



JLGC NEWSLETTER

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VISIT TO NOVI CITY (PAGE5)

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1. Introduction of New
JLGC Staff (Page1-4)

2. Our Visit to Novi City
(Page5)

3. Japan Day @ Central Park
(Page6)

4. Pictures (Page7)

1. Introduction of New JLGC Staff

Arika Aizawa, Assistant Director,
Representative of Kitaibaraki City

Hello, my name is Arika Aizawa from Kitaibaraki City. I'd like to introduce my hometown to you.

What is Kitaibaraki City like? First, where is it? Kitaibaraki is 2 hours by train from Tokyo. And it is close to the Pacific Ocean and also to the mountains. In fact, it's only within 10 minutes drive from both the ocean and the mountains. Many great Japanese artists moved to Kitaibaraki, because they loved the beautiful nature that one finds there.

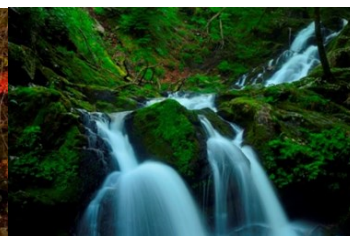
Kitaibaraki



The Variety of Kitaibaraki

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**Hirakata Port****Rokkakudou**
Where Tenshin was immersed in meditation**Hanazono Valley-Autumn****Hanazono Valley-Spring**

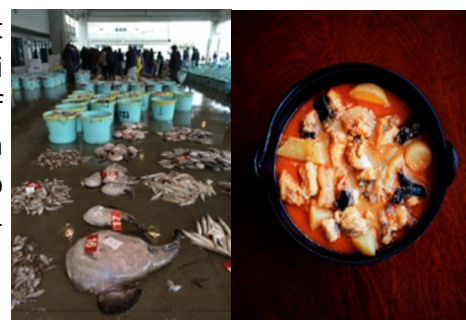
This is the painting by Hishida Syunsou, a famous artist in Japan. Okakura Tenshin was his teacher. Okakura Tenshin was a Japanese writer and art curator who contributed to the development of arts in Japan during the Meiji period (from around 1860 to 1910). Okakura Tenshin moved to the Japan Art Academy in Kitaibaraki, where he invited many talented artists such as Hishida Syunsou to join him. They lived there and produced lots of works of art together.

Okakura Tenshin was also a curator of the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and was a good friend of the American art historian, Ernest Fenollosa. Outside Japan, he is chiefly remembered today as the author of *The Book of Tea*.

**Fall leaves-Painting in the Japanese style**
One of the great Japanese artists, Hishida Shunsou, moved to Kitaibaraki

Today, the environment around Kitaibaraki remains just like in the paintings of the past. But the environment is not all that Kitaibaraki has to offer.

Kitaibaraki City has a lot of delicious foods and even won the first prize in a Nabe contest in the Tokyo Tsukiji fish market!! The Tsukiji market is the biggest fish market in the world. This is a picture of the dish that won the prize and it's called Ankou Nabe. "Monk fish soup". It's a strong miso and Monk fish liver flavor. There are two fish markets in Kitaibaraki. The Monk fish in the front of this picture weighs thirty-two kilograms.

**Hirakata Fish Market****Ankou Nabe**

You can enjoy nature, food, art and the local culture in Kitaibaraki.

If you have any questions please let me know: jlgc@jlgc.org
Come to Japan and experience my home town!!

<http://www.kitaibarakishi-kankokyokai.gr.jp/>

<http://www.tenshin.museum.ibk.ed.jp/>

Kaori Ito, Assistant Director, Representative of Shiga Prefecture

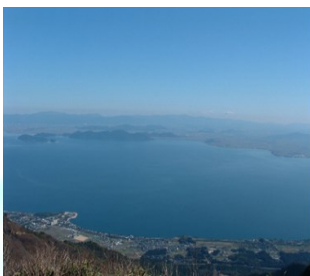


Hello, my name is Kaori Ito. I'm from 'SHIGA' Prefecture. I'd like to introduce you to Shiga prefecture where I come from.

Shiga is located roughly in the center of Japan's biggest island – we call it Honsyū. In Shiga, you can find Biwako, Japan's largest and most well-known lake.

Shiga enjoys a relatively comfortable climate, with each of the four seasons being very distinct. Coupled with its splendid natural surroundings, you can enjoy scenic views all year round.

Additionally, Shiga plays a major role as a transportation route and has done so since ancient times. As a result, Shiga represents Japanese history and culture.



Biwako



Nature

The largest lake in the country, Biwako covers 670 square kilometers and holds 27.5 billion tons of water. It supports the lives and businesses of 14 million people in the region, including Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe in addition to Shiga Prefecture. Biwako is said to be the 'Mother Lake' because it is one of the few lakes in the world known to have a history dating back four million years. Biwako is rich in biodiversity, supporting in its waters and the surrounding mountains about 600 different species of animals, and 500 species of plants.



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

History and Culture

The culture that has grown up around Japan's largest lake, Biwako, has been designated 'Japan Heritage' chosen by the Cultural Affairs Agency of Japan. There are a lot of historical places in Shiga. Shiga's capital Otsu was once the Imperial Capital when Emperor Tenji moved there from Kyoto in 667. During the late 16th century when warlords jostled for power and conquest, Ohmi (now called Shiga Prefecture) was a strategic province since it was the gateway to Kyoto which was then the Imperial Capital and home of the emperor. Powerful daimyo feudal lords such as Oda Nobunaga, seeking to unify the country and place Kyoto under military control, knew that Ohmi Province had to be conquered first. You can still see many complete castles. Even today, one can see fine examples of daimyo castles in Shiga. And there are many other ruins to see. Indeed, castle towns are a frequent sight.

**Hikone Castle**

National Treasure and counted among one of the greatest castles in the world.

**Hieizan Enryaku-ji Temple**

Enryaku-ji Temple is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. Hieizan is respected as one of the leading centers of Japanese Buddhism.

**Hachiman Bori**

Night falls and 2,000 lanterns are lit along Hachiman's canal. Waterways were essential to the region and its transportation until the start of the Showa period (1926 - 1989).

**Chikubu Island**

Called the Island of the Gods – also known as the Eight Views of Ohmi. Popular as a sacred place, combining nature, a Shinto shrine, and a Buddhist temple.

Experience

**Biwako Great Fireworks Festival**

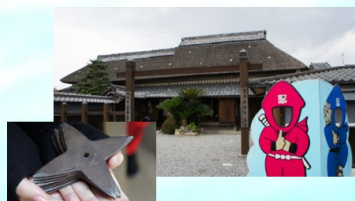
You can enjoy the splendors of 10,000 fireworks, lights and fountains against the incredible backdrop of Biwako.

**Activities**

You can enjoy many kinds of watersports with canoes, kayaks, surfskis, yachts, wakeboards and so on around the lake.

**Hachiman canal boat tour**

The Ohmi-Hachiman boat tour allows you to enjoy a different, natural world. In particular, you can enjoy an Ohmi beef sukiyaki meal while on the boat.

**Koka Ninja Village**

Koka Ninja is one of the famous Ninjas.

You can have fun time in Ninja village experiencing various Ninja related activities. Visit and become a ninja for the day!

Food

Biwako, the Ibuki and Hira mountains and the fertile farmland in between make Shiga Prefecture's landscape a feast for the eyes. They produce a feast for the dining table as well with Ohmi rice, Ohmi beef, ayu (sweet fish), beans, vegetables, green tea, and more. Funa-sushi and ebi-mame are just a couple of examples of the fantastic local dishes this amazing environment spawns.

**Ohmi Beef 'Sukiyaki'**

Ohmi beef has a 400 years history and is considered one of the top three brands.

**Biwako Cuisine****Decchi Yokan (Sweet bean jelly)**

It's one of local specialty sweets.

More Information!

< SHIGA Tourism Official Website >

<http://en.biwako-visitors.jp/>

< Go Biwako >

<http://en.biwako-visitors.jp/gobiwako/>

Travel Brochures

<http://en.biwako-visitors.jp/gobiwako/downloads/>

2. Our Visit to Novi City

Arisa Kurihara, Representative of Miyagi Prefecture

Japan Local Government Center (JLGC) new staff visited Novi City in Michigan from May 16th to 19th. Novi city and JLGC have had close ties ever since the former city manager, Clay Pearson, was a participant on the "CLAIR Fellowship Exchange Program", which has been affording senior state and local government officials in the U.S. an opportunity

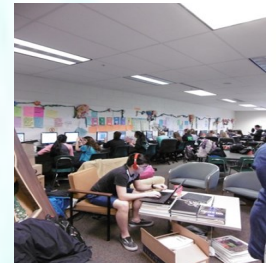


ty to experience first-hand Japanese government administration. So, this study tour has been hosted by Novi City since 2008.

Novi staff members guided us through every inch of the city: The civic center, police headquarters, Novi public library, fire station, Novi High School and some administrative offices. We were truly impressed with the city's hospitality and learned a lot of things. We greatly appreciate the city's kindness.



After arrival in Novi City, Peter E. Auger, the city manager, gave us an easy-to understand explanation about some of the differences between U.S. and Japanese municipalities. He went to Japan last year as a member of our "CLAIR Fellowship Exchange Program". For me, it is the visit to Novi High School that was the most impressive. Novi High School's facilities are much larger than Japanese public schools. Class time is 7:50am to 2:00pm and it is shorter than Japan, but the breadth of the selection of the



classes and also the after-school clubs are considerable. The journalism class had attracted my interest. The number of students in the class is as much as 30 students and they publish wonderful newspapers on a quarterly basis and a Year Book themselves for which the students did all the interviews and took all photography.

We greatly appreciate all the work done by the mayor, Bob Gatt and Novi staff members. We will never forget the memories of everything during our stay and we look forward to our continuing friendship.

5. Japan Day @ Central Park

Tatsuya Matsumoto, Representative of Saitama City

On May 8th, Japan Day @ Central Park, an event to introduce Japanese culture, was held in Central Park. This year, which marks the tenth anniversary of Japan Day, there were more than 20 tents. Lines formed in front of the Activity Tents, open from 9:30AM to 4:30PM, where participants were able to experience Japanese culture in the form of Kabuki face painting, calligraphy, origami and trying on a yukata, as well as the Food Tents, open from 11:30AM to 2:30PM, which provided participants with a taste of Japanese ramen, gyoza, yakisoba and so on. The popularity of Japanese food in New York was revealed by the fact that the Food Tents all ran out of food in the afternoon.



Original charity t-shirt

Every year at Japan Day @ Central Park, donations are collected to plant cherry blossom trees in Central Park, but at this year's event, donations were collected for the Kumamoto earthquakes, which happened in April. Participants who donated \$20 or more received an original charity t-shirt. A lot of people wearing these t-shirts were walking around the park.

Five new staff members from the Japan Local Government Center (JLGC) volunteered at the YO-YO Fishing tent, which was collectively put on by JETAANY and the Japan Society. Unfortunately, the morning of the event was rainy, but many people who stopped by the tent watched with curiosity the staff members making YO-YOs inside the tent.



YO-YO Fishing tent

As the event kicked off at 9:30am, many families lined up in front of the tent to enjoy YO-YO fishing. We were asked how to make the YO-YOs and fish for them many times, but it was very difficult to explain in English. Fortunately, JETAANY members helped us at that time, so the tent was a big success.

That day was the first time I have had the opportunity to speak with many members of JETAA since I came to JLGC. I was surprised and impressed by their continued ties to Japan.

In only one day, approximately 4,000 people came and tried YO-YO fishing at our tent. Upon seeing children gleefully playing in Central Park with the YO-YOs, I am glad to volunteer at this event and grateful to JETAANY and the Japan Society.



Main Stage
(Artist Akiko Yano)



JLGC Staff Training by local staff



Governor of Tokyo visited New York and Washington D.C.



Tokyo and JETAA had booth in Cherry Blossom Festival in D.C.



New Staff visited Novi City, Michigan



Hiroshima Prefecture Assembly visited JLGC

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