



International Relations SAIJO

Autumn Events

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

Halloween Party 🎃

Halloween has arrived in Saijo! Working with the Saijo Machi-dukuri Convention, the Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA) hosted a Halloween Party on Saturday Oct. 31 at the shopping arcade (shotengai).

“Let’s use international exchange to energize Saijo!” was the rallying cry of participants. Organizations included ELIS, who organized a Halloween event for almost 20 years. With the help of many groups, this year was the largest Halloween event in the city’s history. About 1000 participants enjoyed games, a costume contest, trick-or-treating, balloon art and more. Children and adults alike came in costume, and the shopping arcade had a magical Halloween atmosphere.



↑ Costume contest

←Mummy game

World Cafe @ 58th Saijo Industry Fair



↑ World Cafe

←Vietnamese tsukune (Nem lui)

SIEA held a World Café at the 58th Saijo Industry Fair from Nov. 14-15 at Saijo Agricultural High School.

Volunteers from the International Exchange Promotion Association worked together with JICA members to organize the café. Fresh-grilled Vietnamese tsukune (nem lui) were on sale outside, and inside the café visitors could try snacks from around the world, wear ethnic costumes, play games and listen to music.

The nem lui were very popular, selling out all 300 by noon each day. Visitors enjoyed snacks and tea at the café while talking to JICA members and ALTs about many international topics. It was a lively atmosphere.

Vietnamese kamishibai (picture story show) author visits Saijo

Did you know that Japanese-style picture story shows are known in Vietnam as “kamishibai,” their Japanese name? These stories are popular with children in both countries.

On Oct. 27 kamishibai author Bui Lien and his wife visited Saijo.

Mr. Lien first discovered Japanese kamishibai about 20 years ago. He wanted to introduce these wonderful stories to children in Vietnam. He honed his skills in storytelling, performance, and art, promoting kamishibai across his home.

After touring Saijo Library, Mr. Lien performed his stories “Taisetsu na uchiwa” (The Precious Fan) and “Zouge no kushi” (The Ivory Comb). The latter is set during the Vietnam War and is a prayer for peace.

The two stories were donated to the library and can be viewed in the children’s corner. (カ)



Lien (right) and his teacher Hideya Miyano (center)

Upcoming Cooking Classes

◆Afternoon Tea◆

An instructor from England will teach about the history and method of traditional afternoon tea.

【Date】January 23 (Sat.) 2:00~4:00 p.m.

【Place】Atelier Beurre Noisetto

123 Akeyashiki, Saijo

【Instructor】Richard Westrop (ALT)

【Cost】2,000 yen (SIEA members 1,500 yen)

【Max】10 (reservation req., high school and older)

Participants bring their own teacup and saucer.

【Application deadline】Jan. 15 (Fri.)

◆Handmade Udon Lesson◆

Learn how to make Japanese udon noodles. Everyone is welcome! For Japanese participants, practice explaining Japanese food to non-Japanese friends.

【Date】Jan. 31 (Sun.) 9:00 a.m.~1:00 p.m.

【Place】Kanbai Community Center kitchen

【Cost】800 yen (SIEA members 500 yen)

【Max】12 (reservations required)

Participants bring their own apron, bandana, hand towel, and Tupperware to take udon home (approx. 2500cc)

【Application deadline】Jan. 22 (Fri)

◆◆Apply To◆◆ Saijo International Exchange Association TEL:0897-52-1206



4th International Cafe

Join our bimonthly international café and speak with Saijo residents in any language about any subject. Enjoy tea, Vietnamese coffee, snacks and more.

【Date】Feb. 3 (Wed.) 6:00~8:00 p.m.

【Place】Saijo Sangyō Jōhō Shien Center (SICS)

The 3rd International Café (Dec. 2 at Tanbara Community Center) attracted over 30 participants.

Recruiting

Contact the SIEA Office!

“Weekend Saijo Trip” translation group project

The comprehensive tourism pamphlet “Weekend Saijo Trip” (週末西条とりっぷ) will be translated into multiple languages as a resource for non-Japanese visitors to our city.

Those with language experience, those studying a foreign language, and non-Japanese residents are encouraged to apply. Learn more about your home town through this project.

<Languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, etc.>

◆ 16th Industry Culture Festival Ideas wanted

SIEA will host a booth at the 16th Industry Culture Festival and we would like your help!

We are looking for booth activities including clothing, food, dance, games that visitors will enjoy. Introduce your “world” to Saijo.

◆Date: April 29 (Fri., holiday) 9 a.m.~4 p.m.

◆Place: Saijo Shopping Arcade (empty shop space)

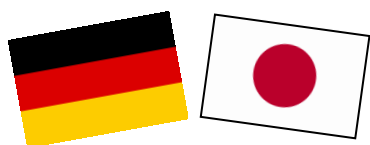
◆Wanted: Ideas for events and activities.

International Relations in Saijo ~ A German Student's Experiences ~

Hello, I'm Stefan Trautrim from Germany. I'm here in Japan for an exchange from March 2015 to January 2016. My homestay is in Saijo while my school is Niihama West High School. Until now I've learned a lot about Japanese culture, for example, family life and school lifestyle. Every day there are interesting and funny situations because of my many friends in class and the choir club I joined.

However, at the beginning of October a friend of my host mother asked me if I wanted to volunteer at a Halloween party. It sounded like a lot of fun and so I started volunteering for the Saijo International Exchange Association.

And so, on the day of Halloween we taught together with many non-Japanese this foreign culture, playing games with the Japanese children on the shopping street (shotengai) of Saijo. For example, in the "mummy game," Japanese children turned us into mummies using toilet paper. I have to say that I've never celebrated Halloween by myself in Germany, so it was a lot of fun to run around as a zombie.



Then in November, there was another event. This time Japa-



Halloween Party volunteers (author is the leftmost zombie)

nese taught us non-Japanese a part of Japanese culture: mochi-tsuki. Making mochi with the others and then eating it together was very interesting and delicious. The members of the Saijo International Exchange Association are all very kind and have very good ideas for events.

Now I don't want to go back to Germany. I want to do other various things together.

Thank you very much.

(Note: This article was translated into English by the author.)

Vietnam Note: Mandatory Military Service and University Education

Since coming to Japan, I am often asked "Does Vietnam have mandatory military service?" The answer is yes.

While service was naturally required until the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, the mandatory service system was maintained even in peacetime and continues today. It is believed that entering the military to protect the country is the responsibility of citizens.

Until this year, a draft has been held twice a year. The first draft was in February/March (after the Lunar New Year), and the second took place in August/September. The service period was 18 months and, while service was only mandatory for young men, women were also able to enlist. Service took place between the ages of 18 and 25—in other words fundamentally all men in this age range must serve at least once. However, men who failed a physical exam or were studying at university were exempt from service. Studies were given priority.

However, a revised Military Service Law was passed mandating that from 2016 the draft will be held once a year in February/March. Military service will be given priority over education. All people 18 and older who receive an



University students

enlistment notice, regardless of their enrollment status, will be required to serve. Once their service requirement is over, they will be able to return to university or their former jobs. Furthermore, the service age will be expanded to 27, and the period will be 24 months.

Even outside of the military, all university students are obligated to take a military training course. Normally this course is held for all new students in December with no division by gender. Students enter "military school" and undergo rigorous training for a month. They study many things such as the use of weapons and how to move. School starts at 5 a.m. and continues until lights out at 10 p.m. Those who violate school rules are punished severely according to real military regulation.

Though only a month, this experience is rigorous and challenging for students. But students may feel themselves growing up. They may become more independent and stronger. They are able to become close with people in their groups with whom they normally would not speak. This is why some believe it is a valuable experience. (L)

英語
でGO!

Merry Happy Christmas? --An Introduction to Holiday Greetings--

The traditional harvest festival in America is called Thanksgiving. It is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. (Thanksgiving in Canada is on the second Monday of October.) The day after Thanksgiving is called Black Friday. Black Friday is a shopping day and marks the start of the “holiday season.” The word “black” means “profit” in this case and refers to the money that stores make on Black Friday.

In the West, the “holiday season” refers to all winter holidays including Christmas, New Year’s, Boxing Day (England), Hanukkah (a Jewish holiday), and Kwanzaa (African heritage). It is a heartwarming month when families get together, people send Christmas cards to friends, and everyone exchanges presents. As there are many holidays, there are also many appropriate greetings. I will introduce a few of them.

Christmas (Dec. 25) is a Christian holiday, but as in Japan, many non-Christians in the West celebrate it. However, there are also many who do not observe Christmas at all, so the broad “Happy Holidays” is seen as more thoughtful than “Merry Christmas.” If

you know that a friend celebrates Christmas, then you should not hesitate to say “Merry Christmas” to them. “Happy Hanukkah” and “Happy New Year” are the standard greetings for those holidays.



Fans of the *Harry Potter* series might have noticed this, but in England the Christmas greeting is “Happy Christmas.” Merry and happy mean the same thing. Sometimes I see “Merry Happy Christmas” on store displays in Japan. This is strange English.

By the way, eating fried chicken on Christmas is apparently a Japanese tradition. Since coming to Saijo, I have also eaten fried chicken on Dec. 25. The movement and evolution of traditions is interesting.

While there are many holiday greetings, as long as you use them warmly and sincerely, you shouldn’t hesitate to say them. Happy Holidays! (J)



A Christmas card that my parents sent to friends and relatives. As it is common to include news from the past year, making cards can take a lot of time.

Events & Announcements

【FUN FUN English Let’s Play in English!】

Play games in English with non-Japanese guests!

- ◆Date: March 6 (Sun.) 2-4 p.m.
- ◆Place: Komatsu Community Center
- ◆Participants: Saijo elementary school students
※Children entering elementary school in 2016 also eligible
- ◆Max participants: 80 (reservations are first come)
- ◆Application period: Feb. 10 (Wed.) to Feb. 18 (Thurs.) 5 p.m.
- ◆Organizer: ELIS (English Language Intercultural Communication in Saijo)

◇◆Inquiries・Applications◆◇

Saijo City International Exchange Association
office (City Office General Affairs Division)
TEL: 0897-52-1206
Email: kokusai@saijo-city.jp

Saijo International Exchange Association ~Email Newsletter Service~

SIEA distributes an email newsletter.

To receive the latest news and event info for Saijo City and Ehime Prefecture, send your name and address to kokusai@saijo-city.jp with the subject line “Email newsletter registration”

Note: not all content is published in English.



編集 後記

In the United States, many people write New Year’s Resolutions. I will think about how we can expand international activities in Saijo next year. I hope that you will join me in this reflection. Happy New Year from SIEA! (J)

International Relations Saijo Staff:

Sachi Kawaguchi(か)
Truong Dinh Le(レ)
John Wheeler(J) (English translation)
Mamiko Imai(今)

