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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation  
 – newsletter editing volunteers

## What Can We Do in Just 2 Hours?

The ものづくり体験館 (Hyogo Craftsmanship Experience Center) is located about a 3-minute walk from JR Higashi-Himeji Station. You can have a full-scale craft experience in a short time here.

This experience center aims to spread the appeal of manufacturing to junior high school students in Hyogo Prefecture. It works with schools to provide vocational education and hold events in which students can participate. At the events, even elementary school students can experience craftsmanship if they apply.

Notable summer holiday experiential courses include classes in which you can make wooden tissue cases, tin objects and keychains, leather wallets, and more. There is also a course where you can create a robot sumo wrestler and play with it. You can learn directly from craftsmen how to use materials, tools, and special techniques that you don't usually have a chance to touch.

It will be your chance to experience the joy of crafting. Please come and join the courses!



ものづくり体験館

### 〈Summer holiday experiential courses〉

Event period: Late July to Late August

Venue: Hyogo Prefectural College of Craftsmanship, ものづくり体験館  
 (1001-1 Ichinogo, Himeji City, 670-0943)

Available for participation: Elementary school students and above

Participation fee: Fee varies depending on the program

Website : 

Instagram: Search for "monodukuri\_taikanan"!

※Detailed schedule and contents for 2025 can be found on the website and Instagram. Please check.



the robot sumo wrestler



the leather coin purses

## Let's Go Hiking on Mt. Shosha!

On Mt. Shosha, there is a very famous temple called “Engyoji Temple”. There are six trails to hike on Mt. Shosha, “Higashi-saka”, “Nishi-saka”, “Rokkaku-zaka”, “Katanade-zaka”, “Nenbi-zaka”, and “Okishio-zaka”. Each trail takes about one hour to complete. Along the way, you’ll find rare and beautiful plants, and the view is spectacular. You might even meet some rare birds such as *Hachikuma* (Oriental Honey-buzzard) and *Otaka* (Goshawk). In this issue, we introduce three of these trails.



### Higashi-saka

The best trail for the scenery!

From the “Shosha Higashi-saka” bus stop, after going through the residential area, you will find the entrance to the trail. There is the smallest pond in Japan and a comfortable rock to sit on for a rest, with a clear view of the Himeji cityscape. This is the most popular trail, so it is well maintained, allowing even beginners to easily enjoy hiking. You can also reach this trail from the Shosha Ropeway Station.



### Nishi-saka

If you are an athletic person, this trail is for you!

Get off the bus at the “Nishi-saka” bus stop. The trail entrance is located on the east side of the University of Hyogo Himeji Campus for Engineering. The trail is wide, but the slope at the beginning is quite steep. There are fewer hikers, so it is very quiet. The fresh green season and the autumn leaves season are especially recommended. If you do not think you’re very athletic, we recommend a different trail.

### Katanade-zaka

Enjoy the nature on this trail!

Get off the bus at the “Katanade” bus stop. You can begin hiking in the woods from the trail entrance located next to the large solar power plant. This trail has a gentle uphill slope, and is better suited for beginners than the Higashi-saka trail. There are brooks and water falls. It’s a very nice hike as you cross the brooks and walk in the sunlight through the woods.



In addition to the above three trails, the Nenbi-zaka trail has many stone Buddhas along the way. In Autumn, Japanese drums will be played by Yosuke, a drum player who lives in Himeji. Many people hike up Mt. Shosha to enjoy his performance. There are many ways to enjoy Mt. Shosha. Why don’t you go hiking there once?

## Let's Make a Disaster Prevention Bag

We don't know when or where disasters will occur. It may be difficult to return home if you are at your workplace or out somewhere when a disaster strikes. In such cases, having a disaster prevention bag prepared at your workplace can be very useful. Let's prepare your own disaster prevention bag using items from a 100-yen shop or other affordable stores.

Water Bag	It is folded, so you'll need to unfold it when using it. Some bags can hold up to 2 liters of water.
Emergency Blanket	It is made of aluminum, so it is light. Use it to keep warm when it's cold, or to protect yourself from the sun when it's hot.
Portable Toilet	Unfold it over a toilet to use. It has deodorizing properties. After use, gel hardens the waste, allowing it to be thrown away as burnable trash.
Flashlight	You can turn it into a lantern by placing a plastic bottle filled with water on top of it.
Whistle	Use it to signal your location if you are trapped. Some whistles come attached to a flashlight.
Plastic Bags	There are two types: one with deodorizing properties, and another that can be used to warm food. It's useful to carry both.
Non-Perishable Food	Include cookies, cereal bars, candies and other long-lasting food items.
Hygiene Items	Disinfectant Wipes, Body wipes, toothbrush sets, masks, bandages, and other sanitary products.
Cash	You may not be able to use cashless payment methods during a disaster.
Other Useful Items	Work gloves, body warmers, folding glasses, towels.

※Be sure to include a note in your bag with emergency contact information: your name, phone number, blood type, any medications you regularly take, and the names and numbers of emergency contacts.



Pack everything in a zippered bag.

## Let's Use the Free Cancer Screening Coupon

Himeji City issues a free cancer screening coupon for women aged 20 and over, and men aged 40 and over in mid-May. Eligibility for the coupon depends on the type of cancer screening, age, and gender. Let's use the coupon to undergo cancer screening and detect any potential illnesses early.

### What's in the Envelope of the Free Coupon

#### ●Reiwa 7 Fiscal Year Free Cancer Screening Coupon (pink paper)

○○( name of the cancer ) Free Screening Coupon

- Your Name
- Date of Birth
- Your Address
- ◎Expiration Date – You can use the coupon until this date.
- ◎Screening Details – Type of cancer screening provided.
- ◎Out-of-Pocket Cost – If you don't use the coupon, you will need to pay the full fee.

Please bring the coupon with you to the screening. Lost coupons cannot be reissued.

#### ●Medical Institution Directory (light green (spring green) paper )

This contains information about hospitals where you can receive cancer screenings for free, including hospital names, phone numbers, and the types of screenings available. To undergo a medical check-up, choose a hospital from the list and call to make a reservation.

#### ●Citizen Cancer Mobile Screening Schedule (yellow paper)

If you don't undergo cancer screening at a hospital, you can receive it at the Himeji City Medical Association or a community center. It includes locations and dates, so please choose the date you prefer. There is a limit on the number of participants, so contact the Himeji City Public Health Center (079-289-1555) by phone and apply as soon as possible.

○In the case of ladies' screenings, please check the ladies' screening schedule and choose the date you want to go. Call the Himeji City Medical Association (079-295-3530) to apply for the screening.

Screenings at medial institutions tend to be very crowded from February to March, as the coupon expiration date approaches. Please make your appointment early.

## People -Interview-

### Ms. Shwe Yi Win (Myanmar)



Ms. Win received First Place in the 17<sup>th</sup> Japanese Speech Contest. Her wonderful speech expressed heartfelt gratitude to her mother. She began studying Japanese in 2019 and came to Japan in 2022 to attend a Japanese language school. After studying in Ishikawa Prefecture, she moved to Himeji in April 2024. In January 2024, she experienced the Noto Peninsula Earthquake. She is currently a student at Kobe University of Future Health Sciences.

**Q** How did your family, friends, or teachers react to you winning First Place?

**A** Everyone was happy for me. My friend sent me a message on LINE. My mother doesn't understand Japanese, so I explained the content of the speech to her over the phone. However, I was too shy to tell her everything directly. Even without words, we both understand that we love each other.

**Q** What has been the most difficult part of living in Japan?

**A** When I was in Japanese language school, everyone around me was also studying Japanese, so I didn't feel anxious about my language ability. But now, I'm surrounded by native speakers, so I sometimes feel unsure. I also had trouble explaining my symptoms at the hospital. I even got lost once when I went to Osaka.

**Q** You experienced the Noto Peninsula Earthquake. What were you doing at the time?

**A** I was working a part-time job at a convenience store. I was thankful that the store manager was there that day. A bottle of wine fell from the shelf, shattered, and turned the floor bright red. Many customers came to buy things like instant noodles, and the store was almost completely emptied.

**Q** Do you have any goals or dreams for the future?

**A** I want to get my certification as a social worker, which I'm currently studying for. After that, I hope to work as a social worker in Japan for five years. Then, I'd like to take what I've learned and apply it back in Myanmar.

Ms. Win's speech from the 17<sup>th</sup> Japanese speech contest is now available on YouTube.

Scan the QR code on the right to watch it!





## Try Out the Himeji Castle Marathon

Starting from Himeji Castle, a World Heritage Site, you can enjoy nature and historical sites. With hardly any differences in elevation, it is an easy course suitable for setting new records.

Along the route, locals cheer runners on with music performances and dances. Food and drinks are distributed at various points. In addition, you will receive a free entrance ticket to Himeji Castle.

Besides the full marathon, there are fun runs (1 km, 1.5 km, 2 km, 5 km), allowing people of all ages to enjoy running.

The next Himeji Castle Marathon is scheduled for February 22, 2026 (Sunday). Details for runner registration will be announced around June on the official website: <https://www.himeji-marathon.jp/>. By participating in the marathon, you can experience history and culture in ways that cannot be learned from books or television. Try out to create wonderful memories with your friends and loved ones!



Website

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

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You can read previous issues of “VIVA! ひめじ” on the website of Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation International Exchange Section. The next issue will be available in September, 2025.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. We are also looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions. If you are interested, please contact us at the address on the right.



Website

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