

Hand Crank TV + Radio “Qriom”

(Ehime Shimbun February 17, 2025)

Yamazen Corporation’s TV + radio Qriom has gained wide popularity since going on sale in February, 2022. The device is equipped with a rechargeable battery that can still function after almost ten years. It retails at around ¥17,800.



The Qriom was developed in response to comments by disaster victims who said, “We wanted to watch TV during an electricity stoppage, but the battery would run out in crucial moments.” The device is normally plugged in but for

outdoor or disaster use, it functions with a dry battery, a mobile battery, or a hand crank charging mechanism. After cranking five minutes, you can watch TV for five minutes or listen to FM radio for 48 minutes. It is also equipped with an LED light and siren, and is water resistant for outdoor or disaster use.

Yamazen’s Matsushima Yasutomo said, “During technical development, we experienced noise in the TV picture because of the complicated circuit for the multifunctionality, so we repeated a process of trial-and-error.”

Customers’ opinions include, “It is easy to watch because of the wider picture compared to the previous one.” Matsushima said, “Store it somewhere that can be reached easily, and make good use.”



This newsletter is published by SGG, a volunteer group that helps foreigners living in and around Niihama. If you need any advice, information, or support, please contact SGG. SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions, or ideas for monthly articles.

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ONE POINT JAPANESE

「～ところだった」の ^{つか} ^{かた} 使い方
(How to use “almost ～”)

A : あれ? 2時から ^じ ^{かいぎ} 会議じゃ なかった?

Are? Nijikara kaigija nakatta?

(Hey! Don't you have a meeting at two?)

B : え? もう そんな ^{じかん} 時間? うっかり ^{わす} 忘れる ところだった。

E? Mō sonna jikan? Ukkari wasureru tokoro datta.

(Oh no! It's already time? I almost forgot it!)

A : Bさん、^{あぶ} ^と 危ない! 止まって!

B-san, abunai! Tomatte!

(B-san, Watch out! Stop!)

今、^{いま} ^{くるま} 車に ^{ぶつかる} ぶつかる ところ でしたよ。

Ima, kuruma ni butsukaru tokoro deshita yo.

(Just now, you almost got hit by a car!)

B : ああ、ありがとう。死ぬかと ^{おも} 思った……。

Ā, arigatō. Shinu ka to omotta...

(Oh, thank you. I thought I was done for...)

A : ^{ある} 歩きスマホは ^{ぜったい} 絶対 だめですよ。

Aruki sumaho wa zettai dame desu yo.

(Walking and using your smartphone is absolutely no good.)



A : いつも キッチンタイマーを ^{つか} 使うんですか。

Itsumo kitchin taimā o tsukaun desu ka?

(Do you always use a kitchen timer?)

B : ええ、以前 お湯を 沸かして いる ことを ^{わす} 忘れて、
^{かじ} 火事になる ところだったんです。

Ē, izen oyu o wakashite iru koto o wasurete,

kaji ni naru tokoro dattan desu.

(Yes. Once I forgot I was boiling water and I almost caused a fire.)

A : タイマーを セットすると ^{あんしん} 安心ですね。

Taimā o setto suruto anshin desu ne.

(So, setting a timer makes you feel safe, right?)



< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

Feel free to contact us at:

Niihama Kokusai Kōryū Kyōkai (Niihama International Center)

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What's New?

Niihama City

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Weekend Itinerary suggestions for the Summer

Michal Owain Smith

Since moving to Niihama, I have gone from being a clubbing enthusiast to the father of twin boys, and I have had to learn how to take things a little slower. It is certainly a safe place to raise children, but when I first arrived here, I was initially unsure what a smaller town such as Niihama, and Shikoku Island would have to offer me. As it turns out I have now lived here for over 15 years, and every week I am still finding exciting new places to investigate. If I may be so bold, I would like to now share some of my favourite, most recent finds.

Each year I go through various obsessions, from exploring all of the Setouchi islands to foraging for wild vegetables, but for me, the theme of last year was “nagashi sōmen”. For those who don’t know, “nagashi sōmen” is a meal of noodles and a “mentsuyu” dip. The chefs shoot the noodles down a type of long gutter in a stream of ice cold water. Customers then use chopsticks to catch the noodles, dip them, and eat them. Catching the fast-paced noodles is quite a challenge, so if you are somewhat sadistic, like me, it’s a great place to bring friends or family who lack experience with chopsticks. I sure would love to watch my father struggle. There are a few options in Ehime, I caught "nagashi sōmen" at Gongenyama Ishitetsu temple, just south of Matsuyama, but you could also try building your own guttering from bamboo at the Saijo Ishizuchi Fureai-no-Sato.

Another great option for Summer is Namekawa gorge, a beautiful woodland trek that takes you on a trail beside and sometimes through a shallow river to a gorgeous natural stadium-like gully clearing and waterfall. If you believe in the health benefits of negative ions, this is the woodland adventure you’ve been craving. Personally, it’s just so refreshing to escape the sun in the shade of the trees, wade through the fresh river water, and feel the water splash your face as you approach the falls at the end. There is a small cafe at the trailhead, but it has never been open when I’ve visited, so if you’re planning to have lunch there, it’s probably wise to bring a bento.

On a rainy day, how about checking out the Shirakidani international museum of contemporary art in the mountains of Kōchi, where vibrant colors and artwork transported my family and I through the bizarre and wonderful mind of Mitsuhiro Takeuchi. The majority of the exhibition is indoors, although a section of the museum will take you outside, so to see the entire collection on a rainy day you should bring anoraks and boots. And, if you do venture outside, upon returning to the ticket counter you can soon warm up with the complementary coffee and finger snacks provided by the staff. Even my 7 year old kids loved it. Truly awe-inspiring, and at 550 yen!!

In Niihama, among other things, I have taken and passed a "Niihama kentei", general knowledge test, to better understand local history, dialect, and customs; ceremonially thrown a live pufferfish into the Setouchi sea; cooked mochi in the dying embers of giant bamboo bonfires at the “Tōdōokuri” festival; and enjoyed learning about local legends such as Kojorōdanuki, the model for Machuri, Niihama’s mascot character.



I still have yet to visit the mausoleum of the vengeful spirit of emperor Sutoku in Kagawa, and most excitingly I have heard that you can book a tour around the Meiji chocolate factory in Kagawa - I shall definitely be making enquiries! The possibilities here are endless. The hard part is finding the time!!

* If you don’t have a car, it would be best to check public transportation options before attempting any of the places mentioned above

Hana’s Exciting World

(Ehime Shimbun: April 20, 2025)

Eight-year-old Yamamoto Hana is a third grader at Niihama Special Support Elementary School (3 cho-me Hongo, Niihama). Her “Hana’s World” handkerchief featuring her painted marine creatures and insects has become quite popular.



Hana has autistic spectrum disorder. She started drawing pictures with colored pencils at the age of two. When she was five years old, her mother Ai (32) showed her how to use a painting app on the iPad. “I was afraid that if she used paints, our newly built house might get dirty”, she says with a smile.

Hana quickly began developing her own view of the world. She got used to using the iPad in no time and was eager to draw her favorite insects and marine creatures in illustration books. She produced one work after another with soft colors and cute shapes.

Ishimaru Miyuki (64), president of “Panda no Ki”, welfare services for persons with disabilities (Shigemoto-cho, Niihama), said of Hana’s artwork, “Her pictures make our hearts sing.” Her works were displayed at a café next to the office in February of 2024. When postcards with her art went on sale, they caught the eye of someone from Oiso Towel Company (Shinyashiki Komatsu-cho, Saijo).

The company, which has supported art by the disabled for a long time, commercialized her work under the Prefectural Project to Support the Commercialization of Art by People with Disabilities. This March they produced handkerchiefs featuring Hana’s fish and bees, printing her colorful illustrations on the bottom right corner. 200 handkerchiefs of two versions were made and started selling for 770 yen apiece. They were well received. Now another 1,000 of each version are being produced. Reservations can be made on the website.



Hana is very excited and her mother Ai is using the Instagram account “katatsumuri to kame” (@hanasui1245), which means “snail and turtle” to post about them. “I looked at disabilities negatively, but thanks to my daughter I feel that human connections are very important.” Going forward, Hana is likely to widen her world more and more through her works.

July Events

The City Swimming pool in Shinonome

July 1 (Tue) ~ August 31 (Sun) 10:00a.m.~6:00p.m.
Fee: ¥10 for junior high school students and younger
¥60 for high school students and older
Closed: July 25 (Fri) (Per Fireworks, see below)
August 8 (Fri) 12:00p.m.~ (Per swimming pool for disabled people)

For further information ,please call the Civic Gymnasium at 34-1888



Swimming Beach at Marine Park

July 12 (Sat) ~ August 31 (Sun) 8:30a.m.~7:00p.m.
Fee: Free
Closed: Tuesdays

In case of typhoon or storm, it will be closed
For further information, please call Marine Park Niihama at 46-4100

Fireworks Festival

July 25 (Fri) 8:00p.m.~9:00p.m.
Location: Kokuryō-gawa riverbed
Phone: 65-1261, 33-5581
In case of rain, it will be postponed to July 28, 29 or 30



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