

## A Mural Filled With Smiles

[The Sunflower Boulevard Project]



The Amino Mineyama prefectural line passes through both the Go area of Amino-cho and the Takahashi district. Along that line, a mural has recently been given a facelift.

The “Sunflower Boulevard Project” was conceived with the goal of contributing to traffic safety and the prevention of crime. Our local Tango police department planned the mural’s renewal as a part of this larger project. It was originally painted two years ago by students and volunteers, and recently, with the help of students from the art clubs of Amino High School and Amino Junior High School, it has been made new again. It took a total of 5 days for the group of 21 to complete this piece of art. In it, you will see a pleasant scene of a police officer and smiling children surrounded by sunflowers. (The officer depicted is Kazuki Ikeda. He is from Go, and is currently working for Kyoto prefecture as a police officer.)

A second year student at Amino High school, Sayaka Maekawa was also involved in creating the mural. She made it a point to pay extra close attention to the coloring and facial expressions. In her own words she says, “We succeeded in painting bright and vibrant faces.” Also, the painting coordinator of the group, Kazuha Umeda (3<sup>rd</sup> year at Amino Junior High) explains, “It was a great opportunity to learn art from high schoolers. Hopefully our painting will make a difference in reducing the amount traffic accidents in the area.”

Sergeant Masato Nakamura of the Go police department expressed his gratitude at the opening ceremony to all of the students who worked on the piece. He stated, “They did a great job with the mural. I hope this brightens the day of everyone who sees it. This should be a great contribution to the prevention of traffic accidents and crime.”

A symbol of traffic safety and the focus of this project, the sunflower, will also be seen at the Go post office in the future. There are efforts being made to plant sunflower fields in its vicinity.

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## **Get Your Fill of Tango’s Majestic Nature.**

[14 Participate in the Tango Open College]



The Tango Open College is a course that was recently launched with the purpose of guiding and educating those interested in the geopark and the history of Tango. The fourth of four sessions was held on July 31<sup>st</sup>. Participants engaged in on-site training at Tate Iwa, Onaru Kofun, Byoubu Iwa, Kyoga Misaki, and Takano Jinja. Lecturer Nakae Tadahiro, board chairman of the community development support center, explained various topics including the unique geographical characteristics and ogre extermination legends of Tate Iwa. He then further explained Queen Hashiudo’s relation to Tango, as well as the history linked to the local areas and towns. A participant commented, “I

decided to join because I wanted to learn about the history and geography of the Tango area. When I looked out over Tate Iwa from Onaru Kofun, I was overwhelmed by its majesty.”

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## Disaster prevention rooted at home

「Ryukoku University Students Present Disaster Prevention Proposal」



University students from Ryukoku University conducted the second “Disaster Prevention Community Development Project” at the Kuchiono Community Center on August 5<sup>th</sup>. The plan’s purpose is to invigorate the disaster prevention activity in Kuchiono, and is a part of the larger project, “Kyotango’s University of Dreams”. Based on a residential survey conducted in April, along with an on-site stroll of the area, the University students presented their disaster prevention plan to the local residents.

One student brought up in the presentation how important it is to recognize the impact disasters can have on one’s self and one’s area. He urged residents to participate in disaster training in an effort to teach the basic knowledge needed to keep themselves safe (how to use a fire extinguisher/the location of the nearest fire cistern). The residents responded to this by pointing out that most people who participate in these training sessions already have some knowledge on the topic, and thus, want to figure out how to reach those who could benefit from this training the most.

The students followed up and responded to this concern. At the scheduled disaster prevention training on August 26<sup>th</sup>, they will prepare a spread of “tasty disaster meals” in hopes of luring in more participants. What should be done regarding price of admission and the max number of participants is still being discussed. Also, in the future, the students themselves are also scheduled to attend the training sessions alongside the residents.

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## **Taking a Stab at Hanging Watermelons**

[Kumihama High School’s “Biological Utilization” Course]



On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, students harvested hanging watermelons at Kumihama High School.

At that same school, students felt what blessing it is to raise one’s own crops, as well as the importance of the process. The children also attained the ability to use money with a sense of responsibility while developing an appreciation of farming. Teaching these values is the purpose of the elective course, “Biological Utilization”. Students of this course will spend a year taking part in the cultivation of various vegetables.

The students took on a new adventure this year. Using watermelons, they gave “3D Cultivation” a try for the first time. 3D cultivation is when fruit is wrapped in a net and hoisted about 1.5 meters into the air. This process is unique to this type of cultivation

and yields benefits when compared to standard “Ground Cultivation”. Such benefits include the determent of harmful creatures such as raccoon dogs, and make up for the overall increase of needed labor.

On the day of the photo attached, four students took down a 10 kilogram watermelon. They carefully took down the giant, and afterwards, had a taste.

Seira Sasaki, a third year at Kumihama High School, gave her impressions of the experience, “It was so delicious. There was a lot of difficult work that needed to be done. For example, we had to get all of the soil ready, but watching the fruits of our labor grow bigger and bigger each day made me happy. I would love to grow my own food in later in life.”

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## **Glistening Sweat! 「Yabun Melons」**

「Mineyama High School’s Plantation Department Harvests Melons」



In a greenhouse run by the Mineyama High School’s Plantation Department, 5 third year students harvested melons on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

In an average year, the department has its students plant seeds in the beginning of March. Each student is then responsible for looking after 7 melon plants. Tasks include

all the fertilizing, temperature control, and watering needed. Other responsibilities include, thinning out the crop and watching with a careful eye every day.

On this day, the interior of the greenhouse rose to 48 degrees Celsius. The students were drenched in sweat, but gave their all as they carefully harvested the fruit.

Leo Sugihara commented the following, "Getting practical experience in that hot-house was extremely taxing. But, in the end, we raised well-shaped melons with satisfactory sugar levels." Around 150 melons were harvested this season. They are named "Yabun Melons" and can be bought on campus at Mineyama High. ("Yabun" is a shortened version of the department's name in Japanese "Yasaka Bunkou").

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## Showing Some Everyday Gratitude

[Mineyama Students Clean Mineyama Station]



Students of Mineyama High School cleaned up Mineyama Station on July 18<sup>th</sup>. The student council, with the help of the baseball team and several committee volunteers (90 in total), contributed to the effort. The group wiped windows, swept the grounds, and picked up garbage surrounding the station. They spent a total of 1 hour underneath

the blazing sun, sweating for the community. One student was quoted saying, "I just wanted to clean up the station that I always use. It was really hot and difficult, but being able to see the station clean again made me feel good."