

United We Stand Fukushima



~ Voices from Fukushima ~

It has been 27 months since the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake. We would like to express our sympathies for the people who are still having a tough time with every day life due to the disaster. We would also like to show our foremost appreciation to the people around Japan and the world for your continuous heartfelt support.

Please take a look at our newsletter GYRO as the updates on the current situation in Fukushima Prefecture and articles on all the local activities involving foreign residents are featured.

You can download this newsletter from our homepage.



Scenery of Fukushima

Tohoku Rokkon (Six Soul) Festival

Tohoku Rokkon Festival, a festival which gathers six famous festivals in the Tohoku region, was held on June 1 and 2 in Fukushima City. During the weekend, Fukushima City was crowded with thousands of tourists from all over Japan and the city was filled with the atmosphere of a Japanese festival.

The main event of the Tohoku Rokkon Festival was a parade which kicked off with the performance of Fukushima's famous "Waraji Festival". After this performance, five other prefectures showcased their festivals and all the performances drew cheers and applause from the audience. The parade began from Fukushima City Hall and continued for about 1km on Route 4.



The gigantic 12 metre waraji used during Fukushima Waraji Festival



Multicultural Supporter -
Ms. Shikama

Other than the parade, performances such as the fighter JETs, Blue Impulse, roamed across the sky. There were booths that exhibited products from Fukushima Prefecture and other prefectures, traditional art performance and live concerts. At the information booth, multicultural supporter from F. I. A. were on site to interpret for foreigners. According to the event committee, around 250,000 people came to the festival over the weekend. People's hope towards reconstruction after the earthquake and the nuclear accident has always been strong and during this festival, the soul of the people in Tohoku became even stronger.

(Taken on 6.1, 2013 in Fukushima City)

High Expectations for the Recovery of Tourism in Aizu-Wakamatsu City



Aizu Tsuruga Castle is crowded with tourists

With the influence from the NHK Taiga drama, “Yae no Sakura” , the tourism industry in Aizu-Wakamatsu City is now getting back on track. Tour buses with tourists from other prefectures can be seen everywhere. Tourists would take the “Haigara-san” tour bus to go around the Aizu area to see tourism spots such as Niijima Yae tourism facility and Aizu Tsuruga Castle. Tourists also like to experience the traditional culture of Aizu by visiting shops with Aizu lacquer ware and Aizu candles painted with drawings.

An exhibition featuring the NHK Taiga drama, Yae no Sakura, is held at Fukushima Prefectural Museum. In the museum, there are about 200 pieces of document which were collected to show Niijima Yae’ s life from Aizu period to Kyoto period. The museum next door is a remain of an old Aizu library which is now used as Taiga drama museum. Many people would come to the museum to learn more about the history of Aizu.

Growth Support for Children through On-Site Training

“Minami-Soma Solar Agripark” is a solar power plant and a plant factory which was built in the tsunami-hit area in Haramachi area in Minami-Soma City. It was opened in May. “Minami-Soma Solar Agripark” was built as a symbol in hope to remove harmful rumours made against Fukushima and as a way to nurture our next generation by providing the children a chance to learn through on-site training.



Through on-site training, children go around for inspections in the factory

Through the program, children will be able to learn how the solar system works and go around for inspections in the factory, charging for electrically-powered cars, and the operation of a plant factory.

(Taken in Minami-Soma City on 5.31, 2103)



Rei Shiga

(From China, Female, lived in Okuma town prior to the earthquake and is currently living in Aizu-Wakamatsu City)

As I was in Okuma town when the earthquake struck, I was forced to evacuate and now I live in the temporary housing in Aizu-Wakamatsu City. I feel anxious as I have been living in the temporary housing for a long period of time and my life has been different since the earthquake. It is also difficult to mingle with the people who are living in the temporary housing. I feel that I need to accept the different values that people perceive and strengthen relationship with others as well as to grasp and to treasure all the possible opportunities.

The municipal government gave each one of us living in the temporary housing a tablet - an information access device, which allows us to confirm any latest information from the town office. We can also use the internet, make phone calls and use SNS via this tablet. I got myself a smart phone as well. Although I am not used to using a smart phone, I am trying my best to become better at it.

Amy Kawamura (From the U.S.A., Female, Fukushima City)

After the earthquake, I evacuated with my son to my husband's hometown in Sakata City in Yamagata Prefecture because I was worried about my son's health. Although there are still earthquakes and I am still worried about radiation, our family decided that we want to be together so we came back to Fukushima City this March. My son returned to his former elementary school and was able to meet his friends again. He enjoys his time playing outside.

7 years ago, when I was moving from Narita City in Chiba Prefecture to Fukushima City, people said to me, "Fukushima is full of nature and the food is delicious so you will definitely enjoy living there!" However, after the earthquake, I can feel a 180 degree turnaround with people's attitudes toward Fukushima. Misunderstandings toward Fukushima still exist. However I feel I need to tell people that I have returned to Fukushima and I feel safe living here. I hope that tourists will come and visit Fukushima again.

Adam Velin (From Canada, Male, Fukushima City)

I came to Fukushima City last summer as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT). Before the arrival, some members in my family were unhappy about my decision yet as I felt there was nothing that I should be worried about because it had been more than a year since the disaster, I came to Fukushima.

Upon arrival, I got to know more information regarding the disaster and the nuclear accident and witnessed the toughness of people in Fukushima that they never gave up even after a disaster at such a scale. My tenure as an ALT is till next summer yet in the meantime I would like to accumulate as much experience I could here in Fukushima. I will treasure the opportunities in meeting new people, visiting famous tourism spots within the prefecture and enjoy the beautiful nature here.



Measurement of radiation level in Fukushima Prefecture (provisional value)

This information was taken from the Fukushima Prefectural Government website.

The Fukushima Prefectural Government website provides updates on the radiation level in Fukushima Prefecture in Japanese, English and Chinese. The Fukushima International Association website also provides the information mentioned above and on top of that, Tagalog, Korean and Portuguese are also provided.

<http://www.worldvillage.org/>

Unit : $\mu\text{Gy/h} \approx \mu\text{Sv/h}$ (micro gray/hour \approx micro sievert/hour)

Date, Measuring time	Fukushima City	Koriyama City	Shirakawa City	Aizu Wakamatsu City	Minami Aizu Town	Minami Soma City	Iwaki City
(Normal value)	0.04	0.04-0.06	0.04-0.05	0.04-0.05	0.02-0.04	0.05	0.05-0.06
2013.6.18 9:00	0.34	0.19	0.13	0.08	0.05	0.15	0.09
Measurement device	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP
Direction and Distance from 1st power plant	North west About 63km	West About 58km	West south west About 81km	West About 98km	West south West About 115km	North About 24 km	South south west About 43km

※Measurement of the radiation level in Fukushima city was taken in the parking lot on the north side of the Kenpoku District Health and Welfare Office, Koriyama city was taken in the parking lot on the south side of the Koriyama government office complex.

※The normal value mentioned above are from the result of radioactivity levels surveyed within Fukushima prefecture in 2010 (21st year of Heisei period).

※MMP is Portable Radiation Monitoring Equipment (Mobile Monitoring Post), IMP is Immovable Monitoring Post.



Information

●Counseling service for foreigners

Here at the International Association, we provide counseling services for foreigners in English, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, and Portuguese.

- English, Chinese, Japanese
Every Tuesday to Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm
- Korean, Tagalog, Portuguese
Wednesday from 1 pm to 5 pm
※Appointment necessary for the 4th and 5th Wednesdays.

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

Publisher

Fukushima International Association

Address : 〒960-8103

Funabacho 2-1, Fukushima City,
Fukushima Prefecture

TEL : 024-524-1315 FAX : 024-521-8308

E-mail : info@worldvillage.org

URL : <http://www.worldvillage.org>