

May 1st, 2020

Attention residents

The number of COVID-19 patients is on the rise daily. You must be deeply worrying about yourself, family and friends living at a distance.

I was initially optimistic about this virus assuming that it was going to only cause minor cold symptoms and patients would soon get recover. However, the entire world is now suffering during this unprecedented situation with a large number of patients and victims.

Please take the following infection control measures: avoid non-essential outing and the ‘three Cs’— closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places and close contact settings. In the event of shopping for daily necessities, please ensure that the minimum number of persons from a household visit and that social distances with other customers and employees in the store are maintained. Additionally, please wear masks if you have them.

Various news outlets have reported evacuations due to the coronavirus. Although people should stay home upon the government’s request, it is also the duty of this town to protect the visitors of summer homes. I have been requesting these visitors to stay in their own summer residences and refrain from going out in the absence of an urgent need. Moreover, town office workers are visiting frequented areas, such as supermarkets and convenience stores, to encourage staffs to implement infection control measures. Also I request tourists to wait to visit Karuizawa until the spread of COVID-19 subsides.

The Japanese economy is in a difficult situation. As mentioned in the last issue, Karuizawa is in a critical economic situation as a “Tourism-Oriented Town”. We need to let industries in the town, including tourism, survive at any cost. Forms of financial support, such as an enhancing loan commitment and extensions to make payments of several taxes and water rates, have already been implemented. Please consult the town office and banks in the town to make full use of these new supports in addition to other assistance measures offered by the government. Once it becomes possible to forecast a potential end of the current situation, a tourism promotion policy which is being prepared in collaboration with the Tourist Association, INN Association and Society of Commerce and Industry will be carried out.

We are all experiencing an emergency now. The true value of each persons will be evaluated in such a situation. All individuals and countries must overcome division on the basis of prejudice and discrimination. Let’s get over this hardship together with a united effort coming from each one of us.

The image shows a handwritten signature in Japanese calligraphy. The characters are '藤巻進' (Fujimaki Susumu), written in a fluid, cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Susumu Fujimaki, Mayor
Town of Karuizawa