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(1) Notices**■ 'Water and Light Cities Forum,' Seeking Attendees**

Representatives from five world cities, renowned for the use of water and light in their design, will gather together with Osaka Governor Toru Hashimoto for this international forum to discuss the creation of appealing areas, and exchange town planning know-how.

Please register to attend.

Participating Cities : Amsterdam, San Antonio, Shanghai, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Osaka

Date/Time: Monday 24th November 2008

13:30 ~ 16:00 (Venue opens 13:00)

Venue: 12th Floor Conference Hall, Grand Cube Osaka
(Osaka International Convention Centre)

Participation Fee: Free

Number of Attendees: 200 (registration required)

Application deadline: Friday 7th November

Organiser: The 2008 Major Cities in Asia Network Committee

Enquiries: Prefectural Citizens Enquiries Centre

TEL: # 8001 or 06-6910-8001

Further Details (Japanese only):

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kokusai/asia/forum.html>

■ 'International Students Forum from Major Cities in Asia,'

Organised by OFIX this event will see foreign and Japanese students take part in a discussion under the theme

'My Ideas and Suggestions,'. Points raised will then be introduced at the Water and Light Cities Forum (24th Nov) and the Major Cities in Asia Network Best Practice Meeting (25th Nov)

Date/Time: Saturday 15th November 2008

Forum: 13:00 ~ 16:00

Foreign Students Exchange Party: 16:20 ~ 17:10

Venue: Momoyama Gakuin University, St. Thomas Hall, Classroom T-002

Participation Fee: Free

Enquiries: University Consortium of Southern Osaka
TEL 072-258-7646

Further Details (Japanese only)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/08ryuugakusei.pdf>

**■ 'Careers Information Day for Foreign Students,'
Participating Companies confirmed**

In order to offer foreign students information and assistance in searching for a suitable job after graduation, OFIX, in collaboration with organisations such as the Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Osaka Prefectural Government will hold a 'Careers Information Day for Foreign Students,' on the 17th November. Participating companies have been confirmed and details can be found below.

Date/Time: Monday 17th November, 13:30 ~ 17:30

Venue: 3rd Floor Event Hall, Grand Cube Osaka
(Osaka International Convention Centre)

Participation Fee: Free

Number of participating companies: 44

Enquiries: OFIX : Tel 072-460-2371

Further Details

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/setumeikai_english.pdf

■ **「International Exchange Festival」**

~ Learn about different cultures! ~

The 「International Exchange Festival」 is an event organised by the Participants Support Council of the Japanese Language Institute, Kansai, and takes place at the Institute. It is an opportunity for students studying at the Institute and local citizens to meet and take part in international exchange. Students will introduce their countries culture, and there will

be introductions to Japanese culture such as calligraphy and origami. In the main hall there will be an ethnic clothing fashion show, and a shamisen concert. Please come along!

Date/Time: Sunday 23rd November, 13:00 ~ 16:00

Place: Japan Foundation, Japanese Language Institute, Kansai (Tajiri Town)

Directions: Shuttle bus from Rinku Town Station

Participation Fee: Free

Enquiries : Participants Support Council of the Japanese Language Institute TEL 073-466-5019

Further Details (Japanese only)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/fureai2008.pdf>

Last years event <http://www.rinku.org/konnitiwa/>

(2) Osaka International Club (Letter from Abroad)

■ **Feng Lin (China), OFIX Scholarship Student**

OFIX Scholarship Student Feng Lin from China wrote to tell us about her 6 years in Osaka and impressions of Japanese culture.

I have now been a student in Osaka for 6 years and the time has flown by.

It has been a truly irreplaceable and important period in my life. Being a self-financed student it has not always been easy living in such an expensive country as Japan. Having to focus on my studies leaves me no time to take on a part-time job, which is why the assistance given to me by OFIX has been of such importance in helping to ease some of the financial burden I face. I am grateful for not only the financial, but also for the moral support given to me by OFIX.

Looking back over my time in Japan, I would like to talk briefly about my opinions on culture, and in particular Japanese customs and conventions.

I was so surprised when I first realized the extent to which Japan has managed to maintain its rich society and culture in spite of the long history of exchange with the west. One eye-opening characteristic of Japanese society is the emphasis on the importance of humility. At first, it was strange for me to be in a society where people do not tend to give their own opinions on matters straight away. It was hard for me understand why people couldn't say "no" to things straight off the bat.

I gradually got used to it though, and came to understand that

respect for one another is a vital part of society in Japan. In this society there is a place for everyone. If anyone, whether from the higher or lower echelons of society, was to be ignored or mistreated, society would cease to function effectively. To people coming from societies based on the importance of wealth and power, the equality seen in Japanese society is truly a wonderful thing.

Of course this is not the only difference in culture that I have noticed during my 6 years here. I would not be able to write everything here, but in the future on my return to my own country I would like to repay the kindness of my teachers, as well as that of the people of Osaka and the whole of Japan, and contribute to exchange relations between Japan and China.



(3) OFIX Network (Introduction to International Exchange /Cooperation Related Organisation)

■ Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, Kansai

The Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, Kansai, was established in May 1997 in Tajiri Town in southern Osaka. The Institute has accommodation facilities making it possible for students to stay on site during their training. Foreign diplomats and young Japan scholars are invited to Japan take part in specialized Japanese courses to assist them in their work and research. Also, in order to promote international exchange in the region many exchange events take place at the Institute in collaboration with other

organizations. The training of foreign diplomats began in 1981, and a total of 545 people have taken part in training since then. At the present time of 56 of these people are currently working for foreign embassies in Japan, including 4 ambassadors. Many exchange events are held at the Institute, so please have a



look at our website for further details
<http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/kansai/index.html>

(4) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report



Hi Everyone,

Over the past few months I have had a fair few requests for a bit more of a self-introduction. So, not wanting to disappoint my readers, here you go!

I was born and raised in London, where I lived until I was 18 years old. As the late great Samuel Johnson once said “when a man is tired of

London, he is tired of life”. London was certainly an interesting place to grow up in, and as an ever changing, thriving cosmopolitan city somewhere I always enjoy going back to. However, when I was 18 I decided to leave London and headed up north

to Edinburgh, where I studied Japanese at university. I am often asked why I decided to study Japanese, and always find it hard to give a satisfactory answer. To be honest I had no deep fascination with Japan at the time, but rather, having studied French and German at school, fancied trying my hand at an altogether different language. I took to the language fairly well, and just stuck with it really!

As part of my university course I had the opportunity to study for one year in Kyoto, and that was the first time I came across the wonder that is Kansai-ben (the Kansai dialect). It was then that I realised my university text books would only get me so far. I was on my own for the rest of

the way! I would chat happily away in my standard Japanese, only to not understand a word of what came back at me! Anyway, I resisted the temptation to throw the books away, studied for the remainder of my time at university and managed to graduate in 2002. I was then posted to Okayama Prefecture on the JET Programme where I spent a wonderful 3 years. I never did meet Momotaro though!

I have now been with OFIX for one year and have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the people of Osaka. Everyone here has been so warm and friendly! I look forward to taking part in international exchange events and meeting with more of you over the next year too!

Oh, and please do get in touch with any recommendations for places to see in Osaka. I am sure there is still much that I don't know about this great place!

Autumn in Osaka

Autumn in Japan is such a wonderful time of year. In particular I love it when the maple leaves turn all sorts of gorgeous reds and yellows. The best time to see this is from mid-November to the start of December. Some of my favourite spots in Osaka are Mino Park (Mino City), Expo Park (Suita City), and Inunakisan (Izumisano City). If you get the chance please go along!

(5) OFIX Programme/Event Reports

■ Support for International Understanding Education

At OFIX we actively promote international understanding education by sending our Coordinator for International Relations and scholarship students to schools to take part in lessons. We also assist NPOs by offering financial assistance for lessons. On the OFIX homepage you will also find a search engine of NPOs which currently undertake international understanding lessons in Osaka Prefecture. You can search the different programmes using a number of criteria such as location and field.

Support for International Understanding Education Programmes

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

Support for NGO/NGO International Understanding Education Programmes (Japanese only)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/jigyuu/index5.html>

International Understanding Education Search Engine (Japanese only)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/jigyuu/search/Main.html>

NPO International Understanding Education Programme School Report (Takemidai Middle School, Suita City)

With the support of the NPO En-joy, we were happy to welcome four foreign students from Vietnam, who spoke to our second year students about Vietnam and Vietnamese culture on five occasions.

On the first and second visits we learnt about Vietnam, and were shown traditional Vietnamese clothes. The students were able to learn a lot about the country. The students also had a lot of fun playing a traditional Vietnamese game which the foreign students showed us. From the third to fifth visits the foreign students taught our students a traditional dance and drum performance for them to practice for the school festival.

The foreign students taught us the meaning of the dance and helped us get the steps right. Using the clothes brought along by the foreign students as a guide, our students set about designing their own clothes, and learnt much about

clothes in Vietnam. The students from Vietnam explained everything in a very easy to understand way, and the pupils were able to learn much about Vietnamese culture. The pupils were able to learn a lot of things that they could not have found out about through the internet or in books. Therefore it made Vietnam seem like a much closer country than before. The pupils had a wonderful time during these visits and will surely not forget the time spent with the foreign students.



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/jigyuu/index4.html>

OFIX Volunteer Information (Japanese only) <http://www.ofix.or.jp/boran/index2.html>

Seeking New OFIX Supporting Members <http://www.ofix.or.jp/sanjyo/index.html> (Japanese only)

Comments/Suggestions: info@ofix.or.jp

Osaka International Club reports: clubnews@ofix.or.jp

To cancel your registration or change your registered email address:
<http://www.ofix.or.jp/>

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