

News from Iwate's Reconstruction

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



Volume 46
(August 15, 2013)

Iwate Prefecture

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.

Summer has truly begun, with the sun's harsh rays beating down on us. The affected areas continue to move toward reconstruction. We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

Beginning of Construction on Urban Park and Roads Project

On Tuesday, August 6, the northern coastal village of Noda held a prayer ceremony for the safety of upcoming construction work. The work is to improve the village road connecting the planned collective relocation points of Maita and Minamihama, and to construct an urban park in the area that was enveloped in the tsunami.

The prayer ceremony saw the participation of high school students who had taken part in the planning workshop for the urban park, and they expressed their opinions about the park.

In order to create a safe living environment, Noda plans to designate the areas that were submerged as a tsunami danger zone, and organize collective relocation to two high-ground sites in the Jonai, Maita and Minamihama areas.

They will be constructing a tsunami memorial park on the site that was subsumed, and in the event of a future tsunami this area will act as a buffer zone.

This is the first urban park construction project to get under way in Iwate's affected region, and the work is scheduled to be completed in September 2014.

First urban park to get under way in Iwate

Noda

Work on improving the village roads will also mean using National Route 45 as a starting point and connecting all the village's districts by building 640 meters of new road. This work is scheduled to be completed next May.

The roads will be important as evacuation routes in case of future disasters, and in order to maintain the local community.



The Prayer Ceremony



Students from Kuji Technical High giving a speech

Morioka Sansa Odori: A Grand Convention of Regional Mascot-Characters

We give thanks for the aid received from all around Japan and the world

Morioka

On Thursday, August 1, regional mascot-characters (*yuru-kyara*) from local governments that support us from around Japan gathered at the Morioka Sansa Odori festival. They shook hands, took commemorative photos and otherwise interacted with visitors.

This event is part of the "Smile 130 Project", which has



Governor Tasso with local mascots from around the country

as its slogan the desire to bring smiles to the faces of all 1.3 million Iwateans. The project aims to thank dispatch aid workers and the municipalities around Japan that sent them for all that they have done for us. It also aims to move the reconstruction forward.

Having started in 2011, this was the third time the event took place, and 15 regional mascots took part: Bulpi from Hokkaido, Kimete-kun from Aomori, Sugitch from Akita, Kobaton from Saitama, Chiba-kun from Chiba, Yuriito from Tokyo, Chappy from Shizuoka, Nagopyon from Aichi, Moppie from Osaka, Yoshida-kun from Shimane, Choruru from Yamaguchi, Abasango from Okinawa, Komachi Hanano from Niigata City, Shachi no Junchan from Nagoya City and Ecoppa from Fukuoka City. They were joined by 8 mascots from within Iwate, including the Wanko Brothers, making this the largest gathering yet.

The rain that day unfortunately prevented the planned participation of the mascots in the parade, but the visitors were very happy to be able to meet so many mascots from all around Japan.

We are recruiting members for the Iwate Reconstruction Supporters Team!

Know, Buy, Eat, Go – and help support us!



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.

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

Iwate Ooendan

Search

Free to Register!

Reconstruction Gourmet Festival Held in Ofunato

Ofunato



The "Image of the Future of the Reconstruction"

A mosaic created by the children was also unveiled

The festival also saw the unveiling ceremony for the mosaic "Image of the Future of the Reconstruction".

The mosaic was created by having all the elementary school students from around the city draw pictures with the titles "My Dream" or "The Future Ofunato" on 12-centimeter square paper, and then selecting and combining images from the total of 1,600 entries.

As a representative of the event's organizers, the Ofunato Junior Chamber, the Chamber's President Hidekazu Hamamori expressed his feelings about the event. "We hope to promote local cuisine that uses Ofunato ingredients like mackerel pike, *wakame* seaweed, abalone and sea urchins, and through this to increase Ofunato's interactions. The key to the reconstruction is the smiles of children. We created the Image of the Future of the Reconstruction with the hopes of turning Ofunato into a town where everyone has a smile on their faces."

On Saturday, August 3, the "Ofunato Reconstruction Gourmet Festival" was held in the special event area in front of JR Ofunato Station.

This event marked the 45th anniversary of the establishment of the Ofunato Junior Chamber, and aimed to promote Ofunato's local cuisine, as well as encouraging exchange with those who provided aid after the disaster.

The event saw some 25 food retailers selling their goods. Centering around disaster-affected businesses in temporary shops, also represented were shops from (within Iwate) Rikuzentakata City, Sumita Town, Kamaishi City and Otsuchi Town, and (from outside Iwate) Noshiro City in Akita, Sagami City in Kanagawa, Tokamachi City in Niigata and Rubeshibe Town in Hokkaido. Visitors were able to enjoy delicious foods from all over Japan.



The Gourmet Festival

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.

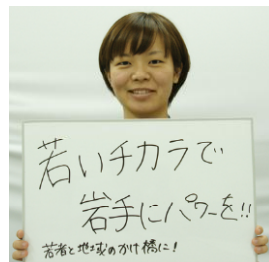
Part 3 introduces Ms. Ayako Yaegashi's efforts.

Profile:

Born in Morioka, she graduated Iwate Prefectural University's Faculty of Social Welfare. In her first year of university she joined IPU's Student Volunteer Center. She volunteered in the affected areas following the 2008 Iwate-Miyagi Nairiku Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. In February 2012, she set up the non-profit "Iwate GINGA-NET", and is now in her second year working as a representative of the organization.



Ayako Yaegashi
NPO "Iwate GINGA-NET"



"Let's turn the strength of youth into Iwate's power! We can be the bridge between young people and the local region!"

In summer 2011, while working as a member of the Iwate GINGA-NET Project, which was linking up students' desire to help out with the needs of the disaster survivors, she realized that there was a need to continue the project into the future. She therefore founded Iwate GINGA-NET as a non-profit organization in February 2012. Today they are working on community-aid primarily in emergency temporary housing districts.

The power of young people will bring this region together

"In order for people in the affected areas to be able to move ahead on their own," Yaegashi says, describing her feelings about the reconstruction, "it's important for them to have the strength that comes from knowing that people will keep coming back. Volunteers shouldn't boast about going out to save people. They should just make the effort to go out the affected areas and do what they can."

"From now on, it'll be critical that young people work to help the region, and a local environment that facilitates this will also be necessary."

By meeting with the local people, we can forge direct bonds with them

Knowing that she wanted to interact directly with the local residents and make face-to-face connections with them, Yaegashi engaged in volunteer work and spent roughly a month following the disaster in the Disaster Volunteer Center in Kamaishi City. She worked on volunteer registration and emergency food-distribution.

Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of July 31, 2013

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,145
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 24,928

For more information on damage in Iwate, or to make a donation, go to the Iwate Disaster Information Portal:

Thank you for all your support!

As of July 31, 2013

- Donations for survivors:** Around ¥17.82988 billion (86,229 donations)
- Donations for reconstruction projects:** Around ¥16.53804 billion (6,228 donations)
- Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations:** Around ¥5.87328 billion (10,791 donations)

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