SAFE?

FIVE YEARS ON:

Seawalls and the changing coastline of Tohoku

Coal vs Nuclear

The rebuilding of Otsuchi

Radiation monitoring by Fukushima school kids
Twenty years before the wind

A force of nature blowing free, the wind is ours to harvest — if we can profitably tame it. But harnessing a force so violent and variable demands supremely robust and reliable technology. And that’s why the world’s leading wind-turbine makers rely on NSK.

You may have seen those gigantic 100-meter tall wind turbines now sprouting around the world — or maybe you haven’t, because many are built offshore or atop remote mountains where there are no neighbors to disturb. Behind the giant rotors, the key components are massive bearings that must operate continuously for 20 years in the harshest of environments. Why so long? Swapping out such massive units 100 meters above a raging sea is such a difficult and costly proposition that bearing durability is the key to achieving adequate return on investment. As one of the few bearing makers that can meet such a rigorous spec, NSK is a pivotal player in sustainable energy.

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The rebuilding of the coast at Otsuchi photo by Sonja Blaschke for her article on seawalls. See also Charles Pomeroy on his hometown.
LETS ME START OFF my column this month with an important reminder for Regular Members. The next General Membership Meeting, a crucial event for Club business, has been scheduled for March 8. Members will be asked to vote on the fiscal 2016 budget and business plan, a labor union settlement that represents the end of the contentious legal suit that has dogged FCCJ finances for many years and other important motions that will affect our upcoming move to the new location in Marunouchi. The board has worked hard to find solutions to these important issues and if members agree with our recommendations, we believe the officers will be able to work hard toward making progress over the next few months.

I know many of our Regular Members are busy and have little time to devote to Club business. In fact, at the last GM – though it was a Special GM and not on the regular annual calendar – a quorum wasn’t reached, leaving important Club issues on the back burner. So let me also point out that under the present keiki status, GMs are now held only twice annually, making them even more decisive dates for members.

On the other hand, members are now permitted to read the motions and background prior to the GM, so that they can send in their votes and proxies without being physically present. I understand that devoting a valuable evening to the FCCJ’s rather raucous GMs can be demanding, so if you’d rather do it remotely, please send in your vote electronically – by email or fax. Also, if some members do not have the time to study the details of the issues facing the FCCJ this March, please feel free to send in your queries to Board officers. The FCCJ is your club – and participation is vital for its longevity.

Another date to remember is March 17. Some well-known former correspondent Members – Bill Emmott from the Economist, William Horsley from the BBC and Fernando Maestri from Le Temps – have timed a visit to the FCCJ where they will be speaking on their experiences in Japan and the future of the press.

Sadako Ogata, two years after becoming U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), voiced her opinions at the Club on June 23, 1992, while FCCJ President David Powers (BBC), in the foreground, and Clayton Jones (Christian Science Monitor) listened attentively. She was to appear again at the FCCJ as a guest speaker in 1999.

Sadako Ogata’s life story is extraordinary. Born in 1927, she came from an illustrious family, with a former prime minister, Yosuke Inukai – assassinated in 1932 by Japanese Navy officers – as her great-grandfather and a former foreign minister, Kenkichi Yoshizawa, as her grandmother.

Dedicating her early life to an academic career, Ogata followed up on her BA from Sacred Heart in Tokyo with graduate study in the U.S., earning an MA in international relations from Georgetown in 1953 and a doctorate in political science from the University of California in 1963. Returning to Japan, she lectured at Sacred Heart and the International Christian University, becoming an Associate Professor of Diplomatic History and International Relations there in 1974. In 1980, following a move to Sophia University, she became a professor, then Director of the Institute of Global Relations, and in 1989 the Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Studies.

Ogata’s scholarly work led to stints from 1968 onward with Japan’s U.N. mission, and in 1978 she became envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. During this time she also served as Chairman of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board, and from 1982 to 1985 she was Japan’s Representative on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. She assumed leadership of UNHCR in January of 1991, which she held until she retired in 2012.

Ogata contributed greatly to making this a better world, including writing books addressing refugee problems. She also raised a family, a son and a daughter, with husband Shijuro Ogata, a senior official of the Bank of Japan and a key person in opening the Japanese bureaucracy to the foreign press.

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Sadako Ogata has been a dedicated tennis player since her student days and still plays at age 88, as attested to by Kazuo Abiko. A former president of the FCCJ and retired AP stalwart, Kaz recently partnered with her to win a doubles match at the Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club.
Koko Sugawara is smiling as she talks about seawalls. Standing in Kesennuma harbor in front of the recently constructed wall of concrete that soared 12 meters in height, she seemed unaware of the ice-cold winds strong enough to pierce the skin on this cold February Sunday. Her pleasant expression, however, is disconcerting; her speech is agonized against the walls. There is something else behind her smile: sadness, frustration, maybe even despair. She is afraid that the walls might ruin the future of the children of Kesennuma by destroying what she sees as the city’s biggest asset — its natural resources and beautiful natural surroundings. “I really don’t like adults pushing decisions onto children,” says the stylish, young-looking 49-year-old. “It hurts my heart.”

Driving along the east coast of Tohoku, where a magnitude 9.0 quake unleashed a towering tsunami which devastated over 400 kilometers of coastline on March 11, 2011, it is easy to get lost. It has become hard to judge when to rely on car navigation and when to ignore it. In Otsuchi, for example, the system shows our car traveling on a railway track, when we’re actually on a dirt road. In Minamisanriku, the empty frame of the disaster prevention center, which used to be a sort of landmark, can now easily be missed in its location among several huge pyramid-like embankments of bare earth, meant to eventually host industrial and public facilities.

What will even further change the landscape is the decision of many communities to build large seawalls. Proposants say these will keep citizens safe and allow reconstruction to speed up. “If only we had money from the government for reconstruction if we build this wall,” was a statement heard coming from many local politicians’ election campaigns.

But Sugawara and other opponents fear that these concrete bulwarks might destroy what little is left of the assets of the area, like the picturesque rugged ria coast. They worry about potential negative effects on tourism and the fishing industry, which could hamper job prospects for young people in particular. Another fear is that people could develop a false sense of security behind the walls and delay their escape after a strong earthquake — especially since the walls will block any view of the sea. This could lead to an even higher death toll next time a tsunami hits.

SUGAWARA EMPHASIZES THAT SHE “is not against seawalls per se. “Walls of a certain size are necessary to protect harbor areas from high tide and high waves in stormy weather,” she says. “But I am against such gigantic concrete walls.” On average, they will measure about 10 meters high.

Initially on the side of the walls’ supporters, she had a change of heart after realizing that the walls would not be effective against a tsunami of the same scale as five years ago — an event said to occur only once in several hundred years. They would only hold back the smaller, though more frequent, ones. Also, little to no maintenance of the walls was planned, meaning they would only be taken care of after the next disaster. But vocal opponents like Sugawara seem to be few and far between, and some fear the seawall issue might even tear the communities apart. There is always the risk of being ousted by the tightly knit local communities and labeled as someone holding up reconstruction. “When I talk with people in private, many agree,” Sugawara says, “but they are afraid to speak up in public.”

Sugawara did find backing from Setsuko Komatsu, a former local assemblywoman. Komatsu’s house, close to the riverbank, was swept away by the tsunami. Now the 68-year-old shares two units in temporary housing with her extended family in Iwa, half an hour south of Kesennuma. Sugawara sometimes visits Komatsu, exchanging ideas over coffee in a cramped 4.5-square-meter living space. Now Komatsu is reconstructing. “When I talk to people about the walls, they might ruin the future of the children of Kesennuma”

In neighboring Minamisanriku, Yutaka Tabata, a pensioner in his seventies, is aware of the debate going on in Kesennuma. He is a member of an elderly women at a table to a new recreation room next to a newly built apartment block, making dolls from pieces of cloth and Q-tips. “The walls are built for safety and to feel safe,” says Tabata. “We have a wall.”

Despite the setbacks, clearly represented by the towering walls at her back, Sugawara does not want to give up her campaign against the walls. “I will do what I can, tirelessly,” she said, “to combat the false information that is being spread.” She is afraid that once the walls in Tohoku are finished, it will set a precedent for the rest of the country, and even more.

While remains passionate in her beliefs, Sugawara has not been immune to social pressure. Once, during an information session, she was asked to leave by the organizer, who was aware of her position on the issue. She also fears that her activities might hurt her family’s business, a small electronic appliances store. She tries to fly under the radar, but is still in the fight, belonging to two local opposition groups and frequently posting on Facebook. “I have not told my family about what I’m doing,” she said with a somewhat sad smile, “but maybe they already know.”

Sonja Blaschke is a German freelance journalist writing for publications in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. She also works as a TV producer.
The story of a tsunami-battered town trying to get back on its feet is a tale of struggle, conflict, bureaucracy and, yes, hope.

Return of a perilous beauty

Not all has gone smoothly in the town of Otsuchi as it struggles to recover from the tsunami devastation wreaked upon it five years ago. (See my story, “The Ferocious Beauty of Otsuchi,” in the April 2011 edition of No. 1 Shimbun.) For starters, the loss of its mayor, Koki Kato, together with key department heads and the more than 30 experienced staff that made up a quarter of the town’s civil servants meant that there was no one to immediately get to work on a master plan for recovery. It wasn’t until January 2012 that a draft was finally completed, under a new mayor, Yukata Ikarigawa.

Mayor Ikarigawa was faced with a number of tough issues, from organizing housing for survivors to sorting out land problems for the dead and missing. And over the next several years some progress was made, including a partial revival of the fisheries industry and construction of new residences to replace the temporary structures housing survivors.

But two key projects in the master plan failed to advance, as the long-range view of those who had forged the plan clashed with the more immediate desires of the survivors. One was a plan to raise the ground level in central Otsuchi by 2.5 meters; the other, to build a huge seawall 14.5 meters high.

The plan to raise the ground level in central Otsuchi by 2.5 meters, to as a safeguard against smaller tsunami and future rises in the sea level, will not be carried out. The other, to build a huge seawall 14.5 meters high, was opposed by a number of stakeholders.

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e five years since the triple meltdowns at Fukushima Daiichi have seen a major shift in Japan's energy policy. While some had hoped that shift would be one toward a brave new world of safe, clean, renewable energy, the reality has been an inching back to nuclear and a rush in the direction of old king coal.

Although international pressure has recently grown for a move away from coal due to its high carbon emissions, the reality is that it is still responsible for generating 40 percent of electricity globally. Coal's share of total energy supply is just under 30 percent, though being the most carbon-intensive, it is still responsible for 40 percent of global emissions.

The Nuclear Power Industry is Coming into Effect

Last November, OECD countries reached agreement to severely restrict export financing of coal power plants, which will be determined by the governments of the countries involved, with tens of thousands more attributed to its burning for heat and electricity generation.

While the U.K. has announced it will eliminate coal from power generation by 2025 and the U.S. plans to drastically curtail it, Japan is building dozens of new coal-fired power stations and investing heavily in overseas mining and generation projects.

The deregulation of the domestic electricity industry that is coming into effect in April will increase competition and looks set to give coal a further boost.

With most of Japan's nuclear reactors likely to remain offline for years to come, the government has made a deliberate shift away from nuclear, which produces much of the country's electricity. This has led to a corresponding increase in the share of fossil fuel energy.

On Feb. 9, in a move that drew fire from opponents, Japan's Ministry of the Environment (MOE) approved the construction of new coal-fired power plants on the condition that emission standards are met. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Ministry of the Environment, which set standards and assess emissions, said they will require stricter controls, but it is a clearly a huge policy U-turn.

The environment ministry had previously rejected applications for a series of coal-fired plants. The Basic Energy Plan announced last summer called for a cut in the amount of coal-generated energy from 50.3 percent to 26 percent by 2030. The plan also called for an expansion of power from renewables to 23 percent by 2030. With a similar percentage to come from nuclear, power from Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) was meant to fall from 43.2 percent to 27. However, with the restart of reactors and the development of renewables moving slowly, an upwards revision of coal's share seems unavoidable.

Last year saw record imports of more than 114 million tons of coal, up 4.8 percent from 2014 and almost double the amount recorded at the turn of the century. Meanwhile, Lng imports dropped by 8.9 percent to 85 million tons, the first decline since the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant mobilised the nation's nuclear reactors.

According to Japanese NGO Kiko Network, there are now 47 new coal-fired plants at various stages of planning and construction across the country, with more likely in the near future once the tendering process has taken off. New coal-fired power plants, "have been created to stimulate the building of new coal plants, in what she calls "a clear reversal of government policy."

Current state-of-the-art Japanese nuclear and two new plants produce around 800 grams of CO2 emissions per kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity generated – an industry standard measurement – says Hirata. The newer IGC plant, a coal-fired plant, cut that to around 700g/kWh, but that is still "around double of that of LNG plants," according to Hirata. "Using coal is incompatible with the long-term goals of the recent Paris climate agreement and, these plants will be in operation for 40 years."

Along with many other commodities, the price of coal has collapsed, almost halving over the last five years, increasing its appeal to the utilities and the government. "It is true that the drop in fuel prices is one of the reasons why we are making a profit recently," says a spokesperson from Tepco, which currently has no new coal-fired generators and is building more. "While all of the nuclear power plants are shut down, coal power plants are in operation at full capacity except during inspection periods because they are more fuel-efficient than natural gas-fired or oil-fired power plants."

Environmental campaigners point out that the price of low-emitting LNG has fallen even more dramatically than coal.

Aside from straightforward price considerations, Japanese companies are deeply involved in the coal industry overseas, through both mining joint ventures and supplying equipment and technology, programs that are often backed by government loans. "There are long-standing supply relations with overseas projects – and the trading houses are heavily invested in coal," says Tom O'Sullivan, a Tokyo-based energy consultant at Mathys. "They probably won't get off that unless they're pushed."

Japan invested around $25 billion in overseas coal plants, technology and mining between 2007 and 2014, according to a report last year by The Natural Resources Defense Council, Oil Change International and the WWF. That accounts for around a quarter of international funding in the coal power sector and makes Japan by far the biggest overseas supporter at a time when other countries are continuing to divest.

Japanese policy is aimed at both securing supply for the domestic market and selling advanced coal technology overseas. "They are targeting developing countries – Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia – to export clean coal technology," says O'Sullivan.

There are long-standing supply relations, according to Tanabe, with little interest in how it is generated. Kiko Network's Hirata notes that "there are no mandatory measures to make new companies disclose their power sources" and says the "political signal is to reduce prices."

So, instead of public outcries against re-nuclear and climate change, consumer choices after deregulation look set to increase generation from nuclear and coal-fired plants. The falling population and workforce, with the ongoing offshoring of manufacturing, mean electricity demand in Japan is likely to continue falling. Power generation in 2015 fell to 1069.9 billion kilowatt hours, the fifth straight year of decline and lowest level since 1998. However, a shrinking market full of new players will likely be even more competitive on price, driving up demand for coal-fired power and increasing pressure to restart idled nuclear reactors.

Kiko Network's solution calls for a mix of energy efficiency, increasing the share of renewable energy, such as wind and solar power, and government funding in building new coal-fired plants. The Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan (FEPC) has a target of a 35 percent cut in the nation's CO2 emissions by 2030, though many of its members are also involved in building new coal-fired plants. The FEPC didn't respond to a request for comment on how it aims to achieve this.

Gavin Blair covers Japanese business, society and culture for publications in America, Asia and Europe.
The Tokyo government is preparing residents for a major earthquake — with some sage advice and a little help from a rhinoceros.

When the big one comes
by GEOFF TUDOR

A FRIEND WHO LIVES in a village close to my home in the Vale of Chichibu, some 80km northwest of Tokyo, was recently approached by a real-estate agent who had a client seeking a country retreat. “Would she be interested in selling her house?” It transpired that the agent was looking for a safe haven in case of a future Tokyo earthquake. Chichibu’s mountainous geological formations are rock solid, unlike the wobbly parts of reclaimed Tokyo prone to liquefaction. Although quakes are not unknown in this scenic valley, the risk of major damage is considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? Considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? A country retreat: “Would she be interested in selling her house?” It transpired that the agent was looking for a safe haven in case of a future Tokyo earthquake. Chichibu’s mountainous geological formations are rock solid, unlike the wobbly parts of reclaimed Tokyo prone to liquefaction. Although quakes are not unknown in this scenic valley, the risk of major damage is considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? Considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? A country retreat: “Would she be interested in selling her house?” It transpired that the agent was looking for a safe haven in case of a future Tokyo earthquake. Chichibu’s mountainous geological formations are rock solid, unlike the wobbly parts of reclaimed Tokyo prone to liquefaction. Although quakes are not unknown in this scenic valley, the risk of major damage is considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? Considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? A country retreat: “Would she be interested in selling her house?” It transpired that the agent was looking for a safe haven in case of a future Tokyo earthquake. Chichibu’s mountainous geological formations are rock solid, unlike the wobbly parts of reclaimed Tokyo prone to liquefaction. Although quakes are not unknown in this scenic valley, the risk of major damage is considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? Considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? A country retreat: “Would she be interested in selling her house?” It transpired that the agent was looking for a safe haven in case of a future Tokyo earthquake. Chichibu’s mountainous geological formations are rock solid, unlike the wobbly parts of reclaimed Tokyo prone to liquefaction. Although quakes are not unknown in this scenic valley, the risk of major damage is considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting? Considered to be slight. Just how serious was this house-hunting?

Some Tohoku high school kids began radiation monitoring of their daily surroundings — and got some surprising results.

Fukushima students turn to shun hysteria
by JULIAN RYALL

The 340-page Preparedness Tokyo manual from the city government’s Disaster Prevention Division published last September is Japan’s most comprehensive guide to how to react to disasters striking Tokyo, including typhoons and volcanic eruptions. (A little known fact is that there are 21 active volcanoes in the Tokyo Metropolitan area.) But the emphasis of the bright yellow paperback volume is on earthquake preparation: survival tips and essential information you should know before the event.

A trigger? 7.85 million copies of Tokyo Bosai have already been distributed to Tokyo citizens, including about 30,000 copies in English. Of special value are sections covering four basic essentials including stockpiling supplies, preparation inside the home, and preparation outside the home and communication with neighbors. There are lists of recommended items for stockpiling at home and for preparing emergency bags for individuals, plus tips on how to make use of local government’s alert system.

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The disaster preparedness mascot, top: ways of using newspaper to keep warm post-disaster, above; and a frame from the book’s manga, below.

When you flick the pages in the bottom right-hand corner, you’ll see an animated Bosai reminding people to be prepared. In general, the tone of the text is very straightforward and almost reassuring. But two sections in particular caught my attention.

On pages 72 through 76 are moving interviews given by survivors of the earthquakes in Kobe in 1995 and Tokyo in 2011, conveying their experiences and in some cases, recommendations. And the back of the book features a 14-page manga treatment of Tokyo X Day, by writer/artist Kaji Kawaguchi, which depicts the great quake to come in dramatic drawings. Ominously, the caption on the title page reads: “This is not a ‘what if’ story. One of these days, this story is sure to become reality.” So, be prepared. Chichibu, anyone?

PDF versions in English, Chinese and Korean can be downloaded free of charge from these sites:
www.metro.tokyo.jp/ENGLISH/GUIDE/BOSAI/index.htm
www.metro.tokyo.jp/CHINESE/GUIDE/BOSAI/index.htm
www.metro.tokyo.jp/KOREAN/GUIDE/BOSAI/index.htm
The book is also available in the Club library.

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Shiuang Sheng Fang

**Profile**

By Suvendrini Kakuchi

As with many Tokyo-based foreign correspondents, it was a strong interest in Japan that led Shiuang Sheng Fang and his journalism career to this country. Born in Taipei, Shiuang attended Taiwan’s World Journalism University, a leading school that has produced many of Taiwan’s best scribes. He took a landmark step when — instead of taking the normal path of getting a job in Taipei — Shiuang applied to Sophia University in Tokyo. “I wanted to study Japanese journalism because I had a strong interest in the media,” he says. “My friends in Taiwan were going to the U.S. for further study but I decided to stay in Asia and learn something different.”

At Sophia, Shiuang gained a deep insight into the Japanese media, an industry he feels is “unique.” He refers to the press-club system for gathering news, something that he finds starkly different to other countries. He also points to the marketing strategy where the newspaper companies, representing some of the world’s most lucrative circulations, maintain these figures mostly because of their links to professional baseball teams. Shiuang also views the way Japanese journalists are treated as salarymen — faithful servants to a company where loyalty and seniority are deeply entrenched in the management systems — as unique.

After completing his four-year degree in journalism, Shiuang returned to Taipei to join China TV, the country’s largest broadcaster. While learning the ropes of journalism in the field, Shiuang — who had an edge over his colleagues because of his Japanese knowledge — was soon recognized by his bosses as the best reporter on East Asia. In 1990 he achieved his lifelong ambition to be sent to Japan as Tokyo correspondent. While learning the ropes of journalism in the field, Shiuang — who had an edge over his colleagues because of his Japanese knowledge — was soon recognized by his bosses as the best reporter on East Asia. In 1990 he achieved his lifelong ambition to be sent to Japan as Tokyo correspondent. The big topics he covered were the April 1994 China Airlines crash in Nagoya and Japan’s 1995 economic crash in Nagoya and Japan’s tense East Asia relations:

“The work was quite grueling because of the investigative work I had to do,” recalls Shiuang. “When I look back now I realize I was covering a different Japan to what I see now.” At first, his coverage focused on Japan as a much-admired economic leader in Asia. Later, however, his reporting began to focus on how the country was struggling with the long recession and the problems that marked the end of Japan’s much-admired postwar growth. Telling this story to readers in Taiwan who had so much respect for Japan required a sensitive analysis, says Shiuang. In 1995 he returned to a desk job at his company’s Taipei headquarters.

**In 2001 He Arrived**

Two days after the disaster, he was covering for news in the chaos, realizing how ill-prepared he was to cover such a major disaster. As the radiation threat spread, he was ordered to return to Tokyo by his company and stayed in the city while collecting information. “Getting real data and quotes was a problem for foreign reporters in Japan during that time,” he says. He emphasized that the FCCJ was a beacon for him at that time.

Still, for Shiuang, the most important angle in his stories was the huge donations that had begun pouring in from the Taiwanese public as much information as possible about how their money was spent in the disaster areas, and a regular theme in Shiuang’s stories was the deep appreciation expressed by the disaster survivors who had received the aid. “Their sincer- ity and smiles when I interviewed them touched me deeply,” he explains. He continued to find and file positive stories, contrasting with the tragedy and despair surrounding him. His reports from Iwate, Fukushima and Sendai where he spoke to Taiwanese doctors, volunteers and organizations, conveyed the struggle for survival that he found all around him. “Taiwanese people, who also face natural disasters in their country, are spontaneously willing to help others. Reaching out to each other during a tragedy is a natural social trait. Yet even I was surprised at how much they were willing to give to help,” says Shiuang.

The story he told his audience in Taiwan during the first year after the disaster was the importance of foreign aid to resilience and recovery. “In my reporting I learned an important lesson which I made sure was expressed in my stories — people were coming together in Japan and were working together to help the survivors and rebuild the devastation. I felt the world was one,” he says.

Now Shiuang is collecting survivor viewpoints on the recovery progress and efforts to overcome the drastic changes in their lives, especially in areas close to the Fukushima nuclear plant. As a journalist, his stories will have to reach an audience saturated with glossy popular themes. Taiwanese youth love Japanese ramen, pop stars and fashion. Shiuang competes against this trend. “I want to tell in-depth stories on the Tohoku disaster on television that make people think for themselves. This is the mission of true journalism,” he said.

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Road to Recovery: Five Years and Counting

by Shinpei Kikuchi

I live in the town of Kamaishi in Iwate Prefecture, in the Tohoku region of Japan. When the great earthquake struck on 3/11, five years ago, I grabbed a camera and fled towards the evacuation center located in the grounds of the local junior high school, with the tsunami close on my heels.

From that day on, my family and I began life as refugees.

Also from that day, I started to slip out from the evacuation center early in the morning while most people were still asleep, and walk through the devastation wrought by the earthquake and tsunami, photographing the various sights until dusk fell. This became my daily routine.

Five years have now passed since I began to record everyday life – the turning of the seasons, various traditional events and the gradual changes that have taken place. Even today, the situation is such that for various reasons a large number of disaster victims are forced to remain in temporary housing.

I intend to continue to photograph the people as they strive to rebuild their towns and communities, showing them as they come together to enjoy local festivities and folk entertainments, in order to ensure that memories of this catastrophe do not fade away.

Shinpei Kikuchi graduated from the Tokyo College of Photography and studied under Tadashi Fujinawa at Photo Studio Fujinawa in Tokyo for 5 years. He returned to Kamaishi in August 1975. After the death of his father he took over the Kikuchi Photo Studio. His house/studio escaped total destruction on 3/11, but all his photographic data was carried away by the tsunami. Since that time he has devoted himself to producing a photographic record of the changes in the disaster area.

Masahiko Shibayama,
Special Advisor to the Prime Minister,
on the negative growth of the Oct.-Dec. quarter,
Feb. 24, 2016

“Looking at corporate income and the environment of household income, we still have grounds to say that the economy is gradually recovering.”

The FCCJ’s 70th Anniversary Year Golf Tournament was held last Nov. 20 at the U.S. Army’s Zama course (at a much more reasonable fee than comparative courses in Japan). First Vice President Peter Langan led a group of 29 around the links on a beautiful fall day. Winner in the Regular Member category was Duke Ishikawa, with Kiyotaka Yoshida taking the overall crown. In the women’s category, Sachiko Mori walked off with the prize. The participants toasted the winners at a later event at the Club.

SEEING GREENS

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CLUB NEWS
The FCCJ is pleased to offer members a substantial discount on subscriptions to LexisNexis’ news database service, Nexis.com. The Members-only deal allows for flat-rate access at ¥7,900 per month—offering big savings on a service that normally costs ¥126,000 per month.

The service will be billed by the Club. The FCCJ benefits from all subscriptions sold under this arrangement.

Nexis provides access to news and information from more than 34,000 sources, including Kyodo News, Jiji, Yonhap, Xinhua, AP, Reuters, AFP, etc., all major world newspapers and specialist news sources. Also included is a database of U.S. and international company information, biographical databases, country profiles and a U.S. legal database.

For those already in on the secret, the application form is available on the FCCJ website or from the Club office.

KAYUKA OGATA is the managing director of the International Department of Kyodo News, which is in charge of Kyodo’s foreign-language news services and global strategy. He joined the company in April 1994 after graduating from Keio University. Ogata was the Bonn bureau chief, concurrently serving as head of the Berlin and Warsaw bureaus, and later served as correspondent at the Washington bureau, where he covered the White House and the State Department. He assumed his present post in June 2015 after stints as deputy managing director of the Digital Operations Department and deputy managing director of the Strategic Planning Office.

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