

VIVA ! ひめじ

Himeji Cultural and International Exchange
Foundation newsletter editing volunteers
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<People> Mr. Bo Bo Han ဘိုဘိုဟန်

Mr. Bo Bo Han is from the Mandalay District of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. He works at a shop selling equipment for martial arts and lives in Himeji with his wife and daughter.

Q: What made you decide to come to Japan?

A: I first came to Japan in April, 2008. I came to study organic agriculture as a trainee student of NGO in Kobe. I went back after one year of training, then I got married to a Japanese woman and came to Japan again in 2012.

Q: Tell us your first impression of Japan.

A: When I first arrived at Kansai International Airport, I was amazed at the long bridges and tall buildings. And I also felt it was cold though it was already April.

Q: What was your life like in Myanmar?

A: The country consists of seven states and seven divisions. The official language is Burmese but it is slightly different in every state. As Myanmar extends north and south, the climate is very different in each area. My village is located in the east of Mandalay. It is a very small village, where there are about only 400 houses. In summer the temperature goes up to 40 degrees C but it is dry. We have a rainy season between June and October, and then the temperature goes down around 10 degrees C in winter.

Q: What is your dream?

A: I would like to go back to Myanmar in the near future, and disseminate the organic agriculture and public health knowledge that I have learned in Japan. Currently, most farmers in Myanmar use imported pesticide and chemical fertilizer. Using those chemicals helps a crop to grow and stabilizes yields, but they contain harmful substances. In Myanmar we have saying “medicine is food, food is medicine”. I would like to produce food which we can eat safely.

Outing Information

Here we introduce places where you can try a variety of new things around Himeji city. Please check directly with the organizations via website or phone call about seasonal events, fees and how to book.



Himeji City Yugyo Center (Fishing park) Matogata-cho, Himeji city

You can enjoy fishing at the beautiful sea. And also you are able to catch a variety of fish in each season such as whiting, flounder and horse mackerel. You can rent fishing supplies (a set with a rod, hooks and bait runs 2000 yen), so even fishing beginners can get started easily.

Entrance fee: 800 yen for attendees 16 and over, 500 yen for attendees 5~15 (no time limit)

Opening time: April to October: 6 am ~ 9 pm
November to March: 7 am ~ 4 pm

Closed: Every Tuesday (open on Tuesday holidays; closed the following Wednesday)

Access: 20 minutes by Shinko Bus from Himeji station south gate, get off at Fukudomari, the last stop, then 5 minutes by foot

Website: <http://www.himeji-yugyocenter.jp>

Phone: 079-254-5358



Green Echo Kasagata Kamikawa-cho, Kanzaki-gun

A place for camping and hiking where you can enjoy nature all year around. There is a pool in summer and sweet potato digging in autumn. The facility also has some cottages.

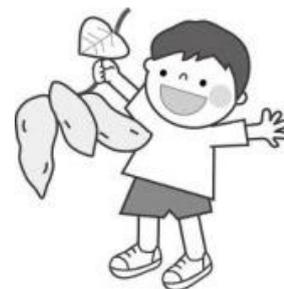
Entrance fee: 200 yen for elementary school students and older

Closed: December 29th to January 1st

Access: Take the JR Bantan Line to Teramae Station, get off at “Green Echo Kasagata-mae” transferring at “Awaga Eigyo Sho” while getting on the Shinko Green Bus at “Teramae Station”, then 10 minutes by foot

Website: <http://web.kcni.ne.jp/green/>

Phone: 0790-32-1307



Mitoro Fruit Park Kamisou-cho, Kakogawa city

Includes a glass greenhouse for enjoying tropical air (the "Crystal Arch"), an observatory where you can see as far as the Akashi channel, barbeque (requires reservation and fee), and a farm where you can pick sweet potatoes (from September ~ October).

Entrance fee: Free

Closed: December 29th to January 3rd

Opening time: Weekdays 10 am ~ 6 pm
Weekend and holidays 9 am ~ 6 pm

Access: 5 minutes by taxi from Yakujin Station on the JR Kakogawa Line

Website: <http://www.city.kakogawa.lg.jp/18,6394,172,980.html>

Phone: 079-428-1113

Road Station "Minami Haga Blueberry Garden" Haga-cho, Shiso city

Harvest your own blueberries at this park, which are not only delicious but good for your eyes, too. Reservation is required for blueberry picking.

Fee: 540 yen per person, 1 hour (free for pre-elementary school children)

Opening time: July 20th to late August

Access: About 30 minutes by car; from the Chugoku Expressway / Yamasaki IC, take Highway 29 towards Tottori

Website: <http://www.haga-net.co.jp/minami/aozora.html>

Phone: 0790-75-3999



Yumesaki Yume no Sato Farming Park: Yumeyakata Yumesaki-cho, Himeji city

A multi-purpose agricultural site with rental farms, a fruit tree garden, and cottages. Enjoy digging up sweet potatoes, picking sweet corn and harvesting chestnuts. You can also make your own soba noodles (requires fee and reservation).

Entrance fee: Free

Closed: Mondays, December 28th to January 3rd

Opening time: 9 am ~ 5 pm

Access: About 45 minutes by Shinki Bus from Himeji Station, departing at Maeno-sho, then around 35 minutes by foot

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/yumesaki.yumenosato>

Phone: 079-336-1585



Consumption Tax Increase

The consumption tax was raised from 5 to 8% in April this year, and a further increase to push it up as far as 10% is still under consideration. And yet the government has not officially approved its enforcement, saying that it is necessary to observe future economic trends in a comprehensive way.



The consumption tax is levied on purchases of most goods and services. As a rule, the previous displayed pricing at retail stores was standardized in a total price with tax. In contrast, changes to tax systems this time have allowed three methods for list prices: a tax-excluding price, a tax-including price, and a tax-excluding price plus tax. In consideration of influences from the hike, temporary welfare benefits will be provided for eligible households. Please contact each of your municipalities for inquiry. In Himeji, the application forms are scheduled to be mailed to those households early in July and the forms can be submitted by post. For further details, call 079-221-2990.

Himeji Police News

The summer outing season is just around the corner. Marine leisure and mountain outings are getting more and more popular. On the other hand, the number of leisure-related accidents tends to increase year by year. Note the following ‘dos and don’ts’ in order to prevent these accidents before they occur.

To swimmers:

- ① Keep off the “no bathing area” at a sea-bathing beach
- ② Do not swim when the sea is rough, in bad weather, or if there are signs of a coming thunderstorm.
- ③ Do not leave children swimming by themselves and keep an eye on them at all times.



To mountain climbers, including mountain hikers

As the weather in mountainous regions changes swiftly, we are likely to encounter an unpredictable danger even when the weather looks nice and easy for climbing.

Therefore it is indispensable to make detailed plans and arrangements for contingencies in advance.



- ① All participants in mountaineering should be well informed about their plans, such as the itinerary and the route for mountaineering.

And you should also let your family and those concerned know about the plan.

- ② Try not to climb alone and climb in a group with an experienced leader.
- ③ Confirm the hazardous areas beforehand and stay on the regular route.

If you should think you have lost your way, get back to a place where you can identify the route of return (the summit of a mountain, for example).

- ④ Among the indispensable items to carry are a map, a compass, rainwear, a snowsuit, food (water in particular), a cell phone, a flashlight, a portable radio, and so on. You can also get some additional equipment ready according to styles of mountaineering.



If You Have a Baby

★Maternal and child health handbook

This is an important handbook that records health histories of both the mother and baby, including from pregnancy and after childbirth. If you are confirmed pregnant, please apply for this handbook right away. This hand book includes an aid ticket for a pregnancy health consultation.

In order to acquire the handbook (residents of Himeji city)

You can get an application sheet for the handbook at a maternity hospital and submit it to the municipal health center or one of its six branches within the city.

Office hours: 8:35 ~ 17:20; closed Saturdays, Sundays, National holidays and Dec. 29th through Jan. 3rd.

* Only South District center is open on Saturdays.

A handbook in eight foreign languages is available. When you receive the handbook, medical officer directly consult you about your pregnancy or your health condition, so you should attend health center for yourself.



Himeji city pregnant woman health check-up coupon

You can use one aid ticket for consultation at the hospital. The handbook includes one ¥8,500 ticket and thirteen ¥5,000 tickets. If your fee exceeds the value of the ticket, you must pay the remainder yourself. You might not be able to use such tickets in medical facilities not located in Himeji city. In such cases, pay the consultation fee yourself and apply to the following office to get a refund within three months after childbirth. Be sure to keep the receipt issued by the hospital.

Contact: Public health office Health Division Tel 079-289-1641

★Lump- sum allowance for childbirth and nursing system

This is a system that aid pays aid money when the insured or their beneficiary gives birth to a baby.

Aid money amount: ¥420,000. (¥390,000 being applied for births outside medical facilities)

Ask the health insurance office you are associated with about the details of application form, etc.

If you give birth in Japan, we have a system where the hospital undertakes application procedures and refunding instead of you. If you use this system, money is paid to a hospital directly, and you do not need to pay the total cost when released. If you want to use this system, apply to your hospital.

★Himeji city holds a conference about pregnancy, delivery, nursing, and so on.

Himeji Wakuwaku Child: <http://www.city.himeji.lg.jp/waku2child>



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

■ 「VIVA! ひめじ」 50th memorial issue

“HELLO HIMEJI CLUB”, an information magazine for foreigners living in Himeji, was first issued in 1998 to deliver useful information around town. As you may know, “VIVA!ひめじ ” succeeded “HELLO HIMEJI CLUB” in July 2002. Thanks to many editing and translating volunteers, the next issue is going to be a memorial 50th edition print.

We're making a special effort to release the 50th edition with an extra page that will serve as a memorial keepsake. But, we need your cooperation to make it. If you are interested in helping us out, please contact us via the contact information below. Thank you!

※※※ Editor's Postscript ※※※

The FIFA World Cup is coming on June 12th in Brazil. I look forward to the Cup every four years, and I've had the pleasure of watching it from the FIFA stadium before.

These days, with tensions brewing around the world, it seems like trouble comes up on a daily basis. I hope to enjoy the players' great performance on TV without any of the political turmoil.

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These names are used with the contributors' permission.
Their assistance is much appreciated.

You can read back numbers of “VIVA! ひめじ” at the website for the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation (International Exchange Section) (<http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/>).

The next issue of “VIVA! ひめじ” will be available in October. Don't miss it! We invite your comments and suggestions.

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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