

# Nasushiobara & Linz

## An Eco-Friendly Lifestyle



Viennese Tram

The summers are getting hotter. Austria is the same. Last year's temperature was 2.2°C above the average temperatures between 1981 and 2010. This year, several towns have measured the highest temperatures registered there since the start of the records in 1767, such as 37.5 °C in Imst in the state of Tyrol. Consequently, climate protection has become a hot topic with regards to the elections of our national assembly in September and many students are going on school strikes, inspired by the Swedish student activist Greta Thunberg.

However, climate protection, or, in a broader sense, protecting the environment has been debated since my

childhood. Austria invests in renewable energy and subsidizes energy efficiency such as the installation of solar panels on roofs or building low-energy houses. The bigger cities subsidize public transport, so citizens can purchase year-round passes for a low price.

There are ways to choose an eco-friendly life on a personal level too. Many Austrians prefer eating organic foods, so that all supermarkets offer organic products, often at an affordable price point. For about five years now, supermarkets have been charging for plastic bags, due to their impact on the environment. Often, the available bags are made from paper, recycled plastic or biodegradable plastics made from natural materials.

While I was writing this article, the



Austrian national assembly has passed a general ban on plastic bags, starting in 2020.

## Linz News: Ars Electronica Festival



This year's AEC T-Shirt

through 9<sup>th</sup>. If you cannot make it to the festival, you can experience media art in Ars Electronica Center (AEC) all year long. Starting this year, there is a new permanent exhibition waiting to be discovered!

The Ars Electronica Festival is a festival of media art that is held in Linz every year. Media art is art that utilizes new technologies such as computers or drones. The festival often showcases works that center around social questions or interactive projects that you are allowed to touch, etc. This year, for the festival's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the festival's title is "Out of the Box – the Midlife-Crisis of the Digital Revolution". Themes such as the current state of technology and art as well as future trajectories are explored. The festival will take place from September 5<sup>th</sup>



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## People: Tamihiko Watanabe



*“inspire our junior high school students to find their dream and deepen the international understanding”*

### What was your first experience with Linz?

Leading up to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Aoki Elementary School, me and two colleagues visited Mr. Niklas Salm-Reifferscheidt, one of the descendants of the school’s founder Mr. Shuzo Aoki, in his home in Linz. There, we were allowed to see some of Mr. Shuzo Aoki’s belongings. We also visited the thousand-year-old castle adjacent to Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt’s home, that he owns. He was planning to restore it and use it for touristic purposes. Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt also showed us around Linz, introduced us to the local board of education and a high school.

Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt came to Japan and attended the celebration for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Aoki Elementary School on November 20, 2004. There, he gave a lecture together with Mr. Morihisa Aoki, who is Mr. Shuzo Aoki’s great-grandson. At the time, I was working as school superintendent and tasked with looking after Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt. Since he had come all this way, on the day after the celebrations I used the opportunity to show him around Nikko. We stayed at the Kanaya Hotel, where we were able to discuss many topics. I mentioned my hopes to inspire our junior high school students to find their dream and deepen the international understanding. I told him about my vision to send some of our junior high school students to Austria, and in the future, establish a two-way exchange program.

On August 21<sup>st</sup> 2010, the Kuroiso Opera Association performed “Sesshoseki Monogatari” (The Killing Stone) in Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt’s newly renovated castle, further deepening the relationship. I am grateful for the kind hospitality we received during our visit.

### Profile

**Surname:** Watanabe

**Firstname :** Tamihiko

### **Career:**

School Superintendent

Kuroiso (10/1999 – 12/2004)

School Superintendent Nasushiobara (3/2005 – 3/2007)

President of the Kuroiso Opera Association

**Motto :** Where there is a will, there is a way!

(by Yozan Uesugi)

Facing challenges head on

### What are some of your memories of the exchange activities?

The long continuity of the junior high school exchange; Being able to realize the reciprocal exchange program and thereby bolstering international relations.

### What are your ideas and hopes for the future exchange ?

Since we have become Sister Cities now, I hope for the exchange between citizens to grow further. .

Thanks to the two-way exchange program, that has been realized due to Mr. Tamihiko Watanabe and Mr. Niklas Salm-Reifferscheidt’s efforts, since 2005 over 500 students from Nasushiobara have been able to visit Linz and around 150 students from Linz have visited Nasushiobara City. This May, 24 students from Linz visited Nasushiobara. In autumn 34 students from Nasushiobara will travel to Linz.

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## Lively Sister City Exchange

### June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019: Linz Japan Day 2019

On the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japanese-Austrian Friendship in 2019, Nasushiobara participated in the Japanese Art and Culture Festival “Linz Japan Day”. At our booth, we introduced Nasushiobara City to the people of Linz. The event was well-attended, and many visitors were interested in Nasushiobara. They were happy about the German flyers and the *onsen* bath additive we distributed. Later, we danced the *makigari*-dance with our visitors, so that they could experience the atmosphere of a Japanese festival for themselves, constituting for a meaningful exchange. Many visitors wrote a “Message



to the Sister City”. The Messages will be displayed at Austria Festa on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

During our stay, we also learned about the art-focused city planning of Linz and had the opportunity to talk to the Mayor of Linz, to Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt, the Vice

President of the OETRV as well as the Tourism Director of the Tourist Association, thus deepening our friendship even further.



### **Let's Go! ☆ Anniversary Events - 150 Years of Japanese-Austrian Friendship**

#### **Aug. 25<sup>th</sup> (Sun.), from 16:00: Concert and Lecture**

Pianist Yoko Takahashi and soprano singer Makoto Yoshizawa, who are currently living in Austria, have been invited to Nasushiobara for a concert!

Place: Hallo Plaza, Tel.: 35-2006, Organizer: Nasushiobara City International Association

Time: 15:30 (Opening), 16:00 (Event Start), Entry

Info: Office of the Nasushiobara International Association (City Office Secretary Section), Tel. :62-7324

#### **Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> (Sun.), 10:00 - 16:00: Austria Festa**

Nasushiobara is hosting “Austria Festa”! Would you like to experience the atmosphere of the alpine nation while enjoying its music and food? You can experience Japanese culture, too, and the festival will take place at the same time as the “Mottainai Ichi”, which is held at the same time as the Austria Festa.

Place: Machinaka – Exchange Center Kururu, the pedestrian zone near Kuroiso station Entrance: Free

Info: Office of the Austria Festa Executive Committee (City Office Secretary Section) Tel.: 62-7324





# Nasushiobara & Linz

## Handmade ☆ Herb Bundle

August 15<sup>th</sup> is the Catholic holiday of the Assumption of Mary. On this day, people bring a bundle of herbs to church, where the priest blesses them. The herb bundle is taken home and put up as decoration in the house for protection, used to make herbal tea or mixed into the food of the family's livestock. Some people use the dried herb bundle for smoke cleansing. To make the herb bundle, tie 7 or 9 kinds of herbs into a bouquet. The kinds are different for each region. Apart from Austrian herbs like St. John's wort, lady's mantle or mullein, herbs that can be found in Japan are used too, like yarrow, mugwort, sage, rosemary or thyme. You can also include flowers or grasses.



Answer below



**Q**

**Where can you NOT swim in Austria?**

**A:** in hot spas

**B:** in public pools

**C:** in mountain lakes

**D:** in the ocean

## Culture Corner: *Swimming in Austria*



Hallstatt Lake

The best you can do on hot summer days is taking a dip in cool, fresh water. About 10% of Austrians have their own pool in their gardens. The mountain lakes or public pools have many visitors. The water in the Austrian lakes is crystal-clear and cool. Outdoor public pools are popular, too. I still remember the long summer holidays (2 months!) of my childhood that I used to spend resting on the lawn of the public pool, eating fries smothered in ketchup.

By the way, Austrian schools usually do not have their own swimming pool, so that swimming lessons are taught in public pools. Since the Austrian swimmers have really giving it their all for the last few years, I am looking forward to seeing them at the Tokyo Olympics 2020!

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Answer : D. Austria is landlocked, so we have to go to Italy or Croatia to swim in the ocean!