



Members of the festival staff making yakisoba (pan-fried buckwheat noodles).

焼きそばを作っているお祭りの実行委員です。



This potter is making a *suribachi*, or grinding bowl – one of Koishiwara’s specialty products. A *suribachi* has many small grooves on the inside. Using it with a wooden pestle, you can grind seeds, nuts, and the like into a fine powder.

## ***Art and Life in Rural Japan* LIBRARY CAMPAIGN**

The Toho students who worked for two years to gather the photos and text for *Art and Life in Rural Japan* are modest, shy—and passionate. (Yes, the stunning photographs are all theirs!) They are hugely eager to have their book make it into the hands of U.S. students, teachers, and others interested in learning about a Japan that never makes headlines. “Our village is shrinking,” 14-year-old Yüme told us. “We worry we’ll become invisible.”

We have an idea and hope you will help.

*Art and Life in Rural Japan* earned a rave review from *School Library Journal* (see below) and we've started to receive orders from book wholesalers who sell to school and public libraries. We would love to give these library acquisitions an additional nudge.

**(1) Public libraries respond positively when patrons recommend that they acquire a particular title. You could help by suggesting that your local library carry the book.**

Many libraries have a place on their website where patrons can recommend a book for acquisition. Here is a template you can use to fill in the blanks.

**Is this item:**         nonfiction     fiction  
**Is the item for:**     children     teens     adults  
**Title:** *Art and Life in Rural Japan: Toho Village Through the Eyes of Its Youth*  
**Author:** Cyrus Rolbin, editor  
**Publication date:** May 2011  
**Publisher:** Next Generation Press  
**ISBN:** 978-0-9815595-3-7  
**Price:** \$24.95

**Please tell us where you heard about this item or other relevant information** (*Note: Please do feel free to put it in your own words. We suggest, though, that you include the link and mention the journal review.*)

I learned about the book from the nonprofit What Kids Can Do and its small press, Next Generation Press: [http://www.nextgenerationpress.org/titles/art\\_and\\_life\\_japan.html](http://www.nextgenerationpress.org/titles/art_and_life_japan.html)

And here's a review from *School Library Journal*:

This gem of a book takes readers beyond typical images of Japan as a land of cityscapes and bullet trains, and into the heart of a small mountain community. Dwindling populations have forced villages to merge to sustain themselves economically, resulting in the loss of each community's distinctive character. A foreword explains that the youth of Toho, Japan's smallest merged village, contributed photographs and text to create this book as part of a revitalization effort to document and share their hometown's unique qualities. Simple, often poignant sentences in English and Japanese tell Toho's story, rich in history and culture. Stunning, full-color pictures capture verdant rice fields, jubilant school scenes, a lively festival, and expressive portraits of Toho's residents. The village's connection with its heritage is evident in photographs of its traditional arts, stoneware pottery created using centuries-old techniques and woodcarvings made of trees from the local forests. A fascinating window into a vanishing way of life, this book holds appeal for both pleasure reading and reports, and the inclusion of a word search, crossword puzzle, and comprehension quiz adds to its value for educators. This book provides an intimate look at the culture and rhythms of a small, rural Japanese community and is especially relevant right now, as children may want to learn about such villages in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. --Allison Tran, Mission Viejo Library, CA

**(2) You can purchase a copy from us and donate it to your local school or public library. You would get a full tax deduction from Next Generation Press for this.** (Better yet, buy several copies for donation.)

**(3) If you are a teacher, your students might organize a small fundraiser, purchase books from us with the proceeds, and then donate the books to their school and local libraries.** (Students could inscribe each copy if they wish!) *Two dollars of every book sold goes to a relief fund for children who continue to suffer from last spring's triple disasters in Japan; two dollars goes to an education fund for the last remaining school in Toho; and the remaining proceeds go to supporting the development of more books in WKCD's "In Our Global Village" project, an effort mostly run on a shoestring.*

If you are interested in helping, let us know: [info@whatkidscando.org](mailto:info@whatkidscando.org). We will send you a complementary copy of the first printing of the book.

Thanks so much for your time and interest,

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