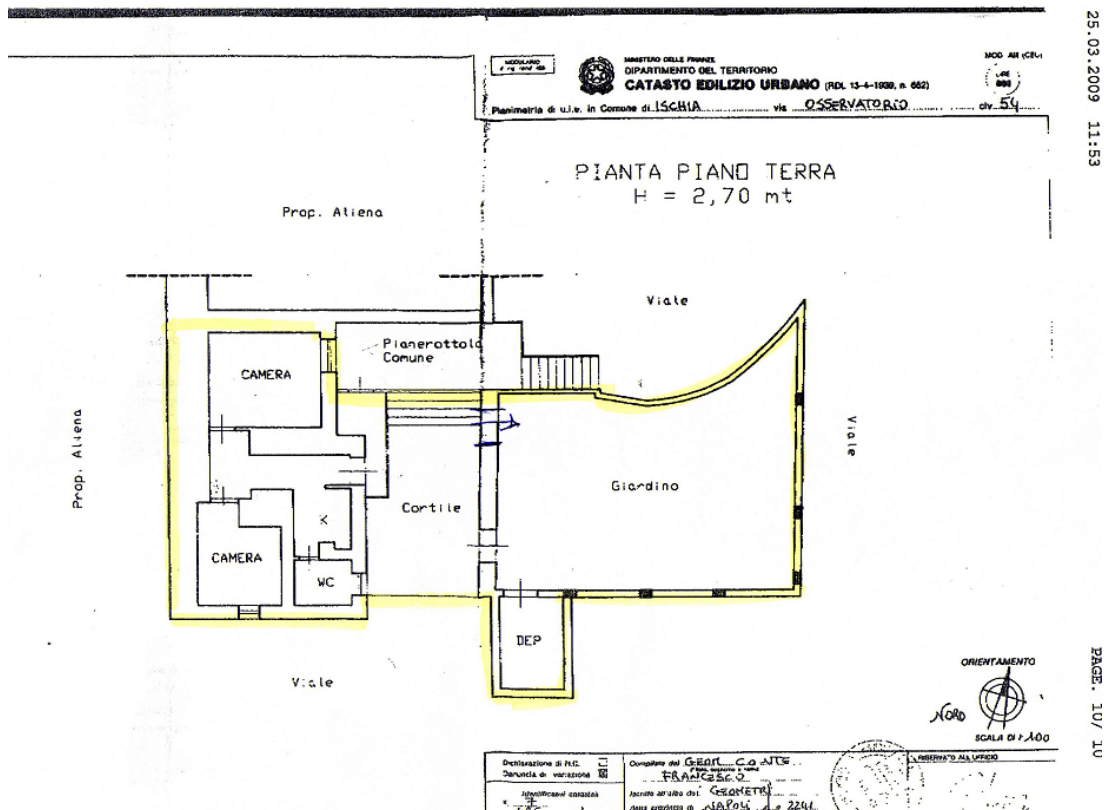


# 前橋瓦版

## Maebashi Kawaraban

Monthly newsletter for foreigners



# MAY 2010



前橋瓦版  
**Maebashi**  
**Kawaraban**

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Editor:

Dario De Leo

## Editor's note

*Good May lads.*

*Maebashi Kawaraban welcomes you this month with a cautionary tale, in the form of a newspaper excerpt that I have personally selected from the 2008 Italian press publications for your delight. The article offers an interesting insight into the mindset of a particularly upset Sudanese man whose inflexibility over trespassing boundaries forced him to take measures that may be judged quite severe by most people, and maybe just right by Jack Bauer on acid. The title goes like "Bicycle thief blown by bazooka", and here's the excerpt:*

*"An angry bicycle owner shot and killed the man who stole his propriety using a rocked propelled grenade launcher. The alleged thief was running away on foot from the crowd of bystanders, and had already abandoned the vehicle before being blown to death. His killer, who pleaded self-defense, was instead ruled guilty of murder by the Khartoum criminal court"*

*Don't try this at home....*

# VEHICLE TAX



May's sunny days won't just bring you lots of holidays, but also good news for people who love bad news. If you own a car at least since April the 1<sup>st</sup>, you're going to have to pay loads of money before the end of May. Here is a breakdown of how much the vehicle tax cost, depending on engine size and car type: [http://www.pref.gunma.jp/cts/PortalServlet?DISPLAY\\_ID=DIRECT&NEXT\\_DISPLAY\\_ID=U000004&CONTENTS\\_ID=33572](http://www.pref.gunma.jp/cts/PortalServlet?DISPLAY_ID=DIRECT&NEXT_DISPLAY_ID=U000004&CONTENTS_ID=33572). The payment deadline is due on Monday June 1<sup>st</sup>, and at

the beginning of May all the car owners will start receiving the payment notices. You can then pay it at any convenience store, bank or post office.

## Folk Tales of Maebashi Presents:

What will the following story teach us? Well, I would say that the author wants to warn people about the dangers of marring wild animals such as foxes or raccoons, because you never know how long they are going to stick around, and they also tend to be easily driven away by strangers. This is just my opinion anyway, although I would

be very interested in knowing what do the Kawaraban readers think.

## The Fox Wife

Once upon a time, there was a young farmer who worked on the fertile fields near his house he lived by himself, since his parents had passed away when he was very young. In the village, a big festival was held at the Inari Temple every autumn. Many people came from the neighboring villages to join the festival. The young man met a pretty woman at the festival. One day, the young man



said to her: “will you be my wife? All I have is a small house and small fields. If you marry me, I will do my utmost to love you and protect you as long as I live.” The woman replied: “If it pleases you, I’ll be happy to marry you.” They married, and she came to live in the village. She was a good worker. The couple worked very hard, and their harvest of rice and vegetables grew bigger every year. Two boys were born to the young couple. One day a strange rumor that the wife was a fox began to spread all over the village. The villagers rushed to the farmer’s house exclaiming: “How awful! Your wife was once a fox and she has deceived you!” The young man was astonished and said: “What on earth do you mean? My wife is not a fox. Go away and leave us alone!” However, the people took his wife away from him and their children, and they drove her out of the village. The

farmer and his children were desperately sad. It was June, and rice planting was underway. The farmer did not know what to do, as he could not work in the fields because of the two children. One beautiful moonlit night, he went outside and saw something moving in his rice field. Looking carefully, he was astonished to see that a fox was planting rice neatly in rows. The fox was singing a song in a low voice:

*“Uradona wa nikukeredo.  
Futari noko ga kawaihani,  
Honi honi, sakiyare,  
yani, honi, sakiyare”*

(Trans. “My neighbours are cruel, but I love my two sons and wish for good harvest...”)

“My darling wife,” the man was about to shout, but he could not speak through his tears. He said to himself: “Now I know you were indeed a fox, but I’ll always love you as my wife and my children’s mother.”

## Koinobori in Tatebayashi



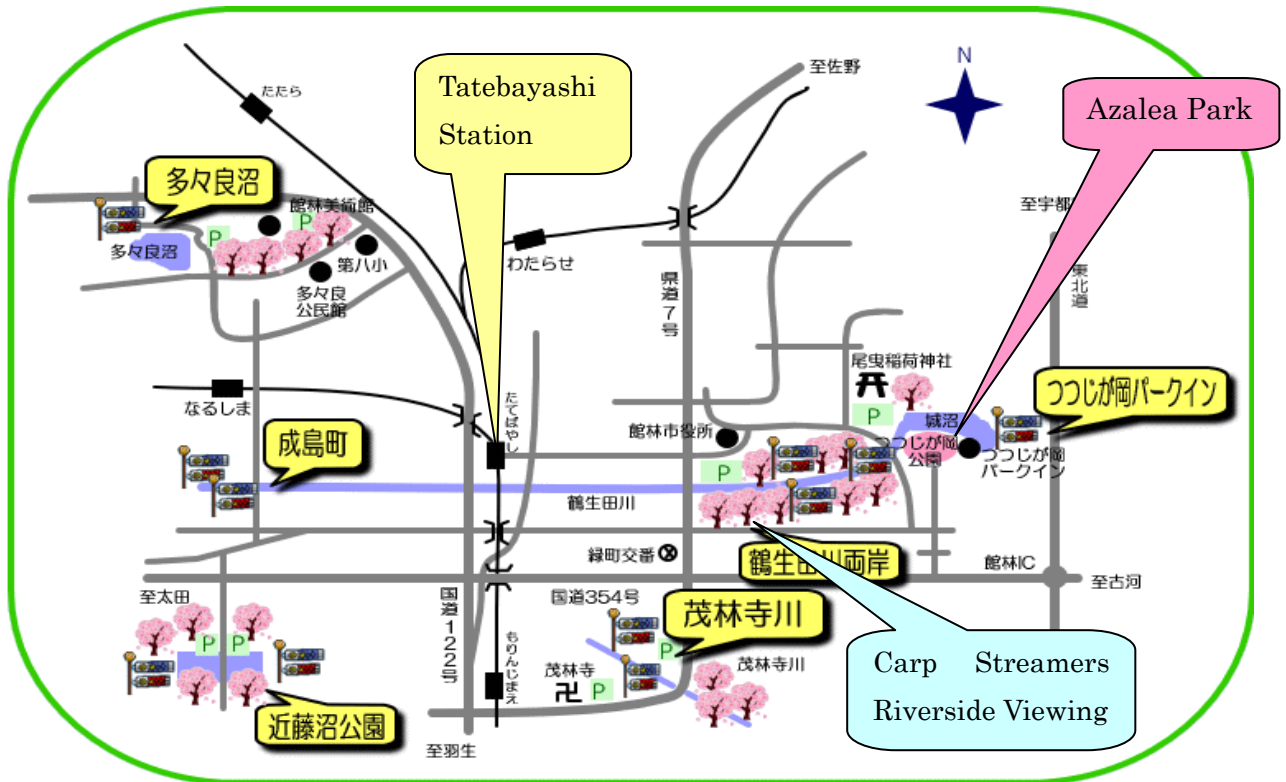
May 5<sup>th</sup> is Children’s Day, a festivity that traditionally celebrates children happiness, along with respecting their personalities. Before this day, Japanese families prepare carp shaped flags by drawing the fish patterns on cloths, and hang them outside their homes, one for each child. When the winds blows through them, the flags look like swimming carps, and that is why they are called *koinobori*, which means “carp streamers”. According to a Chinese legend, a carp that swims

upstream becomes a dragon, which makes the *koinobori* a symbol of the parent's desire for their children to grow healthy and strong like the mythological creature. Tatebayashi City and its



*Koinobori* festival have been approved as a Guinness Record in 2005 with a total of 5,283 carps streaming in the wind, mostly over the Tsurutagawa River. Since then, the City is hosting this world record event every year, and you can experience the beautiful view of over 5000 carp streamers reflected on water in 6 different venues at the 9th Tatebayashi Carp Streamer Festival, which lasts until the 10th of May. You can see a map of the best viewing spots below,

where the location are written in Japanese on a yellow background, although I have added a couple of English notes pointing out the best location and the closest station, which is 20 minutes away on foot. I also suggest you to check out the Azalea (*Tsutsuji*) Park, open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm and currently hosting the "Tatebayashi Tsutsuji Festival" until the 15th of May. The entrance fee goes from 300 to 600 yen, depending on flower conditions. Ciao belli!



## Aconselhamento para Estrangeiros

**PORTUGUESE**

- Local : Segundo andar da Prefeitura de Maebashi, outro lado do setor No.37
- Horário : Segundas-feiras das 13:00~17:00hs  
Quintas-feiras das 9:00~13:00hs
- Telefone: 027-898-5965 (direto, só nas segundas e quintas feiras)

## Consultorio para los Extranjeros

**SPANISH**

- Lugar : Segundo piso de la Municipalidad de Maebashi, mostrador del otro lado de la Ventanilla No.37
- Horario : Lunes de las 13:00~17:00hs  
Jueves de las 9:00~13:00hs
- Teléfono: 027-898-5965 (directo, sólo en el horario arriba mencionado)
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## Counselling Service for Foreigners

**ENGLISH**

- Place : Maebashi City Office 2F, counseling corner  
(the other side of No.37 counter)
- Hours : 13:00~17:00 on Monday  
9:00~13:00 on Thursday
- TEL : 027-898-5965 (directly, only during the hours mentioned above)

## 中文咨询窗口

**CHINESE**

- 地点 : 前桥市役所 2 楼 外国人咨询窗口 (37 号窗口对面)
- 時間 : 每星期一 13:00~17:00  
每星期四 9:00~13:00
- 电话 : 027-898-5965 (直拨。只限于上述时间内)