

「FY2017 Activity Report」

◆General Assembly Meeting (May 14, 2017)

FY2017 General Assembly Meeting was held at a conference room in Fuchu community center on May 14, 2017. Many honorable guests including town mayor Sato attended the meeting. Three bills, FY2016 Business Report, FY2017 Business Plan & Budget and Officers Election, were unanimously approved. Since we try to do our best by consulting with town offices, we would appreciate your continued cooperation with us for fulfilling our events from now on.



◆Cultural Exchange Party (June 18, 2017)

It became an exciting party because the number of participants was 85 including 39 people from eight countries such as China, Vietnam, Taiwan, Laos, Russia, United States, The Philippines, and India. It was fine from the morning even if the rainy season and the meeting were off to a good start with a lot of visitors.

At first, we introduced participants from other countries aside from Japan and had an icebreaker through some games then they enjoyed having food after making a toast.

This year's much-awaited attractions were Balloon Art and Juggling. The Balloon Art by Ms. Osaki from Mazda human resource agency was very popular for kids. She made many kinds of animal shapes by twisting balloons one after another. She also made cute puppies as for requests after her performance as long as there were remaining balloons. The presentation by the Juggling Club "Juggle x Juggle" of Hiroshima University Kasumi campus was also very popular. Both adults and kids watched the performance enthusiastically. They were amazed because the performers skillfully used balls and sticks like a bowling pin.

There were a lot of potluck cuisines prepared early in the morning and everyone enjoyed yummy food such as authentic Chinese dumplings, ethnic food with plenty of spices, Japanese noodles, Japanese sweets and cakes.

At last, we had a lottery session as usual and everyone satisfied with prizes. We ended the event on a high note.

We had a pleasant time and enjoyed talking with people from other countries.



◆Lecture Presentation (July 30, 2017)

On July 30 in 2017, we have received Ms. Isooda Ajdari from Iran as a guest speaker at our event, "Speech by a foreign guest". She is a foreign student at Hiroshima Jyogakuin majoring Global Studies. Iran's population is about 80,000,000 and the land area is 4.4 times of that of Japan. However, as a nation, it's not economically rich whose GDP is a tenth of Japan. Guessing from the pictures of her family she showed us, she seems to have been born with a silver spoon in her mouth.

The first half of her speech was about the history of the old name of Iran, Persia. It carries a complicated history of a lot of strives against neighboring countries besides political intervention by Britain & Russia in modern times. She arranged the main points well in her explanation and caused our interest to hear, starting from Persian Dynasty in BC, invasion of Islam in the 7th century, Pahlavi Dynasty from the 20th century and Islam revolution. In the latter half, mainly food and costume were introduced. The staple food is various kinds of flat bread(nan) and how to bake was also explained.

She kindly brought about 10 kinds of Iranian traditional costume and some of us enjoyed trying on those.

She introduced some of the sightseeing places. Most overwhelming one would be the remain of Persepolis registered as one of World Heritage Site.

The palace was built in BC and destroyed by the army of Alexander the Great in 331 BC.

She introduced Mt. Damavand that looks like Mt. Fuji

She said it's higher than Mt. Fuji. Later I found it that it is a volcano as tall as 5671 m according to the web information.



◆The 10th International Friendship Table Tennis Competition (August 27, 2017)

Last year we combined two ways of games, namely, tournament and league game. But there was a review result that the number of matches performed by a team is not much enough for them to satisfy (minimum 3 matches). And so, this time the league game was arranged so that at least 5 matches are performed by a team. Participants are 16 foreigners and 17 Japanese, making 16 pair teams each of whom is paired by a foreigner and a Japanese. Speaking of foreign players, 14 are Vietnamese and 2 are Chinese. As for Japanese, 14 members were from Fuchu-Cho Table Tennis

Association and 3 were from (Fuchucho International Relations Association (FIRA) members. One of three is 80 years old person and two were, this is the first time in this event, schoolchildren of 4th grade of primary school and 1st grade of junior high school. As workers behind the scene, 8 judges from Fuchu-Cho Table Tennis Association and our 11 FIRA members supported the event with great effort. As we could not determine a champion through this league games, we have to set a final match that has not been expected. But everything went smoothly and this event could be finished almost within the expected time of frame due to the experience and all sorts of preparations.

As usual, the friendly interaction between young Vietnamese players and Japanese players whose ages are almost same as their mothers' were enjoyable and pleasant to see.

We believe we could have wonderful international relations.



◆Let's play in English!" 2017 (October 21, 2017)

On October 21 (Sat), we held an event for elementary school students, "Let's play with English!" at the small hall of Kusunoki Plaza. 12 elementary school students and their parents joined the event.

From the children who finished a reception played with our assistant Ms. Toko in easy English as a warm-up exercise and listened to the story of English history.

After that, they enjoyed playing games using English words related to emotional expression and Halloween with teacher Jamie from England. Since most of the children were English experienter, they gradually became active and they had a lot of fun playing with English.

In the last half of the activity, after children played physical games using English and listened to the story about Halloween, they enjoyed the picture-story show by Mike dressed up as Harry Potter. After that, we enjoyed Halloween walk in the room. Everyone held a bag and went around staffs by saying "Trick or Treat" and "I'm ---" and collected snacks.

At last, when I asked "Who had fun time today?", everyone cheerfully raised their hand up and gave an instant answer and finished the event "Let's Play in English!" with full of smile.

I hope children could enjoy English through playing and take this occasion to get more familiar with English.



◆Domestic Research Travel (November 12, 2017)

Participants were 45 non-Japanese and 25 Japanese people. There were a variety of nationalities such as Russia, Vietnam, US, India and China. We headed to Tsuwano by two buses.

We experienced apple picking at Tokusa Apple farm. We had a lecture on distinguishing sweet apples, simple way of picking and eating in order not to get hands dirty. We also got a lecture on picking apple without hurting branches. It was very fun to pick apples but also satisfied with delicious apples. We didn't know there is the best apple orchard in western Japan where we can go apple picking at the bargain price in such a short distance. Since there are many breed varieties of apples at there, we want to visit again.

In Tsuwano, we were surprised at many never-seen-before big carp swimming. We could feel the taste of Japan by interesting townscape which is called as "Little Kyoto". We took a group photo near the statue of heron dance with a feeling to see the heron dance actually someday.

We felt lucky to see an SL of Yamaguchi line near Tsuwano station and the SL was running with spewing out vapor when we passed by the station again by bus.

At Taikodani-Inari, we got a lecture from the bus tour guide on purifying and praying ways that are different from other Inari tutelary shrines then we actually prayed. At the steps with a lot of tori gates, we gave up climbing from the bottom but moved to the top by bus because of our physical strength.



◆16th Recitation by Junior high school students and Japanese speech contest by Non-Japanese speakers (December 17, 2017)

The 16th Recitation by Junior high school students and Japanese speech contest by Non-Japanese was held on December 17, 2017 at the first floor gallery of Kusunoki Plaza. Nine junior high school students in Fuchu town, eight guest speakers and five non-Japanese contestants attended the contest. The results are as follows:

【Recitation by Junior high school students】

Nine junior high school students in Fuchu town attended the contest. They looked a little bit nervous but delivered their recitation magnificently.

The highest awardees are as follows:

- 1st grader Pair of Namba Masaaki and Sugikubo Nonoka (Fuchu junior high)
- 2nd grader Ohseto Naoya (Fuchu junior high)
- 3rd grader Hattori Miharuru (Fuchu junior high)

Furthermore, 3rd grade students, Horimoto Junya and Hattori Miharuru (Fuchu junior high) joined three consecutive years and got the perfect attendance award.

【Guest speech】

At the elementary student category, seven elementary students, Kiyohira Airi, Fujisaki Koharu, Manabe Ichiro, Ueno Aoi, Oizumi Sayaka, Sagara Yuina and Hagi Hiyori performed the favorite subject and poem "Rain Won't" vigorously.

At the high school student category, International course first grader of Aki-Fuchu high school, Capper Minao Helena, delivered her fluent English speech titled "The Best of Christmas Present in the World."

【Japanese speech contest by non-Japanese speaker】

Five contestants from China, Vietnam, Laos and Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the contest and delivered fluent Japanese speeches. Ms. Cizmic Ada from Bosnia and Herzegovina delivered her speech titled "We need peace, 私の平和への思い" and got the highest award.



◆Lecture presentation by non-Japanese speaker (March 4, 2018)

We had Mr. Preston Backer as a speaker on March 4, 2018. He came from Oregon State in the USA and now teaching English at Aki-Fuchu senior high school. The title was "My life and experiences that changed me". He talked about his life so far and incidents and experiences that affected it in detail.

I understood that the basis of his attitude toward a life is to pursue to the end whatever he is interested in. Because of his parent's divorce, he rather led a complicated life like changing the place to live every week. He was given with a sister after his mother got married. Judging from numerous slides that show the pleasant family life, they seem to be strongly connected each other with family love. He had a keen zest for the drama. His drama performance has been gradually developed from his elementary school age and reached to an almost professional level when he was a university student. He showed three comical skits in which he played as an actor.

Since his childhood, he has had much concern about Japan. He studied Japanese at his high school and university. But the trigger that made him move to Japan was a serious disease. He suffered from pancreas cancer that is considered most serious and the shortest survival rate among cancers. While he was carrying a struggle against the disease with a ball head due to the side effect of anti-cancer drug, he deliberated what he should do in his coming life, and a conclusion was to move to and live in Japan.

He met a beautiful girl and married her. Together with her, he came to Japan. He worked ALT at a senior high school in Fukuyama city. He tried to do his best to be adapted to Japan and its people. He talked half in joke that the best way is to visit bars frequently. He is such a person who loves Japan so much, but he is now in a difficult situation to make him leave Japan considering his wife's life in future. She has a dream to have a bakery, but it is almost impossible legally for foreigners in Japan to do it.

To make her dream come true, he decided to go back to the USA and help her open a bakery. He feels very sorry about that, but we, Japanese, also feel sorry and hope stay longer in Japan



◆「International Exchange Class」 at After School Children's Club (March 10, 2018)

International exchange class for students of "after school children's club" was held at Kusunoki Plaza Gallery on March 10, 2pm~4pm, requested by Board of Education, Forty students(1st grade~4th grade) from 5 elementary schools in town gathered and listened to 『Things about China』 told by Ms.Huang Ying coming from China.

They learned some simple Chinese and also got the introduction to the landscapes, food, history and culture of China through screen images.

They gazed with great interest at the majestic landscapes and appetizing food of China.

At the end of the class, they enjoyed making paper cutting decorations for the Chinese New Year.

Upon planning and holding the class, Ms.Bozena from Poland, Ms.Huyen from Vietnam and Ms.Kiyofuji made a great contribution to the success.

Thanks to the efforts of all concerned, International Exchange Class was really filled with international character.



◆Language Classes (April 2017 to March 2018)

During the above-mentioned time frame, we held three types of conversational classes: English language classes for children, English language classes for adults and Japanese conversation classes for foreign residents.

The children's English classes, which were offered every other Saturday, were divided into two classes. One was for pre-school children and the other was for older children. Children in these classes quickly became used to English sounds and had fun learning with the native English-speaking teacher. On open class days in June and November you could realize how much their English had improved.

The English language classes for adults were divided into three levels. The introductory course was held every Thursday except the fifth Thursday. The elementary and intermediate courses were held every other Tuesday. Participants of all ages had a great desire to learn. Thanks to their enthusiastic teachers from the USA and the UK, they were able to make gradual progress in English conversation.

In the Japanese conversation classes for foreign residents, volunteer teachers gave lessons every Sunday except for the fifth Sunday or every Tuesday and Thursday. The students in the course were from different countries. There were many Vietnamese students. Young people from abroad who recently arrived in Japan practiced daily life conversation, reading and writing. Several professional rugby players from Australia and New Zealand who were in Mazda Motor Corporation participated in this course between practices and matches. Students attending the course actively took part in events organized by our association and deepened personal exchanges between our members.

