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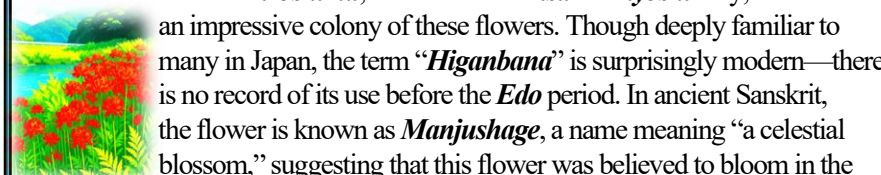

KOHO HIRO

September

Hiro Community News Letter

A Lyrical Tale of the Spider Lily

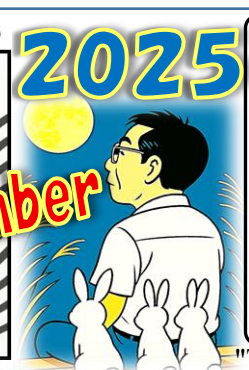
As summer's heat lingers, the quiet approach of autumn begins to stir in the air with the arrival of September. When the autumnal equinox draws near, a striking transformation takes place in the countryside: against a serene backdrop, vibrant red spider lilies suddenly blaze into bloom, spreading like flames across the landscape. Their dramatic beauty captivates the eye, evoking the image of a masterful painting come to life. The spider lily—*Higanbana*, as it is known in Japanese—exists in a rhythm all its own, apart from the familiar cycles of nature. Its leaves flourish in the cold of winter, only to wither away by late spring, long before the flowers appear. This seemingly inverted life cycle lends the plant a mysterious allure and a quiet strength, as if it defies the expected order of the world. It is precisely this reason why the spider lily never blooms during the spring equinox, despite its name. In some regions, it is even poetically referred to as *Ha-mizu Hana-mizu**, meaning "no leaves when it flowers, no flowers when it leaves." Not far from *Hiroshima*, in the town of *Kisa* in *Miyoshi* City, one can find



an impressive colony of these flowers. Though deeply familiar to many in Japan, the term "*Higanbana*" is surprisingly modern—there is no record of its use before the *Edo* period. In ancient Sanskrit, the flower is known as *Manjushage*, a name meaning "a celestial blossom," suggesting that this flower was believed to bloom in the heavens. From ancient times to the present, its ethereal beauty has continued to shine, stirring hearts across generations. In Japan, spider lilies often grow along rice field edges and near cemeteries—a placement both poetic and practical. Their roots are known to help firm the soil and, due to their toxicity, they deter weeds, moles, and mice, serving as natural guardians of the land. Autumn also brings to mind the comforting tradition of sharing *botamochi* or *ohagi*—sweet rice cakes enveloped in red bean paste. Though the names vary by region, the treats are essentially the same. Rich in symbolism, these confections reflect the deep relationship between nature and Japanese culture. The rice represents a prayer for a bountiful harvest, while the red beans are

believed to ward off evil spirits. The seasonal names carry deeper meaning as well: in spring, the treat is called *botamochi*, after the peony (*botan*), a large, round flower; in autumn, it's called *ohagi*, after the bush clover (*hagi*), which is smaller and more delicate—thus, the shape of the sweets traditionally echoes the form of each flower. *Botamochi* is round and generous, while *ohagi* is smaller, slightly oval, like a miniature rice bale. On a quiet autumn evening, gathered around a soft, flickering light with a plate of *ohagi*, one may find a moment of deep contentment. As the changing seasons gently color the world around us, there are moments of quietude when one finds a deep sense of contentment simply by reflecting upon the beauty of the landscape. During the equinoctial week, may you follow the time-honored traditions to ward off ill fortune and welcome days of peace and well-being.

Director Hosokawa



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【Editorial and Publishing Office】

Hiro Community Development Center

〒737-0112

2-1-3 Hiro Koshingai Kure-City

☎ 71-2151

No 344

Population of HIRO

As of the end of June,

compared to May

Total 42,244 (−26)


OM E N 20,448 (±0)

●WOMEN 21,796 (−26)

73-5034

"Tonight, let's gaze at the moon with the rabbit."

All social interaction, by its very nature, demands a degree of falsehood. The wisest way to live is to quietly scorn conventions—yet never live in a way that contradicts them. The most intelligent life is one that looks down on the habits of its time, yet never violates a single one of them.



Ryunosuke Akutagawa

Information from Hiro C.D.C.

Registration starts on Sep. 20th (Sat)

① Art of Elegant Penmanship Calligraphy

Ready to elevate your handwriting? Join us for a two-day brush pen workshop where you'll learn how to beautifully write greetings, gift envelopes, and more with style and grace.

Who: Adults 18+ (must attend both sessions)

When: Tue Oct 21 & 28 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Where: Room 601, 6F-Hiro Civic Center

Fee: ¥1,300 **Capacity:** 15 participants (first come, first served)



Adult Course

② Hands-On Baking for Kids

Shape the dough and bake your own bread! Let your child experience the fun of bread-making while having a great time. We'll be making delicious **Baked CURRY BREAD** entirely from scratch!"

Who: 1st~9th graders (3rd grade and below must be accompanied by an adult)


When: Sat Oct 25 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Where: Room 603, 6F-Hiro Civic Center

Fee: ¥1,800 **1st~9th graders**

(no additional fee for guardian participation)

Capacity: 12 kids (first come, first served)



③ Pickleball

The sport everyone's talking about! Fun, social and great for all ages. Come try out pickleball, America's fastest growing sport! Easy to learn rules and a moderate amount of cardio, it's great for all fitness levels and ages. Whether you're a complete beginner or just curious, give it a try!

Who: Adults 18+ (kids welcome with adult)

When: Sun Oct 12 & 26 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Where: Room 701, 6F-Hiro Civic Center

Fee: ¥600 **Adult Course**

Capacity: 8 participants (first come, first served)



Information from HIRO Sports Association

66th Hiro Townspeople Softball Tournament

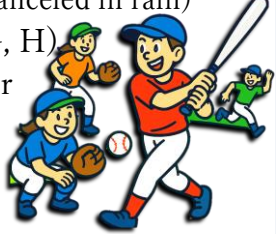
Date & Time: Sun Oct 5th at 8:30 AM (canceled in rain)

Location: Nijimura Park (Courts E, F, G, H)

Eligibility: Participants should be male or female residents of the Hiro district, and in principle, teams should be formed within each neighborhood association. However, if multiple associations agree, they may form a joint team. Even if a neighborhood association does not have enough members, it can still enter. *Note: Participation by high school students and younger is not allowed, except for evening school students aged 18 and over.

Rules & Regulations: 2025 Japan Softball Association rules.

Entry Fee: ¥2,500 per team (due upon registration). Fees are non-refundable, even if canceled.



Registration Details Period: Wed Sep 10 – Wed Sep 24

Deadline: Submission by 5:00 PM on the final day.

Location: Hiro Sports Association Office (☎: 71-2151)

Managers' Meeting: Wed Oct 1st 6:30 PM *Be Punctual

Venue: Room 501 Hiro Community Development Center

23rd Hiro Town Mini-Basketball Tournament

Date & Time: Sun Oct 12th, 9:00 AM start

Location: Shishinyo Oak Arena (Kure City Gymnasium)

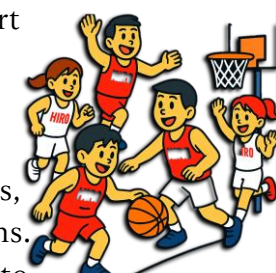
Eligibility: Elementary school teams from the *Hiro* district and nearby regions, as well as invited elementary school teams.

How to Apply: Submit your application to Hiro Sports Association Office by Fri Sep 12th.

☎: 71-2151 FAX: 73-5034

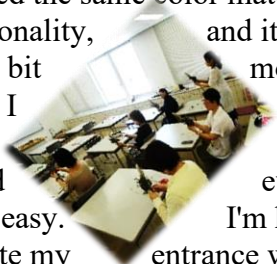
Inquiries: Hiro Sports Association Basketball Division

Kiyonobu Tsubokawa ☎ 090-1353-3916



Thank You for Your Feedback! Early Summer Standing Swag

○It was my first time doing a Standing Swag so it was great. ○I really loved the arrangement—it felt very much like early summer. ○It was my first time making a standing swag, so I was really looking forward to the class. Even though we all used the same color materials, everyone's creation had its own personality, and it was fun to see each other's work. ○It was a bit more challenging than the usual swag style, but I had a great time! ○I was worried it might be difficult, but the teacher explained everything so clearly that it turned out to be easy. I'm happy to have something seasonal to decorate my entrance with! ○Wrapping the wire was a bit tricky, but I managed to finish it—and it turned out beautifully! I'm so happy with the result. ○I always enjoy taking part in these workshops. Thank you so much! ○I had fun and ended up with a lovely swag. I'm very satisfied. ○Thanks to the teacher's calm and gentle guidance, I made a wonderful swag. It was such a peaceful and enjoyable time. Thank you! It was a refreshing and fun experience. ○I'd love to make arrangements using seasonal materials again. I'm very satisfied with this workshop! ○At my age, I've started worrying about my bone density, so I really appreciated learning about how to use calcium in everyday cooking. It was fun and informative—thank you! ○I enjoyed learning a lot!



Announcement from Elderly Support Division

1. Smartphone Workshop: Learn to Use the 'Minchalle' App

Kure City's Elderly Support Division is offering a smartphone workshop on "Minchalle", a free app that helps prevent frailty by promoting healthy routines through group support. Seniors team up to track steps and share photos, building exercise habits together in a fun, encouraging way.

Who's eligible? Seniors (65+) in Kure City with *Smartphones* who can join 2 sessions.

Session 1: Sat Sep 27 ①10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

②1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Session 2: Sat Oct 4 ①10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

②1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Location: Room 601, 6F, Hiro Civic Center

Capacity: First 20 people for both ① & ② (first come, first served)

Registration: Begins Wed Aug 20, by phone

Fee: Free of charge (participants cover their own data usage)

Questions? Elderly Support Division at ☎ 25-3149



2. "Sukoyaka Salon": Weekly Social & Wellness Gatherings

To reduce isolation & promote wellbeing, Kure City offers "Sukoyaka Salon," a space where seniors can enjoy activities like singing & brain games. The program fosters connection, joy, & health, though participation may be limited for safety based on Individual health.

Eligibility: Seniors (65+) in Kure City

Note: For safety reasons, participation may not be possible depending on individual health conditions.

Fee: ¥100/session, plus actual costs depending on activities.

○ **Tuesday Course** **Capacity:** 30 **Location:** Hiro Civic Center 6F

Dates: Oct 14 – Mar 17, every Tue, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

○ **Wednesday Course** **Capacity:** 40 **Location:** Hiro Civic Center 7F

Dates: Oct 15 – Mar 25, every Wed, 1:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Application: Apply directly at each Civic Center, Elderly Support Division, and Various regional Comprehensive Support Centers within Kure City between Fri Aug 8 & Mon Sep 1 at city civic center, Elderly Support Division, or designated elder consultation offices in Kure (Phone applications not accepted; application form required. Selection may be made if dem& exceeds capacity.)

Questions? Department of Senior Services at ☎ 25-3104



Announcement from the East Health Center Health & Fitness Assessment Event

Date & Time: Tue Sep 9th 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM

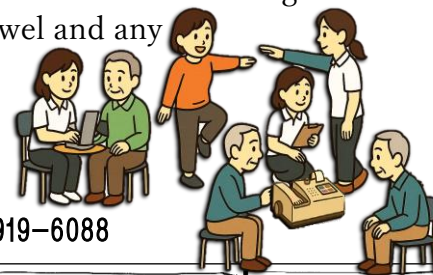
Location: Hiro Civic Center, 3F Hall

Fitness Assessment Items Include:

- *Blood Pressure, Height, Weight, Body Fat Percentage, Bone Density, Grip Strength
- *One-Leg Standing Test (Eyes Open) – measures balance
- *Functional Reach – assesses dynamic balance
- *10-Meter Walk Test – measures walking speed and leg strength
- *Timed Up and Go (TUG) – time to stand, walk, and sit

Important Notes: Please wear comfortable clothing suitable for physical activity. Bring a towel and any personal items you may need. Please sign in at the reception desk for recreational insurance coverage.

Contact: Mr. Hori at ☎ 080-1919-6088



Our office is normally closed on 4th Monday
September ☞ Monday 22nd

Information from Hiro Library

Operating Hours: 9:30 AM – 8:00 PM

Closed on Thursdays and National Holidays

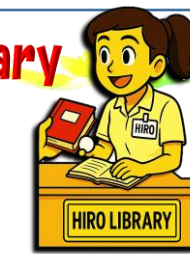
September closure days : 4・11・15・18・23

Special September Closures:

Kure City Libraries will be closed for *Inventory* ☎ 71-7470

Maintenance from Thu Sep 25th, through Thu Oct 2nd

During this period, returns can be made at the book drop located at the entrance of Hiro Civic Center. Kindly refrain from returning *oversized picture books* via the book drop. Additionally, please note that the library will not host its regular Picture book reading session (*Ehon-kai*) in September. We appreciate your understanding and apologize for any inconvenience caused. Thank you.



Information from HIRO Collaboration Center

Kure-Talk: Let's Chat About Your Aspirations About Kure City.

Have you ever thought, "I want to engage more with my community," or "I have ideas, but I'm not sure where to start"? Let's start with a conversation! By talking, you might find the inspiration or direction you've been searching for. It's a relaxed gathering, so feel free to join us!

Date & Time: Fri Sep 26th, 10:00 - 11:30

(You can join or leave anytime during the session.)

Venue: Hiro Kyōdō Center (Hiro Civic Center, 4F)

Participants: Residents of Kure City

Registration: Not required **Fee:** Free

Contact: Kure Kyōdō Center

Operating Hours: Tue-Sat, 9:00-20:00 / Sun & Holidays, 9:00-17:00

☎ 25-5602 Closed Mondays (If a holiday the next day.)



Editorial Note Manjushaka: A Song of Sacred Beauty

Among *Momoe Yamaguchi*'s many memorable songs, one stands apart for its haunting beauty: *Manjūshaka* (1978). The title, written with the kanji “曼殊沙華,” is usually read as *Manjushage*, the Japanese name for the red spider lily. Yet in this song, it's pronounced as *Manjūshaka*—a subtle but deliberate shift that reveals deeper meaning. *Manjūshaka*, a word rooted in Sanskrit, refers to a beautiful flower said to bloom in the heavens. While *Manjushage* is the common reading, *Manjūshaka* is used in Buddhist sutras and chants, where it conveys a sacred and solemn tone. *Yamaguchi* likely chose it for its mystical resonance and spiritual weight. The lyrics mirror the flower's symbolism with emotional depth, evoking separation, reunion, passion, and sorrow. Through its elevated name, the spider lily becomes more than a flower—it becomes a symbol of enduring love and impermanence. Written by lyricist *Yoko Aki* and composed by *Ryudo Uzaki*, *Manjūshaka* is a work of quiet power. It remains a poignant loss that *Momoe Yamaguchi* retired at the age of just 21. ㊦

