

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

Ganbaro, Iwate!
Let's stick together, Iwate!

Volume 138
June 2018 Edition

The news from Iwate as it moves toward reconstruction.

We are deeply grateful for the heartwarming encouragement and support received from both within and outside of Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, which struck on March 11, 2011. The precious bonds created during this time will always be cherished.

We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction

The Opening of Oshacchi, the Otsuchi Cultural Community Center

OFUNATO

On June 10 (Sun), an opening ceremony was held to commemorate the opening of the Otsuchi Cultural Community Center, Oshacchi, in central Otsuchi (Suehiro Town).

The nickname, Oshacchi, was derived from the same devastated district in the area, Oshachi, where a public library and community center once stood before the 2011 disaster.

Locally-obtained lumber were used for



The newly opened Otsuchi Cultural Community Center

the 3-story building. The facility includes a multipurpose hall on the first floor. Several conference rooms, a studio, and a special memorial room where visitors can see videos, pictures, and panels of the disaster are on the second floor. The library on the third floor holds roughly 36,000 books.

At the opening ceremony, Otsuchi Mayor Hirano said, "This facility will



Visitors tour the disaster memorial room

teach the lessons of the disaster and also be a gathering place for our residents. We hope to make good use of this new facility by providing a variety of services and projects."

As part of his work on supporting disaster-afflicted regions, world renowned conductor Yu Sado held a concert with the Super Kids Orchestra group from Hyogo Prefecture to celebrate the opening of the community center.



Concert by Mr. Yu Sado and the Super Kids Orchestra

303,000 visitors at the 2018 Tohoku Kizuna Festival in Morioka

MORIOKA

From June 2nd (Sat) to 3rd (Sun), the Tohoku Kizuna Festival, where visitors can enjoy all six iconic summer festivals of Tohoku in one place, was held in Morioka. An astounding 303,000 visitors (data provided by the festival executive committee) gathered in the city within the span of two days.

The festival is a successor of the Tohoku Six Souls Festival which was held from 2011-2016 in various places in Tohoku as an event to pray for a successful reconstruction and to express thanks to the outpouring support. Since its renewal as the

Tohoku Kizuna Festival, the event is on its second year, with the first one held in Sendai last year.

A total of 1,300 participants from all six Tohoku prefectures took part in the parade. It began with the Hanagasa (Flower Hat) Festival from Yamagata, the Waraji (Straw Foot sandal) Festival from Fukushima, Sendai's Tanabata Festival accompanied with Suzume Dance, Morioka's Sansa Dance Festival, and finally the Nebuta Festival from Aomori. Parade participants walked the 1.2-km route on the Chuo street of Morioka while

performers from Akita's Kanto (Lantern) festival showcased their skills at four designated locations.

At the main stage at the Morioka Castle Site Park, where the opening ceremony was held, visitors enjoyed various folk performing arts from the local regions of Iwate. The Akaiso Drum Group (Rikuzentakata) lead the stage event, followed by 10 other local dance groups from the coastal areas. Many of the visitors enjoyed and applauded the various performances. The two-day event further deepened ties for reconstruction.



The Morioka Sansa Dance at the parade



The Aomori Nebuta Festival at the parade



The Akaiso Drum Group – ARATA (Rikuzentakata) at the main stage (Photo: East Japan Marketing & Communications, Inc.)

We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team!

Know, Buy, Eat, Go – and Help Support Us!

Free to register!



We are now recruiting both individual and group (corporate or other) members in the Greater Tokyo Area for the "Iwate Reconstruction Supporters". Members are e-mailed information regarding reconstruction and tourism in Iwate, and upcoming events in the Tokyo area.

(Information only available in Japanese.)

For more information, please see the website of the Tokyo Branch Office of the Iwate Prefectural Government:

Iwate Ooendan

Search



Google Maps Updated to Replace Street View Photos of Disaster-affected Areas

Street view photos of seven coastal municipalities (Miyako, Ofunato, Kuji, Rikuzentakata, Kamaishi, Otsuchi, and Yamada) for Google Maps have been updated to pictures taken between July – December 2017.

Through Google's Street View Trekker Loan Program, the municipalities rented a backpack-type trekker to take photos of designated areas.

After searching a place name on Google Maps, the service offers up any street views and panorama photos available. Users can also now compare pre-disaster to post-disaster photographs and be able to see the progress of the reconstruction from the disaster.

The company launched a digital archive project of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in July 2011. As part of the digital project, the prefecture will work to share more updates of the reconstruction through Google Map's street view feature.

Google Maps: <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/>

The current street view version of the Kyassen Ofunato area (Photo: Google)



Photo taken September 2011



Photo taken November 2017

Looking for qualified individuals!

2018 Iwate Prefecture Fixed-Term Employees

In order to tackle the increase in reconstruction work taking place after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and Typhoon Lionrock in 2016, the Iwate Prefectural Government is now hiring fixed-term employees to work for various prefectural or municipal organizations.

Application Period

July 17 (Tue) ~ August 24 (Fri)

Employment Period (Tentative)

2 years – April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2021

*You may be hired to work prior to April 1, 2019, but the two-year contract will start from date of actual hire.

Type of Position: Clerical Work Number of positions: 22

Employment Location	
Prefectural Assignment:	Coastal branch offices (Regional Promotion Bureau, etc.) or the Prefectural Office
Municipal Assignment:	Rikuzentakata, Kamaishi, Otsuchi, Yamada

Type of Position: General Construction Number of positions: 20

Employment Location	
Prefectural Assignment:	Coastal branch offices (Regional Promotion Bureau, etc.) or the Prefectural Office
Municipal Assignment:	Rikuzentakata, Kamaishi, Otsuchi, Yamada, Iwaizumi

Employment Examination Eligibility

- Clerical Work** Must be born before, or on, April 1, 2001
- Construction** Must fit one of the following criteria (as of June 2018)
 - Carry a 1st or 2nd class engineer operation and management qualification
 - Must have experience equivalent to a 2nd class engineer qualification

Contact: Iwate Personnel Commission
 ☎ 019-629-6241 • Email: DD0002@pref.iwate.jp

For more details:

Messages for the Future

Rikuzentakata

Rikuzentakata City -
Rikuzentakata Guided-
Tours Section
Tour Guide

Mr. Masayoshi Kono



Immediately evacuate after an earthquake

In the flat central area of Rikuzentakata, aside from shopping districts and residential areas, there once stood public offices such as the city hall, fire department, police department, and hospitals. All were washed away by the tsunami.

Many delayed their evacuation because they believed in the seawalls. But many of the victims were actually from the city's designated evacuation shelters.

Although the city is a flatland, we had 40 minutes of time to spare until the tsunami reached the region after the initial quake. If

people had gone immediately to higher ground, more would have survived.

Build your inner "Disaster Wall"

I tell people (at my tours) to never depend on man-made things, but to build up their inner "disaster wall" instead.

When a tsunami is approaching, the best option is to, of course, run to higher ground. Still, please also think carefully about what you need to do and where to evacuate during any disaster.

Always be prepared for any disaster. That is what I mean by having an inner "disaster wall" – this is the knowledge and readiness that will save your life.



The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami devastated the Iwate coast. As the reconstruction proceeds, lessons learned from the disaster are being passed along in the coastal communities. Earthquakes will happen again in the future, and natural disasters can strike at any time. We will introduce some of the lessons we learned to help others prepare for these incidents.

Rikuzentakata Guided Tours Information

The disaster was a once in a millennia event, and claimed many lives when it struck the region, along with much of Rikuzentakata's history and culture.

Although they themselves were affected by the disaster, the tour guides are using their stories to talk about the tsunami. They work hard in hopes of providing helpful information to prevent future disasters, progress of the reconstruction, how to tackle future issues, and means of evacuation. They also reinforce the importance in appreciating the many lessons left by their ancestors.

Address: Iwate Prefecture, Rikuzentakata City, Takata-Cho, Unaruishi 42-5

Minimum number of participants: 1

Tour Duration: 1.5 hr – 2 hr (negotiable)

Possible Meeting Location: Tea house at the Ippon-Matsu (Miracle Lone Pine Tree)

Reservation is necessary: Please inquire by phone

■Contact■

Rikuzentakata Tourism Association
Rikuzentakata Guided Tours
TEL/FAX: 0192-54-5011

Urahama Green (Dokonjo Poplar plaza) completed

OFUNATO

On the 27th of May (Sun) this year, an opening ceremony was held to celebrate the completion of the "Urahama Green - Dokonjo Poplar Plaza" in the Urahama District of Okirai, in Ofunato.

The poplar tree in the aforementioned plaza is about 80 years old and around 25 meters tall. At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, about half the tree's length was covered in water. After the quake however, the tree's figure, quietly standing amidst the debris, comforted the local residents, and from that strength comes the name "Dokonjo poplar" (super-strong poplar).

At the request of the local residents, the Ofunato City Disaster Prevention Industry Promotion Council bought the ruined site wherein the poplar is located and renovated it for the tree to serve as a symbol of restoration. The surrounding area is used for relaxation and events, and is maintained by the local residents.

The area of the plot is roughly 2,400 square meters. Furnished with a gazebo, benches, and restrooms, it has become a popular meeting point for the locals.



Urahama Green - Dokonjo Poplar Plaza

Hirota Bay Underwater Maturation Project - Trial Observational Tour

RIKUZENTAKATA

As part of the Hirota Bay Underwater Maturation Project, bottles of Japanese sake and wine were sunk into Rikuzentakata's Hirota Bay on the 12th of May, alongside trial observational tours for the public.

At the center of this project are Burari Kesen LLC and the Hirota Bay Fishing Association/Hirota Bay Fisheries' Association. The natural swaying of the ocean waves causes maturation to occur faster, as well as develops a more mellow taste. In addition to increasing the value of the alcohol, it is believed that these tours will draw in more visitors.

Around 30 people took part in the tour including the project-related workers and the general public.

After the bottles had been waterproofed, the participants rode on fishing boats out to the bay's oyster cultivation rafts, where they observed the submersion of the alcohol.

The recently submerged wine will be taken up sometime in the middle of September, and there are plans to hold a debut party in the city.



(Left) Submerging the wine (Right) The wine itself (Photo source: Burari Kesen LLC)



Sanriku Event Information



7/7

Sat

Sanriku Food Court in OFUNATO & B-1 Grand Prix

OFUNATO

7/8

Sun

Location : Kyassen Ofunato

A pre-event for the Sanriku Project 2019. Passionate Sanriku regional groups will take part in a chance to show off their local gourmet dishes, making for a huge event during Ofunato's Tanabata Festival. Seven groups participating in the "B-1 Grand Prix" (a national food competition) will also serve at the food court.

Inquiries

Sanriku Gurutto Shokudo in OFUNATO Executive Committee
☎ 0193-25-2701

7/15

Sun

2018 Taneichi Sea Urchin Festival

HIRONO

Location: Taneichi Seaside Park

Taste the most delicious urchin of the year at our event. On top of selling shelled and unshelled urchin, fried urchin etc., you will also have the opportunity to experience making your own raw urchin rice bowl, crack open your own urchin and more. Please enjoy the Taneichi Highschool student's Nanbu divers performance.

Inquiries

Hirono Events Business Executive Committee Secretariat (Fisheries and Industry Section)
☎ 0194-65-5916

7/15

Sun

Yamagata Shorthorn Beef BBQ & Baeren Beer Fest in Kuji

KUJI

Location: Nakacho Event space (Former Prefectural Hospital site)

Enjoy Yamagata Shorthorn beef BBQ, known for its low fat and high lean meat content, as well as Iwate's Baeren Beer. Regional specialty goods will also be on sale.

* There will be a free shuttle bus from Morioka Station (Apply: first-come-first-served)

Inquiries

Shorthorn BBQ Festival Executive Committee
☎ 0194-72-2129
Baeren Brewery ☎ 019-606-0766

7/15

Sun

Ryusendo Cave Summer Festival

IWAIZUMI

Location: Ryusendo Gardens

Iwaizumi's local specialty, the melt in your mouth Iwaizumi shorthorn beef, will take the main stage in the yakiniku corner at this year's summer festival. Other products will also be sold. There will also be tours led by cave research staff, a stage event and more.

Inquiries

Ryusendo Festival Executive Committee (Ryusendo Office)
☎ 0194-22-2566

7/22

Sun

Yamada Paddle Fest

YAMADA

Location: Uranohama Beach area, Holland Island (Oshima)

Enjoy the calm emerald green Yamada Bay at the Yamada Paddle Fest. Try our sea kayaks and stand up paddleboards for free; sea kayak races, banana boats and more at our marine classroom, and 30 parents and children can participate in our Holland Island tour.

Inquiries

Yamada Town Fisheries and Business Industry Section
☎ 0193-82-3111

7/28

Sat

Ciao Ciao - Dance in the Rikuzentakata streets

RIKUZENTAKATA

Location : Undecided

Every year around 2000 dancers take part in Rikuzentakata dance in the street. It had been put on hiatus since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, until being revived last year.

Inquiries

Rikuzentakata Tourism Association
☎ 0192-54-5011



The NHK TV series "Ama-chan" made the northern-most female divers (ama) known throughout Japan. The real Ama will do free diving performances starting from the 1st of July. After viewing their performance, you'll be able to try the fresh sea urchins they just plucked from the ocean floor (separate charge). Come on up to watch the Ama's traditional methods, in the most northern place you can find them – Iwate.



The Northern Ama crack open fresh sea urchin

Period: July to September, Saturdays and national holidays

Time: 11 am and 1 pm

Location: Kosode Ama Center (Kuji City, Ube-cho 24-110-2)

Fee: 500 yen per person.

* On weekdays we can only take groups of ten or more (by reservation please)

* Performances may be canceled due to weather.

Northern Ama Festival

On August 5th (Sun), Kosode Fishing Port will host the Northern Ama Festival.

Not only will you be able to observe free-diving, but there will also be delicacies like freshly picked sea urchins and sea squirts for sale.

Inquiries Kosode Ama Center 0194-54-2261



This series, "People for Sanriku in Iwate", introduces unsung heroes working diligently towards the reconstruction in Sanriku's disaster-hit regions. It follows on from the "People for Sanriku's Future" series. In part 83, we'll meet Ms. Mina Konno.

PROFILE

Ms. Konno is from Ofunato, and after graduating from her hometown's local schools, she continues to enjoy living there. Since April 2016, she has been employed by Sanriku Railway and is currently based in Sakari Station, Ofunato City, working on the Southern Rias Line. Ms. Konno carries out station duties in her role as an attendant, as well as offering guided tours all along the train line and in Ofunato, in addition to in-car sales.

Sharing the local flair as an attendant

"It's not enough to just have tour groups ride the railway. In order for customers to fully experience the charms of the local area, we attendants are in place to give tours as they view the scenery from the windows, and to do in-car sales as well. I wasn't always an outgoing person, but I've gotten used to it!" smiled Ms. Konno about her work.

"Looking from the Southern Rias Line, you can get a superb view of the sea, and Yoshihama Bay is a particularly popular photo stop.



Sanriku Railway Co, Ltd. Southern Rias Line, Sakari station attendant

Mina Konno



Sanriku Railways Rias Line to open a 163km track

"At Koishihama Station, you can write a wish on a scallop shell, and then hang it on a string with all the other shells. You'll also find the popular pink postbox that, if you post a letter in it, is said to help you find love. I also guide visitors to the station around the Sakari area, as well as Ofunato's Kyassen shopping center" added Ms. Konno – her service clearly benefits by her many years of living in town.

Access to the area is getting more convenient

In March 2019, a 163km long route will open up from Sakari Station (Ofunato City) to Kuji Station (Kuji City). Furthermore, the Northern Rias and Southern Rias lines, which have been separate all this time, will join together as the single Rias Line, making transport along the coast much more convenient.

"Next year, with the Rugby World Cup 2019™ being hosted in Kamaishi, we plan on having many different event cars running consistently all along the Sakari – Kuji line. Visitors will really be able to experience all of the coast if they use the Sanriku Railway."

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of May 31st, 2018

- Human casualties/deaths: (direct) 4,673 Missing: 1,115 (related) 466
Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,079

To make a donation to aid in Iwate's reconstruction: www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html

Thank you for all your support! As of May 31st, 2018

- Donations for survivors: Around ¥18.63261 billion (95,850 donations)
Donations for reconstruction projects: Around ¥19.93422 billion (8,610 donations)
Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations: Around ¥9.44573 billion (21,826 donations)

This fund is to assist in the study and daily life of affected children by encouraging sport and study activities.

Check out the Iwate Earthquake and Tsunami Archive ~Hope~ Over 20,000 articles to read: http://iwate-archive.pref.iwate.jp/



News from Iwate's Reconstruction Web Watch videos on the news and People for Sanriku's Future! Check out our website for more!

