

It has been 18 months since the East Japan Earthquake. We would like to show our foremost appreciation to the people around Japan and the world for your continuous heartfelt support. Please take a look at our newsletter GYRO as the updates on the current situation in Fukushima Prefecture and articles on all the local activities involving foreign residents are featured.

※You can download this newsletter in six other languages on our website.



Scenery of Fukushima



The authentic "Soma Nomaoi" is back! (Taken on 7.29, 2012 in Minami Soma city)

The Japanese traditional festival, "Soma Nomaoi", was originated by the ancestor from the Soma family, Taira no Masakado, during a military training. Last year due to the earthquake, the festival was held in a smaller scale. However, this year as the organizer wanted to show the world that this traditional festival would not back down from any disaster and as a way to remember the ones who have lost their lives during the disaster, the organizer decided to hold the festival in the same scale just like the ones before the earthquake.



The government underwent the process of decontamination (Taken on 8.2, 2012 in Iitate village)

The National government has decided to undergo the decontamination process in Iitate village which is currently designated as evacuation zone. According to a survey which was conducted from May to June, around 60% of the residents wish to return to Iitate village. At the moment, all we can hope for is that the government can find the most effective way to conduct the decontamination process.



Fukushima Tanabata Festival (Taken on 8.7.2012 in Fukushima city)

To Japanese people, Tanabata Festival is the highlight of the summer. During this period, as summer holidays have started for children, many parents would take them out and enjoy this festival. People would write their wishes on a strip of paper hoping that their dreams would come true and after the earthquake, many have hoped for a speedy recovery for Fukushima Prefecture.



Voices of Fukushima

Ayako Harada (From Brazil, Female, Fukushima city)

During the earthquake I was travelling in Gifu Prefecture and left my daughter who is still in high school at home by herself. I was very worried with my daughter's situation as I could not get a hold of her. Fortunately she got on the bus that was prepared by the Embassy of Brazil and after a week or so we were able to reunite in Shizuoka Prefecture. Right now as life in Fukushima is back to normal, my daughter has returned to school enjoying her school life and I too, have returned to work. I have decided to stay put and carry on with my life here in Fukushima.

Kouji Suzuki (Male, Sukagawa city)

I was not affected directly by the earthquake, tsunami or the nuclear accident. I work for the manufacturing industry and other than the threat that radiation poses, there is nothing I am particularly concerned with. However, a friend of mine has evacuated to another prefecture as she is worried that radiation will have further negative effects on her newborn baby. There are many families like them in which the wife and the child evacuate to another prefecture leaving the husband behind in Fukushima. Personally, I believe how people see the radiation issue varies as some do not think it is a big deal while some think it is life threatening. The only thing I can hope for is that the radiation issue will not ruin the relationships between families and friends. It has been 18 months since the earthquake and I feel fortunate that I was not deeply affected by it.



Report on the activities that foreign residents have been involved in



Kum Seok Park & Hana Kang (From Korea, Yohan Koriyama Church)

After the earthquake, we went to Ishinomaki where it was devastated by the tsunami to help clean up the debris and to cook food for the people staying in evacuation shelters. Now, we visit temporary housing which is near our church and we would bring resources for the residents, hold concerts for them, and exercise together with them so that the residents have something to do. In addition, we would make Korean styled pancakes and eat together. Although this is all we can contribute, we would continue to visit them and try to bring happiness to them. We hope that once the evacuees have settled down, we would have time to talk to them about the meaning of life and to encourage them to move forward.



Articles submitted by foreign residents



Zhao Yu Hao (From China, Fukushima city)

福島市花火大会

和朋友一起观看大震灾之后的第一次花火大会，第一次看到了一些很独特很漂亮的礼花。看到有这么多人来观看花火大会，想来福岛的朋友们已经走出了大震灾的阴影了。希望复兴以后的福岛有更多这样热闹的活动。

(Translation) Fireworks Festival in Fukushima City

This was the first time I went to see the fireworks after the earthquake with my friends. I was absolutely amazed by the beauty of the fireworks. On the day, the venue was packed with hundreds and thousands of people and when I saw this, I thought Fukushima is back on track and moving forward. I hope I will be able to attend many events such as this one in the future.



Teachers from U.S.A paid a visit to Fukushima!

Training in Japan Program was organized by Japan Society in which it invited teachers from U.S.A to come to Japan for further training. On July 18 and 19, 4 teachers from U.S.A visited Fukushima Prefecture. The purpose of the tour was for the teachers to be able to witness with their own eyes how Fukushima Prefecture was affected by the nuclear plant accident and be able to interact with local citizens directly. As the American teachers were able to exchange their opinions with the local citizens directly, they were able to get firsthand knowledge of how people were influenced by the accident. We expect them to share the stories with their students and convey the correct messages.



The teachers visited farmers who grew pears and listened to their stories of how they were affected by harmful rumours.



A visit to Port Haragama to inspect the tsunami hit areas.



The teachers visited toddlers who are in the disaster affected area and played games with them.



Measurement of radiation level in Fukushima Prefecture (provisional value)

This information was taken from the Fukushima Prefectural Government website.

The Fukushima Prefectural Government website provides updates on the radiation level in Fukushima Prefecture in Japanese, English and Chinese. The Fukushima International Association website also provides the information mentioned above and on top of that, Tagalog, Korean and Portuguese are also provided. <http://www.worldvillage.org>

Unit : $\mu\text{Gy/h} \approx \mu\text{Sv/h}$ (micro gray/hour \approx micro sievert/hour)

Date, Measuring time	Fukushima City	Koriyama City	Shirakawa City	Aizu Wakamatsu City	Minami Aizu Town	Minami Soma City	Iwaki City
(Normal value)	0.04	0.04-0.06	0.04-0.05	0.04-0.05	0.02-0.04	0.05	0.05-0.06
2012.8.15 9:00	0.68	0.52	0.22	0.10	0.06	0.40	0.10
Measurement device	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP	MMP	IMP
Direction and Distance from 1st power plant	North west About 63km	West About 58km	West south west About 81km	West About 98km	West south West About 15km	North About 24 km	South south west About 43km

- ※Measurement of the radiation level in Fukushima city was taken in the parking lot on the north side of the Kenpoku District Health and Welfare Office, Koriyama city was taken in the parking lot on the south side of the Koriyama government office complex.
- ※The normal value mentioned above are from the result of radioactivity levels surveyed within Fukushima prefecture in 2010 (21st year of Heisei period).
- ※MMP is Portable Radiation Monitoring Equipment (Mobile Monitoring Post), IMP is Immovable Monitoring Post.



Information

OMultilingual Earthquake Information Centre

Here at Fukushima International Association, we provide counselling services in English and Chinese.

Time : Tuesday – Saturday from 9am to 5pm
TEL : 024-524-1316 (direct line)
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