

The Shiga Situation

Mother of All Newsletters

The Ty-FUN Edition

So hilarious it's tie-dye for!

Important Dates!

- 9月5日: SDC Apps Due
- 9月21日: SDC 1 Prep Meeting
- 10月15日: SDC 2-3 Prep Meeting
- 10月26日: SDC Day 1
- 10月27-28日: SDC Day 2-3

AJET Events

- 9月7日: Beer Train
- 9月22-23日: Bike Trip
- 10月: Mt. Ibuki Climb

Hello and welcome to the 4th Shiga Situation: the Ty-FUN Edition (GET IT!?!? Like typhoon... [ya know?](#) 'cause we have a lot of 'em...). Also, a [big ol' howdy do dah](#) to the new ALTs and [SEA](#) in our splendid prefecture. I truly hope everything is just as amazing as you thought it would be in [the Land of the Rising Sun](#). If things aren't quite as good as you want them to be, remember you have a faithful horde of fellow foreigners to console and help you through the adjustment period. All of us who have been here a bit know that the struggles of living abroad are cyclical, with each high followed by a low followed by a high... and another low... That means that it always pays to help out an ALT in need, because you'll inevitably need a pick me up [down the road](#).

I hope everyone has had a great summer vacation. Sadly, despite the continuing oven that is Kansai, summer vacation is over (or will be soon!). As the second semester of the school year starts, I want to wish everyone the best of luck! Personally, I was always plagued with a panic of self-doubt just before each semester began—some sort of irrational fear that I had lost all of my teaching ability [during the vacation](#). That unease is [justifiably amplified](#) for those of you going into your first semester and those of you who have changed schools recently. Again, I'm positive that you will all do great. Each and everyone of us was hired and selected to teach at the schools we have for a specific reason. So don't [stress too much!](#)

But also, [don't stress too little!](#)

Nick

Bracelets as Beautiful

as the Cause They're For!

A local Shiga ALT (Betsy Rock, 5th year) is doing a fundraiser to raise money for [Stonewall](#), an organization that supports LGBTQ+ English speakers in Japan. To donate, you can buy one of her lovely, handmade rainbow bracelets! Prices range depending on the style of the bracelet. [For more details](#), contact her on Facebook (Betsy Rock) or by email at b23rock23@gmail.com.



WE WANT YOU!

As you know, the Shiga Situation is open to contributions and requests by Shiga ALTs. To get more participation, we have a **writing prompt** this issue! Please write and submit a *100-word story* based on the 1-word prompt at the bottom-left of the newsletter!

CLAIR News Highlights

Everyone should have received the CLAIR News in their main email account last week. If yours was the same as mine, it was a [wall](#) of text so big I swear I saw the [Night's Watch](#) at the bottom. Clearly CLAIR was not interested in celebrating the national holiday on September 1st... I've highlighted some main points below, so that you don't have to struggle through the disaster.

- [Mental Health Counseling](#) reimbursement: 50% covered (up to 20,000¥) on professional counseling
- Check in with your embassy if all hell breaks loose
- [Tokyo Orientation videos](#) are available online (contact your supervisor for the password)
- Last call for [Language Courses!](#)
- [Register with CLAIR](#) ASAP! (This is actually required)

Stop, Don't Cry!

Just to make sure no one hits critically low levels of stress, we have the wonderful SDC season to save us like an unwanted superhero [*cough cough*](#). Applications for SDC are out now and due on [Wednesday, September 5th](#)! Everyone except 1st years is required to submit a proposal. If you have no idea what I'm talking about, please check your email; if you still don't know, contact Nick immediately!

This year, we are going to change things up a bit. Hopefully this will relieve some of the [burden](#) that has been placed on the ALT community in the past. That being said, I am very excited to read the [interesting proposals](#) that you all have come up with. Also, if you are interested in giving a demo lesson (the highest rated session last year), please indicate so!!

You Could be the Next PA!

As we are all made painfully aware each year, the JET program is not an everlasting adventure. I'll save you the many clichés of departure and endings, and get down to brass tax: 2018-2019 is my final year on JET. It's been a great time and I'm a [proud unicorn](#), but my [rainbow road is almost over](#).

Instead of reverie in the past, I must look to the future of our Shiga JET community and find my successor! In the coming months (at the first SDC) I will be releasing the **PA application forms** and officially begin the selection process. But it's never too early to start thinking about becoming the PA. If you are interested in applying, are not sure whether the position would suit you, [don't know what the PA is](#), or just want to ask some questions, please reach out to me via email (kenchopa@gmail.com) and/or Facebook (Nick Anthony) at any time.

The PA application will be open to [absolutely every ALT](#) (1st-4th year). Japanese is not required. If you love the JET program, but also have ways in which you want to improve the ALT experience in Shiga, this is a position for you!

日本語能力試験

Japanese-Language Proficiency Test

Congratulations to everyone that passed the JLPT! You are now officially more Japanese by *that* much. Next step is [chopsticks Jenga](#). You are now ready to relax for like... [a minute](#) before you start getting ready for the [December test](#).

Also, CONGRATULATIONS to everyone that [failed the JLPT!](#) Because guess what, an arbitrary selection of grammar and vocabulary in the form of [a multiple choice test](#) tells you absolutely nothing about how fluent you actually are. Granted, failure may mean you should reevaluate your study habits and [test-taking skills](#), but you're no better off with N1 in a job interview if you [can't speak well too](#).

To everyone, what is most important about the JLPT is that just by signing up, you are committing to study Japanese more. If you pass, great! You officially learned some nihongo. If you failed, [excellent!](#) You probably learned a lot of Japanese, and you still have a defined goal ahead to keep you studying. A FAIL is only a First Attempt In Learning (even if it's like the [bazillionth time](#) trying).

Shiga AJET Shikaku:

Summer's over, but as you pack away your swim suits and [watermelon-hitting-sticks](#) remember there's no need to feel down because AJET has some great events coming your way this autumn! September sees two of the biggest events in the Shiga AJET calendar. [Beer train](#) is just around the corner (i.e. THIS FRIDAY!) but if you haven't already got tickets then you can set your sights on our annual worship of Mother Lake: [The Biwa Bike Trip!](#) The trip will take place on the [22nd and 23rd of September](#) and at the time of writing there are still a handful of spots left but you'll need to [sign up soon!](#) The 150km journey is certainly a challenge but a rewarding and beautiful one at that, definitely a must before you leave Shiga (plus anyone who signed up for [membership](#) receives a tasty little discount on the pension!) Finally, this October we'll be celebrating Japan's national Sports Day by making our yearly climb to the top of Mt. Ibuki, Shiga's tallest mountain (more details to come).

Have a good one, Shiga!

Stay hip via the [ShigaAJET site](#), the [NAJET site](#), and [Gazette!](#)

And Now Over to Ollie with the Weather

Alright. So despite what President Loompa has to [say](#), human-caused climate change is real and it's doing some crazy stuff (even more devastating than [Donzilla](#)). If you didn't notice, the western U.S. is on fire (again, not because of [Mr. T](#)), the [monsoons](#) can't end soon enough, Japan is [underwater](#), and the world is an [oven](#). In these crazy times, it's best to take [precaution](#) whenever and wherever you can. This includes things like having emergency [equipment](#), staying hydrated, and find your nearest [emergency shelters](#). In the event that the world seems to be ending, make sure that you are safe and secure and try to get in contact with your JTE/base school (oh, and call your loved ones and stuff...)

[JET Disaster Guide](#).



It's the crazy season of too much heat, [too much humidity](#), welcome enkais, sports festivals, long bike rides, and hard Ibuki climbs. With this in mind, safety should be a top priority! We recently got in touch with Shiga's resident safety official, Graham, who stressed, "In these desperate times, remember to stay hydrated with a few drinks and to seek help and advice from the ALTs around you."

Remember to consume consciously at enkais: count your drinks, replace booze with a water or tea once in a while, [don't feel pressured](#) to drink. This will also be a boon if you are asked to give the welcome or closing speech at the dinner!

If you are asked to participate in an event at sports day, don't blow it off! Speaking from experience, this writer thought it wouldn't be hard to keep up with the 3rd years in an 800 meter race...

Be sure to enjoy the (hopefully) cooler weather and relax like there's no [Monday](#) around the corner, but watch out for your physical health this fall. Stay Safe, Shiga!

Who wants to be a Shiga Situation Contributor?

Come one come all! Do you write poetry? Do you sketch scenery? Do you paint epic pictures? Do you have a story that is dying to be told? Do you have a blog, instagram, etc. that you want to promote? Then you can help contribute to the "Shiga Situation". We would like to start adding short fiction (100-word stories), pictures, artwork, and more to the newsletter, and for that we need your help!

If you are interested in advertising or promoting something you are passionate about, contact Nick via Facebook or email (kenchopa@gmail.com) anytime.

Fireworks



The first writing prompt is "fireworks". Please submit your story to kenchopa@gmail.com. The email's subject should be "100-Word Story". Include the [title](#) and your [name](#) in the email.

Submission deadline: October 1st