

## IAC ACTIVITY

### JAPANESE SPEECH CONTEST BY FOREIGNERS



The International Association of Chigasaki (IAC) and Chigasaki City will jointly hold a Japanese Speech Contest by foreigners on March 22 (Sun.), 2009 at the Community Hall, the 6th floor of Bunchosha; the city hall annex. The time is from 13:30 through 16:00. Speakers don't have to be living in Chigasaki but those who are learning Japanese will be prioritized. The contest is becoming popular among those who are interested in addressing what they think of living in these areas. The majority of speakers actually are going to Japanese language classes opened by volunteer groups in the city including the IAC's two classes.

The sponsors will welcome foreigners who are interested and qualified 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 of time, some prizes as well as gifts will be presented in the name of the city mayor and the IAC. More details will be made available in the next issue.

### A WORLD TRAVELER WILL TALK ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE

On February 1 (Sun.), 2009, a senior teacher at Tsurugadai junior-high school Mr. Kimiya Takebe will give an address on his experiences he had during his travels and on the people he met. He traveled to 40 countries through Africa and Asia and also participated in the activity of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). The place of his address is the AB conference room in the city hall annex. His address will interest young people in particular.

This program is arranged jointly by the IAC and the city and the purpose is for international understanding and awareness. For your further information, please contact the Bunka Suishin-ka of the city hall at 82-1111.

### “IRISH NIGHT” LECTURE CONCERT WENT SUCCESSFULLY

The Lecture Concert of fiddler *Kana Otake*, held on November 30, at the Labor Citizen Hall, gathered almost 100 people and the room on its 6th floor was fully occupied by people who enjoyed listening to her fiddle playing and lecture. The audience also enjoyed dancing Irish dance altogether hand in hand following *Kana Otake's* gestures. Also, her lecture on Ireland, Scotland, and Bretagne in France, impressed all the people so much.



### AUSTRALIAN UNIV. STUDENTS RETURNED HOME WITH GOOD MEMORIES OF CHIGASAKI

It was only three nights for 10 students from Australia to stay at host families in Chigasaki, but they returned home with good memories of Chigasaki and that we learned at the welcome/Sayonara party held by the IAC on November 28 at the Civic Culture Hall. They came from various cities as such as Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, etc. and the schedule was fairly tight, but they went through all the programs prepared including how to wear kimono, how to drink green tea, etc., while visiting *Hamasuka* junior high school and having an exchange with the students.



## PEOPLE IN TOWN

### *Parinaz Hirokawa* from Iran

*Parinaz* came to Japan from Tehran, Iran in June 2007, first to Utsunomiya, Tochigi prefecture, and then to Mutsuai, Fujisawa, in April 2008. She is not living in Chigasaki now but visits the city every Thursday to learn Japanese at the IAC's



free Japanese class being held at the citizen's gallery NESPA (City Resident's Center) near Chigasaki station. It's been only a year and half since she came to Japan, but she dropped by Thailand in 2006 and had a chance to get acquainted with the Japanese. She is now 25 years-old and is 170cm tall, which is roughly 5cm taller than the average height of Iranian ladies. For the people in Iran, age has a meaning in that it tells everything about the person, and she takes it positively to tell her age to whoever she meets. She was born in Babol but moved to Tehran 7 years later. She went to Azad University in Tehran to major in nursing, but came to Japan before graduation. She can read *katakana* and *hiragana*, but she hasn't been able to speak Japanese fluently as yet.

Now, the reason for her coming to Japan was her marriage with a young Japanese man. She met him at an International Exhibition held in Tehran where he, Mr. T. Hirokawa, was working as a Persian translator for a major Japanese company at that time. They say their wedding ceremony in Tehran was something like a home party, but they are intending to have a formal ceremony in Japan when the time comes.

While learning Japanese conversation at the class, she recognizes the kindness of Japanese teachers who voluntarily teach Japanese language free for a number of foreign students. She has been so impressed and she thinks she'd like to develop this sort of activity in Iran in the future. *Parinaz* says there is no such custom in her country because people in Iran have large families and so many relatives, and they have many things to take care of or to help each other.

Personally, she likes dancing as it's typical to people in Iran, and in Japan she enjoys Karaoke with her husband. She likes to sing pop songs. So far she has been to Fukuoka in Kyushu, and Nikko, but in so far as the city is concerned, her impression is the cities have been kept cleaner and more systematic than those in Iran.

*Parinaz* has made some friends already, but most of them are people from countries such as Indonesia, Taiwan, the Philippines, etc. They are attending the same Japanese class, while she says it's a little bit difficult to find Japanese friends in her neighborhood. Needless to say, the Japanese teachers are her good friends. What was funny to her was that a fairly old man whom she saw at the platform of Fujisawa station was using a game machine and he looked like he was enjoying the game so much.

In so far as food is concerned, she likes sushi, especially *toro*, a part of oily tuna fish, and *Okonomiyaki*, but somehow she doesn't care for *Oden* which is popular among the Japanese.

In Iran, the New Year holiday starts on March 21 and ends 13 days later. They have a custom of giving New Year's gifts or *EIDI* to children, just like *otoshidama* in Japan, and the first, tenth and the last day are very important days for celebrating the New Year.

*Parinaz* finds Japanese people to be polite, kind and friendly, and she feels comfortable living in Japan, but she is very much expecting to be able to work as a model some day. (H. Y.)

## “CHIGASAKI-KAN” WILL BECOME A REGISTERED CULTURAL PROPERTY



On December 12, the National Cultural Council sent a report to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to list a long-established Japanese style inn or *ryokan* *Chigasaki-kan* located in Nakakaigan as a registered cultural property. *Chigasaki-kan* is well known as a *ryokan* where a world-famous film director *Yasujiro Ozu* regularly stayed for a long time.

*Chigasaki-kan* was built on a hill overlooking Shonan Coast in 1899, and its four wooden buildings built at the end of the Taisho period (1912~1926) were registered at this time. Its special design work, the so-called *SUKIYAZUKURI*, characterizes the *ryokan* and it symbolizes the city of Chigasaki which had developed into a villa ground or a health resort after a Kabuki actor *Danjuro Ichikawa* built his villa here in 1898.

*Yasujiro Ozu* stayed at *Chigasaki-kan* from fall to winter every year for more than 10 years to work out his scenarios using a room facing the beautiful garden. His masterpiece includes "Late Spring", "The Spring in the Barley Harvest Season", and "Tokyo Story", and even today many domestic and foreign fans visit this *ryokan* in memory of the director *Ozu*.

The owner's son *Hiroaki Mori* says that he wants the value of *Chigasaki-kan* to appeal to the younger generation, adding that he will try to keep those buildings as a precious historical property.