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SIFA

TIMES

February - March 2022 edition

On Friday, November 19th, I visited **Kinsei Daiichi ES**. Both the first- and second-graders came to the gym for a presentation about nature and cartoons in the USA mixed with song and dance.

CIR School visits



On Tuesday, November 26th, I visited **Sangawa ES**. I visited the “matsu” (pine) and “take” (bamboo) class of each grade, and enjoyed eating school lunch with some of the energetic second graders.

Disaster-preparedness seminar for non-Japanese

Beginners' English ②

From October 21st to November 25th, we held Beginners' English ② at the Citizen's Exchange building. We enjoyed English word games, conversation and study with new and returning members. In November we discussed north American holidays.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone later this year.

On Saturday, November 27th, the Shikokuchuo Fire department held a disaster-preparedness event on the first-floor first-aid practice room and natural disaster room. Participants from six different countries practiced CPR and putting out a fire, experienced the earthquake simulator and smoke room, and had a dialogue with staff from the police station and fire department about laws and disasters in Japan.



Holiday Candy Cottages

On Sunday, December 5th, we got in the holiday spirit in the Kawano Exchange (Fureai) Center cooking room. 12 families (31 people) used candy, icing and graham crackers to make their own candy houses. After finishing, some groups decorated a Christmas tree, made paper snowflakes and sang a Christmas song.

Let's do this again next year.



English Salon

On Thursday, December 9th and Tuesday the 14th, we held English Salons at the Kawano Fureai Center and the (Mishima) Citizens' Exchange Center. I enjoyed wide-ranging conversations with members of the Beginners' English class and some old News English students that I hadn't seen for a while. Our chats were over before we knew it.

We look forward to seeing you all at future events.



EVENT INFO

※ Circumstances may force the cancellation or rescheduling of listed events.
※ Please cooperate in wearing a mask and following other safety procedures.

Global Game night

Come enjoy Yatzee, Pass the Pigs, Batu Seramban and other games from around the world.

Date: Sunday, April 17th

Place: Citizens' Exchange Building, 2nd floor meeting rooms

Time: 3pm ~ 4:30

Cost: Free for non-Japanese game leaders
¥ 200 (Japanese SIFA member,) ¥ 500 other (Japanese)

Game leaders: city CIR, ALTs, other local non-Japanese

Event capped at 20 Japanese signups (no limit for non-Japanese)

Please sign up by April 11th

NEWS English ①②

We're bringing this friendly discussion event after a year's break. We'll discuss various trends, nature and funny happenings from around the world

Dates: ① March 17th, 24th, 31st

② April 7th, 14th, 21st

(Three Thursday meetings each)

Time : 7pm ~ 8pm

Place : Citizens' Exchange building, second floor meeting room

Instructor : City CIR Dan Cruse

Class size : around 8 members

Target English level: Intermediate ~

(high-school age or above)

Cost: ¥ 1,000 (member), ¥ 2,000 (general)

Signup deadline: ① March 14th

② April 1st



Members' English Salon

Come 'shoot the breeze' with other SIFA Members in Mishima or Kawanoe.

Dates: March 29th Kawanoe Fureai Center

March 30th Citizens' Exchange building

Time: 10:30am ~ 11:05am

Target event size: 4

Discussion leader: CIR Dan Cruse

Target English level:

Beginner ~ advanced

Free

Signup by Friday, March 25th

SIFA's Online Chats continue Monday ~ Friday, 9am ~ 4:45pm. Why not give it a try (in Japanese or English)? Just email the office with some times that you're free and we'd love to schedule it.



Event info

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My quarantine experience

On December 16th, I left Japan for the first time in two years to visit home. This time my pre-departure checklist included a negative PCR test (available in town, but I needed a same-day test so I went to Osaka) and a 'Vaccine Passport' (available at the city health center near city hall).



I took Hawai'ian airlines and changed planes in Honolulu. Otherwise I spent my time in my hometown in Oregon (with a brief visit to my in-laws in Sacramento).



While western Oregon is further north than Japan by latitude, generally the weather is mild. This visit, though, the temperatures were around freezing. It snowed the day after Christmas.

I took several at-home swab tests to protect my elderly parents. My brother also asked me to wear a mask indoors for two days after returning from California and to eat my meals on the porch. I met up with old friends outdoors (when the weather allowed.)

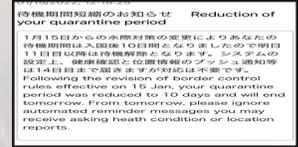


After arriving back in Japan, we took COVID tests, did paperwork, and installed the Health and Location monitoring app "MySoS" on our phones. We were required to spend three nights in a government-assigned hotel room, then after another negative COVID test were allowed to drive ourselves back to my apartment for the remainder of quarantine.



While the quarantine period was initially set at 14 days, on the 10th day we got a message that it had been shortened to 10 days.

I was quite nervous that something would go wrong, but we managed to leave and come back to Japan without incident. I guess this is the new shape of travel in many parts of the world. Like many things, it requires planning and patience.



COVID-19 Test Information

Anyone in Ehime can take a free COVID-19 test through February 28th. If you've been out of the prefecture or in a high-risk space (crowded with strangers, for instance), please be proactive and take advantage of this free testing.

To take advantage of this free testing, you must be asymptomatic. More details at this web address:

<https://www.pref.ehime.jp/h25500/covid/muryokensa.html>

The 2022 International Festival is cancelled

In the last edition of SIFA Times, we recruited for volunteers for this year's International Festival, but unfortunately it has been cancelled. Once the current COVID spike ends, we look forward to celebrating with everyone at a later date.

Ohio – The Birthplace of Aviation



The Wright Brothers created their first airplane in Dayton, Ohio
 Neil Armstrong was born in Wapakoneta, Ohio and he died in Cincinnati, Ohio.
 The joke about Ohians is that no matter what you do, if you were born in Ohio, you will die in Ohio. Not even Neil Armstrong could get away.
 Thomas Edison was also born in Ohio



Cincinnati

Located on the Ohio River. You can take a ride of the famous river boats or bring your own boat. Cincinnati is full of German heritage and other cultures such as Italian and Polish.

Founded in 1852, **Findlay Market** is still going strong. Over one million people visit this market every year.



The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center demonstrates how slaves from the south were able to escape to the North via the underground railroad system.

Cincinnati Museum Center used to be “Union Terminal,” Cincinnati’s old train station. It has an impressive dome mural representing the cultural heritage of Ohio. It hosts many traveling exhibits.



Music Hall opened in 1878 and holds many concerts, ballets and speeches. Albert Einstein once spoke here.

Athens

Columbus is the state’s capital. It’s a very diverse city, home to COSI, one of the world’s largest interactive science and industry museums, and a historical German Village with authentic German cuisine and shops.

A unique and artistic college town (home to Ohio university) in the Appalachian Mountains. Athens holds a famous Halloween block party, and was dubbed the “Scariest Place on Earth” in 2003 by the Fox Family Channel.



Cleveland

Near Lake Erie and across the maritime border from Canada, Cleveland boasts the first indoor shopping mall, the first electrified public square and is the birthplace of Superman.

Cleveland’s **Rock and Roll Hall of Fame** documents the history of rock music and gives prestigious industry awards. It also hosts concerts and hosts memorabilia (like costumes and guitars) from famous rock artists, producers and engineers.



Ohio eats



Cincinatti-style chili

A special type of chili and famous in Cincinnati. Two fast food restaurants, Skyline Chili and Gold Star Chili, are abundant in the Cincinnati area and specialize in conies (chili hot dog, sometimes with cheese) and 'three ways' (spaghetti with chili and cheese on top, 'four way' if you add onions and a 'five way' if you add beans and onions).

German food

Tons of craft beers and microbreweries. First Hoffbraehaus outside of Germany (the original is in Munich). German Christmas Markets and many other German festivals.



Goetta

Sausage stuffed with unprocessed oats. Tasty at any time of day.

At Cincinnati's annual Goetta festival in August, you can try it sandwiched inside a donut.

Buckeyes

Ohio is the "buckeye" state and thus we have a dessert called "buckeyes" they are a ball of sweet peanut butter dipped into chocolate and made to look like a buckeye (the state tree). You will definitely find these at any potluck in Ohio.



Ohio attractions

Amusement parks:



Kings Island (in Cincinnati) and Cedar Point (in Cleveland) are huge amusement parks with world-record-breaking roller coasters. They bring in guests from all over the world.



Hocking Hills State Park :

A beautiful state park with lots of hiking trails, equestrian trails, campgrounds and cabins. It is very famous for its many caves.



Texas trivia answers

Q) What percentage of Texans speak Spanish at home ?

A: 30%

Q) How many countries has Texas been a part of ?

A: 6

Suggestion? Need help with something?

Get in touch!

SIFA staff

(City hall International Affairs section) Yamakawa, Nino, Cruse

TEL: 0896-28-6014

email: sifa@city.shikokuchuo.ehime.jp

Homepage: www.sifaweb.org



Submissions welcome

Send us your thoughts, life updates, artwork, or anything else. What have you been up to? What inspires you? Have an event idea or request? Let's broaden each others' horizons.