



JLGC NEWSLETTER

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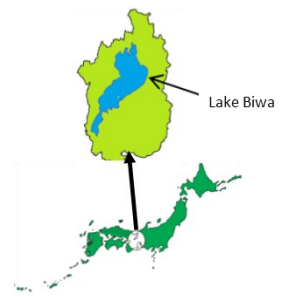
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1. Introduction of New JLGC Staff

Shoji Onuma, Assistant Director, Representative of Shiga Prefecture



Hello! I am Shoji Onuma from Shiga Prefecture, which is located almost in the center of Japan. In Shiga, there is the largest fresh water lake in Japan, Lake Biwa, and we call it "Mother Lake". The lake is one of the sites included in the Ramsar Convention, which aims to preserve internationally important wetlands and their creatures.



Based on our relationships with our lakes, Shiga has a Sister State relationship with Michigan, and this year is the 50th anniversary. Lake Biwa, located in the center of Shiga, has 4 million years of history, and occupies about 1/6 of the prefecture. It supplies water for not only agriculture and wildlife, but also 14 million people in the Kansai region (Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, etc.). We see about 60,000 water fowl visit annually, and the lake contains about 50 species of fish and 40 species of shellfish.



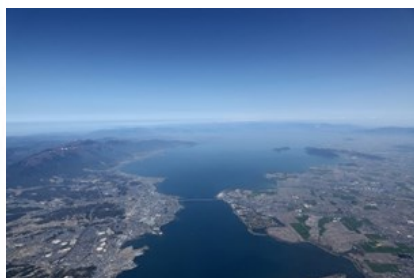
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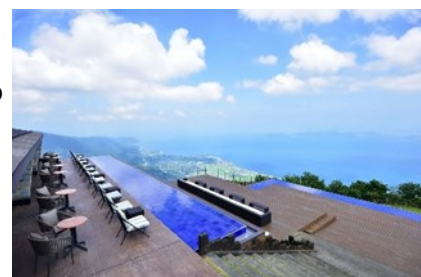
Shiga Prefecture started the “World Lake Conference”, hosted the first conference in 1984, and continues to serve as the group’s secretariat. Every two years, researchers, governments, NGOs, and citizens gather somewhere in the world to discuss lake and basin issues. As an environmentally-friendly prefecture, Shiga has been trying to think deeply about the health and wellbeing of lakes worldwide.

Hikone Castle was completed in 1622, and it has never been deconstructed nor reconstructed, so it is one of the original castles in Japan. The mascot character “Hikonyan” is very cute.



Koka, located in the southern part of Shiga, is the home of the Ninja (Koka Ninja), and nowadays you can visit “Koka Ninja Village”, where you can experience various Ninja training. All generations can enjoy this.

Biwako Terrace is in Biwako Valley, where we usually enjoy winter activities such as skiing and snowboarding. But we can also enjoy the summer season at the Terrace. The area is surrounded by beautiful mountains, and you can see the great lake in front of you. You can also bask in nature while enjoying fresh local foods.



Among these, Omi Beef is one of the top three wagyu (Kobe Beef, Matsuzaka Beef, Omi Beef) in Japan. Although it is not as internationally famous as Kobe Beef, Omi Beef is very highly valued because the process of raising cattle in Shiga takes more time than that for other wagyu. And its history dates back more than 400 years, which is the longest among the top three. You can enjoy Omi Beef in 2 ways, Shabu-shabu (left) and Sukiyaki (right)!

Takahiro Korenaga, Assistant Director, Representative of Wakayama Prefecture

Hello, my name is Takahiro Korenaga from Wakayama Prefecture, Japan. The climate of Wakayama is mild and it is one of the leading fruit “kingdoms” in Japan. There are also two World Heritage sites, plenty of hot springs, cycling courses and experiential ocean adventures .



Do you know where Wakayama is? There are probably few people who can answer accurately.



Facing the Pacific Ocean, Wakayama Prefecture boasts a dramatic coastline spanning more than 600 km. Located on the Kii Peninsula – the largest peninsula in Japan. Delicious fruits are produced in season. For example, persimmons, ume plums, mandarin oranges, peaches and more.

For persimmons in particular, exports to the US have increased since last year, and we are looking forward to future leaps. In addition, Japanese peppers are highly valued, mainly in Europe, and are also used for hidden flavor in cocktail ingredients and sweets.



Persimmon



Japanese pepper

The two World Heritage sites are Koyasan and Kumano. For a culturally illuminating encounter, stay overnight at one of the 52 Shukubo temples. Each temple has its own atmosphere, temple services, cultural assets, gardens, and shojin ryori. To enter the quietude, there are activities such as calligraphic sutra copying practice (shakyo). Shakyo means handcopying scriptures (writings that record the rules of faith), and is one of the



Shojin-ryori

monks' ascetic practices. Focusing on copying by hand relaxes the heart. Shojin-ryori (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine) at Koyasan is completely free of meat, fish, and strong-smelling vegetables. The importance of cooking methods, seasonings, and color balance is emphasized. Take this rare chance to relish dishes passed down through the ages, including Ko-ya tofu and sesame tofu specialties.

Wakayama Prefecture and Galicia State, which is located in the green and lush northwestern corner of Spain, are officially sister states, as both have pilgrimage roads. They have established a permanent friendship as regions with world historical and cultural heritage, "Kumano Kodo" in Wakayama and "Santiago de Compostela" in Galicia. Both of these ancient roads developed historically as pilgrimage routes around the same time, and share a similar historical and cultural heritage as the basis for spiritual culture. In fact, many pilgrims walk both roads, recognizing this spiritual connection. If someone accomplishes both the pilgrimage of the "Kumano Kodo" and the "Santiago de Compostela", we will present a limited edition pin badge recognizing these "Two Road Pilgrims". The Dual Pilgrim logo is a combination of a shell and a three-legged crow (Yatagarasu). The colors are shades of orange, often seen in beautiful sunrises and sunsets.



Nachi Waterfall

This year, the "World Tsunami Day 2018 High School Student Summit" was held in Wakayama Prefecture, which is closely related to the "World Tsunami Day". In December 2015, a resolution jointly proposed by 142 countries including Japan on establishing a World Tsunami Awareness Day, with the objectives of enhancing people's awareness of tsunami and strengthening tsunami countermeasures, was adopted by consensus at the Plenary Meeting of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.



Inamura-no-Hi no Yakata

The proposed date is based on an anecdote and example of a good practice known in Japan as "Inamura-no-hi" (the burning of rice sheaves) which took place on the 5th of November 1854. Hamaguchi Goryo saved the lives of many villagers by setting his rice sheaves on fire as a warning when a tsunami hit his village following a major earthquake.

That achievement has continued to be handed down as a symbol of tsunami disaster prevention still applicable today. Hirokawa Town in Wakayama Prefecture has the "Inamura-no-Hi no Yakata". It consists of the Hamaguchi Goryo Archives and Tsunami Educational Center, in order to learn from and hand down the achievements and spirit of Goryo.

Also, another famous historical incident in Wakayama is the sinking of the Ertugrul in 1890. The Ertugrul encountered a typhoon and the vessel ultimately broke up on rocks off the island of Kii Oshima in the present-day town of Kushimoto. Oshima islanders braved the typhoon, making frantic efforts to save 69 members of the vessel's contingent. This incident triggered the friendship between Wakayama, and the nation of Japan, and Turkey.

The most symbolic event was in 1985, about a century after the Ertugrul accident, when the Iran-Iraq War was escalating and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein announced that his military would begin targeting even commercial airliners over Iran. Then, in response to a request from Japan, the Turkish government sent two airliners, ferrying Japanese nationals to safety.

At the top of a hill on Kii Oshima overlooking the site of the disaster stands a monument to the lives lost there. The town of Kushimoto holds a memorial service there every five years in honor of the victims.



Turkish Memorial Hall

In 2015, the joint Turkish and Japanese film "Marine Accident 1890" was screened, and on November 29 this year, a concert featuring the story of the Ertugrul will be performed at New York's Carnegie Hall.

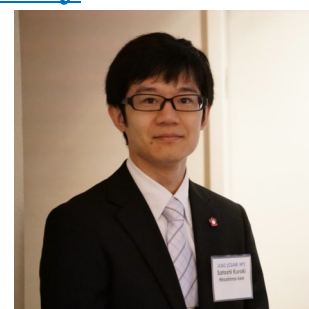
I would like to let more people know about how special my home, Wakayama, is while I am here in NY. If you have any questions about Wakayama, please feel free to ask me! Also, please take a look at the Wakayama Travel Guide: <https://en.visitwakayama.jp/>

Thank you.

Satoshi Kuroki, Assistant Director, Representative of Hiroshima City

My name is Satoshi Kuroki. I've been working for Japan Local Government Center since this April. I'm on dispatch to JLGC from Hiroshima City Hall.

Hiroshima is one of the most popular sightseeing spots in Japan. What does Hiroshima remind you of? The Atomic Bomb Dome or Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima Island? Both of



Shrine on Miyajima Island? Both of them are on the World Heritage list by UNESCO, so that makes them the most famous must-see places in Hiroshima. According to "Trip Advisor", the Atomic Bomb Dome (Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum) and Itsukushima Shrine got 2nd and 3rd place in the "Top 30 Attractions in Japan by International Travelers 2018", respectively. I definitely recommend that you visit both of them. Here, however, I would like to introduce some other places you could see or experience in Hiroshima.



Streetcars

Hiroshima's streetcars are a common way for citizens to move around the city. They have been running for more than one hundred years and they were the first public transportation to restart after the atomic bomb. Actually they are sometimes slower than bicycles and often jiggle, but have been loved by citizens for a long time. It's convenient for tourists to do sightseeing and a tourist pass allows you to access the Atomic Bomb Dome and Miyajima Island.



Hiroshima Toyo Carp

Cheering for the local sports team must be something common to all countries. Hiroshima has a professional baseball team named the Hiroshima Toyo Carp and virtually everyone in Hiroshima loves this team. Mr. Hiroki Kuroda, who was a pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers (2008-2011) and New York Yankees (2012-2014), belonged to the Hiroshima Toyo Carp before and after his career in the US.

In the 2016 season, the Hiroshima Toyo Carp won the league championship for the first time in 25 years and have kept winning the league 3 years in a row. So all fans in Hiroshima have been excited like never before, and their winning has contributed a major economic benefit in Hiroshima of about \$300 million every year. Their home stadium, Mazda Zoom-Zoom Stadium, is located a 10 minute walk away from Hiroshima Station. You must feel their enthusiasm if you visit the stadium during league season.



Okonomi-yaki

Okonomi-yaki is a local specialty in Hiroshima. It's cooked on an iron griddle like teppan-yaki. Okonomi-yaki consists of layers of ingredients like egg, Chinese noodles, pork, spring onions, bean sprouts, sliced cabbage and very thin flour dough. However, "Okonomi" means "as you like", so you have a variety of choices for toppings and ingredients, like cheese, shrimp, oysters, mochi rice cake and so on. You can even have double noodles or change them to udon noodles. Finally, it's seasoned with a thick sweet sauce and dried green seaweed. If you get a seat in front of the griddle counter, you can enjoy the savory taste of Okonomi-yaki directly from the griddle after watching your order being prepared with special skill.



For more information about Hiroshima, please look at our official site:
<https://www.hiroshima-navi.or.jp/sightseeing/>

2. 25th Anniversary of the CLAIR Fellowship Program Kumiko Takayama, Assistant Director, Representative of Hanamaki City

On September 8th, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the CLAIR Fellowship Program at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C. Since 1993 we have been honored to host a group of North American government officials in Japan to see how we work as prefecture and local governments. The goal of the seminar is to build networks and promote mutual understanding between local governments in Japan and overseas.

In our 25th anniversary celebration, past participants Valerie A Lemmie (1994), Jim Brown (2005), Cahl Pominville (2013), and Joshua Franzel (2016) gave speeches of congratulations and also talked about their experiences in Japan. We should like to offer a big thank-you to them for their openness and willingness to share their stories.



Valerie A Lemmie



Jim Brown



Cahl Pominville



Joshua Franzel

Also, we were very glad to hear that the participants had such impressive experiences during their time in Japan. This was so, even to the extent of taking advantage of those experiences back in North America. One, for example, has improved safety in his own city. Another took the opportunity to reconnect with his host family after many years.

We invited Miyagi and Tottori Prefecture staff for the purpose of talking about their experience as hosts for the officials from North America. Miyagi was damaged by the terrible earthquake and tsunami disaster on March 11th, 2011. So, Miyagi Prefecture staff also talked about their work of “Creative Recovery”. On July 18th of this year, governors from Vermont and Tottori met in Montpelier, Vermont’s capital, to sign a sister state agreement. Tottori Prefecture staff spoke about a past participant who went to Tottori from the State of Vermont, which set the stage for this relationship. Also, our Executive Director, Mr. Akagi, talked about our mission: Promoting relationships at the local or grassroots level for mutual understanding and friendship between our nations. And he encouraged both Japanese and North America officials to continue to deepen our exchanges, strengthen our ties, and widen our networks at every opportunity for good relations at the local and grassroots level.



JLGC executive director explaining our mission

We prepared Japanese fare including ‘Aji Fillet’ which is a specialty of Tottori, and Sake from Miyagi and Tottori. We also enjoyed Nen Daiko, a local taiko group giving an enthusiastic and impressive performance.

For this celebration, we got a lot of heartwarming messages and beautiful bouquets from people who were not able to attend. We are thankful for your kind remarks.



Nen Daiko performance



Outside the Old Ambassador's Residence

This year, the CLAIR Fellowship Exchange Program is held in Tokyo and Okayama Prefecture from October 28th to November 6th. The theme is Industry of Okayama. Participants are going to the Industrial Technology Center of Okayama Prefecture. Also they will discuss and exchange opinions about government administration with staff from Okayama Prefecture.

We hope that, as the program continues, it initiates a new chapter in the enduring relationship we now have, building on past experience to make an even better future for North America and Japan.

3. USJETAA's Fundraising for Western Japan

Satoshi Kuroki, Assistant Director, Representative of Hiroshima City

From June 28th to July 8th, 2018, historic heavy rain attacked western Japan. The amount of rain during this period was 2 - 4 times the average precipitation for all of July. According to the Disaster Management Agency in Japan, 224 people died and more than 51 thousand houses got damaged because of floods or mudslides caused by this record-breaking rain (as of October 9th, 2018).



(Photos by Institute of Scientific Approaches for Fire and Disaster)

In response to the damage caused by the heavy rain, USJETAA mobilized JET alumni and friends of JET to raise funds for those in the affected areas. They started fundraising July 13th, less than one week after the deluge. This fundraising immediately became well known through Facebook and other channels. Thanks to all the JET alumni and friends of JET, they raised \$7,508, which exceeded their original goal of \$5,000. These donations supported Japan Platform, which is a central association for humanitarian response NGOs based in Japan. This result showed the deep-rooted connections that JET alumni have to these regions and with people in the affected communities.

On August 1st, the Sankei Shimbun reported on their efforts to give back to Japan. The column said the JET Program is the greatest achievement of Japan's soft power, quoting one of the alumni as saying, "Japan has given me a lot in my life. It's my turn to help Japan."

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to USJETAA and to all the JET alumni and friends of JET who always care about Japan.



<https://usjetaa.org/>