

No-running Athletic Meet

Nurturing the circle of community across generations



▲ More than 200 people participated under the clear fall sky.

Photo courtesy of Minamisanriku Social Welfare Council

On October 14th, 2017, a no-running athletic meet was held in the central square at East Shizugawa Disaster Public Housing, which is beside Yui no Sato, a facility for the elderly.

In the past, athletic meets used to be held in each neighborhood, with everyone from children to the elderly joining in the fun. However, since the two towns of Utatsu and Shizugawa merged to form Minamisanriku Town, Iriya has been the only area to hold such an event.

The central square has a beautiful lawn that is looked after by volunteers each day. Here, both small children and the elderly can exercise safely. People felt they wanted to revive the athletic meets in this square. Residents working in Yui no Sato and staff from the Social Welfare Council exchanged ideas.

Every year, they came up with games that did not involve running so that everyone could participate. The no-running athletic meet came to be put on each year and became an annual fall event for the residents.

Not put off by the pandemic, the organizers devised new competitive content that could be enjoyed with less physical contact. Everyone enjoyed activities that did not involve running, for example: a relay in which the ball is rolled to the next person, or ball tossing in which each person only throws two balls.

Being in a place where people can move their bodies opens the mind and produces positive feelings. Being in a place where all generations are enjoying themselves gives people a direct sense of their life purpose.