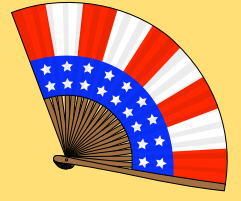


Ikata & Misaki Multi-Culture Festival



Culture Festivals (文化祭 *bunkasai*): Good food, fun games, and a festive atmosphere make these annual autumn events a local favorite. In 2007 the Ikata International Exchange Association (IIEA) joined in on the fun at both Misaki's (October 28) and Old Ikata's (November 3) festivals.

Our activity booths and colorful panels detailing various IIEA programs drew in crowds from young to old. Many visitors were surprised to find that Ikata is a pretty international place after all.



Face painting

Face painting, while common at United States parties and carnivals, is relatively unknown in Japan. We mustered up all of our artistic abilities and, with skin-friendly facepaints and easy-to-use facepainting pencils, we drew and colored all over our little visitors. Some even took things into their own hands, filling up nearly every square inch of skin!

Though we had prepared sample patterns of popular cartoon characters, symbols, etc., Ikata ALT Angela's original designs were the biggest hit of all. Even the parents waiting patiently nearby were impressed by her skillful brush strokes.

While many of our visitors were girls, the local boys made a good showing as well. Soccer fans walked away covered with national flags, and future astronauts showed off their shooting stars and rocket ships. Looking good, guys!

"Where in the world?" Darts

Our challenge to festival-goers: Where in the world is **this** country? Those who accepted our challenge drew a country name or national flag from a box, then aimed for that country on our giant map-of-the-world dartboard. Those who got "Japan" or the Japanese flag were relieved to see a familiar target... until they realized that Japan is tiny! Russia and Canada are easy to hit, but wait... which one is Canada again?

Even when we ran out of prizes, adults and children alike still lined up to play again and again. The dartboard ended up looking like swiss cheese! The satisfying thunk of the dart hitting the board made everyone forget that they were learning some serious geography.

