



Kitakyushu

Bridges

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Mayors of the OEAED

The 3 Big Es for Kitakyushu 2004... Exchanges, Eco-Friendly and Exhilarating!

Kitakyushu saw and experienced yet again another year of its greatest international activities during 2004. Having celebrated its grand 25th Sister City Anniversary with Dalian, China, along with the 45th Sister City Anniversary with Norfolk, Virginia and Tacoma, Washington, U.S., another year-end highlight for Kitakyushu was the initiation of the Organization for East Asia Economic Development (OEAED), where the city embarked

on its journey with the Pan-Yellow Sea region to promote economic exchanges. Aside from exchanges with its neighboring countries and sister cities, Kitakyushu offers myriad of interesting places, great food and never to forget the heart-warming people who live and work in the city. So sit down, relax and enjoy what Bridges has to say about the beautiful city!

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Kitakyushu Leads Asia with a Bright Future



Mayors sign an agreement for the OEAED

The Organization for the East Asia Economic Development, or the OEAED, was held in Kitakyushu last November to start a regional organization designed to promote economic exchanges. Representatives of 10 cities, including host-city Kitakyushu, Fukuoka, Shimonoseki in Yamaguchi Prefecture and the Chinese cities of Dalian, Qingdao, Tianjin and Yantai and South Korean cities of Busan, Incheon and Ulsan all voted in accordance to establish a mechanism that will promote Asian enterprises and increase the actual profit of each member city.

The Organization will form working groups in the following areas: environment, logistics, manufacturing and tourism. Members for these working groups will include entrepreneurs and researchers, who will be able to offer new trends and information.

Regions in the Pan-Yellow Sea were considered ideal for the cause due to its geographical advantages, rich natural resources, advanced technical skills and abundant human resources. The Mayors' Forum and the Business Leaders' Forum were also carried out during these three days of conference in order to reinforce the administrative and

economic ties between member cities.

The conference was executed through a large concern for globalization. Dependence on large enterprises just within a nation has been considered outdated. There was a need for new strategies toward city developments. Mayor Koichi Sueyoshi of Kitakyushu expressed that there was an urgent need for all regions and cities to collaborate in order to internationalize societies and businesses.

"Each and every mayor must carry out ideas, possess their own dreams and make efforts to realize those dreams," Mayor Sueyoshi said. "And I believe the basis for this idea lies within (OEAED)."

Some of the challenges include the establishment of the region-limited version Free Trade Agreement, or the FTA, creation of the Pan-Yellow Sea environmental model, strategy developments for the establishment of the Pan-Yellow Sea Tourism brand, technology exchanges between universities and the establishment of international networks. The OEAED was first initiated by the City of Kitakyushu with the East Asian (Pan-Yellow Sea) Conference established by the initiative of Kitakyushu in 1991.

What is...

Region-limited version FTA?

Developments of the FTA have been expanding worldwide. However, FTAs are still unattainable due to difficulties that involve “sensitive” industries and concrete negotiations concerning tariff rates. Such problems cannot be dealt with at the local government level but there is a great chance that the Pan-Yellow Sea regions can attain effects that are similar to those of the FTA by improving the efficiency of trade-related services and by reducing transaction costs.

Pan-Yellow Sea environmental model region?

Various industries have been gaining greater importance that involve waste disposal, recycling and re-commercialization businesses. The City of Kitakyushu has initiated various eco-town projects to promote recycling and advanced waste treatment. Furthermore, Kitakyushu has received numerous recognitions for implementing international cooperation for environmental protection such as pollution control, along with other East Asian cities.

Since Kitakyushu has developed a reputation of being the model city that incorporated international cooperation for environmental issues, the 10 member cities will use these experiences to foster environmental businesses. Its main goal is for the Pan-Yellow Sea region to become a role model for the world.

Pan-Yellow Sea tourism brand?

The tourism industry will experience an enormous amount of growth as the economy and population increases. Each member city has excellent tourism resources so the establishment of the tourism network in the Pan-Yellow Sea regions will be vital.



Mayor Koichi Sueyoshi of Kitakyushu, center, initiates the OEAED



Technology exchanges between universities in Pan-Yellow Sea regions

Information and communication technologies have been increasing rapidly. Aside from its use for production cooperation, these technologies will also have importance in the field of intellectual creation. It is deemed necessary for universities, science parks and technological transfer institutions in each city to establish networks. It is also essential to conduct exchanges between students and trainees from each country. The Organization will promote academic exchanges through joint research projects and introduce a credit transfer system among major technical universities. The Organization also intends to set up a training institute, like the “Pan-Yellow Sea New University.”



Mayor Sueyoshi, left, and Mayor Xia Geng of Qingdao, right, exchange agreements

A Bite of Warm Happiness through Ekiben



Kazutoshi Yamaguchi enjoys another day of selling *Kashiwameshi*

Hop on a local train, enjoy the beautiful scenery and learn Japanese culture through *ekiben*, or boxed lunch sold at train stations. More than 3,000 *ekibens* are currently sold in stations throughout Japan, each holding its own local specialties. Acquiring Japanese culture through local specialties is one thing, but talking to *ekiben* sellers is also a good opportunity to interact with the local people. However, *ekiben* sellers are hardly seen on train platforms these days. Kiosks and other shops have rapidly replaced the traditional way of selling *ekibens*.

Kitakyushu's Orio Station is but a few of the stations that still dispatches *ekiben* sellers. Kazutoshi Yamaguchi is one of them. Yamaguchi has been selling *ekibens* from the traditional wooden box for nine years. He is one of the two sellers that are left working in the Kyushu region. With his usual bright-red uniform, blue sailor hat he's been using ever since on the job and well-thumbed leather straps that supports the wooden box, he enjoys his days selling Orio's famous *Kashiwameshi* (rice topped with seasoned chicken, egg and seasoned "nori" seaweed) and having a good time with his customers.

"(Talking to people) is the moment I feel happiness," Yamaguchi said. "Especially when I see foreigners, I get excited and try to talk to them in English. But comes out most of them can speak Japanese well (laugh)."

Kitakyushu Profile



Zenzaburo Kojima is the curator at Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art in Tobata Ward. The Museum has just celebrated its 30th Anniversary last year. The Museum was opened in 1974 as a pioneer of public art museum in Western Japan. After graduating from the renowned Tokyo University of Education with a B.A. in Art, Curator Kojima worked as an art teacher at various high schools such as the Moji Commercial High School and Moji Senior High School. In addition, he has been a professor at Kumamoto University for 20 years. He will be celebrating his 2nd year as curator for the Museum this coming September and let's see what he has to say about his love for art along with the Museum's 30th Anniversary activities.

1) What kinds of events were held in celebration of the 30th anniversary?

We have purchased Hanjiro Sakamoto's "Kaigan no Ushi" for the celebration. We are also holding the 30th Anniversary Special Exhibition for art pieces that we've had over the years. The exhibition presents arts we have displayed over the years that reflect upon our past activities. Ever since our grand opening in 1974, we were the first to start the volunteer system. Our volunteers have acted as "bridges" to our museum. To express our deepest appreciation for their efforts, we have presented them with a certificate of gratitude. We have also held a fun exhibition for elementary school students.

2) How did you get yourself involved in the world of art?

I started oil painting when I was in intermediate school, which was after the end of the Second World War. During the war, I was in fifth grade when I ran away from the air raids to the countryside. That was when I injured my leg very badly. People told me that I was unpatriotic and useless. I was bullied and felt very depressed. I started to paint by myself. When I entered high school, I had to decide what I wanted to do in the future. Back in the days, art was not considered a grand job, so my parents were against me becoming an artist. I ended up telling them that I was going to be a school teacher. So I was a double-jobber, being a school teacher and an artist at the same time.

3) To this day, you have encountered countless pieces of artwork. Can you tell me what your favorite work of art is?

I like Zenzaburo Kojima's "Portrait of Seiko Takada dressed in Spanish." Her flirtatious glance is really exhilarating. The structure of the art is fabulous. I can (just)

Tochikuken, a long-established bento company selling *Kashiwameshi*, started selling *ekiben* from wooden boxes. They sell about an average of 30 on the weekdays and 40 to 50 on the weekends.

Yamaguchi works on platform 5 in Orio Station every day except for Tuesdays. His talent does not only limit to selling *ekibens*, but he is also a well-known song writer. He has written a song about Orio Station and *Kashiwameshi*, namely “Kagoshima Line,” which was one of his utmost dreams. Several years ago, “Kagoshima Line,” a line that runs from Mojiko Station in Kitakyushu to Kagoshima Station, was recorded into a CD and he says that there was quite a lot of demand from the public. So if you kindly ask and if he is in a good mood, he might sing that big hit just for you.

Sadly or not, we live in a world where everything is becoming digitalized. Concert tickets, clothes or even a kid’s diaper is delivered straight to your home with a single click or call. Face-to-face communication is deteriorating as industries seek profit from digital communication. As Bridges found warmth through Yamaguchi, we hope you too will discover the true beauty of Japanese culture through a single serving of warm bento.

“Running around delivering *ekibens* is a tough job,” Yamaguchi said. “But I want to work while I am healthy.”



Yamaguchi interacting with customers

feel the beat of the Spanish rhythm from just looking at the portrait. I am doing research on structures, so this part interests me a lot. It provides a European-style composition, but is beautifully drawn in a Japanese style. I just love it because it has an Asian sensibility touch to it.

4) What are your plans or goals for this museum?

The fundamental idea for our museum is “Living Museum,” where we want the citizens’ lifestyles to be in close contact with our museum. That has been our principle ever since the establishment of this museum. In the olden days, museums were places to teach and educate people. As we enjoy art in the new age, we want to provide a place for fun and recreation.

We had an experimental exhibition the other day where artists’ names and titles were not disclosed. Of course we gave them brochures where names and art titles were written. The citizens loved it very much. I think it gave them a new perspective of viewing arts. Instead of visualizing the emotions when an artist creates an art piece, we need to treasure our very own images and feelings when we first look at the creations. We had them look at each piece as one entity which develops an image from their initial perception. Through this philosophy, we feel people can enjoy works of art in a wider perspective. Or else it wouldn’t be fun if they were passive all the time.

5) What is art for you?

Direct communication with my true inner feelings. I think art is a communication tool. You want to convey something and feel something at the same time. Art is classified in the same category as poetry. I am an avid reader of poetry and I believe the two are essentially the same in terms of thought expression. This is the time I feel that I can be sincere. Our

museum displays a wide array of art pieces and I want people to connect with the art they felt compatible with and that is the way to enjoy art. When you can’t feel for what the art piece is trying to convey, put aside that feeling because that is the true echo of your heart. You can also look at many lifestyles through different art forms and possibly learn from them. I truly believe humans cannot live without communication.

Curator Kojima’s favorite art piece, “Portrait of Seiko Takada dressed in Spanish”





Hello, Bridges readers! My name is Anitha Henderson, I work as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) for the Kitakyushu International Association (KIA). My job primarily involves translating the Himawari, our English newsletter, and visiting various places around the city, playing with children, talking to the elderly, and pretty much whatever else they ask me!

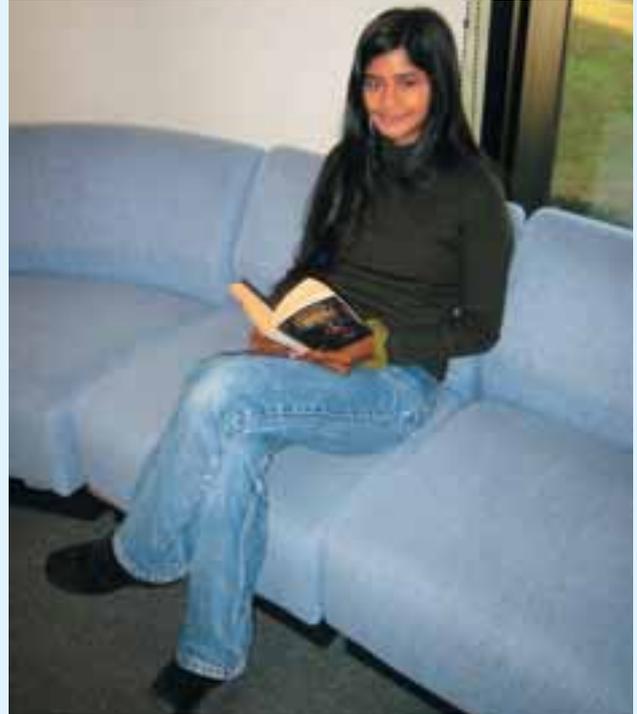
I actually like living in Kitakyushu very much. Normally when you live in a town, you don't learn much about the town itself. Part of my job is to know about Kitakyushu, so I've learned a lot about the different areas, from Kokura to Yahata. I've even seen KitaQ from the air in a helicopter!

This is my first job since graduating college, and my first job in Japan, so I have learned a lot about what it means to be a professional, and moreover, a Japanese professional. I thought I knew Japan after a year of studying here when I was a student, but I was completely wrong! I've learned, for example, that while there are a ton of good points about Japanese culture and manners, in the end, it's not for me. I like being an American!

As for advice for other non-Japanese living in Japan... My best advice is to keep an open mind. And I mean, *really* an open mind. Often I think the biggest problem is

people interpret Japanese with their own culture's mindset. Before you get upset, angry, or even irritated, think about it from the other person's point of view. A lot of times, they're thinking about things for your benefit!

I hope you are having or had a good time in KitaQ. Please be sure to visit us in the KIA anytime!



Anitha taking a little break at the KIA lounge

Sincerely yours,

Anitha Henderson

Invaluable Assets in Kitakyushu

Forget Itsukushima Shinto Shrine in Hiroshima or the Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto. Kitakyushu has a number of valuable cultural assets to offer and every one of them has its own story to tell. Bridges would like to introduce a few of the important places you can visit when you come to Kitakyushu in the near future!

The first famous cultural heritage Bridges would like to introduce is the Old Moji Mitsui Club, which is situated in a quiet port town called Mojiko in Kitakyushu. This building occupies a classic Western-style design, which was considered foremost in those days. Right behind the main building is a Japanese house that is well preserved. A restaurant and a music hall is located on the first floor and archives of materials once belonging to the renowned novelist Fumiko Hayashi along with the Einstein Memorial Room, a public display of the room where Einstein and his wife stayed during their visit to the area in 1922. The Old

Moji Mitsui Club was built in 1921 as a hospitality and accommodations facility for the Mitsui Trading Cooperation.



"Old Mitsui Club in Mojiko"

Kitakyushu celebrates 45th Sister City Anniversary with Tacoma and Norfolk



Members of Tacoma and Kitakyushu gather for the celebration

Kitakyushu celebrated its 45th Sister City Anniversary with two U.S. cities, Norfolk, Virginia and Tacoma, Washington last year. The grand celebration with Norfolk was held in Kitakyushu last August. Two mermaid statuettes, which symbolize an everlasting friendship, were presented to Kitakyushu. The "Golden Dream Mermaid Statuette Unveiling Ceremony" was held in front of *RIVERWALK Kitakyushu*. Chairman Hiroyuki Hamada of the City of Norfolk Sister City Committee, Deputy Mayor Toshiaki Takano from the City of Kitakyushu, children from Norfolk as well as the citizens joined in to celebrate the event.

The "Tropical Fantasia Mermaid" statuette, beautifully painted in a variety of vivid colors, is displayed inside the International Village Center. Both are adored by the citizens of Kitakyushu, which has also become a famous rendezvous spot for many young people.

The sister city celebration with Tacoma was held three months after Norfolk in November. Honorable guests Mayor Bill Baarsma of Tacoma and President Transue of the Tacoma Community College took part in the celebration. Mayor Koichi Sueyoshi and Mayor Baarsma conveyed their appreciation for the long relationship and vowed to strengthen ties culturally and economically.



Mayor Sueyoshi and Mayor Baarsma vow their continued exchanges

In addition, an award presentation ceremony for the blueprint of the Japanese Garden, which is scheduled for construction at Tacoma Community College within the next few years, was presented by the Kitakyushu Greenery Association. The blueprint was specially designed by the KGA volunteers. Chairperson Sadaaki Mizuno of the Association presented the blueprint to President Transue. The Japanese Garden displays a rock-style setting where people can walk around and enjoy the scenery. The Garden is one of the projects for the sister city anniversary.

Relationships with Tacoma and Norfolk started before Kitakyushu became a city. Tacoma tied its sister-city relationship with what was then Kokura City in 1959. Norfolk began sister-city relations with the former city of Moji the same year. Over the years, Kitakyushu has carried out a wide range of economic, cultural and educational activities with Tacoma and Norfolk. In 1986, a street in Kokurakita Ward was dedicated as "Tacoma Avenue." Furthermore, Kitakyushu and Tacoma have initiated sports exchange programs such as the "Japan-U.S. High School Friendship Baseball Series," which began in 1988. In 1986, "Norfolk Square" was opened in Moji Ward. Norfolk and Kitakyushu have each sent delegations of educators to participate in the Japan-U.S. Education Symposium, regularly held since 1989. Furthermore, a citizens' delegation in Kitakyushu led by Mayor Sueyoshi traveled to Norfolk in 1995 for the "Kitakyushu Festival" and the rededication of Kitakyushu Park.



One of Kitakyushu's rendezvous spots, "Golden Dream Mermaid" at RIVERWALK Kitakyushu



"Tropical Fantasia Mermaid" attracts visitors to the International Village Center



Deputy Mayor Toshiaki Takano, fourth from left, Dr. Hiroyuki Hamada, fifth from right, and honorable guests at the "Golden Dream Mermaid Statuette Unveiling Ceremony"

Invaluable Assets in Kitakyushu~Part Two~

The second cultural heritage Bridges would like to introduce is the former Matsumoto House, which stands as one of Japan's proudest architecture. Designated as an important cultural asset in 1972, the edifice was owned by Kenjiro Matsumoto who led a very successful business in the mining industry. The House was built during 1908 and completed its construction in 1912. The House served both as his home and housed several guests from all over the world.

The Matsumoto House is situated in the Tobata Ward of Kitakyushu, which holds roughly 3.21 acres of land. The house is comprised of both Western and Japanese-style, which was supervised under Kingo Tatsuno, a renowned Japanese architect who is also famous for designing Tokyo Station. The Matsumoto family had lived in the House until the Second World War. From 1952, the West Japan Industry Club was established and been using this as a meeting place for its members ever since.

The characteristics for this house lie in its unique style and design. The exterior, interior and furnishings of the western house were especially designed in an art nouveau style. This was Japan's first architecture that introduced art nouveau. In addition, with Mt. Konpira as the background, the garden features various styles depending on the season.



"The Matsumoto House in Tobata Ward"

From Beijing
Beijing International Airport – Fukuoka Airport: 2 hours 20 minutes

From Dalian
Dalian International Airport – Fukuoka Airport: 1 hour 50 minutes

From Incheon
Incheon International Airport – Fukuoka Airport: 1 hour 10 minutes

From Tokyo
by plane
Haneda Airport -- Kitakyushu Airport: 1 hour 30 minutes
by Shinkansen bullet train
Tokyo Station -- Kokura Station: 4 hours 32 minutes

From Osaka
by plane
Kansai International Airport -- Fukuoka Airport: 1 hour (approx.)
by Shinkansen bullet train
Shin-Osaka Station -- Kokura Station: 2 hours

From Fukuoka
by expressway bus
Fukuoka Airport -- Kokura Station: 1 hour 19 minutes
by Shinkansen bullet train
Hakata Station -- Kokura Station: 17 minutes

Access to Kitakyushu



Population:

1 million; 12th largest city in Japan, 2nd in Kyushu Region

Climate:

Temperate; Mean temp: 15

International Recognition

UN Global 500 Award for Environmental Clean-up; UNCED Local Government Governmental Honors for Environmental Education; Earth Summit 2002 Sustainable Development Award.

Industries

Traditional base — steel & metal, ceramics, machinery, chemicals, shipping

New industries — computer software,

environmental technologies, robotics, assistive technologies

Local Life:

*With 1075 hectares of parkland, 3rd per capita among major Japanese cities

*Summer season of exciting festivals

*City of mountains and waterfronts

Upcoming Projects:

New Hibiki Port (open in April 1, 2005)

New Kitakyushu Airport (open in 2006)

Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAP) (October 2005)

United Nations/International Astronautical Federation (UN/IAF) Workshop (October 2005)

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Aloha Bridges readers! I am your new editor Sonia Takahashi from Hawai'i, USA, and I would like to thank each and every one of you for continuing to read Bridges! If you have any questions or possible ideas for future Bridges, please feel free to contact me! Mahalo!

