

# Multilingual Electronic Newsletter

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かごしま南の風便り

Kagoshima Southern Wind Tidings



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## Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) Column

● I attended the Ohara Festival for the first time in my life! ●

—By Kim Juhee (CIR from South Korea) —

I attended the 73<sup>rd</sup> Ohara Festival held in Kagoshima City from 2-3 November. The Ohara Festival is one of the largest festivals in southern Kyushu, having begun in 1949.

During the general dance of the Ohara Festival, more than 20,000 people participated and danced to the tunes of *Ohara-bushi* and *Kagoshima Hanya-bushi*, local folk songs familiar to Kagoshima people, as well as *Shibuya Ondo*, which is from the Kagoshima Ohara Festival in Shibuya. The festival is held in the Tenmonkan area, the largest shopping district in southern Kyushu, and is an event representative of autumn in Kagoshima.



*Ohara Festival's specialty, Hana-densha (flower train).*

I took part in the pre-event on the evening of 2<sup>nd</sup> November under the Prefectural Office Ohara Festival Club.

I prepared thoroughly for the Ohara Festival by practicing for several days prior to the festival. It was my first time to participate so I was worried about whether I would be able to dance well.

However, the choreography was actually easy to follow and there were many repetitive moves that I was able to learn very quickly. It was also the first time I had heard the songs, but I really enjoyed them and had fun practicing by letting the tunes take over.



*We wore happi coats printed with Kagoshima's specialties.*

On the day, we gathered at the Tenmonkan with our colleagues from the International Affairs Division. There had already gathered many participants and onlookers amidst a festive atmosphere.



This is me dancing the *Ohara-bushi*. (laughs)

For the actual dance itself, we danced and traveled the distance of about two city tram stops for about an hour, moving from Asahi Dori to Temmonkan Dori.

At first, I was worried that it would be difficult to dance continuously for an hour, but it was not as fast as I expected and there was time to rest in-between, so I was able to dance without strain.

I had practiced repeatedly for the performance, but it was still not easy to dance 100% perfectly after all. However, the event I attended was open to anyone who wanted to enjoy the Ohara Festival, so I think my mistakes were seen as cute. (laughs)



Governor Shiota with my CIR colleagues.

I am not a fan of alcohol so I drank tea, but those who liked alcohol danced while drinking sweet potato *shochu* liquor, which is a representative specialty of Kagoshima.

Before becoming a CIR, one of the things I wanted to do most in Japan was to participate in local festivals. Hence, I was really happy and enjoyed achieving that goal this time.

Ohara Matsuri, Kagoshima's largest festival, is a festival in which anyone can participate as long as they learn a simple choreography. I was able to feel the passion of Kagoshima and its people at the Ohara Festival, where foreigners such as myself were gladly welcomed.

I think this may have something to do with the regional characteristics of Kagoshima, which is located at the southernmost tip of the mainland and has always been open-minded and accepting of diverse cultures and things. With these thoughts in mind, today I find myself still humming the song *Shibuya Ondo* that I can't get out of my head. (laughs)



*Group photo of the Prefectural Office Ohara  
Festival Club*

## Activities of the Governor

- 11 October : Visit by Ms. Sandrine MOUCHET, the Consul General of France in Kyoto ●

Ms. Sandrine MOUCHET, the Consul General of France in Kyoto, paid the prefectural office a visit from the Consulate General of France in Kyoto.

The Consul General spoke of the beauty of Sakurajima, the kindness of the Kagoshima people, and the interesting diversity of the culture, nature, and language of the islands of Kagoshima. She also mentioned that Martinique, a French territory in the Caribbean Sea, has many things in common with Kagoshima such as volcanoes, sugar cane, and rum made from sugar cane.

We hope that this visit will lead to further development of exchanges between Kagoshima Prefecture and France.



● *The Governor with Ms. Sandrine MOUCHET*

● 25 October : Promoted Kagoshima products at Japan House Los Angeles ●

Japan House is a facility by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hollywood, Los Angeles, and a reception was held there to promote Japanese products to about 60 guests including local food and apparel buyers, chefs, restaurant and general merchandise store owners.

At the reception, we held a beef cutting demonstration using beef from Kagoshima Prefecture and a seminar on fermentation culture using koji. Additionally, the one-star Michelin restaurant UKA presented a special menu using seafood such as yellowtail fish and *unagi* (Japanese eel), as well as miso and soy sauce, which all the guests enjoyed.

Participants gave good ratings, such as saying that “I was amazed by the impressive cutting techniques used on the wagyu beef and the beauty of the marbling”, and “I was able to savor the unique flavor of Kagoshima Wagyu beef, and it was a great experience for both the eyes and the palate.”

Other exhibits representing the traditional crafts of the prefecture included authentic Oshima Tsumugi silk pongee, Satsuma Kiriko Cut Glass and Japanese samurai armor. Participants commented, "I was able to feel the history and tradition of Kagoshima, and would definitely like to visit Kagoshima."

As such, the event promoted the Kagoshima’s attractions from a wide range of perspectives including food, tourism, and traditional crafts.

We would like to express our gratitude to the many people who helped make this reception possible, including the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles, Japan House, JETRO Los Angeles and the Southern California Kenjinkai.



● Giving a speech at the seminar



● During the event

●26 October : Attended the memorial service for the deceased of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai ●

In Los Angeles, USA, we attended a memorial service for the deceased held in connection with the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai. There, we paid homage to the spirits of our forefathers who had supported the activities of the Kenjinkai.

I sincerely believe that the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai was able to continue its activities over the 125 years since its founding is due to the strong bonds of our deceased predecessors, who had immigrated to a distant foreign land as Kagoshima people and toiled hard to get to where they were today.

I pray that the spirits of the departed may rest in peace for all eternity.



●*During the memorial service*

● 26 October : Attended a welcome luncheon hosted by the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai ●

In Los Angeles, we attended a luncheon hosted by the board members of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai, along with municipal mayors and representatives of business groups that have immigrants to California, and offered my congratulations to them.

According to Mr. Frank Yoshifumi Ohara, President of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai, "I hope that people from the same region will have a chance to talk and deepen their ties."

At the meeting, we were able to deepen our friendship by listening to the various stories of Kenjinkai members about their work, daily life and Kenjinkai activities.



●*With Mr. Frank Yoshifumi Ohara, President of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai*

● 26 October : Visited the Japanese American National Museum and offered flowers at the Go For Broke monument ●

I visited the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles in order to participate in the 125th anniversary celebration of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai. This museum opened in 1992 and displays an extensive collection of Japanese American artifacts, photographs, films, and documents, telling the story of Japanese Americans in the United States and around the world.

It is the first institution of its kind in the United States to focus on the Japanese American experience, and tells the story of Japanese Americans across the United States and around the world through various exhibits, educational programs, videos, and publications.

I also left flowers at the Go For Broke Memorial, which was built in honor of Japanese Americans who served during World War II.



● *Commemorative photo with the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai*



● *At the National Japanese American National Museum*

● 27 October : Attended the 125th Anniversary Commemorative Party and Celebration of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai ●

I attended the 125th Anniversary Commemorative Party and Celebration of the Founding of Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai which was held in Los Angeles.

Since its founding in 1899, the members of the Southern California Kagoshima Kenjinkai has continued to work tirelessly without losing their hopes and dreams, cherished their ties with Kagoshima, helped each other overcome many difficulties, and finally reached this memorable 125th anniversary.

I would like to express my deepest respect to all members of the Kenjinkai and thank them for their many years of hard work. We also presented awards to those from Kagoshima who have been active in Southern California.

At the celebration party held concurrently, we celebrated in style with the delegation from Kagoshima Prefecture, members of the Kenjinkai, and many other related participants.



● *Speaking at the Commemorative Party and Ceremony*



● *Ceremonial Sake Cask Breaking at the event*

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## Tourism Information in Kagoshima

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### ● 26, 27 October : Myoenji Temple Pilgrimage ●

This is a traditional pilgrimage that involves walking about 20km from Kagoshima City to Ijuin Town, Hioki City, and is one of the three major events in Kagoshima.

The origin of this pilgrimage begins near the end of the Warring States period, and was to commemorate Satsuma's (present-day Kagoshima) Lord Shimadzu Yoshihiro's return after a hard struggle breaking through enemy lines, to inspire morale in a time of peace, and to train one's minds and bodies.

Hence, the samurai of Kagoshima Castle (and commoners from the Meiji period onwards) began to travel a night-long, round trip of 40km clad in full armor to Myoenji Temple (Yoshihiro's family temple where he was buried) on September 14th of the lunar calendar, which was the night before the Battle of Sekigahara.

This pilgrimage continued even after the shrine was changed to Tokushige Shrine due to the abolition of Buddhism.

Today, the festival attracts more than 50,000 people and includes traditional performing arts, martial arts events, and a walking rally that attracts many families.





● *Scenes from the event* © K. P. V. B

● 26 October-24 November : Kanoya Rose Festival in Autumn ●

Autumn roses bloom slowly, so they are characterized by deep colors, rich fragrances and large petals.

This year, the Takasuchu Street Performance Festival 2024 was held for the first time as the opening event of the Autumn Kanoya Rose Festival 2024.

On weekends and holidays, the park was bustling with activities such as a simple dog run, a mini cafe, a kitchen car festival, stage events and rose-related experiences.



● *Numerous colorful roses in full bloom*



Kagoshima Prefectural Office Website: <http://www.pref.kagoshima.jp/>



**Editor's Note (International Affairs Division, Department of Tourism,  
Culture and Sports, Kagoshima Prefectural Government)**

As autumn deepens, we are now embraced by the season where ginkgo and maple leaves take on vibrant colors. 🍂 The mornings and evenings have turned cold, and it feels as if we have passed through the autumn season into winter.

Even though it is the time of year when the body cannot keep up with the rapid changes in temperature, and flu and colds are common, but let's eat well, sleep well, and get through the winter together 🍷 Looking forward to seeing you in the next issue. ★



The Kagoshima Southern Wind Tidings Bulletin Board is looking for the following Kagoshima-related content!

☆Kagoshima Photo Gallery

We invite people to send us photos that remind them of Kagoshima, or photos of Kagoshima that they have seen overseas. Please also attach a brief description along with the photo. (E.g., a mountain of volcanic ash bags.)

☆Kagoshima Lifestyle Know-How

We invite people to share with us information related to life in Kagoshima. (E.g., delicious ways to enjoy fried fish cakes, how to deal with volcanic ash, etc.)

We also welcome any other information that you would like to share with our readers.

▲▽▲▽ **Inquiries** ▲▽▲▽

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