

awa life

Umeshu Matsuri: **Good Times with Plum Wine**

Honorary **Citizenship Award** from **Leiria City**

February 2020

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Awa Shoku: Tis the Season for **Berries?**

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Cat Day in Japan!



TOPIA

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

February is usually the coldest month of the year here in Tokushima. While enjoying the cool weather outside can be a relaxing activity, chilling inside your warm home is surely a good idea as well. Why not use this month's public holidays as a starting point and learn more about Japanese history? February 11th, for example, is National Foundation Day (*Kenkoku Kinen no Hi* 建国記念の日), where Japan celebrates the mythological foundation of Japan, and which is also a very controversial holiday because of its past history. Moreover, thanks to the new emperor Naruhito, we can also look forward to a newly created holiday on February 23rd (24th is a substitute holiday) when his birthday is celebrated. Doors to Japanese history and culture can be found everywhere. You just have to open them.

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:

awalife@gmail.com

Your editors,
Sydney and Nico

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**HAPPY
VALENTINE'S
DAY ♥**



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Sydney Bartig and Nico Bohnsack

Contributors This Month:

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Umesu Matsuri: Good Times with Plum Wine

By Emily Yocom

The 11th Annual Umesu Matsuri (Plum Wine Festival) is an event for plum farmers in Misato, Yoshinogawa City to showcase their plum wines to the community. Misato is Japan's first ever "plum zone," meaning it's nationally recognized for its umeshu production. The town boasts five breweries, each producing their own unique varieties of umeshu that differ due to plum variety and ripeness, the type of liquor used, the ratios of the mixture, and the age.

The Umesu Matsuri provided an opportunity to sample these various plum wines. It was also a pretty good reason to drink before noon, so it was a no-brainer for me, my boyfriend visiting from the States, and a few coworkers that we had to go check it out.

A shuttle bus was available to haul a group of drunken visitors between the 9 tasting locations. The first location we visited was a

recommendation from a coworker. Here, we tasted four varieties of umeshu. They ranged from light peach in color to a deep magenta, with alcohol contents differing by dozens of percentage points. The hospitality we received - by means of free snacks like veggie sticks, oden, yakitori, and even umeshu pound cake - along with the friendly attitude of the farmers made us lose track of time.



by signs telling us to keep going (あとすこしががんばって!) along the way. At the end of the hike, we were greeted by the friendly folk of the restaurant and their dogs. We sipped their homemade plum wines, soaked our feet in yuzu baths, and yelled down the mountain to kids who were yelling up in hopes of getting a response.

The day had just about ended, so we rinsed



our glasses, dried our feet, and headed back down the mountain. There was another spot on the way down, so we stopped by. Even though they were closing for the day, the farmers let us try their umeshu as we mingled. They taught us of Misato's "plum zone" status and how each farm in the area produces vastly different plums. No sooner than we were lost in conversation did we realize we'd missed the last shuttle bus back. Drunk and lost in the middle of the mountains, we were saved by one of the



women who offered us a ride back to the station. We humbly accepted her offer and headed home.

Looking back on this experience, I can say it was one of the best I've had during my time in Tokushima. The Umeshu Matsuri was a slice of rural life that I truly couldn't have experienced anywhere else. The hospitality shown to me by the farmers, along with their pride for their work, made the hangover more than worth it.

2020 AJET Musical

The AJET English musical will be held for the 26th time this March! This year's story is the "Wizard of Oz", so make sure to come check it out!

The protagonist, Dorothy, is a girl who dreams of city life. One day, Dorothy's house is swept up in a tornado and is blown all the way to the mysterious Land of Oz! However, for Dorothy, who is sick to death of her rural life, this is like a dream come true. In order to meet the "Wizard of Oz", she sets off on a journey to the Emerald City. Along the way she meets some new companions and together they fight against the witch. Through her journey, Dorothy ends up learning the importance of family.

AJET Presents the 26th English Musical

THE WIZARD OF OZ

オズの魔法使い

入場無料! 3月 先着順

ミュージカル

中学生レベルの英語 Showtimes

第1回目	3月1日(日)15:00-17:00	北島町創世ホール
第2回目	3月7日(土)15:00-17:00	石井町中央公民館
第3回目	3月8日(日)18:00-20:00	勝浦町農村環境改善センター
第4回目	3月15日(日)14:00-16:00	吉野川市アメニティセンター
第5回目	3月20日(金)17:30-19:30	脇町劇場オデオン座

お問合せ: ガリ・ダニエル (090)1327-2909 | 主催: AJET徳島
 後援: TOPIA(徳島県国際交流協会)、北島町国際交流協会、石井町国際交流協会、吉野川市国際交流協会、勝浦町教育委員会

詳細: www.ajetmusical.com
www.facebook.com/AJETMusical
 Facebookで「いいね!」をすれば、ミュージカルについての最新情報と写真にアクセスできます!

Poster Design: Ryan Esch

Honorary Citizenship Award from Leiria City

By: Shinobu Watari

Tokushima City and Leiria City in Portugal have been sister cities for 50 years now. On October 9th, 2019 in Leiria City, a ceremony was held to commemorate this 50 year relationship. In January of 2019, the former mayor of Leiria City invited me to attend the ceremony.

Since 2010, (approximately every 2 years) I have invited a total of 9 students and 1 teacher from Leiria City to visit Japan (all expenses, including flight fare, paid). I showed them around Osaka, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Nara, Tokyo, Kochi, Takamatsu, and Tokushima prefecture (Iya Kazurabashi, Oboke, and Koboake). I also introduced them to various elements of Japanese culture such as Japanese manners and customs, Japanese high schools, and the Awa Odori, which they had a chance to try themselves. These experiences further deepened the bonds between Tokushima City and Leiria City, and in response the mayor of Leiria city presented me with a gold medal signifying honorary citizenship. After receiving the gold medal, I also gave a speech in Portuguese expressing my deep respect for Portugal.

About 100 years ago, Wenceslau de Moraes (a navy officer and later vice-consul at the Kobe Consulate) migrated to Tokushima. He sent articles back to Portugal and Europe detailing Japanese culture and arts. He also wrote many books introducing Japan such as "Oyone and Koharu" (おヨネとコハル), "The Japanese Spirit" (日本精神), "Bon Dance in Tokushima" (徳島の盆踊り), and "Tea Ceremony" (茶道). He took permanent residence in Tokushima, held a love for Japan, and then passed away in Tokushima.

Feeling incredibly grateful for Moraes' efforts, I invited young people from Leiria City who were interested in learning more about Japan to come and visit Japan.



Former Mayor Castro



Present Mayor Lopez

Cat Day in Japan!

By: Sydney Bartig

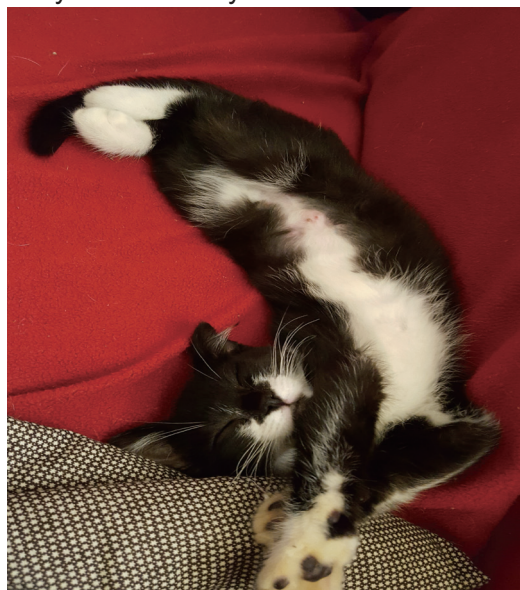


Did you know that February 22nd is an important day in Japan? It's actually the most important day! Well... if you're a cat lover that is. That's right, February 22nd is Cat Day, or in Japanese, *Neko no Hi* 猫の日. It's an unofficial holiday that has been around for some time in Japan and is the perfect chance to celebrate the world's cutest creatures – cats! But why February 22nd? Well, that's because when you put February 22nd into all numbers you get 2/22. As you may know, “2” in Japanese is pronounced as ni (に). This is slightly similar to the sound “nya” (ニャ) which is the sound that cats make in Japanese. So, once you put 2/22 together you get nya, nya, nya! Japan sure does love its play on words.

On Cat Day you might notice even more people posting cuddly pictures of their feline friends online to celebrate. If you don't have a cat of your own, why not try visiting one of the cat cafes in Tokushima? Or did you know that Tokushima even has its own cat shrine?! It's located in Anan and

called “Omatsudaigongen”. The shrine is literally filled with cat statues, maneki neko, and all things cats. It also has a very interesting legend, but that's a story for another day!

Hopefully you can find a purrfect way to celebrate Cat Day this February!



Gairaigo Galore

コンセント (consent; meaning: electrical outlet)

By Nico Bohnsack

There will be times in Japan when you have to search for an electrical outlet, sometimes it might even be crucial to get your devices running, start your presentation, etc. Sometimes you might also have to search for adapters in electronic stores before you travel to another country. It can be helpful then to know the Japanese word for “electrical outlet”. Sure, you could try to use アウトレット (autoretto), but you will soon realize that Japanese tend to think of big outlet malls rather than of



electrical outlets. The correct word is コンセント (consent). Perhaps that surprises you as much as it did me. What does consent, similar to the words “acquiescence” or “approval”, have to do with an electrical outlet?

The roots lay in the year 1924 (Taisho era) when Japan's first electric power company, Tokyo Dento, referred to the combination of a plug and an electrical outlet as コンセントプラグ (consent plug) inside their official regulations. Already during the Meiji era (1868 - 1912), where trade and exchange with foreign nations flourished, a British product called “concentric plug” with concentric contacts found its way to Japan, which was probably the motive for Tokyo Dento to

choose the expression コンセントプラグ for normal outlets (plus plugs) as well. The company's regulations were later revised and electrical outlets without plugs were then called コンセント and single plugs プラグ. This hasn't changed even in the present day.

Awa Shoku: Tis the Season for Berries?

By: Lance Kita

And Michael, you would fall
and turn the white snow red
As strawberries in the summertime
— “White Winter Hymnal”, Fleet Foxes

In the song above, the lyrics contrast the white winter snow with red summer strawberries. However, a Japanese person under the age of 40 may be bemused by this, as strawberries here are as synonymous with winter as the snow. Wait, what? Yes, let's take a look at how seasons changed for these ruby-red berries.

Strawberries were introduced to Japan by the Dutch in the early Edo Period, and spread throughout the countryside by the 1800s. At that time, the natural growing season had them bearing fruit around May or June (as with most other regions around the world), and a list of seasonal haiku words notes that *ichigo* 苺 (strawberry) is an early summer word.

So why is it that Japan's peak season for strawberries is now November to April? You heard that right... checking 10 different Tokushima farms that offer strawberry picking (*ichigo-gari* いちご狩り) finds that the main season for these events is February to April. By the way, this is an amazing way to enjoy these fruits! Pay around 1500-2000 yen, and you can pick all the berries you can eat for 40-60 minutes. Some places will let you bring condiments like condensed milk, chocolate sauce, or softened cream cheese, and for an extra charge you can take home a pack for further berry-licious snacking. Look for *ichigo-gari* tours at farms in Naruto, Komatsushima, and even Higashi Miyoshi.

Oops, didn't answer the question in the last paragraph, and I'm sure that the thought of picking berries in frigid, mountainous Higashi Miyoshi City doesn't make a lot of sense. Well, it turns out that plastic hothouse cultivation of strawberries is

the main way these fruits are grown. The semi-cylindrical hothouses are made with wire and clear plastic, and the bushes are grown on raised rows of soil, or in boxes raised off the floor for easy picking/harvesting and to prevent a snap frost from causing severe damage.

But WHY go through all the trouble of growing these berries in winter? Well, it boils down to

consumerism. Turns out the biggest harvest of strawberries happens around mid-December... just in time for Christmas. Since the late 1980s, Christmas cakes クリスマスケーキ (sponge cake with layers of whipped cream and strawberries) have become a quintessential part of that holiday, and demand for berries

peaks high. The heart-shaped red fruits also do well around Valentine's Day in February. So strawberries have shifted to a cold-weather crop thanks to warm-house technology.

In Tokushima, the major variety of strawberry is *Sachinoka* さちのか, a sweet hardy type that ships out well to supermarkets. However, the only village in Tokushima, Sanagochi 佐那河内村, has a select group of farmers who grow *Sakura Momo-ichigo* さくらももいちご, extra-large and extra-sweet fruits that go for 500-1000 yen PER BERRY! Although most of these are luxury items shipped out to high-end clientele, you can still enjoy local berries at *ichigo-gari* or buy one of my favorite fruit-based Japanese sweets, the *ichigo-daifuku* いちご大福. These dessert dumplings are strawberries coated in sweet bean paste (anko 餡子) and wrapped in a thin sweet sticky layer of rice cake (*mochi* 餅). As you bite into the snow-white daifuku and gaze upon the juicy red berry within, you can contemplate this convoluted story of how a summer berry made it into your winter stomach.



Momo-ichigo strawberries are grown in Sanagochi Village, along with their royal Sakura Momo-ichigo Cousins
(Photos: Bethany Johnson)



The Use of 「か」 after Interrogatives

When you put 「か」 after 「どこ」, such as in 「どこかへ行きましたか。」, or you don't, such as in 「どこへ行きましたか。」, the meaning is different. Let's think about the difference a bit more in detail!

A: 日曜日、どこかへ行きましたか。 Did you go somewhere on Sunday?

B: はい、行きました。 Yes, I did.

A: どこへ行きましたか。 Where did you go?

B: 京都へ行きました。 I went to Kyoto.



A doesn't know if B went out on Sunday. Because of that, A asked, 「どこかへ行きましたか。」 and B answered with, 「はい。」. A now knows that B went out, so A also asked 「どこへ行きましたか。」. Interrogatives (such as どこ・何・いつ・だれ・どれ) + か are used to indicate places, things, time, people, etc. that haven't been decided yet. They are interrogative sentences that can be answered with 「はい / いいえ」. The postpositional particle after the interrogative + か is often left out.

例: どこか(へ)行きましたか。 Did you go somewhere?

誰か(が)来ましたか。 Did somebody come?

However, you would use just the interrogative when asking for certain places, contents, times etc.

練習 Try to choose the right answer!

1. 先生: (授業が終わって) (a. 何か b. 何が) 質問はありますか。
生徒: いいえ、ありません。



2. 妻: (家に帰って、テーブルの上の2つのカップを見て) (a. 誰か b. 誰が) 来たの?
夫: うん。
妻: (a. 誰か b. 誰が) 来たの?
夫: ぼくの友だち。



3. A: (a. いつか b. いつ) 宇宙へ行きたいですか。
B: はい。行ってみたいです。

4. A: (a. 何か b. 何が) お手伝いしましょうか。
B: はい、お願いします。

5. A: ああ、のどがかわきました。
B: (a. 何か b. 何が) 飲みたいですか。
A: はい、飲みたいです。
B: (a. 何か b. 何が) 飲みたいですか。
A: ビールが飲みたいです。



Answers: 1. 何か 2. 誰か、誰が 3. いつか 4. 何か 5. 何か、何が

Events & Memoranda

医療通訳研修

徳島県に暮らす 6,000 人を超える外国人は約 80 の国や地域から来ており、過去最高人数となりました。昨年 4 月より入管法の改正を受けて、技能実習生をはじめとする地域の在県外国人はさらに増加することが予想されます。それと同時に、彼らが抱える問題も多岐にわたり、その中でも医療に関わる問題は避けて通ることができません。医療の現場では、時には急を要し命に関わることもありますし、日本語でのコミュニケーションが難しい患者にとってはストレスがたまってしまいます。診療が円滑におこなわれ、患者のストレスを少しでも解消していくためには、語学ボランティアの方々の支援が必要となる場合があります。今回の研修では、講師の講話やワークショップを通じて、医療通訳の際に多言語で円滑に情報提供できるよう、語学ボランティアの育成・活動促進を図ることを目指します。（語学研修ではありません）

日時：2 月 29 日（土）13：00～16：30

場所：公益財団法人 徳島県国際交流協会

参加費：無料

対象者：通訳言語で日常会話が支障なくできる方

講師：村松 紀子 氏 医療通訳研究会（MEDINT）代表

申込方法：氏名、電話番号、email アドレス、通訳言語、資格を記入の上、お申し込みください。



お申し込み・お問い合わせ

〒770-0831 徳島市寺島本町西 1-61 クレメントプラザ 6 階

公益財団法人 徳島県国際交流協会

「医療通訳研修」担当宛て

TEL: 088-656-3303 FAX: 088-652-0616 E-mail: coordinator1@topia.ne.jp

32nd Big Hina Matsuri 第 32 回 ビッグひな祭り

The first Big Hina Matsuri was held in the spring of 1988 and will now be celebrated for the 32nd time. Hina dolls that are no longer used are gathered from families all around the country, given a memorial service, and then displayed at this festival. At the center of the festival you can find an approximately 8-meter-high 100-step podium decorated with hina dolls. Approximately 30,000 hina dolls are beautifully displayed at this festival.

昭和 63 年の春に始まったビッグひな祭りは、今回で 32 回目を迎えます。本祭では、全国より、家庭で飾られなくなった雛人形を集め、供養し、展示させていただいております。場内には、中央にそびえ立つ高さ約 8m「百段のひな壇」をはじめ、約 3 万体制もの雛人形が豪華絢爛に飾られています。

When: February 22nd (Sat) – April 5th (Sun)

9:00 – 16:00

Where: Hina Doll Museum (Tsukinose-35-1 Ikuna, Katsuura, Katsuura District)

Fee: Adults: 300 Yen

Groups (10 People or More): 200 Yen

Elementary Schoolers: 100 Yen

Info: Big Hina Matsuri Executive Committee

TEL: 0885-42-4334

URL: <http://www.town.katsuura.lg.jp/docs/2010111000514/>

日時：2 月 22 日（土）～ 4 月 5 日（日）

9:00～16:00

場所：勝浦郡勝浦町大字生字月ノ瀬 35-1
人形文化交流館

料金：大人 300 円

団体 200 円（10 人以上）

小学生 100 円

お問い合わせ：ビッグひな祭り実行委員会

TEL: 0885-42-4334

URL: <http://www.town.katsuura.lg.jp/docs/2010111000514/>

Events & Memoranda

日本語支援ボランティアスキルアップ講座

「つながりながら、つながる日本語を身につける」 活動に TRY

ボランティアが関心を置くべき言語活動は、人とかかわり、つながる言語活動ではないでしょうか？
そうした言語活動の中心になるのは自己表現能力で、その自己表現能力は、学習者とボランティアが
交流しながら身につけることができるものだと思います。一緒に研修しませんか！

日時：2月22日（土）13:00～16:00

講師：西口 光一先生

場所：徳島県国際交流協会（TOPIA）会議室

お問い合わせ：（公財）徳島県国際交流協会

TEL: 088-656-3303 Eメール：coordinator2@topia.ne.jp

詳細は TOPIA のホームページを御覧ください。



The 21st Shikoku Sake Festival 第21回 四国酒まつり

The Shikoku Sake Festival is a new year event representing the city of Miyoshi, famous for its local sake. It's the biggest sake festival in Shikoku where you can enjoy famous sake brands from all over the island, with new sake creations at the center. Due to popular demand, a special "Sake Tasting Meeting" with about 80 breweries taking part will take place this year as well.

Moreover, there will be other events where tasty foods from around Miyoshi and other goods are sold.

When: February 22nd (Sat)
10:00 – 16:00

Where: Miyoshi-shi Ikeda Sogo Taiikukan (2551-1 Ikeda-cho, Miyoshi, Tokushima 778-0002)

Fee: 2000 Yen (advance ticket), 2300 Yen (box office)

Info: Awa Ikeda Chamber of Commerce and Industry

TEL: 0883-72-0143

URL: <http://www.shikoku-sakematuri.com/>

『四国酒まつり』は地酒の町・三好市を代表する新春のイベントで、新酒を中心に四国各地の銘酒が楽しめる四国最大の酒の祭りです（´▽`*）
第21回を迎える今回も好評につき、特別企画「地酒試飲会」四国の銘酒80蔵が大集合いたします！

また市内各所では、三好市近隣の美味しい食品や素敵な雑貨を販売する「うだつマルシェ」や「銀座よろず市」、「駅前ガーデンカフェ」が開催されます。

日時：2月22日（土）

10:00～16:00

場所：〒778-0002 徳島県三好市池田町マチ
2551-1 三好市池田総合体育館

料金：前売券：2000円、当日券：2300円

お問い合わせ：阿波池田商工会議所

TEL: 0883-72-0143

URL: <http://www.shikoku-sakematuri.com/>

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.

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

Tel: 088-656-3312 or 088-656-3313 (allows for three-way conversations with an interpreter)