

HELLO SAKURA

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This is a free monthly English newsletter for foreign residents carrying excerpts from the Japanese newsletter published twice a month by the City. Unless otherwise indicated, inquiries over the telephone or at the facilities are handled only in Japanese. If you do not speak Japanese, please have someone who speaks Japanese with you when you make inquiries. Inquiries in English may be made generally on Wednesdays through Koh'hoh-ka (the Public Relations Section) at Sakura City Hall.

NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM MAYOR

明けましておめでとうございます

COLLABORATION WITH SAKURA CITIZENS



I cordially wish each and every one of you a Happy New Year.

I also wish to express my deep appreciation for your understanding and cooperation shown and extended toward the city administration.

As Mayor of Sakura, I have welcomed the New Year for the third time. I reaffirm my promise to pass on Sakura's precious heritages - rich history and culture, abundant natural beauty - to future generations.

The social circumstances surrounding our city are quite severe. We are facing various administrative challenges related to the falling birthrate and the aging of society, as well as economic and employment problems resulting from economic stagnation. I believe, however, we will find a way to overcome these problems through joint efforts by citizens and city government. These efforts will help build a more vibrant city Sakura, which can promptly cope with new situations.

I think that welfare, health management, and education are the fundamental services to support the living of citizens. I will put continuous efforts into support for child-rearing, for example, nursery schools and after-school day care centers, and also into enhancement of infrastructures, such as nursing homes for the aged, educational environment, and road traffic. At the same time, I will further promote administrative and financial reforms, together with encouragement of local businesses and industries in the hope of revitalizing the local economy, and prompt and appropriate settlement of the Shizu Cemetery issue. I wish to ask for your continued assistance, and cooperation in these matters.

In closing, I would like to extend my best wishes to every resident and hope that this year will be filled with joy and success.

Kazuo Warabi
Mayor, Sakura City

SEIJIN-SHIKI (CEREMONY of COMING-OF-AGE DAY)

“*Seijin-no-hi* (Coming-of-Age Day), which falls on Monday, January 11 this year, is dedicated to the nation's young people who have reached the age of 20. It is the age when Japanese people are defined to attain legal maturity, and after that, they are eligible to vote. The Day is observed as a national holiday, and municipal governments celebrate it for their 20-year-old residents. It is meant to be an auspicious event to celebrate and encourage the people who are to realize that they become adults and make up their mind to live their life independently. In Sakura, the City offers a 30-minute celebratory ceremony at the City Concert Hall on Sunday, January 10 for the residents of: Usui/Chiyoda Districts from 10:00; Shizu District from 11:30; and Sakura/Negoh/Wada/Yatomi Districts from 13:30. Invitation cards were sent to people who were born between April 2, 1989 and April 1, 1990. No food, beverages, or smoking are allowed at the event site. Although parking at the Lakepia Usui is available for 2.5 hours for free, you are encouraged to take public transportation as traffic jams are usually foreseen around the event site.



Call *Jidoh-seishoh'nen-ka* (The Children & Youth Section), ☎484-6190 for more information.

THE 12TH JIDAI MATSURI (FESTIVAL OF THE AGES)

Why not join the magnificent procession of more than 200 people dressed in colorful costumes representing different ranks of samurai period?

The festival is scheduled to be held on Sunday, April 25.

● An estimated 100 people in old costumes will form an exciting parade. Rental costumes for *daimyoh* (feudal lord), *okugata* (consort), *himegimi* (princess) are ¥40,000 each. Costumes for *koshimoto* (lady-in-waiting) are available at ¥30,000, and for *yoroi musha* (armored-warrior), *onna musha* (lady warrior), *jijo* (maid-in-waiting) are available at ¥20,000 each. Students, or groups of 5 people or more, will get 30% discount.



The combination of student discount and group discount will not be accepted. You can also join the parade in your own period costume for free.

● There will be a special parade of children who are over 100 cm tall. They will also be dressed in period costumes at ¥5,000/child (¥4,000/child for the group of 3 children or more).

Costumes, dressing, make-up, hair-set, and lunch are all included in the rental fee.

To participate, call 'Sakura Jidai-matsuri Jikkoh Iin-kai', ☎486-2331, fax 486-5963, e-mail: jidaimatsuri2010@sakura-cci.or.jp, or send a postcard to 〒285-0811 Omote-cho 3-3-10, Sakura Shohkoh-kaigisho-nai 「Sakura Jidai-matsuri Jikkoh Iin-kai」 Jimukyoku. The application should contain: your preferred costume, personal particulars such as name, gender, age, height, address, and telephone number. The application deadline date is Sunday, February 28.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED ! : Why not get involved in the Festival as a volunteer? Volunteers will be asked to help organize the festival from the preliminary stages; or control the traffic, or take photos on the day of the event. Contact the organizer, ☎486-2331 for further information.

FREE CONSULTATION FOR FOREIGN RESIDENTS

Don't suffer alone! A free consultation for non-Japanese residents on various matters will be offered on Sunday, January 31, 13:00-16:00 at Funabashi-shi Chuh'oh Koh'min-kan (5-minute walk from Keisei Funabashi Station or 7-minute walk from JR Funabashi station). Please present all the information and documents to illustrate your cases. Matters discussed will be kept strictly confidential. Interpretation is available on prior request. The application deadline date is Friday, January 22. The application is accepted by calling the Chiba International Center, ☎297-0245, Fax: 297-2753, or by e-mail: kudo@ccb.or.jp.

'KAIUN NANDEMO KANTEI-DAN' IN SAKURA

TO BE BROADCAST ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, FROM 8:54 PM

Don't miss it!



'Kaiun Nandemo Kantei-dan' is an 'antiques roadshow' in which antique appraisers travel to various regions of Japan and appraise family heirlooms, antiques, valuable treasures and collections brought in by local residents. Part history lesson and part family drama, the program reveals the fascinating truth about the items put on show. The show taped in Sakura in last November at the City Concert Hall will be broadcast on Tuesday, January 19 from 20:54 on TV Tokyo. Call *Shoh'koh-kankoh-ka* (the Commerce, Industry & Tourism Section), ☎484-6146 for further information.

CITIZENS' SKIING TOUR



Citizens' skiing tour will be held from Friday night, January 22 through Monday, January 25 to Shiga-koh'gen, Nagano Prefecture. The first 40 applicants are accepted by calling Okamoto c/o Sakura-shi *Taiiku-kyohkai* (Athletic Association), ☎090-3086-3737. The participation fee is ¥33,000, including costs of transportation by chartered bus, accommodations, and insurance fee.

SPECIAL CLOSING DAYS OF SAKURA CITY LIBRARIES



In addition to the usual closing days on every Monday and every 1st Tuesday, Usui Koh'minkan Library Room and Kita-Shizu Children's Center Library Room will be closed for the special inventory from Tuesday, January 26 to Friday, January 29. While the libraries are closed, please return books and magazines to 'book return post boxes'.

POPULATION OF SAKURA CITY

As of the end of November 2009, Japanese population of Sakura was 175,960 (86,837 male and 89,123 female) in 69,858 households. Registered foreign residents accounted for 2,036. The combined population of Sakura City was 177,996.

SPECIAL EVENTS TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR

◆ **TAKO-AGE CONTEST(KITE-FLYING CONTEST):** *Tako-age* (kite-flying) is a popular pleasure among Japanese especially during New Year's holidays. Many *Tako-age Taikai* are held all over Japan to celebrate the New Year. In Sakura, an annual contest will be held at the athletic field of *Iwana Undoh Koh'en* (Iwana Sports Park) on Sunday, January 17 from 9:30 to 12:00. Everyone is welcome to participate and it is free of charge.



Kites may be of any size or design, handmade or purchased from stores.

Prizes will be awarded for kites that are judged to be unique, or those that fly relatively high. Every contestant will receive a gift as a token of the efforts. The event will be cancelled if it rains.

Please feel free to participate as it is not necessary to register in advance. Call Jidoh-seishoh'nen-ka (The Children & Youth Section), ☎484-6190 for further information.

◆ **NEW YEAR'S EVENT AT KUSABUE-NO-OKA:** Various events will be held as follows:

● On Sunday, January 3 (admission is free on this day): ★ From 10:00, *karuta-taikai*, a traditional Japanese playing card competition, for children. Free of charge. Up to 30 children. Appointment is required; ★ From 11:00, *mochi* (rice cakes)-making.

Sales of *zoh'ni* (hot soup with *mochi* served as a Japanese New Year's meal), etc.

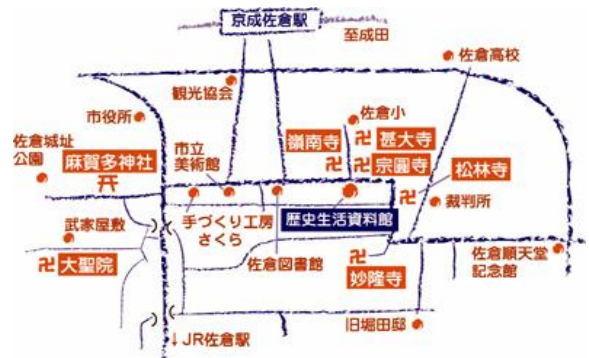
● On Saturday, January 9 & Sunday, January 10: Good luck events such as lottery and quiz.

Admission to Kusabue-no-oka is ¥300 for junior high school & elementary school students, ¥150 for preschool children, and ¥400 for others. Call Kusabue-no-oka, ☎485-7821 for more information.



◆ **SHICHI-FUKUJIN STAMP RALLY:** Why not join *Shichi-fukujin* Stamp Rally when you go 'Hatsu-moh'de' (the New Year's visit to shrine/temple)?

Shichi-fukujin, which literally means 'Seven Gods of Good Fortune', are said to bring wealth, happiness, and long life. To Japanese people, the first dream of the New Year is very meaningful. Since the 15th century, Japanese have believed their fortunes for the coming year are told in the first dreams of the year. To ensure they will have good dreams on the New Year's night from the 1st to the 2nd of January, they put pictures of the Seven Gods of Fortune under the pillows (although it is now less common to do so than before).



Visitors to the shrine/temples of the seven gods from 10:00 to 16:00 during the period from January 1 through January 11, or on the 10th day of every month, are invited to join a stamp rally. Shrine/temples of seven gods are *Jindai-ji*, *Soh'en-ji*, *Reinan-ji*, *Shoh'rin-ji*, *Myoh'ryu-ji*, *Makata-jinja*, and *Daishoh-in*. Stamping sheets for vermilion seals are available at ¥400 each at any of the shrine/temples, *Rekishi-seikatsu-shiryoh'kan* (Center of history and folklore), or at the Sakura City *Kankoh Kyohkai* (1-minute walk from the south exit of Keisei Sakura Station. Closed between January 1 and 3). ¥200 will be required per vermilion seal to be stamped on the sheet (¥300 for two seals at *Makata-jinja* and *Daishoh-in*). Call Sakura *Shoh'koh-kaigi-sho* (Sakura Chamber of Commerce and Industry), ☎486-6117 for more information.

NEW YEAR'S GIFTS FOR READERS

- ★ A 'Fortune Bringing Towel' with *Shichi-fukujin* pictures for 10 people,
- ★ 10 pairs of admission tickets for National Museum of Japanese History,
- ★ 10 pairs of admission tickets for Sakura City Museum of Art,
- ★ A set of picture postcards by photography artist, Mikako Todaka, for 3 people,
- ★ A stuffed 'Chiiba-kun', the official mascot of the National Athletic Meet in Chiba, in three different sizes: 1- large; 3-midium; 5-small.



To apply, send a postcard, a fax, or an e-mail to 「*Dokusha Present* (gifts for readers)」 c/o Koh'hoh-ka (the Public Relations Section) at the Sakura City Hall: 〒285-8501, 97 Kairinji-machi, Sakura; fax 486-8720; e-mail: koho@city.sakura.lg.jp. The application should contain: your opinions or comments on 'Hello Sakura', your preferred gift, personal particulars such as name, address, age, gender, and telephone number. The application deadline date is Friday, January 15. Only one application and one gift per person. Successful applicants will receive the gift without prior announcement.

Chiiba-kun →



HEALTH CHECKS FOR CHILDREN

Kenkoh Kanri Center (Health Management Center) ☎485-6711; *Seibu Hoken Center* (Seibu Health & Welfare Center) ☎463-4181; *Nambu Hoken Center* (Nambu Health & Welfare Center) ☎483-2812

AGES OF CHILDREN	JANUARY '10	TIMES	PLACES
Health consultation for children of 4 months	Health consultation for children of 4 months and <i>Mogu-mogu</i> Class for 8-month-old children in January were cancelled in order to prevent the further spread of new influenza A (H1N1), also called 'swine flu'. If you have worries about child-rearing or baby food, etc., individual consultation is available by calling any of the centers.		
<i>Mogu-mogu</i> (munching) Class for 8-month-old children			
For 18-month-old children born in June, 2008	13	13:30 – 14:30	Kenkoh Kanri Center
	27		Seibu Hoken Center
	21		Nambu Hoken Center
For 3-year-old children born in July, 2006	14	13:30 – 14:30	Kenkoh Kanri Center
	28		Seibu Hoken Center
	20		Nambu Hoken Center
Dental check for children born in January & July, 2007 & in January, 2008	15	13:30 – 14:30	Kenkoh Kanri Center
	26		
	8	13:30 – 14:30	Seibu Hoken Center
	29		
	22	13:30 – 14:30	Nambu Hoken Center

HEALTH CONSULTATION

Consultation with public health nurse, nutritionist, or dental hygienist is available at Center on January 26, 9:30-11:30. An appointment is required by calling the Seibu Hoken Center. **Telephone counseling** is available at any of the centers, 8:30–17:00, Monday - Friday.

FREE ANTENATAL CLASS

A free antenatal class will be held at Seibu Hoken Center on Sunday, February 7, 9:00-14:30 for expectant mothers to have the first babies between March and May, 2010. The program will include instructions on how to raise a healthy child, preparation of nutritious baby food, a lecture by a dentist, etc. There is a limit of 35 people in a class. To attend, application is needed by calling Seibu Hoken Center.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Always be sure to bring your health insurance certificate !

Daytime treatment on Sundays & public holidays : Consultation by a **physician, a surgeon or a dentist** will be available between 9:00 and 17:00 (reception is open until 16:30) at the doctor's office who is on duty in a rotation system. Call ☎484-2516 to learn the doctor on duty.

Nighttime treatment on Sundays & public holidays : **Internal medicine & dental treatment** are available at Kenkoh Kanri Center, between 19:00 and 22:00 (reception is open until 21:45). **Treatment by a surgeon or an ENT doctor** (otolaryngologist) will be done at the doctor's office who is on duty in a rotation system, between 19:00 and 22:00 (reception is open until 21:45). However, obstetrics & gynecology treatment will not be offered any more as there are few patients. Call ☎485-6711 to learn the doctor on duty.

Pediatrics : For children under 16 years of age. Open year-round for treatment at Kenkoh Kanri Center from Monday through Saturday, 19:00-6:00 (next morning). On Sundays & public holidays, 9:00-17:00 & 19:00-6:00 (next morning). Call ☎485-3355 for further information.