

## PLUM FESTIVAL & TEA CEREMONY AT SHŌRAI-AN

On February 11, a group of people in the Kaigan district (beach side) will hold a plum festival at **SHŌRAI-AN** where they serve you *Amazake* (a sweet drink made from fermented rice) free up to 2,200 people, and there will also be a tea ceremony (*CHA-KAI*) with a 300-yen fee.

**SHŌRAI-AN** is located at Takasuna Ryokuchi near the Municipal Library and it's well known as the place of many plum trees and flowers that bloom in the early spring. The tea ceremony is open to anybody who wishes to enjoy or try having tea in *tatami-mat* rooms. Why don't you enjoy the tea ceremony and viewing beautiful pink and white plum flowers?

In the meantime, there will also be flower arranging and a market where they display and sell pottery, glass ware, etc., and you will find many people enjoying the festival. (No car parking lot. If it rains, only the tea ceremony will be held.)

## THE LARGE PINE TREE ROW ON ROUTE No. 1

Near Chigasaki Senior High School on National Route No. 1, or the so-called **TŌKAIDO**, there are large pine trees in rows on both sides. They are the remains of black pine trees that originated from the Edo Period, some hundred years ago.

On the road, *Tokugawa Ieyasu* (the founder of the Edo Shogunate) founded the system of *Shukueki* (the place for travelers to take rest or lodge) in 1601, Keicho 6 year, in order to secure the transportation system between Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto.

Then in 1604, he ordered the building of *Ichirizuka* (marks of milestones) on the road and planted pine trees. The rows of pine trees created shade for travelers, and it was helpful to avoid the wind and rain. They were supported by the villages along the road and at the end of the Edo Period, there were 1,176 pine trees in this area. However, after the Meiji-ishin (the Restoration of 1868), this major walking road was replaced by rail, as the **TŌKAIDO LINE** was laid to meet the needs of industrial development.

Meanwhile, the construction of utility poles threatened the rows of pine trees. The Meiji Government soon laid the communication lines between Tokyo and Nagasaki in order to develop the communication system, but they were laid on the road. So the rows of pine trees, which had gotten in the way of the communication lines, were cut down. Also, the pine trees which had grown to be as old as several hundreds years were cut down each time the road was repaired or widened due to the increase in the number of automobiles. Nevertheless, when the Tokyo Olympic Games were held in 1964, there were about 1,000 pine trees on both sides of the 7,100 meters of **TŌKAIDO** in Chigasaki City.

At present, there are only 307 large black pine trees remaining in the city, and some citizens are deeply concerned about protecting them. And in fact, there are only few places remaining as far as the **TŌKAIDO** in Kanagawa Prefecture is concerned, and, therefore, it would be natural that people will want to keep them alive.

They are a precious historical legacy.

## IAC Activity

### JAPANESE SPEECH CONTEST FOR FOREIGNERS

The International Association of Chigasaki (IAC) and Chigasaki City will jointly hold a Japanese Speech Contest for foreigners living mainly in the city on March 16 (Sun.), 2008. The contest is becoming popular among those who are interested in addressing what they think while living in these areas. The majority of speakers will be the ones who go to Japanese language classes opened by volunteer groups in the city including the IAC.

The sponsors will welcome foreigners who are interested in participating as a speaker, and they will be looking forward to receiving your contact either at the IAC or the Bunka Suishin-ka (Culture Promotion Section) of the city hall although there may be some time limit and conditions to be accepted.

To those who make a good and impressive speech, or show progress in speaking Japanese in a short period, some prizes as well as gifts will be presented in the name of the city mayor and the IAC.

### A WORLD TRAVELLER WILL TALK ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE

On February 23 (Sat.), 2008, a man who has traveled to 60 countries since 2001 by riding his 650 cc *TRANSALPH* motorbike, will give a talk on the experiences he had during his travels and on the people he visited. He will refer to three main subjects; (1) *What is popular in Japan is not popular in other countries*, (2) *The distance between people and people differs in different countries*, and (3) *The Japanese will be required to have strength of heart*. His name is *Masaki Nishioka*, and he is now a teacher at a primary school in the city. The places he has visited so far include Australia, North America, Europe, North Africa, Scandinavia, India, and some Eurasian countries, etc., and the way he drives his *TRANSALPH* so to speak is to cross the earth vertically or horizontally in a trip for one month period.

He says he never felt in danger on his trip as long as he went where people were. He found that all the people were kind and cooperative regardless of the countries.

His address will be held at the AB conference room in the annex of City Hall, and young people especially are asked to attend to listen to his address.

For your further information, please contact the Bunka Suishin-ka of City Hall at 82-1111, or Hideo Yuge at 0467-82-8869.

## IAC Mission Statement

We will contribute to the peace in the world community through mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation, solidarity and human dignity so all people, as "earth citizens", respect and live together beyond the borders of nationality.



## SUPPORT OVERSEAS COUNTRIES BY RE-COLLECTING GARMENTS SOLD

*A garment supplier is trying to be friendly to the environment and help people in poverty .....*

In recent years, environmental issues are becoming a large concern and Al Gore's movie drew the attention of all the people in the world. In a word, global warming and its impact on the **ENVIRONMENT** is key reason. In fact each individual seems to be trying to do something to save the earth today. In Japan, the symbolic catch phrase is "REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE" as a concept of keeping up the need to stay safe environmentally.

Now, this is to introduce that one garment supplier is trying to re-collect the garments they sold under the name of "Thank You Recycling" campaign. In short, they accept clothing at their stores directly from customers and they are sorted into garments for reuse and for recycling. The clothes that can still be worn are distributed to developing countries through the Japan Relief Clothing Center, UNHCR et al, and clothing that is not suitable for reuse is recycled into fiber, or used to make thermal insulation, thick work gloves, cotton rags, etc. Otherwise they are recycled into power-generating fuel.

The supplier is *UNIQLO* and they will be accepting used garments in March and September 2008 if customers bring them directly to the store. There are some conditions for the quality of used garments to be brought back, but anyway they say they were able to collect 140,000 items during a one-month campaign back in September 2006 of which 90% was donated to refugee camps.

The recent news on *UNIQLO* was that they are trying to expand their branch stores in Europe and other countries. For your reference "Thank You" can be read three (san) and nine (kyu) in Japanese and that's the reason why they do this collecting job in March and September.

It's getting close now!

## EXHIBITION OF TARO OKAMOTO AT THE MUNICIPAL MUSEUM

The Chigasaki Municipal Museum is now exhibiting the works of the famous artist, **TARO OKAMOTO** together with the primitive art of *Jōmon* and *Yayoi* period excavated from the Shōnan and the neighboring areas. When **TARO OKAMOTO** had stayed in France with his parents, he saw the art of **Picasso** and he was much influenced by the art, reportedly.

The exhibition will be open until March 9, 2008, excluding all Mondays except February 11.

Entrance fee is 300 yen, but the fee for those aged over 65 years and under high school students is free.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

*A Lot of erosion is occurring at Chigasaki Beach.....*

Readers will know that Chigasaki Beach is known as the beach where green pine trees have grown alongside the beach line in contrast with the white sand, while you can enjoy beautiful scenery including Mt. Fuji, Enoshima Island, and even Bōsō Peninsula and Ōshima Island on fine days.

The environmental issue there is the erosion of the beach which is said to have lost 50 meters in the last 50 years. Historically, the sand that flowed into Sagami Bay from upstream of the Sagami River had built the beach, but dams constructed in 1960's up on the hill side are said to have stopped the accumulation of the sand. Also the concrete protection work for the bank made at the time of Tokyo Olympic games held in 1964 has been said to be another reason. Right now, a number of trucks carry down the sand from these dams to the beach to fill the eroded area, but it isn't enough to recover the old beach and its beautiful bay shape anymore.

According to Mr. Takahashi who has been observing the beach for half a century and loves the beach so much says it has drastically changed since 1964.

## People In Town

### DENNIS ORINA



*I hope to work with the Kenyan government, International organizations like the UN and with Non Governmental Organizations in the future .....*

**Dennis Orina** was born in *Kisii, Kenya*, but he moved to France for his studies in 2002 and came to Japan from France in October, 2007. He goes to Yokohama National University as an exchange student as it was the only university that had an agreement with his home university in France, the University of Paris. Right now, he is living in Minesawa International Student Dormitory, Yokohama, and he is preparing for his masters degree in International Relations.

He speaks five different languages and he likes reading, traveling, playing tennis, meeting new people and making friends. In fact he seemed to have many friends already from all over the world in Japan including Japanese.

It's been only four months since he came to Yokohama but he has found something he had not experienced deeply in the many countries he had visited, and said Japanese people are very courteous and the Japanese family structure is something he really appreciates, the fact that families live together taking good care of their aged parents.

So far he has visited Tokyo, Odawara Castle, Kamakura, and Tsujido, and he is scheduled to return home at the end of August 2008. After he returns, he hopes to work with the Kenyan Government, International Organizations like the UN, and with Non Governmental Organizations. His major interests are sustainable development and poverty eradication as well as mediation and conflict resolution.

When we met **Dennis Orina** for the interview for the first time, he was teaching English to five Japanese students at the English café in Tsujido, and he seemed to be very kind in the way he teaches.

We sincerely hope that he will enjoy staying in Japan for the remaining period and study hard so that he gets his masters degree and realize his future dreams.