

## *Tsukimi* (Moon Viewing)

今回は「月見」についてお話しします

This year has been another hot summer. Even in Miyazaki many days exceeded 30 degrees. In Japanese there is the goes, “the hot and cold will last only until the higan.” This means that after the higan the intense heat or cold of summer or winter will become mild and that the days will become more enjoyable. The word *higan* is a Buddhist term that represents the equinox or the week of the equinox.

This month’s topic is about *Tsukimi* – or moon viewing – which is also a traditional activity for this season.

### **What is *Tsukimi*?**

Tsukimi is the traditional Japanese custom of viewing the moon and takes place on August 15<sup>th</sup> and September 13<sup>th</sup> of the old lunar calendar. (When translated into the modern Western calendar the dates become September 22<sup>nd</sup> and October 20<sup>th</sup>)

On the night of moon viewing people celebrate by decorating Japanese pampas grass while both eating rice cakes and giving them as offerings to the moon. It is said

that the clear night sky of *tsukimi* is the best time for moon viewing. While the moon has been loved and respected by people in Japan since olden times, the practice of holding moon viewing parties began during the Heian Period.

During the Heian Period people would enjoy making and evaluating poetry while drinking sake and viewing the moon.



### **[Moon Viewing Events]**

#### **“Moon Festival” at the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force Takahatayama Sub Base**

The “Moon Festival” is held every year at the JASDF Takahatayama sub base in Kushima. Come and enjoy mini-concerts, armored military vehicle rides, having your picture taken in a pilot’s uniform (children), and traditional Japanese dance beneath the moonlit sky. Shuttle buses will be available for visitors from Kushima and Nichinan.

Date & Time: September 25<sup>th</sup> (Sat) 3:30 ~ 7:40p.m.

Cost: Free

Inquiries: 0987-77-0303 (extension 203)

#### **“Viewing the Harvest Moon” at Kita Kirishima Cosmo Dome**

Observe the moon, fall’s starlit sky, and even Jupiter using a high powered telescope at Kita Kirishima’s Cosmo Dome in Kobayashi. Kobayashi City is known nationwide as “the beautiful town of stars”.

Date & Time: September 22<sup>nd</sup> (Wed) 7:00 ~ 9:00 p.m.

Fee: ¥300 (Adult) ¥200 (Elementary and junior high school students)

More information: (Phone) 0984-27-2468

If you can’t attend one of the events why not try watching the moon from a nearby park or beach?

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestion relating to this column please contact the Miyazaki

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Thank you