



International Relations SAIJO

Vol. 13

December 2016

Contents

**Fall Events Report:
Saijo Industry Fair** 1

Forthcoming Events 2

Halloween Report 2

**A Message from
Anna: Ehime AJET** 2

**Vietnam Note: A New
Generation** 3

**Japanese Garden in
Austria** 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.

Welcome to Saijo from Africa!

59th Saijo Industry Fair World Café



Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA) hosted a World Café at Saijo Agricultural High School's annual Industry Fair on Nov. 12-13. This year, SIEA offered samples of international teas and snacks, opportunities to try on traditional ethnic attire, and Vietnamese fried spring rolls through our collaboration with the International Exchange Promotion Association and JICA. In addition, 6 Ehime University graduate students from 5 different countries in Africa, including Senegal and Mozambique, held a workshop at the World Café. Their rhythmic songs and dances attracted a large crowd!

We would like to express our gratitude to the people of Saijo. We were very humbled and honored by your hospitality and guidance throughout the event. We really enjoyed the special experience. We would be happy to participate again next year! **Senzo Ntshakala: Swaziland**



This opportunity made me aware that many Japanese people do not know about Mozambique. As a Mozambican, I now feel that I must do my best to enlighten people about opportunities they can find in Mozambique, such as tourism, business etc. This event was also a great chance to meet different people and make new friends. **Celso Fernando: Mozambique**

Saijo is very beautiful and the people are so kind. It was nice to meet people from different countries and cultures and engage in discussions with Japanese people about similarities and differences between Japan and Egypt. It was also my first time to visit a Japanese school. Discussing future goals with students was enjoyable. **Omar Abdel Wahab: Egypt**

The weekend in Saijo was one of my greatest days in Japan. Thank you for my birthday party, sharing dance steps with us and giving us the opportunity to introduce our Africa and its culture. I also loved experiencing a traditional Japanese hotel. I hope to see everyone very soon. **Dianouma Demba Sonko: Senegal**



14 Engineers Observe 'Uchinuki'

On Dec. 2nd, 14 engineers and administrators from throughout Africa took part in a training course organized by Shikoku's branch of JICA. They came to Saijo to inspect the 'uchinuki' and to learn about the conversation of ground water, management of the water source, and improvement of the control of water supply facilities.

Christmas Carol Party

American Instructor Introduces Christmas Culture

- ◆Date: Dec. 17th (Sat.) 10:00~12:00
- ◆Place: Saijo Public Welfare Center
- ◆Details: Making Christmas Decorations • Christmas Carol and Culture Introduction
- ◆Capacity: 25 people (First-come basis)
- ◆Materials Fee: 1,000円 (SIEA Members 500円)
- ◆Application Period: Dec. 12th (Mon.)



4th International Café

Join us for tea, coffee and conversation with Saijo's internationally experienced citizens and foreign residents!

- ◆Date: Feb. 1st (Wed.) 18:00~20:00
- ◆Place: Sangyō Jōhō Shien Center (SICS)
- ◆Participation Fee: 300円 (SIEA Members 200円)



Chinese Gyoza Cooking Class

Make Genuine Gyoza alongside Chinese Instructor!

- ◆Date: Feb. 18th (Sat.) 13:30~17:00
- ◆Place: Saijo Public Welfare Center (Nutritional Guidance Room)
- ◆Capacity: 30 people (First-come basis)
- ◆Participation Fee: 300円
- ◆Application Period: Jan. 23 (Mon.) ~Feb. 13 (Mon.)



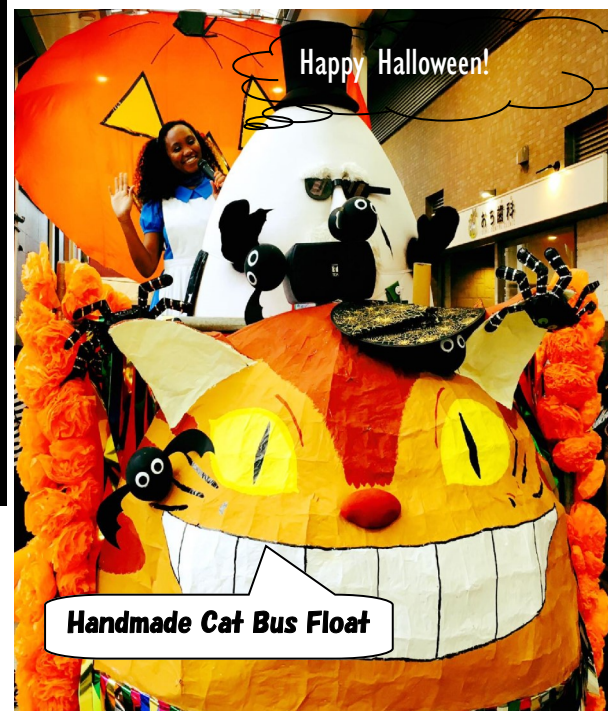
Ehime AJET Scholarship

The Ehime AJET Scholarship Committee, now in its third year, works to send a high school student from the prefecture on a study abroad program of his/her choice. Two students have already benefitted from the scholarship and attended short-term programs in Canada. Both students said that their time abroad, although short, resulted in improved English communication skills and a deeper understanding of different cultures. We hope to continue the scholarship's success this year, and are raising 200,000 yen for the next recipient! If you are interested in donating money, you can do so at the International Affairs Division at City Hall, or at various events throughout the year, like the International Café. Any help is greatly appreciated! If you want more information, please contact Anna Tattersall at ehimeajetscholarship@gmail.com.

Anna Tattersall

SIEA powered up all the more to organize the 2016 Halloween Party with the Saijo Machidukuri Convention! On Saturday, Oct. 29th, the Saijo Shopping Arcade was full of children dressed in Halloween costumes, their energetic voices filling the air as they went to and fro saying 'Trick or Treat!!' Our 500 Stamp Rally cards sold out in only 20 minutes! Also, the costume parade was graced with a handmade cat bus float for the first time, winning the applause of over 1000 visitors. The shopping arcade was overflowing with the art of over 200 Halloween poster designs and illustrations submitted by children from the age of two and grown-ups alike! Thanks to the joint efforts of many organizations, not to mention ELIS (English Language Intercultural Communication in Saijo) and everyone working at the shopping arcade, we could all enjoy a Halloween celebration full of smiles. Thank you to everyone involved! There are still challenges ahead, but we plan to work to resolve each issue gradually, making a Halloween full of even more joy! (石)

Halloween in the Shopping Arcade!



Handmade Cat Bus Float

★Illustration Contest★

Top Award of Excellence

Omachi Elementary 6th Grade
Minami Katou



Vietnam Note: With a Changing Generation, Comes the Change of Traditional Cultural Values

After the war ended in 1975 until 1986, Vietnam closed its borders, ceasing relations with foreign nations except the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Vietnam opened its doors once again with the Doi Moi (Open Door) Policy in 1986. Reforms began with international diplomacy and economic exchange, but now interactions with foreigners in Vietnam and journeys abroad are hardly unusual. As a result, customs and ways of thinking have changed.

With development, Vietnam has encountered negative impacts. People have become busy with work, so human ties have weakened. With easily accessible Internet, rather than speaking directly to friends and families, people become more engrossed in smartphones. Today's children are absorbed in smartphone games instead of in their studies; encounters with nature have decreased, and they do not seem to know the traditional games that I had played in my youth.

Also, multi-generational households decline, while nuclear family households rise, and the number of children in each family has decreased. The financial burden of daily expenses and education, the average age of marriage, and the percentage of divorce have increased. Moreover, people satisfied with gaining financial independence and enjoying solitary lives have increased as well.

However, there are also positive changes. Many countries have eased the conditions for issuing visas to Vietnamese people, so it is easier for us to study or travel abroad. People often maintain favorable foreign customs and manners even after they return to Vietnam.

Additionally, the government has deemed male chauvinism unacceptable and works to bring about gender equality. In the present, Vietnamese women are treated with more respect, and every year Vietnamese Women's Day (10/20) and International Women's Day (3/8) are celebrated. Perhaps, old customs would not have changed without international exchange.

It is important to adopt the positive aspects of both tradition and new culture. Recently, the opinion that Vietnam should celebrate the Gregorian new year instead of the lunar new year (Vietnamese Tet) has appeared. However, Vietnamese Tet is part of our heritage. It has emotional importance and should not change!

In Hue, there are traditional crafts and international festivals held biennially. In this way, I think it is vital that we express the importance of protecting traditional culture inside and outside of Vietnam. (レ)



Japanese Garden in Austria

Grüß Gott! My name is Tomoko Murakami. I am a Saijo native who has lived in Austria for the past 15 years. Austria is about 100 thousand kilometers away from my birthplace. Every day I receive visitors from different countries while working on Japanese Bonsai.

Originally, I had more interest in other countries than in Japan, so I traveled around the world. During that time, I made a stop in the Republic of Austria.

I settled down in Seeboten, a market town along the Millstätter lakeshore in Kärnten (Carinthia), the southernmost state. Seeboten resembles Saijo in some ways. Just as Saijo is protected by Mt. Ishizuchi, Seeboten is surrounded by mountains. The water and air are clean and refreshing as well. Also, it is home to Europe's largest bonsai museum. Approaching its 40th anniversary next year, the museum is displaying 3,000 Japanese bonsai plants in over 200 different varieties. I came upon this museum by chance. The blue-tinged stone garden lanterns first caught my eye. Right away, I spoke to the curator and learned that

the stone had been ordered from Saijo. I remember feeling a mysterious sense of fate. From that point forward, I started working at the garden.

It has been 3 years since I was last in Saijo. Although the townscape has somewhat changed, it still feels like I have come home. I am grateful that I will always have a hometown to which I can return.



Garden of Saijo's Blue-Tinged Stones



※Seeboten's mayor invited Saijo's mayor to visit the 35th anniversary as an honored guest in 2012.



Joined in a Circle

Stepping inside Kiriya Cake Shop, you'll see Castella cake and chestnut manju cutely wrapped to resemble xiao long bao (soup dumplings) lined up in the display case. I was in search of souvenirs, but I not only found tasty morsels but also a new friend: Kiriya Baba.

Thereafter, I would often visit Kiriya Baba, and we'd talk about family, love and multicultural marriage. I told my family in America about Kiriya Baba as well.

Fortunately, my father could visit Saijo from the 16th to the 24th of Nov. He hoped to find out more about Saijo and the people I knew. I introduced him to my friends, coworkers, and not only Saijo, but also Takamatsu, the islands of the Seto Inland Sea, Matsuyama, Ozu, Hiroshima, Miyajima, Tokyo and Kamakura.

We journeyed to Kankakei Gorge in Shodoshima and witnessed beautiful scenery. For the first time in a while, my father hiked to the summit of a mountain on Ogijima and sweat so profusely that the experience became an unforgettable part of his trip and he even managed to remember the island's name (my father

cannot speak Japanese, so it is difficult for him to remember place names). In Takamatsu, we feasted on Sanuki udon; in Miyajima, oysters; in Hiroshima, okonomiyaki; and in Saijo, Marutomo Suisan's delicious seafood bowl.

On Nov. 21, my father's birthday, we visited Kiriya Baba. As she did her best to speak to my father in the English she knew, suddenly, my matsuri senpai appeared with his daughter. Their families are old acquaintances. Kiriya Baba told us that everyone in Saijo seems to join together like a circle.

We grew lively with conversation and burst into laughter when Kiriya Baba said that in the blink of an eye her weight equaled her age a few years ago. Even without understanding Japanese, my father was welcomed into the group of friends and become another member extending the circle. After the short 9-day trip, my father flew back to America, but already he longs to return to Saijo, the city brimming with warm-hearted people. (タ)



Events & Announcements

【Tanbara International Exchange Association】

17th International Speech Contest ◇Free Viewing◇

- ◆ Date: Dec. 18, 2016 (Sun.) 13:00~16:30
- ◆ Place: Tanbara Community Center 1st Floor Hall
- ◆ Details:
 - ① Foreign residents' Japanese speeches
 - ② Elementary school students' speeches
 - ③ English speeches (Middle・High school)
 - ④ Foreign language course students' presentations (Chinese・Korean)

- ◆ Inquiries: Tanbara International Exchange Association

【Saijo English Volunteer Group (ELIS)】

FUN FUN English (Let's Play Using English!)

- ◆ Date: March 5, 2017 (Sun.) 14:00~16:00
- ◆ Place: Komatsu Community Center
- ◆ Capacity: First 80 people
- ◆ Application Period: Feb. 3 (Fri.) ~Feb. 16 (Thurs.)
- ◆ Details: Saijo's elementary school students, ELIS volunteers, and nearby foreign residents have fun playing games while using English.
- ◆ Inquiries: Saijo International Exchange Association

【Announcement from the Administration】

Le's Debut in [Travel Diary]!

An article about Saijo's Coordinator for International Relations (CIR), Le, has plans for release on the 10th of Jan. in a transport newspaper's monthly series called [Travel Diary]. In [LOVE JAPAN!!], the article that interviews the non-Japanese workforce, Le will introduce Saijo!

Please, take a look!

Editor Notes

4 months have passed since I arrived in Saijo. Since then every day has been full of fun international exchange events like the Halloween Party, the Industry Fair, and cooking classes. I will continue to do my best with the editing staff! (タ)

International Relations Saijo Staff

Sachi Kawaguchi (か)
 Truong Dinh Le (レ)
 Diana Marie Linton (タ)
 (English Translation)
 Miho Ishimura (石)
 Mamiko Imai (今)

Read in full
color !

