

# News from Iwate's Reconstruction

The news from Iwate as it moves toward reconstruction

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



Volume 94  
October 15, 2015

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. The wonderful foods and colors of the autumn season are sweeping across Iwate. We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

## Young People Give Their Thoughts about the Reconstruction

Morioka

On September 30th, 2015 (Wed), a group of young people were invited to Morioka's Espoir Iwate Hotel to give their thoughts regarding Iwate's reconstruction following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

The aim was to take the wide-ranging opinions of these young people into account for Phase Two of the Recovery Implementation Plan, which is currently underway, and to also implement them into future policies.

The seven attendees included both Iwate natives, currently working hard

on the coast, and people from outside the prefecture, who have become passionate supporters of Sanriku's revival as members of the Iwate Reconstruction Support Group. Under the direction of Professor Jun'ichi Hirota, who is from the Agricultural Department of Iwate University, they discussed problems that young people can solve, and problems that can be solved by working together.

Many opinions were put forward, such as "We need a place for local

exchange outside of home or school – a 'third place'", "We should use social media to build a local network," "We should create a community that values more than just work," and "We need to encourage more people to move here."

Hanae Tamura, from Ofunato's Disaster Prevention Group and Citizen Media Promotion Council, attended the event. "I don't often get the chance to speak about these topics with people my age. I tried to be an active participant." Masataka Kawamura, who works for a sea kayak company in Yamada called Geotrail, said, "Lots of challenges came up in our discussions, and we really have to work out how to solve them. The first step to find the answers to these challenges is to stay in contact with the people I met today."



Young people exchanging opinions



The participants pose for a photo

## Results from the Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey #2 for 2015

Iwate Prefecture conducts the Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey in order to periodically measure Iwate's reconstruction progress from the earthquake and tsunami.

The survey targets people living or working in the disaster-affected municipalities, and is conducted once every three months.

Here are some key points extracted from the results of the second survey this year (conducted in August 2015).

Have the lives of the survivors recovered?

"Fully recovered" or "Mostly recovered": 66.4% (last time: 65.9%)

- A 0.5 point increase from the last survey.
- Some were happy about the construction of the new townscape, but there was concern about the amount of young people moving away, and the mental care of the survivors they leave behind.

Iwate Reconstruction Watchers Survey #2

Search

(\*information only available in Japanese)

How do you feel about the recovery of the local economy?

"Fully recovered" or "Mostly recovered": 54.2% (last time: 53.6%)

- A 0.6 point increase from the last survey.
- There was praise for the fishing industry, and for the modernization of business models. However, some expressed concern regarding a slump in trade, and the shortage of labor.

How do you feel about the disaster mitigation measures?

"Satisfactory" or "Mostly satisfactory": 33.3% (last time: 30.5%)

- A 2.8 point increase from the last survey.
- The construction of seawalls was appreciated, although some pointed out that they blocked the view of the sea. People also felt uneasy about the lack of signage regarding evacuation procedures.

News from Sanriku

## Direct Bus Service Between Miyako and Kamaishi

The line connecting Miyako and Kamaishi on the JR Yamada Line was closed down after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami... but now it's back! Whether it's for travel or business, take a ride with this service when you travel along Iwate's Sanriku Coast!

- Service available on weekends from September 5 (Sat) to November 29 (Sun), as well as November 2 (Mon).
- One-way 1,500 yen (Miyako-Kamaishi) ※Half price for elementary school students and younger
- No reservations required

【Contact】 Iwate Kenpoku Bus Miyako Eki-mae Information Desk ☎ 0193-62-3620  
Iwate Kenpoku Bus Miyako Office ☎ 0193-64-6060

## High School Girl Decorates Temporary Housing Building with a Heart Design

Kamaishi

On September 20th, 2015 (Sun), the outer wall of a temporary housing block in Nakazumacho, Kamaishi, was decorated with a colorful heart design that was printed on magnetic sheets.

The project was started by Yuki Terasaki, a resident of the temporary housing block and a second year student at Kamaishi High School. "I want this to be a home that I love, not just a lifeless building," she said. Ms. Terasaki contacted Katsuhiko Hibino, an artist and professor at Tokyo University of the Arts, who helped implement her plan.

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, Professor Hibino has been decorating disaster-affected locations with heart designs in order to "bring people together and bring their hopes to life." For this project, around 6,000 magnetic sheets were contributed by local schools, and by people across the country. Roughly 100 volunteers helped to apply these vivid designs to the temporary housing block.



The finished decorations  
(photo courtesy of the Kamaishi  
Reconstruction Newspaper)

## The First Oyster Shipment Ceremony Since the Disaster

Ofunato

On September 30th, 2015 (Wed), an oyster shipping ceremony was held at Ofunato Fishing Cooperative's ice-making factory.

The town's oyster farms were badly hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. After the rafts and processing plants suffered heavy damage, the number of oyster farmers fell from 130 to 81. Shipping restarted the year after the disaster, but repairs were ongoing, and it wasn't until very recently that a full-scale operation was back in place. This ceremony, the first since the earthquake, was held in recognition.

Around 40 people attended the event, including Fishing Cooperative staff and related persons. After celebrating the first shipment of the season, they dispatched 1.9 tons of shelled oysters and 32,490 unshelled oysters to Tsukiji market in Tokyo.

According to the Fishing Cooperative, 144 tons of shelled oysters and 274 million unshelled oysters will be shipped this year, marking a recovery to 80% of pre-disaster levels. This season's shipments will continue until March next year.



The oyster shipment bound for Tsukiji

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 46 introduces Ms. Rina Shimomukai's efforts.

### PROFILE

Originally from Noda.

After graduating from university in Gunma, she moved to Tokyo for work. She moved back to Noda in August 2011 after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

From August 2012, she worked as a coordinator of educational travel experiences for a permanent resident relations promotion enterprise in Noda. In April 2015, she set up "Nonnori Noda Story," an organization that promotes Noda across the country.

### Promoting the region through homestay

While working on exchange projects between locals and visitors, as well as tours of Noda, Ms. Shimomukai was inspired to collaborate further with the residents of the region. She began pouring her efforts into a homestay program, which promotes the local area by giving visitors the opportunity to stay with farmers and fishermen.

## People for

## SA NRIKU'S

## Future

Nonnori Noda Story  
Representative

Rina Shimomukai



"People' are the most  
important asset."

Ms. Shimomukai spoke about the feedback she's received. "There are definitely some difficult moments when trying to put everything together... But when I see the residents bidding their guest a tearful goodbye, shaking their hand and refusing to let go, I know it's all worth it."

### Communication between people is important

Ms. Shimomukai also gave her impressions of the reconstruction. "Besides the visible signs of the reconstruction, like the new roads and land elevation projects, the tone of conversation in the temporary homes has gradually become more positive. There's a psychological revival too."

"Even in Noda I sometimes felt like the connections between people had become weaker. The village was losing its sense of self. I want this to be a place where intergenerational communication happens spontaneously."

Besides spreading information about Noda, the program is expected to become a catalyst for cooperative projects in the village.

## Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of September 30, 2015

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,126
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,165

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

## Thank you for all your support!

As of September 30, 2015

**Donations for survivors:** Around ¥18.4415 billion (92,059 donations)

**Donations for reconstruction projects:** Around ¥19.7879 billion (7,466 donations)

**Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations:** Around ¥7.73874 billion (16,273 donations)

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

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