college teams in the Kanto region can run the Hakone Ekiden. Each team consists of 10 runners. The course is divided into 10 different sec-

tions, and each runner runs his section and passes off a team sash called a *tasuki* to the next runner.

In the Ekiden, an individual overall “winner” does not exist. This sport is all about the teams. The team positions keep shuffling, and it gives every section its own drama. Passing *tasuki* from one section to another is more important than anything to the runners. *Tasuki* are a heavy emotional load. Every runner must keep a balance between the appetite for winning and the risk of going too hard and letting the team down. Runners’ passion for the Ekiden and love for their teams always bring dramatic moments every year.

The young athletes run through the business district in Tokyo, and head for the glorious mountain range of Hakone, passing beautiful shorelines of Shonan area, and looking at the majestic Mt. Fuji in the distance. It is just a sight to behold. This holiday, if you are sick of all the New Year parties, and flipping through the channels at home, give the Ekiden a chance and see what all the hype is about.

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE NEW YEAR’S GAMES

In Japan, during the New Year, people enjoy playing traditional games, both indoors and outdoors. Since ancient times, these games have had traditional meanings, and were passed through the generations.

Some typical games are *tako-age* (kite flying) and *hane-tsuki* (a game similar to badminton) which are played outdoors. It is thought that the gods receive a wish when a kite flies high, so wishes come true by playing *tako-age*. The shuttlecock’s wing is that of a dragonfly and thought to expel evil spirits.

Indoor games include card games like *karuta*. *Iroha karuta* and the pictures on the cards helps children learn the names of animals, plants and numbers. *Uta-garuta* helps children learn proverbs and letters as they try to take the card that matches the first letter of a poem. *Sugoroku* is played on newspaper-sized paper by drawing colorful pictures. The most popular *sugoroku* game is *dochu sugoroku* which is played by drawing the route from Edo (Tokyo) to Kyoto, and famous landmarks. The players roll dice and the first to arrive to Kyoto is the winner. *Fukuwarai* is a game about putting parts of a face together, but as the players are blindfolded, the results are usually funny. And as the saying goes-- “good luck comes to the laughing gate.”

CHIGASAKI CITY'S ROLE IN THE 2020 OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPICS

The city of Chigasaki was registered as a host town for the Republic of Northern Macedonia by the Japanese government earlier this April. North Macedonia plans to send a male and female athlete each for the swimming and track and field events of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. In the Rio de Janeiro Olympics held four years ago, female athletes from North Macedonia participated in the 63kg judo and shooting events in addition to the swimming and track and field events, so that more players would be able to attend other competitions in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. So, as the hosting town and country, remember to also support the Republic of North Macedonia!



According to a Kanagawa Prefecture press release, the torch relays for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics will pass through Kanagawa on June 29 and 30 and July 1. On June 29, the torch will start from Hakone and then pass through Chigasaki and finally making its last stop that day in Fujisawa. Although the detailed route on the map is still not yet confirmed, let's cheer on the relayers as they pass through our town.



Another person deserving our support is pro surfer and Chigasaki resident Sino Matsuda, who is expected to participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Matsuda started her surfing career from 6 years old, and became a professional surfer at 14 years old. She is now a senior high school student and getting good results at various national and international surfing competitions. She even received the best score among female Asian surfers at the international competition in Miyazaki in September 2019. And at an international competition in April or May next year, it will be decided whether or not she will participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

LAWYER ADVICE

Question:

I moved last month from the apartment where I'd lived for 8 years. Then, the lessor charges me 300,000 yen for restoration fees. I think that's too expensive. The rent of that apartment is 70,000 yen a month. Do I have to pay this restoration fee?

Advice:

As a general rule, the lessee is obliged to restore the room to its original condition when moving out.

However, you don't have to make the room completely new. The lessee is not responsible for the usual damage caused by living. Additionally, in general, if you have lived there for 6 years or more, you don't have to restore things such as wallpaper. That being said, one could argue that a restoration cost of 300,000 yen for the room with a rent of 70,000 yen is expensive. We recommend asking the lessor or landlord for a more detailed description of the costs and further consulting a lawyer.



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES IN TOWN

DECEMBER

1 SUN 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

THE 14th SHONAN INTERNATIONAL MARATHON

More than 20,000 people will run on National Road 134. Be aware of traffic control during the marathon.

15 SUN 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

THE 35th CHIGASAKI DAIKU CONCERT

Held at the Chigasaki Civic Hall by the Chigasaki Philharmonic Orchestra.

JANUARY

2 THUR & 3 FRI (morning) HAKONE EKIDEN

Be cautious of traffic control in the morning as the many runners pass through National Road 134.

13 MON 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

THE 82nd KONAN EKIDEN ROAD RELAY

Held around the city center, many teams will participate in this traditional event on Coming of Age Day.

13 MON 1 p.m.-3 p.m. CEREMONY FOR COMING OF AGE DAY

Celebrating men and women who reached 20 years old, a ceremony will be done at Chigasaki Civic Hall.

FEBRUARY

1 or 8 (date is not yet fixed) SAT 9 a.m.

RAW WAKAME FESTIVAL

Soft seaweed from Eboshi Rock will be sold at the Chigasaki Fishing Port.

2 SUN SETSUBUN FESTIVAL

Held at Chigasaki's Enzoji Temple (11:30 a.m.) and Dairokuten Shrine (4 p.m.), and Samukawa Shrine in Samukawa (11 a.m. and 2 p.m.)

11 TUE UME FESTIVAL at the Shorai-an near the Chigasaki City Museum of Art.

CHILDREN'S AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS



Children's after-school clubs offer playgrounds and places to stay for elementary school students whose guardians work in the daytime. Now, clubs in Chigasaki are looking for new members to join in 2020.

There are public and privately operated clubs, with more than one club for each elementary school.

The clubs are operated by a non-profit organization called "Chigasaki gakudo-hoiku no kai."

[Hours] Weekdays: after school until 6 p.m. (Extended child-care also offered until 7 p.m.)

Saturday and holidays:

8 a.m.-6 p.m. (Extended child-care until 7 p.m.) [Usage fee] 7,000-12,000 yen/month*

The following fees are not included in this price:

Snacks: 1,900 yen/month; Extended child-care: 300 yen/hour

*Each time the grade goes up, the usage fee is decreased by 1,000 yen. (1st grade starts at 12,000 yen/month)

[Application period]: Dec. 2-16

Application forms are distributed through each club from Nov 1.

Please submit the form to "Chigasaki gakudo-hoiku no kai" (1-4-26, Higashikaigankita, NTT East Japan Chigasaki Bldg.).

For further information about the clubs, please visit the city website. For questions regarding application, please contact the clubs.

Mammy Rainbowkids@Chigasaki
Southern St. (40) 5551

Machi no semamori-hoiku jiji to baba no takaramono (51) 1121

Chigasaki Wakamatsu zidou-club(33) 5166

MEET IKUSHI SATO, A COMMUNITY AND PARENTING REPRESENTATIVE



The International Marriage and Child-Raising Circle (IMCRC) is the place that everyone can share information and their worries of daily lives. Ikushi Sato, a representative of this circle, is a Taiwanese woman who married a Japanese husband and is now raising two children in Chigasaki. She moved to Chigasaki from Fujisawa in 2011.

Although she had some Taiwanese friends in Fujisawa, it wasn't easy to go all the way to Fujisawa with her

newly-born baby. In order to make new friends in Chigasaki, she decided to join the local parenting support group. She was the only foreigner there so she felt herself as an outsider. However, she became a member of this group and worked as a volunteer for three years.

In the last year of her membership of this group, she worked as a representative. After that, she established a new group for child-raising mothers at the Shorin Community Center which was close to her house. The only concern was that Shorin Community Center is too far from Chigasaki Station for people to visit from other areas.

She wanted to make a place which has good access to the station so that more people can come to visit easily. Soon she established IMCRC as a group of International Association of Chigasaki (IAC) at the Chigasaki Gender Equality Promotion Center IKORIA near Chigasaki Station.

IMCRC is now in its third term and has 12 IAC members, meeting once a month and offering some fun events and activities for foreign parents and children.

Sato said that it's not easy for foreigners to live in Japanese communities without any help. She wishes that IMCRC can be the first communal place for people with roots in other countries to be able to learn rules and information about living in Japan. She also hopes to expand the circle to be held in other community centers.

CHILDREN'S STUDY GATHERING FOR ELEMENTARY & JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES

A children's study gathering for elementary & junior high school's students from various countries has been opened in Chigasaki by the International Association of Chigasaki (IAC).

The purposes of this class are:

1.To support students who have difficulties with learning Japanese and school lessons in Japanese.

2.To supply an opportunity for those students to make friends.

3.To teach those students Japanese culture and customs.

Schedule: Saturday 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (Elementary school students)

5-7 p.m. (Junior high school students)

**Please come 30 minutes ahead for an interview on the day you wish to start.*

Place: Chigasaki Trust Building 4F (IKORIA) **Charge:** Free

Start: At any time. For further information contact IAC by phone at 090-1557-7789 or by visiting the homepage <http://www.chigasaki-iac.org/>. **Since there is no parking lot, please utilize public transportation. If you ride a bicycle, please leave it underground in the Sin-eicho 3 parking space.*

BIKE INSURANCE NOW MANDATORY FROM OCTOBER

Are you insured against bike accidents? Recently bicycle traffic accidents have been increasing. A tendency has begun to stand out where bike riders as the traffic violators are ordered to pay a large amount of the compensation.

For example, a boy riding a mountain bike collided head-on with a walking woman when going down a slope. The woman became bedridden due to the damage and the boy's mother was ordered to pay 95.21 million yen in compensation.

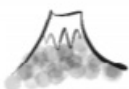
As a safety measure, the Kanagawa prefectural government has legislated Prefectural Regulations related to bike safety and promotion of how to ride appropriately, and so it became the bike riders' duty to insure from Oct. 1, 2019.

Make sure that your current contracting insurance includes bike liability insurance. If you are not insured for this, you need to do so.

Details of bike owner's responsibilities are listed in the graph to the right.

| Targets | Obligated matters |
|--------------------------|---|
| Bike users | Buying insurance |
| Parents/guardians | Buying their underage children's insurance |
| Business owners | Insuring bikes that employees use for work |
| Bicycle retailers | Confirming that insurance was taken out during purchase |
| Rental bicycle retailers | Insuring rental bicycles for customers |

Ask Fuji-san



Dear Fuji-san,

After Christmas is finished, I see many New Year's decorations around the town and for sales in stores. Can you tell me more about them?

From, Z.

Originally, the Japanese new year was an event to welcome Toshigami-sama, a Shinto god who brought about a rich harvest, prosperity for descendants, and health and happiness for the year.

Toshigami-sama came to each home on New Year's Day (gantan).

These decorations help welcome Toshigami-sama. There are 3 main types:

1. **Kadomatsu.** This helps guide Toshigami-sama to each house without getting lost. It consists of bamboo and pine branches and is placed in front of the house gate.



kadomatsu

round mirror. These are placed in an alcove of the main room or living room. The mochi is also traditionally eaten on January 11.

2. **Kagamimochi** are thought to house Toshigami-sama. The name comes from its shape which resembles an old,



kagamimochi

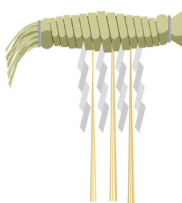
3. **Shimekazari.** This rice-straw rope decoration has many variations:



wakazari



tamakazari



goboujime

They create a holy barrier for Toshigami-sama from other unclean places, evil spirits and disasters. Tamakazari are hung on the front door. Wakazari are hung in rooms, mainly in a wet area. Goboujime are hung over a home shrine.

Decorations can be hung up from December 13-30, but not on the 29, as it's unlucky. Usually people decorate after Christmas and put them away by January 7. Kadomatsu and Shimekazari should be burned at a shrine by the 15 in a ceremony called "dondoyaki."

BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUR SEWER-AGE SYSTEMS

Sewerage systems collect household wastewater, convey it to treatment plants via pipes, and purify the water before discharge back into the environment. Community wastewater management and adequate sewer systems play important roles in environment, sanitation and disease prevention.

Storm sewers (a part of a sewerage system) should be separated from the sewer mains that carry waste and instead carry excess rain water to keep roads from flooding. If you find your storm drain connected to the sewer mains, please report them to the city.



Maintaining your household sewage is important to the health of your family and community. Use it properly and keep the drains clean. In your kitchen, never dump food scraps, fats, oils, and greases down the sink because these form clogs. In your bathrooms, only used toilet paper is flushed together with your waste. Tissues, diapers, etc. can also cause clogs. In your garden, don't plant trees near sewer lines. Tree roots growing inside and breaking sewer pipes are a common problem. Clogs lead your sewer to smell bad and backup. It's harmful to the environment and can potentially cause health hazards.

It's mandatory to connect the drains of your kitchen and bathrooms to the public sewerage system. The piping work should be done by hardware companies designated by the city. Scan the QR code for a list of the designated companies.



排水設備
指定工事店

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[<http://www.chigasaki-iac.org/>] or the Chigasaki City website.