

awa life

Letter from SUKETO
NAKAYOSHI

April 2024
401

Farewell Messages



Nihongo Know-it-All:
明日ありと思う心の仇桜

2024 Tokushima Prefecture
Japanese Speech Contest



TOPIA

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

April is of course the time for sakura in Japan! There are a bunch of flower viewing locations in Tokushima, many of which are holding sakura festivals during April. There will also be Awa Odori events where you can enjoy the sakura as well, so make sure to check out the events section! We also have a new column in place of Gairaigo Galore, featuring an interesting proverb about the beautiful flowers!

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

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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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Sydney Bartig and Rasmus Burgmer

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Farewell Messages

Sydney Bartig

Coordinator for International Relations

After nearly five years I am ending my time as a CIR at the Prefectural Office and TOPIA at the end of March. When I first got my JET placement results in 2019, I honestly had no clue where Tokushima was or what to expect, but my entire time in Tokushima would be one spent surrounded by warm and amazing people. It's difficult for me to put my feelings about these five years into such a short space, but I will try my best.

As a CIR at the Prefectural Office and TOPIA, my work included a variety of fields. For TOPIA I would of course edit Awa Life, but I would also do various translations and interpretations for events, such as TOPIA's yearly Disaster Prevention Study Tour. My work at the Prefectural Office was quite varied, as I would receive translation/interpretation requests from a variety of divisions. I had a number of opportunities to interpret for the governor and various ambassadors assigned to Japan, and it was always interesting to meet people from so many different countries. I also interpreted for things such as a prefectural project to support Ukraine by gifting Awa washi paper for document restoration, tours of Naruto's traditional sake breweries, aizome indigo dyeing explanations, and cruise-related work in Komatsushima to name a few.

In my free time I tried a variety of activities, such as koto, tea ceremony, Awa Odori with TOPIA's

Arasowaren, flower arranging, shamisen, and Ningyo Joruri puppet theater. I still continue koto and tea ceremony lessons even now, and I have been able to perform koto a few times over

the years. I also continued my Japanese studies, and thanks to my wonderful teacher I was able to pass the JLPT N1.

In my free time and through work I've been blessed with the opportunity to visit the majority of tourism spots in Tokushima, which has always been one of my favorite parts of work. As a cat lover my favorite spot has to be Omatsu Daigongen in Anan, but I also love the Iya vine bridges; the various temples such as Tairyuji, Hashikura, and Jorokuji; the sakura of Yuka no Sato, Katsuura, and Central Park; and the wisteria of Fujidera and Dogakuji.

However, out of everything, what I treasure the most from my time in Tokushima is all of the wonderful people I have been able to meet.



Starting right from Tokyo Orientation I met fellow Tokushima CIRs who I still talk to today. Although many have changed through these five years due to personnel change, all of my coworkers at the Prefectural Office and TOPIA have been such brilliant people. They have supported me through all of my troubles, and I am so grateful that is difficult to express with words. I truly hope for the best for every single one of them. I also have to express my appreciation to all of the people outside of work that I have met throughout these years, including all my teachers (koto, Japanese,

tea ceremony, etc.) and friends. All of these encounters are something I will treasure for the rest of my life, and to everyone I am truly thankful.

Although my time as a CIR is ending, I am very excited to report that I have been offered another job within Tokushima City, so I will still be around this area. Although I knew nothing of Tokushima before coming here, this place has become my home, and I hope that, even in a small way, I can contribute to Tokushima and its residents.

Luo Xinxin
Coordinator for International Relations

As I began work on April 2024's issue of Awa Seikatsu, I was filled with the realization that my work and life in Tokushima would be over in just one month. Although only a short time, I believe my time in Tokushima as a CIR was the most special. This is because, although I was scheduled to arrive on April 12, 2020, due to the COVID pandemic, this date became May 30th, 2023. After waiting 1,168 days, taking a plane from Changsha to Beijing, Beijing to Tokyo, and then finally Tokyo to Tokushima, I was so happy to have finally arrived at the Tokushima Awaodori Airport. My first impression of Tokushima was that it is a quiet and small place.

After exiting the plane, my new coworkers were there to welcome me, and we headed to the Diversity Promotion Division of the Tokushima Prefectural Office. After receiving my letter of appointment from our division head, my new job and life began amidst the warm welcomes from my coworkers.

I consider my time as a CIR at the Tokushima Prefectural Office to be one of my life's treasures. Thanks to my kind coworkers, I have been able to enjoy work and spend my time in a meaningful way during this year. Through a wide array of work including conference interpretation, document translation, attending to visiting delegations, visiting Silver Daigaku University, introducing the work of a CIR to Japanese middle-school



students, and editing Awa Seikatsu, my view of Tokushima became more vivid and clear. I also felt how important a role international exchange projects play in Japan/China friendship relations.

On my day off I took a solo trip to see the world's largest Naruto Whirlpools. Together with my coworker from the prefectural office, I climbed the symbol of Tokushima, Mt. Bizan. I went sightseeing in Tokushima with my family. I participated in TOPIA's bus tour and was able to experience Tokushima's traditional cultures of aizome indigo dyeing and ningyo joruri puppet theater. I fully enjoyed a variety of Tokushima's prized fresh and safe foods, such as Tokushima ramen, Naruto kintoki sweet potatoes, and Naruto tai sea bream. In these following days I will savor these countless memories of Tokushima.

I believe in the phrase, "A meeting is the beginning of parting, and parting is for a better reunion." After I return home, I plan to tell everyone about my experiences and the wonders of Tokushima. Then, even just a little bit, I want to do my best to become a bridge for the continued friendship

Farewell Messages

between China and Japan, and help foster the ties of friendship with Hunan Province and Tokushima. Thank you to everyone for your support during this year. I'm truly grateful. I hope that you all

Mari Kimoto **Long-term Work Experience Trainee**

My two years of work at TOPIA have quickly come to an end. I want to thank everyone for their support during my time as a long-term work experience staff. My final year especially has ended in the blink of an eye. I'm truly grateful to all of the staff that I have worked with. Thank you for always kindly teaching me, even until the very end.

My work at TOPIA allowed me to learn about the realization of a multicultural society. My primary work was coordinating the dispatch of international understanding instructors. Seeing the development of international understanding classes by foreign instructors residing in Tokushima; experiencing their fun games, traditional clothing, folk crafts/dances, etc.; and actually being able to see each instructor's ingenuity and learn about their different cultures was truly an invaluable experience that I will make the most of in my future educational career. Many of the registered instructors are from Asian countries, and although these countries are close to Japan, they have different cultures and customs. I want to help build relationships where everyone can recognize diversity and understand that what it is "normal" in Japan can differ depending on the country. The children always have a myriad of questions, and their flexible way of thinking and comments show that they are very interested in foreign countries. Currently, the number of foreigners moving to Japan is increasing. These kinds of classes are a great way to think about how to interact with children who have roots in other countries.

I assisted in the Japanese classes held at TOPIA every week, and I was always conscious to make sure to use simple Japanese that is easy to understand. The more classes we had, the more the feelings of nervousness decreased, and I

will one day visit China and Hunan Province. I'm looking forward to once again meeting everyone somewhere, someday.

remember our conversations became more fun as they talked about daily life and their hometowns. Through teaching, I learned how to understand and support children with foreign roots,



to take pride in one's own culture, how to be compassionate towards those grappling with a myriad of problems, and many other things. I want to think carefully about the increasing number of foreign school children and how best to provide guidance to them as they do their best to live in an unfamiliar place.

Arasowaren, Tokushima's international Awa Odori team that prays for peace, is a great chance to share Tokushima's culture with the world. Even if we can't communicate with words, we can enjoy the Awa Odori together with people from a variety of countries, and every year when the hot summer arrives, I am reminded of Arasowaren's chant "The world is one! Arasowaren". Thank you to everyone who helped support this project.

Throughout these two years, I was able to learn about different views and ways of thinking regarding a multicultural society. I feel happy that I was able to help foreign residents living in Tokushima, even if just a little bit. I realized that it's not only us who are teaching foreigners, but that they teach us as well. Thank you so much. Moving forward, I'm going to use what I learned at TOPIA for my work in the education field.

Recently, my grandchild, who will almost be two years old, began sucking their thumb. I think in the case of my grandchild the cause is that their grandfather, who would often pick them up early from the childcare center and play with them, hasn't been able to do so recently. Being dropped off and picked up by their parents, who sometimes do so early in the morning or late at night due to work, caused them to feel lonely.

Habits such as thumb sucking or nail biting are sometimes used to express that the child wants to calm down or wants attention from the adults. As they can start suddenly due to life changes, it is especially important to be cautious at this time of year, when many are dealing with new changes. If you pay too much attention or try to punish the child, it might have the opposite effect and make the habit worse, or they may begin to hide it. Children's habits are temporary, so you shouldn't pay too much attention to them, instead just engage with them more and give them more opportunities for praise. With a little care it will go away naturally in the majority of cases. However, if it becomes so bad that it interferes with daily life or continues for a long period of time, please consult with a doctor, nurse, or other specialist.

Hand-made Sweets – Kinako Cookies

① Knead butter (5 tablespoons) until it is a cream-like texture and then, in order, mix in sugar (6 tablespoons) --> beaten egg (1) --> kinako roasted soybean flour 34 g, pastry flour 100 g (sift in advance) --> and white sesame seeds (1 tablespoon).

② Roll into approximately 2 cm balls and then bake in a pre-heated oven at 165 °C for 10 minutes.

*The kinako and sesame seeds provide a good source of calcium and iron. It can also be fun to make together with your child.



TOPIA 2024 - Study Japanese Online!

Dates: May 2024 - February 15th, 2025

Time: Once per week for 1 hour

Number of Classes: 20 - 30

Teachers: Volunteer Teachers (Not specialist teachers)

Eligibility: Those living in Tokushima

Those not already studying Japanese at school, their company, a Japanese class, etc.
(First-time participants will be given priority.)

Necessary Items: Please download ZOOM on your computer, tablet, or phone.

It may be necessary to purchase a textbook. (Please consult with your teacher.)

Number of Spots: About 20 People

Cost: Completely Free

Applications: Please see TOPIA's website: <https://www.topia.ne.jp/english/>

Inquiries: Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

Nomizu - coordinator2@topia.ne.jp Kobayashi - tagengo1@topia.ne.jp

TEL: 088-656-3303



Tokushima Culture and Reading Corner:

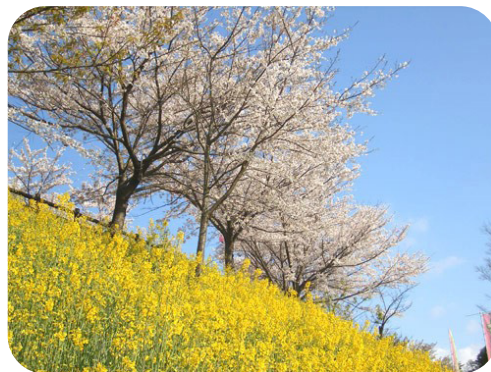
徳島県立神山森林公園イルローザの森

By: Mari Kimoto

みなさんは、^{かみやましんりんこうえん}神山森林公園を ^{かみやまちょう}知っていますか。^{やま}神山町の ^{なかに}山の中にあり、^{えんない}園内は、^{ひろびろ}広々としているので、
 ペットも ^{いっしょ}一緒に ^つ連れて ^い行くことが ^{でき}ます。

また、^{さんぽ}たくさん ^{さんぽ}の フィールドアスレチックがあり、^{さんぽ}散歩や ^{うんどう}運動にも ^{てき}適しています。^こ子どもから ^{おとな}大人まで ^{たの}楽しめます。
^{みどり}緑が ^{しぜんゆた}たくさんあって、^{ばしょ}自然豊かな ^お場所で ^つ落ち着いた ^{とこ}ところ ^{です}です。

^{ひる}お昼は、^{べんとう}お弁当を ^も持って、^{ピクニック}ピクニックを ^{するの}を ^{おすす}め ^めします。^{きたほうめん}北方面の ^{てんぼう}展望では、^{とくしまけん}徳島県の ^{けしき}景色を ^{いちぼう}一望 ^{でき}ますよ。また、^{とくしまけん}徳島県で ^{さいだいきゅう}最大級の ^{さくら}桜を ^{たの}楽しめる ^{さくら}桜の ^{めいしょ}名所の ^{ひと}一つ ^{です}です。インターネットで ^{しら}調べて ^{はな}まだ ^さ花が ^さ咲いている ^{よう}ようであれば、^いぜひ ^い行って ^{みて}みて ^{くだ}さい。



画像引用

徳島県立神山森林公園イルローザの森 HP

Vocabulary List

^{えんない} 園内	Inside the Park	^{べんとう} お弁当	Bento Lunch	^{いちぼう} 一望	Sweeping View
フィールドアスレチック	Obstacle Course	ピクニック	Picnic	^{さいだいきゅう} 最大級	Top Class
^{てき} 適している	Suited For	^{きたほうめん} 北方面	Northern Area	^{めいしょ} 名所	Famous Spot
^お 落ち着いた	Calm	^{てんぼう} 展望	Outlook		

Nihongo Know-it-All



明日ありと思う心の仇桜

By: Rasmus Burgmer

This new segment will replace Gairaigo Galore (we ran out) and showcase Japanese proverbs, expressions, and interesting facts about the language that you will not find in any textbook.

As we all know, the blossoming of the sakura trees is a huge event in Japan every spring, with the tradition of hanami (viewing of flowers) dating back many centuries. It is no wonder then, that the colorful flowers have inspired a variety of proverbs and expressions unique to the Japanese language. This month I would like to teach you my personal favorite: ^{あす}明日ありと ^{おも}思う ^{こころ}心の ^{あださくら}仇桜

Like all proverbs, it is very difficult to translate literally, with my attempt “The feeling of having a tomorrow is like the ephemeral cherry blossom” not really catching the gist of it while also sounding a little weird. A more sensible translation would be like this:

“The beautiful cherry blossoms you expect to still be there tomorrow for you to enjoy might have already been swept away by the night’s breeze.”

Using the illusive beauty of sakura as a metaphor, this proverb conveys the message that if you waste today in anticipation of tomorrow, you may miss your chance and therefore should never put off till tomorrow what you can do today. As this is a thought applicable to all parts of life, I find myself often thinking of the saying whenever I feel lazy or demotivated. And it really does help to get me active, because I would never miss out on something like enjoying the sakura trees in full bloom... would you?








Counters

〈Example〉

わたしは、きのう スーパーで、りんごを3つ（みっつ）と
ビールを1本（いっぽん） 買いました。



As you can see in the above example, the way you express the number of something depends on the object. Additionally, counters such as 「～本^{ほん}」and「～杯^{はい}」 have different readings depending on the number. (Refer to the chart below.)

	本 	杯 	冊 	枚 	
1	いっぽん	いっぱい	いっさつ	いちまい	ひとつ
2	にほん	にはい	にさつ	にまい	ふたつ
3	さんぽん	さんばい	さんさつ	さんまい	みっつ
4	よんぽん	よんはい	よんさつ	よんまい	よっつ
5	ごほん	ごはい	ごさつ	ごまい	いつつ
6	ろっぽん	ろっぱい	ろくさつ	ろくまい	むっつ
7	ななほん	ななはい	ななさつ	ななまい	ななつ
8	はちほん はっぽん	はちはい はっぱい	はっさつ	はちまい	やっつ
9	きゅうほん	きゅうはい	きゅうさつ	きゅうまい	ここのつ
10	じゅうぽん じっぽん	じゅうぱい じっぱい	じゅうさつ じっさつ	じゅうまい	とお
?	なんぽん	なんばい	なんさつ	なんまい	いくつ

〈Practice Problems 〉

Just like in the example, write the correct kanji in the parenthesis (), and the correct hiragana reading in the brackets [].

- 例 ^{れい} ハンカチを (5枚) 【 ごまい 】 ください。・・・5
- ^{みず} 水をコップに () 【 】 ください。・・・1
 - きのう、ノート^かを () 【 】 買いました。・・・8
 - ^{ふでばこ} 筆箱にえんぴつが () 【 】 入っています。・・・6
 - ^{はこ} 箱にりんごが (10) 【 】 入っています。・・・10

Answers: 1.) 1杯・いっぱい 2.) 8冊・はっさつ 3.) 6本・ろっぽん 4.) トお

Events & Memoranda

2024 TOKUSHIMA PREFECTURE 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 21st, 2024 (Sunday), 13:00 - 16:30
Awagin Hall (Tokushima Arts Foundation for Culture) Small Hall (5F)
- 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** We are recruiting a wide-array of foreign residents. We will have all applicants submit a draft of their speech. After a screening of the speech drafts, we will select 10 applicants to participate in the actual 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.
 ※Speeches must not include political or religious content, and must not criticize a particular person or group.
 ※Speeches must be original content that you have not presented on before. If it is discovered that the speech is not original or has already been presented on, awards may be rescinded.
- 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 and speech draft by email, FAX, or in-person (information written below). Please type your speech on a computer. You can download the application form from TOPIA's website.
- 9. DEADLINE** May 24th, 2024 (Friday) Applications must be turned in by 5:30 PM.
- 10. ORGANIZED BY** Tokushima Prefecture &
Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association (TOPIA)
- 11. CO-ORGANIZER** Tokushima Regional Conference for Promotion of Student Exchange
(Planned)
- 12. SPONSORS** The Tokushima Prefectural Assembly's Federation of International Exchange
(Planned) 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** NHK Tokushima, Shikoku Broadcasting, Tokushima Shimbun,
(Planned) Cable TV Tokushima, FM Tokushima, FM Bizan
- 14. WHERE TO APPLY** Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association (TOPIA)
Address : 〒770-0831
Tokushima City, Terashima Honcho Nishi, 1-61, Clement Plaza 6F
Website: <https://www.topia.ne.jp/>
Tel: 088-656-3303 Fax: 088-652-0616
Email: coordinator1@topia.ne.jp
Person in Charge: Kimura

Speech Contest in 2023



Events & Memoranda

2024 Spring Festival (Tokushima Castle Awa Odori) 2024 春の祭典「徳島城 阿波おどり」

Get your fill of the Tokushima Castle Awa Odori at 3 different locations. ♪

Washi no Mon Plaza (Circle Dance)

The Awa Odori's zomeki rhythm will be played by instruments with dancers dancing on top of the yagura. You can watch from anywhere around the area. Before you know it, your heart will start to dance, and then it's time to raise your arms, move your legs, and dance Awa Odori!

Flower Viewing Plaza (Nagashi Dance)

The invigorating nagashi dance will be performed at 3 paths spreading from east, west, and the central area. The plaza surrounded by the park paths serves as the viewing space, and it is possible to bring simple, outdoor chairs to sit in. Enjoy the view of the flowers, and at the finale join the dancers on stage.

Hachisuka Iemasa Statue Plaza (Stage Odori)

Dancers will give an exciting performance on a specially-constructed stage. Enjoy the coordinated dances by Awa Odori ren groups on the stage constructed in front of the Hachisuka Iemasa statue.

When: April 28th (Sun.) 11:00 – 16:00

Where: Across the Tokushima Central Park,
Tokushima City

Fee: Free

Inquiries: Operations Department,
Tokushima Shimbun

TEL: 088-655-7331

URL: <https://www.topics.or.jp/>

3つの会場で「徳島城 阿波おどり」を満喫しませんか♪

鷲の門広場【輪踊り】～櫓（やぐら）の上で鳴り物がぞめきを奏で、その周りを踊り子が踊る～櫓の周りのどこからでもご覧いただけます。見ているうちに心が浮いてくるはず。

さあ、手を上げて足を運べば阿波踊り！

お花見広場【流し踊り】～東・中央・西の3つの通りで広がる、爽やかな流し踊り～

園路に囲まれた広場は観覧スペースです。レジャーシートや簡易なイスは持込可能。お花見気分でご覧ください。フィナーレでは、踊り子と観客と一緒に踊ります。ぜひご参加ください。

蜂須賀家政像前広場【舞台踊り】～特設ステージ

で、踊り子たちが白熱のパフォーマンスを披露～蜂須賀家政像の前に特設舞台を設置。ステージで阿波踊り連が息の合った舞台踊りを披露します。

日時：4月28日（日）11:00～16:00

場所：徳島市 徳島中央公園一帯

料金：無料

お問い合わせ：徳島新聞社 事業部

TEL: 088-655-7331

URL: <https://www.topics.or.jp/>

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)