

27th Volunteer Activity Supporting Restoration and Recovery



Date	Monday, August 26 , 2013
Activity site	Minamisanriku-cho, Motoyoshi-gun, Miyagi
Participants	16 (4 men, 5 women, 7 administration office staff)

● Activity Details



On this occasion, our volunteer activities comprised the following. In the morning, we held an event for children at the municipal Shizugawa day-care center in the town of Minamisanriku. This event comprised holding a reading session for *The Bouquet of Children's Stories* published by JX Holdings, and organizing a mini fair. In the afternoon, we invited all members of the association of senior citizens' clubs in Minamisanriku on a day trip to Minami Sanriku Hotel Kanyo where they enjoyed hot spring ("onsen") baths and some meals.



From early in the morning, we volunteers were busy at the day-care center preparing for the mini fair and putting up decorations around the venue. The event started from 10 a.m. when about 60 children had gathered at the center.

First of all, Ms. Chiharu Niiyama, a Japanese actress and celebrity, who JX has appointed to serve as the JX Children Story Award's PR Ambassador, read two stories from *The Bouquet of Children's Stories*. The children listened intently as Ms. Niiyama read, and could be seen to be really enjoying the experience.

Next, we staged various events for the mini fair, including yo-yo fishing and a hoopla game. We volunteer staff were soon surrounded by many children, and we all had a very happy time together.

Finally, all the children had a commemorative photograph taken together with Ms. Chiharu Niiyama and us volunteers, and the event came to a close with us giving confectionery to the children as a farewell present.

Following these morning activities, in the afternoon we took the 100 members of the association of senior citizens' clubs on a day trip to Minami Sanriku Hotel Kanyo where they could enjoy lunch and some onsen baths. In the same manner as in the morning, Ms. Niiyama read a story from *The Bouquet of Children's Stories*, and afterwards many of the seniors said they were quite moved because they had never before listened so closely to a nursery tale. Afterwards, Ms. Niiyama went round all the seniors and they had a pleasant mixture of chatting and taking photographs together to remember the event. We volunteers were impressed by just how happy everyone was. We also energetically helped the activities along by talking to the seniors around us, fetching drinks when needed, and organizing the karaoke singing.

Later, many volunteers made such comments as, "I felt everyone living in the disaster area has a forward-looking attitude—and that made me feel very good too," and "It was a good experience to have a chance to make other people happy outside of my normal working life." All in all, we felt that it had been an extremely worthwhile

day.