

Winning the Semi Grand Prix at the “Youth Championship of Pop Music”

Mineyama High School Pop Music Club Appears in “Sneaker Ages Convention”

December 24, Mineyama

On December 24th, Mineyama Prefectural High School’s Pop Music Club went for the first time in three years to compete in the high school and junior high school pop music club contest, titled “We are Sneaker Ages,” in Osaka’s Fumin Kyosai Super Arena, and the club went on to win the semi grand prix.

Ninety-eight schools from all over the country competed in the preliminary contest of the grand prix competition, also called the “Youth Championship of Pop Music,” and eighteen high schools and two junior high schools went on to perform at the grand prix. Ten members from Mineyama (six 3rd-year students, four 2nd-year students) stood onstage and charmed the audience by dancing along with their rendition of Kenny Loggins’ “Footloose.”

The club’s leader and vocalist, Fumiya Uetaru (3rd-year student) was pleased with the victory, and said “Our good teamwork was what helped us to perform well. This is also thanks to all the people who supported us.”



↑ The club members who performed celebrate their grand prix win (Back row from left: Komako Sawada, Kouhei Tanaka, Fumiya Uetaru, Ryuta Odani / Front row from left: Rin Ota, Rei Okuyama, Miyu Suzuki, Riko Kawato, Shunya Obayashi, Takuya Tanaka.)

Depicting the Life of Gracia Hosokawa

Seven Princesses of Tango Troupe Performs at the House of the Tycoon Family Inaba

December 9, Kumihama

On December 9th in the house of the tycoon family Inaba, the Seven Princesses of Tango Troupe performed “Dear Lady Gracia.”

The troupe, based in Tango Kingdom “Shoku-no-Miyako”, self-produced the show as part of the NHK’s campaign to draw in viewers for their historical Taiga drama series. The house and gardens of the tycoon family Inaba became the stage for the show, and spectators moved about the house to follow the performance, and using this special theatrical style, they told the tale of Gracia Hosokawa’s life in the turbulent Warring States era. The audience was charmed by the actors’ depiction of that historical world.



↑ Seven Princesses of Tango troupe members Mamiya Wakujiro (left) and Ayano Honda perform the roles of Gracia Hosokawa and her lady’s maid, respectively.

Local Business Skills Astonish Elementary Schoolers

Guest Lecturer Shows the Appeal of Local Industry

January 15, Yasaka

As part of the TANGO Children's Future Project, a local machinery and metals affiliated company held a guest lecture about what their work entails at Yasaka Elementary School on January 15th.

This project is an effort made by the Tango Machine Industry Cooperative Association and the Prefectural Tango Bureau of Education, aiming to put an end to science phobia in children and to have them rediscover their hometown by showing them the appeal of the local manufacturing industry.

On the day of the lecture, Mr. Yasuhiko Horie, from the plastic product production and distribution company Shiraishi Biomass (Mineyama), came out to lecture on the special characteristics and construction of plastics, and how the company's research and development has led to new high-tech materials called "biomass plastics" which are gentler on the environment.

The twenty-seven participating 4th-year students listened to the lecture intently.

Yasaka Elementary student Mihiro Gotou said "It's amazing that there's a business here in Tango that can make plastic products that are easier on the environment."



↑ Mr. Horie, of the company Shiraishi Biomass, explains about plastic products

Elementary Schoolers in Tango Hold an Opinion Presentation Children Express Their Views, Resolve, and Thoughts about the Local Region January 13, Tango

The 28th Tango Youth Opinion Presentation Convention was held in and sponsored by the Tango Regional Community Center on January 13th. Eleven elementary and junior high school students from Tango presented their goals and determination, and thoughts about the local region, in front of a crowd of 230 people.

Toyosaka Elementary School 6th-year Azuna Umeda brought up bullying issues, saying “Everyone has their own interests and ideas. Faces or personalities all vary from person to person. So communication is important to know what someone else is thinking, and to convey your own thoughts,” and introducing her idea of a “Like Box” where classmates can leave messages about each other’s good qualities. Tango Junior High School 3rd-year Chika Okubo discussed the topic of Tango’s future, and proposed that in order to combat the declining birthrate and aging population, we must increase the number of people relocating here from cities. She expressed her sheer determination, saying “In the future, even if you leave for the city, you can promote Tango to the people you meet, so they will think about coming to sightsee or move here. Let’s do our best for our beloved hometown!”



↑ The children express their goals and thoughts about the region

Debriefing about “Diving Beetle Rice” for the Community
Ryukoku University Students Present about Their Year’s Activities
January 13, Omiya

Ryukoku University students gave an activity report on January 13th in the Mie Life Improvement Center. This is part of the “Kyotango City Community Development Committee” activities to revitalize the region.

The students reported on their year’s activities, in which they planted rice in a paddy where they had discovered an endangered species of diving beetle, and sold the harvested rice as “Diving Beetle Country Rice.” They presented the details of their studies on their current sale estimates and results, their goals for branding similarly to Toyoka City’s “Kounotori Rice,” and the tasks and improvements they plan to tackle.

The students also touched on their activities besides the diving beetle rice, exchanging opinions about future topics and plans, saying “We were very grateful to the Kei-Truck Market for cooperating with us for our sales. From now on we will be teaching them how to post information about the market online,” and “Because farmers are being troubled by damage from animals, I’d like that to be the theme of next year’s activities.”



↑ The university students present their activity report to local residents.

Co-Existing with the Oriental Stork

Seminar Held for Case Introduction and Exchanging Opinions

December 17, Amino

On December 17th, a community development seminar about the oriental stork was held in the Shimazu Worker's and Children's Center. This was planned by the Humanity and Nature Coexistence Network (chairman: Toyohiko Mori) with the goal of making an environment where the endangered oriental stork can easily establish itself. The keynote speaker, Japan Oriental Stork Society's chairman, Setsuo Satake, said that in order for the stork to return to living in the wild, residents and government bodies will have to cooperate to create pesticide-free rice paddies and wetlands, and presented the case example of Toyooka City.

Also, Chairman Mori reported on Tango's situation, and proposed the establishment of man-made nesting towers, after which the participants exchanged their opinions and had a lively discussion about the balance needed between farming and the environment.



↑ Participants sharing their opinions