



Various festivals are held in many parts of the Tohoku region during this beautiful, autumn foliage season. Members of the Kamisawa Uchihayashi Hozonkai (Kamisawa Festival Music Preservation Society) play the drums at the opening ceremony of “Tohoku Marche”. The event was held on October 19 at the Shinryo-Oki Park in Kesenuma City, Miyagi Prefecture.

Affected Companies Attempt Comeback

Two years and eight months have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake. The great catastrophe, which included an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident, caused severe damages in the Tohoku area. Most of the businesses in the disaster-hit areas were small to medium-sized companies and caused innumerable damages.

The Cabinet Office announced in 2012 that the number of businesses decreased to approximately 67,000 from the original pre-quake number of more than 80,000, in the three disaster-hit regions of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima Prefecture. Although the number of businesses is gradually recovering compared with the number shortly after the earthquake, businesses have plunged by 18% along with the decrease of employees in the area. This further encouraged the outflow of population in the devastated coastal areas, where depopulation was already an issue, and the urgency for reestablishment and employment has become the utmost concern. Amidst such difficult situations, some businesses and sole proprietors have stayed in the affected areas in hope to reconstruct their hometown.

Thanks to your donations, Civic Force has supported various activities in the Tohoku region. We established the Tohoku Kyoeki Toshi Kikin (Tohoku Common Benefit Investment Fund) in 2011 to support local industries; as well as promoting the “Tohoku Marche™” which encourages local businesses and sole proprietors of the disaster-struck areas.

This month, we will introduce “the third Tohoku Marche™,” which was held in Kesenuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, in October.

“Tohoku Marche™” was the first municipal reconstruction event held in Kesenuma City in November, 2011 after the Great East Japan Earthquake. It was held as a partner project of Network Orange, a local non-profit organization, and Civic Force. The event was aimed to “develop a town more attractive than before the earthquake” and gave shop owners of the Sanriku coastal areas whose shops were severely damaged by the earthquake, a chance to open stalls. As a result, more than 1,000 people visited the first Marche. A unique feature of this Marche is that it provides a preliminary workshop to the participants on how to start a business including ways to verify it and set sales targets. The second Tohoku Marche™ held in August, 2012 attracted 3,600 visitors and drew attention as an event for reconstructing the town.

The Tohoku Marche™, now in its third year, was supported by L’Occitane, a France cosmetic company. On the next day of the Marche, the Entrepreneur Contest was held to progress the existing initiatives. A top winner will be invited to the Provence region in Southern France, a birth place of “marche,” and will attend a workshop to open a stall at a real French “marche”.

From Tohoku to the World: Stall to Open in Southern France Next Spring



The third "Tohoku Marche™" was held in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, on October 19, 2013. "Tohoku Marche™" has become an annual event since it first took place in November, 2011, when many disaster-affected producers were still having anxieties such as losing shops. Working with Registered Smaller Enterprise Consultants to demonstrate business strategies which would solve their challenges and would become useful to start new businesses, "Tohoku Marche™" is giving them power to go forward.

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Monthly Topic

Civic Force selects hot topics among various projects of this month.

Launching Ceremony for Full-scale Flight of Multi-purpose Medical Helicopters

A launching ceremony for multi-purpose medical helicopters was held on October 23 by All Round Helicopters (ARH), partner organization of Civic Force in Kesennuma City, Miyagi prefecture. A large number of relevant persons were present; including the mayor of Kesennuma City and representatives attending on behalf of Mr. Itsunori Onodera, Minister of Defense; and mayors of Ichinoseki City and Minamisanriku Town. Also, many press reporters came to the ceremony for media coverage. Going forward, we will work to further cooperate with more medical institutions.

Civic Force Joined Kesennuma City for Tsunami-disaster Drill on November 2

Based on the unprecedented experience of hardships by the disaster in 2011, Kesennuma City of Miyagi Prefecture established the 5th of November as the "Tsunami disaster Drill Day" in June, 2011 to prepare for potential large-scale earthquakes and tsunamis in the future. In accordance with the occasion, a comprehensive tsunami disaster drill was carried out on November 2 with Civic Force participating.

Among the drills were setting up and operating the disaster response headquarters, conducting P. R. activities including warnings for evacuation, provision of emergency food, supplying water, and triage. As for Civic Force, we executed practices in the fields of transporting relief supplies; and collecting and communicating information in cooperation with ARH and others. Our activities involved an aerial survey of damages caused by the tsunami and transporting supplies by air. Civic Force has already concluded the "Agreement on Practical Use of Rotor Planes (helicopters)", a tripartite agreement, with ARH and Kesennuma City; which enables us to take action immediately in case of emergency.

◆ Third Tohoku Marche™ & Entrepreneur Contest

Comments from the representatives of the top two groups

◆ Highest Award: Hodoru

We lost our houses by the tsunami but we are thankful that we are alive. We wanted to reciprocate acts of kindness extended by our relatives and friends.

We found some kimono cloths in the one and only undamaged storehouse and started to make small Japanese items such as book jackets, pin cushions, and small bags out of those cloths. "Hodoru" means "to become warm and cozy" in Kesennuma dialect. The two of us started this business so the quantity we can make is limited. The preliminary workshop of Tohoku Marche™, including the lecture on POP, was very informative for people like us who knew nothing about business. We were so surprised to receive this award and we are both very anxious and excited to see how French people will react to our products. [Photo: Ms. Shimizu (right), Ms. Kida (left)]



◆ Second Highest Award: Kanedai Co., Ltd.

Before the March 11 Earthquake, we used to distribute seafood including deep sea red crabs nationwide, but we lost our factories and storages by the tsunami and our head office completely destroyed by the earthquake. Although our sales went down by 80 percent, we worked to reconstruct our business by opening a temporary shop and by starting to sell our products at major department stores in Tokyo. We would like to develop and expand our business going forward. L' Occitane is one of the companies we aspire to be, so when I heard that L' Occitane will be supporting Tohoku Marche™, the event we had participated the year before, we decided to make a presentation hoping to get in touch with them somehow. Next spring, I want to learn as much as I can by opening our stall in France. (Photo: Mr. Kumagai)





Backing Potential Entrepreneurs to Inspire Towns

“With or without disability everybody is a leading character for revitalizing the town,” is the basic philosophy of “Network Orange”, an NPO based in Kesennuma City. We support social participation of disabled people and are continuously working to create a comfortable city for everyone to live in.

The Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011 destroyed two offices in Kesennuma City, but the strong will and energy of our staff members enabled us to restart the business in only 12 days after the earthquake. As if we were emerging from darkness, we have focused on environmental improvement under the concept, “Support to help psychological recovery”. Our activities include supporting devastated people and opening “Cha no ki (tree of tea)”, a community café.

“Let’s create it together! Tohoku Marche™” is the hands-on business school first held in November 2011, which we endeavored to start up after the earthquake in cooperation with Civic Force. We have been continuing to work on this project with the expectation that shop owners would find potential customers and gain experiences to start businesses by opening shops at this event. This year as many as 24 shops participated. Opening shops, including the preliminary workshop, were not easy tasks, but in the post-event review meeting, we heard their happy voices such as, “I was able to improve myself by taking part in this event,” and “I found out the reality of business through actual experience.”



In addition, we organized the Entrepreneur Contest this year, awarding opportunities for training in France to top two winners. Going forward, we hope those in the fishery industry, which has been the as center of support for Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture, join Tohoku Marche™. We hope they can benefit from Tohoku Marche as well.

[Photo] Tohoku Marche™ has been providing opportunities not only for opening shops but also for learning about business in the preliminary workshops held once a month since June, 2013.



Miko Onodera, Chairperson
of “Network Orange”

Face Face

Civic Force is supported by various companies, NPOs and government.

This corner features the latest messages from our partners.

Here are some reports on what we are doing in Tohoku region, as of November 11, 2013.

Mid- to Long-Term Reconstruction Projects

Civic Force has been running several “Mid- to Long-Term Reconstruction Projects” since the summer of 2012, in order to tackle the challenges that were identified in the disaster areas during the support activities we conducted for roughly one and a half years following the earthquake disaster. Progress of each project is reported below.
<http://www.civic-force.org/emergency/higashinihon/choki/>

• Tourism Revitalization Project

— Enhancing cooperation between the public and private sectors to make Kesennuma “an attractive city for tourists”—
Civic Force has been supporting the development of strategies for “Revitalization of Tourism,” which is one of the most important challenges for the reconstruction of Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture. In July 2013 we participated in the foundation of the “Platform for Creation of Ria Coast Tourism,” a general incorporated association, and will continue to support the project as a member of the board of directors.

• Community Revive Project

— Supporting local communities in creating and reconstructing homes and jobs—

Cooperating with local NPOs and local administrations, Civic Force has continuously supported the development of new towns for disaster victims who have decided to relocate and the redevelopment of existing towns by sending specialists and providing human resource development programs.

• Dream Support Project

— Supporting local youths through scholarships and locally-developed educational programs—

Many high school students face financial difficulties as a result of the earthquake. To ensure that they can continue with their education through to university, this project provides JPY 30,000 scholarships per month for such students. This project group provided work-study programs in Miyagi and Iwate prefecture this summer. See page 4 for more information.

• Green Circle Project

— Developing a sustainable forest industry and effective utilization of woody biomass—

This program aims to promote a sustainable society by utilizing woody biomass. Together with local companies and other NPOs, Civic Force is supporting the training of individuals engaged in forestry, management of lumber yards, and trial use of community currency.

• Wings for Life Project

— Supporting helicopter transport service for emergency medical purposes—

See page 2 for more information.

Brief Report on Our NPO

We have been supporting projects that are run by the disaster victims for the reconstruction of their local communities. Since April 2011, Civic Force has supported 37 organizations and 49 projects. As of November 2013, we are supporting five projects. <http://www.civic-force.org/emergency/higashinihon/npo/>

- Platform for Creation of Ria Coast Tourism × Civic Force: Embodying the strategy of tourism in Kesennuma City, the organization leads pilot projects.
- nina Jinseki Kogen × Civic Force: The organization encourages evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture to relocate to Hiroshima Prefecture and supports them to sustain their community in the new environment.
- Network Orange × Civic Force: The organization held Tohoku Marche and Entrepreneur Contest on October 19 and 20. See page 2 for more information.
- Mori wa Umi no Koibito × Civic Force
The project promotes environmental education to review how human beings can coexist with nature.
- Kesennuma Future Plan Osawa Team × Civic Force
Specialists in the fields of urban design and architecture support group relocation and reconstruction projects.

What we are doing
in Tohoku
NOW

Meeting for Scholarship Students

“Dream Support Project” awards scholarships to devastated students in Tohoku area. A monitoring and exchange meeting for the scholarship students was held on November 2 in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, where 12 students talked about how to use the scholarships and made suggestions for improving the scholarship system. The students told what they were striving for and related experiences such as “Our family house was completely demolished and we faced finance difficulties, but I used the scholarship to obtain a qualification and got a job,” and “Thanks to the scholarship I am able to devote myself to club activities.” The meeting provided an opportunity for scholarship students to meet each other for the first time, and many said it was good to see their fellow scholarship students who were facing similar difficulties after the earthquake.”



Conference with Fukuroi and Shiojiri Cities

Civic Force was awarded subsidy for the “FY2013 Project for Promoting Wide-Area Cooperation between Communities,” which is led by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism and prepares against future disasters in ordinary times. On October 25, the first three-party conference between Civic Force, Shiojiri City in Nagano Prefecture and Fukuroi City in Shizuoka Prefecture was held in Shiojiri, where they discussed division of roles and policies for the future.

Lecture at JMSDF Staff College

Civic Force gives lectures in various places on its support activities for devastated areas as well as activities against potential future disasters. On October 23, Kensuke Onishi, Chairperson of Civic Force, gave a lecture titled “Current Status of NGOs and Future Challenges” at Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Staff College, discussing how private organizations and military forces can cooperate in times of disasters.

Donations through “Bokin-ken (Donation Ticket)” can be made until November 24

Civic Force was selected as one of the recipients of donations through “Bokin-ken,” a fund-raising system sponsored by RYOHIN KEIKAKU, the company that created the MUJI brand. Donations via Bokin-ken can be made in units of ¥10 or ¥100 on the RYOHIN KEIKAKU online store (the online store of MUJI) until November 24.

Start your support with only 33 yen per day

We must be ready for the “next one”. Donate a fixed amount each month in units 1,000 yen to be a monthly supporter and you can participate in activities to prepare for a large scale disaster. Payment can be made through a bank transfer to Civic Force. Our account numbers are as follows:

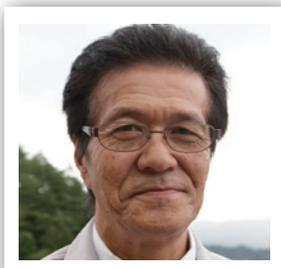
- Bank: Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Aoyama Branch, savings account No. 6953964
- JP Bank : 00140-6-361805
- Credit card: Please check the “Donate Now!” section on the Civic Force website. https://bokinchan2.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php?bokin_type=donation

The following page provides our Monthly Report which comes out around 11th of each month. <http://civic-force.org/news/monthly/>



A Message from Disaster

Two years and eight months have passed since Civic Force started activities to support reconstruction in the disaster-hit areas of northeastern Japan. This section showcases the people who live in the affected areas and continue positive efforts towards recovery. For this issue, we interviewed Mr. Masayuki Sakai, president of Kesennuma Fukko Inc., whose company takes care of the administrative work of temporary housings in Kesennuma City, Miyagi Prefecture.



In September, 2011, after the disaster, I established Kesennuma Fukko Inc. and have been operating variety of businesses such as, reception and distribution of relief goods, maintenance of temporary housings, providing services for temporary housing residents, and sales of temporary housings.

Before the disaster, I was a board member of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry while running a dry cleaners shop in Kesennuma City. For a few months after the disaster, I was engaged in the management of an evacuation center in Kesennuma City where I received and distributed relief goods from members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and acquaintances all over the country. I worked to meet the needs of those taking shelter at places with lesser help by receiving information gathered through local relationships. Later, I set up Kesennuma Fukko Inc. by request from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, etc. to change the situation of Kesennuma City where reconstruction was not progressing as expected.

One of the roles of our company is to connect the supports that are offered to the disaster-affected areas. Since the disaster, I have continued activities only capable by a local person who knows Kesennuma City from old times, as I saw cases, in which appropriate aids were not offered due to lacking knowledge of the area. Now my focus is on “Rental-bin”, a service in which users can rent trucks with a driver on a pay-by-the-hour system. While the needs for maintenance work on temporary housings are decreasing, the needs for moving out from temporary housings will increase going forward. I hope to expand our business irrespective of scope of services and create employment.