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<People> Ms. Zhou Chuchu

Ms. Zhou Chuchu, a Dokkyo University student, is from the Guangdong Province in China. Her speech entitled "My Dream of Becoming a Voice Actor" won the first place *Spring Festival Award* in the Japanese speech contest in February.

Q: Congratulations on your receiving the great prize! How was the contest?

A: I was very nervous about my speech at first. All the participants' speeches were wonderful, and I was worried if I could perform as well as they did. But a little while after I began my speech, I began to feel comfortable as I looked out over the audience. I was very surprised when I found out I had won, but I was very glad at the same time.

Q: Tell us about how you practiced for the contest.

A: In addition to reciting my speech and checking my pronunciation, I used rehearsal techniques such as practicing my speech with the TV on to imitate noise from the audience. Also, I sincerely appreciate the support and cooperation I received from my teachers, classmates, and staff of the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation.

Q: In your speech, you mentioned a voice actor from a Japanese animation series. How long have you been interested in *Anime*?

A: Since I watched "Sailor Moon" and "Slam Dunk". They gave me a lot of energy and inspired me a great deal, especially in terms of my future dream. I also listened to Namie Amuro's songs all the time, which helped improve my Japanese.

Q: How do you like Himeji?

A: My impression of Himeji is that it's cleaner than my hometown. And people are very kind to me when I walk around the city. I'll return to China after I finish my one-year study at the university, and I'd love to come back to Himeji.

Q: Can you give some advice to people who would like to participate in the speech contest?

A: It is very difficult to avoid getting nervous. However, good practice makes you feel more comfortable and calm. I also recommend that you watch videos of previous participants' speeches. Good luck to all!

(This interview took place in June, 2011.)

# 16<sup>th</sup> Himeji International Exchange Festival

Date/Time: October 23<sup>rd</sup> (Sun) 10am~3pm (rain or shine)

Place: Otemae Park (A 10minute-walk from Himeji Station)

The Himeji International Exchange Festival is a great opportunity for foreign and Japanese residents in Himeji City and surrounding areas to meet and enjoy festivities together. This event will include various activities, performances, international food vendors, and opportunities for cultural exchange.

## 1 Activities (Some booths may charge a fee.)

Various activity booths will be available for participants to experience world cultures. There will be a photo booth where you can wear colorful folk costumes, foreign language booths where you can take lessons, an Australian Aboriginal art booth, a face painting booth, and more.

## 2 Food

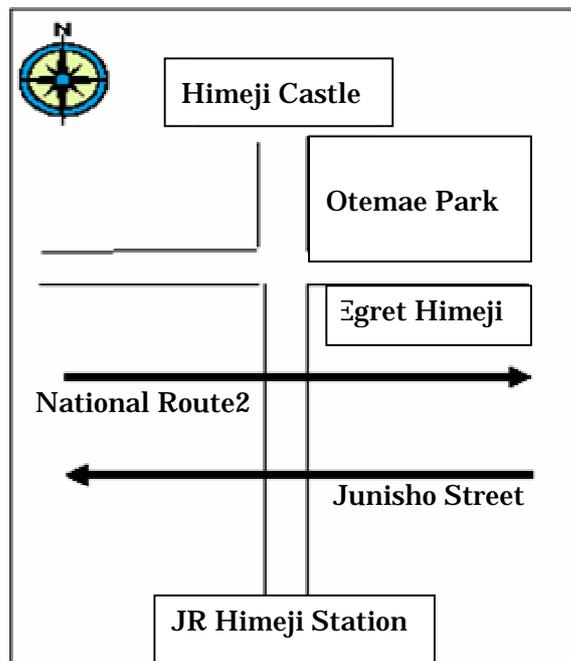
World Food booths will offer 16 various dishes from 13 countries, such as Thailand's Tom Yum Goong and The Philippines' Pansit Bihon. You can enjoy these foods for 150 yen per dish.

## 3 Performances

You can enjoy stage performances such as Vietnam's Moulin, The Philippines' Bamboo dance as well as Aboriginal music, folk dances, and a fashion show of folk costumes.

## 4 Cultural Exchange

The multicultural exchange booth will hold a workshop where you can practice ice breakers in English, experience food and culture differences by sampling ingredients from around the world, and practice situations in which you don't know the foreign language. We will also have a conversation area where you can try speaking a new language.



<Message from Kenichiro Ito, executive of Himeji International Exchange Festival>

This year will mark the festival's 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are looking forward to enjoying another successful year with the help of 900 volunteers, including foreigners. Please come enjoy the activities, performances, food, and cultural exchange opportunities that the Himeji International Exchange Festival has to offer.

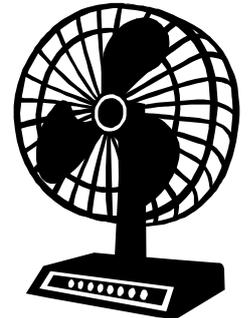
## Are you practicing *Setsuden* (節電)?

It's been hot outside lately. The temperature in Japan this summer has reached more than 35 degrees Celsius, (or 95 degrees Fahrenheit), and the humidity has been as high as 80 %. Summer weather can be hard on your body, so make sure to keep cool. The heat can affect your food as well. Remember to keep your groceries fresh, as the high temperature and humidity can cause bacteria to grow more easily.

Air conditioners and refrigerators are helpful for surviving the summer and keeping healthy. However, this presents a very serious problem. Because of the earthquake in Tohoku, there is not enough electricity available in Japan this summer to support everyone's needs. After Japan's nuclear power plants were damaged during the earthquake, the government has decided to perform extensive checks to ensure their safety. As a result, only 19 generation stations out of 54 are currently operating. Developing new energy sources for the coming future has become a hot topic for Japan as well as many other countries around the world. But in the meantime, we need to incorporate energy conserving techniques into our daily lives.

In Japan, saving electricity is called *Setsuden* (節電). Television and newspapers have introduced the following ideas for energy conservation. Do you think that some of them are worth trying? Or do you have other ideas? Let's all try *Setsuden* to save electricity!

- i Try to avoid stocking up on frozen food, and eat perishable food quickly. This will reduce the amount of electricity used by your refrigerator and freezer.
- i Try hanging plastic curtains on each shelf of your freezer.
- i Increase the temperature of your freezer by 1 to 2 degrees.
- i Kick the habit of only drinking cold beverages—studies have shown that drinks are easier to digest at room temperature anyway.
- i Try sweeping and mopping your floors whenever possible to avoid vacuuming.
- i For carpet, try vacuuming no more than once a week. Use tape rollers in the meantime.
- i If you work during the day, only use air conditioners from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- i Try using your fan instead of your air conditioner, and let your hair air-dry after showers instead of blow-drying.
- i Set your washing machine at the lowest setting on the spin cycle.
- i Try only doing laundry once three days. You may want to buy additional underwear and socks to hold you over.
- i Use pressure cookers and gas stove burners instead of electric heating systems.
- i Try using more natural products in everyday life. For example, one news article featured a man who built green curtains made of *goya*, or bitter gourds. etc.



Do you know other effective and creative ways to save energy? If so, share them with friends and spread the word about the importance of *Setsuden*.

# The 6<sup>th</sup> B-1 Grand Prize in HIMEJI

The festival of *B-kyu Gotochi Gurume* will be held in Himeji this year.

The B-1 Grand Prize is not just intended for providing food, but for promoting and developing our towns. It is a big project to help develop the areas economically.

Date/Time: November 12<sup>th</sup> (Sat), 13<sup>th</sup> (Sun) 9 : 30~15 : 30 (rain or shine)

Place: Three areas surrounding Himeji Castle

The first venue: Shirotopia Memorial Park

Parking area north of the Castle

The second venue: Otemae Park

The third venue: Karoyashiki Ato Park · Otemon Park



Exhibitors: About 60 groups from all over the country.

Entrance: Free. Food costs about 300 yen to 500 yen. Vendors will not accept cash. Instead, vouchers will be sold in packs of 10 at the each venue. The vouchers will be sold in advance. We advise you to purchase them beforehand because many visitors are expected on the day of the event.

*B-kyu Gotochi Gurume* is inexpensive but delicious food that has a Grade-A taste and a Grade-B price. The dishes sold at the event represent local tastes and preferences. For example, “Himeji Oden” is famous in Himeji.



After eating, you may vote for your favorite dish by dropping your used chopsticks in the appropriate ballot box. You may put each chopstick in a different box or vote for the same dish twice. The Grand Prize as well as gold, silver, and bronze medals are chosen based on the total weight of these chopsticks.



We also have an event during the same time called *HIMEJI SHOKUHAKU 2011* (Himeji Food Exhibition 2011.) The event is located at Higashi Oyashiki Ato Park and Himeyama Park. About 70 groups are expected to join from the Himeji area. Please come and visit both events!

## Autumn Outing Information



### ★☆☆ Autumn Festival ☆☆☆

When the Bansyu Plane is covered in golden lights, there are many autumn festivals. During this time, we celebrate the harvest and give thanks to God for the past year. We are glad to share our strong energy with the community. Many of the following festivals are designated as important cultural events, and we encourage you to attend.

#### ○ October 8<sup>th</sup> (Sat), 9<sup>th</sup> (Sun)

Ebisunomiya Tenman Shrine: *Daiba-neri*, a famous festival in which twenty-four men carry two tons seats. A ten-minute walk from the Shikama Station on the Sanyo Line.

Hamanomiya shrine: *Daiba-sashi*, famous for its participants holding a float high above their heads. A twenty-minute walk from the Shikama station on the Sanyo line.

Lion Dance in Inukai & Haze: A dance in dedication to the Shinmei and Haze-Otoshi shrines in Kodera town. Take a No.86 bus bound for Fukusaki from Shinki Bus No 2 waiting area on the north side of the station and get off at Inukai. Or it's about an 800m walk from Mizoguchi Station on the JR Bantan Line.

Shou Hachiman Shrine: The *Jyomaijyo* performance is famous. It is performed with *Hayashi* by a dancer with a prominent nose mask and scarlet costume, five bagpipers, and a drummer. A ten-minute walk to the east from Mizoguchi Station on the JR Bantan Line.

#### ○ October 14<sup>th</sup> (Fri), 15<sup>th</sup> (Sat)

Matsubara Hachiman Shrine: As famous as the Nada Fighting Festival. Many people visit this festival every year. *Yatai-neri*, or hitting shrines against each other, is the highlight of the festival. A tree-minute walk to the south from Shirahamanomiya Station on the Sanyo line.

Oshio Tenman Shrine: A famous Lion dance performed by eight lions on eight stages. A five-minute walk from Oshio station on the Sanyo Line.

#### ○ October 21<sup>st</sup> (Fri), 22<sup>nd</sup> (Sat)

Usuki Hachiman Shrine: *Lantern-neri* occurs on the festival's eve. Great-flamboyant floats called *Danjiri* and lion dances appear on the festival day. A ten-minute walk from Aboshi station on the Sanyo Line.

#### ○ November 13<sup>th</sup> (Sun) ~ 16<sup>th</sup> (Wed)

Harimanokuni Sousya: The *Shimotsuki Taisai* is the last autumn festival in Harima area.

It starts from the 13th *Shiokakinogi* when many children pray for the *Seven-Five-Three* Festival.

### ★☆☆ Great Places to View Autumn Leaves ☆☆☆

When festivals are over, trees begin to change color in the suburbs of Himeji. We can enjoy watching autumn leaves at the following locations;

#### ○ Mt Shosha Engyoji Temple:

There is a great view from the *Mani Den*, which bears the same construction as Kyoto's Kiyomizu temple.

#### ○ Himeji Koko-en: Enjoy the beauty of the compact and well-arranged Japanese Garden next to Himeji Castle.

#### ○ Yasutomi Green station Shikagatsubo: A beautiful mountainous panorama clustered over a pattern of greens and autumn colors. Hiking, barbecue, and visiting Mt Seppiko are also fun.

Information : 775 Seki, Yasutomi-cho, Himeji-city 671-2416,

Tel : 0790-66-3505, Fax : 0790-66-4445, Closed on Tuesdays.

Access: Take a No.34 Bus for Green Station *Shika-ga-tsubo* from Shinki Bus No.3 waiting area on the north side of the station. It's about 1 hour ride to the last bus stop. Buses only leave at 9:10 am and 1:25 pm.

☆☆Information about the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation☆☆

Consultation for foreign residents, “*Himeji hatsu Sekai* (From Himeji to the world)”

We offer consultation services on everyday life for foreign residents at the Himeji International Center (4F). If you have any problems or questions about your daily life, feel free to ask us.

English, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese are available.

Technical information, introduction to specialists, and counseling will be offered if necessary.

Consultation is free. We respect your privacy.

Days & Hours : 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sun 14:00 ~17:00

Phone Number : 079-287-0821

Location : Himeji International Center 4F consultation room  
(Himeji-shi Honmachi 68-290 Egret Himeji 4F)

※※※Editor’s postscript ※※※

The East Japan Earthquake caused serious damage and left incredible devastation.

Throughout history, the people of Japan have experienced many natural disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons, droughts, and cold spells that occur during all four seasons of the year. As a country we have always been in awe of nature, and we have worked to prepare for disasters. Moral action and cooperation with others are very important during an emergency. Many effective provisions against disasters as well as food preservation techniques have been developed in Japan. Through these provisions, we have formed not only our national character, but also a unique food culture.

We encourage foreign residents in Japan to be prepared for disasters as well. People throughout Japan, not just those living in disaster areas, are moved and encouraged by the donations and support from all over the world .

The next “Viva Himeji” will come out in December 2011.

We welcome all of your opinions and comments.

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These names are used with the contributors’ permission.

Their assistance is much appreciated.

We are always looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions of 「VIVA! ひめじ」. If you are interested, please contact us at the following address:

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