

SHINJUKU NEWS

No. 9

Publishing Date: June 25, 2007
Published by: Cultural and International Division, Regional and Cultural Affairs Department, Shinjuku City
Tel: 03-5273-4069
Fax: 03-3209-1500
1-4-1 Kabukicho, Shinjuku City, Tokyo 160-8472



Foreign Language Website <http://www.city.shinjuku.tokyo.jp/foreign/english/>
Please make your inquiries in Japanese when calling the coordinating division.

Outdoor Spots Where Families Can Play Together

Because the summer is so humid in Japan, places by water or in the shade become especially inviting. Shinjuku may have an image of being an all high-rise building and downtown shopping area, but it also has a lot of places where you can relax next to refreshing waters and surrounded by natural greenery. Why not pack a lunch and head out with the entire family?



1 Seseragi-no Sato (1-1 Kami-Ochiai)

Even small children can safely play at the stream (seseragi in Japanese) located here. Visitors are free to spread a picnic blanket or leisure sheet in the spacious grassy area and enjoy a picnic lunch. Also available are slides and outdoor play equipment.

Hours: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Until 5 p.m. from November through March). Closed on Mondays (Tuesdays if Monday is a national holiday)

How to Get There: A three-minute walk from Shimo-Ochiai Station on the Seibu-Shinjuku Line.

2 Otomeyama Park (2-10 Shimo-Ochiai)

With its stream and rich natural greenery, this park will help you forget the hustle and bustle of the city. It is common to see people resting on the benches while being refreshed by the breeze filtered through the shade. Fireflies can also be seen in the park.

Hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Until 5 p.m. from October through March)

How to Get There: A seven-minute walk from Takadanobaba Station on the JR Line, Tokyo Metro Tozai Line and Seibu-Shinjuku Line.



3 Toyama Park - Hakoneyama Area (2 and 3 Toyama)

Visitors can play to their hearts' content in this spacious park with its rich natural greenery, Jabu-Jabu Splash Pond and at the Seseragi Plaza, and outdoor play equipment. Hakoneyama, the highest mountain in Shinjuku City (44.6m), is also located in the park.

Hours: Jabu-Jabu Splash Pond - Late July (subject to change) through August 31 (Fri.), 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Closed on rainy days)

How to Get There: A 15-minute walk from Waseda Station on the Tokyo Metro Tozai Line.



4 Shinjuku Chuo Park (2-11 Nishi-Shinjuku)

This park acts as an oasis in the city and is situated with the Metropolitan Government Building and high-rise buildings in the background. Families with children can enjoy using the jogging course, basketball court, and Chibikko Kids Plaza. There is also a Jabu-Jabu Splash Pond in which children can safely play.

Hours: Jabu-Jabu Splash Pond - July 10 (Tue.) through September 7 (Fri.), 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Closed on rainy days)

How to Get There: A 10-minute walk from JR Shinjuku Station, and a five-minute walk from Tocho-mae Station on the Toei Oedo Subway Line.



5 Minami-Motomachi Park (20 Minami-Motomachi)

There is a Jabu-Jabu Splash Pond with clear flowing waters. The pond has a stone pillar that emits misty waters at scheduled times.

Hours: Jabu-Jabu Splash Pond - late April through late October, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

How to Get There: A seven-minute walk from Yotsuya Station on the JR Line, Tokyo Metro Marunouchi Line and Namboku Line, and a five-minute walk from JR Shinanomachi Station.



The next issue of Shinjuku News will be published in September 2007. Shinjuku News is available at various public facilities such as Shinjuku City Office, Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza, Branch Offices and public libraries.

Learning Assistance for Foreign Children Has Begun

Foreign children who come to Japan may have trouble keeping up with their studies at school because they do not speak Japanese. For this reason, Shinjuku City has introduced a learning-assistance program for children with the cooperation of NPO Minna-no Ouchi (which means "everyone's home"). Under this program, tutors help children keep up with their studies and enjoy school life.

Program 1 – Learning Assistance

Japanese, math and English are taught to children at Okubo Children's Hall and Enokicho Children's Center.

Program 2 – Friendly Exchange

Classes such as international cooking classes and foreign

culture classes are held to allow for the gathering of people from various countries.

Program 3 – Nature Experience Tour

Bus tours to Niigata are held in the summer and winter.



Inquiries: NPO Minna-no Ouchi/Kobayashi,
Tel/Fax: 03-3204-0916

Coordinated by: Cultural and International Division,
Tel: 03-5273-4069

Municipal Elementary and Junior High School Enrollment in April 2008

Compulsory education in Japan includes six years of elementary school and three years of junior high school for a total of nine years for children between the ages of six and 15. While foreign residents are not obligated to attend a Japanese elementary or junior high school, admission can be authorized upon application if the parent so desires. Today, approximately 300 foreign children attend school in Shinjuku.

Please note that a child must graduate from a Japanese elementary school in order to be admitted to a Japanese junior high school. If you wish to enroll your child, please complete the following procedures.

Furthermore, with regard to newly-entering 1st grade/1st year students of elementary and junior high school, a school selection system is in place that allows you to select a school from a list of designated optional schools that are outside the school district. A list of optional schools outside the school district is distributed during the application period.

Eligibility for Entering Elementary School: Those born between April 2, 2001 and April 1, 2002

Eligibility for Entering Junior High School: Those born between April 2, 1995 and April 1, 1996

Application Period (for submitting an application for an optional school)

For Elementary School – September 3 (Mon.) through 28 (Fri.)

For Junior High School – October 1 (Mon.) through 31 (Wed.)

To Apply: Bring the notice mailed in advance by the Operations Division and the child's foreign resident registration card to the School Operations Division of the Board of Education. If you cannot speak Japanese, please come with someone who can.

Application/Inquiries: School Operations Division,
Tel: 03-5273-3089

Eligible Age Range for Children's Medical Subsidies to Be Extended

Shinjuku City will extend the eligible age range for children's medical subsidies from the current age of 6 (until the first March 31st after the child becomes 6 years of age) to the age of 15 (until the first March 31st after the child becomes 15 years of age). Application forms will be mailed to those eligible. Please be sure to complete the designated procedures.



Eligibility: Elementary and junior high school students living in Shinjuku.

Medical Subsidy Starting Date: Medical treatment starting in October 1.

Medical Certificate Issuing Period: Late September

To Apply: Apply by mail or in person at the Child-Raising Section of the Children and Family Division (Shinjuku City Office 2F) or your local Branch Office.

Inquiries/Mailing Address: Child-Raising Section, Children and Family Division (Main Bldg. 2F, Tel: 03-5273-4546) 1-4-1 Kabukicho, Shinjuku-ku 160-8484

No Smoking or Littering Cigarette Butts on the Street

Smoking on the street is very dangerous for other people as it can lead to passive smoking and cigarette burns. Please do not walk on the street while holding a lit cigarette or litter the streets with cigarette butts.

Please smoke only in designated areas and use common courtesy so the people in our town can walk along the streets with peace of mind.

Smoke in Designated Locations

Please smoke in the designated smoking areas of facilities. The following areas are designated smoking areas (seven locations): In front of Seibu-Shinjuku Station, in front of Shinjuku Station West Exit, Takadanobaba Station-Front Plaza, Shinjuku Station East Exit Station-Front Plaza, Shinjuku Station Southeast Exit Station-Front Plaza, in front of the Shin-Okubo Station East Side Bicycle Parking Lot and in front of the Shinanomachi Station South Side Bicycle Parking Lot

Inquiries: Environmental Conservation Division
Tel: 03-5273-3763



▲ Smoking Area



Let's Do the Samba!

Yakuo-ji/Yanagicho Tanabata Star Festival



– along the full 430-meter length of the street. The annual

This year marks the 29th local annual Tanabata Festival.

Tanzaku (oblong cards) with wishes written on them will decorate large bamboo branches – a Tanabata Star Festival tradition

Samba Parade will be winding its way along this street, with authentic samba dancing. Along the sidewalk, there will be rows of various vendors, such as those providing goldfish scooping, *yakisoba* (noodles) and water balloon yo-yos. Have fun at this local festival with all the family.

Date and Time: July 8 (Sun.), 1 to 5 p.m.

Location: Gaienhigashi-dori Avenue (Yanagicho Intersection to Nakanocho Intersection)

Inquiries: Yakuo-ji/Yanagicho Tanabata Star Festival Executive Committee, Tel: 03-3353-1461

Mini-Lesson! Tanabata

This annual event is based on the story of Hikoboshi (Altair) and Orihime (Vega), who are separated by the Milky Way but are able to meet once a year on the night of July 7. People write their wishes on *tanzaku* (oblong cards) of various colors and hang them on a bamboo branch so that their wish will come true.

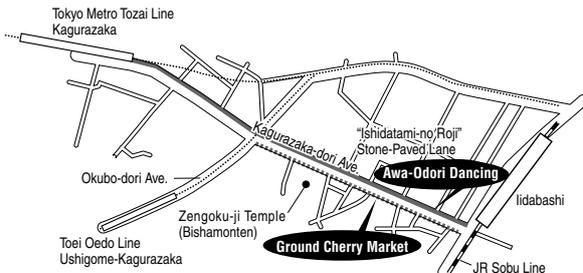


Japanese Summer Tradition - Ground Cherry Plant Market

July 25 (Wed.) and 26 (Thu.), 6 to 10 p.m.



Hozuki-Ichi (Ground Cherry Plant Market) will take place mostly at Bishamonten-Zenkoku-ji Temple. Potted *hozuki* (ground cherry plants) with their vivid vermilion-colored flowers will be on sale, and a refreshing beer garden will be open. There will also be a *yukata* (a summer cotton *kimono*) dress up service, and information on strolling through the Kagurazaka area. Why not stroll through the charming town of Kagurazaka dressed in a *yukata*?



Lots of Excitement - Awa-Odori Dancing

July 27 (Fri.) and 28 (Sat.), 7 to 9 p.m.

This year will mark the 36th Awa-Odori Dance, which is the climax of the festival. Although originally a dance from Tokushima Prefecture, this dance is now performed throughout Japan. A total of approximately 15 groups (each consisting of dozens of people) will dance along the slope to the sound of the *shamisen* (lute), flute and Japanese drum. Experience the excitement of Kagurazaka!



Inquiries: Tansumachi Branch Office, Tel: 03-3260-1911

Website: <http://www.syoutengai-web.net/kagura/maturi14.htm>

**Okinawa is Coming to
Shinjuku East Exit Again
This Year!**

Shinjuku Eisa Festival

The Eisa Festival is a traditional performing art from Okinawa. Over 500 people from Okinawa, Shinjuku and neighboring areas will perform in teams. The dancers will look spectacular dancing to the festival drums in their colorful kimonos.

Let the energy of the Eisa Festival blow your summer fatigue away!

For more information, please see <http://shinjuku-eisa.jp/>.

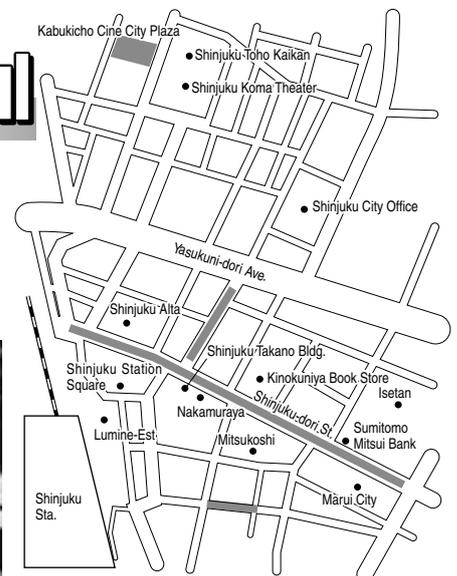
Date and Time: July 28 (Sat.)

1:30 to 9 p.m., subject to change (Will be held even in the event of light rain.)

*Shinjuku-dori Avenue from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Locations: Shinjuku-dori Avenue, Kabukicho Cine-City Plaza and other locations.

Inquiries: Shinjuku Station-Front Shopping Area Promotion Union, Tel: 03-3352-6713



Living Together

“Multicultural living” refers to people of different nationalities and ethnic races living together, and accepting and understanding the differences between their cultures.

In this issue, we will report from the front lines of multicultural living.

Korean members of the community who are learning Japanese at the Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza (hereafter referred to as “the Plaza”) have formed a club called the Shinjuku Mukuge Club to increase awareness of Korea among community members and to strengthen friendships.

For this article, we observed the first activity of the Shinjuku Mukuge Club – a Korean-language class at the Plaza.

The Shinjuku Mukuge Club – Aiming to Share Cultures



Bonds Formed at Japanese-Language Classes

There are approximately 30,000 foreign residents living in Shinjuku City. People from various countries around the world get together at community Japanese-language classes and at the Plaza to learn Japanese. Ms. Kataoka, a volunteer Japanese teacher of foreign residents, is attracted by the earnest and passionate character of Korean people. When the idea was proposed to share the wonderful qualities and culture of the Korean people, members got together and formed the Shinjuku Mukuge Club. The mukuge is the national symbol and flower of Korea. It symbolizes a long blooming period.



▲ Teachers at the Shinjuku Mukuge Club

Starting with Language when Learning about a Culture

“We learned about Japanese culture by studying the language with Japanese volunteers. We would like to teach Korean so that people can become familiar with Korean culture,” said one organizer. Korean classes ran from April through June for a total of eight classes. A surprisingly high number of 30 people participated in the daytime classes on Saturdays.

The textbook and program were completely original. Although some members were involved in the education sector, most were housewives and foreign students with no experience in teaching. “Foreign



▲ Students Meet Up Often Before the Classes Begin

students usually spend their Saturdays working part-time. But we want people to know about Korea and want to work hard at this, even if it means having to scrimp and save in our everyday lives,” says Ms. Park, who served as the Chief Instructor. Ms. Kataoka also commented, “Quite often, we got little sleep when making this textbook.”

As a result of the hard work and cheerfulness of the Shinjuku Mukuge Club members, the class was a success and produced many smiles.

Thai Students Study Korean too!

Korean culture has recently become quite popular among Japanese women, which can perhaps account for the high proportion of Japanese female participants. However, some Japanese men are also attracted to the depth of the sensitivity of Korean people. One man commented, “I joined this

class because I thought it would be nice if I could travel to Korea and speak the language. Although I was anxious because I didn’t know any Korean, the teachers kindly answered my questions even when the class was over. I feel I’ve experienced the kindness of the people of Korea.”

Among the participants were some Thai students. One of these five fellow students who attended a Japanese-language school said, “We joined because one of the teachers was a fellow Japanese-

language student. We want to master both Japanese and Korean. But now, our heads are kind of mixed-up with a blend of Thai, Japanese, Korean and English!” He spoke in Japanese



▲ Japanese and Thai People Studying Korean Together

that was so fluent you would never guess he only arrived in Japan six months ago. When someone suggested, “Why not start a Thai class next?” The response was, “Yes, that would be nice.” It seems that this circle of friends sharing their cultures is going to grow even more.

It is important to have the desire to get to know one another

The expression “multicultural living” perfectly describes the goal of the activities of the Shinjuku Mukuge Club. “Multicultural living” means that people accept cultural differences and understand the point of view of others. In order to do this, it is important to give consideration to the other person. The Multicultural Plaza in Shinjuku is a valuable place where people from various countries around the world can get together and make new friends, study Japanese and obtain useful information on everyday living. It provides a wonderful opportunity for people to learn together and about each other. “Although the next program hasn’t been decided on, we hope to continue using the Plaza as the center of our activities,” commented one organizer. All members seem eager to organize future activities. Perhaps you will be next to share your culture with others!

If you are interested in the activities or classes at the Shinjuku Mukuge Club:

Inquiries: Shinjuku Multicultural Plaza
Tel: 03-5291-5171 Fax: 03-5291-5172