Japanese ‘Flying Fish’ to Grace Turner Field for Asian Heritage Night

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Koi-nobori flying in Japan. Photo used under Creative Commons license with no modifications.
Colorful carp streamers as long as 15 feet will blow in the breeze during a pre-game parade at Turner Field for the Atlanta Braves’ Asian Heritage Night May 6.

The event will come a day after Japan celebrates Children’s Day, a time when the carp, called koi-nobori, are displayed by families with young boys to signify hope for an upbringing filled with strength and resilience, according to the Consulate General of Japan in Atlanta.

Consul General Takashi Shinozuka said the streamers carried in the parade by students from the bilingual Seigakuin International School will invoke childhood memories from Japanese attendees.

Mr. Shinozuka will be the honorary captain for the game as the Braves face off against the Arizona D-backs at 7:35 p.m.

Baseball is a shared pastime for the United States and Japan, signified by the country’s decision to honor Atlanta Braves great and former home run king Hank Aaron with an imperial decoration earlier this year for his work promoting baseball as a tool for understanding between the countries.

Previous Japanese consuls general have thrown out the first pitch for the Braves, and the team’s signing of a (since-departed) Japanese pitcher years ago prompted a major news conference and reflections on the importance of the city’s Japanese community.

Attracting the international community is vital to the Braves, who are situated in a sport that is becoming more globally accepted by the year, Braves President John Schuerholz recently told Global Atlanta at a naturalization ceremony where 500 new Americans took their oath of citizenship at Turner Field.

Along with theme of children, Japan-America Society of Georgia is funding an exchange program for four Atlanta students to attend the Asia-Pacific Children’s Convention in the Atlanta sister city of Fukuoka in July. For more information, send an email to jasg@mindspring.com.