



S I F A

T I M E S



News Flash

2

Event info

3

ALT Greetings

4

COVID-19 Vaccine &
Proof of Vaccination

The Lone Star State

5 – 6



NEWS FLASH

Halloween 'Jack O Lantern' Party

On Saturday, October 16th, we held our "Jack-O-Lantern party" in the Entrance Hall and Lesser Hall of Shikochu Hall. With limited numbers like last year, this year we were able to take our event back inside. The kids' costumes were adorable, and it was heart-warming to see them enjoying the games and piñata-breaking, getting spooked in the haunted house and designing cool pumpkin faces. At the end of the event, our high school volunteers helped lead everyone in playing "Witch, Mummy, Zombie" (Rock, paper, scissors). Many thanks as always to our wonderful volunteers who help us carry on the tradition of SIFA Halloween.



English Cafe ④

On Saturday, November 13th, nineteen participants from five different countries gathered at Shikochu Hall and chatted casually in English for ninety minutes. We had many first-time attendees and the time passed very quickly. We're looking forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events. Special thanks to our discussion leaders Jason Lockwood, Talia Fisher, Grace Nasu and June de Vera.



CIR school visits



On Wednesday, October 6th, I visited **Kawataki ES**. I presented about American foods and festivals to 1st - 4th graders, then we all enjoyed dancing and singing together.

On Tuesday, October 12th, I visited **Kawanoe ES**. I showed some money from around the world, talked about USA World Heritage sites and played 'Simon says'. I enjoyed running the lessons with their English teachers and temp ALT Ms. Iuchi.



On Wednesday, October 20th, I visited **Nagatsu ES**. I enjoyed dancing the Hokey Pokey and singing "Old MacDonald had a farm" with the cheerful and energetic first and second graders.

On Friday, October 22nd, I visited **Kofuji ES**. After presenting about food, clothes, and houses around the world, we all played "Rock, paper, scissors, split".



On Tuesday, October 26th, I visited **Doi ES**. After introducing myself and talking about the USA and world money, we played "Color Tag" in the gym.

On Wednesday, November 11th, I visited **Minami ES**. I enjoyed dancing, singing and playing Simon Says and various kinds of Rock, Paper, Scissors with the first and second graders.



On Monday, October 11th, I held an **online English chat** with a SIFA member for the 3rd

time. We talked about life and travel and brainstormed what the English translation for the Japanese proverb 「人生は山あり谷あり」 ("Jinsei wa yama ari tani ari, Life has mountains and valleys") is. I think the closest equivalent expression would be "Life has its ups and downs". What do you think?

From December 16th to January 25th, I will be out of the office, so we won't hold any online English chats. If you're interested in an online Japanese practice session with one of our lovely Japanese staff, though, send us a message and we'll be happy to set it up.

EVENT INFO

✂ In the interest of preventing the further spread of COVID-19, there may be changes to our event schedule.

✂ Please wear a mask to our events. We thank you for your cooperation in disinfecting your hands and fingers, as well.

SIFA bulletin

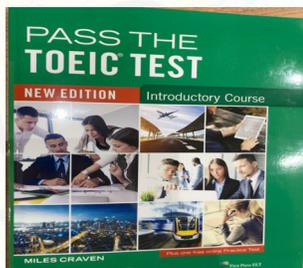
Volunteer for the International Exchange Festival

Date: Saturday, February 26th
Time: noon ~ 5pm
Place: Shikochu Hall
Target age: Twenty or older
Details: Help run the booths
and clean up afterwards
Signup deadline: Friday, February 4th
✂ Event time is subject to change



Ace the TOEIC

What do you know about the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication)? Unlike the popular Japanese “Eiken,” the TOEIC is a measure of English ability used around the world. Also unlike the Eiken, there’s no “failing” the TOEIC – everyone will get a score regardless of English level.



We’ll be holding a class in Japanese to prepare first-time test-takers for how to take the TOEIC. We hope to provide motivation for intermediate English learners to continue their studies.

Dates: January 27th, February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th,
March 3rd (Thursdays, six meetings)

Time: 7pm – 8pm

Place: Citizens’ Exchange Building
2nd floor meeting rooms

Instructor: Daniel Cruse (city CIR)

Target English level: Intermediate and above
(High Schooler or older)

Cost: ¥2,000 (SIFA member,) ¥4,000 (general)
¥3,000 textbook fee not included.

Signup deadline: Thursday, January 20th

Members-only English Salon

Come ‘shoot the breeze’ with other SIFA members in Kawanoe or in Mishima.

Dates: Thursday, December 9th –
Kawanoe Fureai Exchange Center, meeting
room 1

Tuesday, December 14th –
Citizens’ Exchange Center, 2nd floor meeting
rooms

Time: 10:30~ 11:05

Group size: 2-4 SIFA members (HS or above)

Discussion leader: Daniel Cruse (city CIR)

Cost: free

Signup deadline: Tuesday, December 7th



Welcome, Astrid and Talia!

Hello, my name is **Astrid Westerbeek** and I am from Nelson, New Zealand. I grew up in The Netherlands where I graduated from Utrecht University. I studied English Language and Literature, not thinking I would ever become a teacher. Twenty years ago I emigrated to beautiful New Zealand which I now consider my home. After a life changing event in 2016 I walked part of the Ohenro san 88 temple pilgrimage. It was the most amazing experience; the temples are peaceful and beautiful, the people friendly and the food great. And since then I have wanted to live in Japan for a while. I love visiting temples and shrines. I also enjoy walking, reading and quilting, and playing outside with the students during play time.



こんにちは、ニュージーランド・ネルソン市の**ウエステルベーク・アストリッド**です。育ちはオランダで、フトレヒト大学を卒業しました。先生になるつもりは全然なかったのですが、専攻は英文学でした。20年前美しいニュージーランドに移住し、今はニュージーランド人です。2016年に人生が変わり、初めて四国88ヶ所の東部を歩き遍路として回りました。素晴らしい体験でした。名刹がのどかで美しく、人が親切で食べ物も美味しかったです。それ以降しばらく日本に住みに来たかったです。お寺や神社参り、散歩、読書、キルティング、学校で子供と遊ぶことが好きです。



Hi! My name is **Talia Fisher** and I come from Ottawa, Canada. I'm so excited to be here in Shikokuchuo as an ALT! Last year I graduated from the University of Ottawa in International Development and Globalization. I also did a minor in Asian Studies and have been learning Japanese for a few years. I can't wait to keep learning while I'm here. I love hiking and cycling and I am very excited to get to explore the trails around Shikoku. If you have any recommendations please let me know! I look forward to meeting you all.

こんにちは、カナダのオタワ出身の**フェッシャー・タリア**です。ALTとして四国中央に来られて、わくわくしています。去年オタワ大学の国際発展とグローバル化学科を卒業しました。副専攻はアジア学科で数年日本語を勉強してきました。今後もちろん日本語の勉強を続けたいです。山登り、サイクリングが大好きで四国の道を検索するのはとても楽しみです。野外のお勧めの場所があれば、教えて下さい。皆さんに会う機会を楽しみに待っています。

COVID-19 Vaccine and Proof of Vaccination

Over 80% of those eligible (adults and children 12 years and older) have now scheduled their vaccines, so from mid-November the number of clinics offering COVID vaccines has decreased. Appointments are open by email or telephone.

Phone reservations : 0570-057-089
(Available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese etc)

<https://www.city.shikokuchuo.ehime.jp/site/vaccine/22331.html>



If you need **proof of vaccination** for **travel overseas**, the city's Infectious Disease Policy department is issuing them. (Phone number: 0896-28-6208). If you're considering overseas travel, please gather the required documents and apply without delay.

The website is available in both English and in Japanese.

Everything is Bigger in Texas

TEXAS IS THE #2 STATE IN THE USA IN SIZE (AFTER ALASKA) AND POPULATION (AFTER CALIFORNIA) AND IT LOOMS LARGE IN THE AMERICAN IMAGINATION. WHILE TEXAS IS FAMOUS AS THE HOMELAND OF “COWBOY CULTURE,” IT’S A VERY DIVERSE STATE AND HOME TO MANY REGIONS WITH DIFFERENT CULTURES AND ATTRACTIONS. LET’S EXPLORE SOME OF THEM.

San Antonio

Visitors to this South Texas metropolis can enjoy a boat ride on the San Antonio river walk, a visit to the Institute of Texan cultures, and a meal at the Tower of the Americas.

History lovers should check out the San Antonio Missions National Historic Park (UNESCO World Heritage area built in the 17th century) and the Alamo (site of a major battle in 1836).

Houston

Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth-largest in the United States. It’s a melting pot that offers fine dining, sports and plentiful entertainment.

Take a day trip to the nearby port of Galveston and enjoy the downtown historic district, seasonal festivals and the atmosphere of the beautiful Gulf of Mexico.

On the way to Galveston, check out the Johnson Space Center.



Dallas • Ft Worth

While Houston may be Texas’s largest city, the cities of Dallas, Ft Worth and surrounding towns make up the biggest metro area in the state. Enjoy staples of Texas culture like the Texas State Fair, a Dallas Cowboys (Football) game or enjoy a visit to the original Six Flags amusement park in nearby Arlington.

Austin

The capitol of Texas, Austin is host to cultural institutions like the University of Texas, LBJ Presidential Library, Texas capitol building, and in March, the South by Southwest music and film festival. Music lovers can listen to music year-round in the South Congress neighborhood. In the summer, head to the Congress Avenue bridge at dusk to see the USA’s largest urban colony of bats.

Texas Trivia

1) What percent of Texans speak Spanish at home?

2) How many countries has Texas been a part of?

Answers will appear in next February’s newsletter

The Tastes of Texas



Barbecue

One of the most famous Texas meat dishes, **beef brisket** (marinated and slow-cooked for many hours), can be enjoyed with sausage links.



Chicken-Friend Steak

Beef steak deep fried and breaded (like fried chicken) and served with cream gravy.



Gulf Shrimp

Another fried food enjoyed in coastal Texas is Gulf Shrimp. Gulf shrimp are renowned for their size and delicious taste.



Chile : Originating as “chili con carne,” authentic Texas chili is chopped or ground beef, spices and some vegetables. Enjoy with hot cornbread. (Some versions of chili include beans).



Breakfast Tacos

Start your day with a combination of eggs, beans, meat, avocados, salsa and other tasty ingredients.



Fajitas

Strips of grilled and marinated steak beef served in a wheat tortilla. Originally created by Ninfa Laurenza at her Houston restaurant (where you can still order them today!)



Kolaches

A traditional fried Czech pastry filled with fresh fruit or sweet cheese, Texas kolaches are sometimes savory and filled with meat (“klobasniky”).



Four ways to explore Texas:

Swimming



Enjoy the white sands and pleasant temperatures of the Gulf of Mexico with a trip to Padre Island (near the city of Corpus Christi).

Tubing



Relax with an adult beverage as you float down the Comal river (less than an hour from San Antonio).

Equestrian



Explore Texas on horseback on a guided tour of Big Bend Ranch State Park, Hill Country State Natural Area, or Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

Hiking



Immerse yourself in nature at west Texas's Guadalupe Mountains or Big Bend National Parks.

Suggestion? Need help with something?

Get in touch!

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Submissions welcome

Send us your thoughts, life updates, artwork, or anything else.

What have you been up to? What inspires you? Have an event idea or request? Let's broaden each others' horizons.