

KCC Newsletter

April, 2024

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Vol. 96

Announcement

Exchange Programs with
Sister & Friendship Cities of Kashiwa

Recruitment of the Student Delegation to Chengde City

While staying with a host family, you will experience Chinese history and culture and student life through exchanges with young people in China.

D6 days from August 22 (Thu) to August 27 (Tue)

Destination: Chengde City (Hebei Province, China)

N8 (Those who live or attend school in Kashiwa and were born between April 2, 2002, and April 1, 2009.)

FApproximately 130,000 yen

AFill out the application form distributed at the information session and send it to the KCC office by mail (must arrive in time) or bring it to the office from May 7 (Tue) to May 28 (Tue).

Selection: July 7 (Sun) (Interviews included.)

<Information Session> **D**May 5 (Sun) from 10:00 a.m.

PPalette Kashiwa. Applicants must attend the session.

*For more information, including application requirements, please visit the KCC website.

Inquiries: KCC Office



At the summer resort in 2017



Visited Hebei Toursim Vocational College in 2017

Cross-cultural Teatime

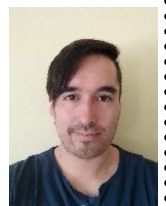
"The Extended Geography of Chile from North to South"

DApril 13 (Sat) 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. **P**Palette Kashiwa, Meeting Rooms A & B

CThe Republic of Chile is a country with a total length of approximately 4300 km from north to south. Its varied nature, history, and food culture will be introduced. There will also be quizzes on Chile. We look forward to your participation.

LDr. Joaquin Armijo (Kavli Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe, University of Tokyo) *The lecture will be given in English (with an interpreter).

N50 **F**400 yen **A**Directly at the KCC office, or email to <boshu-1@kira-kira.jp>



Dr. Joaquin Armijo

Online International Exchange Salon

"Casual Fun World Café"

We will learn fun and creative group discussion methods.

DApril 18 (Thu) 8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

LMs. Yukari Saiki, Professor and Director of Language Education Center, Tokai University

FFree **N**First 30 applicants

AAt the KCC office or by e-mail to <boshu-1@kira-kira.jp>.

Include your name and phone number. You will receive a URL to join on the day of the event.



Donation for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

Everyone is deeply concerned about the Noto Peninsula earthquake on January 1, and we have set up a donation box in front of the KCC office for the "2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake." We would like to ask for your continued warm cooperation and support.

<Request> When applying via email, please be sure to include the event name, your name, and phone number.

DDate & Time **P**Place **F**Fee **N**Number of applicants **L**Lecturer **C**Contents **A**Application **R**Reservation.

Thirty-one participants learned how to communicate with each other to overcome the generation gap. Ms. Lois Mark, who has lived in Japan for 38 years and has been involved in English education, spoke about the reality of Japanese communication and how it has changed. In the Breakout Room session, there were exchanges of opinions that today's young people interact mostly through social networking services, and that abbreviations and coined words are commonplace, making it difficult for older people to understand them. On the other hand, from the younger generation's point of view, they sometime lose their nerve due to the older generation's use of difficult words and logical thinking. However, we learned that language is living and changing, and that it is important to try to understand each other without giving up by saying that we "don't get it." It was interesting that the lecturer suggested one of the best opportunities for intergenerational communication is New Year's Day, when parents, children, grandchildren, and others of different ages gather together.

Incense Making Experience (2/25)

Thirteen participants, including four foreigners, experienced traditional Japanese incense culture. The instructor gave a detailed explanation about the history and characteristics of incense, its types, and how to use them, and after that, we enjoyed typical incense scents. Since we do not normally have opportunities to experience many different scents, everyone was nodding their heads in appreciation, feeling the differences in smell of various types of incense. At the end of the session, participants made their own favorite fragrance and took it home in the form of *fumiko*. (*Fumiko* is incense in a Japanese *washi* paper bag, which is inserted in a letter or a book to enjoy its shifting fragrance. It is believed that the fragrance has the power to purify and ward off evil spirits.) The participants commented that the session was a good opportunity to experience Japanese culture as they do not usually have a chance to enjoy incense, and that they were glad to be able to create their own favorite fragrance after enjoying a variety of smells. It was a friendly exchange surrounded by the pleasant aroma of incense.



Enjoying the incense with the instructor's explanation

Multicultural Seminar "May We Live Happily Together!"(3/2)

Ms. Saji Nishijima from Sri Lanka was the lecturer. The seminar proceeded in a friendly atmosphere with Sri Lankan tea and homemade sweets.

Ms. Nishijima graduated from a university in Sri Lanka with support from Japan, received further support from Japan to obtain a doctorate from a Japanese graduate school, and now works at the Children's Education Division of the Sammu City Board of Education. She also focuses on supporting foreign residents in Japan. Through her talks about the issues that foreigners in Japan encounter and the things she wishes for foreigners and Japanese, we understood her strong wish that everyone, both foreigners and Japanese, live happily together.

Also, the speech by Mr. J.R. Jayewardene, "Hatred Ceases Not by Hatred, But by Love," was introduced. He represented Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) at the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951. The seminar was also an opportunity to learn about the postwar history of Japan.



Ms. Saji Nishijima

Early Spring Exchange Walking Tour and Hina Doll Exhibition (3/3)

On the day of the Doll Festival, a warm and sunny day in early spring, nine participants including international students from the University of Tokyo (from New Zealand and China) and five staff members enjoyed an exchange walking tour from Kashiwanoha Campus Station to the *Hina* Doll exhibitions at the Former Yoshida Residence Historical Park and Daidoin temple.

Participant's Comment: First time to participate in an exchange walking tour. The Former Yoshida Residence is a proud asset of Kashiwa City, designated as a National Important Cultural Property. With its beautiful straw roof and massive zelkova architecture, its high ceilings provide a refreshing atmosphere. The beautiful flowers and paintings in each room and the bamboo garden were in perfect harmony with each other. There is a wonderful guide in the museum who speaks fluent English and Japanese. The hina dolls were stunning works of art with a touch of history and dignity. Adorable hanging ornaments were displayed throughout the museum, and we had a chance to talk with the creator of the ornaments. We then went on to the Daidoin temple, where we were also able to see the *obi* display. It was a wonderful day that I felt was a reward from God.



Hina Doll Display in the back at Former Yoshida Residence



Are You Ready To Speak English?

Riho Fujita (The recipient of the Kashiwa Mayor's Award at The 13th English Speech Contest)

Today I skipped my math class in cram school for this speech contest, although I'm having an entrance exam in a couple of weeks. In this speech, I would like to tell you "Why English is making the students suffer so much" based on my experiences.

In the very first English class in Junior high school, we sang the ABC song. At first everyone thought this was too easy and were all disappointed. However, when I flipped through a few pages of the new text book, I was surprised to see pictures and articles of Stevie Wonder already. The students are required to understand the text without enough vocabulary. When I was small, It took years to learn how to listen, read, write and speak English. On the other hand, this curriculum requires everyone to do all of this in a few weeks.

No matter how hard you try, improving your level in a new language won't happen overnight. Isn't the lack of basics the biggest difference between English and other subjects?

Some students may be pessimistic about the difficult situation and say that they don't like English. What I want everyone to understand is that they don't actually hate English, they just wish they could speak it more fluently. But many students can't do that. What caused this issue?

According to what my English teacher explained, the English classes in elementary school were to get used to English. After we did, we start learning grammar in junior high school. But hold on. Really? Are the children able to get used to English just with the classes in elementary school?

From my experience, to learn a new language, it's important to have the chance to speak at the right time. Furthermore it is said that it takes 2000 hours of input for a person to speak a language.

Therefore, I thought about the amount of time elementary school students actually spend time with English with the once a week English class. According to my calculation, when we subtract the time teachers demonstrate in Japanese, students spend about less than 20 hours every year. If we are going to learn English 2000 hours, we have to go to elementary school for 100 years.

When it comes to this topic, some people may think I'm talking about early English education, but that's not what I'm here to discuss about.

Let's now change our perspective from the domestic to the global scale.

There are many countries that are multilingual, so it's not so impossible to master multiple languages. By the time they graduate from elementary school, all of the children will be able to speak English.

What I want to convey is that rather than discussing domestic issues, we should first compare the current situation in Japan with the diversity of the world!!!

A lot of my friends feel anxiety and dread towards 'the subject English'.

Probably it's because they haven't spent enough time to get used to it. I believe they need more time to listen, read, and write to be confident in using English. The students are trying so hard to get their grammar right with only 20 hours of input experience instead of 2000 hours. The situation is also hard for the teachers as well. As I currently belong to a public junior high school, I believe that it is my mission to convey the current situation of students. I would like to acquire a wider range of knowledge in order to solve this problem.

I strongly hope that English curriculum will change so that the future children can enjoy speaking English as a communication tool. And I hope I can be a part of that.



Ms. Riho Fujita

Used Stamps for International Assistance (2/17)

We sorted out used stamps and miswritten postcards donated from Kashiwa residents. The used stamps were sent to "Green Earth Defense Fund" and the miswritten postcards were sent to "Vaccines for the World's Children." We appreciate your cooperation. The collection box is located at the KCC office, and if you have used stamps or miswritten postcards at home, please bring them in. This year's stamp sorting sessions will be held on May 29 (Wed) and November 25 (Mon).

April Events

Japanese Shonan Classes(4/4~)		
Online Classes		
Sat	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary II
Sun	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I and Intermediate II~
In-person Classes (Shonan Community Center)		
Thu	10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I and Primary II
Sun	10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I(2 classes)
Japanese Kashiwa/Kashiwanoha Classes(4/9~)		
Online Classes		
Tue	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I (Unit 19 -)
Wed	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Elementary (Level 2)
Wed	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary II (Unit 42 -)
Thu	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Conversation Elementary (Level 2)
Fri	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary II (Unit 43 -)
Sat	9:30 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.	Conversation Intermediate
In-person Classes (Palette Kashiwa)		
Tue	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Hiragana, Katakana
Tue	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Beginners, <i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary 1 (Unit 6~)
Tue	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I (Unit 11 -)
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I (Unit 3 -)
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary I (Unit 18-)
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Minna no Nihongo</i> , Primary II (Unit 40 -)
In-person Classes (Kashiwanoha Service Center)(4/11~)		
Thu	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Hiragana, Katakana
Thu	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Elementary Former • Latter
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<i>Intermediate Dekiru Nihongo</i>

Free Legal Advice and Administrative Procedure Support for Foreign Residents

To foreign residents. Are you in need of help? Lawyers and administrative procedure specialists are available for consultation. You can ask for specialists' advice on issues such as family or partner violence, divorce, visa procedures, and problems at work. Reservation necessary.

D April 24 (Wed), 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **P** Palette Kashiwa Room F **R** the KCC office

Members Wanted! Kashiwa International Relations Association (KIRA)

Why don't you become a member and join us in international exchange activities? Let's interact with foreigners by planning and organizing various events. You don't have to speak English. You can also make friends. For more information, please visit our website. (Inquiries: the KCC office)

Information for Foreign Residents from Kashiwa City

Consultation for Foreign Residents

Available in English (Thu), Chinese (Wed and Fri), Spanish (Mon), and Korean (2nd and 4th Tue) from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Consultation Counter for Foreign Residents (City Hall Main Office Building, 3rd floor).
Tel: 04 - 7168 - 1033
No reservation required.

Email distribution service from Kashiwa City

Sign up to receive email announcement from the city, such as information on natural disasters, crimes, and fires of your area in the language of your choice. Scan the QR code and register!



Multilingual "Koho Kashiwa," monthly official city bulletin

Scan the QR code and select your language under "Foreign Language" to read the official city bulletin, "Koho Kashiwa," selected and translated for foreign residents.

Links for Multilingual News & BOSAI INFO (Disaster prevention and Coronavirus)

NHK WORLD-JAPAN



Questions?
Please contact the office of
Kashiwa Cross-cultural Center (KCC)

Tel: 04-7157-0281 Fax: 04-7165-7321
Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.
Closed on Sundays and national holidays