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<People>Mr. William M. Balsamo (Originally from New York)

Mr. Balsamo came to Japan 18 years ago. He is now an English instructor at Kenmei Women's Junior College and Himeji Dokkyo University. He has traveled extensively to almost 100 countries, and is the editor of "Himeji JALT News," a newsletter for English language teachers.

(<http://www.geocities.com/yamataro670/HJNews.htm>)

He is also a member of the Celestina chorus which practices on Monday nights at Himeji's Catholic Church. Among his personal interests are gardening, traveling and writing.



Q . What made you come to Japan ?

A The focus for my Doctoral studies in New York was on International Education and learning an Asian language was a requirement. Following my professor's advice, I decided to come to Japan as I was much interested in Japanese education. Shortly afterwards I was offered employment by the former Ministry of Education, and I taught English in Hyogo prefecture. I have lived in Himeji now for 15 years.

Q . Do you have any advice for foreigners who plan to live in Himeji for a long time ?

A . I have no specific advice because everybody has different expectations about what he/she wants and expects from his/her experience. But I think it is important that "one should not be too critical of his host country and should try to live with a positive attitude." I personally like Japanese culture and customs very much.

Q . Would you tell me about the book "Disappearing into Clouds" which you published at your own expense ?

A .It is a book of three fables in which the leading characters are animals. Each story has a moral lesson based on passages from scripture. All sales of this book will be donated to the "Casa Anna Orphanage" built in Bangladesh in 2002 with my personal savings. In Bangladesh a child can be supported at the orphanage for 2000 yen per month. I also hope to publish a second book next year of science fiction stories to support a student dormitory also in Bangladesh that is currently under



「 Casa Anna Orphanage 」

construction. It is being built as a memorial for my father. Further information about these projects can be found at their websites:

<http://www.geocities.com/yamataro670/CAO.htm> and www.81x.com/balsamo/studentdormitory

Q . Would you tell me about your future ambitions ?

A . I would like to work as a volunteer in a developing country in Asia or Africa, and to help in teacher training. I don't have any intentions of retiring and I would like to continue to work as long as I am healthy.

Mr. Balsamo is always positive and is willing to do anything in his power for the children of the next generation. We would like to send warm cheers to him!! We wish him the best in his work!!

Disaster Prevention

We have experienced more typhoons than usual this year, and they have left a lot of damage amongst many regions of Japan. The 10-year anniversary of the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake is next year. In Japan, we have sayings such as “Disasters happen when we forget,” and “If prepared, there is no worry.” These sayings teach us the importance of preparing ourselves for natural disasters because we never know when they will happen. In this edition, we will talk about how to prepare for natural disasters and what we need to do when they occur.

In case of typhoons

You need to pay close attention to the weather forecast and take precaution.

- Clean out the ditches along the street (They may overflow if blocked by leaves and plastic bags).
- Check the roof tiles and make sure that signboards are tied up.
- Move objects that might get blown away inside the house. (Such as plants and laundry poles on the balcony).
- Close shutters and curtains. Secure shutters by placing wood boards or tape across them. (This will help prevent windows from getting destroyed when hit by flying objects, and will prevent you from getting injured by shattered glass).
- Avoid going outside as much as possible.
- Prepare flashlights, radios, etc in case of blackouts.
- If you live close to the shore, pile up bags filled with soil called *donou* in case of a tidal wave.

You should also remove *tatami* mats from the floor in case of a flood.

Once a typhoon gets close and an evacuation order advising people to go to a public area such as a school or town hall is given, you should follow the advice immediately. Pay attention to evacuation orders given over the loudspeakers of passing city cars, fire trucks, or from the town house. You can also hear these announcements on “NHK” (TV channel 2), radio station 666 kHz, “Wink” (a local cable station), or “Genki” (a local FM radio station, 79.3MHz).

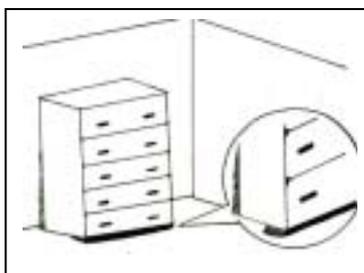
For children going to school

If there is a warning(警報-keiho) for a heavy storm(暴風-bofu), heavy rain(大雨-ooame), a flood(洪水-kosui), or heavy snow(大雪-ooyuki), in the southern region of Hyogo (兵庫県南部-Hyogo-ken nanbu) or Harima southeast region(播磨南西部-Harima nanseibu) by 6 AM, school children in Himeji city must stay home until further notice.

In case of an earthquake

When an earthquake occurs, it's important that you remain calm and take appropriate action.

- When you feel a tremor, go under a strong table or desk. Once the tremor stops, open the front door to keep an emergency exit open.
- To prevent fires, it is important to turn off all gas pipes in the house. Immediately turn off any devices using fire.
- When you go outside, try to remain calm and watch out for falling objects.
- Obtain the correct information. (In the event that there is heavy damage, don't get confused or misled by inaccurate information but pay attention to the information issued by the city hall, fire department, police department, or NHK (TV channel 2).
- If there are people injured or in danger, do what you can to help but don't put yourself in danger.



Things you can do to minimize the damage of an earthquake

- To prevent furniture from falling
 - Store heavy books on bottom shelves.
 - Put a thin piece of wood or stack a few magazines under the front part of the furniture.
 - Secure furniture to the wall by using special hardware that prevents them from falling forward.
 - Avoid putting things on the top of tall furniture such as dish shelves and





dressers.

- To strengthen the house

If your house is old, make sure that the floor base and pillar are strong enough to support the house. If the structure needs to be replaced, do so.

- To prepare an emergency bag

Here are things that should be put in the bag (heavy items and items you don't use often should be put on the bottom): flashlight, extra batteries, portable radio, first-aid kit (tape, rubbing alcohol etc), work gloves, medical masks, food (water, canned-food, cookies, chocolate, etc), clothing (underwear, sweatshirt, socks etc), thick plastic gloves, copy of insurances and bank accounts, etc. You should check the contents of the emergency bag and update it as needed. It is also important to discuss with your family about where to find and how to contact each other in case of an emergency, so your family is always aware of the importance of disaster prevention.

We have brochures called "What to do in case of an emergency" at the International exchange office on the third floor of the Egret Himeji building. They are available in English, Korean, Chinese, and Portuguese free of charge. Please stop by to get a copy for yourself.

One point advice (by Yorimasa Yamashita, a disaster prevention adviser and a former meteorologist)

Typhoons and heavy rain have a lot to do with the greenhouse effect, and one of the biggest causes of this is carbon dioxide created from our daily activities. Some things you can do to help lessen the greenhouse effect: avoid idling the car engine; do not overuse the heater and air conditioner (adjust the temperature accordingly); grow more plants and trees in parks and other areas; avoid using concrete as much as possible around the house and in the community. If everyone makes an effort, it will lead to the prevention of the greenhouse effect, and this will help prevent typhoons and heavy rains. Let's save our earth together.

Wind Velocity (風速-fusoku) Wind velocity is the average wind speed. The highest wind speed can be twice as much as the wind velocity. Wind velocity at 20m/s will cause damage, and at 40m/s it may destroy the house.

Magnitude(マグニチュード) Magnitude is the size of the tremors caused by earthquakes

Seismic Intensity (震度-shindo) Seismic intensity is the level of the tremors as felt by humans. Currently it is calculated by the earthquake scale.

Rainfall (降水量-kosuiryo) 1mm of rainfall is the same as when you spill a 2-liter bottle of water in an area the size of one *tatami*-mat. When we get more than 20mm of rainfall in an hour, it can cause damage.

Tidal Wave (高潮-takashio、高波-takanami) Tidal waves are higher in bay areas where winds blow straight in. Tidal waves come once every 20 to 30 minutes, so be careful.

Changes Made to the Domestic Violence (DV) Prevention Law

The DV prevention law passed in October 2001 will be modified starting December 2nd, 2004. Underlined are the changes that will be made from the current law.

1. In addition to the physical violence that threatens people's lives, psychological damage, such as using abusive language and ignoring, and sexual violence, such as forcing unwanted sexual activities, will be included to the conditions for which you can ask for protection orders.
2. People who are protected under a protection order will be extended from spouses to ex-spouses.
3. The following underlines are the changes made for protection orders.

Restraining Order	Leaving Order
-The assailant is forbidden to hang around the victim, <u>including the kids living with the victim.</u> (this restriction applies to residence and work place). -The term is six months	• Leaving Order -This order requires the assailant to leave the residence. -The term is <u>two months</u> (it is forbidden for the assailant to walk around the residence).

Event Information

Mt.Shosha All-Night Services

Date: (Fri) December 31, 2004 ~ (Sat) January 1, 2005

Place: *Shosha-zan Engyo-ji* Temple · *Shosha-zan* ropeway

December 31 9:00 p.m. ~ The ropeway runs all night long.

11:50 p.m. ~ *Joya-no-kane* (the watch night bell)*1

January 1 0:00 a.m. ~ Those who take the first run will get a "*Hatsunori-Shomeisyo*"

About 7:00 a.m. ~ The first sunrise of the year.

Ropeway fare: (Adult) 500 yen: one-way ticket 900 yen: round-trip ticket

(Child) 250 yen: one-way ticket 450yen: round-trip ticket

a certificate showing they have taken the first ropeway in 2005.

*1:*Joya-no-kane* (the watch night bell): In temples bells are tolled one hundred and eight times on the night from New Year's Eve to New Year's Day. It is an annual event in Buddhism and it is believed that, by hearing the sound of the bells, we can clean out the dust in our minds and welcome the New Year with a fresh mind.

(^o^)/ New Year's Day is the most important day of the year for the Japanese, much like Christmas Day is an important day in the West. It is believed on this day the gods come to our houses to give us happiness for the upcoming year. Therefore, at the end of a year, we clean our houses thoroughly and purge belongings, and many events are held in shrines and temples to cleanse people's minds.

Free Entrance to Himeji Castle Date: (Sat) January 1, 2005

Open: 7:00 a.m. ~4:00 p.m.

The National Kite Flying Festival

Date: Some time at the beginning of January (in 2004 it was held on January 12.)

Hundreds of kites are gathered from across the country.

Place: Himeji public racecourse Time: 10:30 a.m. ~3:30 p.m.



Baika Festival

 (Baika means blossoms of ume: Japanese apricot)

Date: (Sun) February 13~(Sun) March 13, 2005

Place: Koko-en

Open: 9:00 a.m. ~5:00 p.m. *Closed: December 29 ~ January 1

You can have *O-Maccha* (powdered green tea) in the tearoom of this garden.

Charge: 500 yen (per person)

Japan Toy Museum <http://www.japan-toy-museum.org/>

(You can view this website in English)

Christmas art from around the World Exhibition

Date: (Sat) October 23, 2004~ (Tue) January 25, 2005

You can see about 1,000 exhibits ranging from Christmas trees decorations to Santa Claus dolls gathered from fifty countries around the world.



Special Exhibition in Spring: History of *Hina* dolls.

Date: (Sat) February 5, 2005 ~(Tue) April 12, 2005

You can see *Hina* dolls that were actually displayed between the Edo period and the Showa period.

Hina dolls are dolls displayed on Girl's Festival day in hopes of the good growth of girls.

< Access to Japan Toy Museum >

From JR Himeji station, take the Bantan Line five stations to Kohro. About 15 minutes on foot.

<Open> 10:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m. (Closed: on Wednesday)

< Admission fees > 500 yen (general admission), 400 yen (high school or college student), 200 yen (children four and up)

How to take out household garbage Part 2

For April, 2004-March, 2005

The explanation for large garbage (incombustible) is as follows: First please refer to the sheet that was introduced last time, "Clean Calendar for General Households for the Year 2004"

You can also obtain the sheet at the Himeji International Association.

Garbage that cannot be put out at the garbage station will be explained next time.

1. What kind of garbage is classified as large garbage (incombustible)?



Dry batteries (If batteries are leaking, put them in a bag.)

Used paper

- Districts with local collection: Put them out at the designated spot on the designated day.
- Districts with no local collection: Put them out as recyclable garbage on the "large garbage day."

Fabric and Aluminum

- Districts sell these items to recycling traders. (Put them out at the designated spot on the day designated by your town).
- Items that cannot be sold locally can be put out as garbage: fabric as "bedding/rug" and aluminum as "empty cans"

2 When should I put them out?

- The large garbage will be collected twice a month. There are designated days for each area. Please refer to the "Clean Calendar for General Households for the Year 2004"
- If you do not know the designated days for your area, please ask your neighbor or *Jichikai* (neighborhood associations).
- Please put out garbage by 8A.M. on the collection day (Please note that you may be required to put your garbage out before 8A.M., depending on the decision of your self-governing council).

3 What should I be careful about?

- Please wrap broken light bulbs or knives with paper or cloth to avoid injury to the collectors.
- Spray cans might explode so please finish them completely and puncture them.

4 Who should I ask when I have a question?

(Contact)

- About garbage . . . City Hall · Recycle Suishinka (Recycle Promotion Section)
0 7 9 2 - 2 1 - 2 4 0 4
- About collecting garbage . . . Ichikawa Bika Center (Ichikawa Beautification Center)
0 7 9 2 - 8 2 - 5 3 8 9
- . . . Nanbu Bika Center (Nanbu Beautification Center) 0 7 9 2 - 3 4 - 8 2 1 1

DV (Domestic Violence) victims can live in prefectural housing on a higher priority basis

Hyogo prefecture has decided to give DV victims higher priority when applying for prefectural housing. With this decision, 30 percent of available rooms in prefectural housing that had been previously allocated to the aged and the handicapped will also be extended to DV victims. This new system is applicable to all prefectural housing and has been in effect as of October 4. (The next offering will be mid-April, 2005.)



Who can apply?

- A person who has a protection order from the family court which forbids the spouse from approaching the residence.
- A woman who has consulted a prefectural women's consulting center or welfare office and can get proof that she has suffered from domestic violence.

When the applicant is a foreigner, the person must be registered in Hyogo Prefecture.

How the lots are chosen

- (Hyogo Housing Supply Bureau) will reserve 30% of all available rooms for the aged, the handicapped and DV victims. Then the bureau will select the tenants.
- If you are not chosen in the first selection, you can still apply again with the other general applicants.

In the case of special circumstances such as concern regarding the leaking out private information, you can consult with the bureau.

Enquiry

Hyogo Housing Supply Bureau Harima Nishi office Tel.0792-89-0076

Editor's Postscript

Pretty large typhoons did great damages in September and October. The river was flooded and some sheds were blown down in Himeji. In 3 days after the No.23, a pretty strong earthquake hit Niigata. The pictures of the damaged district surprised us. This 「VIVA!ひめじ」 is featuring articles on the prevention of disasters. Your measure against typhoon and earthquake is all right? Also, what should we act when we suffer from disaster? Please think about this once again after reading this article.

The publication of next issue, 「VIVA!ひめじ No.12」 is planned in March. Please express your frank opinions and impressions by mail, phone and E-mail provided below.

Translation assistants and native proofreaders

English: Kaoru Araki, Emi Takahashi, Emiko Hamada, Keiko Raymond, Kathy Wakamatsu

Chinese: Zhou Jiangtau, Aoi Matsui, Li Jilin

Portuguese: Flavio Takeshita, Koba Matsuko, Okuda Yukie, Higashimura Kozue

Vietnamese: Ken Ishida, Nguyen Viet Dan

Spanish: Aki Saito, Takeshi Sonoda, Tomoko Watanabe, Hirotohi Kouma

Pilar Garcia Escudero Arimoto, Toshiaki Arimoto, Aki Elsa, Ohtani Alicia

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We always invite translation assistants and native proofreaders on 「VIVA!ひめじ」.

If you have some interests, please contact us with the following address, number and E-mail provided below. We're waiting for your replies

Contact Office
Himeji International Association
Egret Himeji 3F 68-290, Honmachi, Himeji, 670-0012
Tel:0792-87-0820 Fax:0792-87-0824
E-mail:kokusai@city.himeji.hyogo.jp