

# awa life

Letter from SUKETO  
NAKAYOSHI

December 2023

# 397

Fate Took us to  
Tokushima (Part 1)



Ambassador's Tour to  
Tokushima

Gairaigo Galore:  
ランドセル



TOPIA

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

In a blink of an eye the year is almost over! Does everyone have any plans for the end of year/ New Year? Maybe you can curl up under the kotatsu and enjoy a good book, or catch up on some much-needed rest. Visiting a shrine for the first time of the year is also always a fun experience for New Year! You can make sure to get a new omamori charm for the upcoming year.

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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*Download a PDF file of awa life or view the online version by going to TOPIA's website!*



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## *Ambassador's Tour to Tokushima*

By: Sydney Bartig

On October 30th and 31st, a total of 16 ambassadors and their spouses visited Tokushima Prefecture. The ambassadors represented 12 different countries, including Finland, Singapore, Ghana, Romania, Venezuela, and Norway. The group visited Tokushima with the purpose to learn more about the prefecture under the theme of “Tokushima’s history and its advanced initiatives toward the achievement of the SDGs.” Held in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this project was the first of its kind in Tokushima.

On the morning of the 30th, the group arrived at the Awaodori Airport. After some short introductions, it was immediately off to the first location – Otsuka Holdings. As one of Tokushima’s largest companies, Otsuka introduced its history, products, and philosophy to the ambassadors. The presentation took place at one of Otsuka’s buildings known as “The ENCOUNTER”, built to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the company.

After a delicious lunch with the vice governor of Tokushima, the group set out to the small town of Kamikatsu. With a population of approximately 1,300, of which almost half are 65 years or older, the town has been grappling with the issues of low birth rates and an aging population. The ambassadors were introduced to 2 of the major initiatives that Kamikatsu has been working on: the Zero Waste Center and the Irodori Leaf Business.



Yokoishi-san, the founder and president of Irodori, began with a presentation about his unique company. He explained about how the idea for the company came about, the myriad of troubles that he faced at the beginning, and his hopes for the future. For those who don’t know, Irodori farmers sell leaves known as ‘tsumamono’ that are used to enhance Japanese dishes and add a feeling of the seasons. The majority of the farmers are elderly grandmas who put their heart into the business. Yokoishi-san’s presentation was filled with laughs, entertaining everyone.

After listening to Yokoishi-san’s presentation, the group was given a tour of the Zero Waste Center. Everyone listened with great interest as the guide, Otsuka-san, explained about Kamikatsu’s sole trash separating center, complete with 45 different categories that waste must be separated into. She spoke about the town’s efforts to eliminate waste all together, and the importance of reusing items. At the Kuru Kuru Shop, a shop consisting of items that were no longer needed by the town’s people, one of the ambassadors even picked up some small glasses for himself. In an interview afterwards, the Singapore and Finland



ambassadors both remarked on how impressed they were with the town's efforts to involve and educate the community about zero waste and environmental issues.

It was next time for the final event of the day – a welcome party hosted by the governor of Tokushima at the AoAwo Naruto Resort. Everyone enjoyed talks with Governor Gotoda and some of the department heads from the prefectural office. Partway through, a performance of Awa Ningyo Joruri Puppet Theater, Sanbaso, was performed, with everyone happily taking photos and videos of the puppets.

After a busy day prior, the second day began with a trip to the Otsuka Museum of Art. Although time was limited, the group was guided to some of the main attractions of the museum's replica paintings, including the Mona Lisa, the Last Supper, the Scream, and Van Goh's Sunflowers.



Next, the group headed out to experience a different part of Tokushima – one of its traditional cultural arts. After arriving at the Ai no Yakata, the museum head, Mori-san, explained about the history and importance of “ai indigo” in Tokushima Prefecture. Of course, one of the most fun parts of the Ai no Yakata is trying indigo dying for yourself, and all of the ambassadors did just that. Listening to the staff's instructions, everyone dipped their handkerchiefs into the indigo vats multiple times, lifting them up after 1 minute each time in order to oxidize them. When the handkerchiefs were finally dyed a beautiful indigo blue, everyone took a group picture and explored the grounds of the Ai no Yakata a bit further.

With their indigo handkerchiefs in hand, it was

time to stop at the recently opened Kamiyama Marugoto College. Located in the town of Kamiyama, the school operates with the goal of fostering future entrepreneurs and hosts students from all around Japan. The students had a chance to connect with the ambassadors online where they spoke about their school, had the chance to enjoy lunch made with Kamiyama ingredients, and asked each other questions. The students did their best to speak in English, and asked the ambassadors questions such as, “What food do you recommend from your country?”, and “Why are people okay with paying such high taxes in your country?” After saying goodbye, it was time to head to the last few places on the tour's itinerary.

When it comes to Tokushima, you can't visit without seeing the Awa Odori, so the group stopped at the Awa Odori Kaikan to see one of the afternoon shows. After seeing the professionals dance and explain the basics of the Awa Odori, it was time for everyone to try it themselves, and everyone danced excitedly in a circle on the main stage. One of the ambassadors was even named the ‘champion’ of the dance.



As the day drew to a close, the bus finally stopped at Kuru Kuru Naruto before heading to the Awaodori Airport. Many of the ambassadors took this opportunity to purchase some delicious Tokushima souvenirs, some commenting on how tasty the Naruto Kintoki sweet potato sweets were. A few were also amused by the large sweet potato sculpture in front of the shop and took photos next to it.

After a busy 2 days, it was finally time for everyone to head home. For most this was their first experience in Tokushima, but many kindly

## Ambassador's Tour to Tokushima

commented on how they would like to come back and explore more of the prefecture in their private time. One ambassador was quite excited to try

crossing the Iya Kazurabashi Vine Bridge one day. Hopefully everyone has the chance to come back and enjoy more of Tokushima's wonders!

### Fate Took us to Tokushima (Part 1)

By: Philippe Levy



Have you ever been in a situation where the whole universe seems to be ganging up against you?

That is exactly what happened to me and my 23-year-old nephew Max when we decided to go to Japan this year. We had planned the trip over a year ago. This would give Max the time to finish his final year of studies, and to put some money aside. As I usually take my vacations in September, I had suggested this period to him as a good time to go. We had a deal then!

We decided to go to Tokyo, or Kyoto perhaps. For simplicity's sake I must confess, as since 2005 I have often been to these prefectures. I know them well and have my habits there. At the beginning of September, Maxence graduated with a master's degree, and I was on vacation, so at last, we were both finally free to go, with something to celebrate. (And that is when everything started to go wrong.)

First, I fell ill, confined to bed by a strange fever. After a week, the fever had passed and I packed my bag. (Checklist complete.) Max came to my place to arrange plane reservations. My habit is always to make plane reservations one day in advance, which gives me the freedom to change my mind. As I have never had trouble booking at this time of year, I had not thought it worthwhile booking in advance. Much to our despair, we found out that all flights were fully booked, whether to Tokyo or Osaka. All of them!

No matter, we decided to take two stand-by tickets and try to board the evening Tokyo



flight on a waitlist. I was so confident! I was sure we would soon be gone. So off we went to Paris CDG airport, checked in our luggage, and waited until the end of boarding to see if two seats would become available for us. At around 10.00 pm, we were notified that we would not have any seat on this flight, which was the last of the day. So, we sadly headed back to Paris, arriving home at around 1 am. Too tired to arrange a plan B, we waited for the next morning after a good night's sleep to make further arrangements.

The next day, we checked the flights to Japan again. All of them were still fully booked... So, we gave up on this Japan idea and decided to visit Europe, starting with Stockholm, Rome, maybe Edinburgh etc. But once again, all flights were fully booked, or nearly so, and we certainly did not want to relive the hours of waiting pointlessly at the airport.

What to do...?? Frankly, I felt we had been through enough bad luck already and too many signs telling us not to go at all... I was on the verge of giving up totally. Then I thought we could go to Korea. Max and I did not know the country, so why not... At the same time, I could feel Max's bitter disappointment, as he was dreaming of going back to Japan for the second time. What could I possibly do to make him happy? That is when we remembered a series of tv shows we had seen during the covid lockdown years on the Japanese TV channel « Tabi ». As we were no longer able to travel, every day we dreamed a

little of the Land of the Rising Sun, as we watched television.

We had been particularly impressed by documentaries depicting the Shikoku 88-temple-pilgrimage. A journalist from Tokyo had decided to do the whole pilgrimage, and had filmed it all. Max and I promised ourselves we would go one day, mesmerized by the wonderful images.

So, we started a new checklist. First: google map. Korea was not far away from Shikoku after all. Flights from Paris to Seoul were available, and above all it was only an hour and a half's flight from Seoul to Matsuyama City. (Not to mention the cheap fares between the two places.) That is when all the obstacles suddenly disappeared and

the skies had cleared, at last. Checklist complete! We were able to board the flight to Seoul. There, a Jeju Air flight took us to Matsuyama. And everything else was a dream.

~Continued Next Month!~



## Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI

By: Kazue Inoue (Center for Early Childhood Education and Care SUKETO NAKAYOSHI)

Recently at the center, the older children have been helping care for the younger ones. They return to class saying, "they were cute" after enthusiastically helping with the lunch clean-up, other cleaning, and playing with the younger children. The younger children are so happy and comment that, "It was so much fun"! Of course, they can also help the childcare providers, bringing merits for both sides. Do you have a child at home who wants to help out? I highly encourage you to let them help, especially when they have the desire to do so.

Helping out fosters a myriad of skills.

- ① Teaches the fundamentals of daily life.
- ② Through experience, children begin to think of ways to do tasks better and develop the strength to challenge anything.
- ③ A sense of accomplishment is tied to further desire and confidence. Making others happy makes the child happy, and it fosters feelings and thoughts of wanting to assist others.

In early childhood it can be difficult for children to continue this every day, so make it fun while having them help with things that they are able to do. The keys to success are to recognize the

child's desire to help and not demand perfection; don't redo things in front of the child; and don't forget to say, "thank you"! As children grow, their skills will improve and they will be able to help you more.

### Homemade Sweets: Ohagi (For 1 Person)

- ① Mix 15 g of rice with 15 g of glutinous rice and then cook in 150 g of water. (Adding the glutinous rice gives it a springy texture.)
- ② Roll approximately 10 g per person of coarse anko red bean paste (store bought).
- ③ Wrap the coarse anko ② into the cooked rice ① and form into an oval shape.
- ④ Mix 3 g kinako (roasted soybean flour) and 2 g sugar, then sprinkle onto ③.



\* Ohagi is often eaten in Japan on the equinoctial weeks (seasonal changing point of spring and autumn). As glutinous rice is used, it is recommended for children 3 and older. When making for younger children, you can use just normal rice.



Tokushima Culture and Reading Corner: 大晦日

By: Akira Harada

1年の最後の日、12月31日を「大晦日と言います。晦日とは、毎月の最後の日のことで、一年の最後の日は「大」をつけて大晦日と言います。

昔の日本は、日暮から次の日の日暮までを一日としていました。つまり、12月31日の日暮までが大晦日でした。夜は一晩中起きていて、私たちに幸せをくださる神様をお迎えして、お祝いをする日（正月）でした。現在は、夜の零時からが新年です。大晦日の夜から新年にかけて、各地で、さまざまな催しが行われます。

皆さんは、どのように新年を迎えますか。

新しい年が、皆さんにとって、良い年になりますように！



Vocabulary List

大晦日	New Year's Eve	お	起きている	Awake	げんざい	現在	Present Day	まいつき	毎月	Every Month
晦日	Last Day of the Month	かみさま	神様	God(s)	れいじ	零時	12:00	さいご	最後	Last
昔	The Past	むか	お迎え	Welcome	しんねん	新年	New Year	つぎ	次の日	Next Day
日暮れ	Sunset	いわ	お祝い	Celebration	かくち	各地	Each Area	おこな	行われる	Held (Event)
一晩中	All Night Long	しょうがつ	正月	New Year	もよお	催し	Event			

ランドセル (Backpack)

By: Sydney Bartig

Gairaigo Galore



If you teach at an elementary school or are up early in the morning and see students commuting to school, you have probably noticed the unique backpacks that they carry. These almost square-shaped leather/artificial leather backpacks are actually called ランドセル and are typically used by elementary school students starting from their first year of elementary school to their final year of elementary school.

Since they are used until the end of elementary school, they are made to be long-lasting and can be quite pricy. In the past, boys had black ランドセル and girls had red, but there are many colors to choose from now. There are even Sudachi-kun version ランドセル covers here in Tokushima!



The word ランドセル actually stems from the Dutch word 'ransel' which translates to backpack. These ransel first made their way into Japan during the Edo period (1603 – 1868) from the Netherlands. Initially, they were not used by children, but rather by soldiers to carry their goods. Eventually they became the norm for students to carry all of their school supplies in after the crown prince of that era received one when beginning school.

## ～ながら

Let's study how to use 「～ながら」 to express two verbs that are done at the same time.

In the morning, Tanaka-san drinks coffee (コーヒーを飲<sup>の</sup>みます) and reads the newspaper (新聞<sup>しんぶん</sup>を<sup>よ</sup>みます) at the same time.

When using 「ながら」 to make this one sentence, the pattern is as follows:

田中<sup>たなか</sup>さんはコーヒーを飲<sup>の</sup>みながら新聞<sup>しんぶん</sup>を<sup>よ</sup>みます。

Vます形+ながら



Now, how about for this scenario?

A: さあ、食<sup>しょくじ</sup>事にしよう。

B: ちょっと待<sup>ま</sup>って。このドラマが面白<sup>おもしろ</sup>くて・・・。

A: こまったなあ、いま、食<sup>た</sup>べてほしいんだけど。

じゃあ、テレビを見<sup>み</sup>ながら食<sup>しょくじ</sup>事にする？

B: う・・・ん、じゃあ、食<sup>しょくじ</sup>事しながらテレビ見<sup>み</sup>るね。



The primary action follows after 「ながら」.

In A-san's sentence, 「食<sup>しょくじ</sup>事にする？」 comes second, while for B-san it is 「テレビを見<sup>み</sup>る」 that appears second. This lets us know which action they think of as the primary one.

Additionally, you can also use 「てはいけません」, such as in the example 「携<sup>けいたい</sup>帯を見<sup>み</sup>ながら運<sup>うんてん</sup>転してはいけません。」, to express two things that must not be done at the same time.

## Practice Questions

Use 「ながら」 to combine the two actions into one sentence.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ① 音 <sup>おんがく</sup> 楽 <sup>き</sup> を聞 <sup>き</sup> きます | 運 <sup>うんてん</sup> 転 <sup>ん</sup> しま <sup>す</sup> す  |
| ② 本 <sup>ほん</sup> を <sup>よ</sup> 読 <sup>よ</sup> みます    | お風 <sup>ふう</sup> 呂 <sup>ろ</sup> に入 <sup>はい</sup> ります  |
| ③ 携 <sup>けいたい</sup> 帯 <sup>たい</sup> を見 <sup>み</sup> ます | 自 <sup>じてんしゃ</sup> 転 <sup>ん</sup> 車 <sup>しゃ</sup> に <sup>の</sup> 乗 <sup>の</sup> ります (てはいけません)                 |
| ④ ガム <sup>か</sup> を <sup>か</sup> 噛 <sup>か</sup> みます    | 先 <sup>せんせい</sup> 生 <sup>せい</sup> の <sup>はなし</sup> 話 <sup>わ</sup> を <sup>き</sup> 聞 <sup>き</sup> きます (てはいけません) |

- ④ ガムを噛みながら先生の話を聞いてはいけません。
- ③ 携帯を見ながら自転車に乗ってはいけません。
- ② 本を読みながらお風呂に入ります。
- ① 音楽を聞きながら運転します

Answers :



# Events & Memoranda



## Romantic Christmas at the Otsuka Museum of Art 大塚国際美術館 ロマンチック クリスマス

Let's spend Christmas at the Otsuka Museum of Art. ♪ The museum is holding a special event: Romantic Christmas. While perusing famous works of art, enjoy a magically romantic winter complete with a Christmas tree, decorative lights, and more.

When: November 21st (Tue.) – December 24th  
(Sun.) 9:30 -17:00 (Closed Mondays)

Where: Otsuka Museum of Art

Fee: General Admission: 3,300 Yen

University Students: 2,200 Yen

Elementary – High School Students: 550

Inquiries: Otsuka Museum of Art

TEL: 088-687-3737

URL: <https://o-museum.or.jp/publics/index/1269/>

クリスマスは美術館で過ごそう♪特別イベント「ロマンチック クリスマス」を開催します。名画鑑賞とともに、クリスマスツリーやライトアップなど、この季節だけの、幻想的でロマンチックなひとときをお楽しみください。

日時：11月21日（火）～12月24日（日）  
9：30～17：00・月曜休館

場所：大塚国際美術館

料金：一般 3,300円

大学生 2,200円

小中高生 550円

お問い合わせ：大塚国際美術館

TEL: 088-687-3737

URL: <https://o-museum.or.jp/publics/index/1269/>

## Asutamuland Tokushima Happy Xmas 2023 あすたむらんど Happy Xmas 2023



Park hours will be extended until 9:00 PM! 400,000 lights, one of the largest illumination events in the prefecture, will be on display! The park is welcoming all visitors with its 400,000 light display so that they can enjoy the feeling of "emocion!".

Plenty of night-limited events are planned. ♪ Facilities such as the children's science museum will also be open during the evening, and there are many events waiting for you.

When: December 2nd (Sat.) – 29th (Fri.)  
9:30 – 21:00

Where: Asutamuland Tokushima

Inquiries: Asutamuland Tokushima

TEL: 088-672-7111

URL: <https://asutamuland.jp/events/event/7370/>

夜9時まで延長開園！県内最大級規模40万球のイルミネーション！来園者の皆様に“emocion！感動”していただけるように、県内最大規模の40万球のイルミネーションでお出迎えします。

夜間限定イベントもたくさん開催するよ♪子ども科学館などの施設も夜間開館し、イベント盛り沢山でお待ちしております。

日時：12月2日（土）～29日（金）  
9：30～21：00

場所：徳島県立あすたむらんど

お問い合わせ：徳島県立あすたむらんど

TEL：088-672-7111

URL：<https://asutamuland.jp/events/event/7370/>

# Events & Memoranda

## ONE WORLD Stories from the United States & Mexico アメリカ・メキシコについてお話を聞いてみませんか？

講師の方、お二人をお迎えして、ONE WORLD こども支援事業を行います。

ペレズ アンゼロ トマス バウティスタさんと、オマール カマチョ ゴンサレスさんです。  
みなさん、この機会にアメリカとメキシコのお話を聞いてみませんか？是非、ご参加ください。

日時：1月14日（日）13：30～14：45

対象：県内に住む小学生等

参加費：無料

主催：徳島県国際交流協会（TOPIA）

電話：088-656-3303

申し込み：coordinator3@topia.ne.jp

締め切り：1月11日（木）

\*申し込み：メールにて、名前、学年、メールアドレス、電話番号を書いてお申し込みください。

詳しいことは、HP を見てください。

TOPIA HP



### \*\*Event Notice\*\*

#### Tokushima Marathon 2024

The Tokushima Marathon 2024 will be held on March 24th, 2024 (Sun.)!

For more information, please scan the QR code.

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### \*\* Important Notice! \*\*

TOPIA will be closed from **December 29th (Fri.) - January 3rd (Wed.)** for the end of year/New Year holidays.

We will reopen as usual on January 4th (Thur.).

Have a great holiday!



## Counselling Service at TOPIA・トピアの相談窓口

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)