

# awa life

**Farewell Messages**

**Japanese Culture &  
Reading Corner:**  
出会いと別れ

April 2021

# 366



**Awa Shoku: Spring Shoots  
Herald the End of Winter**

**Gairaigo Galore:**  
アイスクャンデー



**TOPIA**



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

April in Japan is always a good time for optimism. The nice weather and pleasant temperatures create a great environment for positive thinking while the start of the new fiscal year, together with its accompanying effects, often comes with new periods of life and challenges. The same goes for TOPIA where five of our staff members will leave and five new members will come. Check out their messages in this and next month's issue! For the Japanese learners among you, our yearly Japanese Speech Contest could be a nice challenge (check out page 8 for more info)! Not only are nice prizes waiting for you, but it could also be a chance to set new standards and goals for the next 12 months after which maybe your life will change once again.

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

Your editors,  
Sydney and Nico

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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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# Contents

Pg. 2-4: Farewell Messages

Pg. 5: Japanese Culture and Reading Corner: 出会いと別れ

Pg. 5: Gairaigo Galore: アイスキャンデー

Pg. 6: Awa Shoku: Spring Shoots Herald the End of Winter

Pg. 7: Japanese Lesson

Pg. 8: Events and Memoranda

Pg. 9: Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI



## Farewell Messages

### Chie Suzue

Approximately 5 years ago, while searching for work, I heard from a friend about a posting on Hello Work for a job at the Tokushima International Exchange Association. Since I had experience studying abroad and the job entailed using English, they suggested I apply. I ended up at TOPIA's door, not really knowing anything, and now that I think back, this is a very nostalgic memory.

job has given me the opportunity to rediscover some of the amazing things about Tokushima.



*From left to right: Chie Suzue, Kayo Miyoshi, Toshiro Taki, and Yukari Nagata*

As the multilingual consultation staff in charge of English, my primary duties include providing foreign tourists with sightseeing information as well as providing consultation support for foreign residents living in the prefecture who may have any issues in their daily lives. As I was born and raised in Tokushima Prefecture, I thought I would have no problems with providing sightseeing information to tourists. However, with each day I've had to deal with unique inquiries and this

In regards to consultations, I have assisted with a variety of issues, such as those concerning one's daily life, procedures for updating a visa for work, medical related issues, etc. Unfortunately, however, since last year, there has been a sharp decrease in foreign tourists due to the entry restrictions caused by COVID-19. As a result, there

has also been a sharp decline in tourism related work on my side. I hope that soon things can return to normal and foreign tourists can once again visit TOPIA with a smile on their face and a friendly "hello".

Additionally, being able to participate and assist with supporting the daily Japanese lessons at TOPIA, TOPIA's large Japanese speech contest, Arasowaren, the International Understanding Support Forum, etc. has allowed

me to rethink my own actions and thoughts in the midst of this world as it progresses towards becoming a more multicultural place. It has truly been a great experience for me.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude for being a part of TOPIA and ending these 5 years without any issues. From the bottom of my heart, I pray for the health and prosperous activities of those at TOPIA.

#### **Toshiro Taki**

Let's work together and aim for a multicultural society! In April 2019, I started working at TOPIA as a coordinator for local internationalization, and after 2 years I am now leaving my post at TOPIA. In Japan, there was a shortage of labor, so a new status of residence known as "specified skilled worker" was established and there was a higher intake of workers from foreign countries. Along with this, comprehensive countermeasures for the aim of building a multicultural society began to take place. My work has included playing a part in the establishment, development, and management of a "multicultural comprehensive consultation one-stop center", of which there are 100 established nation-wide. Additionally, I helped hold a drill for how to support foreign residents when a large-scale disaster occurs, and promoted cultural exchange between local citizens and foreign residents.

As I look back on these 2 years, I still feel that there are many issues that remain. At TOPIA, we have consultation staff who can speak English, Chinese, and Vietnamese. We also have a system that allows for a 4-way conversation with an interpreter (18 languages available), so we have an entire consultation system in place. I think it would be great to have a system that many different foreign residents can more freely utilize.

Japan is a country with many natural disasters such as typhoons and earthquakes. The future occurrence of a magnitude 9 class earthquake known as the Nankai Trough Megathrust Earthquake is particularly concerning.

Therefore, we hold a drill every year, but along with expanding the scope of participants, I would like everyone to thoroughly prepare for disasters by researching evacuation shelters in advance, purchasing disaster prevention goods, and confirming the safety of their homes. As we aim for a multicultural society, it's important to promote a relationship between foreign residents and the local people to the point that they "know each other's faces" and deepen their relationships to the point where they help each other during their daily lives and in times of disaster. I think this is incredibly important. During these 2 years at TOPIA, I have had the chance to meet a number of foreign residents and to learn and try many new things. I felt that we were all the same humans and didn't take notice of things such as differences in nationality. I'm leaving TOPIA, but I hope to watch over TOPIA's endeavors to realize a multicultural society and support them from a different position. Thank you to everyone.

#### **Kayo Miyoshi**

In April 2020, I started my long-term work experience at TOPIA with anticipation. My first experience with TOPIA was in regards to the "international understanding support instructors project". At the school I first worked at as a teacher, we invited a foreign instructor who lived here in Tokushima Prefecture. "Foreign residents, not just ALTs, come and conduct a class! There's no way we can't make use of such a wonderful TOPIA project!" I thought, and then sent an application. Finally, when the long-awaited day came, the instructor gave an in-depth explanation about their home country and language. They explained how to wear a sari, and also made marshmallow rice krispies and marshmallow cookie sandwiches with the students. For the students and myself as well, this was a completely new experience, and I still remember the strong impression that such a multicultural experience left on me.

When I began work in April, the state of emergency had been issued and work relating to assisting foreign tourists had almost completely

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*Farewell Messages*

disappeared. Due to elementary, junior high, and senior high schools closing, and in order to make use of what few classes they had, requests to TOPIA for junior high school student work experience programs, senior high school and university internships, etc. decreased along with the spread of COVID-19. Although it was only a few classes, we were able to do some “international understanding support instructor projects”. I’m truly thankful to the instructors who visited these schools and conducted passionate classes for the students. Moving forward, I hope that I can return to schools and further develop this wonderful project in order to promote international understanding and understanding of cultural differences to the children in Tokushima.

I also had the opportunity to plan 2 different events. The first was the “International Understanding Support Forum”. 3 instructors gave lectures under the theme of “child rearing and education for children with foreign roots”. I listened to their talks about differences between their home country and Japan’s educational system, support at schools, building human relationships, and education/career paths. I strongly felt the need for creating schools where everyone can understand and accept diversity. The second event was the “International Understanding Support Instructors Skill Improvement Training”. There are many international problems such as the recent pandemic and environmental issues which are impossible for one country to solve. From the view of achieving SDGs (sustainable development goals), I believe that there are initiatives that schools must take part in as well. In order to respond to the needs of the times, I hope for the further development of the “international understanding support instructors project”.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the training I have received at TOPIA. I want to become a teacher who can utilize what I learned at TOPIA, who are conducting many activities under the idea of promoting a multicultural society, in order to think together with students about issues from a global perspective. I have many shortcomings, but thanks to everyone at TOPIA’s

kind guidance I was able to make it through. I’m truly thankful. From the bottom of my heart, I’d like to express my thanks to everyone who helped me during my training. Thank you for everything.

**Yukari Nagata**

During the 3 years that I have worked at the JICA Tokushima desk, I feel that the distance between the world, Japan, and Tokushima has shrunk, and that their relationship has also grown much deeper.

When I first began my work, under the theme of “Connecting to the World with Regional Revitalization from Tokushima”, I had the goal of connecting Japan (local areas) with developing countries and working to realize a better society. Through the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer program and from witnessing Tokushima’s unique points and strengths in regards to agriculture such as the Nishi Awa Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System, education, consumer policies, etc. I have been able to personally feel Tokushima’s ties to the world. Additionally, due to emigration and immigration management law revisions in April 2019, it has become necessary for Tokushima to strive to be chosen by foreign personnel as we enter an age where people coexist together and work to develop Tokushima. Many of these people are from developing countries, and their stay in Tokushima has greatly contributed to international cooperation. While working with foreign staff and deciding how best to shape Tokushima’s future, I believe that now is the time for industries, academics, governmental institutions, private institutions, and economic institutions to think and work together.

There are 9 years left until 2030 to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Under the motto of “leave no one behind”, and aiming for a Tokushima that is connected to the world, I hope to continue to do my best as a citizen of the prefecture. I’m extremely grateful for all of the relationships I was able to make thanks to my time at TOPIA. I look forward to working with you all again.



# Japanese Culture and Reading Corner: 出会いと別れの季節

By: Kayo Miyoshi

日本の学校や会社の一年は、4月から始まり、3月に終わります。4月から新年度が始まります。2021年4月1日から令和3年度なります。学校では、3月に卒業式、4月に入学式があります。会社に就職した人は4月に入社式があります。「3月は別れ、4月は出会いの季節」と言われます。4月に、多くの人が新しい場所でスタートを切ります。新しい環境で、新たな人間関係を築きながら、勉強や仕事などを始めます。新しい自分や人との出会いを大切に、みなさんも新しいドアを開いてくださいね。



## Vocabulary List

新年度	New Fiscal Year	卒業式	Graduation Ceremony	入学式	Entrance Ceremony
就職	(Finding) Employment	入社式	Welcome Ceremony	別れ	Farewell
出会い	Encounter, Meeting	季節	Season	スタートを切る	To Make a Start
環境	Environment	人間関係	Human Relations	築きながら	While Building

## Gairaigo Galore

アイスクャンデー (Popsicle)

By: Sydney Bartig

In Japan, especially in the sweltering summer months, you may come across the word アイスクャンデー. At first glance it may be hard to imagine what exactly this is: a candy made from ice? Ice in the shape of candy? However, this is actually a *wasei eigo* word (Japanese-made English word) which means popsicle - a beloved summer treat of children and adults alike. (Depending on the country/region, this can also be known as an ice lolly, ice pop, freezer pop, etc.)



The popsicle was actually born in San Francisco back in 1905 thanks to a simple mistake by a young boy named Frank Epperson. He inadvertently left a cup of soda and a stirring stick out on his porch. That night happened to be especially cold, and the next morning Frank found that his drink had frozen into a delicious treat. He originally referred to his creation as the 'Epsicle', but when he grew older and had children of his own, they called them 'Pop's 'sicle', a name which ended up sticking.

The Japanese word アイスクャンデー is a bit more of a literal name for the frozen treat compared to the word popsicle. By the way, the Japanese word for 'ice cream' is simply アイスクリーム, and you can say gelato in Japanese as 'ジェラート'.

## Awa Shoku: Spring Shoots Herald the End of Winter

By: Lance Kita

The end of winter brings new growth from the frozen earth, and foragers move out with the warm-ing weather to pick **sansai** 山菜 (mountain vegetables) from forest and field. Here are four of the most common sansai you will find in supermarkets, farmer's markets, and restaurants (if you want to forage, do it with someone knowledgeable about what to pick and where to pick them).

### Tsukushi 土筆 (Horsetail shoots)

Horsetails are extremely hardy, thriving in untilled fields, ditches, grassy flatlands, and roadside green areas, making these some of the most easily foraged sansai for newbies (but get advice from experienced people). The shoots have slender stems and an oval head.

They contain lots of bitter compounds, so after the outer sheath is removed, the stems are blanched in water with some salt and vinegar before rinsing in fresh water several times. Tsukushi add a lovely bitter accent to a bowl of miso soup, can be pickled, sautéed with miso or sweet soy sauce, or scrambled with eggs.

### Tara-no-me タラの芽 (Tara-no-me, Japanese Angelica shoots)

These clusters of newborn leaves actually come from the tips of Japanese Angelica tree branches. You can find them in regular supermarkets, or farmer's markets in mountain towns. These also have a distinctive but pleasant bitterness, and are best eaten as tempura (sprinkled liberally with salt) or sautéed in oil. You can also make a dressed salad with them (May 2018 Awa Life) if you are used to the bitterness in vegetables.

### Warabi ワラビ (bracken fern shoots)

There are several ferns with edible young coiled fronds. Warabi is the most common, but it requires some soaking and boiling to wash out the bitter compounds. It is easiest to buy pre-soaked, water-packed, brown-stemmed warabi.

These tender stems should be cut into 1 cm pieces, and braised with soy sauce, dashi, and other ingredients like carrots, bamboo shoots, or thin fried tofu. They are also often eaten as a Korean namul. Try adding them to your rice before you cook it.

### Fuki-no-tou 路の臺 (butterbur shoots)

These huge buds surrounded by a light-green leaf sheath are also commonly found

during this season at supermarkets and farmer's markets. The meaty, bitter shoots are usually served as tempura (matcha or shiso salt are particularly good with it), or minced and sautéed with miso. Fuki-no-tou miso is all you need with a bowl of hot rice, on a square of tofu, or as a grilled topping for a skewer of **konnyaku** 蒟蒻 starch blocks. You can find this miso in markets as well.

Fresh sansai shoots have a very short season, so pick them up right away if you see them in the markets. Bitterness is not usually a flavor associated with something delicious, but to the Japanese, these shoots are a tangible and edible sign that a season of new life is ready to spring forth.



(Clockwise, from upper left) Fuki-no-tou (butterbur shoots), Tsukushi (horsetail shoots), Tara-no-me (Japanese angelica shoots), and Warabi (bracken fern shoots). (Photo credit to Mr. Jiro Kasahara for the tsukushi photo)



## Japanese Words with Multiple Meanings (Part 3)

Some words in Japanese have multiple meanings, which can invite misunderstandings.

1.) There are many ways to use the word [ ちょっと ].

- First Meaning: A little bit



- Second Meaning: A lot, very much



- Third Meaning: To refuse something, such as an invitation

すみません。ちょっと、お酒は...  
(飲めません)



- Fourth Meaning: When calling out to someone/stopping someone

あの～、ちょっと



2.) There are also many ways to use the word [ いい加減 ].

- First Meaning: To express something that is just right

Usage: 「いい + 名詞 + 加減」



- Second Meaning: To express something that is sloppy, careless, or incomplete

せんせい: 「いい加減に 手を あら 洗うと ウイルスが 残り ます。  
(雑に 手を 洗うと ウイルスが 残り ます。)



- Third Meaning: Warning someone to stop doing something after you have reached your limit

お母さん: 「いい加減に しなさい」





# Events & Memoranda



## TOKUSHIMA PREFECTURE 2021 JAPANESE SPEECH CONTEST

1. PURPOSE True internationalization cannot be achieved without first coming in touch with other cultures and ways of life, fostering a sense of international awareness and gaining mutual understanding with people of the world to create a society in which we can all work and live together in harmony. This speech contest seeks to give a voice to the international residents of Tokushima Prefecture and engage them in a dialogue to further discourse on cross-cultural understanding and fostering multiculturalism.
2. DATE & PLACE July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Sunday), 13:30 - 16:30  
Awagin Hall (Tokushima Arts Foundation for Culture) Small Hall (5F)  

Based on the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, this event may be held so that it is open only to related parties (staff, participants, supporters, etc.) We will notify everyone once the details have been decided. Thank you for your understanding.
3. ELIGIBILITY Only foreign residents whose native language is not Japanese are eligible to apply.  
(Additionally, foreign residents who have had over three years of compulsory education in Japan, or those who have previously won the Grand Prize or the Tokushima Prefectural Assembly's Chairman of the Federation of International Exchange Assembly Members Award, are not eligible to apply.)
4. SELECTION Applications will be open to all foreign residents of Tokushima Prefecture that fulfil the eligibility requirements. We will ask all applicants to submit an outline of their speech (about 800 characters), and after reviewing all of the applications, roughly 10 or so applicants will be chosen to proceed to the final contest.
5. THEME The topic is left to your discretion, but it should relate to the event's purpose of fostering cross-cultural understanding and multiculturalism.
6. LENGTH Speeches should be no more than 6 minutes in length.
7. AWARDS Grand Prize, one person (Prize: 50,000 yen gift certificate)  
The Tokushima Prefectural Assembly's Federation of International Exchange Assembly Members Chairman's Award, one person (Prize: 30,000 yen gift certificate)  
Awa Bank Award, one person (Prize: 30,000 yen gift certificate)  
Tokushima Taisho Bank Award, one person (Prize: 30,000 yen gift certificate)  
Tokushima Chamber of Commerce and Industry Award, one person  
(Prize: 30,000 yen gift certificate)  
Tokushima City International Association Special Recognition Award, three people  
(Prize: 10,000 yen gift certificate)  
Special Effort Award, to be decided (Prize: 5,000 yen gift certificate)  
\*All participants will receive a participation award.
8. HOW TO APPLY Submit your application form by mail or fax. Alternatively, you may submit your application in person.
9. DEADLINE May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Tuesday) Applications must be turned in by 5:00 PM.
10. ORGANIZED BY Tokushima Prefecture & Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association (TOPIA)
11. CO-ORGANIZER (Planned) Tokushima Regional Conference for Promotion of Student Exchange
12. SPONSORS (Planned) The Tokushima Prefectural Assembly's Federation of International Exchange Assembly Members, Awa Bank, Tokushima Taisho Bank, Tokushima Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Tokushima International Association (TIA), Otsuka Pharmaceuticals, Nichia Corporation
13. WITH THE SUPPORT OF (Planned) NHK Tokushima, Shikoku Broadcasting, Tokushima Shimbun, Cable TV Tokushima, FM Tokushima, FM Bizan
14. WHERE TO APPLY Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association (TOPIA)  
〒770-0831 1-61 Terashima Honcho Nishi, Tokushima City, Clement Plaza 6F  
TEL: 088-656-3303 Email: coordinator2@topia.ne.jp

※Based on the COVID-19 situation, there may be changes made to the speech contest. Any changes will be posted on TOPIA's website, so please confirm.

## Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI

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

Recently, due to COVID-19, children have been playing inside the home more, causing stress for both parents and the children themselves. Today I will introduce some tips to help reduce irritation for children!

<Tip 1> If children are getting fed up with constantly doing the same thing, rethink their environment.

- If they can't clean up their toys: In order to make it easier to clean up, reduce the number of toys or think of a place that makes it easy to take out/put away toys. If children get tired of a toy, try replacing it with something else.

<Tip 2> Eliminating the root of irritation (refreshing the body-mind equilibrium)

- Rather than having them watch TV or a movie, go to a nearby park so they can move their body and play as much as they want.
- Make sure they are following a schedule, such as waking up early, going to bed early, and making sure to eat breakfast.
- Avoid battle shows and play fighting. Provide relaxing activities they can do inside such as playing with clay, drawing pictures, playing with blocks, etc.

\*If their mother is stressed, then this will also affect the child's mood. Therefore, it's important for the mother to find some form of stress relief as well.

### Handmade Sweets: Steamed Matcha Bread (For 4 People)

1. Pour 32 g of sugar and 60 g of milk into a bowl and mix.
2. Add 80 g of sifted wheat flour and 2.8 g of baking powder to the ingredients in 1.) and mix.
3. Add 1.6 g of matcha and mix.
4. Add the ingredients to a ramekin (microwaveable cup) and fill 6/10ths of the way. Heat for 3 min. 30 sec. in a 600-watt microwave (if using a steamer, steam on medium heat for 15 – 20 min.).
5. Pierce the dough with a toothpick. If nothing is attached to the toothpick, it is ready to be served.

\* Please don't give matcha to children under 1.



**Notice:** TOPIA has published a variety of videos for studying Japanese. Take a look at TOPIA's website for more details!

<https://www.topia.ne.jp/english/docs/20180830000051/>

### 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)