

This newsletter conveys the voices of foreign residents, while also focusing on the activities of various international organizations and on the restoration efforts after the disaster.



Voices from Fukushima

Finding Diversity in a World of Gray

Hee Sook Yang (From Seoul, Korea/ Currently living in Fukushima City)

Hee Sook Yang is a teacher at a junior college and Japanese language school in Fukushima City. She also volunteers her time helping foreign women. Hee Sook first visited Japan on a study abroad program. She has had various experiences while living in Japan for 20 years. We wanted to ask Hee Sook about her current thoughts on Fukushima as well as on Japan and Korea. (Interview date: October 1st, 2019)



- Please tell us about the time you studied abroad in Japan.

Before studying abroad, I worked for a Korean trading firm that had dealings in Japan. I was also interested in Japanese culture and so I already had a close connection to Japan since then.

At university, I majored in "Zainichi Korean literature". I studied about the life and literary works of Korean intellectuals in Japan during the colonial period.

- I heard you also lived a year in the United States for your husband's work.

In a culture like the United States, many people have diverse backgrounds. I found that few people there care about someone's country of origin. Also, I was surprised that the issue between Japan and Korea was

not really a big deal. I think from the world's perspective, these countries are considered to be the same region in East Asia.

- What kinds of thoughts do you have about Fukushima?

Fukushima has areas that are safe to live, but also places still rebuilding. There is work to get the nuclear power plant decommissioned as well. I want to let the world know that Fukushima people continue to work hard amid these various situations and that their normal everyday lives demonstrate strength for Fukushima.

- There are many different and complex thoughts regarding Fukushima.

Yes, it is important to know that there exists a million shades of "gray" in all situations, not just

black and white. It is easy to see only one side of the matter when questioning if something is right or wrong. However, if we consider the "gray" zone, then we might be able to see a different perspective. I think it is necessary to expand our viewpoints when thinking about problems such as the harmful rumors in Fukushima.

- Do you think this can also lead to the acceptance of diversity?

Yes. I am always thinking about how foreigners and Japanese people can live peacefully together. It is possible for people with different backgrounds to get along, without being divisive or being too accommodating. I hope we can have a peaceful society where people can all appreciate each other's differences.

Connecting Fukushima City Residents Through the Sounds of African Drums

The “Connecting the World through Food and Music: World Charity Marché” took place at Fukushima Station on Sunday, September 8th. It was organized by the international cooperation group, Kanimambo. There were many booths selling African goods and home-cooked dishes. Also, a Mozambican musician, Naja, performed and there was even an African drum performance. One attendee said, “I was able to experience African culture through this event and Naja’s music was relaxing to listen to.”



An Emergency Mock Drill in Nihonmatsu City

On Wednesday, September 11th, Fukushima International Association’s staff, Youki Wiens, observed an emergency mock drill with foreign tourists.

“Emergency service workers used VoiceTra (a multilingual translation app) to help the foreigners. I was interested in seeing how smoothly they would be able to communicate during an emergency. The Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics are happening next summer and as a result, tourists from around the world will visit Japan. I think many foreign tourists will feel safe knowing these kinds of drills are taking place.”



International Exchange and Sports Day in Tamura City!

An international sports day took place in Tamura City on Sunday, October 6th. Around 200 foreign and Japanese residents participated in the event. One participant said, “It was my first time participating in this kind of Sports Day and it was really fun.” Residents from various generations and nationalities gathered at the event.



Multilingual information on the revitalization effort from “Fukushima Restoration Station”

“Fukushima Restoration Station” hosts the latest data on food safety efforts and the activities of those supporting Fukushima in 10 different languages.

<http://www.pref.fukushima.lg.jp/site/portal-english/>

Consultation services are now available in Vietnamese!

- **Support Desk for Foreign Residents** -
English, Chinese, Japanese

Tuesday to Saturday 9:00~17 : 15

Korean, Tagalog, Portugese, Vietnamese

Thursday 10:00~14:00

(Reservation required for 4th,5th Thursday)

☎024-524-1316✉ask@worldvillage.org (direct line)

Please Send Us Your Thoughts and Feedback

We would appreciate hearing your thoughts and opinions. Please send us any information that you would like to see covered or information about people willing to be interviewed.



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