

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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

Volume 126
June 2017 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.

Tree-Planting Ceremony Held For Takata-Matsubara Pine Forest

Rikuzentakata

On May 27th (Sat), a ceremony (hosted by Iwate Prefecture, Rikuzentakata City, and others), was held to mark the planting of pine saplings, marking another step towards the revival of the Takata-Matsubara Pine Forest.

The Takata-Matsubara Pine Forest was once a renowned place of scenic beauty, with around 70,000 pine trees. The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami washed away all but one of those trees. Now, seawall construction and land elevation work has progressed to the point where the planting of a new pine forest (which will also serve

as a natural seawall) can begin.

The tree-planting ceremony was attended by around 400 people, including the mayor. Governor Tasso gave a greeting, saying, "Today is the first step towards the revival of the Takata-Matsubara Pine Forest. I want to work with everyone involved to protect and raise these saplings," he said. Mayor Toba also gave a speech. "The revival of the Takata-Matsubara Pine Forest is something that resonates with everyone in the city," he said.

Rikuzentakata received donations of Kuromatsu pine saplings from Tottori Prefecture, the national

government, the National Council of Forests, Waterfalls and Coasts, and other donors. The ceremony's attendees planted around 1,250 Kuromatsu saplings in a 0.25 hectare area of reclaimed land between seawalls #1 and #2.

At the closing ceremony, a student from Takata Elementary School made a pledge, saying, "We promise to raise these saplings into big trees, creating a beautiful, green Takata-Matsubara Pine Forest next to the blue ocean."

Iwate Prefecture plans to work with the "Takata-Matsubara Preservation Council" to plant 40,000 saplings by 2019.



Attendees planting saplings



Mayor Toda and local children at the tree-planting ceremony



An elementary school student makes a pledge

Completion Ceremony Held For Town Renewal and Park Construction

Noda

On June 11 (Sun), a ceremony was held in Noda to mark the near-completion of a Noda Village's renewal project, and of Tofugaura Park, a park construction project.

Around 170 people attended the ceremony. A ribbon was cut, and two plaques were unveiled: one marking the renewal project's completion, and another bearing the new park's name.

Work on the village renewal project began in October 2013. It focused on 12.9 hectares of land on the east side of the town hall that had been destroyed

by the tsunami. The new structures include 137 new homes, 7 parks, and a multi-purpose building functioning as a tax center and evacuation point.

Work on Tofugaura Park, which is situated within an area vulnerable to tsunamis, began in May 2013. The park is designed to help reduce potential damage. Its 19 hectares contain 6 different regions, including a multi-purpose event space, an activity space, Noda Forest, observation and rest facilities, and a seafront area. It's sure to become a peaceful haven for the village.



The ribbon-cutting ceremony (Photo: Noda Village)



The newly-created Tofugaura Park (Photo: Noda Village)

We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team!



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:

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

Iwate Ooendan

Search

Free to Register!

Ofunato Attracts New Business To Tsunami-Hit Region

Ofunato

On May 19 (Fri), a signing ceremony was held at Ofunato City Hall to commemorate the decision of Iwate Ginga Farm Ltd. to open a factory and other facilities in the city.

The company reliably provides high-quality tomatoes by using computer-controlled greenhouses, nutrient recycling, and other farming techniques that reduces the burden on the environment.

The new agreement means that a factory and other facilities will be built and operated in the city, which are expected to contribute to the development of the local community. The city is providing support to ensure that the project runs smoothly.

This is the first time Ofunato City has attracted a new enterprise to an area damaged by the tsunami. The total area of the new facilities, including tomato cultivation and processing buildings, is around 32,000 square meters. Construction is due to begin in October, and end in 2018, and 30 to 50 people will be employed at the site.



The signing ceremony (Photo: Ofunato City)

Richie McCaw, the Former New Zealand Rugby Captain, Visits Kamaishi

Kamaishi

On May 27 (Sat), Richie McCaw, the former New Zealand rugby captain who led his team to successive championships for the first time in history, visited Kamaishi to play rugby with local children.

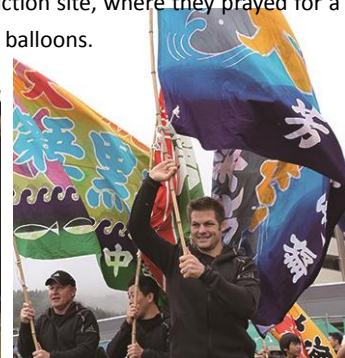
The event was part of the "Support Our Kids" project, which aims to support children who were affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. It was also intended to help build momentum towards the 2019 Rugby World Cup. Around 200 people attended a ceremony held at Unosumai Elementary School and Kamaishi East Middle School, where Mr. McCaw was welcomed by performances of singing, wind instruments, and tiger dancing.

"Sports have the power to give people hopes and dreams. It's wonderful that the Rugby World Cup is being held in Kamaishi," Mr. McCaw told the crowd. He then led a training session, where 60 children from Kamaishi and Miyako rugby schools practiced passing and attack.

Afterwards, the group held traditional flags high, and proceeded towards the new stadium's construction site, where they prayed for a successful tournament by releasing balloons.



Children try to tackle Richie McCaw (Photo: Kamaishi City)



Richie McCaw holds a traditional flag (Photo: Kamaishi City)

A Record of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in Iwate Prefecture

2011.3.11

Ofunato

What happened that day? In this section, we will be looking back at the disaster in each coastal town.



The devastated city center (Photo: Ofunato City)



A fishing boat that was carried inland (Photo: Ofunato City)

- Tsunami Height
 - 16.9m Okirai Bay
 - 23.8m Ryori Bay
 - 17.4m Ofunato Bay
 - 17.2m Yoshihama Bay
- Deaths 340
- Missing people 80
- Injured people Unknown
- Destroyed buildings 3,934



1. The city center suffered catastrophic damage

The areas surrounding Ofunato and Sakari Stations on the JR Ofunato Line suffered the most damage, and these two areas of Ofunato and Sakari make up the city center. A great number of lives were taken by a wave that reached a height of 13.0 metres.

2. Redevelopment that learns from the past

Many regions suffered severe damage, but the damage to buildings in the Yoshihama section of Sanriku, which faces Yoshihama Bay, was relatively low. After learning from tsunamis in the past, a plan was implemented to keep farming and fishing in the lowland areas, but to relocate homes to higher ground, so this resulted in less damage during 3.11.



Kyassen Ofunato, a shopping facility which opened in Ofunato city center



The restored Ofunato Fish Market

Iwaizumi Elementary School Kids Meet the Rakuten Eagles

Iwaizumi

On May 17 (Wed), around 100 children from grades 4-6 at Iwaizumi Elementary School, which was damaged by Typhoon Lionrock in August last year, were invited to watch a baseball game at Iwate Prefectural Baseball Stadium in Morioka. It was an official, professional match between the Tohoku Rakuten Eagles and the Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters. The children loudly cheered from the stands.

The invitation was part of Rakuten Baseball Inc's "Do Your Best, Tohoku" initiative. It came about after two Rakuten players, Ginji (from Fudai) and Motohiro Shima, visited the school in December last year.

Before the match, the children, wearing baseball uniforms they received as presents from Rakuten, met with Mr. Ginji and Mr. Shima. On behalf of the other children, Gento Sasaki (6 years old), cheered them both on, saying, "We'll support you as much as we can". As they took a commemorative photograph together, the children looked happy to be reunited with the two players.

The Tohoku Rakuten Eagles managed to win the match, thanks to a timely go-ahead play by Ginji. As he took to the stage for a post-match MVP interview, he was greeted by a huge roar from the crowd.



The commemorative photograph
(Photo: © Rakuten Eagles)



Ginji at the MVP interview
(Photo: © Rakuten Eagles)

The Only Hill Climb on the Sanriku Coast Takes Place in Otsuchi

Otsuchi

The "Otsuchi Shinyama Hill Climb 2017", a bicycle race up a mountain, took place on May 28 (Sun).

The competition, which began last year, has three major aims. The first is the restoration of the rhododendrons on the Shinyama Plateau, which were difficult to maintain after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The second is showing off the current progress of the reconstruction in Otsuchi, and the third is cooperation within the Sanriku area, to work towards reconstruction and development.

Spectators cheered in loud voices from the roadside, to communicate the Otsuchi reconstruction's state of progress, and to show their appreciation for the support they've received.

Around 250 people from all over the country took part in the competition. The course began at Otsuchi Town Hall and ended at the Shinyama Plateau, covering 23 kilometers and an elevation of 844 meters. The riders, clad in colorful bike wear, first took part in an 8km parade. Then they split into 8 different categories, divided by age and gender, and raced towards the goal on Shinyama's verdant peak.

The competition is expected to give a boost to bicycle tourism in the Sanriku coastal region.



The riders, racing towards the Shinyama Plateau. (Photo: Otsuchi Shinyama Plateau Hill Climb 2017 Organizing Committee)



Come to Sanriku!

Sanriku Event Information



7/16 Hyotanjima Island Festival Otsuchi
Sun

Venue: Akahama Fishing Harbour

This festival offers grilled squid and scallops, a scallop fishing experience, and a perfect view of Hyotanjima Island. There will be displays of tiger dancing, and other folk performances. An open campus event will be held concurrently with the festival at the International Coastal Research Center, University of Tokyo.

Inquiries Akahama Community Centre
☎ 0193-42-6562

7/22 Moguranpia Summer Festival Kuji
Sat

Venue: Moguranpia Aquarium

7/23 A summer festival at the Iwate's only aquarium. There will be a stall selling local products, stage performances and a special exhibition. Another event, "Sanriku Gurutto Dining in Kuji" (similar to "Ai B League"), will be held simultaneously. Come and see, eat and experience what this fun event has to offer.

Inquiries Moguranpia Aquarium
☎ 0194-75-3551

7/29 Miyako Festival Miyako
Sat

Venue: City Center / Desaki Pier

This unique display of coastal culture is a highlight of Tohoku's brief summer. The noise from energetic taiko drum performances will thunder across the ocean towards a parade of tugboats across the bay, each flying bright, vivid flags.

Inquiries Miyako Chamber of Commerce and Industry
☎ 0193-62-3233

North Sanriku's Tatami Train 2017

This year, this will be a special train departing from Miyako, so it will make 3-minute stops at stations like Shimanokoshi, which was destroyed in the disaster and later rebuilt, and Horinai, which was the filming location for "Sodegahama Station" in NHK's morning drama, Ama-chan.

Dates: July 15 – 30 (weekends and holidays)
August 5 – 15 (daily), August 19 – October 9 (weekends and holidays)

Times: Kuji 12:15 → Miyako 13:54 (stops at all stations)
Miyako 14:40 → Kuji 16:32 (express train)

Fee: Varies by distance travelled (e.g. Kuji – Miyako one way = ¥1,850 + ¥310 seating charge)

Lunch (Kuji departure) ▶ New! "Big Catch" set (¥3,000)
Sweets (Miyako departure) ▶ Limited Edition sweets (¥500)
Tanohata Ice Cream (¥250)

By reservation

(Photo: Sanriku Railways)



Sea urchin and abalone lunch



"Big Catch" set

■ Inquiries ■ Sanriku Railways, Passenger Services TEL: 0193-62-8900 (9:00 - 18:00)



Just off the coast of Yamada, roughly at the center of the Sanriku Coast, is the uninhabited Holland Island. The emerald water of the surrounding Yamada Bay fascinates the tourists who come here. Read more about a highly-recommended, limited edition package below.

A special offer for June – October. Just one group per day!! <http://www.yamada-kankou.jp/>

This is a new collaboration between "Marine Tourism Yamada", who offer fishing boat cruises, and "Geotrail", who offer sea kayak experiences.

The "Kayak Experience on the Uninhabited Holland Island" is limited to one group per day, who will travel by fishing boat to Holland Island, and take part in a sea kayak experience.

The tour will be matched to your level, and led by local instructors, so beginners are welcome to take part.

Dates ■ June 1 – October 31
* We may not be able to accommodate you on certain days due to fishing conditions in Yamada Bay.
* Tours may be cancelled suddenly due to weather.
Participants ■ One group per day (4-6 people)
Fee ■ ¥5,000 per person
* Please apply as a group of 4-6 people.
Time ■ 9:00 – 10:30
Application ■ Reservations must be made at least 7 days in advance.
Inquiries ■ Yamada Wonderful Experience Bureau
Tel: 0193-82-3111 (Extension 227)
8:30 – 17:15 (Closed on weekends and holidays)



A fishing boat heading for Holland Island



Sea kayaking off Holland Island

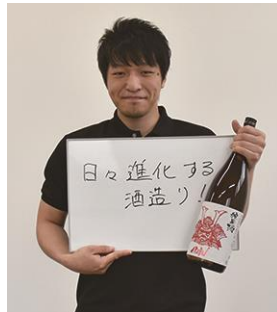
(Photos: Yamada Wonderful Experience Bureau, Yamada Tourism Association)

Many young people are diligently helping the affected area of Sanriku move toward a full reconstruction. The section "People for Sanriku's Future" introduces these young people and their powerful feelings. Part 71 introduces Mr. Ryunosuke Furudate's efforts.



Akabu Sake Brewery
Chief Brewer

Ryunosuke Furudate



"Sake brewing that evolves everyday"

different path, but in his third year he resolved to return to Iwate and brew sake.

After coming back to Iwate, he developed "AKABU", a new brand of sake to go alongside the existing "Hanamusume" brand. "I developed the 'AKABU' brand in 2014, using the study and experiences I'd gained so far. It has a very clean flavor. I hope people take the time to savor the taste. The brand's starting point was my ambition to make sake that everyone in the country could enjoy," he said.

Aiming to be an Iwate brand

Mr. Furudate, who still visits old friends in Otsuchi, also spoke about his home town. "I still remember what the town used to look like, but it's completely different now. I'd like to brew sake there someday, but in order to do I that I must first make great sake in Morioka, to use as a platform," he said.

Akabu's employees are mostly in their 20s or 30s. Mr. Furudate told us his goal for the future. "My aim isn't to increase the volume we produce, but for 'AKABU' to become a sake that represents Iwate," he said.

Nationally-recognized sake from Iwate

After being destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, the Akabu Sake Brewery relocated to Morioka, and resumed business.

When he entered university, Mr. Furudate expected to join the family brewery someday. After the Great Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, he considered taking a

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of May 31, 2017

- ▶Human casualties/deaths: (direct) 4,672 Missing: 1,122 (related) 463
 - ▶Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,077
- 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 31, 2017

- Donations for survivors:** Around ¥18.56253 billion (94,794 donations)
 - Donations for reconstruction projects:** Around ¥19.83637 billion (8,198 donations)
 - Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations:** Around ¥8.97563 billion (20,186 donations)
- ※ This fund is to assist in the study and daily life of affected children by encouraging sport and study activities.



For the News from Iwate's Reconstruction archives:

<http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/>



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



News from Iwate's Reconstruction, Volume 126. June 25, 2017.

Published by the General Affairs Division, Bureau of Reconstruction, Iwate Prefecture. TEL: 019-629-6945

News from Iwate's Reconstruction Volume 127 will be published on July 25th.

Editing & Printing: SYNAPSE