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The Candle Night Newsletter--#25  
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The Candle Night Summer Solstice 2008 was extended to July 7, 2008, when the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit launched. July 7th is the Star Festival, one of the milestones of a year. In Japan, people write their wishes on a paper strip called "tanzaku" and tie them to bamboo trees decorated with many paper ornaments made of "origami." The trees were placed at homes, primary schools, and shopping areas. We saw many events related to Candle Night and the Star Festival on July 7th this year. How did you enjoy Candle Night this year?

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#### Topics

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- \*Event reports of Candle Night Summer Solstice 2008
- \*Global Warming Action Plan of Junior Chamber International Japan --'Tsuki Hotaru (moon and fireflies)'
- \*'Eco-Wave' of 8 Prefectures and Cities

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#### Event reports of Candle Night Summer Solstice 2008

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On the Candle Night website, 938 events were registered from Japan and abroad. The events varied: some enjoyed staying at home with their families and some joined events held at restaurants, shops, and model houses.

Many messages were also written on our online message board, the Candlescape. Some of them were sent from other countries.

The lights-down events were held from 8 to 10 p.m. on June 21, the solstice, and July 7, the first day of the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit. This was done in collaboration with the Japanese Ministry of the Environment. A total of 149,937 facilities all over Japan, including major landmarks, businesses, municipalities and commercial facilities joined. During the campaign, over 2,370,000 kilowatts per hour of electricity was saved, which translated into the equivalent of 925 tons of CO2. This amount is equal to the daily emission of about 64,000 households. In Sapporo City and other areas of Hokkaido, the northern island of Japan where the summit was held, over 400 facilities participated in the campaign.

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Global Warming Action Plan of Junior Chamber International Japan  
--'Tsuki Hotaru (moon and fireflies)'

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The year 2008 is the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. In Japan, various initiatives started to prevent global warming. The Junior Chamber International Japan, a member of the Junior Chamber International, with 40,000 members nationwide, also started their global warming action plan this year, calling for "just start, even from a small thing."

The plan has three action programs: encouraging people to use bicycles instead of cars; bringing one's own chopsticks to restaurants and ordering only enough food that you can eat; and calling for people to turn off their lights and TVs at home for one hour twice a month to enjoy moonlight and candlelight.

According to an estimate by JCI Japan, the lights-off programs will save 10 percent of electric consumption, meaning 0.223 kilogram of CO<sub>2</sub>. This is translated to 5 kilogram of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

These programs are found in the reports uploaded to the following website.  
<http://www.jc-kankyoku.jp/> (Only in Japanese)

On the website, everyone, including non-members, can see how much CO<sub>2</sub> they save, after entering the minutes they turn out the lights. Then, the amount they reduce will be aggregated according to prefectures and communities. The ranking can also be seen at the site. This system will help people join the program with ease. It will also encourage participation when people watch other participants efforts.

Do you have a similar system in your country? Please send the information to the Candle Night Committee.

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#### 'Eco-Wave' of 8 Prefectures and Cities

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Eight municipal governments including Saitama and Chiba Prefectures, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Yokohama, Kawasaki, Chiba and Saitama Cities orchestrated a time to turn off the lights from 20:00 to 20:10 on July 7, 2008. People in the area were also encouraged to enjoy Candle Night during that time. These municipalities formed a league called "8 Prefectures and Cities", whose populations are among the largest Japanese municipalities and have good economic activities.

The lights-off program is part of their "Eco-Wave" initiative. There are two other actions: encouraging people to switch to other types of lights that use less electricity; and encouraging people to choose green certificates power systems to promote renewable energy.

Yokohama City, one of the members of the league with a population of 3.6 million, turned off their lights at 20:00 on that day. In the Yokohama Minato Mirai 21, a large-scale business district, the Yokohama Landmark Tower, Ferris Wheel, neon signs of the Queen's Square Yokohama, offices, hotels and condominiums also participated.

At the event site, a countdown ceremony was held. Primary school children decorated paper strips with their wishes and messages for a better environment and attached them to bamboo branches. Candles were also placed along the 250-meter main street, producing a fantastic atmosphere.

Music concerts and talk shows were also held at event sites in participating municipalities and they received favorable responses from citizens. The league is considering holding the campaign next year too.

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The action plans of JCI Japan and the Eco Wave initiative of eight prefectures and cities have given us some ideas to help attract participants; everyone can start easily and can enjoy it without being forced to do something. How about starting similar initiatives yourself?

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Editor's note

At the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, not only presidents and prime ministers of G8 nations attended, but also ones from developing nations were invited to participate in the meetings during that period. More and more issues need to be discussed in the global arena--one country cannot address them as well as many. Through Candle Night and other opportunities, I would like to be connected with the world, too. (Y.K)

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We also invite your local stories, festivals and events related to candles and fires. Please send emails to: [eninfo@candle-night.org](mailto:eninfo@candle-night.org)

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We welcome your comments. Please send them to: [eninfo@candle-night.org](mailto:eninfo@candle-night.org)

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