

BARBARIAN VOLUNTEERS 2020

Greetings,

We're looking for volunteers to stay and help with various projects at our space in Nishiaizu for the year 2020. We would like help in primarily two areas:

1) Barbarian Farm

Maintaining our organic vegetable and rice field, assisting other local farmers with various tasks.

2) Institute of Barbarian Books

Assist in publication production, workshop support, and various tasks in running the community space.

In exchange for volunteering we can provide a private room and three meals a day (usually to be cooked and cleaned together). Our printing resources like the risograph and etching press can also be made available if you wish to use it. We're also open to proposals if you'd like to suggest an event, workshop, publication etc...

Volunteers with experience in farming, printing, teaching (or anything really!) are very much appreciated, but no experience is necessary. If you'd like to apply please send us an email with your preferred dates (we'd suggest a minimum of 3 weeks) and a short note on why you're interested. If things seem well, we will contact you for a further Skype interview with more details.

info@barbarianbooks.institute

Sincerely,
M&W

PROJECTS FOR 2020

Farming

Our farm is only two years old and we're still in the learning and practicing phase. This year, we are looking to experiment with no-till techniques and raise a variety of vegetables (primarily for ourselves).

We also take care of a rice field which requires a lot of work. The most busy times are planting (around the middle of May) and harvesting (around the end of Septmeber) but there are many small jobs and weeding that have to be done in between.

Finally, we often help local farmers with different jobs depending on when help is needed. This can include setting up greenhouses, transplanting and delivering rice seeds, and harvesting and organizing vegetables.

Community Space

Our library, print-space, and store is open irregularly but we try to hold periodic events and workshops that we could use some help with. These can range from zine-making workshops with college students, to helping with the weekly guitar lessons, to simply assisting (or playing with) some of our younger kids with their homework and projects after school.

We may also need help with printing and binding publications, in addition to occasionally selling things at our space and preparing shipments from online orders.

Another project is to build a rudimentary screen-printing studio with a space to expose, wash, and print screens.

Finally, this year we are planning to renovate a vacant home near ours to be a meeting place for the neighborhood. We will need help cleaning and fixing up the space, which will include a room for meals and talks, a music room, a general workshop space and rooms for sleeping.

Hours

We'd like to replicate something like the WW00Fing system which stipulates 4-5 hours a day for 5 days a week. But to be honest, realistically, the hours will vary greatly depending on the season and what kind of jobs we need to finish. We'd like to always guarantee at least two days off a week but you're always welcome to ask for a day off or more if you'd like to take a small trip.

Ideally, you should have fun and be interested in the work you're doing. If not, we ask you to please be vocal and let us know so we can find something else. Let's be flexible!

BARBARIAN VOLUNTEERS 2020 FURTHER INFORMATION

The Institute of Barbarian Books is a small community space run by Momoe and Will. It's located in the rural village of Nishiaizu, in Fukushima, Japan. It is about five hours north of Tokyo, and the cheapest and most direct route is taking a highway bus from Shinjuku Station to Aizu-wakamatsu Station. We are surrounded by mountains and forests, and the majority of land is used for agriculture. Because we tend to have heavy snow in the winter, visits and volunteers are usually postponed from December until March.

The majority of the population in Nishiaizu is aged 65 and older, but we share our lives with many energetic and funny neighbors. Our neighborhood in particular (Kaminojiri) is very active relative to other ones and we ask our volunteers to always act with respect when interacting with the locals and be mindful of the fact that we're participating in a community together.

In our house we will provide a private simple guest room with a futon for sleeping. In the event that there are volunteers overlapping we can find more space or talk about sharing. Amenities like the washing machine, bath, kitchen, wifi, and bike are free to use. We live with two friendly indoor cats that don't enter the guest room, but those with allergies might have problems.

While it varies with the farming season, we are of the "early to bed, early to rise" type. We like to cook and eat and clean together, and we are primarily vegetarian at the house. However, there are often times when we share meals with the community that contain meat or use fish dashi as a base so we ask strict vegans to please understand and be prepared.

Our printing space and library is always open if you wish to use it as a resource. We can help you with the risograph printer, etching press, and various other supplies if you'd like to experiment.

The central part of town has a convenience store, supermarket, restaurants, and onsen, and we often go by car to get supplies. It is possible to go by bike but as the road is a little dangerous we'd advise waiting so we can plan to go together.

Please be open to communication and to voice any problems that may arise. We will do our best to make sure you are as comfortable as can be but keep in mind we're not perfect! Our goal is to make this experience as mutually enjoyable and beneficial as possible for both of us. In the meantime, please feel free to email us with any questions.

info@barbarianbooks.institute

Sincerely,
M&W