

What's New?

Niihama City

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Getting Outside on Shikoku

by Nate Dennehy

Living within 10 minutes of both mountains and seaside is something I consider a special privilege of my Shikoku lifestyle. I am personally inclined to spend more time in the hills than in the waves, which probably has much to do with my childhood in Arizona, an American state with beautiful mountains and virtually no water to speak of. I also spent my first three years in Japan living deep in the mountains of Tokushima, which provided me with ample time to grow to love them.

Though hiking and backpacking may not appeal to everyone, and seem to carry the connotation that in order to participate one must be rugged, hairy, or at least not beholden to the rigors of personal hygiene, I contend that an occasional romp through the hills of Shikoku is in the best interest of most of us living here. Thoughts, inspiration, even

epiphanies have a habit of visiting with surprising frequency during a stroll through the woods, and that alone is reason enough to shoulder a backpack full of food and camping gear every once in a while.

I am little more than a novice backpacker, and I have recently been surprised and impressed by the traditions of Japan's mountaineers. On a recent trip to the Northern Alps, I spent the night with 100 other people at a mountain lodge near the peak of Mount Tsubakuro. I must say, it felt a bit unnatural to belly up to a liter of draft beer and a set meal at 2700 meters, but I wasn't about to refuse. The 360° view and the peculiar sense of community shared by 100 scruffy strangers more than compensated for the sense that I was cheating by not taking care of my own food and shelter.

The truly amazing part of the journey, however, came the following morning. Everybody wants to see the sunrise, so around 4:30 all the hikers pour out of the lodge into the crisp, chilly air to look down on a dark sea of clouds. Not one to sleep through what was obviously an important event, I dragged my stiff joints down out of my loft and headed outside. It was the first sunrise I had ever intentionally woken to observe, and it was indeed worth the effort. After a 5:30 breakfast most of the lodge's temporary inhabitants were off, traversing ridges in pursuit of other peaks or making their way downward toward the promise of a hot bath. My companion and I hustled our supplies together and departed around 7:00, making us among the last to leave.

The Northern Alps are certainly breathtaking, but Shikoku itself has a great deal to offer, and you don't need to drive all night to get there. This weekend I'm heading out to

Mount Miune of Tokushima Prefecture, a 1900 meter peak with a quaint pond on top. Miune (called Sanrei on its Kochi Prefecture side) is usually full of wildlife. Last time I hiked it I ended up producing all manner of inhuman noises to scare away a wild boar after we startled each other on the trail, and heard the whistles of deer all night long.

Sometimes the most incredible places are literally right in your backyard. Last spring on a whim I went to Akaboshiyama (Red Star Mountain), a mere 30 minute drive from my apartment, and was astounded to find a hike that rivals the best trails of Hawaii. The first two kilometers are an endless cascade of waterfalls, full of appetizing swimming holes and laced with rickety wooden bridges.

All of this leads me to believe that we, the residents of Shikoku, are very lucky to live in an area so full of natural beauty. Regardless of where you live, it's right outside your window, and it doesn't need to be as famous as Ishizuchi to be worth your while.

Nate Dennehy is a coordinator at the Shikokuchuo City Hall. He is on the rugged side, quite hairy, and of questionable personal hygiene. For inquiries regarding international exchange events in the Shikokuchuo area, or to discuss Shikoku's mountain trails, he can be reached at sifa@city.shikokuchuo.ehime.jp.



The National Census

(国勢調査・Kokuseichosa)

There will be a national census conducted soon in Japan. Between September 20 and 22, census takers will deliver census request notices, and from September 23 to 30, they will visit again to deliver the forms to be filled out. Fill out the forms with information about your household circumstances as of October 1, 2010 at noon.

Anyone in Japan three months or more or who will be in Japan three months or more as of October 1, 2010 must participate.

Seal the envelopes. The census taker will return to collect the forms between October 1 and 7th.

Be sure the person collecting the forms is truly from the census bureau - there was a fraudulent form collector in Matsuyama last time. I believe you can also mail in the completed forms free of postage.

Apparently the forms are available in 27 languages, so please request which you'd prefer when the census taker visits at the end of September.

This link's English information is not very convenient, so please check with family members, the newspaper, your international center, etc. for more information on the census.

<http://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2010/kouhou/index.htm>

The Niihama Taiko Festival (Oct.15/16 to 18)

One of the most famous, popular events in Niihama is the Niihama Taiko Festival. With tradition and history of 300 years, the Niihama Taiko Festival is held every year from October 16(Oct. 15 at Ojoin) to 18 to give thanks for abundant autumn harvests. A total of 51 taikodai(drum floats) parade the streets and compete in their five respective districts for the best carrying style. Five districts are Kawahigashi(Eastside of the Kokuryo river, Kawahigashiseibu(western part of Kawahigashi), Kawanishi(Westside of the Kokuryo river), Jobu(Southern part of Niihama), and Ojoin.

For further information(Japanese)

<http://www.city.niihama.lg.jp/kanko/taiko/>

Diet and Lifestyle-Related Diseases

(from The Niihama Shisei-dayori, August issue)

Those who skip breakfast are 4.5 times as likely to become obese as regular breakfast eaters. This is because, it is believed, when you skip your breakfast, your appetite is more stimulated at lunchtime, with the result that your total daily energy intake actually increases.

In addition, late-night snack syndrome is cited as a common eating habit among obese people. It features a decrease of appetite in the morning, night time overeating and sleeplessness, resulting not in increased total daily energy intake but in an unbalanced shift to night time eating. Night time waking and eating will put your body clock out of order, leading to a metabolic disorder which causes obesity.

People should therefore take care when dieting. Leptin, a hormone, which is secreted from fat cell tissue, restrains appetite by affecting the central nervous system and simulates the energy consumption of the body as well. If you lose weight too quickly by crash dieting, your body mistakenly believes that the weight loss has been caused by lack of nutrition and works to reduce the secretion of Leptin. This causes a strong sense of hunger that can lead to overeating. While energy consumption is reduced through dieting, and weight may be lost it is highly likely that your weight will eventually rebound upward.

Therefore, when you diet to lose weight, it is absolutely necessary that once you reach your target weight you continue to watch it for a set period of time. This way your weight is less likely to rebound and further weight loss will be easier to achieve.



TOHO CINEMAS Niihama (AEON Shopping Center)

September 11 ~	Resident Evil: Afterlife	3D	English
	Resident Evil: Afterlife	3D	Dubbed
September 17 ~	Eat, Pray, Love		English
October 9 ~	Knight and Day		English/Dubbed
October 16 ~	The Expendables		English
October 30 ~	SAW VII		English
October 30 ~	Despicable me		Dubbed

Information Service

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

Tape (24 hrs): 0897-35-3322 (in Japanese)

Snack Foods! A Danger to Japanese Children!

Studies show that there is a stark rise in obesity in children.



<Contributed by Adam Schartup>

SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions or ideas for monthly articles.

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*The editors for this month are E. Okada & T. Kashimoto

いろいろな“いっぱい”No.1

(まつ
お祭り) (At the Niihama Taiko Festival)

A : わあ、太鼓台が いっぱい ですね。

Wa, taikodai ga ippai desu ne.
(Wow, there are lots of Taikodai! [Taiko-floats])

B : ええ、まだまだ いっぱい 集まって 来ますよ。

Ee, madamada ippai atsumatte kimasu yo.
(Yes. More and more Taikodai will be gathering.)

A : 外国人も 参加できるんですか。

Gaikokujin mo sanka dekirun desu ka.
(Can foreigners take part in it too?)

B : 責任者に 頼めば、大丈夫だと思えますが・・・。

Sekininsha ni tanomeba, daijōbu da to omoimasu ga
(If you ask the person in charge, it will be OK, I think.)

A : お店も いっぱい 出て いますね。 Omise mo ippai deteimasu ne.

(There are many booths too.)

B : ええ、子ども達は こちらの 方が 楽しみなようです。

Ee, kodomotachi wa kochira no hō ga tanoshimi na yō desu.
(Yes. Children seem to enjoy these booths [more than Taikodai].)

A : 遠慮 しないで、どんどん 食べて くださいね。

Enryo shinaide, dondon tabete kudasai ne.
(Please don't hesitate - help yourself to the food.)

B : ありがとう ございます。 Arigatō gozaimasu. (Thank you.)

でも、お腹が いっぱい で、こんなに 食べきれません。

Demo, onaka ga ippai de, konnani tabekiremasen.
(But, I'm full, so I can't eat this much.)

A : 映画は どうでしたか。

Ega wa dō deshita ka. (How was the movie?)

B : とても よかったです。 Totemo yokatta desu. (It was very good.)

感動して、胸が いっぱい になりました。

Kandōshite, mune ga ippai ni narimashita.
(I was moved, and my heart was filled with deep emotion.)

< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

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