

Fukushima NOW

Vo. 5 (Published in November 2017)

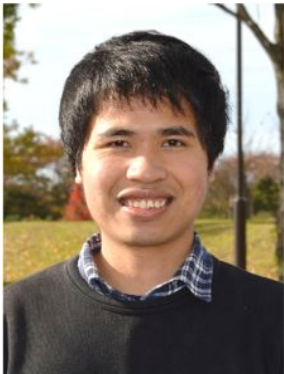
The Fukushima Prefectural International Association would like to communicate Fukushima in the “now” in multiple languages by recording the voices of the foreign residents of Fukushima and their efforts towards restoration after the disaster, be it through international exchange, or the efforts of various organizations.



※Translated versions of the newspaper can be downloaded from the FIA’s homepage.

Voices from Fukushima

Aiming for Employment at a Japanese Research Institute Pham Van Thanh (living in Aizu-Wakamatsu City, From Vietnam)



I’m currently studying light-wave communications at The University of Aizu. I came to Japan in the third year of my undergraduate program. I am now in the second year of my doctorate, and have been in Japan for six years. I began studying Japanese in Vietnam, and in September 2011 I was told by my university that my admission to the

University of Aizu had been decided and I would go to Fukushima the following April.

Before I started my study abroad, I got in contact with a Vietnamese professor at the University of Aizu, and I gathered information on the effects of radiation from the nuclear accident on Fukushima prefecture. At that time in Vietnam, the story of Fukushima’s nuclear accident was on the news every day. My parents were worried and did not want me to study in Japan, but after speaking directly contact with the Vietnamese professor, my parents approved my decision to study abroad. I do research every day from morning until about 10pm at night. Once a week, I work as an assistant teacher, helping out with classes at the university. On the weekends, I enjoy playing volleyball and soccer with other study abroad students. In the future, I’d like to get the JLPT N1 certificate, and to be employed by a Japanese research institute. For that reason I am currently attending the Aizu-Wakamatsu City International Association Japanese classes.

Aizu has cherry blossoms, autumn colours, and snow, all of which is a natural beauty that doesn’t exist in Vietnam. I’d like to show Aizu in every season to my parents while I’m here. The message I’d like to convey to everyone would be that “I am doing well along with the people of Fukushima, and we’re all leading completely normal lives here.”

Climbing Mountains to Relish in Fukushima’s Natural Beauty Jennifer Bishop (living in Date City, From America)



In February 2017 I began working as a Coordinator for International Relations in Date City. Four years ago I came to Japan as an Assistant Language Teacher. I studied Japanese in high school, I was both surprised and attracted to the indirect expressions in Japanese, and from that point on, took an avid

interest in the Japanese language. Possibly influenced by the fact that the ninety percent of the classmates in my surrounding environment were of foreign origin, I began to think that I, too, would like to live in another country. I heard about the nuclear accident from the news, but after looking at the available information, decided that it would be safe here.

Fukushima’s mountains are incredibly beautiful. I very much enjoy mountain climbing. At work, I have guided foreign residents up Mount Ryozen. I’ve climbed 30 mountains in Fukushima Prefecture thus far. My favourite mountains are Mount Ryozen and Megamiyama. Next year I’d like to climb Mount Iide.

I study Japanese by reading books and watching dramas. At the moment, I quite enjoy watching “Midnight



▲ Mountain Climbing Tour of Ryozen with Foreign Residents.

Diner”. At work I enjoy interacting with the locals. I also teach English and sing songs like “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” with preschool and kindergarten aged children. I think that being able to experience foreign languages at a young age is incredibly important. Seeing the smiles of the children is something I look forward to.

Scenes of Fukushima

The Matsuri in Iizaka

On Saturday, October 7th, the Iizaka Rotary Club held the “27th Annual The Matsuri in Iizaka” alongside the Iizaka Kenka Matsuri. Despite the light drizzle that descended upon them, approximately ninety foreign residents, including study abroad students and English teachers gathered to participate in a rare mikoshi carrying experience. After gathering at the Hachiman shrine, they paraded around the town while carrying the mikoshi, or portable shrine. Afterwards, the participants were able to heal their cold and weary bodies in Anabara Onsen’s famous Yoshikawaya hotel hot springs. Participants had many good things to say about the experience such as “I’m so glad I was able to participate in a Japanese tradition” and “the mikoshi was unexpectedly heavy” among others.



▲ Participants carrying the mikoshi

Opening of Motomiya City’s “English Garden”

The “English Garden” that Prince William visited in order to pray for Fukushima’s revitalization has been opened. An opening ceremony was held on November 4th, where British Ambassador Paul Madden, former House of Commons member Lady Borwick, and others with ties to England, came together to celebrate the symbol of friendship that bridges England and Japan. Messages from Crown Prince Charles and



▲ Tape Cutting Ceremony by Japanese and British Representatives

Prince William were received and read at the opening ceremony which was rife with a celebratory mood.

Malaysian Junior High School Students Visit Nakajima Village

On October 19th, for five days, Junior High School students from Inanam Secondary School in Sabah State in Malaysia were accompanied by their principal and Japanese teacher on a visit to Nakajima Village. The students were able to deepen their cultural understanding of each other by participating in home stay’s with the villagers, apple picking, painting darumas, and dressing in kimonos.

The students of Nakajima Junior High School’s “Chinese Bellflower Festival” included a welcome ceremony, a slideshow from their field trip to Malaysia, and a koto performance.



▲ Inanam Secondary School and Nakajima Junior High School Students

Multilingual information on the Revitalization effort from “Fukushima Restoration Station”

On Fukushima Prefecture’s official revitalization related information portal site “Fukushima Restoration Station” hosts the latest data on food safety efforts and the activities of those supporting Fukushima in 9 different languages (Japanese, English, Mandarin, Korean, German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese).

Fukushima Restoration Station <http://www.pref.fukushima.lg.jp/site/portal-english/>



FIA Information

○Support Desk for Foreign Residents

Here at the FIA, we provide consultation services for foreigners in English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, and Portuguese.

- English, Chinese, Japanese Consultation
Every Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 to 17:15
- Korean, Tagalog, Portuguese Consultation
Thursday from 10:00 to 14:00
※Appointment necessary for 4th and 5th Thursdays.

TEL : 024-524-1316(direct line) E-mail : ask@worldvillage.org

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