



# 山梨グレープヴァイン

## The Yamanashi Grapevine

Summer 2008

遊園地 / 南部町 / 蒸溜所 / ヴァンフォーレ / 花火

### Editor's Note:

It's the summer season, and where I come from, that can only mean five things: fireworks, roller coasters, sports, the great outdoors, and refreshing beverages. Luckily, *The Grapevine* agrees. Because this issue is packed with just those five: both exciting articles to get you in the summer mood, and refreshing ones to cool you off faster than a hike up Mt. Fuji.

Alas, this appears to be my last season as editor of this hyper-ephemeral *Grapevine* magazine. But I won't be dusting off the Biwa and blindly wandering about Japan just yet—*The Grapevine* and I will be back with some fresh new articles next winter.

—Jonathan Smith

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Located close to Mt. Fuji, Fujikyū Highland, also known as Fuji-Q Highland or Fuji-Q, is one of the most thrilling amusement parks in the world, and proves that a trip to Yamanashi isn't only about Mt. Fuji, fruits and wine.

### Top level roller coasters

Fuji-Q Highland originally started in 1959. In the beginning, the park consisted of only an ice skating rink and small attractions. In 1964, *Giant Coaster*, the world's longest roller coaster at the time, opened its rails to the public. *Giant Coaster* rapidly became a famous ride, attracting more and more visitors to Fuji-Q each year. Since then, many huge roller coasters have been built in Fuji-Q, which is now famous in Japan for its extreme rides such as *Fujiyama* and *Dodonpa*. *Fujiyama*, also known in Japan as the *King of Coasters*, was the highest (79 metres/259 feet) and the fastest (130 km/80.8 mph) roller coaster in the world up until a few years ago. The *Grapevine* team had the opportunity to try *Fujiyama* and can assure you that it is a very intense ride. *Dodonpa*, also one of the fastest roller coasters in the world, reaches

its top speed of 172km/h (106.9 mph) in only 1.8 seconds. Unfortunately, the *Grapevine* team didn't have time (and enough courage after *Fujiyama*) to try *Dodonpa*. But even if we didn't ride it, we were very impressed by its speed and the huge vertical hill at the end of the track. Adrenaline lovers: *Fujiyama* and *Dodonpa* will leave you speechless!

### Eejanaika: the new generation of roller coasters (www.eejanaika.jp)

However, the brand new roller coaster in Fuji-Q might soon outstrip *Fujiyama* and *Dodonpa*. *Eejanaika* (a possible translation is: "Ain't it fun?") is to open in July this year and will surely be one of the craziest roller coasters in the world. The machine was still under construction when the *Grapevine* went to Fuji-Q, but we had the opportunity to look at the steel monster. It consists of a red structure, higher than



Dodonpa's giant slope...

*Fujiyama*, with very steep slopes and two loops. The Fuji-Q team told us that *Eejanaika* will be equipped with a new system of rotating seats that spin when the train moves. Although the attraction hasn't opened yet, it has already broken a new world record as: "the roller coaster with the highest number of rotations (fourteen rotations) in a single ride." Get ready for the opening of *Eejanaika* in July!

### A park for all

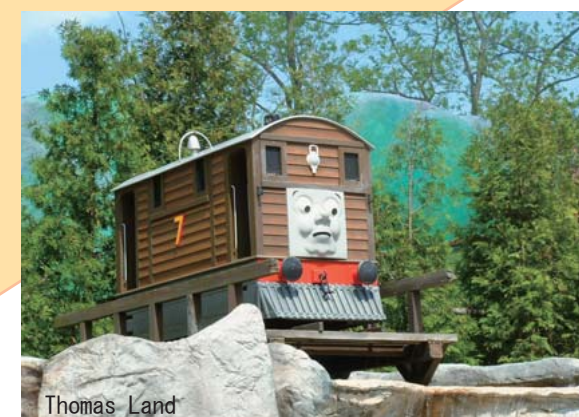
Fuji-Q counts more than thirty attractions among its line-up: three haunted houses (including the longest "haunted hospital" in the world), *Tondemina* (a giant pendulum), free fall, bumper cars, carousels, family coasters and even a Mt. Fuji museum. Of course, Fuji-Q is also a family park where children can have a lot of fun. The area called *Thomas Land* is like a small

park inside the park. Well themed, it is the home of *Thomas the Tank Engine*, the TV character, and offers about a dozen attractions for small children. Along with *Rikachan's house*, a doll house, *Thomas Land* is one of the best areas in the park to spend time with small children. Fuji-Q always has something exciting to offer to all its visitors, no matter their age or tastes. Also, the park participates in the *Visit Japan Campaign*, a national campaign aimed at developing tourism in Japan. For example, Fuji-Q organized a special event for the Chinese New Year that attracted about 5000 Chinese visitors. The park welcomes some 90,000 foreign visitors each year and provides pamphlets in English and Chinese. So, if you want to spend a fun weekend and see Mt. Fuji from up close, don't hesitate to go to Fuji-Q Highland!

Sébastien Noël



Fujiyama with Mt. Fuji in the background



Thomas Land

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<http://www.fujikyū.co.jp/fuji-q/>

### Access:

Chuo line (express trains) from Shinjuku Station to Otsuki, and Fujikyū line from Otsuki to Fujikyū Highland Station, or bus from Shinjuku Bus Center to Fuji-Q. Bus from Tokyo, Yokohama, Omiya, Kawagoe, Tokorozawa and Shin Matsuda Station.



# Nanbu Bamboo Adventure

## The Princess of Bamboo – Kaguya Hime

“Once upon a time, there lived an old woodsman who found a bright tiny little girl in a bamboo stalk. Since he didn't have children of his own, he decided to raise the girl with his wife, naming her Kaguya Hime. From that time forward, whenever the woodsman went back to work in the grove, gold coins would come pouring out from the bamboo he cut. As a result, the old couple became wealthy. She grew up and was courted by many noblemen.” (Adapted from *Kaguya Hime*- the Princess of Bamboo).

Inspired by this Japanese fairy tale, *The Grapevine* staff accepted to head off to Nanbu, the southernmost city in Yamanashi Prefecture, braving thundery, stormy weather in order to experience, find and savor the best bamboo shoots in Yamanashi (we also attempted to find some gold coins).

## Nanbu and Bamboo Shoots

It is believed that during the Warring States Period (16th Century), bamboo shoots used to be sent to warlord Takeda Shingen, as a kind of mid-campaign contribution to the war chest. During the 18th century, “moso” bamboo was brought from China and since then, due to its appropriate soil and its high temperatures and rain levels, Nanbu has become known as a place to grow flavourful bamboo shoots with few bitter alkaline substances.

Nanbu's natural treasure is renowned enough to merit a huge bamboo shoot monument near the main train station and also a Bamboo Shoot Festival, held annually in late April. During the peak of harvest season, visitors can go to farms where bamboo shoots are cultivated, either to try digging the shoots up themselves or to buy them by the kilo! Bon appetit!

## Nutritious Bamboo

Bamboo shoots are highly appreciated in Asian cuisine and are very nutritious, containing natural vegetable proteins, fiber, amino acids, calcium, and phosphorus, as well as vitamins B1, B2 and C. They are usually savored raw, cooked with rice, fried “tempura” style or boiled.

## Digging Bamboo Shoots in Nanbu

It was a rainy morning when we were taken to a bamboo forest by an experienced bamboo farmer and his wife. My first impression was that we would readily see all the bamboo shoots ready to be cut. Sweet illusion. I had never imagined that bamboo shoots could also grow under the surface of the ground. Finding them is more difficult than winning the lottery, but I assure you it is as fun as a treasure hunt. But you need eagle eyes to find some of the sprouts, sometimes almost barely visible.

Definitely, the most rewarding part is when you find the juicy white bamboo shoot as clean as water, ready to be eaten.

As a prize to compensate our efforts, some shoots cooked in soy sauce were waiting for us afterwards. Yummy!

## Climbing Mountains in Nanbu

Nanbu provides several attractions throughout the year. Its mountainous landscape guarantees wondrous trekking and hiking experiences to such points as Mt. Shishinzan (1,031m high) which has one of the “100 best views of Mt. Fuji in the Kanto area.” Apart from that, climbing lovers can also try out the Shiratori Yama (568m high) course; Kangatake (897m high) course; Taka Dokyo (1,134m high) course; Jumaizan (1,726m high); Chojagatake (1,336m high); Aozasa Yama (1,555m high); or Shinoi San (1,394m high).

Summer is celebrated with the “Hydrangea Festival” which attracts visitors to Utsunuma Park where there are more than 70 species and 25,000 hydrangeas arranged in what resembles a giant hydrangea carpet. Also, many people crowd both sides of the Fujikawa River during the traditional Nanbu Fire Festival which, besides its religious significance, aims to ask for protection against low rice output.

Érica Tanaka





# Water into...

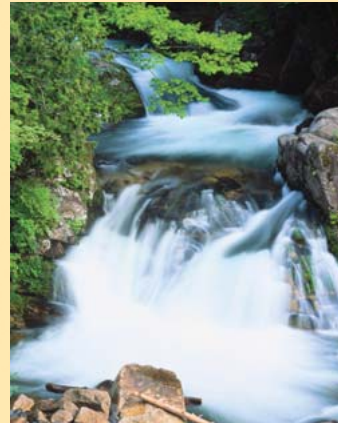
# ...Whisky



In the northern highlands of Yamanashi, amongst the peaks of the Southern Alps, stands one of the 20 highest mountains in Japan; *Kaikomagatake*. The snow and rain which precipitate on its summit at 2967 metres begin a journey, down through the mountain itself, that gives rise to one of Yamanashi's finest natural resources. As the water leisurely makes its way through the granite of which the mountain is composed, it passes through layers of granular quartz and is slowly filtered. The journey takes around ten years to complete but the end result is said to be among Japan's purest and finest water and the innate sparkle of the many streams and rivers found in the area are a testament to the quality found here in nature's most simple, and essential, gift.

By 1973, the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the first Japanese distillery in *Yamazaki*, Japan's most famous whisky distiller *Suntory* had begun looking for a prime location to build its second distillery. From over 30 locations investigated nationwide a forest area in *Hakushu*, at the foot of Mount *Kaikomagatake*, was chosen. The reason was, quite simply, the water.

Over 30 years have passed and the 'Forest Distillery' continues to use the natural mineral water of the *Hakushu* region to distill world-class whiskies. *Suntory* insists on optimal quality in all the other ingredients besides water, and this has helped to ensure the continuing success of its product. The distillery is complemented by a Visitor Centre and Whisky Museum, and visitors to the site can take part in a guided tour which introduces them to the techniques and processes that are employed to produce some of Japan's finest whisky.



Distillation is conducted twice and the whisky is then transferred to barrels for maturing. This stage is also of vital importance and in *Hakushu* mainly North-American White oak is used in the traditional construction of these barrels. Over the years natural elements from the wood slowly seep into the whisky as the flavour evolves. Although initially the whisky stored in the barrels may be the same, once ten years have passed each barrel's contents are unique. *Suntory* currently has more than one million barrels maturing at its *Yamazaki* and *Hakushu* distilleries.



The final stage of production has perhaps the most immediate effect on the end result. The Blender holds the vital responsibility of testing the myriad whiskies and choosing a selection (which can be of as many as thirty or more whiskies) which will be carefully blended to create the final product.

## ...To Glass



## Re - Charring

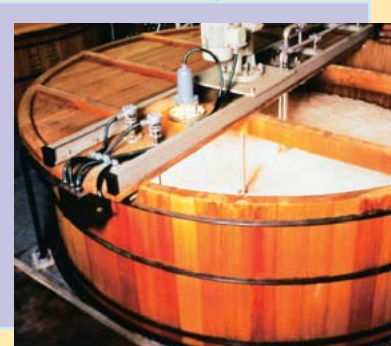
The barrels used at the *Hakushu* distillery are constructed using traditional methods and their maintenance is also a well-established skill. Over years of use the inner skin of the barrel becomes saturated with the various whiskies stored in it, to the extent where the elements present in the wood can no longer seep out to help mature the whisky. After thirty or forty years of use a process known as 're-charring' becomes necessary to revitalize the wood and enable it to regain its maturing properties. The accumulated whisky is literally burnt out of the wood and the inside of the barrel burns with a blue flame as the alcohol is consumed. As the last of the whisky is burnt off the flame changes to a natural yellow colour and the inner skin of the barrel itself is also slightly charred, to re-open it and allow its properties to transfer to the whisky once again. A barrel can be re-charred usually up to two times, giving each barrel a working-life of close to one hundred years.

## From Grain...



Initially, carefully-selected two-row barley, rich in starch, is ground and put into a mashtun with warmed *Hakushu* water, where the starch breaks down into glucose in a process called 'mashing.'

The mixture is slowly filtered to leave a wort. The flavour at this stage (which will form the basis for the final product) is greatly influenced by the water used in the mashing stage, and therefore *Suntory* chose a location with excellent water. Yeast is added to the wort and the fermentation process begins inside wooden vats made from the Douglas-fir, imported from North America. This process lasts for approximately three days.



Up until this point the production process is largely the same as that for other wheat-based alcohols such as beer or *shochu*. However, the subsequent distillation phase is what separates whisky and gives it its unique character and taste. The distillation takes place inside containers called pot stills, and the shape and design have a profound effect on the characteristics of the final product. The majority of distillers produce one type of whisky, and hence have only one design of pot still in their distilleries. *Suntory*, however, is distinguished in that many different styles of pot stills are used, and up to one hundred different types of whisky are distilled.



More than 20,000 people visit the *Suntory* Distillery in *Hakushu* every year, over half of whom come from outside Yamanashi Prefecture. In addition to the distillery and whisky museum the grounds themselves are quite spectacular and *Suntory* is going to great lengths to preserve the surrounding nature, including establishing a bird sanctuary within the land owned by the distillery. Indeed, it is this natural environment that is responsible for the water which forms the foundation of the whisky, and the company has not only recognized this but also built a bottling plant to be able to sell the natural mineral water directly. Due to incredibly high demand it is currently running at full capacity.

Through both its water and its whisky *Suntory* is making use of the natural resources of Yamanashi Prefecture and allowing people all over Japan to enjoy the fruits of the *Hakushu* region.



- Ben Morris -



# The Goal is the Goooooool!



With 2006 seeing the holding of the the FIFA World Cup, we've taken this opportunity to interview Jader Volnei Spindler (Bare) and Katsuya Ishihara from *Ventforet*, Yamanashi's own J-League Division 1 football team.

Our interview took place right in the middle of all the World Cup excitement, but by the time *Grapevine* subscribers read this article, the best football team in the world will have already been decided.

Ventforet was founded in 1965 as the official football club of the city of Kofu. The team name has its origin in French (from "vent," or wind, and "foret," or forest) and was inspired by "Fu-Rin-Ka-Zan" (Wind, Forest, Fire and Mountain). Originally an extract about

military tactics from Sun Tzu's "Art of War," Fu-Rin-Ka-Zan became Yamanashi warlord Takeda Shingen's personal motto, because he was said to be as fast as the wind, as quiet as the forest, as strong as fire and as immovable as a mountain.

The team's emblem has blue as its main color and Yamanashi's prefectural flower – Fuji zakura (a type of cherry blossom) – at the top, plus red which represents the abundance of wine in the prefecture. The VFK in the middle is an abbreviation for "Ventforet Kofu" and also "Vital Fighting Knights".



Forward *Bare* is from Brazil, a country with no shortage of football stars. His first encounter with the world of football was at the relatively late age of 17, and coming to Japan has given yet another direction to his career and life.



Midfielder *Katsuya Ishihara*, however, is Yamanashi-born and Yamanashi-raised. It is clear how dedicated he is to representing his beloved home prefecture through his beloved sport of football.

**Hello. First off, how are you enjoying the World Cup?**

**Ishihara:** With the time difference, the World Cup games are all broadcast at night here in Japan. And since we still have regular practice, I can't stay up too late every night. But I am watching all of Japan's games, and those of other teams that I'm interested in.

**Bare:** So am I. I have been seeing the results on the news due to the trainings.

**Did you want to be a football player ever since you were a child?**

**Ishihara:** Yes, I wanted to be a football player ever since I was a little kid; my dream was to represent Japan in a World Cup. But I was also involved in other sports, such as baseball and basketball.

**Bare:** Frankly, I never imagined that I could become a professional football player. It is very hard to become a player in Brazil, where everyone's desire is to become a football player and it is highly competitive. I started to work in a supermarket when I was 12, as a bag boy.

**Did you have any idols?**

**Bare:** My mum struggled and dedicated her life to raising her four children, since my dad passed away when I was seven months-old. So, for me, she is my eternal heroine.

**Why did you end up choosing football?**

**Ishihara:** My brothers played, so it was only natural that I played as well. Also, my elementary school had a very strong football team.

**Bare:** I started playing at the age of 17 in my hometown, which is considered too late in Brazil. In 2001, I was invited to play in the J-League Division 2 in Japan, and I didn't hesitate to accept.

**Where do you see yourself if you weren't playing football today?**

**Ishihara:** That's a hard question—maybe playing baseball. I'd definitely be involved in sports somehow.

**Bare:** I can't see myself doing something else because I was never dedicated to studying (laughs).



**What has been the hardest part of your experience with Ventforet? And the best part?**

**Ishihara:** The hardest part has to be trying to make a living as a football player—financially it's not so easy. But I do have a great team here that comes to my aid a lot. The best part was surely when Ventforet became a Division 1 team last year.

**Bare:** I helped the Omiya [Ardija team in Saitama] be promoted to J1, and right after that I was transferred to Ventforet, which was J2 at the time. For me, helping Ventforet be promoted to J1 was a challenge and a matter of honor for my career.

**How did it feel when Ventforet was promoted to J League Division 1?**

**Bare:** It was the happiest day and the greatest memory of my life, that Saturday evening, December 10, 2005.



**Do you incorporate the Fu-rin-ka-zan ideal into your daily practice or playing?**

**Ishihara:** Oh, I never thought about that really. But we do try to have a strong offense, or a strong attack, which does go along with the Fu-rin-ka-zan ideal.

**What do you like most about Yamanashi?**

**Ishihara:** The amount of nature here is just so great. Even when other teams come to Yamanashi to play against us, the players comment on how much more nature Yamanashi has than their home towns.

**Bare:** Definitely, juicy grapes and peaches. Wow! They are so delicious! And certainly, the calmness and tranquility of the nature here gives us strength and energy to go on playing. Don't you think it's a marvelous place? (laughs)

**What's your favorite place in Yamanashi?**

**Ishihara:** My favorite place has to be Kose Sports Park [where Ventforet plays their home games]. Before the Kose stadium was built, though, we used to play our games at the Midori-ga-Oka Sports Park in Kofu, so that used to be my favorite place.

**Bare:** I like the city where I live in – Kai city, which is beautiful and surrounded by nature like everywhere else in Yamanashi.

**Ishihara, you went to the same High School as Nakata Hidetoshi, one of Japan's most famous football stars. How do you remember him?**

**Ishihara:** We only had one year together in High School, but I'm very happy for his success.

**Bare, how would you compare playing in Japan to playing in Brazil?**

**Bare:** I am offered good playing conditions here, and the kindness of our fans – although I don't speak much Japanese – is expressed through their eyes and smiles; they don't express so much through physical contact.

**You're known as the "Dynamo." Why is that?**

**Ishihara:** Oh, well the word "dynamo" originally meant a type of electric generator. I'm always moving about, more than my teammates, so I guess that's why the name *Dynamo* stuck.

**What's the origin of your nickname, "Bare?" Did you get it here in Japan?**

**Bare:** Oh, no! It was a long time ago, when I was child. There used to be a soda in Brazil called "Bare Cola", which had a horrible taste! I won a box of them as part of a bet with my friends.

**What do both of you see in the future for Ventforet?**

**Ishihara:** Well, we're just coming off our promotion to Division 1, so we need to continue to train and play like a division 1 team. Eventually, I'd like to see Ventforet produce players strong enough to enter the Japanese national team.

**Bare:** I do want us to take part in the Asia World Cup one day.

*Érica Tanaka & Jonathan Smith*



# fireworks and yamanashi

The audiovisual thrills of fireworks displays are enjoyed by young and old the world over, and Japan is certainly no exception. But for the people of the Yamanashi town of Ichikawa Daimon (now incorporated into the larger town of Ichikawa Misato), these dazzling displays are more than just a summer pastime: they are a centuries-old tradition.

It is said that the fireworks industry in Ichikawa Daimon had its start in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, when Yamanashi warlord Takeda Shingen used gunpowder not only for smoke signals (which proved a helpful tool as his domain began to expand) but also as fireworks, incorporated into his army's pre-deployment ceremonies. Ichikawa Daimon's fireworks industry greatly developed under Shingen's reign, and even after his passing, local manufacturers of the "Takeda Style" of fireworks were employed by the three honorable branches of the ruling Tokugawa clan. Seeing its industry truly flourish by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Ichikawa Daimon was soon counted among the top three fireworks-producing areas of Edo-period Japan.

Fireworks also have a history of spiritual significance in Japan, being incorporated into ceremonies honoring the deceased, such as in the summer Bon Festivals of certain areas. In Ichikawa Daimon it is the Shinmei Fireworks Festival that has been drawing the crowds for hundreds of years. Edo-period folksongs even sing, "In July once the Bon Festival has past/ We'll meet in Ichikawa, where the fireworks blast."



The Shinmei Festival not only honors the Shinto deity of paper, Ame-no-Hiwashi-no-Mikoto, but also Ichikawa Jinzaemon, the Late Heian period man who is credited with contributing to the development of the washi paper trade in the Ichikawa area.

Layers of washi paper, incidentally, used to form the protective outer shell of the finished firework, upon which the producer's name was stamped by way of a hanko personal seal—personal seals being yet another specialty of the Ichikawa Misato area, together with washi and fireworks. Washi and hanko are no longer used at the local Marugoh Fire Works Company (who graciously provided *The Grapevine* with a tour of their factory and the accompanying photographs), but fireworks production there is still a hand-made affair. The fine-tuned mixing of the chemical compounds that will eventually give the firework its distinct color and spark, the insertion of the pellet-like pyrotechnic stars created from this mixture, the layering of the outer shell and attachment of the fuse—these are all done by skilled hands fostered in the centuries-old Ichikawa Daimon tradition. And as the awed and smiling faces of the audience at the Shinmei Fireworks Festival indicate, the fireworks trade in Ichikawa Daimon should continue for centuries to come.

—Jonathan Smith

## やまなし はなび 山梨の花火 ぶんか文化コーナー

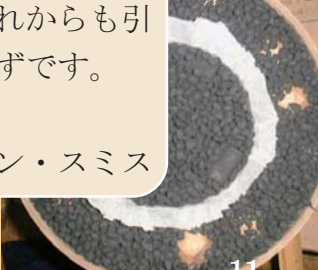
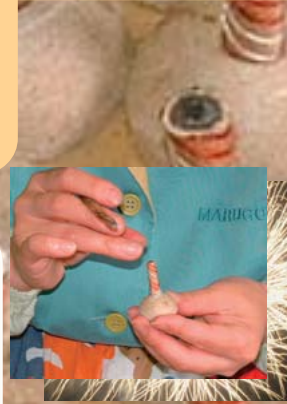
子供からお年寄りまで、目と耳でスリルを感じることができる花火大会は、世界のいろいろな国で楽しんでいます。日本も例外ではありません。しかし、山梨県の市川大門(現在市川三郷町)の人々にとって、このきらびやかな花火大会は単なる夏の娯楽ではなく、数百年の歴史を持つ伝統産業でもあります。

市川大門に花火産業が始まったきっかけは、戦国大名の武田信玄にであると伝えられています。領土拡大に努めた信玄公は、遠くからも見えて便利な狼煙に火薬を使い、出陣の夜にも花火を使ったりしたそうです。武田氏の栄えた時代、市川大門の花火産業は大いに発展し、江戸時代に入ってもその「武田流」の煙火師が徳川御三家に仕えました。市川花火産業の隆盛期は17世紀末から始まり、当時の市川大門は日本三大花火にも数えられました。

日本の花火には鎮魂の意味もあり、祖先の霊を祭る夏のお盆などによく打ち上げられてきました。市川大門では「神明の花火」が数百年前から有名です。江戸時代の民謡にも「7月おいで盆すぎて/市川の花火の場所であいやしよ」と謡われていたそうです。「神明の花火」は紙の神である天日鷲命だけでなく、平安末期、市川和紙の発展に大きく貢献した市川甚左衛門も祭ってきました。

昔は、和紙を何回も貼り付けて作った花火玉の上に、煙火師のはんこを押しました。ちなみに、はんこと和紙は花火と共に、市川大門とその周辺地域の名産品です。今回取材し、花火について教えていただいた花火製造会社、株式会社マルゴ(写真提供も同社)では、現在は和紙やはんこは使われていませんが、手で花火を作る製造工程を守っています。花火の独特な色や火花を決める化合物の調合や、これから出来る「星」という小さな玉を花火玉に入れること、その周りに紙を貼ること、そして導火線の固着など、その手作業の全ては代々受け継がれてきた伝統を守る職人の技の見せどころです。神明の花火大会に集まる人々の驚嘆し、笑い合う笑顔を見ると、市川大門の花火がきっとこれからも引き継がれていくだろうことが分かるはずです。

—ジョナサン・スミス





# MEET THE AUTHORS



Érica Tanaka

The most enthusiastic Brazilian CIR in Yamanashi, Érica Tanaka has lost many hours of sleep to support and cheer for the Brazilian football team which is looking forward to conquering its sixth World Cup. With the same enthusiasm, she is ready to face her second year in Yamanashi and she asks for the support of all her readers!

Jonathan Smith

American CIR Jonathan Smith (seen here during a typical day at the office), is enjoying not only the highs and lows of his life in Yamanashi, but also the resulting G-forces. Cycling and running about, in particular, seems to leave an enjoyably tingly feeling in his stomach. Eager for another go, he has decided to remain one more year in Yamanashi, despite the thousand-yen ticket price and 45-minute wait. This time, though, he will be sure to secure his cell phone and wallet during the dizzying loop-d-loops.



Sébastien Noël

Although comfortable on a skateboard half-pipe, French CIR Sébastien Noël had to pluck up the courage to jump into the Fujiyama train and write his last contribution to the Grapevine. After three years in Yamanashi, Sébastien will soon leave the land of Mt. Fuji to fly towards new adventures. His first stop will be France, but he doesn't know yet where his future plans will lead him (though he mentioned Paris and Tokyo). Sébastien will never forget all the people he met and all the friends he made in Yamanashi.



Ben Morris

Having spent three years as a CIR in Yamanashi, Ben Morris has started to forget where he came from. He is uncertain as to whether the whisky which provided the material for this edition's article is in any way related, but he only has a couple of months to remember before his tenure ends. He is certain the answer lies in the letters 'U' and 'K' printed on his ticket home. All that remains is to crack the code...



Corrections: The Winter 2006 Edition of *The Grapevine* reported that the Kisonokakehashi Bridge was located in Toyama Prefecture, but the bridge is in fact in Nagano Prefecture. Similarly, dates in reference to the *sengoku* era should have read "16<sup>th</sup> Century" instead of "17<sup>th</sup> Century." We are sorry for any confusion this may have caused.

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Send your thoughts our way! For Reader's Corner submissions, free subscriptions, or change of address, please contact:  
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