

THE TOMBO

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MEMOIR FROM MIYAGI

4 Minutes That Will Last a Lifetime

My name is Luke Happle and I work as a Coordinator for International Relations/Prefectural Advisor for the JET Programme in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture. I was at work when the Tohoku Pacific Offshore Earthquake hit on the 11th of March. To say it started out like a normal day is a cliché, but the truth nonetheless. The walk to work was uneventful and I spent the morning at my desk in a thoroughly bad mood, lamenting my stagnating Japanese ability and not getting enough sleep the night before. After a lunch break that seemed too short as they often do, I resumed work not feeling any better.

At 14:46, a massive earthquake of magnitude 9.0 struck the Tohoku region of Japan. The earthquake in turn caused a tsunami of epic proportions that ravaged the Tohoku coast. The current death toll is estimated at more than 13,000 with roughly the same amount still unaccounted for. This was only the beginning. The quake lasted for around 4 minutes, but the effects will be felt for years to come.

I was coming back to my office from the toilet, shaking the water off my hands when I heard the shrill earthquake-early-warning alarm sound from my office. I just had time to get back to my desk and get ready for the inevitable shaking to begin. Nothing could have prepared me for what was to come next. In all honesty, my memories of the quake actually hitting are hazy at best. I put this down to a massive surge of adrenaline. The room started to rumble and shake, slowly at first, but then getting faster and more pronounced. Initially the shaking was going up and down but when we began moving around in a circular motion at the same time I knew this earthquake was different. By this point I was down on my knees; I watched and listened as the sound of my colleagues' frightened voices mixed with the noise of things falling off shelves and glass shattering around me. The shaking grew worse and the desks and cabinets started to slide around. The entire office was now moving like a roller-coaster. I got under my desk and held tightly to my chair.

Then the secondary alarm sounded. This sounded more like a school bell or fire alarm. A voice on the intercom was shouting at everyone to be calm. At this point I remember thinking that now could very well be the end. My office is on the 13th floor and I remember waiting for the ground to suddenly fall from underneath my backside as I crouched under my desk. Despite the adrenalin it

was a scary thought; I found myself earnestly begging, to whom I do not know, that this not be the end and for the shaking to stop. Eventually it did stop. We all gingerly got up and surveyed the extensive damage.

As my colleagues and I began scrambling into action, phoning and emailing Miyagi JET participants to confirm their safety, somebody put the television on. A visibly shaken but outwardly calm presenter announced that a tsunami of over 10 metres would be approaching the coastal

areas of Tohoku any minute. The bewildered look of horror on the faces of my colleagues as they processed this new information will stay with me for a long time to come. In the panic I was not able to fully grasp what this meant and simply got back to my

work contacting people. The mobile phone networks were down within 10 minutes and repeated attempts to reach people were met with beeps or an apologetic recorded voice. It was only when the first footage of the tsunami started coming in that we all started to realise the seriousness of the situation. It was then that we realised we were in this for the long haul. The ensuing days are a blur in my mind now and my endurance was pushed to the limit. I lived at my office for the first 5 days

working long shifts trying to get in touch with our ALTs (Assistant Language Teachers), dealing with phone calls from worried relatives, coordinating with the embassy teams as they started arriving to confirm the safety of their citizens, talking to the overseas media and whatever else was necessary. I slept on the floor of my office and washed with wet-wipes but we were all too keenly aware that while it was tough, this way of living was luxury compared to the thousands of people displaced



and living at the mercy of the elements.

After the first week I was able to get back to my apartment to survey the damage and clean up. After I started living at home again, my workload slowly began to return to normal levels and I became increasingly restless constantly sitting at my desk. I began to yearn for the opportunity to get out there and help in a more direct way. I had this opportunity on the 19th of April when I went with my supervisor to one of the worst hit towns, Ishinomaki, to search for a JET Programme participant whom we were unable to make contact with. Personally, I was apprehensive about aftershocks and the possibility of another tsunami, but my desire to get out in the field overshadowed any fear I had. We were dropped off by colleagues early Saturday morning. I have never seen anything like it. We trekked around what was left of the town for about 9 hours, checking every evacuation shelter on the way, trying to find any word of our missing ALT. The sheer scale of the destruction was appalling. Overturned and smashed cars littered the streets everywhere. Boats catapulted from the sea by the tsunami lay incongruously on the roads or wedged in buildings. The main bridge leading to the south part of the city was blocked by a boat and covered in rubble, including a nearly intact house that had been torn from its foundations and hurled onto the bridge. The smell sticks in my mind. Sometimes fairly innocuous; rubble, mud, and wood mixed together, resembling that of a building site. Sometimes it was repulsive, a mixture of mud, raw sewage, of rotten fish, meat and decay.

After the initial earthquake and tsunami another issue became apparent: the situation at the Fukushima power plant. We were stuck in the bubble of our office, extremely busy with safety confirmations, amongst other things, and thus did not really have time to think about the developing situation at Daiichi. When internet access resumed and I started trawling overseas news sites I was completely taken aback by the coverage that was being given to the issues at the plant. To us, the situation at the plant was of concern but still a very minor issue when compared to damage caused by the earthquake/tsunami. This surprise was quickly replaced by anger as the coverage became more and more reactionary, irresponsible and sensationalist. The overseas media were quick to latch on to the nuclear "crisis" and coverage of the developing situation at the Fukushima power plant quickly eclipsed that of the earthquake/tsunami disaster. The sensationalised coverage of some outlets has led to very real and considerable distress to not only foreign nationals living in Japan, but their relatives in countries all over the world. It has been the main impetus for hundreds of people to needlessly flee Japan from places

as far away from the plant as Kansai and Kyushu.

I am always critical when it comes to things reported by the media, but the sheer level of irresponsibility and downright disregard for facts that I have seen during the coverage of the Fukushima Daiichi power plant has forced me to reconsider entirely the role of media in society.



The situation at Fukushima Daiichi is still very serious and a complete clean-up will take many months and there will also be lasting damage to the surrounding area. However, while it is important to understand the risks of the situation, I think it is also vital that we are calm, logical and well informed when assessing the situation for ourselves.

While this disaster is of course an extremely terrible situation, the response by those affected, the Japanese population in general and the rest of the world has been profoundly moving, humbling and heartening to say the least. After the quake and tsunami the Japanese Self Defense Force sprang into action and started the important work of search and rescue and road clearing. Search and rescue teams from all over the world started pouring into Miyagi and Tohoku, along with donations of provisions and financial aid. There are countless stories of acts of selfless bravery and generosity that really remind one of what it is to be a human being. Even now thousands of people across Tohoku are living, day-by-day, in makeshift evacuation shelters in school sports halls and other buildings. Gas and electricity are still far away for many and hot water a long forgotten luxury. Despite this, people are remaining positive and making every effort to recover and move on with their lives. It is nothing short of inspiring.



The future of Miyagi prefecture and the Tohoku region may look bleak now. So many people have experienced such profound loss that it is difficult, if not impossible for me to put it into words. My experience, though trying, pales into insignificance compared to what a lot of people are going through. I am only glad that my

family is safe and that I have been in a position that has allowed me to help my fellow Miyagi JETs.

In spite of all this, from what I have seen of the affected people's strength, humanity and resolve, I personally have no doubt whatsoever that Miyagi and Tohoku will recover and be brilliant once more.

THE TOMBO would like to thank the author of this article for his valuable contribution. Luke Happle is a Coordinator for International Relations/ Prefectural Advisor in the International Affairs Division of Miyagi Prefectural Government. Readers can contact Luke Happle directly at cir2@pref.miyagi.jp.



Bathing in the Snow



Korea is notorious for two things, spicy food and the two-year mandatory military service. Knowing that I would be entering the latter this coming May, I set out on a local budget trip to enjoy the last moments of my freedom.

I thought I was going to Yufuin, until I fell asleep and went two stations past my initial destination to a station called Bungo Nakamura, distinguished by a cute little wooden station you would see in a theme park. It looked all the more magical as it was snowing, which surprised me as it had been quite warm in Beppu.

I got off and found that there was no one at the station to collect my ticket or charge me extra for getting off at the wrong stop. I took the chance to slip out of the adorable train station to look for a restaurant, as I was feeling hungry from sleeping. Unable to find a place to eat nearby, and with the sudden urge to go on a spontaneous adventure, I headed back to the station and looked around for a taxi number. A wooden sign caught my attention and I gave the number a call.

What came wasn't the regular taxi you would usually see, but a mid-size wine-red minivan. I didn't think it was a taxi until a friendly-looking *ojisan* stepped out and gave me a smiling bow. I got in and asked the driver where the best-tasting restaurant in town was. He mentioned there was a buffet lunch in the mountains, so I asked him to take me there, curious about why anyone would build a restaurant in the mountains.

Let me pause here to mention the snow-white mountain and trees, which shined in the sunlight (the driver mentioned it was even more beautiful in the fall). After 20 minutes of driving up the curvy mountain path and a passage between rows of leafless Sakura trees (by then, I had resolved to visit here again in the spring after my service), I arrived at the restaurant. I was about to pay the driver when he waved his hand, saying the restaurant and the taxi are under the same business so the ride was free. It was my lucky day.



Beautiful View from Private Hot Spring

The campfire outside of the restaurant caught my attention and I saw soy-bathed *mochi* on a stick, slowly roasting on the fire. Making a mental note to come back for the *mochi*, I stepped in the restaurant to enjoy some authentic Japanese side-dishes I had never seen before, with purple rice and a cake bar. It was 1,500 yen well spent.

After lunch, holding a soy-covered *mochi* on a stick in one hand, I went for a walk enjoying the snow-covered mountain scenery, which reminded me of a scene in Lord of the Rings. Boy was I glad I missed my Yufuin stop! After walking for about five minutes,

I came across some traditional-looking lodges, which turned out to be a Japanese-style hotel with outdoor *onsen*. I'm not a big fan of hot springs, but this was an experience not to be missed!

I booked a room with a private outdoor bath on the veranda. My intuition served me right, as the *onsen* was a spectacular experience! I was lucky that it had snowed because it made the mountains all the more beautiful. After being one with nature, I relaxed and watched some TV in my hotel room,

before heading out to another restaurant nearby, this time a purely traditional Japanese course-menu.

What came out, I would never forget— some of the best tasting home-made tofu pudding, *wagyu* (Japanese beef) sukiyaki, and a dish full of exotic seafood, some of which I had never seen before.

Wondering why I didn't know of such a wonderful place sooner, and satisfied that the whole trip cost me less than 10,000 yen, I left the isolated hotel the next morning (after another dip in the *onsen*) and took the free hotel-taxi ride down to the train station. Saying goodbye to the friendly driver, I got on the train and headed home, watching as the snow slowly faded as I got farther and farther from the one trip that I knew would comfort me during my potato-peeling days yet to come.

Written by Yong Ho Kim, a student at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.

Writer's note: As I later found out, the hotel is run by a group called Kyusuikei.

Reservations and trip arrangements can be made at <http://kyusuikei.com> or by calling 0973-79-2144

Sake Competition

Do you like Japanese *sake*? Can you distinguish the subtle flavors, scents, textures, and qualities of different brands of *sake*? Come test your ability at the Oita Preliminary for the National Kikizake Competition! To compete, participants try to match 7 different kinds of *sake* on one table, with the same exact 7 varieties lined up in a different order, on a separate table. This proves to be a challenge as contestants must note the characteristics of the first set of *sake* and then match them with the second set, without being able to move between tables, and with increasing inability to judge due to intoxication.

Contestants waiting to hear competition results will be served refreshments and can play games taste-testing *sake*. Top finishers receive prizes, and the top **two** finishers will also receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Tokyo to compete in the National Kikizake Competition.

What: National Kikizake Competition Oita Preliminary

When: Saturday, July 16th 13:00~

Where: Toyo Hotel (Behind Oita Station on route 210)

Number of Participants: 60

How to Apply: Admission is FREE! To apply, send your name, age, country, phone number, and e-mail address to kikisake@oita-sake.or.jp or FAX 097-543-9903

Application Deadline: June 30th (Thu.)

Inquiries: Oita Brewer's Association 097-543-9901



**In order to be eligible for the trip to Tokyo you MUST plan on being in Oita in October of this year.*

**Twenty years is the legal age for drinking alcohol in Japan, and ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SHOW IDENTIFICATION (picture ID that shows your date of birth). Please plan responsibly and refrain from driving yourself.*

Festivals & Events

Date	Event Description	Location	Contact #
May 3 rd	Tour de Kunisaki- Cyclists from all over cycle the Kunisaki Peninsula, starting at Kitsuki's Culture Gymnasium (文化体育館). Choose 20/70/90/160km course.	Kitsuki City Culture Gym	☎0120-711-951
May 3 rd	Wisteria Festa- Enjoy dance and <i>koto</i> performances under blooming wisterias at Hayasu-Hime Shrine. Tea & sweets to be served. Trees also light up at night!	Oita City Saganoseki	☎097-575-0341
May 3 rd	All-Japan University Sumo Tournament- Top wrestlers from universities throughout Japan will battle it out at the sumo ring at Usa's Sports Ground.	Usa City Sogo-Undo-Jo	☎0978-32-1111
May 3 rd ~ May 4 th	Ebine Festa- Ebine orchids and local food products for sale. Stage events, Yamaga Beef BBQ corner and more at Yamaga Town Hall. Walking marathon on May 4 th .	Kitsuki City Yamaga Town	☎0977-75-1211
May 3 rd ~ May 4 th	West Japan Paragliding Contest- Youngsters from around the country come to enjoy paragliding at this great Kyushu location from the top of Kirikabu Mountain.	Kusu-Machi Kirikabu-yama	☎0973-72-4566
May 3 rd ~ May 4 th	Onta Pottery Festival- Ceramics on sale, and visitors can try their hand at the spinning wheel used for making this classic craft from Hita's Sarayama area.	Hita City Motoe-Machi	☎0973-29-2403
May 4 th	Ebisudani Festival- Festivities at Ebisu Yaba Noson Koen(Park) include <i>taiko</i> (drum) and <i>kagura</i> (traditional dance) performances, rice cake giveaway, and more!	Bungo Takada Ebisudani	☎0978-54-3111
May 4 th ~ May 5 th	23rd Kitsuki Castle Festival- Go back in time with carriage races, costume processions, geisha parades, the recreation of an Edo period village, and more!	Kitsuki City Jouka-Machi	☎0978-63-0100
May 5 th	Hands-on Traditional Toys- Come experience traditional Japanese toys including bamboo fireflies, water guns and more! Open participation from 9am to 3pm.	Oita City History Museum	☎097-549-0880
May 5 th	Children's Day Festival- Children's plays, hand-made crafts corner, games, fishing competitions and more to celebrate Children's Day.	Kusu-Machi Mishima Park	☎0973-72-7151
May 8 th & June 12 th	Yayoi Morning Market- First come, first serve at this bustling morning market with fresh foodstuffs at Michi-No-Eki Yayoi (Yayoi Rest Stop).	Saiki City Michi-No-Eki	☎0972-46-5951
May 14 th ~ May 15 th	Festival & Fireworks in Hiji- Shiroshita karei is Hiji's special flounder, served at this 26 th Shiroshita Flounder Festival. Fireworks to take place on the 14 th .	Hiji-Machi Yokoku Ruins	☎0977-72-4255
May 14 th ~ May 15 th	Bungo Takada May Festival- Spring festival with duck soup giveaway (for 2,000 people), karaoke contest, and more outside the Chamber of Commerce building.	Bungo Takada Shin-Machi	☎0978-22-2412
May 15 th	Bungo Takada Marathon- Participants from all over will gather to walk (up to 10km) starting from in front of the Chamber of Commerce.	Bungo Takada Chuo Park	☎0978-53-5111
May 15 th	Usa Air Base Peace Walk- A walking tour (10km course) of the former Usa Air Base with guided narratives about the base and battle sites at Yanagigaura Noson Koen.	Usa City Yanagigaura	☎0978-32-1111
May 18 th ~ May 24 th	Mankoji Temple Market- This gathering has taken place since 1425. Come to exchange goods, compete in costume and karaoke contests, and see performances!	Oita City Sakanoichi	☎097-592-1352
May 21 st & June 11 th	Uki Uki Flea Market- Come get deals on goods at OASIS Tower from 11:30~15:00	Oita City OASIS 1F	☎097-538-7411
May 21 st & June 18 th	Kimono Appreciation Day- Monthly event held on the 3 rd Sunday of the month. Free and rental kimonos for trying, professional photo shoot and more!	Kitsuki City Jouka-Machi	☎0978-62-3131
May 21 st ~ May 22 nd	Yunohira Hot Spring Festival- On the cobblestone roads that line this hot spring town will be a children's parade, music, stage events and more!	Yufuin-Machi Yunohira Onsen	☎0977-86-2367
May 21 st ~ May 22 nd	Hita River Opening Festival & Fireworks- Performances and other festivities to take place to celebrate the ban lift on <i>ayu</i> fish. Don't miss the grand fireworks!	Hita City Mikuma-River	☎0973-55-1111
May 21 st & June 18 th	Saganoseki Morning Market- Oita's specialty <i>seki-aji</i> and <i>seki-saba</i> fish will be on sale at the Prefectural Fisheries Association Saganoseki Branch.	Oita City Saganoseki	☎097-575-1000
May 21 st ~ May 22 nd	Himeshima Festival & Fireworks- Himeshima's famous children's fox dance and other performances, and from 11:00am & 12:00pm flounder served for ¥1,500 on May 22 nd . Fireworks from 8:30pm at Himeshima Beach on May 21 st .	Himeshima Beach/ Ferry Port	☎0987-87-2111
May 22 nd & June 26 th	Saiki Kodawari Market- Hand-made goods market based on the concept of "local production for local consumption". Karaoke contest and food vendors too!	Saiki City Ohte-Machi	☎090-2585-3991
May 28 th ~ July 2 nd	Hosenji Firefly Festival- Every Saturday, during the event period, stages will be set up and firefly viewing buses will be in service. Tanabata festival on July 2 nd .	Kuju- machi Hosenji Onsen	☎0973-73-3800
May 29 th	Yufuin Cycling Life- Event to promote enjoying Yufuin by bicycle. Come and discover a different side of Yufuin!	Yufu City Yufuin-Machi	☎0977-85-4464
June 5 th & From 7pm	Kurushima Night Market- Local produce and crafts for sale, photo/art on display and live performances at this rare night market on Mori-Hon-Machi main street.	Kusu-Machi Mori-Hon-Machi	☎0973-72-2374
June 5 th	Mud Volleyball- Teams of 6 get together, dressed up in various costumes, for a friendly game of mud volleyball. Come get muddy at Sachi-no-tanbo!	Nakatsu City Sanko-Mura	☎0979-43-2050
June 13 th	Tashibuno Shoen Rice Planting Festival- Come see this rice paddy village unchanged since ancient times, and try your hand at rice planting!	Bungo Takada Ozaki Area	☎0978-22-3100
June 22 nd	Kamae Candle Night- A fun event to take you back to olden times. Story telling, picture theatre, and candle lit lanterns lining Kamae-Ura Port.	Saiki City Kamae-Ura	☎0972-42-1112
June 26 th	18th Lavender Festival- 10,000 purple lavender trees at Oita's Lavender Park are a sight to see! Come pick your own lavender for free (up to 100 branches)!	Oita City Lavender-en	☎097-588-0656
June 26 th	Usa Shrine Rice Harvest- Come join the fun in planting rice and praying for a healthy harvest at Usa Shrine.	Usa City Usa Shrine	☎0978-37-0001
June 26 th	Yabakei Hot Spring Day- All of the hot springs in Yabakei and Hon-Yabakei's Nishitani area hot springs will be opened to bathers for FREE!	Nakatsu City Yabakei Area	☎0979-54-3111

★ Stage & Music Events ★

May	Time	Artist/Event	Venue	Cost	Contact #
1 st ~ 5 th	All Day	Rainbow Point Music Festival- 5-day festival featuring many music groups at Ryujin Beachside Camp Site	Ryujin Beach Camp Site	¥3,000	☎090-2097-9246
Every Mon.	21:30	Oldies Night & Open Mic- Come perform or just listen at this weekly event held every Monday (also in June)	Cantaloop 2	¥500 + drink	☎097-548-5363
3 rd	19:00	Mixed Genre Live Music- J-pop/electronica/rock and more	AT HALL	¥2,500	☎097-535-2567
4 th	20:00	AK- 69 The Red Magic Tour- Hip hop artist performance	Ongakukan	¥3,500	☎080-1789-1234
5 th & 6 th	19:00	Nabowa- Ambient music (guitar, percussion, bass & violin) at art/film/music café space in YuFuin	Creeks	¥3,500	☎0977-84-3838
6 th	22:00	HOOPLA- DJ music event	DJ's Bar TRIP	¥2,000 w/ drink	☎097-533-8249
6 th	20:30	Acoustic music- Regular event in Oita City (also June 3 rd)	Cantaloop 2	¥500 + drink	☎097-548-5363
10 th	20:00	Drummer's Unite- Takashi Numazawa & Kosuke Tsuji	AT HALL	¥3,500	☎097-535-2567
12 th	19:00	TAO Drum Performance- High energy Japanese drumming	Patoria Hita	¥3,000~5,500	☎0973-25-5000
9 th ~ 19 th	Varies	MUSIC FESTIVAL Argerich's Meeting Point in Beppu- A series of concerts featuring famed pianist Martha Argerich	Beppu B-Con Plaza iichiko Culture Ctr.	Varies	☎0977-27-2299
21 st	19:30	Punk Music- People presents Public Organization	AT HALL	¥2,000	☎097-535-2567
21 st	21:00	Bossa Nova Night- Popular monthly event (also June 17 th)	Cantaloop 2	¥500 + drink	☎097-548-5363
26 th	18:30	SPITZ Jamboree Tour- Popular Japanese band SPITZ	iichiko Grand Thtr.	¥5,400	☎092-714-0159
27 th	20:30	Soft & Mellow- Open mic for acoustic acts (also June 24 th)	Cantaloop 2	¥500 + drink	☎097-548-5363
28 th	19:00	Pyramid Vol. 3- DJ music event at lounge-style bar/café	Raku-zou	¥1,500	☎097-532-2339
June	Time	Artist/Event	Venue	Cost	Contact #
5 th	18:00	Rimi Natsukawa- Famous Okinawan vocalist	Patoria Hita	¥3,000~5,000	☎0973-25-5000
6 th	19:00	Berlin Philharmonic Octet- Chamber music concert	iichiko Otonoizumi	¥1,000~6,000	☎097-533-4004
9 th	20:00	Leona- Japan tour	Cantaloop 2	¥3,000 + drink	☎097-548-5363
10 th	19:00	Septet Vocal Performance- Soprano, tenor, and baritone	iichiko Otonoizumi	¥1,000~2,000	☎097-549-6576
11 th	18:00	TAO Drum Performance- High energy Japanese drumming	iichiko Grand Thtr.	¥4,500~7,000	☎092-721-2015
11 th	18:30	Swing Echoes Jazz Orchestra- Tohoku charity performance	Brick Block	¥1,000 w/ drink	☎097-536-4852
25 th & 26 th	10:00	Japan Choral Association- The Kyushu branch of the Japan Choral Association will hold their 34 th choral performance	iichiko Grand Thtr.	¥1,500	☎097-533-4004
July	Time	Artist/Event	Venue	Cost	Contact #
12 th	19:00	Geza & the 5 Devils- Genius violinist Geza Hosszu	iichiko Grand Thtr.	¥3,000~5,000	☎097-592-0584
31 st	18:30	KAAGAPAY Oita Filipino Association Charity Music Event	Compal Hall	¥1,000	☎080-3996-0728

Ticket prices range from student to most expensive general admission. Prices shown otherwise indicate price for purchase on the day of the event, they may be cheaper if purchased in advance. "w/ drink" prices include drinks, "+drink" prices require the additional purchase of a drink. Times shown indicate start times, doors usually open 30 minutes beforehand.

Venues

At Hall= 2-6-4 Chuo-Machi,
Ichi-ii Kaihatsu Bldg 3F, Oita City

Cantaloop II= 3-2-30 Miyako-Mach,
Nakayama Dai 5 Building 6F, Oita City

Compal Hall= 1-5-38 Funai-Machi, Oita City

Creeks= 3009-6 Kawakami, YuFuin-Machi

Brick Block= 5-7-5 Ikushi, Oita City

DJs Bar Trip= 3-6-3 Miyako-Machi 2-chome,
Oita City

iichiko Grand Thtr= Oasis Tower 1F Oita City

iichiko Otonoizumi= Oasis Tower 4F Oita City

Ongakukan= 2-1-24 Miyako-Machi Oita City

Patoria Hita= Sanbonmatsu 1-8-11, Hita City

Raku-zou= 4-1-30 Chuo-Machi,
Ashikari Bldg. 2F, Oita City

Ryujin Beach= Uchida, Musashi-Machi,
Kunisaki City



Exhibitions & Screenings

Date	Description	Venue	Cost	Contact #
~ May 5 th	Josef Albers Formulation:Articulation Exhibit- All 127 pieces of Josef Alber's Formulation:Articulation collection on display.	Oita Art Museum	¥600	☎097-554-5800
~ July 4 th	Oita-Portugal Exchange Exhibit- Exhibit introducing the cultural and historical exchange between Oita City and Portugal since the 1500s	Oita City History Museum	¥200	☎097-549-0880
~ July 10 th	Things Made in the Atelier- Display of bamboo crafts by Shono Shounsai, the nationally designated living treasure for bamboo crafts.	Oita Art Museum	¥300	☎097-554-5800
May 22 nd & June 26 th	Museum Theater- Come enjoy short films on historical Oita figure Otomo Sorin and animated Japanese folktales from 1pm to 2pm.	Oita City History Museum	Free	☎097-549-0880
May 28 th	International Movie Screening- Korean native In Sung Gun will introduce the Korean film The Secret Reunion and hold a discussion to promote international understanding from 1:30pm.	OASIS B1 Screening Hall	Free	☎097-533-4021
June 24 th ~ June 26 th	Yufuin Bunka Kiroku Film Festival- SDocumentaries of historical and cultural interest will be screened at Yufuin Community Center.	Yufuin Kominkan	¥800	☎0977-84-4424

Oita Art Museum= Oita-Shi Bijutsukan 大分市美術館

Oita City History Museum= Oita-Shi Rekishi Shiryokan 大分市歴史資料館

Most Museums and Centers are closed on Monday, or Tuesday if Monday is a public holiday. Student admissions vary, highest cost shown.

Japanese Lessons

Himawari Japanese Volunteers

Support for people learning Japanese in order to help them enjoy their lives in Oita, now at three different locations.

Wasada Public Hall Wed. 10:00~12:00

Meiji Akeno Public Hall Wed. 14:00~16:00

Tsurusaki Public Hall Sat. 10:00~12:00

For more information contact Fukata Miharu TEL: 097-527-2614

E-MAIL: nihongo_himawari_oita@yahoo.co.jp

Asian Culture Exchange Center

Free Japanese lessons near Oita River on the 2nd floor of the Yutaka Building in Yutaka-Machi, Oita City. Wednesday from 10:10~11:40. Asian Culture Exchange Center TEL: 097-537-0122
CELL: 090-4580-9550 (Ms. Noda)

Nihongo Rakuraku-talk

Beppu City Hall offers free Japanese lessons every Tuesday from 14:00~15:30. For more information contact Beppu International Affairs Division TEL: 097-721-6133

E-MAIL: int-ma@city.beppu.oita.jp

Sakura Japanese Class

Come study Japanese with friendly volunteers and teachers in a pleasant atmosphere. Sakura Japanese Class is held every Monday from 10:30~12:30 at the Oita University International House in Nishiki-Machi, Oita City. Classes are FREE. For more information call Ohashi-san CELL: 090-7866-2486

AIUEO Japanese Lessons

Volunteers offer free Japanese lessons on Tuesday and Friday from 10:20~11:50 at I-NESS near Oasis Tower as well as Thursday nights at Compal Hall from 18:30~20:00. Lessons are also offered in Beppu at the Oita International House on Tuesday mornings from 10:30~12:00. For more information contact:
Ms. Miyase 090-8353-2485 (day lessons)
Ms. Kato 097-532-5940 (night lessons)

From the Plaza

Japanese Chat @ OIP

Come to the Oita International Plaza to exchange with locals and practice your Japanese conversation skills one-on-one in a relaxed atmosphere.

Saturday May 21st 1pm~2:30pm

Saturday June 18th 1pm~2:30pm

Space is limited! Contact us to reserve your seat!

TEL: 097-533-4021

E-MAIL: melissa@emo.or.jp

**International Understanding Seminar:
Movie Series~ Korea**

The Oita International Plaza holds several seminars throughout the year to promote international understanding. This event uses movies as a vehicle for discussing interesting aspects of other cultures. Come experience Korea! The movie The Secret Reunion will be introduced by Korean native In Sung Gun, and a discussion will be held afterward. (Korean language with Japanese subtitles). No reservations necessary and admission is **FREE!**

Date: Saturday May 28th 1:30pm~

Place: iichiko Culture Center B1F Screening Hall

**International Understanding Seminar:
Foreign Culture Series~ Korea & France**

This seminar is another effort by the Oita International Plaza to promote international understanding. Natives from different countries lecture in Japanese about aspects of their culture and society. The next seminars will be about customs and manners in Korea and France.

Korea: Saturday May 21st 2:30pm~4pm

France: Saturday June 25th 2:30pm~4pm

Place: iichiko Culture Center B1F Screening Hall

What's Going On?

From the Plaza

Free Legal Consultations

The Oita International Plaza is holding free legal consultations on **May 18th and June 15th from 13:00~16:00**. The Oita Emigration/Immigration Affairs Council also organizes free consultations where emigration/immigration specialists are available to offer advice on a variety of topics from Immigration Bureau paperwork and procedures, to daily life matters. **The next consultation will be held on June 5th from 13:00~16:00**. English interpretation available, other languages may be available with reservation two days in advance. OIP 097-533-4021

Free Tagalog Consultations

Date: Saturday **May 7th** & Tuesday **May 17th**

Saturday **June 4th** & Tuesday **June 21st**

Time: 13:00~16:00

Place: Oita International Plaza

Consultant: Rhodora Yoshitake

Free Chinese Consultations

Date/Time: Every Thursday 10:00~13:00 and every Tuesday from 13:00~16:00. Place: Oita International Plaza. Consultant: Cui Wenyu (*Dates and times are subject to change. Please contact the Oita International Plaza before coming.)

TEL: 097-533-4021

Community

Oita International Christian Fellowship

You're welcome to join us for worship and fellowship! Check our website at: www.oicf3712.webs.com

Place: Compal Hall

Time: Every Sunday 10:00am~12:00pm

Check the lobby board for the room number under "O.I.C.F."

International Kempo (Self-Defense Classes)

Ever thought about being able to defend yourself? Join us to keep in shape and to learn martial art-based self-defense techniques and *bo-jyutsu* (stick fighting).

Place: Souda Dojo (Near Oita University)

Time: Every Friday 19:00~21:00

For more information on times and places, please contact Katsunori Tsujita at 097-583-0959.

"Tomare" Meditation

~Stop and find your center~

Would you like to learn more about or participate in individual or group meditation sessions, classes, or the Japanese healing art of Reiki? Thursday Evening Monthly Meditation at Organic Cafe Hana: Explore meditation one Thursday a month from 7PM to 8PM. 1500yen includes tea and sweets. Meditation and English: Monday mornings, Nakajima Ko-minkan. For information, schedule or questions please contact Joanne at 097-573-8053 or joannegyoshida@yahoo.com

Lunch With Us?

Japanese home cooking club for international families living in Beppu, takes place on **Friday May 27th and June 24th** at Women's Center Fujin Kaikan "Nadeshiko" from 11:00~14:00. 500yen to participate. For more information contact Beppu International Affairs Division TEL: 0977-21-6133

E-MAIL: int-ma@city.beppu.oita.jp

KAAGAPAY Charity Concert

The KAAGAPAY Oita Filipino Association (KOFA) is holding a charity concert to generate funds for their outreach programs and to give back to the Oita community. KOFA members will perform song and dance, and anyone from the Oita Community is welcome to come watch! Tickets are 1000yen a person. Details: July 31st at Compal Hall. Contact Emily for more information 080-3996-0728

LANGUAGE LEARNING PAGE



Kanji of the Month



This section aims to teach new kanji characters to beginner-level Japanese learners, and to give intermediate and advanced learners deeper understanding of each character. This month's character set is:

DIARY 「日記」

The character 「日」, which is read ニチ or ひ, originated as a pictograph of the sun. The character for sun takes on the meaning:

DAY 「日」

The character 「記」, which is read キ or しるす, contains elements meaning 「言」 words and 「己」 thread. This suggests *tying words together*, so that the character takes on the meaning:

WRITE 「記」

Combining the characters for “day” and “write”, gives us a word meaning “daily writing” or:

DIARY 「日記」

The following sentence uses the above characters to exemplify their different readings:

私は毎日、日々のことを日記に記す。

Every day I write about daily happenings in my diary.

**Not all readings for each character are listed.

Foreign Movies Showing in Oita

Cinema	Movie	Showing Date
Cinema5 Central Oita (on 5 th Ave) ☎097-536-4512	Rumba! El iceberg (<i>French</i>)	Apr 30 th ~ May 6 th
	Agora	Apr 30 th ~ May 13 th
	The White Ribbon (<i>German, Italian, Polish</i>)	May 7 th ~ May 20 th
	A Porta do Vento (<i>Sicilian, Italian, English</i>)	May 7 th ~ May 20 th
	180°South (<i>English, Spanish</i>)	May 14 th ~ May 20 th
	Whatever Works	May 14 th ~ May 20 th
	Uncle Boonmee (<i>Thai</i>)	May 14 th ~ May 27 th
	Looking for Eric (<i>English, French</i>)	May 14 th ~ May 27 th
	Herb & Dorothy	May 21 st ~
	Copie conforme (<i>French, English, Italian</i>)	May 21 st ~
	Film socialism (<i>French</i>)	May 21 st ~ May 27 th
	Somewhere (<i>English, Italian</i>)	May 21 st ~ Jun 10 th
	Welcome (<i>French, Kurdish, English</i>)	May 28 th ~ Jun 3 rd
	The Experiment	May 28 th ~ Jun 3 rd
Toho Cinemas Wasada Town ☎097-548-7878	On the Path (<i>Bosnian</i>)	Jun 11 th ~ Jun 17 th
	Au Revoir Taipei (<i>Min Nan, Mandarin, French</i>)	Jun 11 th ~ Jun 17 th
	Of Gods and Men (<i>Arabic, French</i>)	Jun 25 th ~ Jul 8 th
	Black Swan	May 13 th ~
	Pirates of the Caribbean 4	May 20 th ~
T-Joy Cinemas Park Place	The Adjustment Bureau	May 27 th ~
	Super 8	June 24 th ~
	Black Swan	May 13 th ~
	Pirates of the Caribbean 4	May 20 th ~
	The Adjustment Bureau	May 27 th ~
	Maestro 6	May 28 th ~
	X-men: First Class	June 11 th ~
	Skyline	June 18 th ~
	Super 8	June 24 th ~

Only foreign films are listed. Changes may occur without notice.

Unless otherwise noted films are shown in English, with Japanese subtitles.

Admission Standard ¥1,800 Pre-release ¥1,500 Pair ¥2,800

Seniors ¥1,000 Students ¥1,000~1,500

Special Discounts

The first day of the month ¥1,000 Ladies' Day (Wednesdays) ¥1,000

Men's Day is ¥1,000 (Thursday at Toho Cinemas and Cinema5)

Late Night Show (Sun-Fri) ¥1,200 (Toho Cinemas)

The Animated Adventures of Oita Ben 大分弁講座

The lovable, language-saving super hero trio- Oita Ben, Guy Jean, and Hyo Jun Go- had a pleasant getaway in the Nagayu Hot Springs resort area, and now they were ready and rearing to get back to the task of tracking down their most despised enemy, the language-destroying, grammar-botching, syntax-slaying villain JAPANESE JARGON.

They made their way back to town, where they could access the most up-to-date information on sightings of JARGON in newspapers, magazines and other mixed media publications. While flipping through national and international coverage of JARGON they noticed that while some media outcast JARGON as a threat to common language and social harmony, other media framed JARGON and his loosely-associated associate Wakamono Kotoba, as new and innovative pioneers bridging the gap between traditional and contemporary Japan.

Well, this was food for thought indeed! Did JARGON in fact destroy language, botch grammar, or slay syntax? In their hot-spring induced, relaxed state-of-mind, they were feeling a bit more objective, at which they encouraged each other to think about it:

Guy Jean: Try to think about it.

Hyo Jun Go: 考えてみなさい。

Oita Ben: 考えちみよ。

～てみなさい＝～ちみよ

In standard Japanese the form 「～てみなさい」 is a polite imperative form used to tell someone to “try to ~”. This is used with verbs conjugated in the te-form. In colloquial Japanese this becomes 「～てみよ」, and is further transformed in Oita dialect, where it becomes 「～ちみよ」. As always, the te-forms of verbs ending in 「ぶ」, 「む」 or 「ぐ」 become 「～でみよ」 in colloquial Japanese, and 「～じみよ」 in Oita dialect. Below are examples for conjugating different types of verbs.

English	Standard Japanese	Colloquial Japanese	Oita Dialect
Try to do	してみなさい	してみよ	しちみよ
Try to eat	食べてみなさい	食べてみよ	食べちみよ
Try to read	読んでみなさい	読んでみよ	読んじみよ

Note: 「～てみなさい」 is a polite form used by a superior towards a person of lower rank. 「～てみてください」 is the form that should be used when addressing a superior.

Making Submissions

THE TOMBO is always looking for articles and event information. Please send your submissions to the Oita International Plaza by E-mail (melissa@emo.or.jp) based on the submission deadline listed in the publication schedule below. The Oita Prefecture Cultural and Sports Foundation reserves all copyrights to articles printed in THE TOMBO.

Issue	Publication Date	Submission Deadline
July/August	July 1 st	June 1 st
September/October	September 1 st	August 1 st
November/December	November 1 st	October 1 st
January/February	January 1 st	December 1 st
March/April	March 1 st	February 1 st
May/June	May 1 st	April 1 st

Receiving THE TOMBO

The Oita International Plaza mails THE TOMBO, free of charge, to all foreigners living in Oita prefecture. If you would like to start receiving THE TOMBO by mail, or you would like to cancel your subscription, or change your address, please send your name and address to the Oita International Plaza by mail, phone, fax, or E-mail (melissa@emo.or.jp)

Necessities of Life

Disposing of Electronics



In an effort to reduce electrical waste and to promote a cycle of reuse and recycling, with electronics retailers and manufacturers playing a central role, the Home Appliance Recycling Law was enacted in 1998. This law also greatly affects the consumer as it means that we cannot simply throw unwanted electronics away. Namely, televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, and air conditioning units are under the jurisdiction of this law. Below I have outlined options for disposing of electronics.

Option 1: The more straight-forward option is to have an electronics retailer or a recycling company come pick up the item. Most large electronics stores provide this service, and those that do *not* should be able to guide you to one who does. On the pick-up day, they will assess the cost for recycling the item based on the size and the item manufacturer, and you will be charged the pre-

determined recycling fee and a pick-up fee.

Option 2: The second option is to pay the recycling fee at a post office and receive a receipt (リサイクル券 *risaikuru-ken*) proving that you have paid the fee. This process involves filling out a form with the type of electrical item, the manufacturer name and code, and the recycling fee (reference for looking up fee available at post office). Then you can drop off the electronic item along with the recycle fee receipt at a designated center, or pay to have the item collected. Some post offices provide a list of agencies that will collect the item, but if yours doesn't then you will need to inquire with the division of your local city hall that deals with garbage disposal.

I have posted a list of contact numbers for each city hall on the Oita International Plaza Homepage:

<http://www.oitaplaza.jp/english/uploads/photos/248.pdf>

国際交流プラザ
財団法人 大分県文化スポーツ振興財団

Oita International Plaza
Oita Prefecture Cultural & Sports
Promotion Foundation

大分市高砂町2-33 OASISひろば21 (B1F)
☎097-533-4021 FAX:097-533-4052

OASIS Hiroba21 (B1F) 2-33 Takasago-Machi, Oita-Shi 870-0029

THANK YOU!!

A special thanks to all those who co-operated with us for this issue. Your help was very much appreciated.

THE TOMBO is produced by :

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HOURS: Monday-Friday 9:30am-7:00pm
(closed weekends and the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. We are open on the Saturdays before these Mondays)
Closed national holidays & Dec 29 - Jan 3

The International Plaza is located on the basement floor of OASIS Hiroba 21 (iichiko Culture Center) .

