



4月と言えば桜の季節ですね。今年は3月に晴天が続いたため、県内の桜は例年より5日早い3月30日に開花しましたが、あいにく見ごろとなる4月7日に荒天に見舞われました。しかし、石川の桜は嵐にも負けませんでした！桜の花は散らさずに残り、翌日には兼六園など県内の桜の名所は花見客で大いに賑わいました。

また、4月と言えば始まりの季節でもあります。荒天から一転、晴天に恵まれた4月8日、金沢や白山、野々市各市の市立小・中学校で入学式が行われ、晴れやかな表情を浮かべた新1年生たちが元氣よく学校の門をくぐりました。金沢や白山、野々市各市以外の小中学校では、入学式は4月5日に行われており、この日で県内すべての公立小中学校で新学期が始まりました。金沢新入生は環境も変わり期待と不安が胸がいっぱいでしょうが、元氣に学んでもらいたいですね。そしてこの春、能登有料道路が無料化され、「ふるさと紀行『のと里山海道』」として生まれ変わりました。「ふるさと紀行『のと里山海道』」の愛称は公募により決まったものです。2年後に北陸新幹線の金沢開業を控え、石川県を訪れた観光客の方々に石川県全体を楽しんでもらえる準備が整いつつあります。

最後にうれしいお知らせです。4月1日、本県出身の大スター松井秀喜さんが国民栄誉賞を受賞することが決定しました。松井選手の出身地である能美市では、市役所にさっそくお祝いの懸垂幕を掲げたそうです。桜の開花や松井選手の国民栄誉賞の受賞決定など、うれしいニュースでいっぱいの石川県です。

今回の新聞情報

- (1)桜散らず「ほっ」 兼六園人並み戻る
<http://www.hokkoku.co.jp/subpage/H20130409103.htm>
- (2)入学式:1年生、青空も歓迎 県内全公立小中で新学期に
<http://www.hokkoku.co.jp/subpage/E20120409001.htm>
- (3)能登有料道路が無料化 名称「のと里山海道」
<http://www.47news.jp/CN/201303/CN2013033101001684.html>
- (4)「石川の誇りだ」松井氏の国民栄誉賞受賞に県民湧く
<http://www.hokkoku.co.jp/subpage/H20130402101.htm>

※次回は5月末にお届けする予定です。
* The next edition is scheduled to be issued at the end of May.

April is the cherry blossom season. This year because of the good weather in March, the cherry blossoms started to bloom on March 30, five days earlier than usual. Unfortunately, the weather turned foul on April 7, which was considered the best time to view these beautiful trees. However, the cherry blossoms of Ishikawa resiliently survived the storm! The flowers did not fall, letting crowds of tourists flock to famous cherry blossom viewing spots the next day.

April is also thought of as a season to commence new things. On sunny April 8, which came a day after stormy weather, entrance ceremonies took place in municipal elementary and junior high schools in the cities of Kanazawa, Hakusan, and Nonoichi. First-year students eagerly passed their schools' gates with great expectations. The entrance ceremonies for schools in other cities were carried out earlier on April 5, so by April 8, the new academic year had started off for all public elementary and junior high schools in Ishikawa. We hope that these new students will be successful in their studies and will achieve their many goals in spite of their anxieties and change in environment.

This spring the Noto Yūryō Toll Road was made free of charge and renamed to be the "Noto Satoyama Kaidō". The new name was selected from submissions contributed by the public. This new toll-free policy, as well as other measures, was implemented in order to entice more tourism around the whole of the prefecture in preparation for the start of Shinkansen service to Kanazawa in two years.

And finally, we have more good news. On April 1, it was decided that Matsui Hideki, the big star who was born in Ishikawa, will receive the People's Honor Award. The administration of Matsui's hometown Nomi has already placed a celebratory banner on the city hall. It looks like Ishikawa is doing well this spring.

Recent News

(1) On April 6 and 7, Ishikawa Prefecture had stormy weather but fortunately there were no injuries due to the strong winds. The winds were not as strong as expected and the cherry blossoms survived the storm without falling and the day after, visitors were back in Kenrokuen Garden. There was concern that the cherry blossoms would be blown away with the storm, but according to information from the Kanazawa Castle Park and Kenrokuen Management Center, the wind had almost no influence on the flowers.

(2) The bad weather that continued until April 7 completely changed on April 8, the day on which elementary and junior high school entrance ceremonies were held in Kanazawa, Hakusan, and Nonoichi cities. The new students cheerfully passed through school gates under blue skies on a clear day. Entrance ceremonies for schools in other cities had been previously held so this day marked the day when the new school year had officially started for all schools of Ishikawa Prefecture.

According to the Ishikawa Prefectural Board of Education, the number of new students as of April 1 in the public primary schools was 10,063 students while in junior high schools, the number of new students was 10,959. On this day, the entrance ceremonies for senior high schools in Ishikawa also took place. According to the Prefectural BOE, the number of new full-time senior high school students was 7,794 students, 251 less than the previous year.

(3) The entire stretch of the Noto Yūryō Toll Road (length 82.9 km) connecting Kanazawa and the town of Anamizu in the Noto Peninsula became toll-free and was renamed to the Noto Satoyama Kaidō on March 31. The road came into full operation in 1982 after an investment of about 46.1 billion yen. Local residents have long been demanding that the road be made toll-free. This request was fulfilled after the prefecture agreed to renounce its claims to prefectural highway public corporations amounting to some 13.5 billion yen. The prefecture expects that the amount of traffic on the road will increase by 1.5 to 2 times. In the meantime, Governor Tanimoto expressed hope that "more visitors from the capital region will travel to the Noto after the Shinkansen reaches Kanazawa in two years."

(4) The Pride of Ishikawa, Ishikawa Citizens Proud of Mr. Matsui's National Honor Award. On April 1, it was decided that baseball player Matsui Hideki, who played for the Japanese professional baseball team "Giants" in the major leagues, will receive the National Honor Award. Hometown of Nomi has begun consideration of presenting him with the Honorary Citizen title. In celebration of his reception of this award, Nomi City Hall is also making a big poster that will be hung in the city hall next week. On April 2, until the poster is ready, a temporary handmade poster made by the employees of the city hall will be hung in its stead in the lobby.

詳しい情報のアクセス先 For more information, please access the following links:

- (1) 財団法人石川県国際交流協会 IFIE (Ishikawa Foundation for International Exchange) <http://www.ifie.or.jp/index.php>
- (2) ほっと石川旅ねっと Hot Ishikawa Tabi-Net (Ishikawa Prefecture Tourism Guide) <http://www.hot-ishikawa.jp/>
- (3) 石川県 Ishikawa Prefectural Government Official Website <http://www.pref.ishikawa.lg.jp/>
- (4) 首相官邸 Prime Minister of JAPAN (Countermeasures for the Great East Japan Earthquake) <http://www.kantei.go.jp/>

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