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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange
Foundation – newsletter editing volunteers
<http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp>

<People> Ms. Nollaig O’Cuill

Ms. O’Cuill is from Ireland. She moved to Japan in July 2019 and has been working as the Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) for Himeji City. In addition to her native languages of English and Irish, she also studied French, German and Japanese, and hopes to put her languages to good use at work.



Q: What is a CIR and what kind of work do you do?

A: CIR is an abbreviation of “Coordinator for International Relations,” one of the positions available in the JET Programme (Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme). My work mainly involves translation, interpretation, sister city exchange programmes and other international exchange projects which aim to promote Himeji to foreign nationals.

Q: How did you become interested in Japanese?

A: It’s a bit stereotypical, but I first became interested in Japanese when I began watching anime in secondary school. I then studied Japanese for four years in university. I came to Japan for the first time in 2017 for a 6-month internship at a hotel.

Q: What kind of place is your hometown?

A: Ireland is famous for beer, so there are pubs in almost every town. My hometown, Cork, is the second largest city after the capital, Dublin. It’s very green. In winter, the sun sets at around 4pm, but in the summer, it often doesn’t get dark until 10pm! It rains quite a lot, but the summers are very mild and comfortable.

Q: What do you do on your days off?

A: I often cook and recently started doing yoga. I also love travelling. Last month I travelled to Toyooka and Takeno in northern Hyogo with some friends.

Q: What are some things you would like to do while you are in Japan?

A: As CIR, I hope to show Irish culture to the people of Himeji. Personally, I’m interested in pottery and would like to learn more about that.

Let's go eat "Oyster"!

Harimanada is the leading origin of oyster in Japan. "Oyster festival" will take place in various regions from January through March which is the best time of the year for oysters. Oyster is nutrient-rich and is called milk of the sea. There are various ways to enjoy oysters such as raw oysters, grilled oysters, oyster stew, fried oysters, and *kakioko* (oyster *okonomiyaki*). There is a site where they offer free grilled oysters. Also, you can get oysters at a bargain price.

Venue and time of oyster festivals

1. Oyster Fair 2020 (かきフェア 2020)

Place: JF Bouze Himeji Tore Tore Market (JF ぼうぜ姫路とれとれ市場)

Date: January 18 and 19th

Access: 15 minutes walk from Sanyo Electric Railway "Shirahamanomiya" Station

Free shuttle bus from south exit of JR "Himeji" Station



2. Murotsu Oyster Festival (むろつ 室津かきまつり)

Place: Ayabeyama Plum Grove park entrance (あやべやまぼりんりぐち 綾部山梅林入口)

Date: January 26th

Access: 15 minutes bus ride from Sanyo Electric Railway "Sanyo-Aboshi" Station, 10 minutes walk from "Mitsu chugakko mae" bus stop.

A marathon race is held at Mitsu athletic field on the same day, therefore, neighboring roads are regulated. Shuttle bus from designated parking.

3. Aboshi Oyster Festival (あぼし 網干かきまつり)

Place: Eco-park Aboshi (エコパーク網干)

Date: Early February

Access: Shuttle bus from Sanyo Electric Railway "Sanyo-Aboshi" Station

4. Ako Oyster Festival (あこう 赤穂かきまつり)

Place: Ako Seaside Park Ako plaza (あこうかいひんこうえんあこうひろば 赤穂海浜公園赤穂広場)

Date: Early February

Access: 10 minutes bus ride (West Shink Bus) from JR "Banshu-Ako" Station, 15 minutes walk from "Myojingi" bus stop



5. Aioi Oyster Festival (あいおい 相生かきまつり)

Place: IHI Fureai Plaza (IHI ふれあいひろば)

Date: Early February

Access: 10 minutes walk from JR "Nishi-Aioi" Station, 10 minutes bus ride from JR "Aioi" Station

Japanese *Sake* tasted with an oyster

Winter is the season when you can enjoy fresh *sake* made from new rice which was harvested in the fall. Fresh Japanese *sake* and oyster make a very good match. Let's enjoy oyster more with cold fresh *sake*.



Setsubun

The 3rd of February is *Setsubun*. *Setsubun* (節分) means “separation (分ける) of the seasons (季節).” Because there are four seasons: spring, summer, fall and winter, *Setsubun* happens four times a year. A long time ago, it was thought that the new year began in the spring. So, *Setsubun*, which was celebrated in February, was considered especially important because it was at the start of the new year and we could feel the arrival of spring. It is also said that with the coming of the new year, so comes the demons, bringers on misfortune. Various events and customs to dispel demons and pray for health, happiness, and good harvest still remain.



Bean Throwing

In order to dispel demons from the house and attract good luck, we throw beans while saying “demons out, good luck in” (鬼は外、福は内). It is believed that beans have the power to purify ill intent/evil spirits. We look forward to a traditional event in which children throw beans at someone wearing a demon mask. After that, we eat the same number of beans as our age and pray for our health for the year.

Ehomaki

Ehomaki is a type of *sushi* that acts as a good luck charm. It represents taking in good luck in one breath. We eat the entire *ehomaki* silently - only thinking of our wish for the year - while facing the year’s “lucky direction.” The “lucky direction” for 2020 is west-southwest. A recipe for the *sushi* is published in “VIVA!ひめじ” Vol. 47.



Sardines and Holly

To ward off demons, a twig of holly is inserted into the head of a cooked sardine and is placed at the entryway. The smoke from the cooked sardine keeps the bad spirits at bay while the spines of the holly leaf stab any demons, preventing them from entering the house.



Main *Setsubun* Events Taking Place in Himeji

Mt. Shosha Engyoji Temple

Every year on January 18th, the red and blue demons dance to ward off evil spirits – they take place in the Hakusan-gongen Pavilion and in Mani-den area. Large chopsticks called “the demons’ chopsticks” are charms distributed to visitors of the shrine.

Hiromine Shrine

Feb. 3rd, 10am – Prayer to ward off bad luck
4pm – *Setsubun* Festival

Feb. 4th, 12pm – Festival for the First Day of Spring
4pm – Ritual to ward off bad luck

Harima-no-kuni-Sohsha Shrine

Feb. 3rd, 3:30pm – *Setsubun* Festival
4pm – Bean throwing by *Fukumusume* (Shrine Maidens)

Setsubun events take place at many other shrines and temples, including Mt. Masui Zuiganji Temple and Usuki-hachiman Shrine.

How to take out the garbage : ① flammable

In Himeji city, you are required to separate garbage according to type. Important points to be remembered are provided in three parts. This time, we take up flammable garbage. It is collected twice a week. Please keep to the guidelines so that you do not trouble people living near the garbage site.

★Guidelines as to the disposal of flammable wastes.

- Be sure to use the prescribed plastic bags. Garbage in plastic shopping bags or corrugated boxes is not collected.
- Be sure to take out your garbage before the prescribed time on the garbage collection day.
- Be sure to use prescribed garbage sites.



★In order to reduce flammable garbage,

- Be careful of food which goes to the waste.
 - ▶Do not cook too much, and cut down the leftovers.
 - ▶Try eco-cooking. For example, cabbage cores can produce good soups.
 - ▶Take a good look in your fridge for leftovers. Cook older ones first.

消費期限 use-by date...(a certain date)
賞味期限 best-by date ...(a certain date)

*only when the food is preserved in a recommended way and the packaging is not disturbed.

- Keep the garbage dry.
- Do not mix flammable wastes with recyclables.
Separate paper, plastic covering, and plastic bottles. Take those out as recyclable wastes.

★Other notices.

- Flammable wastes do not include liquids.
- Let air out of the plastic bags containing shredded paper wastes to prevent them from being broken open when picked up.
- As for used paper diapers, take them out only after they are properly processed. (For how to process used diapers, go to the directions on the label.)
- Pruned branches are to be cut down to less than 50 cm in length and 20 cm in width. Put them in the prescribed plastic bags. Those bigger than that are to be bound together by strings and be taken out on oversized garbage days.

Our next bill will be about how to take out sorted-out wastes.

The calendar showing “flammable wastes” days and “oversized garbage” days are available in the Himeji official application, “Himeji Plus”. It also carries articles titled “How to Take Out Garbage” and “Handbook of Sorting Out Garbage by Type.” By using QR codes here, you can download the related application.



iOS



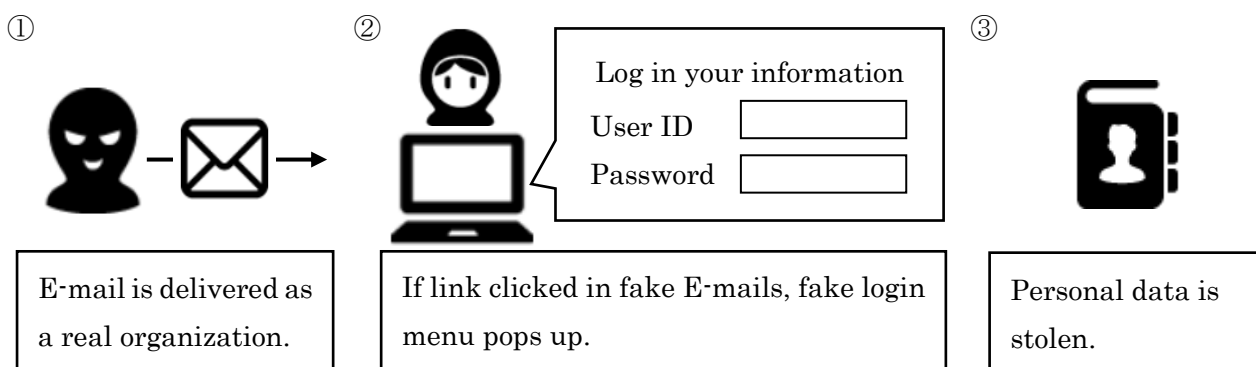
Android

Pay attention to fraud on the Internet!

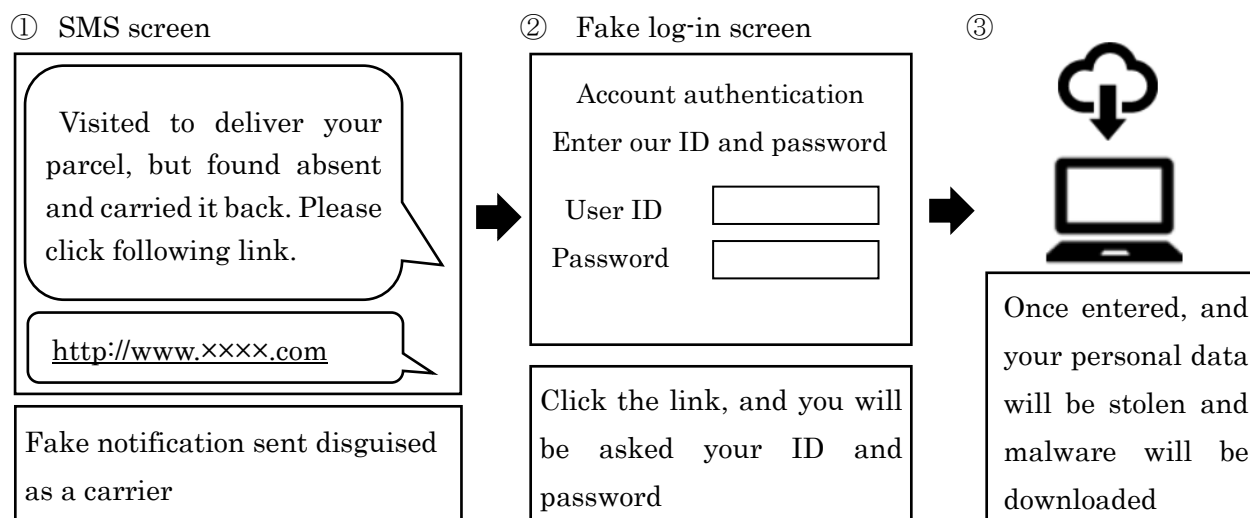
Common use of smartphones or tablets are very useful in our daily life. On the other hand, we have many risks involving crimes such fraud. Fraud scams are getting to be slier, and we might fall for scams without noticing.

Recently a common fraud on the internet is “Phishing scam”. Phishing scam is the fraudulent attempt to obtain personal data by disguising as a trustworthy, real entity on the internet.

An example of phishing scam by E-mail



An example of phishing scam by SMS (SMS : Short Message Service)



Precautions when accessing web sites

- ① Confirm key mark
- ② Can also clarify if the URL is correct or not
- ③ Do not open links and banners on the internet easily



Precautions when using smartphones and tablets

- ① Do not answer unfamiliar phone numbers
- ② Try to search delivered E-mails or messages, and you might find some scams.
- ③ Do not enter your ID and password immoderately when the log-in screen appears

☆Announcements from the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation

■Himeji Foreign National Advice Center was opened.

Himeji municipal office is offering free consulting and counseling service at the Citizen's counseling booth on the first floor. Foreigners can discuss any question about daily life. Please call the center for foreigner support enquires: 079-221-2159

Available language	Japanese, English, French	} Mondays to Fridays (9:00am-12:00am, 1:00pm-5:00pm)
	Other languages (available by translator machine)	
	Vietnamese	Mondays (1:20pm-5:20pm)
	Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese	Tuesdays (1:00pm-4:00pm)

◆◆◆Letter from the Editor◆◆◆

Big disasters have occurred frequently around the world this year. It is thought to be caused by global warming. It has been 23 years since the Kyoto Protocol was adopted. Greta Thunberg, who is a 16 year-old high school student from Sweden, gave a speech at the IGES. While there are pros and cons, her speech deserves consideration. If each of us are dedicated with helping each other, it will have a greater impact. As a result, it will prevent global warming.



Disaster Prevention Vocabulary of This Issue

さいがい 災害 *Saigai*: disaster

example) どしゃさいがい 土砂災害 *Dosha-saigai*: land slide

Translators and Proofreaders

Japanese: Mika Miyamoto, Toshiharu Mochizuki, Minako Kunimitsu, Fusako Shigeta,
Megumi Itani, Masako Honjo

English: Nollaig O'Cuill, Wakana Tokura, Tiffany Gibson, Kenzo Fukui, Megumi Itani,
Manami Yokoyama, An Tran

These names are used with the contributors' permission.
Their assistance is much appreciated.

You can read back numbers of "VIVA! ひめじ" on the website of the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation (International Exchange Section) (<http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/>).

The next issue of "VIVA! ひめじ" will be available in March, 2020.

We are always looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions of "VIVA! ひめじ". If you are interested, please contact us at the following address. We also welcome your comments and suggestions.

Contact Information

Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation
3rd floor, Egret Himeji, 68-290 Honmachi,
Himeji City, Hyogo 670-0012
TEL : 079-282-8950 FAX : 079-282-8955
Email: info@himeji-iec.or.jp