



「ねっどわーく通信」 第1号

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Join the Foreign Residents Network

KIRA and Kashiwa City have created the *Foreign Residents Network* to organize communication channels between the city and foreign residents. The network will be used to share critical information in the event of a disaster (earthquake, etc.), as well as information about daily issues and events.

So far, in 2005 we have:

- Distributed questionnaires to foreigners to research the level of awareness about disaster preparedness
- Created a disaster protection exhibition
- Published the *Handbook for Protection from Earthquakes*
- Posted a guide and notice boards at evacuation shelters
- Held 3 exchange meetings

We continue to work on this project (now in the second year). Newsletters of our current activities are published twice a year. Members participate in large scale drills on protection from earthquakes, sponsored by a local township. We have held 6 exchange meetings. Overseas residents are invited to join the network today!

Foreign Residents Exchange Meeting



1 First Exchange Meeting

Thirty-one foreign residents representing 8 countries participated in the 1st exchange meeting held at the KIRA office on Saturday, July 8th. Guests enjoyed a lively discussion about living in Japan, and received an "Information Kit for Daily Life" that included a disaster protection handbook and map, daily life guidebook, and trash/disposal guide, which KIRA's Foreign Residents Networking Committee helped edit last year.

Some participants will help plan our next exchange meeting. The opinions and suggestions of Kashiwa's foreign residents will make future exchange meetings better and help expand the network.



▲ 1st Exchange Meeting 「Useful Information Kit for Daily Life」 were handed out to all attendants



2 Second Exchange Meeting

Twenty-eight participants, including 8 staff members, took part in the 2nd exchange meeting held at Chiba Prefecture West Disaster Protection Center in Matsudo on Saturday, September 23rd.

Guests experienced simulated emergency situations such as escaping from a room full of smoke, a strong earthquake, high winds, a fire extinguisher demonstration, and techniques for artificial respiration and heart massage (CPR).

Under professional guidance we also learned by simulation what to do -- and what not to do -- during an earthquake. In the bus on the way home we enjoyed crackers, one of the emergency foods given out at the center.



3 Third Exchange Meeting

Overcoming cross-cultural friction was the theme of the 3rd exchange meeting, held Monday, October 9th at Shonan Kominkan. Thirty-four attendees, including 16 foreigners from 8 different countries listened to the guest speaker, Mr. Shintaro Tominaga, an instructor of cross-cultural communication techniques in entrepreneurs' training courses of many Japanese companies. He talked about differences between Japanese and foreign cultures, and gave examples of how foreign residents can avoid misunderstandings. Even attendees who had difficulty understanding Japanese enjoyed the lecture, thanks to Mr. Tominaga's bilingual capabilities.



◀ 2nd Exchange Meeting,
residents experienced a
simulated earthquake

3rd Exchange meeting▶
residents learn about
Japanese culture



◆ Summary of Questionnaires

- 1st** * Suggestions and proposals about objectives of the exchange meetings in order :
- Manners and etiquette, Japanese culture
 - Common problems and solutions in daily life, protection from natural disaster
 - Cooking class and consultation of education
 - Japanese conversation skill up
 - Visit historic sights and places of interest and sports event
- * many participants are willingly calling their friends to participate in the next exchange meeting and some of them are interested in getting involved at the planning stage.
- 2nd** * Impression about Chiba Pref. West Disaster Protection Center are excellent and all participants said "it was educational, and we enjoyed the tour of the center "
- * Other proposal and comments :
- More frequent disaster drills
 - "Useful Information Kit for daily life" is fairly well-known among foreign residents and is well regarded.
 - To get more foreign residents to experience events like this one.
 - Kashiwa is a fairly nice and convenient town to live in.
- 3rd** * General impression of the lecture is good and most participants said "It was beneficial and good for me"
- * Their comments :
- Good to know differences between Japanese and foreign cultures, often a problem for foreigners.
 - For participants whose mother tongue is other than English or Chinese, the lecture was difficult to understand because of some complicated Japanese language used in the lecture.
 - Most participants agreed to call their friends to participate in the coming exchange meeting.

◆ Cooperation at Kashiwa Citizens' Learning Course

KIRA is appealing to Kashiwa citizens to reach out to overseas residents to make their life here as pleasant as possible. The learning course, *International Understanding Lecture*, is one of the Lifetime Learning Courses sponsored by Kashiwa City. These courses teach about foreign countries, and promote activities such as the Foreign Residents Network Project. This year we plan to participate in 3 courses: On November 8th at Nanbu Kinrin Center, a KIRA member from Sri Lanka will talk about senior citizens' life in Sri Lanka. On February 1st at Toyoshikidai Kinrin Center, 3 members from different countries will speak about the history and culture of their mother countries. And on February 15th, at Kashiwa Amuse several KIRA members will talk with participants about their volunteer activities .

◆ Advance Notice - 5th Foreign Residents Exchange Meeting

「Have you come across any strange Japanese customs?」

Date/Time : November 25th (Saturday) 13:00~15:00

Place : Kashiwa Shohi Seikatsu Center

Theme : Among the various kinds of problems in daily life, such as misunderstandings due to differences in culture and customs, at this time, we will look at areas "**greeting**", "**language**" and "**customs•behavior**" .

Let's talk all together and enjoy some amusing live skits.

Fee : Free of charge (soft drinks and some cookies are served)

Application : KIRA Office by November 20th (Monday) KIRA Tel.: 04-7144-1300, Fax.: 04-7144-3020