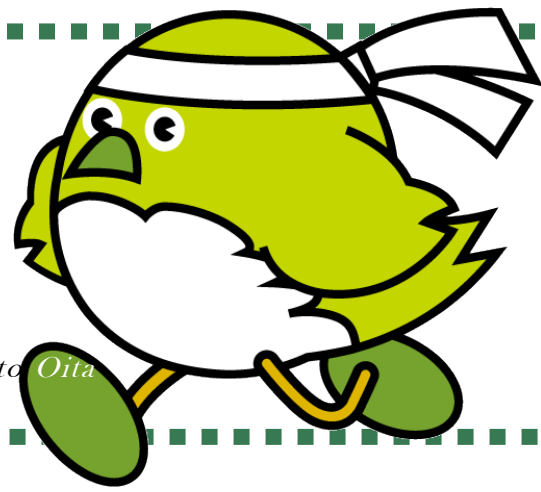


What's up,

OITA! 2020 September No. 52

Bringing the latest from Oita, Japan to all those connected to Oita thriving all across the globe.



The JR Hoho Main Line becomes fully operational from Saturday, August 8!

The JR Hoho Main Line, partially suspended due to the effects of the Kumamoto Earthquake in April 2016, has become fully operational from August 8. The line connecting the Oita Station and Kumamoto Station is indicated by red on the map – partial services on this line in Kumamoto prefecture were suspended due to damages caused by the earthquake.



The Yufuin no Mori (indicated by yellow on the map) running on the JR Kyudai Main Line, suspended due to July's torrential rains, has also resumed services. The opening and restoration of the services are expected to generate traffic and revitalization through providing transportation to tourists.



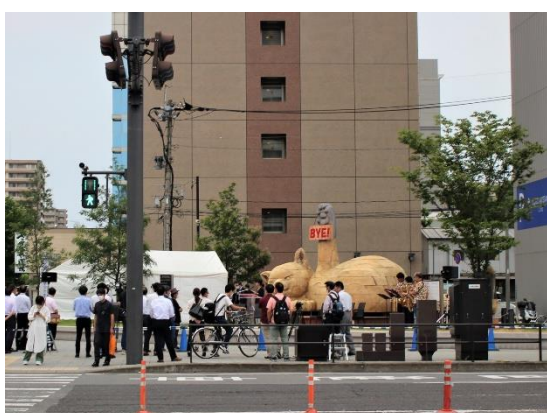
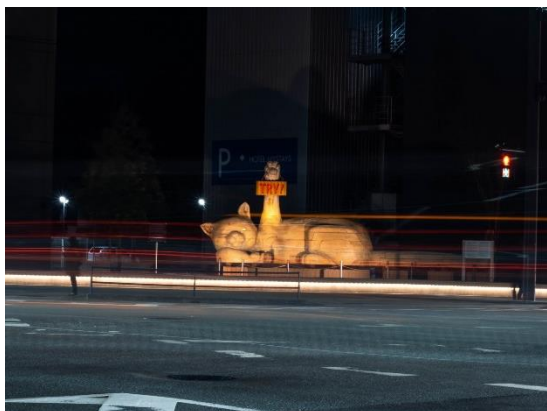
Foreigner technical intern trainees & intercultural communication through food (August 8)

The local residents and foreign technical internal trainees of Imazu, Nakatsu have lately engaged in intercultural communication through a food-related meet-and-greet event at the Imazu Community Center on August 8, during which free rice was distributed.

The event convened in presence of 31 participants, including local children and their guardians, as well as Indonesian technical intern trainees who work in factories of the automobile industry. The participants cooked Indonesian food together, and enjoyed the event's amicable atmosphere.

The distribution of free rice, which began from late June, is expected to continue into September with 170 applicable recipients.

Fukunyan, the Giant Lounging Lucky Cat, Bids Farewell to Oita City



Fukunyan, the giant lounging lucky cat, is due to be returned to the Asakura Fumio Memorial in Asaji, Bungo-ono on September 5.

Fukunyan, formally named ‘Giant Lounging Lucky Cat Fukunyan’, was created in memory of the late sculptor Asakura Fumio. Aside from being a landmark figure in Japan’s modern sculpture landscape, the Bungo-ono-born sculptor was also a great lover of cats in his lifetime. The students of the Tokyo University of the Arts (then ‘Tokyo School of Fine Arts’), Asakura’s alma mater, alongside a large group of volunteers, worked together to build the cat during the Japan National Cultural Festival 2018.

Right before the Rugby World Cup 2019, Fukunyan was moved to Oita City, welcoming over 170,000 fans from Japan and overseas alike as the city hosted three preliminaries and two quarterfinals. Made in the image of a *manekineko* (‘beckoning cat’), Fukunyan is a wooden carving that measures over 3m tall and 10m long. Lazing on its side and holding a ‘TRY!’ with its forepaw, the giant cat winks playfully at all passersby.

The citizens of Oita City gave Fukunyan a final sendoff by giving its ‘fur’ a good clean with sandpaper, and a formal farewell ceremony was held on September 4.

The cat will make its way back to the Asakura Fumio Memorial Hall upon completing the long business trip, where it will continue to greet visitors away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

*Pictured from top to bottom:
Fukunyan on a sunny day. /
Fukunyan at night. /
Fukunyan during the farewell ceremony.*

Words from the editor:

I have enjoyed every moment of Fukunyan’s stay in the city, and is sad to see it go. Thanks Fukunyan, for bringing a smile to our faces. *Otsukare sama*, meowww!

- Xin Lan Xie, CIR