

P1

IIA New Office Opening

IIA 's new office will officially open on April 1. Our new office is located at the 3rd floor of the building which was formerly called "Shimin Danwashitsu (Citizens' Communication Center). On the same floor, Ichikawa City will also launch the International Exchange Lounge which will be operated by IIA, hence the decision to move to the same space.

.....

New address: 3rd Floor, 2-4-8 Yawata, Ichikawa City, Chiba, Japan 272-0021

Office hours: Monday to Friday 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Closed - Sat, Sun & public holidays

Phone/Fax numbers and email address are unchanged

.....

P2

Ichikawa City International Exchange Lounge

The International Exchange Lounge is set to promote understanding of different cultures and internationalization by providing information on living and exchange events to non-Japanese residents in Ichikawa. It will also provide information to foreign tourists in cooperation with the Tourist Information Center.

The lounge will be the place where Japanese and non-Japanese citizens can interact with each other.

.....

Official opening: April 1, 2021

Location: 2-4-8 Yawata, Ichikawa city (3rd Fl. of formerly Shimin Danwashitsu)

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (except public holidays & year end/new year)

.....

※ IIA is now recruiting assistants for the International Exchange Lounge.

Members who are interested may contact IIA office.

Supporters for non-Japanese residents at Evacuation Shelters

IIA and Ichikawa City have signed a disaster prevention agreement to support non-Japanese residents. When a disaster occurs and evacuation centers are opened, IIA is expected to send the supporters to evacuation shelters in the city. We are very grateful that many people have applied for participation as supporters.

Training was immediately conducted through this organization on March 11th, the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. It was assumed that a huge earthquake occurred at 10 am, and the city requested for support at the

evacuation shelters. 25 supporters walked their way to the designated shelters (elementary schools) and returned home. Since no shelter has actually been opened this time, this training was mainly for the verification of the communication system.

We will continue to improve this system and make it a highly reliable one that everyone can easily participate in. We look forward to your participation.

P3

Activities under the COVID-19~Looking back on activities in 2020~

In 2020, most of the planned activities were canceled or postponed due to the impact of the new coronavirus infection throughout the year.

Under such circumstances, some activities were carried out while taking the precautionary measures to ensure people's safety and peace of mind.

All exchange projects with partner cities have been canceled or postponed.

However, three contracted projects from the city were carried out - the final year of the Chef Teachers at 4 elementary schools; World Friends (Video letter exchange) between St. Nicholas School in Issy-les-Moulineaux and Fukijima Elementary School; and ICHIMAIL translation as an information tool for non-Japanese residents.

The activities of each committee were also greatly affected by COVID-19. Regular projects such as Japanese language classes as well as German, French, and Chinese language classes were held for a limited time. The plenary session had to be held through written notice. On the other hand, some committees tried a new initiative by holding online events such as yoga and tai chi using ZOOM, which seems to be a hint for future activities.

Japanese class under COVID-19 situation (Japanese Language Committee)

Last year, the second year of Reiwa era, the city facilities were available for Japanese language classes only from August to November. While the number of participants in the normal year exceeded 10,000, it is expected to be around 3,000 this year.

In conducting the classes, volunteers are struggling with hardships and ingenuity. For instance, wearing of masks and keeping a distance made it difficult for them to hear their students' voices.

What is surprising is that 20 volunteers from the Japanese language class have started online classes using ZOOM. Online study sessions such as ZOOM are also held in various forms - for the entire committee, for each classroom and for individual lessons.

P4

Online Japanese Language Lesson Experience (Contribution)

This class covers 35 lessons using the textbook, "Minna no Nihongo", and attended by 2 Indians and 1 Chinese learners who were usually tolerant of time, but because it is an online class, the learners were waiting properly before it starts. The learners are people who use ZOOM at work and are accustomed to operating it, so no support was needed other than sending their ID and password.

During the lessons, we provide the students with screen-sharing materials (Excel, PowerPoint) instead of blackboard writing.

Explaining while operating the PC can become complicated, and I could not afford to take a closer look at their situation.

In addition, learners often speak at the same time, so I think it is necessary to devise ways to use some cues.

With the above-mentioned situation, it seems that it is better to start with a small class until we get used to online classes.

French Language Class (Issy-Les-Moulineaux Committee)

We restarted the class in June and immediately formed the LINE group to confirm the number of attendants, report the contents of the class with photos, and to announce the future schedule (5 times in total). The class was held with about 15 people while avoiding the 3Cs, disinfecting hands and wearing masks. The instructor was Samuel Le Youdec. Along with the language course - to speak in French about "How I spent my time recently", he showed us a video introducing the French culture. He mentioned that Japanese animation is very popular in France, wherein "Captain Tsubasa" was renamed "OLIVE et TOM" and "Belle and Sebastian" became "BELLE et Sebastian". He shared with us that his family moved to Chamonix because of his mother's strong love of "Alpine Heidi". He showed videos of Japan and France during the Meiji and Taisho eras and talked about the Christmas (Noel) tradition in France. Although the committee meeting in February was canceled due to the re-declaration of the state of emergency, we look forward to having it using ZOOM and other means in the future.

New Mayor in Medan City (Medan City Committee)

Mayor and deputy mayor elections were held in Medan in December last year.

Muhammad Bobby Afif Nasution (30 years old), the son-in-law of the current Indonesian president Joko Widodo, was elected as the new mayor and so was Aulia Rachman as the deputy mayor. They took their office on February 26th.

Although 2021 is the year for acceptance of youth delegation from Medan, it is postponed to next year because Medan City is not well prepared for dispatching

young students after the elections. Youth exchange program is very beneficial for the future exchanges between Ichikawa and Medan, and I hope that it will be steadily implemented in 2022.

En Juku will complete its performances (Medan City Committee)

Japanese musicals of the theater company "En Juku", which is composed of Indonesian university students, have been held every year in various parts of Japan. "En Juku" was formed in 2011 by the instructor, Ms. Sugako Kaikiri, as a training ground for Indonesian university students to help them become members of society. Now that many of the enrolled students have become active members of the society in the last 10 years, the activities will come to its completion on April 21, 2021, because the original purpose has been achieved.

The Medan City Committee was able to watch the theater company performance in Tokyo. I believe that the Indonesian young members who left the En Juku, which gave the audience a lot of energy, will become a bridge between Indonesia and Japan in the future. Thank you for the wonderful stage performances.

P5

The new information tool "News Letter"

The News Letter has begun sending information to IIA members about the activities of IIA through email, since IIA News was difficult to publish due to coronavirus pandemic. The articles and composition of NL were decided at a monthly ZOOM meeting, so there was no need to gather at the IIA office.

There were important announcements such as recruitment as well as IIA activities. The biggest disadvantage of NL is that it cannot be sent to members who do not have registered e-mail addresses. I would like to ask members who did not receive the NL to register your e-mail address.

German Study Group (Interpre. & Transl. Committee: iTC)

Due to the frequent state of emergency declarations, community centers had to be closed, and classes to be cancelled. Our German class was not an exception. Ms. W. a newcomer to Ichikawa, who moved from Berlin, Germany with her family last August, suggested an online-meeting. I agreed instantly and informed our members. Eventually, 7 members joined, and our very first German online-meeting took place. Introducing briefly ourselves, we talked where and when we lived in Germany, tips where we could buy good German bread or delicious German sausages, and how we keep studying German etc. The time went by so fast, and we really enjoyed "chatting in German".

I truly hope that the community centers will reopen soon, and that we can hold our classes again, the German class with Ms. Saito as well as the Rosenheim German gathering. I appreciate all of them very much.

World Friends (IIA)

This project started in 2019, aiming at fostering international awareness for youth. Selected schools overseas and elementary schools in Ichikawa exchanged several video letters and cards so far. The schools are Myouden Elementary School and 186th Street Elementary School in Gardena, USA , in 2019. Also, Fukijima Elementary School and St. Nicolas School in Issy, France, had an exchange in 2020. The students showed their curiosity about the cultural differences while respecting each other's culture. The project has surely helped students get interested in English, broaden their horizons, and acquire global thinking.

Yoga Lesson (Buddies)

Buddies had stretching and Yoga Lesson in October with our instructor, Ms. Shinozaki. As it was the first meeting after a long time due to the impact of coronavirus, members were happy to see each other again. We had a sharing of our experiences on how we spent the time during the self-restraint period. We came to know that someone enjoyed walking outside, another one discovered a new hobby, and that all members who gathered were well and active. The stretching was easy to learn and I decided to repeat it at home. At the next meeting, we will be sharing tips on how to enjoy daily life in each country's manner, which must be fun.

Editor's Note

Since the beginning of this year, the state of emergency has not been lifted. All public facilities in the city where we used to hold our activities are closed and we worried that IIA activities would be suspended by almost all committees. However, many committees worked smartly with various ideas as described here such as, Chef Teacher, World Friends Project, communicating with the elementary school in France and teaching Japanese using ZOOM.

It is March 11th today, the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. We don't want to experience it again, but according to experts, it is expected to occur again. One of the important things is the evacuation drill.

It is difficult to live in Japan which is prone to earthquakes, and some epidemics. Disasters can be visible or invisible. It is very important for Japanese and non-Japanese residents to work together to confront these difficult situations.