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Japan Screen Topics

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BALLOON-MAKING LESSONS

61 feet 1 min. 41 sec.

1. (UNIVERSITY, PROFESSOR, CLASSROOM) In the shadow of Mt. Fuji, a new form of educational recreation is taking shape...in mid-air.

At Gakugei University in the suburbs of Tokyo, a rather unusual course is being offered... in balloon-making.

Fifty-six year old Professor Tsutomu Hiroi is teaching this fine art.
2. (DESIGNING BALLOONS PREPARATION) First, the intricate designs for the balloons are drawn up with the aid of a computer... Then the students carefully put together the many pieces.

The number of students in the seminar is limited to assure close teacher-student communication. Most of the class hope to be primary or junior high school teachers someday.
3. (LAUNCHING BALLOONS) Launching day rolls around, and the balloons...which come in every imaginable size and shape...are helped into the sky by heated propane gas.

The professor's first love was making kites, but the move to balloons was not such a big jump... What lies behind all this is Professor Hiroi's fervent belief that learning should be an enjoyable experience.

There are even some balloons propelled by solar power...filled only with air.

The secret is that the usually dark-colored solar balloons draw heat from the sun. And the sun heats up the air in the balloon and up it goes.

SAPPORO'S SNOW FESTIVAL

57 feet 1 min. 35 sec.

1. (BUILDING, STATUES) On Japan's northern island of Hokkaido... in the city of Sapporo...the long, dark winter is punctuated by a happy annual event...the Snow Festival.

Sapporo's people take advantage of the tremendous amount of snow fall and turn snow into the raw material for a unique art form.... snow sculpture.

Japan's Self-Defense Forces as well as regular citizens pitch in to build these masterpieces....

2. (STATUES, BUILDING MADE OF SNOW, VISITORS) Replicas of entire buildings...with details like windowpanes and fancy gargoyles... Huge snow statues of legendary figures, of characters from Japanese mythology...and zoo animals... all reproduced in mind-boggling detail...

The first Sapporo Snow Festival started 33 years ago, with six snow statues made by high school students. From that beginning, the festival has gone from a small town event to what is probably the most important winter festival in Japan.

People fly to the island of Hokkaido from all over the world to take part in the five-day festival, which occurs every year at the beginning of February.

The Snow Festival, or "Yuki Matsuri" is the biggest exhibition of snow sculpture on earth!

72 feet 2 min. 1 sec.

1. (LABORATORY, SCIENTISTS) Here at this laboratory in Kagoshima, the fine art of ceramics is being used in revolutionary new ways... to manufacture a wide variety of products...from spark plugs, precision tools...to integrated circuits.

2. (CERAMIC HARDNESS) The kind of ceramics pioneered in Japan is a tough breed...on a 1 to 10 scale of hardness, with the precious diamond at 10, technical ceramics is way up there at 9! This shouldn't be surprising; the most widely-used technical ceramics is made up of Corundum, the same basic and very hard material contained in sapphires and rubies. And like the diamond, technical ceramics is hard enough to be used in drilling equipment. It can even cut steel.

3. (ALUMINUM VS CERAMIC) One of the many desirable properties technical ceramics has is heat-resistance. Compared with aluminum conventionally used in car engines, for example, technical ceramics holds up much better when subjected to intense heat. Here we see it exposed to five minutes of over 1200 degrees Centigrade. And unlike most metal material, it cannot be corroded by acid or alkalis.

4. (EQUIPMENT) Ceramics is being used in the manufacture of highly-sophisticated equipment...laser spectographs, microanalyzers and X-ray diffractometers.

5. (AUTOMOBILE WITH CERAMIC ENGINE) Right now, in Japan, 4-cylinder DIESEL ENGINES are rolling off the assembly line --- with pistons, turbo-chargers and other key parts made of technical ceramics.

6. (TECHNICAL CERAMIC PROPERTIES) For its hardness,...heat- and chemical-resistance...and insulation properties, there would seem to be unlimited uses for technical ceramics material...in electronics the chemical and automobile industries....

IBUSUKI SAND BATHING

77 feet 2 min. 8 sec.

1. (SCENERY, FLOWERS) On the southern tip of Kyushu's historic Satsuma peninsula lies the resort city of Ibusuki.

Blessed the year round with warm temperatures, Ibusuki is a mecca for tourists...a sort of Japanese Riviera.

Tourists come to Ibusuki to soak up the warmth of the town's famous hot springs....

2. (BEACH, EGGS, PEOPLE BURIED IN SAND) But most of all, they come to take what might be called a "sand sauna bath"... on a one-kilometer stretch of naturally steaming beach at Surigahama.

The volcanic sand is heated by underground springs at temperatures that constantly hover at around 85 degrees Centigrade...so hot you can boil an egg in the sand!

3. (PEOPLE IN SAND, BAY) People come from all over Japan... and all over the world... to get buried in the health-giving sand.

The heat from the sand in Ibusuki Beach is believed to cure muscular aches and pains...and even indigestion.

Ibusuki's natural sand-bath is the largest of its kind anywhere in the world.

THE 16TH OME MARATHON

86 feet 2 min. 23 sec.

1. (PREPARATION) Every February, in the town of Ome near Tokyo, a marathon race takes place. The Ome Marathon draws people of all walks of life...of all ages...male and female. They take part in either one of two courses...a 10 kilometer race that's run in the morning, or the MAIN EVENT... a 30 kilometer marathon in the afternoon of the same day...;

2. (RUNNERS) The Ome Marathon is open to anyone who wishes to participate... And among those who did this year were several of the top runners in the world-famous Boston Marathon.

3. (RUNNERS) The hardest runners went the course from East Ome to Okutama..30 kilometers in all... in cold and rainy weather. But such is the appeal to true marathoners that the climate was of secondary importance. Many ran long after the results were in.

4. (OLD MAN) The oldest runner was an 84 year-old, while another of the senior citizen competitors was a 74 year-old who also ran in Boston last year!

5. (FINISHLINE) The winner, a 28 year-old American, Kirk Pfeffner, clocked in at one hour, 33 minutes and 20seconds. He sprinted out in front of his neck-in neck competitor at the 17 kilometer point... and kept his lead to the finish line.

Pfeffner placed 2nd in the 1979 New York City Marathon.

6. (RAINY STREET) Many of the marathoners at Ome ran long after the results were in...long after it got dark...true sportsmen.