

## 8000 Seek the Taste of Winter

### “Kumihama Oyster and Fish Festival” Held for First Time in 3 Years

The “34<sup>th</sup> Kumihama Oyster and Fish Festival” was held on January 19<sup>th</sup> at the Kyoto Prefectural Fisheries Cooperative Minato Office

This event is held with the goal of advertising local marine products, and is run by an executives committee consisting of the Shotenkyo Tourism Association, the Kyoto Prefectural Fisheries Cooperative, and various local Ku.

These past two years torrential rains and typhoons caused fresh water to rush into Kumihama Bay, which is where oysters are bred. Because of this, the number of oysters produced was random, and plans to hold the event were shelved. This season, however, oysters came out in full force, and the festival was held for the first time in 3 years.

At the venue, fish were taken directly from their water tanks and sold alongside oysters. People taste tested grilled oyster and fish hotpot, and scooped live Japanese amberjack. The place was alive with 8000 visitors who came from near and far in search of the taste of winter.

Reito Shimizu (11) came from Fukuchiyama with his family and ate grilled oyster. He commented, “They were so meaty, soft, and delicious!”

Kumihama Bay oysters will be shipped throughout March.



## Exorcising Evil with the Sound of Loud Drums

### Asamogawa-ku Traditional Event “Setsubun Taiko”

Setsubun Taiko, a traditional event where participants pray for happiness and health, was held on February 3<sup>rd</sup> in Asamogawa-ku. Large taiko drums were played, and evil was driven out.

Those who hit the drums were male and 36 years of age when counting with the East Asian age reckoning. This year, 10 drum players practiced for 3 months in anticipation of the event. Starting at 7 A.M., they went around the ku shouting “dokkoi dokkoi youtsu youtsu” to the sound of evil-exorcising taiko drums. A taiko performance was also held at a local preschool, where children joined in on the chanting despite initially being startled by the drums.



## Research is a Series of Discoveries

### Research Presentation at Yasaka Branch School

On February 7<sup>th</sup> at Mineyama Yasaka Branch School, third year students of the plantation department and home economics department conducted an assigned research presentation. This assignment has students of each department spend 1 year researching a topic. Five teams of students that were chosen at the end of January presented on their research.

The plantation department presented on “Koshihikari: The relation between yield and what’s sown” and “Making sweet tomatoes with soy sauce lees,” while the home economics department presented on “Utilizing food: preventing food waste in a delicious way,” “Making disaster rations on the cheap,” and “Using Tango Chirimen together with denim.”

Each team showed slides and handouts loaded with their research to a crowd that listened to them intently.

Member of the sweet tomato group Yoshiki Dohi commented on a side effect of his study. He said, “I hated tomatoes when we started researching, but I slowly started to like them and can eat them no problem now.”



## I Want You to Know How Special You Are

### A Tango Elementary School Course for Learning the Value of Life

A lecturer from the Kyoto Midwives Association conducted a class on learning the value of life to 33 sixth graders at Tango Elementary School on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

At the beginning of the class, a small piece of paper that had been pierced with a sewing pin was passed out. The students were surprised as they were told that the hole in the paper (.1 millimeter) was the size of a fertilized egg. After that, they learned about what it is like for a baby when it is still in its mother's womb, and watch videos of birth and egg fertilization.

Lecturer and midwife Kaori Iwami told the children, "In a man's life, he can make trillions of sperm, and a woman can make hundreds of eggs. A pair of those meet when you are born. The chances of those two meeting are a quadrillion to one, a true miracle. Also, mothers go through a lot of pain and sorrow when they give birth to us. This is how important each and every one of you are. Let's all value ourselves, our family and our friends."

After the class was over children commented things like "I was able to learn the importance of life," and "I will thank my mom when I get home."



## Sports Are Fun!

### Learning Soccer at Mineyama Elementary

The “Sango Tsunagari Squad,” which is part of the larger pro soccer team “Kyoto Sanga F.C.,” conducted a soccer class at Mineyama Elementary on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

The “Sango Tsunagari Squad” conducts these classes at elementary schools throughout the prefecture. The goal of this effort is to show kids how fun sports are by teaching them soccer, and to have them understand the importance of thinking and acting for oneself, and to teach the importance of communicating with one’s friends.

Under the instruction of squad coach Yoshihisa Fukunaka, children passed, dribbled, and exercised with the soccer ball.

Second grader Yuzuna Tanigawa commented, “I wasn’t able to kick the ball well at first, but I learned a lot. In the game I passed the ball and was able to score a goal! That made me happy.”



## Demons Out! Blessings In!

### Omiya Northern Nursery “Setsubun Party”

A “Setsubun Party” was conducted at Omiya Northern Nursery on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

After learning the origins of Setsubun, children showed off their demon masks class by class, and then watched a Setsubun play acted out by nursery staff. At the end of the event they scattered parched beans.

Children bravely fought off the demons with their beans, which were actually small balls made out of newspaper.

