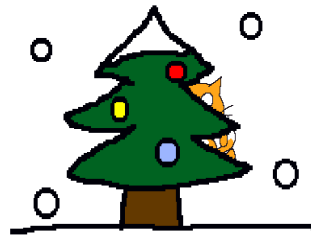


What's New?

Niihama City

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“Yattosa!”

By: Juliana Peele

I love festival time in Ehime. It creates such an exciting environment to be in and to enjoy the company of friends and co-workers. A year of festivals in Ehime starts off in January. It's too cold to do any actual partying outside so families gather in each others homes to eat special bentos made just for New Years. I have never eaten one but they always look delicious. February brings Valentine's Day. Women give chocolates to male co-workers and other males they care about. In March and April, the most well known is "Hanami", the cherry blossom viewing event. Sakura are beautiful especially at night when they are illuminated by lights. It creates a real romantic and serene atmosphere, which in turns allows Japanese and foreigners alike

to get loose, enjoy a few drinks, eat delicious food, and just be happy even if the weather is a little chilly outside.

May brings Children's day, a day to celebrate the children of Japan. Beautiful kites depicting Koi are hung from houses, representing the number of children in their household. There's something wonderful about seeing the sky littered with colorful fish swimming in the warm breeze.

July and August allow us to enjoy summer festivities. It's probably one of my favorite times of the year (except for the heat). Many people dress in beautifully decorated Yukatas to attend fire work shows in Imabari, Saijo, and Niihama. Again, it's another opportunity for everyone to relax a bit and have fun. In my town of Tanbara, it's our biggest event. I love the time leading up to Tanabata festival, the air is electrified with excitement. Tall polls of bamboo are prepared to hold the richly decorated, hand-made banners, stalls are set out to prepare for the hungry crowd, and advertisements are everywhere urging people to come and enjoy the holiday. The highlight of Tanabata in Tanbara is when Awa Odori from Tokushima, come to perform for us. It is truly a wonderful traditional dance to see and they often encourage us to join in as well.

I love to see my students out of their uniforms, showing off their unique styles, my co-workers chilling out with their families, the smell of meats being grilled, the laughter of children as they run from booth to booth trying to win as many prizes as possible,

babies and parents "ooooing" and "aaaing" at the colorful streamers hanging from the banners along the street. It's always a surreal experience for me.

I guess the reason I've fallen in love with festivals in Japan is because as a New York native, there aren't such beautiful events. We have parades but they're nothing compared to Japan. Especially in Tanbara, the whole community helps in every step necessary for the event to be a success.

As the weather gets colder, my students rush around preparing for Bunkasai ("culture day"). I look forward to seeing what they have worked so hard to put together. I also look forward to another year of wonderful festivals all over Japan.

Happy Holidays!

Juliana Peele has lived in Saijo for 2 years. She teaches at elementary and junior high school. She loves Japanese culture. Her favorite food is curry udon. Her favorite desserts are from Hatada and Ichiroku.



English Conversation Teachers' Labor Union

From the Asahi Shimbun 10/1, 2010

As the number of those who learn English conversation has been increasing, more and more, foreign language teachers are becoming involved in labor-management problems where they have been fired or the extension of their labor contract has been rejected. Many of them may want to make complaints but their knowledge of Japanese is not good enough to solve their problems or they don't know who they should talk to. In order to protect their rights, members of the non-Japanese Labor Union are working to help them. They talk with foreign workers, give advice and take on tough negotiations with management for the workers.

The bankruptcy of NOVA, the major English language school, has made us aware of the labor problems of foreign teachers working for language schools. They were fired suddenly and forced into financial difficulties. In many cases, the Ministry of Labor has been providing guidance to ALTs, assistant language teachers under contract to local Boards of Education because their labor contracts violate the Worker Dispatching Act as a disguised labor contract.

It is this multinational labor union that has been assisting foreign teachers by providing counseling on their problems in foreign languages and helping them gain union membership even if he or she is not a member of a group. The General Union, one of the major unions of this kind, was established in Osaka in 1991 and has a membership of 700 from more than 20 countries. English, to say nothing of Portuguese, Spanish, and Japanese is available because they have staff members who speak many languages. Its members are not only language teachers but also many workers employed by subcontracting companies and major corporations.

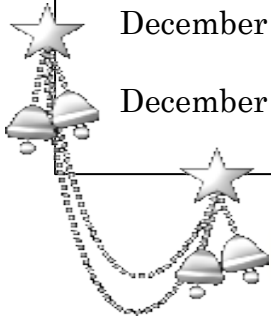
The Ministry of Labor says that there are 560,000 foreign workers in Japan, as of the end of October, 2009.



MOVIE

TOHO CINEMAS Niihama (AEON Shopping Center)

November 19 ~	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1		English/Dubbed
December 10 ~	Robin Hood		English
December 13 ~	Tron : Legacy	3D	English
December 18 ~	Shrek Forever After	3D	Dubbed
December 25 ~	Shrek Forever After	2D	Dubbed



Information Service

Internet: <http://niihama-aeonmall.com>
Tape (24 hrs): 0897-35-3322 (in Japanese)



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SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions or ideas for monthly articles.

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"Mancho-Ramen" Has Made a Come Back!

From the Ehime Shimbun 10/1, 2010

Mancho-Ramen disappeared from the market last year because of the bankruptcy of the company manufacturing it, however it has just been revived again. Mancho-Ramen first went on the market in 1959 when a noodle company in Niihama made it as dry stick noodle with a special soup.



It had been a Niihama specialty for half a century as people loved it very much. Even when production stopped in the fall of 2009 it still continued to be sold in large quantities. Many customers came to the store and some bought whole boxes of the ramen. This phenomenon

surprised the people concerned and they were impressed by the popularity of Mancho-Ramen.

Some people in Niihama and Saijo decided to revive this ramen, which was popular with all generations. After spending a great deal of time examining the last remaining packets of genuine Mancho-Ramen and checking the taste of the soup paste and noodle thickness, they succeeded in recreating the original taste and commercializing it. A company outside Ehime was finally asked to produce it and the registered trademark was transferred. The packaging and even the corrugated boxes the noodles come in were made just the same as the old ones. In order to compete with major companies, and differentiate from their products, Mancho-Ramen is only available in Ehime. The revived "Mancho-Ramen" is on sale at ten supermarkets chains which have their stores in Ehime.

Recruitment of volunteers for the 21st Global Party

The Global Party association is recruiting volunteers for the 21st Annual Global Party (Sunday, Feb. 13th '10). We are planning to prepare different sweets, dancing, music and other events.

If you are interested, please contact either

Mr. Yamamoto: harutoshiyayoi@ybb.ne.jp or 0897-55-8808

Ms. Okame: yasumi@galaxy.ocn.ne.jp or 0897-34-8914

Next meeting will be held at Women's Plaza, 10:00am, Dec. 5th.



ONE POINT JAPANESE

いろいろな“もう” No.1



A : Bさん、正月休みは国へ帰るんですか。

B-san, shōgatsu yasumi wa kuni e kaerun desu ka.

(Are you going back home during the New Year holiday, B?)

B : いいえ。Iie. (No.)

今回は、京都で正月を楽しみたいとおもっています。

Konkai wa, Kyōto de shōgatsu o tanoshimitai to omotte imasu.

(This time I thought I'd like to enjoy New Years in Kyoto.)

A : ホテルはもう予約しましたか。Hoteru wa mō yoyaku shimasita ka.
(Have you reserved a hotel yet?)

B : いいえ、これからです。Iie, kore kara desu. (No, not yet.)

A : 早くしないと、もういっぱいかもしれないよ。

Hayaku shinai to, mō ippai kamo shiremasen yo.

(If you don't do it quickly, it may be fully booked already.)

ぼうねんかい
(忘年会で) Bōnenkai de. (At the year-end party)

A : さあ、遠慮しないで、どんどん食べて!

Sā, enryo shinai de, dondon tabete!

(Now, please help yourself without hesitation.)

B : お腹いっぱい、もう食べられません。

Onaka ippai de, mō taberaremasen.

(I'm full, so I can't eat any more.)

C : あのう、もう遅いので、これで失礼します。

Ano, mō osoi node, korede shitsurē shimasu.

(Umm, it is very late. I'm afraid I have to be leaving now.)

A : そんなこと言わないで、もう一軒行こうよ。

Sonna koto iwanaide, mō ikken ikō yo.

(Oh, don't say such a thing. Let's go to one more bar!)

A : Bさん、日本へ来て、どのくらいになりますか。

Bsan, nihon e kite, donokurai ni narimasu ka.

(How long has it been since you came to Japan?)

B : 今月で、ちょうど3年です。Kongetsu de, chōdo sannen desu.

(It is just three years this month.)

A : えー! もう3年も経つんですか。早いですね。

Ee! Mō sannen mo tatsun desu ka. Hayai desu ne.

(Wow, has it been three years already?! So fast!)

B : ええ、あっという間でした。Ee, atto yū ma deshita.

(Yes, it passed in no time.)

< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

Feel free to contact us at ~Tel : 0897-34-3025 (Manami Miki).

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