

has been clearly understood. Chinese international students volunteers joined with the Japanese volunteers in thinking of what each one could do.

There were comments, such as, "it was a valuable opportunity to learn how to help foreigners during a disaster. I'm happy to have participated."

We will continue to hold support activities for foreigners in times of a disaster.

■ Disaster Prevention Training Jointly Sponsored with International Associations in Local Municipalities

We would like to introduce Disaster Prevention Trainings for Foreign Residents, Interpreter and Translator Volunteers in times of a disaster jointly sponsored by OFIX and International Exchange Associations of the local municipalities .

【Disaster Prevention Training for Foreigners (Settsu Association for International Exchanges)】

The training was held on July 17 (Thurs.) at Settsu City Community Plaza as the first joint activity for this year.

There were 30 participants, which included 9 foreigners (4 countries). A lecturer was invited from Suita International Friendship Association, who taught the basic disaster prevention training foreign residents need to know using pictures. After having lunch a circle, aside from reviewing what they have learned, there was also an exchange between the participants, where they also talked about the evacuation training and disaster prevention education in their countries. Participants understand very well when the Korean participants said that they do not have any disaster training, but only war training.

(From the questionnaire)

"It was a good experience. We ate emergency food as if it were a real disaster, and by talking about it, the impression was stronger than just by reading about it."

"I used to be afraid of disasters, but since I learned what to do in such a situation, I have a different image now."

【Disaster Prevention Training for Foreigners (Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis)】

On July 25 (Fri.), training was conducted at the Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis (ATOMS) with a total of 87 participants, including 47 foreigners (12 countries). There were many activities, such as a lecture by the Toyonaka Fire Department, Disaster Prevention training led by an ATOMS employee, and afterwards, first aid training using AED, which foreign participants eagerly learned through the interpreters.

Also, a local disaster prevention expert brought an actual emergency towel that can be made from things in the house". It was an opportunity to closely consider preparation for a disaster.

(From the questionnaire)

"It was a good and useful seminar as I could learn how to save a person's life."

"I thought that if something happens, I would do my best to survive."

"It's a very important information, and that everyone needs to know about it."

If there is any local international exchange association interested in this kind of joint event , please inquire at OFIX.

■ Visit to Nagai Elementary School

At OFIX, we are conducting the International Understanding Education project to promote internationalization in Osaka Prefecture. Under this project, we send international understanding education supporters living in Osaka, who are registered with OFIX, to elementary, junior and senior high schools to teach the children about their country's history and culture.

On June 6, as part of the international understanding education project, 5 people from 5 countries, Vietnam, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Brazil and China went to Osaka City Nagai Elementary school. They were welcomed by the Grade 6 students. After everyone gave a self-introduction, each supporter went to their assigned classes. Aside from introducing their countries and culture, they also introduced history, education, songs, and games.

The Vietnamese supporter introduced Vietnam's various food, especially stall food and fruits. Everything was new to the students. They listened intently and looked at the pictures as if they wanted to try it.

From what the Indonesian supporter introduced, the sheer number of islands and the animals that can be seen in Indonesia, especially the Komodo dragon, impressed the students very much.

The supporter from Sri Lanka brought a Sari. Not only did she show it to the students, but also had them try it on. The students, who have just seen the Sari for the first time, were surprised to find out that the Sari was only 1 piece of cloth.

The supporter from Brazil talked about the colorful festival and sports of Brazil. There were many children in the class who loved soccer and they were very surprised to find out that soccer was not the number one sport in Brazil, but Volleyball.

The Chinese supporter introduced a game, foot "janken", which is similar to the Japanese rock, paper and scissors game. The children were surprised that the feet are used instead of the hands. At first, they had trouble doing it, but after some practice, they were able to get into the rhythm. The class was very lively and enjoyed the game.

The following are the comments of the teachers and parent who participated in the class.

Teacher's comments:

- "By learning the culture of different countries, the students could reflect and understand the importance of living together and put it into action, such as, "acting while thinking of the other person" and "approaching someone they think has a problem".

- "We were able to know about the difference of many countries since people from 5 countries came to visit. The students could also discover the similarities and differences with the different countries and I think they now feel that they want foreigners to know more about Japan."

Parent's Comment:

On June 26, OFIX International Understanding Education Supporters came to my daughter's school, Osaka City Nagai Elementary School. The children learned about geography, climate, famous food, how the countries are related to Japan, and they were even taught games. They enjoyed it so much, their laughter echoed even in the hallway. A few days later, each group showed me a wall newspaper they made. Although they wrote about one country, each class had something different to say. I could see that they learned many interesting things from the short time they learned from the visitors. Thank you very much for the special experience.

■ "2nd Moriguchi de World"
Moriguchi City Research Council for the Education of
Foreigners Residing in Japan

On June 29 (Sun.) the "Moriguchi de World" was held at Moriguchi City Moriguchi Elementary School, where children and students with foreign roots, together with their parents, gathered together. The entire Moriguchi City is undertaking it as an activity of the Moriguchi City Research Council for the Education of Foreigners Residing in Japan. The theme is "Let's meet and play with friends of the same standpoint."

With the cooperation of the faculty from the Research Council Steering Committee, the Moriguchi City Education Research Association Ethnic Group Section and accompanying faculty members, "National Costumes", "Korea", "Philippine", "Vietnam" and "China" corners were set up. Teams of children would visit each corner and through the activities, make friends with other children. This year, the picture book reading was introduced in the program. A total of about 130 people attended composed of parents (24), faculty members (60), and children (Kindergarten: 4, Elementary: 43, Junior High school: 6 Total 53) from 9 countries and regions of China, Philippines, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Indonesia, Nepal, Peru and Vietnam. It was only a half day gathering, but the gym rang with laughter and cheers. It was a time that will be remembered. During the picture book reading, we also had parents read the books in their own language. The sight of beaming children listening to the story was very impressive. This became an opportunity to reaffirm the meaning and necessity this activity so that children would learning to treasure the culture and language of a country, and live being proud of one's foreign roots.

The following are some of the comments received.
(Children's Comments)

- "The book (reading) was great. I think I have heard the Thai language when I was barely 1 year old.
- "Aside from the Philippine game, there were also other games. It was fun. Please visit the Philippines once and try playing a Philippine game once."
- "I was happy that my mother read me the book and played with me. Let's play together again."

[03] France ESSEC Business School Student Training

■ About the Essec Hirakata Training
Ai Hoshi, Hirakata Foundation for Culture and
International Exchange

Osaka Prefecture and Val-d'Oise have a friendship city affiliation. In 1994 Osaka received a request for cooperation and is now undertaking it. The ESSEC Hirakata Training, where ESSEC Business School students who come to Japan for training in companies stay in Hirakata to learn about Japanese life and culture, is now on its 23rd year this year. This year, 12 students participated in the program. From June 28, for two weeks, while they lived with their homestay families in Hirakata City, they associated with the city residents and Japanese students through learning Japanese language, experiencing Japanese culture and visiting companies. The participating students, most of whom had an interest in Japan, seemed tired after the very hectic schedule, but the content of the program is something they cannot experience in a regular personal trip. It was a valuable two weeks. Although the students studied Japanese at ESSEC before coming to Japan, their Japanese improved much in their 2 week stay in Hirakata. It seems that the 4 Japanese classes and, of course, exchange with the host families that looked after the students, helped in improving their Japanese. We are looking forward to the day the students, who are now undergoing internship, will make

use of their experiences now to play a role in the global stage.

■ Comment from a Participating Student

Jenna Aït Ouakli

I think that we will never forget this two week Hirakata seminar. Each and every member of our little group is interested in Japan in some way. There is someone with bookshelves filled with manga; someone who had been dreaming for a long time to wear a kimono; or someone who is fascinated with cutting edge technology. The Hirakata seminar introduced us to the complexity and diversity of the Japanese culture. We had the amazing opportunity to discover traditional arts such as flower arrangement, tea ceremony, traditional music or calligraphy under the supervision of respected professionals. As business school students, we enjoyed meeting with Japanese businessmen and visiting companies of all sizes. We met Japanese students, had a taste of delicious Japanese food and visited beautiful monuments. It was an honor for us to learn about Japanese traditions, culture and business in such exceptional conditions.

[04] Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

■ Procedures for Converting your Foreign Driver's License to a Japanese One

The common procedures for anyone living in Osaka who wish to convert their foreign driver's license to a Japanese one is: answering questions about your foreign license and submission of documents→Examination of vision and motor skills→written test→appointment of day of actual driving test→driving test. If the above examinations have all been passed, the license will be issued (there are countries that are exempted from the written test and driving test).

The written test consists of Japan's traffic rules to be answered right or wrong (○×). There are 10 problems using illustrations, and if you get 7 correct, you pass. The test can be taken in different languages (Japanese, English, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Persian, Russian, Thai, Tagalog and Vietnamese).

The driving test will be conducted at the testing center by driving a test car through a test course determined by the type of license being applied for. If 70 out of 100 points is garnered, you pass.

For conditions and documents necessary for application:
"Osaka Police HP"⇒"General Information"⇒"Procedures for a driver's license"

Kadoma Testing Center for Driving Licensing Section

06-6908-9121 (Local 351)

Komyoike Testing Center for Driving Licensing Section

0725-56-1881 (Local 351)

©Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

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

(Hours 9:00-17:30)

Tel (direct line) 06-6941-2297

Languages: English, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese,

Spanish, Thai, Filipino, Vietnamese, Japanese

[05] JICA Volunteer Activity Report

- Osaka People Active in the World
Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (Rwanda, Math and Science Teacher) Akira Sakiyama

【Reason for Joining the JOCV】

I am now living in Rwanda as a JOCV volunteer, even though I don't know anything about Rwanda, because of a meeting I had with a youth during my travel in Southeast Asia. He was not able to get an elementary education because of the family's poverty. To send his brother to school, he studied English and Japanese on his own and sold juice to tourists. Seeing him made me want to do something for someone, so I applied for the JOCV.

【Rwanda, the Miraculous Revival of a Small African Country 20 years after the Genocide of the Century】

Rwanda, a small country about 1.5 times the area of Shikoku, can be found in Central Africa. The weather is like the beginning of summer the whole year. Rwanda people are warm, very kind and a little shy.

Just by looking at them now, it is hard to imagine that 20 years ago there was a Rwanda Genocide when the civil war intensified. It is said that in just 3 months, about 1 million people, from children to elders, died then. Overcoming their grief in the past, Rwanda has developed rapidly and is known as "Africa's Miracle".

【JOCV Activities in Rwanda】

Rwanda, which is striving to be an "ICT (Information Communication Technology) nation", is currently focusing on its foundation, Math and Science, and is putting much effort in the education of its technicians. I am in charge of teaching Physics and Math in Junior high schools and High schools in Rwanda, and I conduct a workshop in the schools in each area.

School in Rwanda starts early and classes for the day starts at 7:20 with the sound of a gold tub being hit (chime). There are as much as 50 people in 1 class. Students sit side by side on a narrow 3-person bench and copy what the teacher writes on the board with their blue ball pen. When the day's classes end at 4 pm, the students spend an enjoyable time playing soccer and basketball with their friends.

【What I've Learned in Rwanda】

After coming to Rwanda, I have realized the high level of education in Japan. There are textbooks with many pictures, material collections, and countless school supplies. There is a laboratory, a library and computer room, and a rich variety of food for lunch. This may be common in Japan, but in Rwanda you won't be able to find most of these things. They only have dark classrooms with no lights, a school with leaking roofs. Lunch is the same menu of bean soup and sweet potato everyday. Classes are only done in the classroom. There are many problems in education, but together with the local teachers, we are working together sharing ideas on how to make classes more easily understood by students. I am always being encouraged by the students when I see their eyes light up as they observe the experiments or when they say "Please do it (experiments and science events) again!" I would like to seriously face the students and teach them the enjoyment of science, believing that this would lead to the infinite possibilities of the children for Rwanda's future.

Editorial Note

- Summer in Japan is really very hot. Finally it's September and I just can't wait for the season of Autumn with its hues of red and yellow. (Tan)

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