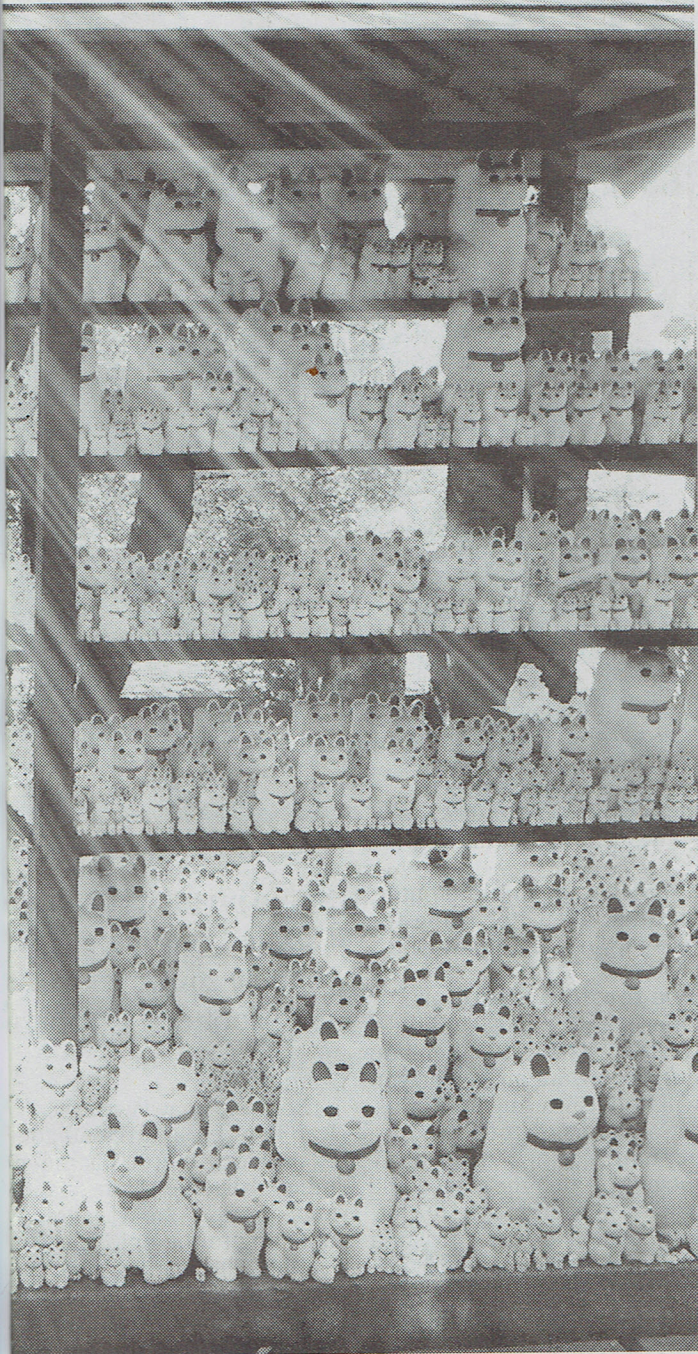
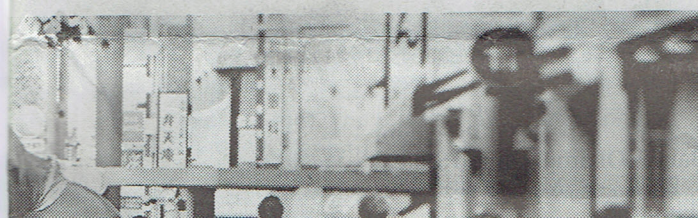


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in a happy, rainbow-colored light," a photo by Momoe Fritz, Indonesian ambassador. The image won the Grand Prize in Through Diplomats' Eyes 2014 photographic competition on The annual contest draws entries from foreign diplomatic oned in Japan and their families. The compelling images can through Wednesday at Hills Cafe at Tokyo's Roppongi Hills. then tour to cities such as Kobe and to Hokkaido.

Fritz PHOTO



Collaboration touted for recovery

# Coping with brain injuries, step by step

CHUNICHI SHIMBUN

A new facility for people with traumatic brain injuries has opened in Nakagawa Ward,

## CHUBU CONNECTION

Nagoya, to offer the kind of care that, say, traffic accident victims often need.

Unlike "jusanjo" vocational training centers or day care facilities, Challenge House Mirai Aichi aims to provide young patients a way to regain their independence by training in such basic skills as cooking and shopping.

The ultimate aim is to ensure that when patients' parents or partners pass away, they will be in a position to carry on with life independently.

A traumatic brain injury can hamper a person's speech and cognitive abilities, as well as behavior and memory. It occurs when an exterior blow creates neurological or cerebral damage. Typical causes are traffic accidents and falls, which cause bleeding or blockage in blood vessels.

One problem is that such injuries often have no external symptoms. In fact, some patients even go through life without realizing they might be suffering from a past blow.

Common symptoms include an inability to remember recent events, difficulty concentrating and an inability to control one's emotions.

Some patients develop an extreme intolerance toward others, condemning them for minor faults and making their

ki's symptoms have improved, but he still has poor short-term memory and cannot recall, for example, what he just ate or who he met earlier that day.

Even though he is living on his own now, he requires a caretaker to clean his apartment and do other household chores.

Having seen her son's struggle, Yoshiko thought that young patients "need a place that trains them how to be independent, and where they feel they belong."

Upon retirement she searched for a solution and set up Challenge House Mirai Aichi with the help of support groups for traffic accident victims. The facility's premises are above an old shop in a residential district.

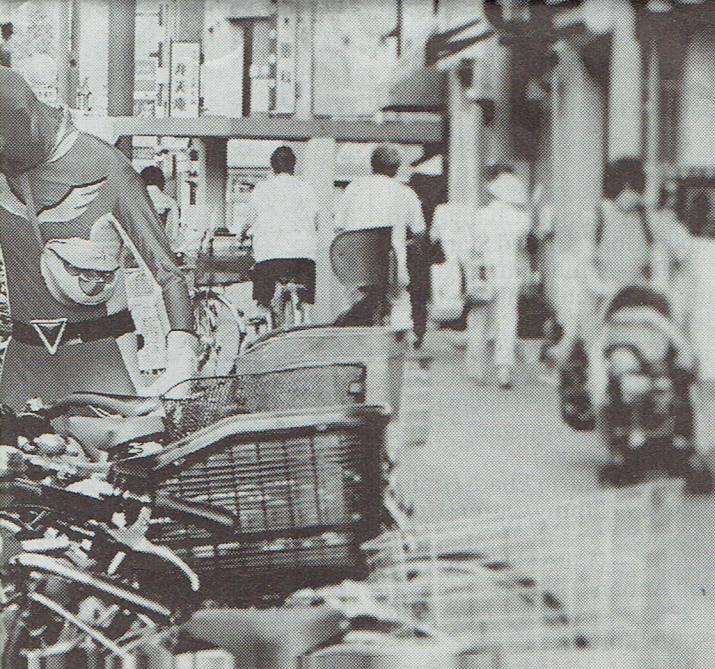
There are five people using the facility, including Kazuki. They exercise, eat together and engage in simple work, such as inserting flyers between the pages of pamphlets.

Other activities include excursions to the zoo, aquarium, supermarket or post office, and cooking meals.

Kenshiro Shiomi, 24, has been going to the facility ever since it opened. A fellow motorcyclist, he hit a car in 2006 and was in a coma for three months. At first, it seemed the 16-year-old was steadily recovering, but those around him soon realized he had cognitive problems as he could no longer read certain kanji.

He had also begun behaving strangely. He would obsessively pick up any trash he saw at the station. Whenever he saw a stranger riding a bicycle with one hand and holding an umbrella in the other he would confront the person for





**"An Ordinary Man," Prince Takamado Memorial Prize, by Roman Malyshev, attache at the Russian Embassy**  
ROMAN MALYSHEV PHOTO

cent events, difficulty concentrating and an inability to control one's emotions.

Some patients develop an extreme intolerance toward others, condemning them for minor faults and making their own reintegration with society that much harder.

The director of Mirai, Yoshiko Oyama, has experience with this. In 1992, her 19-year-old son, Kazuki, came off a motorbike after colliding with a bike left in the road by a biker gang.

He was wearing a helmet and sustained few external injuries but was in a coma for six months. He was discharged a year later after being diagnosed with a serious brain injury.

Kazuki went to a rehabilitation center affiliated with Nagoya and a "jusanjo" (vocational aid center), but being an assertive young man he was unable to accept his disability. Again and again, he wished to die.

Yoshiko began to organize the relatives of other young victims through the center and set up Japan's first support group for families of patients with traumatic brain injuries.

In the 20 years since, Kazu-

ing strangely. He would obsessively pick up any trash he saw at the station. Whenever he saw a stranger riding a bicycle with one hand and holding an umbrella in the other he would confront the person for the risk they were taking.

Shiomi was unable to associate well with other people and as a result could not stay in a jusanjo for long.

"We finally found a place for him with Mirai. He now lives in peace and we have fewer problems," said his 56-year-old mother, Kumiko.

The collaborative approach is one that Yoshiko believes the center excels in.

"I hope we can be like a family and help each other with those who experienced what we went through," said Yoshiko.

For more information about Challenge House Mirai Aichi, call 052-352-0677 or visit <http://koujinou.net>

*This section, appearing Saturdays, features topics and issues from the Chubu region covered by the Chunichi Shimbun. The original article was published Oct. 5.*

## The 6th Japan Times Bee

The Japan Times will be hosting Japan's 6th spelling bee contest on March 14, 2015. Your school is welcome to participate in The 6th Japan Times Bee.

\*In regards to eligibility requirements, please refer to the Japan Times Bee website.

Give your students a great opportunity to improve their spelling, increase their vocabulary and stimulate their aspirations.

For more information, please refer to

<http://spelling-bee.japantimes.co.jp/>



**Early Bird Deadline :  
October 15, 2014**

(After registration, schools will receive study materials from the Scripps National Spelling Bee website.)

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