

# awa life

November 2023

# 396

## Tokushima Wooden Toy Museum



Impressions from  
Arasowaren

## Todoroki Shrine Festival



Gairaigo Galore:  
サボる



TOPIA

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## Awa Life is a Monthly Publication of the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

Konichiwazzup people! How are you all coping with the increasing lack of sunlight that November brings to Tokushima? I hope it does not discourage you from going out to enjoy the countless autumn activities one can do in the prefecture. For example: enjoying a hot cup of sake at a cozy izakaya after spending the whole day driving around visiting the various momiji spots of Tokushima. Sounds nice doesn't it?

For all of those who like writing, please feel free to submit an article to us at any point in time about basically anything. There are a few limitations though, such as you can't write about religion, politics, commercial activities or businesses or anything that we deem inappropriate. But, other than that, we would be more than happy to receive articles about anything and everything including but not limited to concerts, lectures, other events, culture, sports, community group information or anything cool that's happening in your local community.

We highly appreciate all of your articles and we love reading them. So if that writing bug of yours is buzzing about, grab a pen or a computer and write and send away! Please send all submissions to our email:

Your editors,  
Sydney and Rasmus



[awalife@gmail.com](mailto:awalife@gmail.com)



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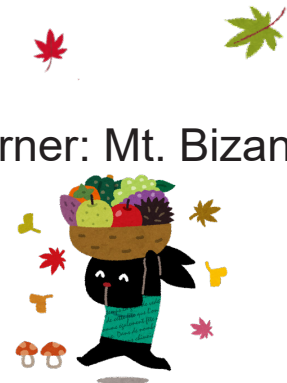
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## *Kaiyo's Waterfall Festival - Todoroki Shrine!*

By: Tony Lu

Although the majority of festivals in Kaiyo take place during summer, our two biggest and most famous festivals are actually in autumn. October's Ozato Hachiman Shrine Festival, and the Todoroki Shrine Autumn Festival in mid-November.



*Todoroki Shrine Festival and Mikoshi*

that is now Kaiyo for thousands of years. The festival is centered around giving thanks to this fact and to the goddess of the waterfall, which explains why this autumn festival is so beloved, and why its history stretches back over 400 years!

Last year, I had the chance to see it for myself

If you've ever heard of Todoroki Falls, this is the associated shrine's festival. Todoroki Falls, the largest waterfall in Shikoku, is considered to be the source of the Kaifu River that flows through Kaiyo. This river and the water from these falls has supported the livelihoods of people in the area

along with a couple of the Global Kaiyo team members. It was the first time the festival had been held in three years so we were all very excited. The shrine area is where the ceremony, the first part of the festival, takes place. It wasn't too crowded because of the lingering COVID restrictions at the time, but I'm sure it'll be very packed this time around.

There were a couple of moments during the ceremony where everyone went silent, kneeled and prayed. As foreign spectators, these moments always tend to make us feel somewhat awkward as we often don't know what's correct, so we kind of just went along with the people surrounding us. Still, ceremonies like this are always interesting to see and it was great to participate



*Todoroki Shrine Ceremony*

Once the ceremony finished, the carriers picked up the mikoshi (portable shrine) and started

making their way to the main waterfall. If you're the type of person who wants to capture every moment on camera, then you'll be faced with the excruciating choice of following behind the mikoshi or scrambling to get ahead of the crowd. Like many others, we chose the latter and waited at the main waterfall where the festival reaches its climax.



*Mikoshi carriers climbing slippery rocks*

The carriers clambered over slippery rocks and swam through the cold water of the river while

attempting to bring the mikoshi to the base of the waterfall. The mist coming from the waterfall also meant that we were practically being rained on. With the spectacle of the festival, the roaring and vibration of the water crashing into the pool, it was an intense feast for the senses that's definitely worth checking out while you're in Japan. For those interested, you can find more info on the event page at the back!



*Carriers and Mikoshi in waterfall crevice*

## Tokushima Wooden Toy Museum

By: Mihoko Matsuzaki

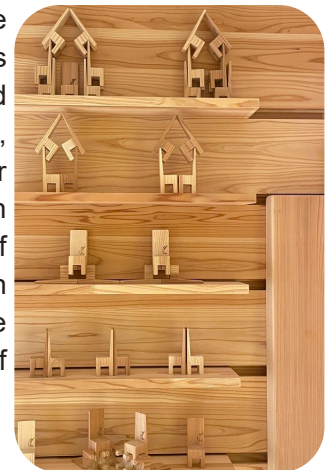
Tokushima Prefecture is rich in nature, with 75% of the prefecture's land covered by forests. With the goal to familiarize more people with woodcrafts while also showcasing the natural charms of the region, the Tokushima Wooden Toy Museum was founded on October 24th, 2021. The approximately 1,600-square-meter venue features more than 300 types of wooden toys, a slide going down a giant tree, as well as toy replications of different forestry products.



*Entrance to the museum*

Inside the museum, Tokushima landmarks like the Yoshino River, terraced rice paddies, the Udatsu Townscape, and the Kazurabashi Vine Bridge in Iya are recreated in

a dynamic wooden space that allows visitors to playfully experience the nature and culture of the prefecture. There are many traditional Japanese toys, beautiful toys from around the world, and wooden toys that nurture the spirit, which visitors can actually pick up and play with. In addition, through playing together with the red apron wearing volunteer staff "toy curators", you can learn about the culture and different playstyle of the toys.



### Satoyama Square

Here, a wooden version of the symbol of Tokushima City "Mount Bizan" is showcased in a 300 to 1 scale, surrounded by a reconstruction of the Yoshino River filled by tiny round wooden pieces. The mock river contains about 50,000



*Tokushima Wooden Toy Museum*

of those wooden pieces, all of them polished smooth, making it a popular and danger free playground for children. In fact, there are also some acorns mixed into the “stream” of the river. According to staff members, it is surprisingly



hard to find just a single one, as there are only 100 of them. Give it a try and see how long it takes you to find them! Next to the river there is a tree. If you look closely at the trunk, you can make out caterpillars hidden within.

To get them out you need to use either a magnetic stick or pull them outside with your own hands. Since they are made from wood, even people who normally do not like touching insects can enjoy this experience.

*Good Toys Square*

This room is dedicated to highlighting “good toys” that have been specifically selected by about 6,000 toy consultants nationwide. They are high quality toys bringing smiles to faces worldwide no matter what age, gender, or country of origin.



*Udatsu Townscape*

In this area you can find small huts that have installations displaying board games and other analogue games. Because the design of the huts is based on the famous tourist spot “Udatsu Townscape”, known for its traditional Japanese architecture, Tokushima’s culture acts as a backdrop for this part of the exhibition too.



*Wooden huts based on traditional architecture*

*Playground for Toddlers*

This is a room reserved for children until the age of 3 and their parents. The babies can crawl around in the huge and safely designed space, where the toys and play equipments are arranged to fit their different age and developmental needs, creating an exciting environment to play in.



*Impressions from Arasowaren*

*By: Akira Harada*

The Awa Odori is Tokushima’s traditional folk dance, said to have over 400 years of history. There are a variety of theories as to the dance’s origins, but it was not a bon dance unique to the

Tokushima Castle area. Rather, it was a myriad of dances, such as furyu dance from the Kinai region, that were incorporated to form the Castle Area dance. It’s said that as the Castle Area



developed and changed thanks to the support of local leaders, the present-day Awa Odori took shape. The dance began to flourish when Hachisuka Iemasa, founder of the Tokushima Domain, arrived in 1586, after which indigo merchants became active and the Awa Odori grew more and more luxurious with each year. (Source: Awa Odori Kaikan Homepage)

Today, the Awa Odori is not only known in Tokushima, but is viewed around the world as one of Japan's representative traditional performing arts.



Formed in 1980, Arasowaren is a group that dances Tokushima's traditional art of Awa Odori. Through dancing together with people from throughout the world, regardless of nationality, race, religion, etc., Arasowaren hopes to create a peaceful world through mutual understanding. At the time of its formation, there were approximately 20 members. The name 'Arasowaren' comes from the Tokushima dialect with 'ren' meaning 'one must not do something'. Arasowaren then means 'one must not fight', with the 'ren' portion of the



name also being used to mean an 'Awa Odori group'.



On August 14th, 2023 (Mon.), the Awa Odori exchange project 'Arasowaren' was held. This year marked the 43rd year since the group's formation, and this year 39 foreign residents from 20 different countries took to the stage under the guidance of the famous Nonkiren, for a total of approximately 130 members. The participants all began practice a month in advance, and everyone was looking forward to the main event. The day of the performance was filled with rain due to the influence a typhoon, but I was able to see everyone's smiles as they danced. Some of the members commented that, "I feel like when everyone was dancing together our hearts all became one. It was so much fun", and "I hope that one day we will have a peaceful world".

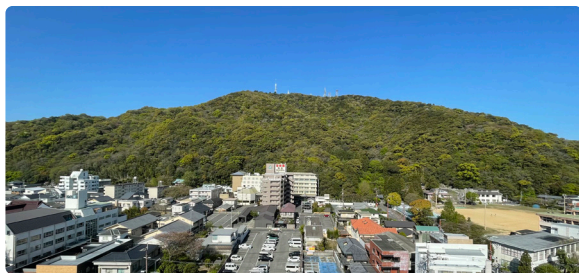
Even in spite of the rain, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to everyone who helped make this possible, as well as all of our participants.



# Tokushima Culture and Reading Corner: Mt. Bizan

By: Junko Kimura

眉山は 徳島市街に そびえる 標高 290 m の山で、徳島市のシンボルの一つです。市内の どこからでも その姿を 眺められます。眉山は 眉の形に 似ていることから 「眉山」と 名付けられたそうです。眉山山頂の 展望広場からは、徳島市街を 見渡すことが できます。天気の良い日には 淡路島や 紀伊半島が 一望でき、夜には 綺麗な 夜景を 満喫できます。眉山では 春には 桜の花が 咲き、花見をする人で 賑わいます。秋には 紅葉を 楽しむことができます。そして、季節ごとに 訪れる 野鳥を 観察することができます。眉山には ロープウェイか 車で 行くことができます。また いくつかの 登山道があり、ハイキングを 楽しむ人も 多くいます。徳島駅から 眉山山頂まで 歩いて 1 時間位で 行くことができます。眉山の 一番高いところは 展望広場だと思っている人が 多いかもしれません。しかし、眉山の 最高点は 展望広場から 歩いて 40 分くらいの 所に あります。スポーツの秋に、眉山の 最高点を 目指して、歩いてみてください。



## Vocabulary List

名付け	Naming	そびえる	To Tower	標高	Elevation	眉	Eyebrow
山頂	Summit*	展望	Outlook	広場	Square	一望	Sweeping View
見渡す	Look Out Over	夜景	Night View	賑わい	Bustling	満喫	Having One's Fill
紅葉	Fall Colors	訪れる	Visit	野鳥	Wild Bird	観察	Observation
登山	Mountain Climbing	最高点	Highest Point	目指し	Aim/Goal		

\*Does not always mean the highest point

## サボる Slack Off / Skip Work

By: Rasmus Burgmer

## Gairaigo Galore

The Japanese word for slacking off or skipping out on work originates from the French word “sabotage”, which is also the origin for the English word with the same spelling and meaning. Although there is some connection between the meanings and you can somewhat retrace how サボる has developed from sabotage, the latter definitely implicates a much more deliberate obstruction and would not be used when you can't make it to work just because you are too hungover.



The meaning of the gairaigo has therefore deviated towards describing everyday life situations and has become the preferred expression to use compared even to original Japanese words with the same meaning.

I of course know that you have not been slacking off about studying Japanese, so I am sure you all realize that this word is written using both katakana and hiragana, a combination that is most rare in Japanese. The katakana letters サボ (sabo) are what remains of the French original, with the hiragana る (ru) being added to make it into a verb, that you can conjugate like any other verb in the Japanese language. Adapting the word to fit grammar rules shows again how widely accepted as part of the language it has become, with a lot of Japanese people not even realizing that its origins lie outside of Japan.



## コロケーション (Collocations)

To follow up on last month's lesson, let's study some more collocations. Collocations are expressions made up of words that always go together. For example, of which of the two verbs 「飲む」 and 「食べる」 would you use in combination with either 「コーヒー」 or 「パン」? That's right, it's 「コーヒーを飲む」 and 「パンを食べる」. The differentiation in using 「飲む」 for liquids and 「食べる」 for solids is easy to understand. How would you go about 「みそ汁」 and 「薬」 though? 「みそ汁」 is a mixture of liquids and solids. 「薬」 is a solid. Therefore, if you try to apply the same rules used for bread and coffee, you wouldn't know what to use for 「みそ汁」 and for 「薬」. It would be 「食べる」. However, for both 「みそ汁」 and 「薬」, the correct verb is in fact 「飲む」. You have no choice but to memorize it. Let's look at similar expressions which also cannot be explained through logical thinking or grammatical rules.

For this month's collocations, I chose two words particularly relevant for this season: 「かぜ」 and 「熱」.

Words that come together as a set with 「かぜ」

1. かぜをひいて、会社をやすんだ I caught a cold, so I took a day off from work
2. 寒くなり、かぜがはやってきました It's getting colder, and a cold is going around
3. かぜにかかってしまい、咳が止まりません I've caught a cold and can't stop coughing
4. 妻のかぜがうつってしまった I've caught a cold from my wife
5. かぜが軽かったので、病院へ行きませんでした It was a minor cold, so I didn't go to the doctor
6. 会社を休んでぐっすり寝たら、かぜが治った As soon as I took a day off and had a good night's sleep, my cold went away

Words that come together as a set with 「熱」

1. かぜをひいて、38度の熱がでた I've caught a cold and have a fever of 38 degrees
2. 息子が元気がないと思っていたら、熱があった  
I thought my son didn't seem well, and he indeed had a fever
3. 頭が痛かったが、熱がないので会社へ行くことにしました。  
My head hurt, but since I didn't have a fever I went to work anyway
4. 一日寝たら、熱が下がった。 After a day's sleep the fever went down
5. 薬を飲んだのに、また熱が上がってしまった Despite taking medicine, my fever went up again
6. 熱が高くて、喉が痛いので医者に見てもらった。 I had high fever and a sore throat, so I went to  
see a doctor

【Test】 Choose the correct word

1. かぜが(はやって かかって) いるので、うがいをしましょう。
2. 熱が(減ったので 下がったので)、今日は学校へ行きます。
3. かぜが(軽かった すくなかった) ので、薬を飲まなかった。
4. 熱が(高くて 大きくて) 頭も痛いので、晩ご飯を食べたくない。
5. 病院の薬を飲んだら、かぜが(なくなった 治った)。





# Events & Memoranda

## Todoroki Shrine Autumn Festival 2023 轟神社秋季例大祭り

The Annual Autumn festival, held on the second Sunday of November every year, and is famous for the "abaremikoshi" spectacle, whereby the "mikoshi" (portable shrine) is carried energetically down the steep stone steps descending from the main shrine to the Waterfall.

In this ritual, the mikoshi is plunged into the waterfall basin, unfolding into a magnificent scene that unites the bearers, mikoshi and nature.

When: November 12th (Sun.)  
14:00 – Todoroki Shrine Ceremony  
15:00 – Mikoshi Carrying (Main Shrine to Waterfall)

\*Event dates and times may change, so please refer to the website for the latest information.

Where: Kaiyo, Hirai Kareidani 21-1, Todoroki Falls  
Inquiries: Todoroki Shrine  
TEL: 0884-75-2216  
URL: <https://www.kaiyo-kankou.jp/en/event/todoroki-autumn-festival/>

毎年11月第2日曜に行われる例大祭は、神社を出発して急な石段をかけ降り本滝に向かう暴れ神輿が有名で、特に御神輿を担いだまま滝壺に入る滝渡御では人と神輿と自然が一体となるような荘厳な情景が繰り広げられます。

日時：  
11月12日（日）大里八幡神社秋祭り  
14時～轟神社で祭儀  
15時～轟本滝神社への神輿お滝入り  
※開催日時は変更になる場合がございますので、最新情報はホームページでご確認ください。

場所：  
海陽町平井字王余魚谷 21-1

問い合わせ：轟神社  
TEL：0884-75-2216  
URL：<https://www.kaiyo-kankou.jp/event/event-1055/>

## TOPIA Events TOPIA のイベントのお知らせ

① Heiseiza UNESCO Future Heritage Registration 10 Year Anniversary Performance (Awa Ningyo Joruri Puppet Theater Performance)  
When: Nov. 26th (Sun.) 13:00-16:00  
Fee: Admission Fee Required  
Where: Awa Jurobe Yashiki, Kawauchicho, Tokushima City

② Supporting Tokushima's Rural Areas Harvesting of Hassaku Oranges  
When: December 10th (Sun.) 8:30-17:00  
Where: Anabuki, Mima

③ International Understanding Forum  
When: December 13th (Wed.) 13:30-15:00  
Where: ASTY Tokushima

◆ For detailed information, please refer to our website/Facebook page.

① 平成座 ユネスコ未来遺産登録10周年「人形浄瑠璃記念公演」  
11月26日（日）13:00～16:00 入場料必要  
（徳島市川内町 阿波十郎兵衛屋敷にて）

② とくしま農山漁村応援し隊  
12月10日（日）8:30～17:00  
はっさくの収穫作業（美馬市穴吹町にて）

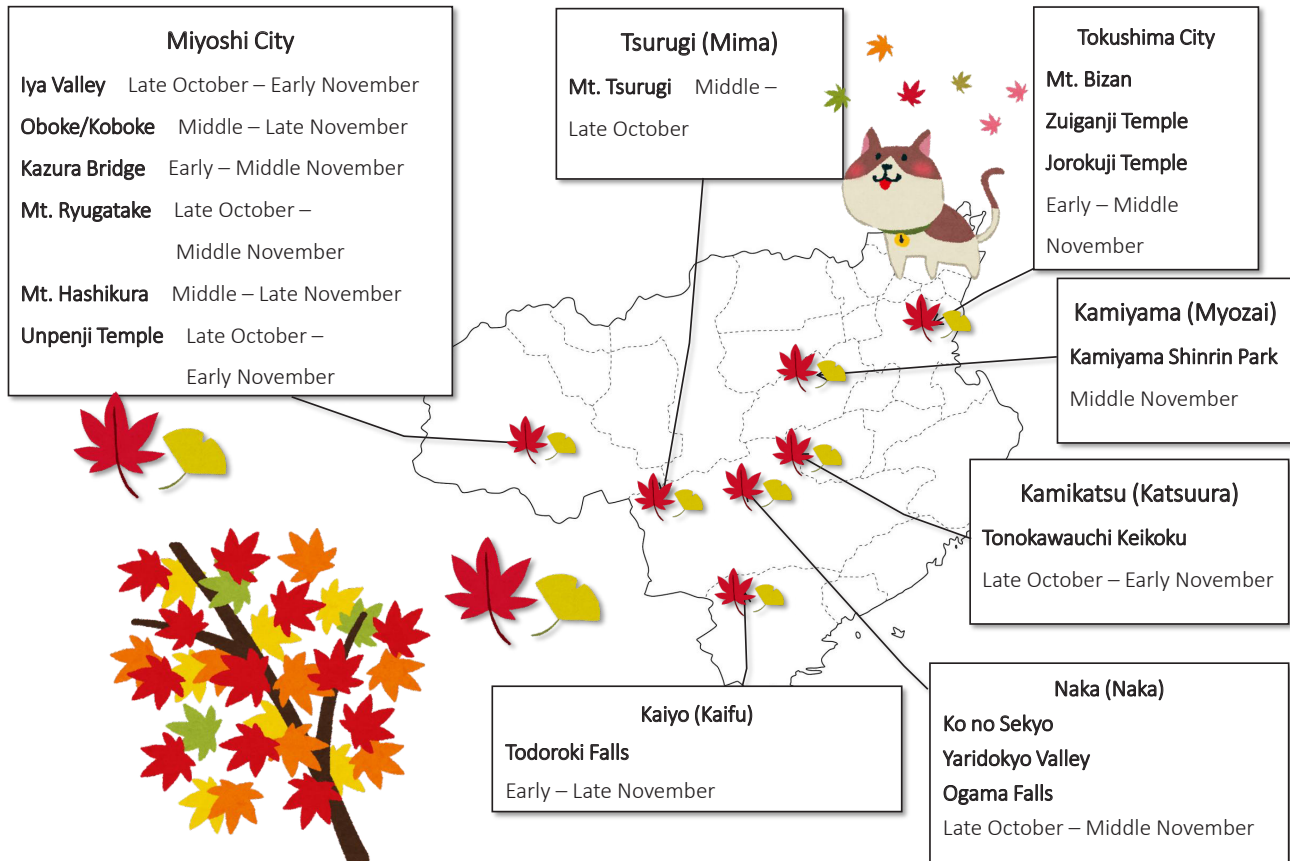
③ 国際理解支援フォーラム  
12月13日（水）13:30～15:00  
（アスティとくしまにて）



◆ くわしくはTOPIAホームページ・フェイスブックをみてください。

# Events & Memoranda

## Tokushima Fall Foliage Map 徳島紅葉マップ



### \*\*Free General Consultation in Miyoshi City\*\*

When: November 7th (Tue.) 13:00 - 16:00

Topics: Visas, Marriage/Divorce, Taxes, Insurance, Etc.

Languages: Japanese, English, Chinese, Vietnamese

See TOPIA's website for making a reservation!

<https://www.topia.ne.jp/english/docs/2023101100026/>



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TOPIA provides consultation on everyday life, education, labor, medical institutions, and disaster prevention; and information on sightseeing spots to overseas residents and visitors. When necessary, we will refer you to the appropriate organization that can assist with your needs. Counselling is available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

**Japanese, English, Chinese:** Everyday, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)

**Vietnamese:** Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 10:00 - 14:00

Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)