



International Relations SAIJO

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Contents

Culture and Industry Festival (SANBUN) 1

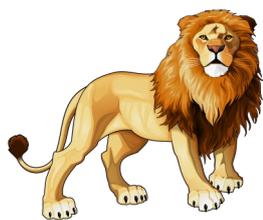
FUN FUN English ~ Let's Play Using English! ~ 2

Saijo-China Friendship Exchange Association Introduction 2

Hue Traditional Handicraft Festival Report 3

Dates with Diana 4

Events & Announcements 4



International Relations Saijo is a quarterly newsletter published in Japanese, English, and Vietnamese by the Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA). We welcome your comments, questions and submissions.

19th Culture and Industry Festival

On April 29, the Culture and Industry Festival was held in the Saijo Shopping Arcade. Entitled "Africafe" (Africa Café), this year's international booth held activities with Africa as the theme. The booth enjoyed great popularity from the start to the finish. Our success was largely due to the help of many volunteers, so we thank everyone wholeheartedly.



Saijo High School students who had participated in the recent Study Tour also shared their experiences with guests.



The café booth was a great success! We also introduced games from Africa. Children and adults alike had an enjoyable time.

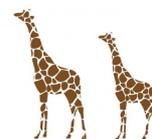


We held a djembe (African drums) workshop with foreign exchange students from Nigeria and Lesotho. The sound of drums reverberated throughout the venue.

Left: John Right: Ishmael



Beloved sambusa are often eaten as a snack or light meal in East Africa. 400 sold! Our high school volunteers were quite busy!



<English Language Intercultural communication in Saijo (ELIS)>

16th Annual FUN FUN English ~ Let's Play Using English! ~

Amidst the gentle spring breeze and warm sunlight of March, children came one after the other to our reception where we handed out red, blue, and yellow handkerchiefs, dividing them into teams. Thus, the 16th Annual FUN FUN English ~ Let's Play Using English ~ began.

80 Saijo elementary school students (including this year's first-year students) gathered at the Komatsu Community Center to enjoy competitive group games and a shopping game to get snacks with Saijo's ALTs and CIRs while using English.

At first, there were children who were not used to English and who felt shy speaking to people from different countries. However, the cheerful, smiling faces of the non-Japanese volunteers brought power to the event and helped the children overcome their shyness and speak more smoothly. They became more naturally animated, and everyone's spirit seemed to dance with joy. It is our mission to cultivate the zest for life, adaptability, expressiveness, dynamism, and imagination of our developing youth as well as to advance our initiatives through English activities.



How interesting!

This is fun!

I want to try!



We treasure these feelings. In the future, we will endeavor to carry out similar activities with everyone!



《 Saijo-China Friendship Exchange Association Introduction 》

Our association has developed a long-lasting relationship with China, especially with Saijo's Friendship City Baoding. This July, we plan to host a proactive exchange with the students of Hebei University who will come to Saijo. Recently, our volunteers have implemented observational trips to various parts of China.

2014 Baoding City (Hebei University, First Central Hospital)

2015 Northeastern Region (Harbin, Changchun, Shenyang, Dalian, Lushun)

2016 Hebei Province, Shandong Province (Jinan, Qufu, etc.)

2017 Beijing (Peking), Tianjin, Chengde

2018 Henan Province (Luoyang, Shaolin Temple, etc.)

This year, we plan to visit Guilin, which is considered the world of landscape paintings.



Here are pictures from our recent trips!



Longmen Grottoes



Baoding First Central Hospital (2014)



Friendship City Monument (Baoding)



Harbin (2015)

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This was my third visit to Hue. I was able to engage with many more Vietnamese people during this visit than during my previous trips. I had a great experience because I had conversations with many people, such as the chief administrator of Hanoi and the students of the Hue University of Foreign Language Studies Korean Language Department. Our group went to a workshop on making beanbags and yoyos. We also made beanbags with the visitors who came to Saijo's booth at the Hue Traditional Handicraft Festival. Just as in Japan, there were Vietnamese people who could toss the beanbags skillfully and those who could not, but we were grateful that everyone took interest in joining us.

I think that the effort I made to study in the Saijo International Exchange Association's Vietnamese language course made this visit better than my previous ones. After all, speaking a foreign language with people from that country teaches you the joy of learning another language. This experience will be a motivation for my future studies. Xin cảm ơn (thank you) Anh Thy - Vietnamese teacher. **(Kyozo Teramachi)**

Cà phê sữa (Milk Coffee) is so tasty!!!



Hue Traditional Craft Festival 2019



Beanbag and Yoyo Workshop



Exchange with Local Staff



Welcome Party Toast with Hue Mayor



Exchange with Ethnic Minority Textile Artisans



Sightseeing in Hoi An (World Heritage Site)



Exchange with Artisans who Make Paper Lotus Flowers



I participated in the Hue Traditional Handicraft Festival as one of Saijo's volunteer supporters this year. We hosted a beanbag and yoyo workshop at the exhibition booth. The women volunteers sewed bags together and showed visitors how to complete them. The men provided yoyo demonstrations and helped by attaching rubber bands to beanbags to make yoyos. There were so many visitors that our 3 women volunteers could not work fast enough to supply the demand, so for the first time in a while, I held a needle and thread. Also, as I was wearing a monk's clothing, many of the guests asked to take pictures with me in front of our Mt. Ishizuchi backdrop. I shared information about Mt. Ishizuchi and photographs of Mt. Ishizuchi in winter on display.

It was my first visit to Vietnam, but wherever I went, I felt a strong consciousness toward Japanese people. Even when we purchased beans for the beanbags at the local market, I could hear people refer to us not as Korean or Chinese, but as people of Japan (Nhật Bản). While we volunteered at the Saijo booth, each participant conveyed affinity for Japan, making the workshop a huge success. I could personally feel their consideration and warm-heartedness for us Japanese people.

The people of Hue also invited us to a welcome reception where we sat as guests of honor during the opening ceremony. I felt moved that everyone involved was aware of our visit from Saijo. Thanks to the people of Hue and the other members from Saijo, I had a wonderful trip. Should the opportunity arise, I hope to enjoy a leisurely visit to Vietnam. **(Hiroyuki Kondo)**



Purchasing beans for beanbag yoyos at a local market



Let's Stop Time

"We drink coffee to stop time." My new Turkish acquaintance had told me. Last month, I visited Turkey and learned about the culture and lifestyle through the local people, but a conversation on Turkish coffee made an especially deep impression.

In America, coffee culture has some diversity, but coffee franchises like Starbucks are ubiquitous. Customers using coffee shops for free wireless internet, friends enjoying sugar-loaded Frappuccinos, and people rushing somewhere with paper coffee cups in hand are hardly rare.

While you can see this spectacle in Turkey as well, it is relatively uncommon and limited to large cities. As coffee is brewed in keeping with tradition, there is no way to rush Turkish coffee. Time is essential. Therefore, people drink coffee when they want to stop time. About 10 minutes are needed to brew one cup. Even then, you can't take a sip right away because the finely ground beans are not filtered. First, you must wait for the coffee grounds to fall like snow to the bottom of the cup. Only after they have settled, can you enjoy your coffee. The ritual may end for most Turkish men after they finish drinking, but there is a 2nd chapter for which the women tend to stay.

Next, you flip over your coffee cups and make a wish before you proceed with fortune telling. Once the cup has cooled down, you look at the patterns within your friend's cup and she looks at yours to tell each other's fortunes. The side where your lips have touched the cup reveals everything that is intimate – private sentiments that you keep concealed in your heart – while the other side shows the mundane, practical matters like financial health. Though you tell each other's fortunes, the ritual isn't re-

ally about the fortunes or the fortune-teller's interpretations. It is about what is going on inside.

What each person is currently facing, experiencing, or troubled by is important. The fortune telling is meant to give comfort and hope. It is also a conversation starter. No one has to feel bad about sharing anything because we are all human. At some point or another, we experience the same joys and the same sadness. Through coffee, we get the feeling that we are all one, as it is about coming together and setting things in order.

So, why talk about Turkish coffee culture? As I listened to this story, I reflected upon international exchange, intercultural understanding, and the way that we spend time. Even though I cannot speak Turkish, I could communicate with some of the locals because English has become the language for global means of communication. Although I do not believe that everyone must become fluent in English, I do recognize that with English as a tool, there is a greater possibility for conversation with people of various nations and, thus, more opportunity to learn about them and their cultures – a chance to widen your perspective. As a result, little by little your outlook on the world and on your own life will change.

Thanks to the English language, I could enjoy deep, thoughtful journeys throughout my travels. However, I still think it is important to learn other foreign languages out of respect for other cultures. When we mutually respect each other, it is natural to want to learn another language. Therefore, I would like everyone who studies English to reevaluate why you learn it. Of course, it may be for work or perhaps as a precaution against cognitive impairment. But don't you think that, more than anything, we learn foreign languages to have meaningful encounters with people of foreign nations?

Events & Announcements

◆ Saijo Fan Club Tour Guide Course

Let's share the interesting and charming aspects of Saijo with local non-Japanese residents! Take part in this course to hone your skills as a bilingual guide for the Saijo Fan Club Tour.

[Course Dates] July 4 ~ Aug. 22 (Thurs.) 9:30~11:30
(6 Thursdays ~details sent upon application to the course)

[Tour Date] Aug. 30 (Fri.) 9:30~16:30

[Where] Saijo Welfare Center

(Tour will take place throughout Saijo City. Details to be confirmed during class on July 4)

[Conditions] Above high-school age, intermediate to advanced English language abilities, must participate in the tour

[Capacity] 8 students

[Application period] June 10 (Mon.) ~ 28 (Fri.)

[Applications & Inquiries] TEL 0897-52-1206



◆ International Cook-Off with ALTs

We will be hosting a cooking class to introduce the simple home recipes of Saijo's ALTs. Participants will also have a chance to play some games and have fun using English!

[When] Aug. 27 (Tues.) 10:00~14:00

[Where] Omachi Community Center

[Who] Elementary school students in Saijo

[Capacity] 20 kids (first come first served) **[Fee]** 200 yen

Please bring an apron & a bandana

[Application deadline] Aug. 16 (Fri.)

[Applications & Inquiries] TEL 0897-52-1206



Editor
Notes

We've published our first NEWS issue of the Reiwa era! Going forth, we will aspire to write articles that our readership can enjoy. (伊)

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Nguyen Bui Anh Thy (ア)

Read in full
color !

