

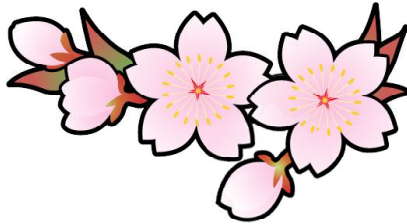
What's New?

Niihama City

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The 38th Niihama Mayor's Cup Equestrian Competition

Hannah Melnic

I grew up in rural Scotland, surrounded by farms and their animals. The local hunt would often ride past my house and I would be amazed at the elegance of the hunt master and all the horses. By the time I was 4, I had pestered my mother so much that she gave up and took me to the closest riding school to try riding for myself hoping that would be the end of it. Unfortunately for her, it started my life long affinity with horses and riding.

I rode on and off throughout my school years and in high school I would occasionally accompany my neighbour and help groom for them at their inhand shows. At university I chose to study equine sports science with equestrian psychology. There, I have to admit, I lost (or forgot) my passion for the sport. Having never owned a horse or competed myself, I was an outsider and had to study twice as hard as everyone else.

After that work and life in the adult world never left me much time to pursue my hobby. As I was preparing to leave for Japan, I was told that Niihama has its own riding school. Riding isn't common in Japan so I was excited that I could have the opportunity.

It actually took me a couple of years to finally go and take a lesson there but after I did, I became hooked again and although I only take dressage lessons, last year I started competing.

I always loved jumping when I was a child, but I had a nasty fall that knocked my confidence so I started small by entering the club's 'sports day', then this February I entered the 38th Niihama Mayor's cup.

This competition is held annually over two days with a variety of classes including dressage, local rule showjumping, larger showjumping classes and a gymkhana class.

Unfortunately the turnout was low due to the weather and many people not making the application deadline, but there were people from all over Shikoku and a riding goods stall from Kobe.

I spent the night before polishing my boots and stock pin and went armed with my best show clothes early in the morning.

I had entered into the 70 and 80cm classes and although small, I was nervous. My jumping horse, Airconcourse, was bred for racing and so isn't particularly big. He also gets over excited and difficult to control when jumping, so with the local cable TV company recording and broadcasting the competition and I was terrified of falling off in front of everybody.

Luckily, Aircon was on his best behaviour and we made round each course in good time with four faults each. Both times we had a refusal at the last jump which we were both equally to blame for. Jumping is not only dependant on the skill of the horse and rider, but also the mentality of the rider, which complicates the sport further. These results meant we came bottom of both classes as there was few people in the smaller rounds.

Aircon was back in his stable and my white jodhpurs were brownish before 8.30am, so I spent the rest of the morning watching the larger classes and the kid's gymkhana. Even though it's a serious competition the atmosphere was laid back and everyone was enjoying themselves. It also gave me a good chance to be an 'armchair expert' watching everyone and picking up a few pointers on things I need to work on at the same time.

Around lunchtime the prizes were awarded and I received a bronze and silver medal (my classes were very small!). As everyone started tucking into their bento, I slipped away home to go take a nap.

Being an uncommon sport here, our riding school group is incredibly close knit and the other members have always made me feel welcome and whilst I may not have come first, I had an amazing day out, catching up with different people and reminiscing about my long history with horses.

Hannah is an eikaiwa teacher and has been living in Niihama for four years. When she's not riding she enjoys cooking and visiting different prefectures throughout Japan.

Niihama Water Service is 60 Years Old (from Ehime Shimbun December 6, 2014)

15,000 bottles of water were produced to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Niihama Water Service. Niihama Water Service started in 1954 using underground water. The label of the bottle was designed by animator Katsuya Kondo of the popular Studio Jiburi. He is from Niihama. The motif of the design is the dragon used to decorate so many of the city's Taikodais according to Niihama City Office's Department of Water Service. Many shrines and bridges in Niihama have the character of dragon in their names. Mr. Kondo named the bottle "Dragon Water" because water is dedicated to the dragon.

The 490 mm bottle is made of aluminum. The Use By Date is 5 years from now. 11,000 bottles were given to elementary and junior high school students and the rest will be kept by the City Office for disaster relief.

Three students from Funaki Elementary and Funaki Junior High School attended the presentation ceremony. Mayor Katsuyuki Ishikawa handed a bottle to each student saying "Please enjoy the good taste of our water from a bottle with a label designed by your famous senior Mr. Kondo. Yodai Yano, a 6th grader, thanked him and had this to say, "We have tended to take our water service for granted for the last 60 years but please keep giving us safe water to drink."



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Information in English & Chinese on the Web

***What's New?**

Click ➡ <http://www.city.niihama.lg.jp/what's> new?

Clair:*Multilingual Living Information

<http://www.clair.or.jp/tagengorev/en/index.html>

A butterfly's long distant flight from Saijo

(from Ehime Shimbun, November 20)

Asagi Madara, a Chesnut Tiger butterfly which was marked by students at Yoshii Elementary School in Saijo has been caught in Otsuki-cho, Kochi. The students are beside themselves with joy and hope that the butterfly they marked will be found abroad.

It was in the middle of last October that the butterfly was found at Yoshii Elementary School. Students put markings on it and set it free. And it was identified in Otsuki-cho in the western part of Kochi, which is 130 km away in a straight line.

Last year, Mr. Kenji Beppu, the principal of Yoshi Elementary School proposed growing bonesets in a schoolyard flowerbed in order to lure Chesnut Tigers. In April, six graders started the project and on October 17 they were able to catch one. The sixth graders wrote "10.17", "Yoshii 1" on its wing with an oil paint pen and released it.

On November 18 Mr. Tsuyoshi Onishi, a specialist curator at the Ehime Prefectural Science Museum located in Niihama City reported the result of the tracing investigation to the school children at a whole-school meeting. He said, "Thanks to all of you, we could collect valuable data." And he mentioned that there are some places such as Okinawa, Taiwan, Hong Kong where their marked butterfly might be caught after flying via Otsuki-cho.

Yuto Okita and Iori Ochi, the six graders who marked the butterfly said, "We thought it was miraculous that it was caught in Kochi because we hear that we have to release about 80 butterflies in order for one single butterfly to be caught. I hope the butterfly we marked will be caught in a foreign country too."

Parts of Asagi Madara's wings are light blue and the length of the wings is about 10cm when they are open. They live from the south of Honshu to the south of China. They travel to the north in spring and return to the south in fall.

SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions or ideas for monthly articles. email: yukiko-m@shikoku.ne.jp

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* The editors for this month are K. Kaida & T. Kashimoto

MOVIES

TOHO CINEMAS Niihama (AEON Mall)

February 21 ~ American Sniper R15+ 2D English
March 15 ~ INTO THE WOODS 2D English
March 20 ~ Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb
2D English
April 11 ~ Thomas & Friends :
Tale of the Brave 2D Dubbed
April 17 ~ Furious 7 2D English
April 25 ~ CINDERELLA 2D English

Information Service

Internet: <http://niihama-aeonmall.com>

Tape (24 hrs): 050-6868-5019(in Japanese)

Movies might be changed without notice. Please check.

April Event

Cherry blossom viewing spots

- Takinomiya Park
- Hirose Park
- Yamane Park
- Minetopie Besshi
- Ikeda Pond Park
- Kokuryo Riverside Park
- KuroshimaKaihin Park
- Inariyama Park


ONE POINT JAPANESE

いろいろなオ/マトペ

A : 今日 ^{きょう}は ポカポカ ^{いい} 天気 ^{てんき} ですね。Kyo wa pokapoka iitenki desu ne.
(Today the weather is nice and warm, isn't it?)

B : ええ。上着 ^{うわぎ}が いらない くらいです。
Ee.Uwagi ga iranaikurai desu.
(Yes. It's about warm enough not to need a jacket)

C : 桜 ^{さくら}が パツと 一齊 ^{いっせい}に 咲き そう です ね。
Sakura ga patto isseni sakiso desu ne.
(Cherry blossoms seem about to burst into bloom all at once.)



B : この 調子 ^{てうし}で いくと、週末 ^{しゅうまつ} あたり が 見頃 ^{みごろ}に なる でし よう か。
Knochoshi de ikuto,shūmatsu atariga migoroni narudesho ka.
(If it goes on like this, won't around the weekend be in full bloom?)

A : 広瀬 公園 ^{ひろせこうえん}の 桜 ^{さくら}は、もう 散り 始め まし た よ。
Hirose-koen no sakura wa, mo chirihajimemashita yo.
(The cherry blossoms in Hirose Park have already started to fall.)

(広瀬 公園 ^{ひろせこうえん}で) (At Hirose Park)

A : ひら ひら 散つ た 花 びら が 池 ^{いけ}に 浮か んで いる のも 風情 ^{ふぜい}が あり ます ね。
Hirahira chitta hanabira ga ikeni ukandeiru nomo fuzē ga arimasu ne.
(Isn't it romantic to see cherry blossom petals floating scattered on the pond?)

B : 桜 ^{さくら}を 見な がら、池 ^{いけ}の 周り を ぶら ぶら して みま せん か。
Sakura o minagara ike no mawari o buraburashite mimasen ka.
(How about strolling around the pond looking at the cherry blossoms?)

A : いい です ね。椿 ^{つばき}の 花 が ちら ほら 残っ て いま す ね。
Iidesu ne.Tsubaki no hana ga chirahora nokotte imasu ne.
(Sounds good. There are camellia flowers left here and there.)

B : あれ? C さん は? Are? C-san wa? (Oh, where is C-san?)

A : あ そこ で 何 か パク パク 食べ て いま す よ。
Asoko de nanika pakupaku tabete imasu yo.
(He is munching on something over there.)

C : 桜 ^{さくら}も いい けど、やっ ぱり “花 より だん ご” です。
Sakura mo ii kedo,yappari “hana yori dango” desu .
(Cherry blossoms are good but, after all, it's “cake over flowers.”)

こ れ、モチ モチ して おい しい です よ。
Kre,mochimochi shite oishi desu yo.
(This is nice and chewy and tastes great.)

A : 花 見の 時期 ^{はなみ}は 何 だか そわ そわ して 落ち 着き ませ ん ね。
Hanami no jiki wa,nandaka sowasowashite ochitsukimasen ne.
(Hanami season somehow feels restless and unsettled.)

< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

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