

The Continuing Struggle of Onma!

Mimitaro interviewed Ms. Lee Woo Ja of Ryuo-cho, a sign language interpreter at the city office of Omihachiman City.

She talked to us about how she had spent her life as a "zainichi" in Japan. ☆("Onma" means "mama" or mother in Korean.)



I'm a "second generation and a half" Korean living in Japan. My father came to Japan in his childhood and my mother was born here. Koreans living in Japan otherwise known as "zainichi" are those who were forced to come here from the Korean Peninsula when Japan occupied it for 35 years, from 1910 to the end of WW II, and their descendants. Even

though they were discriminated against in many situations in the Japanese society, such as those related to jobs, marriage and housing just because they were a colony in the past, they struggled hard to live. The times may have changed but ethnic discrimination has only changed its form, but is still existent and deeply rooted. At the end of last year, I saw a scene where children in an ethnic school were being exposed to hate speech. Vividly remembering what I had experienced, I could not stop myself from crying.

We, Koreans, resemble the Japanese in appearance, that many hide their real names and use Japanese names to avoid being discriminated. I, myself, used a Japanese name throughout elementary, junior and senior high school, but I was afraid that the truth of my being a Korean would be exposed, making school a place where I don't feel at ease. When my real name was called during the elementary school graduation ceremony, another student tore my diploma, saying, "My suspicion was right, she's a Korean!" Because of the extreme bitterness that I had felt, I blamed my parents unreasonably: "I should have been born in Korea!" "Why did you give birth to me in Japan?" It required me years and the needed courage before I was able to use my real name, when at last I became a university student, and I felt like I found a sense of identity as I experience the culture of my motherland in re-learning its language and history.

I got married afterwards and when my children started going to school, I was worried more than anything, if they were being treated with respect in their schools as Koreans. Every time there were issues of concern, I go to the school and the Board of Education to express my opinions. We tried to fit in with the community using our real names to make ourselves be understood by more people. It has been more than 20 years since I started to talk about my ethnicity to children in schools and took part in local and school committees.

My involvement in sign language began when I happened to see a parent who was inconspicuously using it in a corner of my kid's kindergarten. Having a hearing impairment is very similar to us Koreans here in Japan: recognition just by appearances is not easy. I started to join a sign language

group and is presently working as a sign language interpreter at the welfare division for the disabled at Omihachiman's city office. While providing consultations for the hearing-impaired, I heard a lot of things that came to me as a surprise, such as the limited information they were given, the insufficient opportunity for learning, and the concealment of their very existence in society, among others. Their claims have compelled the government to take action, and made possible the issuance of a city ordinance for sign language, indicating that it is a language, as well as a culture, allowing the expansion of a better understanding. I am hoping that people with visual and hearing defects may be able to live with pride, full of vigor and without constraint.

If these so-called "minorities" such as the disabled and foreigners do not speak out for themselves, they will remain unnoticed and in most cases, will not be given their proper place in the society. These "minorities" may be told that they are "shameless" in raising their voices, but they could meet a lot of other people who would say, "We didn't know about that till now. Really? That isn't right!" which could also give them the confidence they need. The new batch of "minorities" may now say that, "This is our culture," unlike us who took a long time to be able to do so. I hope that they value their own culture, and make sure that their children keep their own identities by speaking their own language at home.

Though people often say, "Ms. Lee, you are always working hard", I hope we can just live a life that's "average" without the need to work harder than we have to. To be able to attain that ordinary happiness, we should speak out when things are not right. I would need to keep on working to advance forward gradually. Let's continue Onma's struggle.

This is a poem my daughter wrote when she was in elementary school.

I hope that the people around us would fill us with the warmth that would completely take off the scab in our wounds.

The Scab in our Hearts Cho Kaho

When I was in the 1st grade, and even in the 2nd grade,
 Many times, I have been told bitter remarks
 When I told my teacher about it,
 "Why do you say such things?
 The wound in the body may heal,
 But the heart's wound will never mend."
 This is how he scolded the one who made the remarks.
 "I'm sorry." "I'm sorry."
 How many times have I heard "I'm sorry."
 The heart's wound is not healing,
 Now, the wound has formed a scab
 I'm sure that soon, the scab will come off completely.



Shine regardless of your disability!



In Japan, there are various types of services and support based on the Act for Supporting the Independence of Persons with Disabilities (the Act on Comprehensive Support for Persons with Disabilities from April, 2018) so that persons and children who for some reasons, became mentally and physically disabled, can live their daily and social life in the society. If you have worries about anything, consult your municipal office and other public offices.

Persons with disabilities are divided into those with intellectual disabilities, those with physical disabilities, and those with mental disorders (including those with developmental disorders). Those with mild disabilities are also included. They can avail of various support systems and services, according to the type and level of their disabilities. For this, application procedures regarding the *Certification of a Person with Disability (shougaisha techou)*: physical disability certificate (*shintai shougaisha techou*); rehabilitation certificate, ex. rehabilitation of disabled children (*ryouiku techou*); and mental disability certificate (*seishin shougaisha hoken fukushi techou*), must be accomplished in the city/municipal office. (The certification for persons with disabilities must be determined by medical and specialized institutions.)



☆◆☆☆ The following are services available for those with a Certification of a Person with Disability ☆◆☆☆

- **Medical care services to support self-reliance of persons with disabilities (*jiritsu shien iryuu*)** The burden of the expenditures for the medical services to eliminate and ease physical disabilities and mental disorders are reduced.
- **Welfare services for persons with disabilities (*shougai fukushi service*)** There are services including in-home nursing care, visiting care for persons with severe disabilities, activity support, accompanying support, short stay, group home, medical care, assisted-living care, support facilities, etc.
- **Services to support and grant benefits to children with disabilities who regularly use different facilities (*shougaji tsuusho shien kyuufu service*)** There are services like developmental support for children, medical type child development support, after school day services, etc.

As a general rule, the user of the above mentioned services will pay 10 % of the base amount of the services utilized, but the amount may be reduced based on the income of the household concerned.

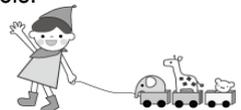
- **Welfare Allowance (*fukushi teate*)** There are some cases where allowance and pension may be received according to the classification and level of the Certification of a Person with Disability (*shougaisha techou*). (There are restrictions on income, etc., Allowances that are overlapping may not be received.)
Special Disability Allowance (*tokubetsu shougaisha teate*), Children's Disability Welfare Allowance (*shougaji fukushi teate*), Progressive Welfare Allowance (*keikateki fukushi teate*), Severe Disability Allowance (*zaitaku jyuudo shougaisha teate*), Special Child Rearing Allowance (*tokubetsu jidou fuyou teate*), Child Rearing Allowance (*jidou fuyou teate*), Allowance for Orphans (*iji teate*), Disability Basic Pension (*shougai kiso nenkin*), Disability Employees' Pension (*shougai kousei nenkin*), Special Disability Benefits (*tokubetsu shougai kyuufukin*), Disability Compensation Benefits (*shougai hoshou kyuufu*), Disability Benefits (*shougai kyuufu*).
- **Others** Aside from income tax deduction, reduction of fees for the use of public facilities, transportation fare discounts, and priority in public housing settlement, employment support and considerations to suit different types of disabilities during job recruitment are preferentially provided.



◆☆☆☆ Supervision and Educational Facilities for Children with Disabilities ☆☆☆◆

- ▲ There are facilities providing care according to the type of disability such as *welfare type* and *medical type* facilities for children with disabilities, and *medical type child development support center*, etc. <http://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/e/jido/shisetsu.html>
- ▲ There is a subsidiary enrollment system and branches of special support education in elementary and junior high schools, provision of guidance in specialized trainings in local communities, and vocational education in senior high schools.
- ▲ There are 16 distinct special support schools in each area in Shiga.

<http://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/edu/270630.html?mode=preview>



Stop worrying all by yourself, consult us immediately!

- Disability Welfare Section of each city or municipality
- Shiga Prefectural Welfare Center - Consultations for persons with physical disabilities and mental disorders, and a sports center for the disabled (A pool and a training room is available.)
8-5-130 Kasayama, Kusatsu City Tel. 077-564-7327
- Shiga Prefectural Education Center - Consultations on special support education, consultations on children with developmental disorder, etc. Please make an appointment prior to visit.
Telephone consultation services: 9:00 am to 12:30 pm / 1:00 to 4:30 pm
Kitazakura, Yasu City Tel. 077-588-2505

Learning / Playing Groups for Children

A new school year is coming. Let's study and play with enthusiasm! In Shiga, there are various groups where children of foreign nationalities can study, play and eat meals together.



Name of Group	Details	Venue	Date / Time	Inquiries
Japanese Language Class for Children <i>(Kodomo no tame no Nihongo kyoshitsu)</i>	Supports learning, pre-school children, leisure activities (from 4 y.o. to 6 th grade in elem. school)	Nagahama City International Cultural Friendship House "GEO"	Saturday 15:00 - 16:00	Nagahama International Friendship Association (NIFA) Tel. 0749-63-4400 nifa_info@ybb.ne.jp
Hikone UNESCO Association (Japanese Language Class for Children)	Learning support, Japanese language learning	University Satellite Plaza Hikone (AI Plaza Hikone 6 th flr.)	Sunday 10:00 - 16:00	Hikone UNESCO Association Tel. 0749-24-7974
World Amigo Club	Learning support, Japanese language training, providing a place where children can stay	Omihachiman City Kaneda Community Center	Saturday 10:00 - 12:00 summer vacation (4x) winter vacation (once)	Tel. 080-3834-8095 world.amigo.club@gmail.com
Kan-chan no chiisana ie (<i>"Kan-chan's little home"</i>)	Consultations about learning, learning support	Omihachiman City Kan-chan no chiisana ie	Upon request	Tel. 090-3708-3315 srmq61299@nike.eonet.ne.jp
Higashiomi Amigo Kyoshitsu	Japanese language learning, learning support, Japanese culture	Higashiomi City Heart-pia, Yokaichi City	Saturday 14:00 - 16:00	School Support Regional Headquarters (Lifelong Learning Division, Higashiomi City Board of Education) Tel. 0748-24-5672
Classes on South American Languages <i>Camino Kyoshitsu</i> <i>Caminho Kyoshitsu</i>	Native language classes: 1. Spanish, 2. Portuguese	Konan City Mito Machizukuri Center	Saturday (1) 10:30 - 12:00 (2) 9:30 - 11:30 11:30 - 13:00	Konan International Association Tel. 0748-71-4332
Camiyando	Japanese language learning, learning support	Konan City ERUDI	Monday / Wednesday 19:00 - 21:00	Tel. 090-1338-3350 (Mr. Kise)
Club for Children <i>"Tampopo"</i>	Learning support for jr. & sr. high school, native language (Portuguese) training (mainly for elementary school students)	Kusatsu City Jinken Center	Wednesday 17:00 - 19:00	tampopo@digibo.tv
Japanese Language Class <i>"Niji"</i>	Support for children whose age already exceeded compulsory education to enable them to enter senior high school	Kusatsu Class (SHIPS)	from April to March Monday to Friday	Working Support Association for Foreign Residents Tel. 077-561-5110
Hiyori-terakoya Otsu	Learning support, measures to be taken in passing an entrance examination	Otsu City Seta Community Center (2nd floor)	Saturday 10:00 - 12:00	hiyori_o2@yahoo.co.jp

Multicultural Children's Cafeteria/Others

SHIPS	Multicultural cafeteria for children	Kusatsu City SHIPS	4th Saturday 11:00 - 14:00	Tel. 077-561-5110
Kan-chan no chiisana ie	Multicultural coexistence, regional exchange events (children's cafeteria)	Omihachiman City Kan-chan no chiisana ie	Once every two months	Tel. 090-3708-3315
Hikone-shi Kodomo Tabunka Club Hikone City Children's Multicultural Club	Cooking, experiencing diverse cultures, visiting facilities, etc.	Hikone City	summer vacation, winter vacation	Human Rights Policy Division, Hikone City Tel. 0749-30-6113

Event Information



- ◆ **Hachiman Festival** Apr 14th (Fri) to 15th (Sat)
Himure Hachiman-gu Shrine (257 Miyauchi-cho, Omihachiman City)
An intangible folk cultural heritage taking pride in its more than 1,000 years of history.

Torch festival - 4/14 Drum Festival - 4/15
[INQ] Tourism Information office at Omihachiman station north exit
Tel: 0748-33-6061

- ◆ **Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival** Apr 19th (Wed) to 20th (Thu)

Minakuchi-jinja shrine (3-14 Miya no mae, Minakuchi-cho, Koka City)
An intangible folk cultural heritage of Shiga prefecture. Traditional musical performance on the magnificent floats livens up the festival even more.

[INQ] Koka City Tourism Association Tel: 0748-60-2690

- ◆ **Korei Taisai (Taga Festival)** Apr 22nd (Sat)

Taga Taisha Shrine (604 Taga, Taga-cho)
A Shinto ritual performed by an estimated number of 400 people and approximately 40 men mounted on horses.

[INQ] Taga Tourism Association Tel: 0749-48-1553

- ◆ **The 49th Kusatsu Shukuba Festival** Apr 30th (Sun)

Around Tokaido and Nakasendo streets around JR Kusatsu Station and the Kusatsu City Hall area. There will be a parade displaying costumes of different eras, stalls, stage performances, etc.

[INQ] Kusatsu Shukuba Festival Executive Committee secretariat
Tel: 077-566-3219

- ◆ **Shigaraki Pottery Festival in front of Shigaraki station**



From late April to early May

Shigaraki Station square, Shigaraki Kogen Railway
(Shigaraki-cho, Koka City)

A variety of Shigaraki potteries and delicious food.

[INQ] Station Pottery Business Promotion Association Secretariat
Tel: 0748-82-0194

- ◆ **Kenketo Festival** May 3rd (Wed)

Suginoki-jinja Shrine (Yamanoue, Ryuo-cho, Gamo-gun)
A national intangible folk cultural heritage. Local male residents worshipping the same guardian deity will wear colorful costumes and will demonstrate a sword dance.

[INQ] Ryuo Tourism Association Tel: 0748-58-3715

- ◆ **Azuchi Nobunaga Festival** June 4th (Sun)

Azuchi Castle ruins (Shimotoira, Azuchi-cho, Omihachiman City)
A parade of armored Samurai warriors will be held in memory of the death anniversary of Oda Nobunaga, the military commander of the Japan's warring states in the old days. There will be an Azuchi Raku Ichi or open market and various events.

[INQ] Azuchi Nobunaga Festival Council Tel: 0748-46-2346

The next issue of Mimitaro is scheduled to come out on July.



Information from SIA



- ◆ **Shiga Prefecture's Nursing Care Staff Training**
Shiga prefecture will hold a nursing care staff training for foreign residents involving the care of the elderly, the disabled, etc., for them to be able to work in the field of nursing care. For interested parties, please contact the number below.

It includes: Training in the Japanese language that will be needed in the field, initial training for beginners, etc.

Who can participate: Foreign residents of Shiga prefecture who want to work in the field of nursing care.

*Tuition is free but textbooks will be shouldered by the students.

Application period: from April to May, 2017

Training period: from June to December, 2017

Venue: Kusatsu City

[INQ] SHIPS Tabunka Kyosei Shien Center (Entrusted organization of the Prefecture) Tel. 077-561-5110



"La Folle Journée Biwako 2017"



- ◆ April 28th (Fri) until April 30th (Sun)
Shiga Prefectural Center for the Performing Arts "Biwako Hall" (15-1, Uchidehama, Otsu City)

You can enjoy local and international first class performances in music festivals available at affordable prices. Free events, such as outdoor concerts and kids' program are also held. Please refer to the following website for details. <http://lfjb.biwako-hall.or.jp/>

La Folle Journée Biwako 2017 "Kids' Program"

Date: April 30th (Sun)

Venue: Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization (SIA) International Information Salon

• *Be a capoeirista! Let's master great steps!* ♪

Plus, topics on Brazil

Let's try the "Jinga steps", the basic steps of Capoeira!

The program also introduces the culture and charm of Brazil.

① 11:00 am to 11:25 am

② 11:40 am to 12:05 pm

③ 12:55 pm to 1:20 pm

④ 1:45 pm to 2:10 pm

※No participation fee

※Participants: Toddlers and elementary school students

Reception opens at 10:30 am on the scheduled day for both sessions on a first-come, first-served basis for the first 12 participants.



BRAZIL

Recruitment of Foreign Student Applicants for the Biwako Scholarship for the year 2017

Who may apply: Students from other countries, junior college and university students who are residents of Shiga prefecture.

(High school students are not eligible to apply since 2016.)

For 2017 application guidelines, please visit SIA's website: (<http://www.s-i-a.or.jp>)

[INQ] Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization (SIA) Tel. 077-526-0931