

“Namahage” are devil-like characters that roam Akita on New Year’s eve according to old custom.

Nasushiobara & Linz

The Austrian version of “Namahage”?



Krampus©Naturpuur CC-BY-SA-4.0

Austria has traditions that are similar to Japan’s “namahage”. There are two kinds of demons with a furry body, horns and a scary face.

One kind is “Krampus” who appears together with Saint Nicholas on Saint Nicholas’ Day on

December 6. Children who have been good receive sweets and such from Saint Nicholas, but children who haven’t been good are punished by Krampus. At Krampus parades, the Krampuses sometimes intimidate the visitors, it’s best to prepare yourself before going to watch them!

The other kind are the “Perchten” who appear in the regions of the Alps mountains during the “Raunächte (rough nights)”, the twelve nights between December 25 and January 6. The word Perchten is used for various folk characters and the costumes. It is taken from the mythical goddess “Perchta”. In olden times,

Perchten and Perchta were tasked with checking if the spinning restrictions that were enacted around New Years were observed. It is said that there is also an element of driving out the winter and evil spirits.

Nowadays, Perchten are divided into the good-natured “Schönperchten (beautiful Perchten)” and the evil “Schiachperchten (ugly Perchten)”. The Schiachperchten look similar to Krampus, but the Schönperchten often have very gorgeous decorations. The exact traditions, as well as the number and design of the Perchten are different from region to region, but parades are commonly seen. At the Gasteiner Perchten who are registered as UNESCO immaterial cultural heritage, about 30 of the 165 participants carry lavishly decorated

head pieces. These can be up to 2.5 m high and weigh up to 50 kilogram!



Schönperchten called “Glöckler” in Bad Ischl ©Otto siegl CC-BY-SA-3.0

Welcome Kickory ! I went to meet Austria’s mascot!



A three-shot of Kickory, Austrian Ambassador Dr. Bertagnoli and CIR Florentine

On November 3, 2022 I met Austria’s very adorable official mascot “Kickory” in the Austrian Cultural Forum in the Austrian Embassy in Tokyo.

If you think about an animal that is typical for Austria, the marmot is better known, but there are also many beavers. They are thought of as creative, and nature’s architect, because they build their own nests out of wood. Moreover, Austria is known in the wood industry for its high-grade techniques and knowledge. So I think Kickory’s creator Ms. Yoshizaki made a great choice with the beaver. It is perfect to introduce Austria not only as a country of historic culture such as classical music, but also as a country that takes care of its nature and is active and innovative in many areas.

I am looking forward to Kickory’s future activities!

Nasushiobara & Linz

People: Music Exchange with Linz

In fiscal 2022 we added an online music exchange to the existing online exchange projects between Austria and Nasushiobara. This time, we are doing an exchange with schools in our sister city Linz. We asked teachers of Kreuzschwestern Gymnasium (Higashi Nasuno Junior High School’s partner school) and Otto Glöckel Elementary School (Aoki Elementary School’s partner school) about their schools and the exchange project.



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Kreuzschwestern Gymnasium

Our school is an educational institution including everything from preschool to the *Matura* exam (general qualification for university entrance), including different school types. We want to foster the students’ talents and strengths in a feel-at-home atmosphere, in order to contribute to a positive personal growth. We aim to be aware of our own shortcomings, and to be understanding about the shortcomings of others. We hope that each team member can contribute with their own strengths and work together in a constructive way.



Online exchange on December 15, 2022

About the exchange

The exchange was a highlight for all of us. The organization worked great and each meeting was very enriching. We have grown closer as a class unit and now know that we are a great team! It is wonderful to be allowed to experience another culture up close through music.

Kreuzschwestern Gymnasium,

Teacher in charge.

Surname: Weghuber

First Name: Anna

Motto: Start “doing”!
Exchange views,
experience things
together, and “do”!

Otto Glöckel Elementary School

Our school is “VS 12 Otto Glöckel Elementary School” in Linz, Upper Austria. At the moment, around 280 students attend our school. A characteristic of our school is that a majority of the students don’t have German as their mother tongue. For this reason, we are a very colorful school with many different languages and talents. Our common language is German. We learn it in many different ways.



Online exchange on November 4, 2022

About the exchange

When we received the offer for the music exchange, I agreed immediately. Playing music with the students is something that is close to my heart. I think that with music, one can express emotions very well, and in this way gain friendships.



Otto Glöckel Volksschule,

Teacher in charge.

Surname: Auer

First name: Irene

Motto: Encourage children in their strengths; give them many opportunities to be act autonomously; singing and playing music together promotes a sense of community.

Nasushiobara & Linz

Reports of the exchange meetings on the city's homepage (Japanese)



Lively Exchange

☆ Legacy Online Exchange Meetings in Fall & Winter 2022 ☆



Online exchange meeting of Higashi Nasuno JHS with athlete Onea, Nov.30, 2022

Online Exchange between Para Athletes & Schools

Nov. 30: Higashi Nasuno JHS & Athlete Andreas Onea

Dec. 1: Higashi Hara ES & Athlete Yvonne Marzinke

Online Exchange between Schools

Nov. 8: Sekiya ES & Erwin Moser ES

Nov. 25: Oharama ES & Zurndorf ES

Online Music Exchange between Schools

Oct. 20 & Dec. 15: Nishi Nasuno JHS &

Kreuzschwestern Gymnasium Linz (HS)

Nov. 4: Aoki ES & Otto Glöckel ES

☆ Culinary Exchange ☆



Oct.2-10, 2022: Distribution and Sale of Austrian-style food at the Tochigi Sports Festival

The students of Nasu Takuyō High School created the Austrian-inspired foods “Nasukko Kouglof” and “Shuni-Pote-Toteyaki”, which were distributed at the Tochigi Sports Festival. The students helped with many aspects from food preparation to PR for sales. Visitors got to enjoy the “Omotenashi Menu”. (left picture)

Oct. 23, 2022: Music and Food - Event

Tokyo Happo-En prepared many of the Austrian-inspired dishes the students of Nasu Takuyō High School have created together with professional chefs since 2020, and served them at Viscount Aoki's Country Villa in Nasu, which is registered as a Japan Heritage site. The visitors enjoyed the western atmosphere while listening to classical live music by the Kuroiso Chamber Ensemble. (right picture)



☆ Activities by citizens of Linz ☆



Oct. 3, 2022: Prof. Dieckmann receives the Culture Medal of Linz City

Prof. Felix Dieckmann, who is a woodcut artist in Linz, exhibited his works in on the occasion of the one-year-anniversary of sister city relations between Linz and Nasushiobara in 2017. He has also supported other exchange activities between our cities. In honor of his efforts on an international stage, Mayor Luger awarded him the “Culture Medal of the City of Linz”. (left picture)

Nov. 12, 2022: Piano recital by pianist Mr. Traxler

Christoph Traxler, who is a pianist from Linz, finally was able to realize his concert tour in Japan, which had been planned since before the Covid-19 pandemic. He delivered a moving performance of pieces by Schubert and Liszt in Nasunogahara Harmony Hall. (right picture)



Nasushiobara & Linz

Let's make ☆ Simple "Punschkrapfen"

No oven needed!

Ingredients (approx. 16 pieces): approx. 300g sponge cake (2 round layers), 2 tbsp. apricot jam; **Filling:** 3 tbsp. apricot jam, approx. 25g cocoa powder, 1/4 tsp. clove powder, juice of half an orange, zest (ground outer peel) of one orange, a little vanilla extract, (for adults: a little rum to your liking); **Icing:** 200g powdered sugar, 2tbsp. raspberry jam, 2 tbsp. lemon juice, 3-4 tbsp. water, a little red food coloring



Preparation: ① Cut the 2 cake layers horizontally to make 4 layers. Cut the circular layers into a square shape. ② Take one of the layers and the cut-off edges and crumble them. Mix with the ingredients for the filling. ③ Line a plastic container with a cooking sheet. Put in one cake layer. Spread one tbsp. apricot jam and half of the filling. Put the 2nd cake layer on top of it and spread the remaining apricot jam and filling. Top off with the 3rd cake layer. Close the plastic container and let it set in the fridge for 4 hours minimum. ④ Cut the cake into cubes of approx. 2x2cm. ⑤ Mix the icing ingredients. ⑥ Put the cubes on a cake cooling rack, cover them in icing and let them dry. The finished *Punschkrapfen* are perfect for *Fasching* (carnival) in February.

Answer below

Q: Which of these Japanese words was not originally a German word?

A: エネルギー
enerugii

B: パン
pan

C: アルバイト
arubaito

D: テーマ
teema

Looking back on 6 years: Connecting through language



Before my first German class in 2016 I didn't have much experience with teaching, I was not good at speaking in front of people and was not confident in my Japanese skills, so despite being the teacher, I was more nervous than the class of German beginners. But I gave my best to share my knowledge and the participants listened patiently. After that, I taught three German courses for beginners, "Wolfi", "Edelweiss" and "Grüß Gott". The students actively participated not only in the classes, but also in Christmas meetings or the Austria Festa in 2019. Starting with language, the exchange extended to each other's culture and individual views. Different than at one-off events, we could have in-depth exchange; for that reason, even amongst all the exciting projects I was allowed to be a part of as coordinator for international relations, I saw the German courses as especially rewarding and I learned a lot. By overcoming the "language barrier", one's own world expands, as does the other person's. With some patience and effort, the language "barrier" can be changed into a connecting bridge.

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Answer: B, pan. Energie, Arbeit and Thema are the original German words.