

# VIVA ! ひめじ

<English Version> March. 2005 No.12

Issued by Himeji International Association  
Newsletter editing volunteer  
URL <http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp>

PEOPLE <Interview> PEOPLE	Mr. Dowdy Wayne	To meet "Iaido"	P1
About Japanese school	Q&A		P2.3
About Obento	The recipe for an omelet		P4
Household waste	The garbage we can't throw away at the garbage station		P5
Information about events in spring			P6



## PEOPLE Interview Dowdy Wayne "To meet "Iaido""

He is from Arizona in the USA. When he decided to go on to college eighteen years ago, he happened to meet "Iaido", and it was a start of his being interested in Japan. He majored in economics and Japanology at a state university in Arizona. He studied Japanese literature, religion and so on over a wide range. Then he met his wife and was also taught Japanese by her. After graduation he came to Japan as an English teacher in Himeji, sister city of Arizona, and got married her one year later. At his wedding ceremony he had Japanese kimono on. But after that he went back to college by himself to get the qualification of junior and senior high school teacher. Until he came to Japan again, he had a frequent communication with his wife by letters and phone calls.

### "Iaido" as a lifework

He said, "I practice Iaido with Japanese training suit once a week. Iaido is the place for training the concentration of mind and body. I can get the feeling of satisfaction by Iaido. In practicing Iaido, I don't use shinken (real Japanese sword), but I practice the same mental attitude as using shinken." "Iaido" is Japanese sword martial arts and its aim is to train the spirit. It



has a lot of schools and his Araki Mujinsai school spread over the whole country about 350 years ago. On Sunday, June 26, 2005, the twentieth anniversary ceremony concert will be held (Toyoda school Japan Meirinkai) at Himeji Bunka Center. If you are interested in Iaido, please come and see. (Free) Please access my HP and get the information about the concert. <http://www1.winknet.ne.jp/~meirin/index2.html> (Japanese. English)

### About international exchange

"When I think of living in Himeji and what I can do for Himeji, I think, is to help the interpretation in English and join the events as a volunteer. Because Himeji is my town." he said with earnest. He also said, "My big dream is to build 'Edo Museum (a tentative name)' in Himeji and to introduce not only the historical heritage, Himeji castle and Mt. Shosha, but also the people's way of living in Himeji 200 years ago. We wish his dream will come true for us and the tourists from inside and outside of Japan. I felt his strong love for his home province and I had to take action for Himeji, I thought.



Digression: He is very tall, so when he order half coat, he needs to use special cloth. The size of his feet is 30 centimeter. Even the biggest size of tabi (Japanese-style socks made of cotton) sold at the market is 28 centimeter. Every time it is washed, it becomes smaller and smaller. So he can use it only four or five times. To wear kimono or put on hakama(a sort of long divided skirt like culottes) is one of the lessons.

## The Japanese Education

### About the Japanese Education System / Schools

**Q.** When do children start to go to school?

**A.** In Japan every child at age of 6 enters elementary school and at 12 starts junior high school. The basic Japanese school system is composed of a 6 year-elementary school, a 3 year-junior high school, compulsory education is only for 9 years of elementary school and junior high school, though almost students go on to high school.(3 or 4 years) In Japan every child has a right to receive equal education.



**Q.** What do children study and do at school? (You may feel anxious to go to school without knowledge of Japanese)

**A.** At school, children study **Japanese, mathematics, science, social studies** and many other subjects, and also experience very interesting activities and events.

For example:

**gymnastics** . . . to develop the body's strength by doing sports, swimming and including athletic festivals which everybody enjoys is one of the biggest school events

**music** . . . to enjoy music, singing and playing instruments, and also have school concerts

**arts and crafts** . . . painting, drawing, figurative arts, art appreciation

**moral education** . . . to learn and study social and community relationships to enhance the understanding of humanity

As sports, music, arts and human hearts are very universal matters.

**Q.** How many **kanji** (Chinese character) do children have to learn?

**A.** In elementary school children are expected to learn 1006 **Kanji**, which are basic and used very frequently in everyday life. If a person knows these 1006 **kanji**, he/she won't feel any difficulties living in Japan. Nobody can memorize many kanji at once, so at first people, Japanese children, foreign students (child/adult) start to learn the beginning 80 kanji, which are taught in the first grade of elementary school.

Many kanji are made up of pictures drawn by people, and have specific rules. Once you understand **kanji**, you can guess the meaning of the words and won't have any problems with reading and writing Japanese. You can find various kinds of textbooks and workbooks for practicing **kanji** at bookstores.

#### The Great Advantages to Know **Kanji**, which are taught at elementary school

1. You can understand shop signs , guides, various information, community bulletins and so on.
2. You can enjoy Japanese books, magazines and KARAOKE texts.
3. Knowing kanji will promote your business chances, because employers often assess employees' Japanese skills.
4. You can communicate naturally with Japanese.

**Q.** Are Mathematics and Arithmetic helpful?

**A.** YES! You won't have any problems with shopping, change, your wage. And it will help when you use counting, weight, scale and measure in your business, job, cooking ,etc.

**Q.** How much does it cost to go to school?

**A.** There are no school fees for elementary and junior high school, and also school textbooks are free. However it is necessary to pay expenses for materials of personal use, expenses for school lunch and so on.



**Monthly Expenses:** approximately 5000yen(junior high school will cost more, because students sometimes need more workbooks and school materials for studying).

**Expenses for personal use at school:** school uniform, indoor shoes, paint box, a calligraphy set, musical instrument, backpack or bag, etc. Besides the above-mentioned materials, for junior high school students, school uniforms (for summer and winter use) are demanded, and uniforms and expenses of extracurricular clubs, which students belong to, are requested to be paid for.

**Special Expenses for school travels:** Before graduation, in their final years, children of the 6th grade at elementary school, and of the 3rd grade at junior high school have school excursion travels lasting for 2 or 3 days. These expenses are required to be covered by saving a small amount of money every month.

**Q.** Is it a disadvantage not knowing Japanese at the entrance examination?

**A.** Since year of 2000, if your junior high school requests to the high school that you want to enter, you may be allowed to extend your examination or you may take the examination with *kana* given alongside Chinese characters (*kanji*).

It is necessary to ask and consult your teachers or your school authorities at once, before you apply to the high school.

**Q.** How much will tuition fees cost to go to high school?

**A.** If for financial reasons it is difficult to pay tuition fees and expenses of school, a reduced tuition fee system, fee-exemption, or a scholarship system will be available. For more information, please inquire at the school in which you are enrolled.



**Q.** What is good preparation before job hunting?

**A.** You had better prepare your curriculum vitae (personal history). If possible, filing it out in Japanese is desirable.

- It is better to understand the traffic systems and your possible commuting area, before applying for a job.
- You had better acquire Japanese greetings and manners.
- And acquiring a driving license for vehicles or a motorcycle/ motorbike will enlarge your job chances.

**HELLO WORK** (Himeji Public Employment Security Office) is the office administered by the government that offers consultation and introductions for employment.

Foreigner's Employment Service Corner: Himeji-shi Hojo 250 Tel. 0792-22-8609

English/Spanish/Portuguese services are available on Wednesday/Friday 13:00~17:00

### **When You Feel Insecure or have Difficulties Speaking Japanese, Please Contact Us!**

#### **Himeji International Association "Nihongo Hiroba : Japanese Square"**

Japanese volunteer tutors teach Japanese. Tel 0792-87-0820 (no registration fee)

Child education support or daily life assistance, various information and consultation are provided.

Individual lessons: at any time according to your request

Group lessons: at any time according to your request

For further information, please contact us or visit our office, Himeji International Association (Egret Himeji 3F).

**The best way to understand and practice Japanese is by making Japanese friends in your living community.**

The next issue of "VIVA ! ひめじ" will explain Japanese Education Systems and the choices after graduation from Junior high school. Please feel free to contact us and please tell your opinions and advice!

## Obento ( Lunch Box)

In Japan, we have a custom to take a lunch box to school or the office for lunch. The new school year starts from April. What is a lunch box?



A lunch box is made in the morning at home, then we eat it at school or the office in the early afternoon.

How to make a lunch box

- Cool down main serving and side dishes and put them into the lunch box.
- The food from last night reheated in the morning.
- The lunch box shouldn't contain foods that are perishable.

The lunch box is a source of energy for the afternoon till supper.

What can I put in a lunch box?

You can put in food such as

Main serving: rice or bread and sandwiches or pasta

Side dishes: vegetables, eggs, beans, seaweeds,  
steamed fish paste, Vienna sausage, fruits, etc...



Combining the below will provide you with a well-balanced and nutritious meal.

Red/orange food: carrots, tomatoes, pickled ume(Japanese plum) strawberries, etc...

Yellow food: eggs, pumpkins, corns, sweet potatoes, bananas, etc...

Green food: leafy vegetables, green peppers, cucumbers, broccolis, French beans, green asparaguses, kiwi fruit, letuce, etc...

A lunch box includes items such as

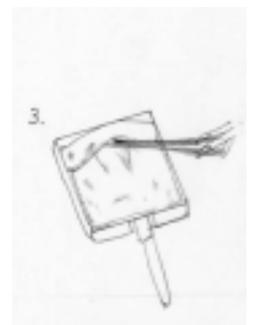


Onigiri (rice ball) How to make Onigiri?

1. Put the warm cooked rice in a Japanese rice bowl and make a hole in the center of rice then place selected filling in to the hole.
2. Put a little salt on your hands after you have washed them.
3. Remove rice from bowl and place in one hand then make a rice ball keeping the filling in the center.
4. Make a shape e.g. (circle shape, triangle shape, oval shape) wrap with dried seaweed.

Tamagoyaki (How to make Tamagoyaki?)

1. Whisk a cracked egg in a bowl (add a little seasoning as you like)
2. Heat some cooking oil in a fry pan then put half of the whisked egg.
3. Cook like an omelet, fold one on one with chopsticks and then place the remaining half of previously whisked egg in between the layers.
4. After its cooked, cut it for easy eating



\* Other tasty ideas: put a touch of *Furikake* ( various fish and vegetables flakes to sprinkle on cooked rice ) or put on dried seaweed on the rice.

\* In Japan, we often eat things such as pickles, cooked beans, *Tukudani* (e.g. kelp salt - sweet preserves) that also can be used in a lunch box.

\* Leftovers or frozen foods can also be used in a lunch box.



## Rules To Dispose Of "Household Garbage" (2004.4 - 2005.3)

This is the last time to show you how to dispose of household garbage.

Several types of garbage will NOT be collected at collection sites (Gomi Station).

### 1 What will NOT be collected ? How to dispose of them?

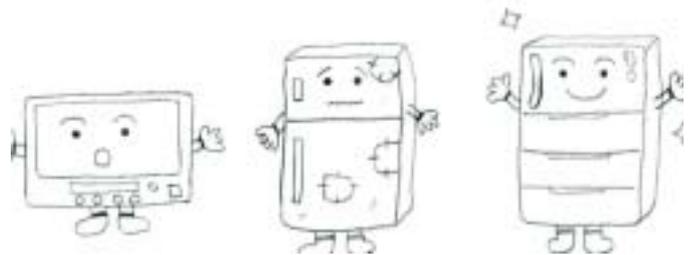
#### 1) TVs, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, air conditioners and PCs

Return to retailers or recycling shops.

Note that you must pay a recycling fee and collection fee when doing so.

#### Home Appliance Recycling Law

Old TVs and refrigerators were collected and taken to the landfill for disposal. But such items contain recyclable materials so we now remove the materials from the item and recycle them. Recycling of the targeted materials has successfully reduced the amount of waste. Removing recyclable materials costs money so you must pay a fee.



#### 2) Household hazardous garbage and Bulky garbage

Gas cylinders, fire extinguishers, tires, batteries, paint, kerosene, deadly poisons such as agrichemicals, straw mats (tatami mat), safety boxes, pianos, motorbikes

Return to the shops you bought them or the special processors.

Note that you must pay a collection fee and a processing fee when doing so.

#### 3) Large quantities of garbage

Garbage resulting from moving, garbage more than 50kg, bundles of wood, etc.

There are two ways to dispose of them.

Note that you must pay a fee either way.

Bring the garbage to Nanbu Beautification Center (Nanbu Bika Senta) by yourself. You must separate the garbage before bringing.

For inquiries contact Nanbu Beautification Center at 0792-34-8922

Contact a licensed Himeji city collection company for service.

### 2 Who to ask questions?

#### • Garbage Classification :

City Hall Recycle Promotion Section (Risaikuru Suishin-ka) Call at 0792-21-2404

#### • Garbage Collection :

Ichikawa Bika Senta (Ichikawa Bika Center) Call at 0792-82-5389

or Nanbu Beautification Center (Nanbu Bika Senta) Call at 0792-34-8211

## Spring Events Information

The Beginning of April **Himejijo-kan'okai and Ohanami-daiko** at Sannomaru Hiroba park  
Himeji Castle / Postponed in case of rain

Performances of Kotos and Wadaikos against the background of cherry blossoms  
Various booths for selling Japanese Tea, sake and dango (rice cakes)

The Beginning of April **Yozakurakai** at Himeji Castle / Admission free

More than 50 cherry trees will be lighted up at Nishinomaru Garden from 18:00 to 20:00.

Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> to Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> **Yozakurakai** at Himeji Koko-en  
Garden / 300 yen for an adult, 150 yen for a student

Drooping cherry trees will be lighted up from 18:30 to 19:30

Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup> **Haru no daicha no yu** / 500 yen ( with tea cakes )

The Tea Party at Koko-en Garden



The end of May **Hotaru kanshokai** at Himeji koko-en garden / Open up to 20:30

300 fireflies planted by children will light in the dark. It will be at its best around 19:30.

**\* \* Please don't catch fireflies so as we can view them every year. You must not take insect cages or nets to the garden.**

Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup> **Shiro no hi** (The day of the Castle) / Admission free

Closed doors in Himeji Castel tower will be open to the public.

The editor's postscript

One of the biggest disasters ever seen happened in Asia at the end of last year. It took the lives of about 297,000 people and made us grieve. We sincerely pray for all those affected and hope for an early recovery to those who received damage.

The publication of next issue, "VIVA! ひめじ" No.13 is planned at the end of May. We always welcome your frank opinions and impressions. Please notice the following address.



Translation assistants and native proofreaders

English : Akiko Sakai, Takashi Sugawara, Kayoko Fujihata, Yuko Hosaka, Masako Nakanishi  
Dowdy Wayne

Chinese : Xu Shuang Quan, Chen Jie, Fumie Miyahara, Zhou Jiangtau

Portuguese : Takeru Kishi, Clara Yamada, Kozue Higashimura

Vietnamese : Ken Ishida, Nguyen Viet Dan, Hadingh Chien

Spanish : Aki Saito, Saori Horii, Yuko Fukunaga, Hirotoishi Koma, Gary Kayo, Jose Enrique Uicab Vivas

Only those who permitted printing are carried. We really appreciated all your help.

Correction: We correct errors of last issue as follows.

- On Page 1 in Each version except English one

<http://www.81x.com/balsamo/studentdormitory> <http://www.81x.com/balsamo/studentdormitory>

- On the last page in Spanish version Ohata Alicia Otani Alicia

We sincerely apologize for inconveniences.

Contact Office

Himeji International Association

Egret Himeji 3F 68-290, Honmachi, Himeji 670-0012

Phone: 0792-87-0820 Fax: 0792-87-0824

Mail to: [kokusai@city.himeji.hyogo.jp](mailto:kokusai@city.himeji.hyogo.jp)

