

HIMEJI CIR NEWSLETTER

February is already here and I am looking forward to spring with every fibre of my being. This month's newsletter features some new content including 'Updates from Himeji City' to keep everyone informed. I hope you all enjoy reading it!

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About Me

Hello! My name is Cessan Smith and I am the fifth Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Himeji City. I was born in Scotland but lived in Australia for seven years.
よろしくお願いします！

What is a CIR?

A Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) is a position on the JET Programme that involves providing international expertise in a local government office. My everyday work involves translation, interpreting as well as holding cultural exchange events in Himeji.



Monthly Reflections



When I lived in Scotland, I constantly complained about the cold weather. Despite living in a place like Edinburgh with a yearly average temperature of 9.5 degrees (Himeji's yearly average is 15.6 degrees), it has not made me any more resilient to a colder climate. One of the things I have noticed about Japan is how many tools there are for relieving discomfort in extreme weather. In Scotland, I never wore down jackets, although I did wear heat-tech T-Shirts until the material started giving me a rash. Since coming to Japan, I've bought earmuffs, heat-tech for every variety of clothing, and a lifetime-supply of カイロs (hand warmer). Even when I lived in Sydney (yearly average temperature: 18.8 degrees), I never saw anyone using a handheld fan, let alone a jacket with fans built into it like they have in Japan. It amazes me that these two countries, in spite of their notorious weather, don't seem to embrace the same technology as Japan. There is a famous Nordic saying: "The north wind made the Vikings", I think that it can be said that technical innovation made Japan a cozy place to live.

Himeji Castle Marathon

I went to the Himeji Castle marathon again this year and it was lots of fun although freezing cold. Congratulations to all the runners who beat their personal best this year!



Mount Masui Oni-oi ceremony

Oni-oi refers to the 'chasing away of demons', every year during Setsubun, this religious ceremony is held as a symbolic representation of eliminating evil.



Updates from Himeji City



Household garbage collection during poor weather (heavy rain, typhoons, snowfall, etc.)

The usual household garbage such as general waste, paper and plastic are collected as usual, although it is asked that you refrain from disposing of paper and plastic when there are strong winds as it may be blown away. Large-sized garbage (壮大ゴミ) is handled by your local neighbourhood organization (地元自治会) so please follow their advice.



The 17th Annual Leather Fair will be held on Sunday, March 9 at 10:00 a.m.

Leather goods will be on sale in the area of Nishi-Misuzu Sogo Center, Kamisuzu Sogo Center, Naka-Suzu Sogo Center and Mino Township Exchange Center, along with other leather-making workshops and experiences.

Updates from Himeji City



This year's events at the Himeji Disaster-Prevention Plaza in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake have been announced.

In May, the 'Children's Disaster Prevention Fair' is scheduled to be held during Golden Week from Saturday, May 3 to Monday, May 5, with photo opportunities for children to dress as firefighters.

In August, the 'Firefighting Classroom Challenge' will be held on Saturday, August 2 and Sunday, August 3 as a family hands-on event for fourth-sixth graders in the Himeji Fire Department, where they can experience rope crossing.

Japanese Word of the Month

びょうぶ
屏風

A 屏風 (byoubu) is an illustrated Japanese folding screen. This word includes the kanji for wall 屏 and wind 風, although 風 often refers to vibes / atmosphere (e.g. 風味、風景)

The four panel 屏風 pictured below features Himeji Castle (top-middle) and is believed to have been created during the late 18th century.

