



Keep Learning, Keep Moving Forward!

In this issue of Mimitaro, we visited Konan-shi Kosei Junior High School Night Class and interviewed the students.

Mr. Honjo Rolando Fernandez



I came to Japan from the Philippines at the age of 18 to join my mother, who had married a Japanese man. He later adopted me as his son. After attending a Japanese language school for a year, I helped my adoptive father's work for a while, who owned an electronics store, and then I got a job at a company. I learned Japanese by taking notes, and also obtained qualifications for operating lifts, cranes, and slinging works. I had been wanting to learn Japanese properly through a systematic approach when I happened to notice a flyer for a night junior high school that my child brought home from elementary school. I thought, "This is it," and decided to enroll.

I didn't expect to study not only Japanese but also all the junior high school subjects at night school. However, I'm now gaining a wide range of knowledge about the Japanese language and culture, which is a truly valuable experience. Every class is so interesting that time flies by, and I often find myself thinking, "What? Class is over already?!" I especially enjoy the math classes. Thanks to the teacher's clear explanations, I'm starting to understand things I didn't grasp in the past. I used to avoid numbers, but now I want to study properly and apply what I learn in my future work.

After finishing work at the company each day, I grab a quick bite to eat and rush off to school. By the time my studies are over and I get home, it's already past 9:30pm, and my current concern is that I have no time to spend with my children. Still, I want to be able to answer their questions about their studies properly, so I guess I just have to be patient for now.

As I grow older, I've come to feel the brevity of life and the importance of time. For us foreigners, language is a huge barrier, but if we do nothing, we will never achieve anything. By continuing to learn and look forward, life expands. Age has nothing to do with it!

Ms. Luciene Barbosa Muto



I was fascinated by the wooden architecture I once saw in photographs as a child, and Japan was a country I longed to visit. After marrying my Japanese-Brazilian husband, he left his company, I left my job as a chemistry teacher, and we came to Japan from Brazil. That was the turning point of my life.

After arriving in Japan, I had difficulty finding my ideal job as an English or chemistry teacher, so I started working in a factory. My motivation to studying Japanese came from a conversation in English with my supervisor, who has roots in both Philippines and Japan. He told me, "If you are living in Japan, you need to learn Japanese." For one year, his wife kindly taught me Japanese for 15 minutes each day during my work breaks. Then I decided to study Japanese seriously, so I took courses in "Japanese Language for Work (*Shigoto no tame no Nihongo*)" and "Vocational Training for Foreigners (*Gaikokujin muke shokugyo kunren*)" and obtained a nursing care qualification. I am proud that I was able to get a perfect score at the end of the course, which surprised my teacher, even though I didn't know much Japanese when I started. When I heard about the opening of a night junior high school, I enrolled without hesitation. I attend school while working as a caregiver during the day and teaching Portuguese to preschoolers.

Knowing that this was a school, I never imagined myself being a student here. The teachers are outstanding, and now I'm able to understand lessons that once felt difficult. My goal is to graduate and to be able to speak and read Japanese fluently. I hope to grow by focusing on what I can do now and what genuinely interests me. I'd also be happy if I could be of help to others along the way.

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The 2nd grade class includes students from the Philippines, Brazil, China, and Nepal. During Japanese language class on this day, they were learning Japanese expressions and culture through *Karuta* (card games).



How Can We Protect Lives from Disasters?

Japan is a country that experiences many natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, heavy rain, and heavy snow. It is important to learn about these disasters and to be prepared in advance in order to minimize the damage when they occur.

Information useful in times of disaster is available on the Immigration Services Agency's website.

Download the apps and use them on a regular basis so they will be useful in case of emergencies.

Please take a look at the Lifestyle orientation video (emergency/disaster) too.

"Useful information in the event of a disaster"

https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/01_00469.html



Apps that can be downloaded from here

- **Safety tips** This is a useful app for finding out about disaster information in Japan, such as emergency alerts and weather information.
- **Voice Tra** A multilingual voice app that translates foreign languages when you speak to it.
- **NHK WORLD-JAPAN** Provides news from NHK.

It also announces emergency information on earthquakes and tsunamis.

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

Disaster Prevention Portal Information on disaster prevention is available for you to know on a daily basis and to check at the time of a disaster.

<https://www.mlit.go.jp/river/bousai/bousai-portal/en/index.html>



☆ Let's Learn About Natural Disasters ☆

Earthquake When a major earthquake occurs, it can lead to the collapse of buildings, outbreaks of fires, and landslides. Lifelines such as electricity, water, and gas may be cut off, and transportation services like trains and buses may be suspended. In the event of an earthquake, ensuring your safety is the top priority. It is important to lower your posture, take cover under a desk or similar sturdy structure to protect the head, and remain still until the shaking stops. For more information→ "Do what you can do to reduce personal risk"

https://www.s-i-a.or.jp/en/bosai_info/earthquake-measures



Typhoon/ Heavy rain From summer through autumn, typhoons regularly approach Japan. Heavy rain and strong winds can cause trees and utility poles to fall, and even damage roofs. It is important to stay updated with the latest typhoon information. If there are any objects around your home or on balconies that could be blown away by the wind, bring them inside or secure them firmly. You should also prepare for possible power outages by having items such as candles, flashlights, batteries, and power banks ready. In addition, heavy rainfall increases the risk of river flooding and landslides, so please stay away from dangerous areas.



Heavy snow In the northern part of Shiga, heavy snowfall can occur every year. Weather information related to heavy snow is usually announced several days in advance, so be sure to check the forecasts. If snowfall is expected, prepare early by spreading snow-melting agents on roads, and getting snow removal tools such as shovels, as well as cold protection gears. It is also important to take precautions against frozen water pipes, store drinking water, and fill the bathtub with water for daily use. For those who drive, be sure to switch to snow tires well in advance.

☆ What You Can Do Before a Disaster ☆

Tips for Arranging Furniture

- Secure furniture to walls to prevent it from falling over.
- Avoid placing furniture in bedrooms and children's rooms as much as possible.
- Arrange furniture so that it will not block doorways in case of a fall.

Prepare an Emergency Carryout Bag

Passport/residence card, valuables, medicines, mask, underwear, cash and the basic necessities for life in an evacuation center.

Pack in advance in a backpack what you need to take out in case of emergency and have it ready to go.

Stockpile of Water and Food, etc.

To prepare for situations where lifelines such as electricity, gas, or water might stop, keep a supply of drinking water and long-lasting food on a regular basis.

Prepare for at least 3 days

Drinking Water: 3 liters per person per day × 3 days

Emergency Food: Alpha rice (pre-cooked dried rice), pasta, canned food, ready-to-eat meal, cookie, chocolate, etc.

Other Supplies: Toilet paper, portable toilet, wet wipes, utility lighter, flashlight, portable gas stove, plastic bags, plastic wrap, etc.

Water for daily use: Be prepared by having a plastic tank filled with tap water available on a daily basis

※Everyone's needs are different, so make sure to prepare items that suit your own situation.

How to Confirm the Safety of Family Members

- Decide on a meeting place and how to contact each other with your family in advance.
- During a disaster, phone lines may be difficult to connect, so Saigai-yo Dengon Dial 171 can be very useful.

How to use Saigai-yo Dengon Dial 171

(Disaster Emergency Message Dial 171)

To record: ①Dial 171→1 ②Your phone number

③Record a message

To play back: ①Dial 171→2 ②Phone number of who you want to check on ③Play back the message

Check Evacuation Centers and Evacuation Routes

- Participate in local disaster drills and evacuation drills
- Check local hazard maps for dangerous places where disasters can occur and safe routes to take when evacuating.

Hazard Map Portal Site

<https://disaportal.gsi.go.jp/>



☆ Emergency Call Numbers and Useful Terms to Remember ☆



ひなんばしょ
避難場所 *Hinan-basho* (Evacuation sites)

Temporary places for emergency evacuation, mainly parks and open spaces.



ひなんじょ
避難所 *Hinan-jo* (Evacuation shelters)

Facilities where people can stay for a certain period of time in the event of a disaster, and anyone can enter for free.

#110 Police To report an incident or accident

#119 Emergency call for firefighters and ambulance

#7119 Emergency Telephone Consultation When in doubt about whether to go to a hospital or call an ambulance

Kinkyu sokuho (Emergency alerts): Life-altering messages such as evacuations and warnings

Yoshin (Aftershock): A small earthquake after a large one / *Hinan* (Evacuation): Moving to a safe place from disaster

Tokai (Collapse): Building is damaged / *Dansui* (Water outage): Water not available

Kyusuijo (Water station): Where you can get water to drink

たちいりきんし
立入禁止 *Tachiiri kinshi* (No Entry): A dangerous place to enter

Takidashi (Emergency meal service): Food is available at shelters and parks

Okyushochi (First aid): Immediate and easy treatment of injuries

“*Tasukete!*” (“Help!”): If you are in trouble, call for help in Japanese

Mimitaro Information

◆ Autumn leaves



Best from mid-November to early December

Hiyoshi Taisha 5 chome 1-1 Sakamoto Otsu
Hachiman-bori Around Miyauchi-cho Omihachiman
Genkyu-Rakurakuen 3-40 Konki-cho Hikone
Kotosanzan Hyakusaiji 323 Hyakusaiji-cho Higashiomi
Keisoku-ji Furuhashi Kinomoto-cho Nagahama

◆ International Art Festival BIWAKO BIENNALE 2025

Exhibition Period: Sept 20 (Sat) – Nov 16 (Sun)

Venues: Omihachiman old town, Chomeiji, Okishima

Closing days: Wednesday (Open on Nov 12)

An art event in which about 70 artists from Japan and abroad will exhibit their works.

◆ Makino Pic-land

Experience picking chestnuts and digging sweet potatoes
The golden Metasequoia avenue is a breathtaking sight
835-1 Terakubo Makino-cho Takashima

◆ Aguri Park Ryuo

From October to December, enjoy digging sweet potatoes, taro, and *daikon*, and picking peanuts and persimmons
6526 Yamanoue Ryuo-cho Gamo

◆ HIKARIUM 2025

Fantasy Garden Traveling with Butterflies

From Oct 10 (Fri)

English Garden Rosa & Berry Tawada
605-10 Tawada Maibara

◆ Biwako Higashiomi Ballon Festival 2025

Hot air balloon competition flights, experience balloon boarding, balloon illusion with night mooring, etc.



Nov 15 (Sat), 16 (Sun)

Higashiomi City Athletic Park Multipurpose Ground
1503 Shibahara-cho Higashiomi

◆ Tarobogu no Ohitaki taisai

Fire festival to pray for family safety and good health
Dec 7 (Sun)

Tarobogu (Aga Jinja) 2247 Owaki-cho Higashiomi

Next issue of Mimitaro is scheduled in January

◆ Joya no kane

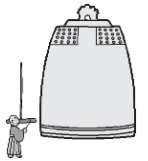
On New Year's Eve (December 31), temple bells will be rung 108 times all across Japan

Ishiba-ji Joya no kane and *Udon* will be served
823 Ishibaji-cho Gokasho Higashiomi

Seigan-ji Joya no kane and *Amazake* will be served
669 Maibara Maibara

Saikyo-ji 5-13-1 Sakamoto Otsu

Choko-ji 694 Chokoji-cho Omihachiman



Mimitaro News



◆ 2026 Konan-shi Kosei Junior High School Night Class Information session for prospective students will be held!

Date and time: 1st session Oct 24 (Fri)
2nd session Dec 12 (Fri)

Starts at 6 pm (Reception starts at 5:30pm)

Venue: Konan-shi Kosei Junior High School
284 Hari Konan

To apply, please scan here →
(Application deadline: 1 week before the session)

 Konan-shi Board of Education
School Education Division
Tel 0748-77-7011



Oct 24



Dec 12

◆ Administrative Counseling Day

A specialist will consult with you on any problems you may have. (Reservation required)

- Takashima: Oct 17th (Fri) 1:00pm-3:30pm
Imazu Higashi Community Center 3F Large hall
- Omihachiman: Oct 22nd (Wed) 1:00pm-4:00pm
Aeon Shopping Center, 2 Bangai 1F Central Court
- Nagahama, Maibara: Oct 24th (Fri) 1:00pm-4:00pm
Nagahama City Hall 1F Multi-purpose room
- Hikone: Oct 31st (Fri) 1:00pm-3:30pm
Viva City Hikone 2F Community Space

Participating organizations: Legal Affairs Bureau,
Labor Bureau, Pension Office, Judicial Scrivener,
Administrative Scrivener, Tax Accountant,
Administrative Consultant, etc.

 Administrative Counseling Center
(Gyosei Sodan Center) Tel 077-523-1100

Shiga Foreign Residents Information Center

(within Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization)

Tel 077-523-5646 Fax 077-510-0601

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