Special Editior No.23, 24, 25, 26

MY TOWN



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We interviewed Amnaj Luangweera (37), a man from the Kanchanaburi Province of Thailand. He is currently studying Japanese at the Aoyama International Education Institute. He walks around the Akasaka and Mr. Luangweera when he visited Aoyama area when he does not have classes.

Nara

Q1 : Why did you come to Japan?

"Since I was a child, I've loved Japanese comics and cartoons such as 'Doraemon.' After graduating from university in Thailand, I got a position in a Japanese company over there. I started to develop an interest in Japanese culture and went to a Japanese language school. I then decided to come to Japan to learn more Japanese, and I arrived here in September, 2011."

Q2 : You speak Japanese well. How long have you been studying Japanese?

"It has been approximately seven years since I started studying Japanese in Thailand. I can read and write Japanese quite well now, but I would like to deepen my understanding of the Japanese language and learn to speak more fluently and naturally."

Q3 : What is the best thing about living in the Akasaka & Aoyama area?

"The best thing about this area is that it is very covenient in transport. I usually walk to the institute, but when the weather is bad, I use Minato-City community bus called Chii bus. I also love reading books, so I go to secondhand bookshops to buy various books at reasonable prices."

everyday life?

so I am not sure what to do if an emergency occurs on one of these days. Also I know there's nothing I can do about it because it is the climate, but for someone like me who came from Thailand where it is very hot all year around, winter in Japan is too cold. Although I put on many clothes in layers, but I just can't get warm. I wonder when it will get warmer this year (Laugh)."

Q5 : Do you have any favorite places in Akasaka & Aoyama?

the Icho Festival last year. Japan has four seasons, and the changes in scenery are beautiful in each season."

Q6 : Do you have any interesting stories about living in Japan?

(a mixture of ground red chili peppers and other spices) until the whole surface of the katsudon was covered. My Japanese friend was worried and said, "You'll end up with a stomachache." But for

Q7 : What is your future goal?

"When I return to Thailand his year, I am planning to start a business which is related to both

Japan and Thailand. Therefore, in order to improve my Japanese as much as possible, I try to study the language not just at school, but also surrounding myself with Japanese language by reading newspapers and watching dramas and news on television."



language teacher.



The very fashionable Mr. Caludis

Q1 : When did you first come to Japan?

"My first visit to Japan was in 1996, and I stayed in a homestay for three months in Tokyo in order to learn Japanese. I went back to Italy and came back to Japan again in 1998 as an Italian language teacher."

Q2 : What made you interested in Japanese language and culture?

"When I was a child, I used to watch Japanese cartoons such as 'Heidi, Girl of the Alps.'

I was surprised at the perfection of the story lines, which was guite different from European cartoons. Most Japanese cartoons were subtitled, so I was automatically listening to Japanese. We also had Japanese wrestling matches, and Japanese wrestlers were very popular. Whenever my mother visited Japan as a tour guide for a travel company, she bought me a present, and I was very impressed with the items she brought home. Due to these influences, I decided to study Japanese Language in the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Turin."

Q3 : What are the attractions of Akasaka and Aoyama? Do you have any favorite places there?

"I often come to Aoyama. The town's atmosphere and the fashion in Aoyama are similar to those in Europe, and we can buy food and goods from all over the world. It is very easy to get around in the Akasaka and Aoyama area. The inconvenient thing in this area is ... well, the only thing I can think of is that the area is too large to walk around.

My favorite place is the backstreets. I like walking through the backstreets between Aoyama-dori and Omotesando and finding interesting shops and historical places. The Ichonamiki (ginko tree road) of Jingu Gaien is also beautiful."

Q4 : What is the biggest difference between Japan and Italy?

"Most Japanese people are punctual, unlike Italians. Because I have been in Japan for a long time, it has become normal for me to be punctual. My Japanese friends always tease and ask me, 'Why are you punctual even though you are an Italian?' (Laugh). Whenever I go back to Italy, I now get confused with their sense of time."

Q5: What would you like to try now - like a hobby or anything else?

"One of my hobbies is art. I am into pencil drawing, but in the past I did Japanese calligraphy and oil painting. I also like making clay sculptures. It's my dream to have a private exhibition to show all my art works. When I am concentrating on art, I can take a break from my busy daily life and feel relaxed. But in reality, I am often too busy to spend the time for my art work (Laugh)."

Associazione Italo-Giapponese

http://www.aigtokyo.or.jp/ Akasaka Chuo Mansion 2F 7-2-17 Akasaka Telephone: 03-3402-1632

LET'S ENJOY at the unsel of fun! AKASAKA & AOYAMA!

Community Information Bulletin

"MY TOWN AKASAKA & AOYAMA" is a community information bulletin created

by residents of the two local communities. They make plans, conduct research

and do the editing by themselves. The bulletin is aimed at spreading information on fascinating things found in and around Akasaka and Aoyama, Tokyo.



Q4 : Is there anything you feel inconvenient about this area in

"Most hospitals and clinics close on Sundays and public holidays,

"I like Ichonamiki (gingko tree road) in Jingu Gaien, and I went to

Thai cuisine of Tod Mun Pla

(Fish Cake)

"Once, I ordered katsudon and put so much of 'shichimi togarashi'

me, I am used to spicy food, it was not hot at all. When I cook, I buy ingredients which are similar to Thai flavors, but unfortunately I can't buy chili hot enough to make he unique hotness of Thai food."

It has been 45 years since he came to Japan and 40 years since he opened the French home-cooking style restaurant "Chez Pierre." He started as a baker and has always been in the food business. We interviewed the owner and chef Pierre Prigent who has been living in Aoyama since his arrival in Japan and is currently still working hard in his restaurant.



Mr. Pierre Prigent

Q1 : Please tell us about your upbringing

"I was born in Saint-Denis, a suburb of Paris, on June 30, 1947. I always wanted to become a baker, so I entered this business when I was 15. I left there for military training and cooked in the army for one and a half years, and then I went back to work as a baker. The baker who was mentoring me at that time was sent to Japan, so I came to Japan in 1968 to visit him. I started to work at Dong in Aoyama. In those days Aoyama was a town influenced greatly by the Western bread cultures, with 'Kinokuniya' selling British style bread, 'Dong' selling French bread and 'Andersen' selling mainly German bread."

Q2 : Please tell us what Aoyama was like when you opened vour restaurant.

"It was in 1973 when I opened my restaurant in the basement of the building next to a large florist named 'Hanamo'. It was when a large scale city expansion plan was underway after the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. While making French bread and cakes at Dong, I was putting everything into opening 'Dong Kansai' at the same time as the 1970 Osaka Expo. It was at a time when the eating habits of Japanese people were just about to change along with Japan's recovery from the World War II.

In the midst of all that, I opened a full-scale French home-cooking style restaurant near Kinokuniya with support from the owner of Dong and others. The young cultured people who all left for western countries after the war to study - such as artists, architects and fashion designers - all came back to Japan. They initiated new trendsetting activities, with Aoyama at the center. People who were inspired by other cultures used my restaurant quite often as a 'hangout'. Their 'word-of-mouth' was the basis for the success of my restaurant."

Q3 : Then why did you move your restaurant to Nogizaka?

"Since the opening of the restaurant, business was great, but as a quintessential French man who loves ambiance, I wanted to have a shop from which you could see people walking by and you could also experience elements of nature. Everything started when I heard the person sitting next to me at a meeting of bakers saying 'I am going to close my shop.' After numerous discussions and negotiations, I finally moved my restaurant in 1985. I finally came out of the ground, so to speak. As well as our regular customers, new customers from consulates and embassies began to come to our restaurant.



I owe my success to the people around me and the trends of the times. I feel thankful I can blend in here quite well having a Japanese woman as my wife. With a lot of greenery and many tourists from overseas, Aoyama is somewhat like Paris and is a nice quiet town. It is still as charming as when I first came to Japan. I would like to keep living here in the future."

Chez Pierre" is celebrating its 40th year anniversary



She was born in Tokyo in May, 1981. Traveling between Japan and France, she currently works as an advisor in productions of television travel programs, events and content, while running her own trading company.

We interviewed the energetic Ms. Isabelle Massabo who lives in kasaka, Minato-ku

Ms. Isabelle Massabo

Q1 : Please tell me about your upbringing.

"I am the daughter of a French artist father and a Japanese mother from Ishigaki Island. I was born in Tokyo, but I was brought up in a bilingual environment moving between Nice, France and Japan. In Japan, I attended the Lycée Franco-Japonais, so I was brought up completely in the French language and culture. When I was 18 and started university and I started working as a TV personality and realized how wonderful Japanese language and culture are."

Q2: What do you like about Japan and France?

"The things I like about Japan are, more than anything else, 'kikubari (attentiveness)', 'mekubari (watchfulness)' and 'kokorokubari (thoughtfulness).' Whether it is with food or work, Japanese people are sensitive and precise, and always place others or customers first. In addition, each region has unique attractions, as well as beautiful sakes, food and hospitality. My favorite foods are mentaiko (spicy cod roe), karaage (Japanese-style fried chicken), natto (fermented soy beans) and shimesaba (mackerel marinated in vineaar).

The things I like about France (Southern France) are that people are open to everyone, that people are proud of their own culture, and that they are trying to make the environment easier for immigrants and the elderly population. For example, in Southern France, the government provides a year-long free language course for newly arrived immigrants and even finds jobs for them afterward. Also, education in France is almost free up until university, and the selfsufficiency rate is 120%! Therefore, it is a good environment in which to raise children. These are the cultural aspects I wish Japan would adopt and follow."

Q3 : What are the attractions of Akasaka? Do you have any favorite places?

"Akasaka has the atmosphere of a foreign country. Particularly along the northern side of Roppongi-dori and around Midtown, we see many French people, and the green areas and parks make me feel relaxed. I also like the "downtown" atmosphere you experience when you first enter the side roads leading into town. My favorite place is Hinoki-cho Park. When I'm not working, I walk in the park or read books."

Q4 : What is your future goal?

"I would like to keep challenging myself to try new things. First, I would like to expand my activities to connect Japan and overseas countries through media and events, with the catch phrase of bringing high quality content to Japan and sharing the high quality content which Japan can be proud of to overseas venues!', using the network of people I have established in Japan and overseas.

This year I am going to introduce information and attractive products to Japan mainly from the twentyeight EU countries."

Ms. Massabo as the MC at an event sponsored by the Croatian National Tourist Board



Aovama Cemeterv A Person and History

No.18 Tokuzo Akivama (1888-1974)



Tokuzo Akiyama, who was working as "Chef for the Emperor" and the main chef at the Imperial Cuisine Division of the Imperial Household Agency for over fifty years and

contributed greatly to the French cuisine business in Japan, was born in 1888 as the second son of a wealthy family in Takefu, Fukui. He was quite an energetic boy when he was little. He told numerous adventurous stories, including the story that when he decided to become a Buddhist monk and went to a Zen temple for training, he went too far with his mischief – he threw the headstones of successive holy priests off a cliff – and was expelled from the temple after just one year.

However, this changed when Tokuzo visited to the mess hall of the 36th Regiment who were staying in Sabae, and Tokuzo became interested in Western cooking. One day, he was very impressed by the beautifully presented, fragrant food served at the hall, and he decided to become a chef of Western cuisine. He went to Tokyo when he was 16 and trained at famous Western restaurants of that time period, such as Kazoku Kaikan and Tsukiji Seiyoken. He was quite a hard worker – he even attended oneon-one French language classes after work.



When Tokuzo was 21, he finally made it to Europe. It had been his dream. He trained at best restaurants in Paris, including the Ritz-Carlton. Although he was smaller in stature than other trainees, but he was competitive in showing his fighting instinct in those grand French kitchens full of larger men. When a chef asked him to carry soup in a large pot which was too heavy for any man to lift on his own — Tokuzo lifted up the pot after draining all the soup into the sink. After that, he gained everyone's respect, and his cooking skills improved significantly. Although Tokuzo's skill (Sourced by: Provided by the was well recognized in France, he returned to Japan in 1912 when he was offered the

Akiyama family)

position of main chef for an imperial ceremony of the Taisho Emperor. He got married and began working as the main chef at the Imperial Cuisine Division of the Imperial Household Agency at the age of 25.

His attitude toward cooking was guite strict. He commented, "The most important thing is the basics. Follow the basics, and try not to cut corners. Not only your skills, cooking from your heart is also important." While adhering to these intense values, he was at the same time guite playful. He often chose to amuse guests visually by positioning ice sculptures and tray landscapes in interesting ways at dinner parties

Occasionally he felt stressed about times changing and the fact that the new young trainees starting out were not as traditionally minded as the older generation of chefs, but he noted that the most important thing in the world, and indeed the only thing which would never change, was that

all of the chefs young and old shared a passion for the job. His passion for his work must have inspired him to continue serving the imperial family for more than fifty years. Tokuzo retired when he was 84 and died in 1974 at the age of 85. Not only he was the Emperor's chef, but he was also the leader of the Western cuisine business in Japan. While working as the head chef, he spent ten years compiling " The Encyclopedia of French Cuisine" and wrote books on all manner of Western cuisine.

Sourced by: "Aji" by Tokuzo Akiyama, "Showa-tenno no

Oshokuji" by Makoto Watanabe



"Aji – Tenno no Ryoriban ga Kataru Showa" by Tokuzo Akivama (Chuko Bunko)



Please use the nearest bicycle parking spaces.

When using a bicycle, please park it in the dedicated bicycle parking space at the destination or at a temporary bicycle parking space managed by the Minato-City shown below. Minato-City has strengthened its measures against illegally parked bicycles around the railway stations for which Minato-City has established paid temporary bicycle parking spaces. All the illegally parked bicycles will be removed immediately and periodically. Please use the bicycle parking at the destination whenever you use a bicycle.

Aoyama 1-chome Station Temporary Bicycle Parking Space

- Address: Minami Aoyama 1-1 to 1-2
- Maximum Parking Capacity: 100
 Hours: Open 24 hours

•Parking Fee: Free for the first two hours (¥100 every six hours after the first two hours)



The removed bicycles around the station will be transported to the Shirokane -takanawa Station Bicycle Collection Point.

Omotesando Station Temporary Bicycle Parking Space

- Address: Minami-Aoyama 3-13
- Maximum Parking Capacity: 312
- Hours: 4:30 am to 1 am (the next morning)
- Parking Fee: Free for the first two hours (¥100 every ten hours after the first two hours)



*The removed bicycles around the station will be transported to the Kaigan 3-chome Bicycle Collection Point (five minutes walk from Yurikamome Shibaura-futo Station)

Akasakamitsuke Station Temporary Bicycle Parking Space

- *This parking space began charging fees on July 1st, 2013.
- Address: Akasaka 3-9. Moto-akasaka 1-2
- Maximum Parking Capacity: 50
 Hours: Open 24 hours
- •Parking Fee: Free for the first two hours (¥100 every six hours after the first two hours)



* The removed bicycles around the station will be transported to the okane-takanawa Station Bicycle Collection

Contact: Community Development Support Subsection. Collaboration Project Section, Akasaka Regional City Office Telephone : 03-5413-7272

Local cleaning activities in Akasaka and Aoyama



In order to keep the Akasaka and Aoyama area safe and clean, many people in the area participate in local cleaning activities. Below shows the list of several of these cleaning activities.

Cleaning Group	Date	Cleanup Area
Esplanade Akasaka Shopping Market Union	2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month Starts from 12:15pm (Duration: about 30 mins)	The Esplanade Akasaka Shopping Market between Akasaka-mitsuke Station and Akasaka- dori
Aoyama-Gaienmae Shopping Market Union Namboku Aoyama 2-chome Town Council	2nd & 4th Friday of the month Starts from 9am (Duration: about 30 mins)	Gaiemmae Station Area
Aoyama 3-chome Shop Association	2nd Friday of the month Starts from 9am (Duration: about 40 mins)	From the Aoyama 3-chome intersection to Zenkoji Temple
Omotesando Shop Association	2nd & 4th Friday of the month Starts from 9am (Duration: about 40 mins)	Omote-sando Station area
Aoyama 1-chome Town Council	3rd Friday of the month Starts from 10am (Duration: about 40 mins)	1-chome Town Council area
Aoyama 2-chome Town Council	1st Thursday of the month Starts from 10am (Duration: about 40 mins)	2-chome Town Council area
Akasaka Regional City Office	1st Friday of the month Starts from 9am (Duration: about 30 mins)	Akasaka Regional City Office area
Greenbird Akasaka Team	2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month Starts from 8:30am (Duration: about 60 mins)	Akasaka-dori and Hitotsugi-dori area

* Each group may cancel the cleaning activity on a rainy/stormy/extremely hot day.

People from relevant town councils, shopping malls or local business entities also participate in the cleaning activities. When you volunteer, your town becomes clean, and you will also have an important opportunity to talk to the local business people and other residents of the area. Individuals and group participation are both welcome.

If you are interested, please call the number below!

Contact: Collaboration Project Section, Akasaka Regional City Office Telephone : 03-5413-7013

LET'S ENJOY CYCLING INAKASAKA & AOYAMA! Cycling at the wheel of fun!



On

Cycling is recently becoming more popular because of the health trends and also as an ecologically friendly way of transport.

New cycling shops are opening one after another, and we often see cyclists riding past us on the streets. One of the most enjoyable parts of cycling is that anyone can enjoy it, from children to adults. You can also enjoy a family conversation while riding bicycle together.

Do you find it difficult to ride on many steep hills in Akasaka and Aoyama area?

You may discover something new if you put slight effort to cycle to a place that you do not normally visit, and ride for a long distance to get away from the everyday hustle while feeling the wind in your hair. Please remember to keep safety in mind at all times and enjoy your cycling in everyday life.

"Chari-jo": Women who enjoy cycling in a healthy and stylish way



Ms. Emiko Sato is a sportswoman who participated in the Sunday Ride, a cycling event organized by Y's Road Akasaka. sport bike shop in Akasaka, Minato-City. Her bike riding history is ten years on road bikes and a little under two years on sport bikes. She explains, "I participate in races inside and outside Japan, but I mostly ride as a hobby and a sport on the weekends. After many years of bike riding,

my body became lighter and I now feel better. The advantage of bike riding is that my network has expanded. Sharing the same hobby of bike riding and participating in events and practices, I've made many friends beyond work, age, gender, and nationality. I would like to participate in the Norikura Hill Climb and Honolulu Century Ride in the future"



Ms. Erika Aoyama, who lives in Akasaka, Minato-City, enjoys town rides on her pink bicycle. She has been riding a bicycle for about ten years. At first she was riding a Mamachari*, but after the recent bicycle craze, she bought her current bike three years ago. She does not use trains on weekends and public holidays, and uses her bicycle for meeting friends and shopping. She comments, "I cycled to

the Sumida River Fireworks Festival last year. By using muscles which you do not normally use while walking, cycling is effective for tightening your legs and shaping up your backside. Also, when on foot, you only walk around the train stations; but on bike you can go to places you do not normally go and find new shops. I now know many roads in and around the metropolitan area of Tokyo. It is not easy to bike in Akasaka because of the hills. From my house in Akasaka, riding to Shinjuku seems a guick ride, but to Shibuya seems longer - I think it is because I have to ride uphill...

* See the footnote of "Mama-charist.

"Holiday Cyclists" who value their family time

Mr. Morita works at Itochu Corporation a general trading company whose main office is on Aoyama-dori. He began cycling when he was working in Osaka. His company dormitory was on a hill between Kobe and Hanshin, and he was commuting by mountain bike. When he returned to Tokyo, he began touring with his cycling friends, often starting from a shop in Aoyama where cycling enthusiasts get together. He once cycled 70 kilometers! He now cycles on his own to the park and other locales in the early hours of the weekend and public holidays before

spending time with his family.





Column "Aoyama — Bicycle Friendly Town

Did you know that Aoyama is aiming to become a "Bicycle Friendly Town"? It began when the Federation of Aoyama Shopping Malls made this declaration in 2009. Since then, in order to have the town and bicycles exist in harmony, Aoyama has been promoting various activities with cooperation from business enterprises and groups.

There have always been many cycling shops in the Aoyama area, and we have seen many people riding bicycles. With fashionable streets and beautiful green areas like Jingu Gaien* and Aoyama Cemetery, Aoyama provides a fun atmosphere for cycling. As the bicycle is regaining the spotlight as an eco-friendly form of transportation with recent health trends, it is important to reconsider the convenience and comfort that cycling can provide and work to create a bicycle friendly town similar to those found in Europe.

^t The one-way loop around Jingu Gaien is open for cycling on weekends and public holidays. Details are provided at the end of this special edition.



station

Gingu Gaien Cycling Course

*Detailed map is shown inside the article.

Kita-aovama(2)

Omote-sando Minami-aoyama(3) station

Kita-aoyama(3)

Minami-aoyama(4)

Chiyoda Line

Minami-aoyama(6)

Minami-aoyama(7)

- Zone (Cho-me) Boundary X Bicycle Accident Sites in 2011 (Source: National Police Agency Statistics)

Looking after the area "Business Cyclists"

We interviewed two female employees, Ms. Kanazawa and Ms. Shintaku of the Akasaka Branch of Sawavaka Shinkin Bank. Both ladies were carrying their briefcases in the baskets of their power-assisted bicycles, and when I tried to lift up the briefcases, they were too heavy to be lifted with both hands. The ladies are utilizing their cycling experience in their work -Ms. Kanazawa has experience cycling with her

three children, and Ms. Shintaku was a member of the cycling club at her university. They both said, "We love cycling through the skyscrapers, feeling the wind in our hair". Their sense of risk management is impressive - "We cycle around carefully not to meet an accident." I hope that more cyclists share this view in order to reduce the number of accidents by cyclists for our comfortable cvcling life.

Cooperating with "Patrol for Everyone"!

Sawayaka Shinkin Bank is one of the participating companies in the "Patrol for Everyone" crime prevention activity of Minato-City. Cycling within the Akasaka and Aoyama area, the employees are looking after the safety and security for the local residents.



"Mama-charists*", the mothers make big efforts on raising children and shopping on bicycles

"Riding my bicycle, I began to go to a lot more places and began to change how I use my time", said Yasuko Baccari, the mother of an energetic boy named Jun. Jun loves riding on the back while his mother flies in the wind on her bicycle. Considering safety to be the most important factor in her cycling life, Yasuko selected a bicycle with small wheels and a low center of aravity.

She recommends a route around Sakurazaka slope of Akasaka 1-chome. This route has a beautiful scenery all year round as a great cycling site (although

Yasuko Baccari and her son Jun

going up all those hills is indeed quite challenging...)

As you can only ride a bicycle with your child at the back for a short time in your life, I think it's nice for parents to enjoy cycling with their children.

Holland is a country with highly developed bicycles. There are various 'Mama-chari*' bicycles of all different designs with colorful baskets and bodies. Some of these bicycles have three wheels which are stable and safe, also with the child seat attached to a lower position in front of the

* Mama-chari means mother's bicycle often with a big basket in front and child's seat at the back.

Bicycle Support Locations (Sales and Repair) **1**Y's Road Akasaka ···· Sales and Repair

- Y.International Building 2-10-1 Akasaka phone 03-5545-1525 Hours 11am to 8pm (irregular holidays)
- OCv-Q···Repair Kasuga Mansion Akasaka 1st floor 7-6-55 Akasaka

elephone 03-3583-1340 (Field Repair) n Hours 9am to 7pm (Our visit will be the following day if the repair call is made after 5pm) Closed for Saturdays and Sundays

Cycle Spot Akasaka Studio · · · Sales and Repair 3-6-12 Akasaka phone 03-3584-4174 Open Hours 11:30am to 7pm Thursdays http://www.cyclespot.net/ akasakastudio

nchi Community ···· Sales BELTE Minami Aoyama I-104 4-1-15 Minami Aovama

elephone 03-6804-1385 pen Hours 10:30am to 7:30pm (Closed for Mondays)

c Aoyama ···· Sales and Repair Daiichi Aoyama building 3-3-7 Kita Aoyama 03-6439-1211 urs 10am to 7:30pm (Irregular

Holidays) tp://www.olympic-corp.co.jp/shop/aoyama/

*There are many bicycle shops in the Aoyama area, but the ones located outside of Minato-City are not included on this map.



often urgent to meet the deadline. He also delivers Mr. Kosuke Shimosaka

much more. For safe and swift delivery in the Akasaka and Aoyama area which has many hills, a messenger needs physical stamina as well as good foot straps to ensure that his/her shoes do not slip off the bicycle pedals. Appropriate bicycle maintenance, morning briefings and email contact for safety confirmation are also essential. Kosuke's favorite place is Ichonamiki (ginkgo tree road) in Jingu Gaien. He says, "I cycle there feeling the four seasons - not only the new greenery in spring and summer, the autumn colors, but also winter when the trees only have branches."

from Kosuke's company delivers 15-20 packages per

day to five neighborhood cities, with Akasaka as its

center. The job includes delivering various items such

as manuscripts for publishers or photo data which are

tickets, computer games, food boxes for elderly and

Messengers also provide maintenance service, not just delivery. Mr. Ryo



Shimosaka is one of them. From the customers own home to roadsides, he comes to assist in the event of an accident or an emergency. According to Ryo, because the Akasaka and Aoyama area has many hills, most requests involve power-assisted bicycles. He advises other cyclists to "maintain tire air pressure properly, and you can avoid accidents

such as a puncture and also save battery life."

Mr. Ryo Shimosaka

Follow rules and manners, and ride your bicycle safely!

5 rules for bicycle safety

1 As a general rule, ride on the roadway and not the sidewalk.

Under the Road Traffic Act, bicycles are classified as light vehicles. Therefore, you have to ride a bicycle on the road where roads and sidewalks are clearly separated.

2 Ride on the left side of the roadway.

When riding a bicycle on the road, you should ride on the left side of the road, just as you would with a car.

- It is the safest to ride on the far left side of the road.



where there is an auxiliary sign saying "JITENSHA WO NOZOKU (Excluding Bicycles)" where you can go both ways with bicycles.

3 Sidewalk is for pedestrians. When you ride on the sidewalk, ride slowly on the closest side to the roadway.

When riding on the sidewalk, if you are likely to disturb pedestrians, you must stop.

4 Follow the safety rules.

- Drinking alcohol before riding / Two passengers on one bicycle / Riding side by side with another bicyclist are not allowed.
- Keep the light on at night.
- Follow the traffic lights. Stop to ensure safety.

Ignoring the traffic lights at an intersection and not stopping at a stop sign are traffic offenses. You must follow the traffic lights at an intersection, and make sure the area is safe before crossing.

5 Children must wear helmets

Parents must ensure that their children wear helmets when riding bicycles.

The center of gravity of a growing child is unstable, and s/he might receive critical damage on the head at an accident.

Please ensure that your child wears a helmet when s/he is riding a bicycle on his/her own and also when you carry him/her in a child seat.

Please check the Tokyo Metropolitan Police **Department website for more details** (in Japanese language only). http://www.keishicho.metro.tokyo.jp/









The editorial board members got together and started own pace and feel safe.

Experience the Jingu Gaien Cycling Course Oasis for exercises and therapeutic forest cycling in metropolitan Tokvo

One day in May, a few of our editorial board nembers came to the Jingu Gaien Cycling Course and began cycling together. It seems surreal cycling in the middle of a roadway which is normally used by cars, and it was refreshing to ride against the wind while pedaling. On this bicycle-only breathing in the fresh air of the vast and deep road, you can cycle at your forest. It was exciting when we heard cheers from the surrounding sports facilities. To be honest, at first we were wondering it might be

too boring to simply cycle around and around the same track, but cycling while admiring the forest was much more refreshing than we expected and it turned out to be quite entertaining. Without having to worry about cars and being able to have relaxing conversations with friends and families, we could cycle at a slow pace and thorough enjoy the experience.

The course also provides cycling lessons. There are two separate zones, one is for children under five years of age and another one is anyone over elementary school age, including adults. First, students will learn how to balance on the bicycles, using a "walking bicycle" without pedals. Then, they will ride on a bicycle with pedals and learn how to keep it balanced by themselves. Qualified staff members look after students and teach are not many cycling lessons for them until they can successfully ride a bicycle. children are free in Tokyo. Quick learners can ride comfortably in a few



Children at cycling lessons. There

The world's first bicycle. Draisine.

but with no pedal or crank.

invented by German Baron

Drais. Two wheels were aligned.

hours practicing. Mothers whose children participated in the riding lessons



commented, "It was great we can rent bicycles (with the appropriate sizes for children) for free. The staff members are friendly and caring. They are qualified instructors, so it feels very safe for my children to be looked after. Once my child can ride a bicycle, we would like to enjoy the circular course together."

Please come and experience this relaxing and refreshing cycling course!!

Filled with greenery, Jingu Gaien is an oasis in the urban city. You will feel refreshing openness.

Gingu Gaien Cycling Course.....opened as Japan's first "bicycle park" in 1968. Since then, the public road around Jingu Gaien, which is used by 30,000 cars daily, has been closed to automobile traffic on Sundays and public holidays and opened just for cyclists.

• Days: Sundays and public holidays (cancelled if it rains)

- Riding Lessons (Free):
- 1) Under 5 years old age group
- 2) From elementary school children to adults (no age limit)
- •Rental bicycles (Free): Total of approximately 400 bicycles for children and adults. Bringing your own bicycle is allowed.

Iquiry: (In Japanese language only)

Japan Cycling Association

Telephone: 03-3405-8753 (Sundays and public holidays only) http://www.j-cycling.org/jingu.html



History of the Bicycle

Bicycles actually have a short history. About 200 years ago in 1817, Baron Karl von Drais in Germany invented the Draisine. This is a bicycle mostly made out of wood and was propelled by the rider pushing it along the ground with their feet. In 1839, Kirkpatrick MacMillan in Scotland designed the rear-wheel driven bicycle. It was the first time that the riders could keep their feet off the ground, and the design greatly influenced the future development of the bicvcle.

The first bicycle to arrive in Japan

was the modified "Michaux" model which was imported during the Keio Era. The original "Michaux" bicycle was developed by a father and son duo from France, Pierre and Ernest Michaux. Their design included pedals and cranks on the front wheels of the bicycle. Further improvements to this model * Source of the information and photographs: Bicycle Culture Center

were made in the United Kingdom, whereby saddle springs and brakes were added to the existing design. Japan then imported this new style of bicycle. Around 1878, people such as Torajiro Takeuchi and Jinnosuke Kajino began manufacturing bicycles. In 1892, the bicycles were used for telegraph delivery for the first time.

After Japan's defeat in the war, many war plants became bicycle manufacturers. Mitsubishi Heavy Industries launched a duralumin bicycle named "Ju-jigo" (a safety bicycle). Bicycles have evolved from utility transportation to sport bikes to mini cycles. Nowadays, bicycles are used for outdoor activities and are necessary as healthy and ecologically friendly way of transport.



The early safety bicycle. Like modern bicycles, the sizes of the front wheel and the rear wheel are the same.