

「OFIX News」 Issue 19 (February 2010)  
~E-Newsletter distributed by the Osaka Foundation of International  
Exchange~

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### 【01】 Notices

#### Become an International Understanding Education Foreign Supporter

OFIX is currently looking for foreign residents living in Osaka to become OFIX International Understanding Education Foreign Supporters, and visit schools to introduce their country's culture, history, music, traditions, and games in Japanese.

Prior to joining the programme there will be a training session to give all supporters an idea of what is involved in school visits. So beginners are more than welcome! All those interested please get in touch with OFIX.

#### Requirements :

Applicants must be foreign residents living in or around the Osaka area, be interested in visiting schools to introduce their home country, and be able to communicate well in Japanese.

#### Further details

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/jigyou/index.html>

#### List of current Supporters (Japanese only)

[http://www.ofix.or.jp/jigyou/index2\\_2.html](http://www.ofix.or.jp/jigyou/index2_2.html)

【Enquiries】 OFIX Planning and Promotions Group  
06-6966-2400 E-mail: [info@ofix.or.jp](mailto:info@ofix.or.jp)

#### Seeking Residents at the Sakai International Hall

The Sakai International Hall is a safe and comfortable residence for international students. We are currently seeking new residents to move in from April 2010. Each room is fitted with bath, toilet, air-conditioner, fridge, desk, bed etc. There is a friendly caretaker, and support officer on site. There are also many fun events throughout the year. Applications

should be made through the relevant international office at the applicants university.

Monthly Rent: : 26,000 Yen (includes communal fees, no deposit required)  
Further details <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index.html>

Make a Donation to the Shanghai Expo Osaka Pavilion

Shanghai Expo Osaka Exhibition Details  
<http://expo2010-osaka.jp/>  
Donation information (Japanese only)  
<http://www.ofix.or.jp/news.html#syanghai>

## 【02】 Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

### Filing Year End Tax Returns

In Japan income tax returns are filed from the 16th Feb to 15th March. Benjamin Franklin said that “ In this world nothing is certain but death and taxes ” , and as such foreign residents living in Japan that fall under the following categories are also required to file their tax returns, and make their tax payments. (The majority of salary earners have their income tax calculated by their “ year-end tax adjustment ” , and as such do not need to file a separate tax return.)

Residents (those that have a fixed address in Japan, or those that have been resident in Japan for more than one year)

- 1) Those that receive a single salary, and whose income aside from salary/retirement income exceeds 200,000 Yen
- 2) Those that receive more than a single income, and whose income outside of the “ year-end tax adjustment ” exceeds 200,000 Yen.
- 3) Foreign diplomats stationed in Japan, and those employed as domestic servants, who do not have income tax deducted from their pay slip. Etc.

Non-residents: In most cases tax is deducted using the standard pay as you earn system (withholding tax), so there is no need to file a separate tax return. However, in cases where the person owns a permanent establishment, they will be liable for taxation on aggregate income and therefore will be required to file a tax return.

• Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents  
Mon-Fri (closed 29th Dec ~ 3rd Jan and on national holidays)  
Direct Tel: 06-6941-2297 (Hours 9:00 ~ 17:45)  
Languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

## 【03】 Osaka International Club News

### OFIX Scholarship Students Graduation Report

Two of our scholarship students have written to us as they prepare to graduate from their respective universities in Osaka.

To read their reports click here:

Feng Lin, China <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/club/lin2>  
Wei Liu, China <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/club/ryu>

## 【04】 OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

## Sports Fans!

Hi everyone, Richard here again.

I hope you are all keeping warm this winter wherever you are!

As I'm sure you are all aware, the Winter Olympics has just been held in Vancouver, so I thought it would be apt to write this month about sport in general. Sport is an integral part of life in Japan and the UK, however the sports we watch, and the ways we support our favourite teams differ a fair bit.

For starters the most popular sport in Japan is baseball. A sport which nobody plays in the UK, and which I have yet to work out the rules to! In the UK we have cricket, which is similar to baseball, but has only two bases (called wickets), and an entirely different scoring and bowling system. Actually, rather embarrassingly I have just about as much of a clue about cricket rules as I do of baseball! The national sport of Japan is Sumo Wrestling, but other sports that are extremely popular include volleyball, football, martial arts, kendo, and tennis.

Football is the most popular sport in the UK by a long way, with most adult males supporting a team, and many playing for fun on the weekends. I used to play at school, and to be honest was always far better at watching the game than playing it! The Premier League is popular all over the world now, including Japan, so it is pretty easy to keep up with what is going on back home. Although the 9 hour time difference makes it difficult to watch live games! Along with football and cricket a great many sports originate from the UK. Sports such as golf, tennis, hockey, rugby, badminton, and even table tennis (a somewhat little known fact!) hail from the UK.

I watch a lot of football on television, and I have noticed a few differences when it comes to international matches on TV in the UK and Japan. Programmes in the UK can be a tad dull, but the level of analysis and commentary is for the most part fairly high. During half time there will be extensive highlights and a discussion of both England and the foreign country. In Japan the focus is mainly on how the Japan team did. Even if the opposing team has made outstanding plays they will be given very little coverage. And rather than analysis there will usually just be a member of a pop group on hand to make a comment like "Fingers crossed for a Japan goal in the 2nd half!!". I often wonder why this is, but I suppose it has something to do with football still being a relatively new sport in Japan with most people in being casual viewers, rather than hardcore like the majority of England fans!

Both England and Japan will be at the World Cup to be held this summer in South Africa, so I look forward to supporting both teams! I just hope they don't end up playing each other. I won't know who to support!

Two other amusing traits amongst sports viewers in the UK are pessimism and love of the underdog. Of course we support our national teams, but never expect them to win anything! I suppose this way of thinking protects us from the shock of defeat and enables us to say "Oh well, no surprise there then!" when defeat arises. Love of the underdog is something more difficult to explain. Winning and the glory shown in doing so is perhaps still seen as rather vulgar in the UK, so we tend to cheer on the underdog. Although if the underdog starts winning we'll switch to the other team straight away!

Sport can be an extremely valuable tool in bringing people of diverse backgrounds and status together. However, I often feel that the displays of nationalism that are sometimes seen at sporting events, go against this ideal. More focus could be placed on celebrating individual feats regardless of nationality, as opposed to the flag waving that so often accompanies sporting achievement.

## 【05】 OFIX Network

### Emergency Support Network for Foreign Residents

This network was established in 2007 by the Council for Local Authorities for International Relations Kinki Regional Block Committee members (Shiga Prefecture, Kyoto Prefecture, Osaka Prefecture, Hyogo Prefecture, Nara Prefecture, Wakayama Prefecture, Kyoto City, Osaka City, Kobe City), in order to better support foreign residents when natural disasters and other such emergency situations have arisen.

For further details click here:

[http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail\\_english\\_no19.pdf](http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no19.pdf)

## 【06】 OFIX Programme Reports

### One World Festival and Asian International Students Forum

The One World Festival was held at the Osaka I-House from the 6th-7th February. This was the 17th time it has been held. The aim of the festival is to promote international exchange and cooperation work to citizens of Osaka Prefecture. Over 100 groups ranging from NGOs and NPOs to international organisations and businesses took part and introduced their activities through booths, symposiums, and workshops.

Participants were able to get a taste for issues relating to international cooperation through the many booths, ethnic music and dance shows, film showings, and programmes. The ethnic food stalls where visitors could try lots of tasty dishes such as Sri Lankan curry, Turkish kebabs, and Vietnamese Coffee were particularly popular.

OFIX had a booth at the Festival where we promoted our activities, and were able to chat to people of all ages, from kids to adults. On the 6th February we held an Asian International Students Forum at which a total of 8 students introduced their home countries/regions, all in the context of the theme of the upcoming Shanghai Expo, "Better City, Better Life". Speakers hailed from Vietnam, China, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, and Japan. After the speeches a question and answer session was held, and everyone enjoyed the students fun responses. There was also an introduction to the Osaka Pavilion which will be at the Shanghai Expo. It was a highly successful event, at which much was learnt.

A total of 14,500 people visited the One World Festival over its two days, and it was a great opportunity to exchange information, learn about the activities of different groups, and network.

For photos click here:

[http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail\\_english\\_no19.pdf](http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no19.pdf)

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Information for foreign residents in Osaka

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/life/index.html>

Event Calendar (Japanese only)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/cgi-bin/calender.cgi>

Seeking residents for the Orion International Hall

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

Seeking New OFIX Supporting Members

[http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/ofix/index3\\_1.html](http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/ofix/index3_1.html)

The Japan Times now available to read at OFIX Plaza.

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Comments/Suggestions: [info@ofix.or.jp](mailto:info@ofix.or.jp)

Please send Osaka International Club reports to the following address:

[clubnews@ofix.or.jp](mailto:clubnews@ofix.or.jp)

To cancel your registration or change your registered email address

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/index.html>

Print-out version (PDF) of OFIX News with photos

[http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail\\_english\\_no19.pdf](http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no19.pdf)

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