

**11月 Important Dates:**

- 2日 Rescheduled Mt. Ibuki Hike
- 3日 Tea Ceremony
- 4日 Culture Day (Observed)
- 16日 Eigenji Onsen and Fall Colors (tentative)
- 22日 Wine Train
- 23日 Labor Thanksgiving Day
- 26日 SDC Day 2
- 27日 SDC Day 3

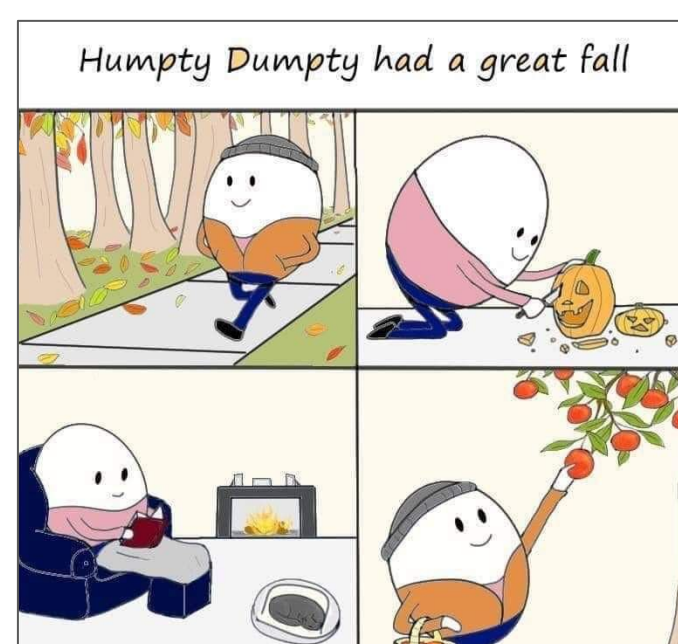
# The Shiga Situation

**12月 Important Dates:**

- 7日 Shiga Christmas Party

Mother of all Newsletters

OH THE LEAVES,  
THEY ARE A CHANGIN'!



With the arrival of November comes the necessity of prepping for the cold. It's time to set up your kotatsu, sort out your winter clothes, and get ready your heater. If you don't have a heater you'll probably want one, since using the hot air setting on your air conditioner is costly. If you go with a gas heater don't forget to stock up on gas, and ensure you have fresh air circulation so you don't fill your apartment with carbon monoxide while you sleep. If you have a kotatsu or an electric heater... plug it in. If you get tired of feeling the breeze come straight through your windows you can cover them with a kind of bubble wrap you can buy from various home or hardware stores. Don't forget to close off rooms you aren't using to keep your heating as efficient as possible, and know that your energy and gas costs will be increasing in the coming months (budget for it!).

Outside your apartment you'll probably want a few pairs of heavy socks, a couple of sweaters and some of that nifty heat-tech underneath to keep your body's heat from escaping. My fellow lifeguards will know that a lot of your body heat escapes from your neck and head, so get a scarf and a toque (that's a knit-hat for those of you not fluent in Canadian) to stay toasty (and fashionable). And since your schools might inexplicably leave their windows open to let in fresh air along with the cold, you may want to have a few heat packs you can tuck between your layers of clothes for added warmth.

It's about to get chilly, stay warm out there Shgia!

## Beware the Winter Blues

The days are getting shorter and the nights are getting colder. It's natural to be less active. You might find yourself opting to stay-in after work and on weekends, and start seeing less of your friends. This along with the approaching holidays and knowing you'll be away from home might leave you feeling down. If you find this sounds like you, know you're not alone. There are people you can talk to.

It's a great idea to try and force yourself to be active (join a bukatsu practice, or try going for a swim at a local pool). Physical activity can increase the amount of serotonin in your brain, which can help you feel happy and well. Try to plan occasional outings like going out for dinner with JETs in your area and it will help make the winter more bearable.

If you need someone to talk to remember you have a lot of resources at your disposal:

[Web Mail - JET Counseling Service](#) (no limit)  
Login Password: spufa2019

[Skype - JET Counseling Service](#)  
Login Password: spufa2019

[AJET Peer Support Group](#): 050-5534-5566  
Skype: AJETPSG

[TELL Counseling Services](#)

[International Mental Health Professionals Japan](#)

Furthermore your PA's are always here to lend an ear.

Kevin - [kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com)  
Emilie - [shigapa@gmail.com](mailto:shigapa@gmail.com)

## SDC

Day 1 of the Skills Development Conference has come and gone. Due the circumstances beyond my control it was scheduled a month earlier than usual. Having SDC in September put a significant crunch on preparation time, so I appreciated your understanding when the inevitable hiccups arose.

Unfortunately, we didn't have the main conference room for the afternoon so I wasn't able to give closing announcements (again, beyond my control), but I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the ALTs who gave their time to prepare the variety of sessions on offer, as well as those who volunteered their time and baked goods for a worthy cause.

Day 2 and 3 of SDC are coming up at the end of the month. One of your JTEs or HRTs should be attending Day 2 of SDC, and you will be attending sessions together in the morning, and separate sessions in the afternoon. On Day 3 it will be only the ALTs again. I hope you'll be pleased with the variety of topics that will be available and that you can gain some valuable knowledge from our guest speakers as well as your fellow JETs.

**SDC Day 2**

**Date:** Tuesday November 26th

**Time:** Check-in from 9:10 AM

**Location:** Piazza Ohmi

**Attending:** ALTs and JTEs/HRTs

**Dress code:** Formal (suits)

**SDC Day 3**

**Date:** Wednesday November 27th

**Time:** Check-in from 9:10 AM

**Location:** Piazza Ohmi

**Attending:** ALTs

**Dress code:** Formal (suits)

## Going home for the holidays?

Don't forget to fill out your paperwork if you're going home for the holidays. You need to fill out a form for long-term nenkyu (when you use three days or more consecutively), as well as a travel notification form. Failure to do so can make people angry. Don't make people angry, respect the bureaucracy.

## BAKE SALE

The annual SDC Bake Sale will happen again for SDC days 2 & 3. The first day was a success, in which we sold all bake goods and raised a total of 8,700 yen (thank you!).

For Days 2 & 3, we'll need all hands on deck. We're asking again for volunteers to bake something for the bake sale. It doesn't necessarily have to be a bake good, as non-bake goods have been sold before. If you're interested in helping, contact Austin via Facebook or email ([santisoukas@gmail.com](mailto:santisoukas@gmail.com)). And as a reminder, all funds raised will go towards the Shiga JET Scholarship Fund and Pencils of Promise.



## Short-Story Contest

Enjoy the following piece, which won last month's short-story contest. The prompt was 'chills'. Thank you to everyone who made a submission.

**Beast**  
by John Solan

How long has it been now? Minutes? Hours?

I'm not sure I can keep up this pace.

In the distance, the sun sets on my hopes of survival.

I shift my gaze from the path ahead in one final act of arrogance to confirm my worst fear... it looks bigger than before.

What could it be? A cougar? A bear?

The shadowy figure looms ever closer, while I trip and fall.

Oh how I wish I hadn't thrown that stone.

As I turn to meet my pursuer, a cold shiver runs down my spine.

This is really it, huh?

Woof.

## November's Prompt



The short-story contest's next writing prompt is **Blizzard**. Please submit your story of 100 words or less to [kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com) by **December 15th** with the subject **100-word story**. Please include the title and your name as you'd like it to be written. All submissions are welcome!

## Call For Writers

Do you like to write? Do you know about an interesting place in Shiga? How about a cool upcoming festival in your town?

**The Shiga Situation wants you!**

If you want to try your hand at writing a column for the Shiga Situation please contact Kevin at [kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com) to become a contributor. We're interested in featuring articles about life in Japan, travel experiences in Japan, local events, involvement in local communities, local specialty foods, local places, interest groups, etc. All pitches are welcome! Inspire your fellow JETs.



## Illuminations

The season of night time illuminations is upon us. Here are just a few of the spots in Shiga to check out at night.

The gardens at Hikone Castle 11月16日(土)~12月1日(日) 18:00~21:00 ¥700

Ishiyamadera 11月15日(金)~12月1日(日) 17:50~21:00 ¥600

Taga Shrine 11月1日(金)~12月1日(日) sundown ~21:00 (various light up events)

**Don't forget to check when your school holidays are. We always get a few days before and after New Years off. Don't make the mistake of showing up to work only to find your school locked up... \*sigh\***