

## INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

### Sister City Trip to Hanamaki, Japan

To be part of the citizen delegation to Hanamaki is to take the trip of a lifetime - an amazing journey to experience Japan. It is not just a tour or a vacation, although it is an incredible trip. Being part of a sister city delegation allows individuals to experience Hanamaki, its beautiful countryside, the wonderful flavors of their food, the incredible hospitality of the people of our sister city, and the culture of the Japanese people.

This year, the group will travel September 4-12. The first two nights are spent in Tokyo. While in Tokyo, there will be a day trip to visit ancient temples, shrines and see a bit of Tokyo. The following day, the delegation will travel by world-famous bullet train to Hanamaki. While there, guides take the group to visit shrines, museums, and onsen, which are Japanese bathhouses.

The accommodations are all western-style hotel rooms. The highlight of the trip will be the Hanamaki Festival, which will take place September 10 – 13. Delegation members are even invited to take part in the festival parades if they wish and will have a special viewing platform to watch the festivals dancers, mikoshi (portable shrines which are carried on the shoulders of a group of Hanamaki citizens), and finally the lighted floats travel down the street to the sound of ancient rhythms.

The estimated travel cost of \$3500 for single, and \$3400 for double occupancy includes airfare, transportation, lodging, tours, guides and most meals. The initial \$500 deposit is due by June 1. For more information how you can join this travel group, please contact Sister City Program Coordinator Mary Neilson at 501-545-6960, or email [hotspringsstercity@yahoo.com](mailto:hotspringsstercity@yahoo.com). See below for trip summary and helpful links.



- Estimated cost per person, excluding some meals and incidentals: Single \$3500/Double \$3400
- Non-refundable deposit due by June 1, 2010
- Balance due July 31, 2010
- For more information about Hanamaki: <http://jet.wikia.com/wiki/Hanamaki> - <http://www.city.hanamaki.iwate.jp>
- Hotel websites: Tokyo - <http://www.princehotels.com/en/shinagawa> Hanamaki - <http://www.hotel-grandciel.com>
- Japanese newspaper: <http://mdn.mainichi.jp>

### TENTATIVE ITINERARY

Sat., Sept. 4	Depart Little Rock, AR
Sun., Sept. 5	Arrive in Tokyo
Mon., Sept. 6	Day tour from Tokyo, either Kamakura or Nara, shrines and temples
Tues., Sept 7	Depart Tokyo, arrive Hanamaki early afternoon, visit Kenji Miyazawa Museum
Wed., Sept 8	Tour Ohasama area of Hanamaki, visit Edel Winery, visit Inazo Nitobe Museum
Thurs., Sept. 9	Tour Ishidoriya area of Hanamaki, Sake museum, Ishidoriya festival,
Fri., Sept 10	Hanamaki, shopping, craft exhibits, festival
Sat., Sept. 11	Ikebana, etegami and time with volunteers, shopping, festival
Sun. Sept. 12	Departure from Hanamaki in morning, arrival in Little Rock early evening

