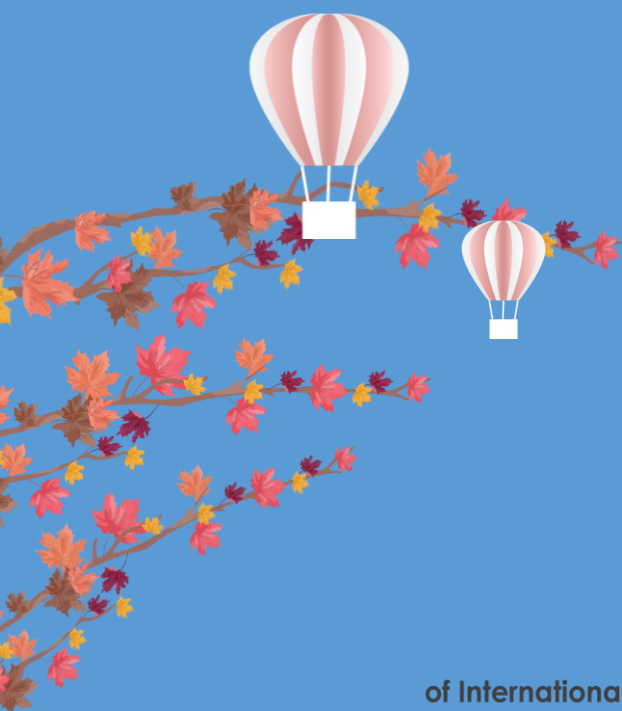


Combined issue for
Autumn & Winter 2022 vol 13&14


from
SAGA

Provided by

SUISA Newsletter Team
& Center for Promotion of International Exchange, Saga University



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A large red speech bubble containing the word "Hi!" in white, bold, sans-serif font. The exclamation point is black. The speech bubble has a tail pointing towards the top left.

Autumn & Winter 2022 vol 13

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Saga 'International Balloon Fiesta' 2022

One of the most famous events in Saga, Saga International Balloon Fiesta 2022," is back after 3 years to cheer people up!



SPIRA International Festa 2022


Saga Prefecture International Relations Association (SPIRA) held SPIRA International Festa 2022 in Takeo city.



Second Home for International Students

Where you live is one of most important things. Saga Univ. provides the dormitories for international students.

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Saga 'International Balloon Fiesta' 2022

What caught my eye in this year's balloon festival was the writing on the riverbank which says, "After 3 years, let's meet in the sky". It made me realize that it had been three years since this well-known Saga festival was not being held. For all the new students who come to Saga during these three years, it might be the first time they got to see the festival. Therefore, in this issue of the newsletter, I proudly present this year's Saga 'International Balloon Fiesta' which was held between the 3rd to the 6th of November 2022.

Even though there were no foreign teams participating in the competition like before, there were more than 50 domestic balloons flying in the sky. There are many ways of competitions but the rule of what I watched was simple enough. The competitor flies the balloon as close to the target set on the ground as possible. The target is a large circle and the competitors need to drop their markers in the circle or as close as they could. The rule of what I saw are simple but actually doing it is not an easy task since the balloons are controlled by the direction of the winds at a certain time. You cannot force it to go left or right with a steering wheel like other vehicles. If you really want to experience how driving a balloon works, you can try the balloon driving simulation at the Saga Balloon Museum which is open all year round.



After the competition with cool balloons, up next were the cute fancy balloons. There were many cute balloons being displayed for example "Tom and Jerry" from Saga Bank, the Asimo balloon from Honda, the new black bear balloon from Taiwan, and the octopus and Yakult balloons with their cute balloon child. But my all-time favourite is the whale balloon where you can go underneath and touch its belly.

Any time the spectators were hungry, there were always food stalls with delicious food like Saga beef skewers, Takoyaki, long French fries, castella, Sasebo burgers, and many more. There was also a tent where all the Saga delicacies were sold called the 'Umakamon Market' (Saga dialect translated as delicious market). There were Saga packaged and fresh foods that you can buy for lunch or as a souvenir, for example, Saga beef, and Saga seaweed.

On the night of the 5th and the 6th of October, there was a beautiful show called "La Montgolfier Nocturne (Night Mooring)" where all the balloons spread out along Kase River and lit their burners up with the musical rhythms. The fire taking turns shining in the darkness looks like they were dancing with the joy of the festival which made the closing moment most memorable.

How about you? Did you participate and have fun?

I hope this will go into one page of your fun moment in Saga life!

SPIRA International Festa 2022

The Saga Prefecture International Relations Association (SPIRA) aims to contribute to making Saga more open to the world by facilitating international exchange with countries all over the world, deepening the international understanding of Saga residents, promoting Saga Prefecture's internationalization by utilizing the region's uniqueness and developing resident-driven international exchange in cooperation with Saga residents and other locally based international exchange groups.



One of the big events from SPIRA is this International Festa. The Saga International Festa aims to build face-to-face relationships by having local Japanese residents and foreign residents participate in the event together. The event is held in a different city or town every year. This year, the main event was held at Machinaka Hiroba and Chuo Koen in Takeo city on 30 October, 2022.



SPIRA International Festa in Takeo was amazing. There were 40 booths (Food, Shop, Promotion, Experience, and consultation) with about 1800 visitors. There were also 5 group of Saga university international students joining to support SPIRA booth. Some of them were dressed in Halloween costumes and walked around the venue with candies and chocolates. Others came as staff and taking pictures at the venue. There was also a wonderful dance performance by Indonesian students from Saga University. Many people who came to the venue were very excited. Dances by Indonesian students are so popular every year.



As the closing statement, here is a word from SPIRA for the readers. "We hold international festa every year in October. We welcome international students. Come and join us! If you would like to help as a volunteer, please contact SPIRA at <https://www.spira.or.jp>. Let's liven up the festival together."

Second Home for International Students

A home is a place where we can feel love, warmth, and security, an environment where we can show our true selves, and a shoulder to rely on when we have a hard time in life. In another word, a place we all are missing in our study abroad journey. Though it may seem that nowhere feels like home, we can still find a sense of belonging through the support and camaraderie of a community. At Saga University, the International House provides a welcoming and home-like atmosphere for students from all over the world.

Saga University offers three different options for student housing: Building A, Building B, and Building C. Building A offers single occupancy rooms, Building B is designated for couples without children, and Building C is designated for families. On average, International Housing can host 150 students.



As a resident of the International House, you will participate in an orientation at the start of each semester. During this orientation, the dormitory's hall tutors will provide a comprehensive overview of the rules and regulations of the dormitory. This will include information on proper waste disposal, designated study times, and guidelines for maintaining a quiet environment during non-business hours.

For further insight, I interviewed a student residing in the Building B dormitory designated for couples. The following is a summary of their responses:

Erjon Krasniqi is a student from Kosovo. He is currently studying Master of Engineering at Saga University. He is assigned to the couple housing Building B.

Question: How do you feel about the rules and regulations of International Housing?

Answer: At first, I was pretty stressed about how to properly dispose of trash. We have to separate it into different categories like burnable, non-burnable, glass, and cans. But now, I'm used to it, and I've come to realize how easy recycling can be and how important it is for the environment.



Question: What is the advantage of living here?

Answer: The living expense is quite cheap, and it is close to the university.

Question: If need some helps, how do you solve it?

Answer: I have the peace of mind knowing that I can reach out to hall tutors for assistance with any daily challenges I may face. As they are fellow Japanese students, they are also able to assist me with paperwork and other language-related tasks. They have been incredibly helpful and supportive.



Friends gathering at their house to celebrate Christmas.

Mathiro Jose Sindete is a student from Benin and he is currently studying engineering as a doctoral student at saga university. He is living in international housing C with his family.

Question: What are the advantages of living in an international house as a family?

Answer: The house is spacious and has many rooms, making it ideal for families with children. Additionally, being a family home, it provides an opportunity for kids to easily make friends, which can be particularly beneficial for those who have recently moved to Japan and are still adjusting to a new country. Also, it is convenient to hang out altogether with my friends since the location is within the university campus.



Celebrating the birthday of Jose's kids with international friends.

Wherever you live, we hope that everyone can find your peaceful home where you can truly rest and be yourself just like your home country.

Edited by

Peemaphat Buarapha, 3rd Year PhD Student of Science and Engineering

Myat Htoo San, 1st PhD Student of Advanced Health Science

Takayuki Kunihiro, 4th Year Student of Secondary English Education

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Hi!

from

Winter 2022 vol 14

SAGA


Provided by
SUISA Newsletter Team
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Cultural Night

Global Supporters and Center for Promotion of International Exchange held "Cultural Night 2022" where you can deepen and experience culture of various countries on January 18th, 2023.

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CULTURAL NIGHT

As the world becomes increasingly globalized, it is important to celebrate and embrace the diversity of cultures and traditions that make up our communities. Universities are often at the forefront of this effort, hosting events such as "Cultural Night" to showcase the unique traditions and customs of their students from around the world. It is also an opportunity for students to share their cultural heritage with their peers, and for the broader university community to learn about and appreciate different cultures.



Saga University celebrated its highly anticipated "Cultural Night of the Year 2022" on January 18th, 2023, following a postponement due to extreme snowfall in December of the previous year. This year's event was particularly significant. In this year we had a larger turnout of international students from a variety of countries, including Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, China, Cambodia, Cameroon, France, Indonesia, Korea, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Kosovo, Tunisia, Vietnam, Lithuania, Mozambique, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Nepal, Zimbabwe, and others.



At cultural night, each country or cultural group represented by the students typically had a booth or table where they display information about their culture, as well as traditional clothing, food, and artefacts. The event also included musical performances, dance performances, and other cultural activities.



As a representative of Republic of China, we have dance performance, which captivated the audience with its beauty and elegance. The dancers showcased their remarkable talent and skill, bringing to life the rich culture and unique artistry of Chinese dance combined with modern melody. We thoroughly enjoyed the performance and were left with a greater appreciation for the beauty and grace the dance.



As a host country, Japan, we had dance performance by Saga University significant club called "RANBU". Their dance is called "Yosakoi dance". Originating in Japan, it is a distinctive style of dance that has captivated audiences at festivals and events across the country. With its high-energy movements and fusion of traditional Japanese dance with modern music, Yosakoi (ranbo dance) has become a beloved part of the country's cultural heritage.



Then, Vietnam performed us with a song. The meaning of the song is "While striving for a better future in a foreign land, let us not forget our beloved homeland, Vietnam". The song was presented with heartfelt emotion and paired beautifully with images of Vietnam's breath-taking landscapes and rich cultural heritage. The performance left a lasting impression on all of us, reminding us of the importance of staying connected to our cultural roots, no matter where life may take us.



A group of dancers from Indonesia took to the stage next, showcasing their unique style was meant to combine dance and bird calls. Their performance was based on the ancient art of bird hunting, with the dancers emulating the movements of both the hunters and the birds. Their synchronized movements and calls were mesmerizing, creating a captivating performance that was both fascinating and fun to watch.



Next, a group of graceful dancers from Sri Lanka was on the stage, dressed in vibrant traditional costumes that added to the visual appeal of their performance. Through their exquisite dance moves, they shared the natural beauty of their homeland and a glimpse of their rich cultural heritage to us. Their performance was not only visually stunning but also brought a sense of joy and excitement to the audience, making it a truly enjoyable experience for all.



The event also featured several captivating musical performances from around the world. The performance by the Bangladeshi singer was particularly notable for their powerful and captivating vocals, leaving the audience in awe of their talent.



A Nigerian student also showcased their skills, combining music and dance to create a dynamic and energetic performance that left us all feeling energized and entertained.



Finally, the Beninese dancer not only gave a beautiful performance but also invited the audience to join in, teaching us all some traditional dance moves and encouraging us to let loose and enjoy the moment. The experience was heart-warming and unforgettable, a true celebration of the joy and diversity of world cultures.



In my opinion, Cultural Night is an important event because it promotes cultural awareness, understanding, and appreciation among students, faculty, and staff. It creates an inclusive environment where students from different backgrounds can come together to celebrate their differences and similarities. This type of event can also help break down stereotypes and promote cross-cultural understanding. It can be a powerful way to promote diversity and inclusion on campus.



The booth was as interesting as the fashion shows and performances on stage. The booth in the cultural night gave a wonderful opportunity for visitors to experience and learn about various cultures from around the world. Each booth offered something unique, from musical instruments to traditional clothing to language and art.



The Indonesian booth showcased the Angklung, which requires collaboration between musicians to create a melody. Meanwhile, the Tunisia booth offered visitors the chance to write their names in Arabic using brush and black ink, a beautiful and unique writing system.



The Myanmar booth showcased a traditional cream made from ground bark called Thanaka, which is used to apply to the face in beautiful designs and to prevent sunburn. The Thai booth added a Thai touch to Japanese handicraft called Mizuhiki, by preparing three colors of paper cord for decoration.



The Vietnamese booth presented the Tết Trung Thu festival, during which children receive toys made from rice powder from adults. At the Chinese booth, visitors could paint their own Jing masks, which hold different meanings for different emotions. The Bangladesh booth was one of the most popular, as visitors were able to get Henna tattoos, which are commonly used in weddings.



The Nigerian booth offered general information about Nigeria, from geography and population to traditional clothing, while the French booth presented information about France, including language, notable figures, sports, food, and art. The Cambodia booth showcased a traditional garment called Krama, which can be used for various purposes.



Finally, the Taiwanese booth offered visitors the chance to learn about the Taiwanese phonetic symbols used to indicate how a word sounds. Overall, it sounds like the cultural festival was a wonderful opportunity for visitors to experience and learn about various cultures from around the world.



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Cultural Night Galleries:

