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**(1) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents News****■ H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Foreign Language Support**

There have recently been confirmed cases of the H1N1 strain of influenza (Swine Flu) in Osaka Prefecture. OFIX (Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents) is working alongside the Fever Consultation Centre to provide interpreting services to foreign residents.

Furthermore the Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents continues to provide advice on all matters including Swine Flu from Mon-Fri (9:00 ~ 17:45)

**■ H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Information**

- Symptoms include sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, coughing, as well as high temperature, chills, stiffness, joint pain etc.
- This strain of influenza is highly infectious, however many of the people who have contracted it have only had a mild case, and recovered well. Standard flu medicine has been seen to be effective in curing illness, and the strain has been confirmed as sharing many similarities with the normal seasonal influenza virus.

**[Protection against infection]**

- Etiquette when coughing
  - We ask all those coughing and sneezing to wear a mask.
  - Try to maintain a distance of 2 metres or more from those coughing and sneezing. Airborne droplets from coughs and sneezes can travel up to 2 metres.
  - Those without a mask, please be sure to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or handkerchief.
  - Throw all used tissues away. Wash hands after sneezing or coughing.
- On returning home:
  - Be sure to gargle and wash your hands.

**Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents**

( Mon ~ Fri, not open on weekends and national holidays)

Tel (direct line) 06 6941 2297 (Hours 9:00 ~ 17:45)

Languages : English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

**[If you start to show symptoms]**

- If you start to show symptoms such as a high temperature, sore throat, coughing etc, first of all call the **Fever Consultation Centre**. In order to prevent the spread of the infection please do not go straight to hospital.

**Osaka Prefecture Fever Consultation Centre  
(open every day of the week)**

· Advice in Japanese

Tel: 06 6944 6791 (24 hour advice service)

· Advice in foreign languages

Tel: 06 6943 8530 (9:00 ~ 17:45)

Languages : English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

**Further Information**

· Osaka Prefectural Government Homepage

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/chiiki/kenkou/influ/foreignlang.pdf>

· Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare Homepage

[http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/influenza\\_a/index.html](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/influenza_a/index.html)

## (2) Notices

### Careers Information Day for Foreign Students

OFIX works to support international students in seeking work in Osaka after graduation and to provide them with opportunities to meet and talk with prospective employers in the region.

Eligible to attend:

Foreign students due to graduate in spring 2010 and wishing to work for a company in Japan

Those companies (foreign companies included) seeking to employ foreign students.

Schedule:

Company Booths

around 30 companies will have their own booths

Individual Consultation Corners

career counseling, status of residence counseling

Seminars

changing visa status, advice on job hunting etc

Date/Time: Fri 26<sup>th</sup> June 2009, 13:00 ~ 17:30

Venue: Umeda Crystal Hall, (Umeda Centre Building B1F)

Admission Free

Further Details: OFIX (TEL 06-6966-2400)

Homepage:(map of venue)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index2.html>

**\* \* \* We look forward to seeing you there \* \* \***

### Free Information and Advice Day for Foreign Residents

Free information and counseling services will be offered to foreign residents at International House, Osaka to help with difficulties experienced in everyday life, and offer advice on how to live comfortably in Osaka. Specialist advice will be available regarding many common difficulties experienced by foreign residents such as legal advice, visa issues, work, insurance, and child-rearing. Volunteers will provide interpretation in 9 languages, and all advice is offered free of charge. Please tell your foreign friends about it.

Date/Time: Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2009, 11:00 ~ 17:00

Venue: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room, International House, Osaka

Admission Free

Languages available: English, Chinese, Korean,

Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, Thai, Filipino,  
and Vietnamese

Further Details: OFIX TEL:06-6966-2400

Homepage:(map of venue)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/news.html#information>

## (3) Osaka International Club News

### OFIX Scholarship Student Gathering

On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April, two new OFIX scholarship students paid a courtesy visit to the Osaka Prefectural Government. During the afternoon they were joined by existing scholarship students for a visit to the Shinsekai area of Osaka. One of the students, Heyun Shen from China wrote to us with the following about the visit.

#### Heyun Chen (China), OFIX Scholarship Student

This was our first chance to visit the new OFIX office in Osaka. First of all we met with the two new scholarship students for this year, and heard about all of the events and programmes that OFIX is planning for this year. I was able to tell the new students all about the events I took part in last year. We chatted with OFIX staff, and learnt about each others culture. I am looking forward this year to actively taking part as I did last year.

We then left OFIX and made our way to Shinsekai, home to one of the symbols of Osaka, the Tsutenkaku

Tower. Even though I have lived in Osaka for 3 years I had never been there myself! From the top of the tower there was quite an impressive view of the city. The tower is also famous for its statue of the famous Biliken good luck god. It is said that if you touch its feet you are guaranteed wealth in the future. So I touched the statue many times! It was great spending time with the other students, and I look forward to future gatherings throughout the year.



At the Tsutenkaku Tower (left to right: Yu (China), Shen (China), Hyejin (Korea))

## (4) 2008-2009 NPO Activity Grant Support Programme Reports

### International Exchange via Web Radio

#### Takatsuki Broadcast Agency

Takatsuki Broadcast (Radio 171) is a publically run Japanese language web radio show broadcast once or twice a month offering local news to residents. Unfortunately very little of this information is relayed in foreign languages, despite there being a large number of foreign residents in Osaka. As a result it was deemed important to produce an English language show too, and in doing so create a forum for all municipalities in Osaka Prefecture to use to promote international exchange and understanding.

The grant received from OFIX greatly assisted in the development of this project. Through this project we were also came to realization that the level and scope of international exchange varies greatly between municipalities in the prefecture.

#### Shitennouji Wasso

#### Shitennouji Wasso Culture Association

The Shitennouji Wasso Festival was a great success. It is an event held in the ancient Naniwa capital of Osaka in which people parade in traditional East Asian costumes and dance to traditional music. It is a way to visualize the great importance international exchange has plaed in the development of Osaka since ancient times, and connects directly to international exchange taking place today.

There was a great atmosphere with citizens, foreign

residents, and tourists all enjoying themselves. Through this exchange visitors were able to experience different cultures, and see their own traditions be introduced in Japan. Students of the Shitennoji Wasso Academy had the opportunity to take part in exchange with citizens of the prefecture and foreign residents.

Over 300 volunteers helped out during the event, all wanting to contribute in some way to international exchange and their local area. With messages of support from the Prime Minister of Japan, and the Ambassador of Korea, as well as participation on the day by both the Governor of Osaka Prefecture, and Mayor of Osaka City, this was a truly special event.

This was also a wonderful opportunity to inform local residents of the importance of Osaka as the ancient Naniwa capital of Japan, something that is actually not widely known.



Dancing in traditional Asian dress

## (5) International Student Hall News

### ■ Exchange Party for international students and local residents

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May an exchange party for international students and local residents was held at the Sakai International Hall (Orion International House), which OFIX runs. Local residents livened up the atmosphere by teaching students some traditional songs, and Japanese calligraphy. A representative of the local police force also came along to give a brief talk about maintaining safety in the area.

At the end the students had fun playing a drawing game for prizes such as soap and washing up liquid. All things invaluable to life in the hall! All in all it was a very fun event enjoyed by all.



Students learning Japanese songs

## (6) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

### ■ Getting Hitched!

Hi everyone, Richard here again!

In June I will be making a brief trip back to the UK to attend a good friend's wedding. So with my mind on that I thought that this month I'd write a little bit about weddings in the UK and Japan. In the UK a traditional wedding is much as you see in the movies. It will take place at a church, with the bride in a beautiful white wedding dress and the groom in a stylish wedding tux. The bride is walked down the aisle by her father, and there follows a ceremony at which the bride and groom exchange wedding vows, and the wedding rings are handed over by the Best Man.

The ceremony is followed by a reception and party usually at a nearby hotel or event hall. These are always fun affairs, with lots of food, alcohol, and more often than not a dance floor and even a live band! Evening events will go on long into the night, and the following day many couples will head straight off for their honeymoon.

Of course in the UK there are people of all faiths, and for each one the style of the wedding ceremony and party will be slightly different. Obviously people of no religious denomination get married too. These people will tend to have a ceremony at a registry office, and follow this up with a reception and party. Another point of interest is that a few years ago, gay marriage was made legal in the UK. Although some people were against this the majority of British people have been happy to accept it (myself included!)

A traditional Japanese wedding will take place at a temple with the bride and groom in full traditional dress.

After the ceremony there will be a reception and meal. This is a very formal affair, at which the guests of honour are the managers of the bride and groom's respective companies! The bosses even



make speeches during the reception. In the UK you may well ask co-workers to the party, but they certainly wouldn't give speeches! In the UK this honour goes to family and close friends. I am always amazed when I go to Japanese wedding receptions to find the bride and groom's parents sitting at the back rather than at the front with their children. Although Japanese weddings feel very formal, as soon as people start drinking the atmosphere changes and things get much more relaxed!

These days however many couples in Japan will choose a white wedding over the traditional temple wedding. I always find it amusing that despite the couple not being Christian these are held in mock-up chapels, replete with crosses, organ, choir, and priest. In fact, since this is all for purely aesthetic rather than religious reasons, the priest is more often than not a foreigner acting the part for a few thousand yen! Oh, and the aisle is called the "Virgin Road" in Japan. A reminder of purer times perhaps!

Which ever way a wedding is celebrated one thing remains the same. It is a joyous occasion, and always a pleasure to be invited!

- Donations for Osaka exhibition at 2010 Shanghai Expo: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/news.html#syanghai>
- Information for foreign residents in Osaka <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/life/index.html>
- Seeking residents for the Orion International Hall <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index.html>
- Become a supporting member of OFIX [http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/ofix/index3\\_1.html](http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/ofix/index3_1.html)
- Japan Times (English language newspaper) now available to read at OFIX Plaza!

Comments and suggestions for OFIX News: [info@ofix.or.jp](mailto:info@ofix.or.jp)

Osaka International Club Reports: [clubnews@ofix.or.jp](mailto:clubnews@ofix.or.jp)

Register to OFIX News: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/index.html>

OFIX News Back Numbers: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber.html>

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