

The Newsletters for foreign residents

VIVA ! ひめじ

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newsletter editing volunteers.
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<English Version> Jun.2009. No.29

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<People> Mr. Do Van Duong

Mr. Duong is from Hai Phong, which is the north part of Vietnam. From 2002, he worked in Laos for three years. At this time, he met his future wife who came to Laos to work as a volunteer. They got married in 2007 and came to Japan. So they can communicate in the language of Laos. While learning Japanese, he teaches Vietnamese to Japanese when he has enough time. He served as the chair for a Japanese speech contest in 'Spring Festival in 2009'.

Q: What kind of impression did you have of Japan?

A: I knew a lot about Japan through TV in Vietnam, so there was no trouble and surprise. Japanese are very kind as well as punctual and have common sense. I like these types of Japanese very much.

Q: Could you tell me about your country, Vietnam?

A: It is still a poor country because of a long period of war, but I think it will gradually develop. There are many Japanese coming to my country. There is also a plan to introduce the Shinkansen system with cooperation from Japanese companies. The skill of speaking Japanese may broaden the choice of work, so many Japanese schools are being founded. I am really happy at the fact that I belong to two countries!

Q: I have heard that you are having a baby soon.

A: Yes, I am really looking forward to it. Because I know the baby is a boy, I already named him. Our baby will be able to understand two languages if I talk with him in Vietnamese and my wife talks with him in Japanese. In addition to these, if I use Lao and English, he will be perplexed, won't he?

Q: How do you spend your holidays?

A: I usually clean our rooms with my wife and prepare for childbirth. They are pretty pleasant for me. When I have enough time, I cook some Vietnamese food. There are shops in Himeji where Vietnamese commodities are sold, so I go there to get ingredients. Although I want to travel, I cannot manage to make enough time because I have to work on ordinary days and participate in the Japanese classes at "Egret Himeji" on Sundays. There is no long vacation, so I have not gone back to Vietnam for a long time. However, I really like the life in Japan, so I want to stay in Japan throughout my life.

* This interview was conducted in March.

Home Appliance Recycling Law

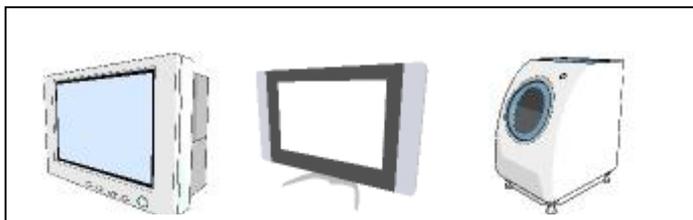
The Home Appliance Recycling Law was revised in April 2009. In addition to conventional four items: air conditioners, CRT televisions, refrigerators and washing machines, the following three items were added to the recycling list.

- Added Items:

LCD television

Plasma television

Clothes dryer



- How to Dispose:

Himeji city government does not collect these items and you must dispose of them by yourself in accordance with the follow the instructions.

1. Take waste products back to retailers where they were bought and pay the collection, transportation and recycling charges.
2. Purchase Home Appliance Recycling Tickets (*kaden risaikuru ken*) at the Post Office and bring waste products to the designated recycling station.

For more information: The Post Office or Himeji City Hall, Recycling Promotion Section (Tel: 079-221-2404) *Note that the recycling fees differ among products so please provide the manufacturers' name when making inquiries.

Supplementary Income Payments

The government is now accepting the application of "Supplementary Income Payments" for households.

- Eligibility: Those who satisfy the status of either (1) or (2) as of February 1st, 2009.

(1) Those who are on the Basic Resident Register

(2) Those who hold the Alien Registration Card

- Payment: ¥12,000 per eligible person

* To those who were born before February 2nd in 1944 and after February 2nd in 1990, ¥20,000 is given per person.

- Application: an application form and a self-addressed envelope are sent to eligible persons. Fill out the form and return it to the General Center, Life Support Section.

- Deadline: September 25th 2009

More information: the City Hall, General Center, Life Support Section (Tel: 079-221-1530)



Kodera Town

This is the introduction of the four towns merged by Himeji, in March 2006. In our final installment, we introduce Koudera cho. To get to Koudera cho by train, Take the Bantan Line from JR Himeji Sta. and get off at Kouro. It's about a 20 min. train ride. The town has fresh air with great natural scenery, surrounded by mountains, vast fields and the Ichikawa River. Make sure you have a hat and a drink to avoid sunstroke!



<Japan Toy Museum>

The Museum consist of 6 houses, constructed in a special traditional way called "shirakabe dozou zukuri". Exhibited are traditional toys from all over Japan, such as mechanical dolls originally made in Kobe known as "Kobe ningyou," as well as toys from around the world in the 4th one. In addition, some toys, for example tops, marbles and the cup-and-ball, can actually be touched and played with.



ACCESS: 15min walk, 10min cycling to the east from Kouro Sta.

OPEN HOURS: 10:00~17:00(Closed every Wednesday. All day opened during the summer vacation and national holidays.)

ENTRANCE FEE: Adult ¥500, Student (High school, College) ¥400, Child (over 4yrs old to junior high student) ¥200

TEL: 079-232-4388 HP: <http://www.japan-toy-museum.org/>

<Koudera Herb Garden>

Opened in 1985, the Garden conducts research & development together with universities and the government and produce a large variety of goods related to herbs in recent days.

About 200 kinds of organic herbs can be seen free of charge. Furthermore, there is a shop selling soaps and cosmetics with herbs as well as baked bread and herb tea. At the Garden, you can become conscious of the connection between humans and nature through herbs.

ACCESS: 20min walk, 15min cycling to the north west from Kouro St.

OPEN HOURS: 9:00~17:00(closed during the Bon Festival)

TEL: 079-232-7316 HP: <http://www.koudera-herb.com/>

<Free Rent-a-Cycle>

Yellow-colored rent-a-cycles for sightseeing are available at Himeji City Koudera Office.

ACCESS: A short walk from the east side from Kouro Sta.

TEL: 079-232-0001 OPEN HOURS: 9:00~16:00



Summer Events 2009

Himeji Yukata Festival June 22 (Mon) to June 23 (Tue)

Place: Himeji Castle Sannomaru Square, Osakabe Shrine, Otemae Street, Nikaimachi Street etc.

The Festival continues a tradition that started when the lord of the Himeji domain, Masamine Sakakibara held "Senza Festival (temporarily moving main shrine to another place)." He moved the Osakabe Shrine into the temple precincts to allow ordinary people to visit the shrine, and proposed wearing Yukata not



Kamishimo (samurai cloth) and using "Mawari Toro" (revolving lantern) instead of horses used for shrine ritual. Now the Festival is kicked off with Kids Yukata Parade, and numerous stalls are set up at the festival site every year. Admission to Himeji Castle, Kokoen, and Himeji City Zoo is free for participants wearing yukata.

Daikakuji Koujin Festival June 26 (Fri) to 28 (Sun)

Place: Daikaku Temple 151 Okinohama Aboshi-ku Tel: 079-273-8825

Access: 12 min. walk from Sanyo Railway Aboshi Station <http://www.daikakuji-himeji.jp/>

This is also called Aboshi Yukata Festival since the temple precincts and the entrance path are filled with a number of stalls. For local people, the festival used to signify the coming of summer since the hot summer sets in after the festival.

Ajisai Festival June 27 (Sat) to 28 (Sun)

Place: Around Ajisai Park/ Anji Inari Shrine in Anji, Yasutomi-cho

Access: Take Shinki bus line No. 31, 32, 33, or 41 bound for Yamasaki from Himeji Station, and get off at Anji stop. (50 min.) 970 yen

About 10,000 hydrangeas (Ajisai in Japanese) cover the mountain slope. They will be in bloom between middle of June and beginning of July.

Wanuke Festival June 30 (Tue) to July 1 (Wed)

Place: Harimakoku Main Shrine

To pray at this shrine, you need to go through big hoop made of thatch (plant), which is believed to ward off evil spirits. Praying for future health, you breathe on a piece of person-shaped paper on which your family name is written.

Himeji Port Festival Maritime Fireworks July 25 (Sat) (Postponed to July 26 (Sun) in case of

rain) Place: Himeji Port Access: Take city bus line No. 37 bound for Himeji Port from Himeji Station, and get off at the end of the stop. (25 min.) 260 yen

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Himeji Port, so various events are scheduled for the celebration. "Port and Ship Museum" will be open at Himeji Passenger Ship Port Terminal and a special fireworks display will be featured. On July 20 (Mon), the inboard section of the cruise ship "Fuji-maru" and the marine environment ship "Ikoma" will be opened to the public. On Sunday, August 2, the sailboat "Kaio-maru" will be shown to the public.

Himeji City Museum of Art Twilight Concert August 1 (Sat), 18:00 to 19:00

In front of the Himeji City Museum of Art, you can enjoy live cozy jazz music free of charge.

Himeji Castle Festival July 31 (Fri) to August 2 (Sun)

Place: Sannomaru Square, Otemae Street, Otemae Park, Miyuki Street

Following various events are featured; Takigi Noh (performance by firelight) at Himeji Castle Sannomaru Square, introduction of new Himeji Castle Queen, Citizen Parade, Evening Parade in which participants dress as historically famous figures including Senhime and Kanbei Kuroda, Soh-Odori (everyone is welcome to join in the dancing), and Sound Festival. On the last day, the boisterous and energetic Himeji Yosakoi Festival will be held, and participants will parade along Miyuki Street.

Shoshazan Summer Night Festival August 22 (Sat)

You can enjoy various games as well as food booths and festival stalls in Shoshazan Ropeway Sanroku Square and Sanjo Park.

Shosha-no-Sato Art and Craft Museum TEL:079-267-0301

Admission: General 300 yen, High school/college students 200 yen, Elementary school/junior high school students 50 yen

After sunset, enjoy a twilight concert in the tranquilly illuminated Bamboo Grove (Cancelled in case of rain).

Engyoji TEL: 079-266-3327

After sunset, Maniden, Mitsunodou, and Okunoin will be illuminated. In the evening, Mandou Kuyo (Buddhist candlelight memorial service) will be held around the Maniden.

Shoshazan Ropeway TEL:079-266-2006

Round ticket: Adult 720 yen Children 360 yen

Access: Take Shinki bus line No. 8 bound for Shoshazan from Himeji Station and get off at the final stop. 25 min. 260 yen

Events to be held near Himeji city (Mitsu, Tatsuno city)

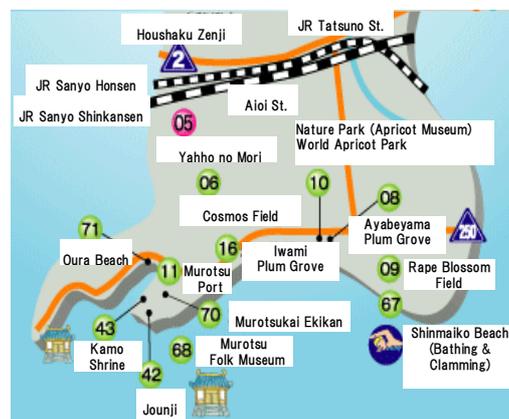
Mitsu Marine Festival (Shinmaiko) July 19 (Sun)

The Festival is also called Sunset Festival. In Shinmaiko beach, you can fully enjoy participatory events, stage performances and maritime fireworks display.

Nagoshi Festival (Kamo Shrine, Murotsu)

July 25 (Sat) to 26(Sun)

The Festival has the following three Shinto rituals: (1)Ohbarai that is held across the country to wash away sin, (2)praying for an end to diseases spreading, which is held in Gion Festival, and (3)praying for maritime safety and a good haul, which is held at Sumiyoshi Taisha. You can enjoy the local flavor and idyllic festival.



Hassaku Doll Festival (Murotsu) End of August

Murotsu Folk Museum (TEL 079-324-0650) and its surroundings

Access: Take Sanyo Railway and get off at Aboshi Station. Then, take Shinki bus bound for Oura from Sanyo Railway Aboshi Station. (20 min.) 450 yen

In this area, the Doll Festival is held in Hassaku, indicating August on the lunar calendar. Long ago, a younger brother of the lord of Muroyama Castle lost his wife on his wedding night due to a sudden attack by the lord of Tatsuno Castle. For the repose of her soul, the Doll Festival has been held in August, 6 months after the original Doll Festival. Each family in this area celebrates the Festival at home, and various events are also featured.

☆☆ Information from Himeji International Association ☆☆

“Japanese Classes for Foreign Residents” will start in September. Every course includes 10 lessons and features conversation and grammar using beginner’s text.

- Course Fee: ¥3,000 (10 lessons)
- 20 Seats
- Apply at least THREE days prior to the first lesson

Beginner A		Beginner B		Beginner C		Beginner D	
『Minna no Nihongo I』 Lesson 1~7		『Minna no Nihongo I』 Lesson 8-16		『Minna no Nihongo I』 Lesson 17-25		『Minna no Nihongo II』 Sun: Lesson 36-50 Wed: Lesson 34-41	
Sun	13 : 00~14 : 30	Sun	10 : 30~12 : 00	Sun	10 : 30~12 : 00	Sun	13 : 00~14 : 30
Thurs	19 : 00~20 : 30	Thurs	19 : 00~20 : 30	Wed	19 : 00~20 : 30	Wed	19 : 00~20 : 30

*The schedules may be subject to change. (For more information: Himeji International Association)

※※※ Editor’s Postscript ※※※※

The global recession caused by the current credit crisis is casting a shadow over our lives. The economy is always changing just like the weather and physical conditions. To take advantage of this situation, we need to keep pace with the trends with foresight. It is also important to stay healthy in order to prepare for the coming fierce summer heat.

The next issue of “VIVA! ひめじ No.30” will be out in September 2009. Your opinions and comments are always appreciated for our improvement and encouragement.

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(only names permitted are carried) Special thanks to you all!

We are currently seeking translation assistants and native proofreaders. Please contact us at the office below if you are interested in this program.

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