

This newsletter is sent only to those who have registered at
<http://www.candle-night.org/>

To unsubscribe from the list, please visit at:
<http://www.candle-night.org/2005summer/english/index.html>

The Candle Night Newsletter--#3
June 15, 2005, Copyright (c) 2005
Candle Night Committee

The "Candle Night Summer Solstice 2005" will be held from 8 to 10 p.m.
(your local time) on the evenings of June 18 through 21.

We hope to expand globally "a gentle wave of darkness," on "a night without
excessive lights."

Let's join us!

-----Information-----

*Candlescape 2005 is now open!
<http://www.candle-night.org/scape/>

Participants can send their messages to the Candlescape. With the use of postal codes, the system can identify the participant's location and can visualize it on the map of Japan with their message (Japanese only) Please enter the site, click the map and see how it works. Currently we have only Japanese map, but we would like to expand it worldwide in the near future.

*As of June 14, 2005, 259 events all over Japan are registered at the Candle Night website.

*Around 24,000 major buildings and structures in Japan will turn off their lights during the 2005 summer event, about four times as many as last year.

This issue features the following stories:

Essay by Shinichi Tsuji
Candle Night in South Korea

Essay

Shinichi Tsuji (Keibo Oiwa)

Candle Night Committee

Cultural anthropologist, Professor at Meiji Gakuin University

Summer Solstice--it is the longest day of the year. Many traditional societies celebrated, worshiped and prayed for it as a holy day. They were in awe and thankful--people at that time realized that they could only live thanks to the solar energy. However, no one today seems to remember those facts.

When you turn off the lights, darkness comes back. It has been a long time since the darkness disappeared from Japanese cities, where 80 percent of people live. Some people want to watch the moon and stars, or fireflies. Some might sit still in the darkness and some exchange their love for each other. Some make fire and others light candles. The flame of candles accentuates the darkness, and the darkness highlights the fire.

The majority of Japanese people eat dinner watching TV. Is this a sign of affluence? To me, this is simply a sign of cultural impoverishment. Let us turn out the lights and eat dinner under candlelight. Just a little act like that can give us a great opportunity: forming a circle, eating together and sitting by the firelight. Just think about it. Aren't these three major factors of culture to show what we, humankind, are all about?

I have had many opportunities to take my students to the ancient forests of North and South America. They looked happiest when they sat around a bonfire at night. Some even cried with a full smile on their faces. Then I realized--I took them all the way to see the moment. At the same time I was appalled by the fact that our "affluent" society could not give our children even that much joy. We seem to have pursued freedom under the fluorescent lamps.

We have been fixed in a strange idea that the more electricity we consume and the brighter the nights are, then society is more affluent and advanced, as the U.S. President Bush suggested 5 years ago that U.S. economy would be secured only if they construct one or two new power plants every week for the next 20 years. However, can we call it "economy" when its pursuit for money allows us to wage a war or to destroy the ecosystem that supports our lives?

Darkness, candlelight and bonfire will bring us a relaxing and peaceful time. Going with the flow of the time, we can come back to life from the madness of the "fast life" that has occupied us for a long time. Some might cynically say to us, "Such a little thing will not work for energy-saving," but we do not need to hold back. Candle Night

can change me, and then the world, which I am part of, can certainly change, even though the change may be slight.

There is a folk legend that has been transmitted among indigenous peoples of South America.

"The forest was on fire.

All the animals, insects and birds in the forest rushed to escape.

But there was one little hummingbird named Kurikindi, or Golden Bird, who stayed behind.

This little bird went back and forth between water and fire, dropping a single drop of water from its beak onto the fire below.

When the animals saw this, they began to laugh at Kurikindi.

"Why are you doing that?" they asked.

And Kurikindi replied, "I am only doing what I can do."

--I am as little as the hummingbird, but I will do just what I can do, too.

Candle Night in South Korea

The preparation of the first "Candle Night" event in South Korea has been underway, mainly by college students in Seoul.

On the night of Summer Solstice, June 21, 2005, exterior lights of the youth culture center will be dimmed, and candles designed by art students will be exhibited. Various other plans such as music events and offering organic coffee samples are in preparation.

The students created a "community cafe", an online message board, asking others to join them. With the help and advice of other environmental NGOs and ex-journalists, they have tried to plan the first event in South Korea. The message board is found at: <http://cafe.daum.net/candlenight>

The students are planning to hold another Candle Night event in larger scale in October 2005. The Candle Night Newsletter will cover their initiative possibly in the future issues.

We hope you enjoyed this issue of the Candle Night Newsletter.

If you find the Candle Night Newsletter interesting, please forward it to friends and suggest that they start their own free subscriptions at

<http://www.candle-night.org/2005summer/english/index.html>

This newsletter is sent only to those who have registered for it.
We do not rent, loan or sell this e-mailing list to any other party.

Back issues of the newsletter are also available.

<http://www.candle-night.org/2005summer/english/news.html>

We welcome your comments. Please send them to:
eninfo@candle-night.org.

Copyright (c) 2005, Candle Night Committee.
All Rights Reserved.

Candle Night Committee
eninfo@candle-night.org
