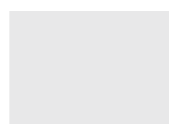


hypo Łtimes

December/January
2006-2007

To:
From: Present for you
<http://hypo-a-jet.org>

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Tanuki, Kyoto

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...

All JETs in Hyogo are encouraged to send in articles, musings, poetry, prose, and any ideas to contribute or improve the Hyogo Times for the betterment of the Hyogo JET community.

Submit by the 15th of each month to:

submit.hyogotimes@gmail.com

<http://hyogoajet.org>





from the editor

of cold – the sad part is that it's not even that cold out...Regardless, I am now faced with a daily bathing "Catch-22": I am far too chilled to even think about getting undressed and washing myself, but once I'm actually in the warm water, it's hard to think about getting out! I must confess that I have been shamelessly drawing out the "I'm still clean from my last shower!" period, and wearing a toque on the walk to school in order to blame my bad hair on hat head. However, I have now decided to solve this problem by making more trips to the onsen, as those seem to have the power to warm the depths of my heart, soul and bones.

On the up side to the Japanese winter, I can now get hot coffee and hot chocolate from the vending machines! Kudos to whomever came up with this idea – I don't know why this phenomenon has yet to cross the Pacific to the frozen tundras of Canada! I admit that it's pretty terrible coffee and my teeth cringe when the sugary liquid touches them, but at least it's HOT! I don't even want to drink it, I just want to hold the can...or put it in my socks.

Anyways, I hope that those of you reading this printed issue were also able to enjoy last month's online version. I was both surprised and pleased to receive a number of feedback emails: some came with compliments, others with constructive criticisms, but both types were greatly appreciated. I will certainly take into account all your suggestions.

Hope you're all keeping warm and enjoy the holiday season – whether you're celebrating Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanza, Ramadan or just a break from school!

submit.hyogotimes@gmail.com

Between inventing dialogues for OC1 classes, correcting and redoing Writing 1 speeches, composing various lengthy emails and hammering out a couple of articles for this issue, I feel as though I have been spending most of my time writing. As such, I don't really have any inclination to sit down and type up an editorial, nor do I have anything particularly witty to say, but on the other hand, I don't have much to do sitting here at school right now, so I might as well "just give!"

Now that the cold weather is here, and seems to have literally moved in overnight, I find myself faced with a whole new set of wonders and worries in Japan. As I was warned, the inside of my house is indeed colder than the outside air, and I am not ashamed to admit that I would sell my soul for central heating. While I may be a northern Ontario broad who is fully accustomed to -40C weather, this is an entirely different kind

from the PR

Dear fellow JETs,

Perhaps a Monday afternoon with what now seems like a life sentence ahead of me until the weekend is the wrong time for your P.R. to write a nice chirpy note for the JET community to read. Let's face it though: we all get a little homesick, de-motivated and just plain sick of school at some point as a JET. Call it the winter blues, label it grumpy-face-itis, or tell me to just get a grip. Whatever anyone says, I can't help it - I'm in a strop! I'm gonna stamp up and down the teachers' room, throw a hissy-fit if the copier breaks on me AGAIN, and whack the most annoying teacher in the room with a stuffed Doraemon...whatever consoles me.

There's no doubt about it, this term is looooong, and I'm feeling it. I'm just clinging on until I can hit the beaches of Thailand, get some warmth in the old bones and thaw out the ice queen demeanor I have taken on as of late. Ok, so this is definitely not the most uplifting of notes you'll receive from me, but at least some of you know you're not alone. And for those of you on top of your game and still emanating genki-ness like you're a children's T.V. presenter on a caffeine-high, well bully for you...I mean, I'm very happy for you.

Fortunately, the season of bonenkais is now upon us. It's the time when you discover the teacher whose being sitting next to you all year, but never uttered a word to you, is actually the head of the English department. Also, don't be surprised if you leave your bonenkai venue fully informed of what type of underwear your kocho-sensei wears - though maybe he just likes to parade around in his red fluffy thong because it's a special occasion? In addition to this priceless window into Japanese society, Hyogo AJET has decided to host a little otsukare sama soiree of our own. On December 9th, make your way to Akashi, feast on some of the best Indian food to be had in Japan, and drink your weight in alcohol

before crawling to Murphy's Irish bar to dance like the sexy beast you will consider yourself to be at that point in the night! Aaah, I feel better already.

I hope to see you there!

Fix



Love & Relationships

brenda mckinney

goukon: the japanese "blind date"

'Let's face it: a date is a job-interview, that lasts all night. The only difference between a date and a job interview is: not many job-interviews is there a chance you'll end up naked at the end of it.'

— Jerry Seinfeld



I was recently talking to another JET about dating and she mentioned group blind dates. Group blind dates? To an American ear, this sounds hilarious, but my curiosity was aroused. So I start to ask around and sure enough – it seems that this is actually a common practice!

My initial reaction was a desire to try one out for 'field research' - but even though I don't have to ever talk to the people I meet again, I doubt that my boyfriend (the one that lives far away, you know, back in America) would really be cool with me going on actual dates. Thus, I was limited to asking others about their experiences and what they think, know and feel about goukon. Take a read over what I found...

The concept of group blind dates is known as "goukon" and can be thought of as a modern twist on a traditional Japanese dating ritual. These dates are also sometimes referred to as konpa, but this is actually Japanese-English for

'I've been on so many blind dates, I should get a free dog.'
— Wendy Leibman

Companion (party). "Goukon" itself is short for "Gouryuu Konpa". Be careful not to confuse it with go-KAN – rape!

There are usually two hosts, one male and one female. The two hosts are usually the only ones that know each other; everyone else is meeting for the first time, hence the blind date. They plan an event and each host invites an equal number of friends of the same sex as them. Dinner and drinks is the standard recipe, but I heard that some people play games to keep things flowing. They even sell books with advice at the 100 Yen shop! Basically, it is a slightly formalized way for young people to meet possible partners outside of their standard circle of friends.

Goukons can start as early as high school, though this is rare. It is primarily a college thing, but for all of you high school ALTs out there, I don't think I need to remind you how hard it can be to get some members of the opposite sex to socialize with each other in Japan! Even if they are not looking for a boyfriend or girlfriend, these dates are a good outlet for younger people to get to know people of the opposite sex. While couples can break off and "things" have been rumored to happen at some parties, the goukon usually ends with a guy giving the girl(s) his number and then then playing who calls who later. I have been told that, in Japan, there is more of a culture of 'introductions' and less of a culture of meeting people at bars or events. Apparently, 'exchanging emails is THE most important thing you can do over here after meeting someone.

In this case, the concept behind these parties makes sense.

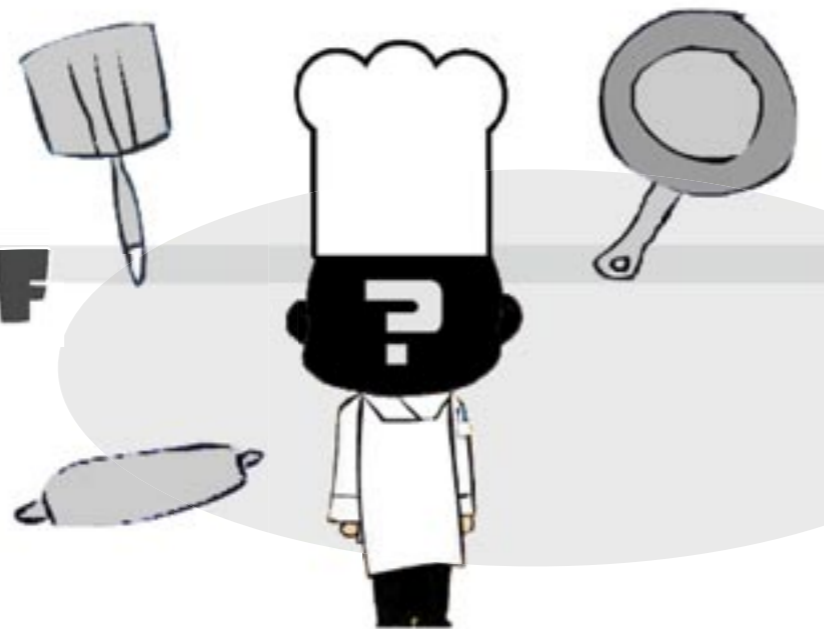
While some people would rather head out to a bar or meet people at work, these parties can also be a good outlet for foreigners to get to know people here. There are downsides, however: I talked to or read accounts from a few people who found goukon to be too competitive. One girl recalled how she regretted inviting her friends on the date because they got all the attention. Another guy called it 'an eye opener' after his friends "who pretended to be cool and confident and friendly... would suddenly become vicious back-stabbing bastards." Others complained about having an awful night when everyone else in the group turned out to be boring or rude, or about how they didn't find anyone attractive. Conversely, one guy posted a comment online about receiving "more attention as the only foreigner... women went out of their way to make [him] feel comfortable." If you live in the inaka, goukon may be a big plus with no bar scene, and you never know who might show up. All I can say, is that if you do decide to host or attend a goukan... choose your friends carefully before inviting them!

The more I heard about konpas, the more I couldn't get past the fact that this sounds like a reality dating show, Japanese **style**. Hello Blind Date, Japan! While not all konpa couples work out or end in a hook-up, though some do, it's a cultural experience we don't practice much - in my culture at least - and might be worth a try. If you didn't find this information helpful, hopefully you found it interesting! You should go on one for the fun of it. It might make good memories and would at least something fun to write home about!

Remember to send your questions to submit.hyogotimes@gmail.com.



IRONIC CHEF



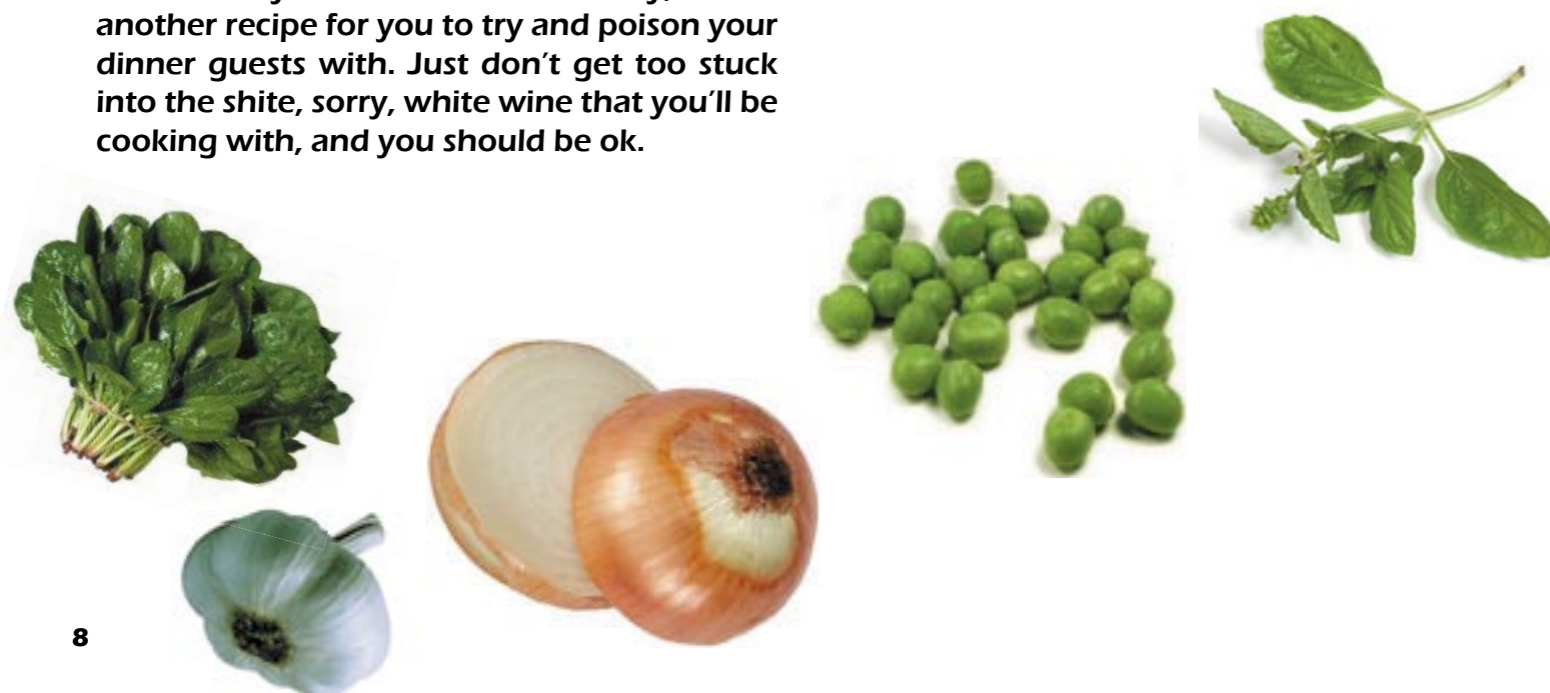
pumpkin, pea and spinach risotto

serves 2-3

Well how's life now that you've got at least one decent recipe under your belt? How did that healthy, nourishing soup go? Did you manage to follow my step-by-step, holding-your-hand-and-wiping-your-nose instructions, or did you botch it up entirely? If you are one of the former, well done, but don't be getting cocky - a Michelin starred chef, you are not. If you're one of the latter, as much as I'd like to throttle you à la Gordon Ramsay, here's another recipe for you to try and poison your dinner guests with. Just don't get too stuck into the shite, sorry, white wine that you'll be cooking with, and you should be ok.

Now this is a risotto in the loosest sense; ie, it gets around a bit. Now for all you purists out there, we're not using traditional risotto rice because, frankly, have you ever seen Arborio rice in Japan? And given how many times you have to wash rice to get rid of the starch - which is exactly what makes a risotto - koshihikari rice is suitable. Just don't tell the Italians.

Vegetables in this risotto are easily substituted for whatever's in season (you know, one of those four weather changes that often make life somewhat hellish), just watch how long you cook it for. Cooked chicken can easily be added in the last few minutes.



Ingredients

- ◆ 1 Tablespoon of olive oil
- ◆ 2 Tbsp butter
- ◆ 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- ◆ 2 cloves garlic, finely diced
- ◆ 1 leek, washed and finely sliced
- ◆ 100 gms or 3/4 cup rice
- ◆ 1 cup white wine
- ◆ 400 - 500 mls HOT chicken/vegetable stock (made from cubes or powder, seeing as making stock from scratch is obviously too much to ask). *Have a saucepan of stock premade and waiting for use.
- ◆ 300 grams pumpkin, peeled and cut into 2 cm pieces
- ◆ 1 1/2 cup frozen peas
- ◆ 1/2 bunch spinach, washed, stems removed and leaves cut in half
- ◆ 1/2 cup of grated cheese
- ◆ small handful of basil, finely sliced

method:

1. Heat the olive oil and butter together over medium heat in a large frypan. Once the butter begins to foam, add the onion, garlic and leek. Cook until the onion is translucent. Try NOT to let the aromatics (the onion, garlic and leeks - the basis of flavour for most dishes) brown, as they'll turn the rice a poo colour, and we don't want that on the table.

2. Add the rice and stir to coat with the oil and butter, cook for one minute. Sling in about a cup of white wine, and turn the heat up to medium high. Let the wine bubble and evaporate, and then pour in 1/2 a cup of stock and turn the heat back down to medium-low.

3. Add the pumpkin, and continue to stir. Add stock bit by bit, until the rice is almost cooked. The rice is almost cooked when it still has a tiny bit of bite to it - this should take about 15 to 20 minutes. If you haven't used all of your stock, don't worry, as long as the mix isn't all gluggy and liquidy, you're doing fine.

4. In the last 5 minutes of cooking, add your frozen peas and spinach. Cook until the peas are hot and the spinach has wilted. Continue adding small amounts of stock to keep the risotto smooth and slightly sloppy; add the cheese and the risotto will begin to thicken substantially. Turn the heat off, add the basil and season to taste. If you're being all fancy-like, a few shavings of parmesan over the top will also impress.

Questions? Queries? Challenges? Ironic Chef welcomes them all. Email your witticisms or catatrosphies to ironic_chef675@hotmail.com



What's in a Nog?

As December rolls in and a commercialized, fake holiday spirit fills the air, there are a number of things we Christmas-celebrating Westerners will probably have to do without: cheesy TV specials, Santa in every mall, 45 varieties of candy canes, and egg nog. While the Japanese seem to be pretty adept at coming up with new and random replacements for occidental world products, I suspect that egg nog will not be appearing on my grocer's shelves anytime soon. Admittedly, I know very little about "Christmas" in Japan, but judging by the appearance of holiday decorations before Halloween, if the egg nog's not out now, it just ain't gonna be!

In truth, I don't even like the stuff - there's something about a drink translating to French as "chicken milk" that just doesn't appeal to me. However, in the absence of such a popular holiday beverage, I decided to start questioning the tradition. What is a nog, exactly? Where do the tradition and desire to drink a nog come from? Why is it so popular? As it turns out, egg nog is nothing new and there are actually several stories as to its origins...

Supposedly, egg nog literally means "eggs inside a little cup." It first appeared in 17th century Britain as fashionable drink mainly among the upper class. By the 1800s egg nog was popular on both sides of the Atlantic, each "world" with its own variety, and was generally considered a social drink. When people gathered with friends and family, they would toast one another's health with this concoction. Since people generally gathered in large groups during the holidays, the drink eventually became a seasonal treat.



The egg nog we know today descends from a hot British drink called "posset" which consisted of eggs, milk and strong ale. The word nog was old slang for a very strong ale, or beer, hence the name Egg Nog. It is also thought that perhaps the term comes from the fact that the drink was generally served in a "noggin" – a small, carved wooden mug. Conversely, in Colonial America, rum – or grog – was cheaper and more abundant than ale, and so was more commonly used for the alcoholic addition. Some stories say that the term Egg Nog evolved from a fusion of "eggs'n'grog", as the New Worlders initially called it.

At some point, sugar and spices were also added to the well-traveled recipe, and it is now often served with whipped cream. In a traditional egg nog recipe, the eggs remain raw, however most cartons sold in the grocery stores today tend to boil the drink for health and safety reasons. So if you find yourself looking for a little taste of home this winter season, pull on an apron and indulge yourself in an old tradition. Try this recipe to cook up your own batch of holiday cheer:

you will need:

- ◆ 6 large eggs, beaten
- ◆ 2 cups milk (whole for a creamier taste, skim for a lower fat drink)
- ◆ 1/3 cup sugar
- ◆ 1/2 cup spiced rum (or substitute brandy or bourbon)
- ◆ 1 tsp vanilla
- ◆ nutmeg sprinkles to top

directions:

- in a large sauce pan, mix beaten eggs with milk and sugar over medium heat.
- continue cooking and stirring until mixture coats the spoon.
- place pan in a sink filled with ice water to cool quickly; stir in rum and vanilla.
- chill 4 to 24 hours ; served topped with whipped cream and nutmeg if you like.



Egg nog has a number of different varieties around the world, each using different alcohols and calling it by a different name. In Germany, the drink is served with ale and is called "biersoupe". One of the most popular versions is the Puerto Rican "coquito" which combines the traditional drink with an essence of coconut. If you are in the mood for something a little more tropical, give this recipe a try, but be warned: this is not for the faint stomach, as the eggs in this drink remain raw.

you will need:

- ◆ 1 cup coconut milk
- ◆ 1 cup sweetened condensed milk
- ◆ 1 cup evaporated milk
- ◆ 1 cup white rum
- ◆ 1 cup water
- ◆ 3 cinnamon sticks
- ◆ 4 eggs, well beaten (preferable to use only the yolks, but not absolutely necessary)

directions:

- combine the three milks and rum in a blender
- boil the water with the cinnamon sticks; allow to cool to room temperature, then discard sticks
- add water and eggs to milk mixture; blend well.
- chill and refrigerate until ready to serve; top with nutmeg if you like.

My Favorite Drug...

mikah jorrich

a (canned) coffee review



Everyone has a drug. For some, it might be a rather mellowing yet highly illegal (in Japan that is...sorry, you hippy Canadians) substance. For others, it might be dressing up like Doraemon and drinking a six-pack of apple chu-hi down by the river – whatever floats your boat! My drug is quite common, I guess: I am addicted to a bitter black substance brewed with scalding water and ever so tenderly served in a cup. I lovingly refer to this wonderful concoction as java, black crack and, sometimes, even coffee. Here in Japan, one tends to be spoilt for choice (WARNING!!! Spoilt is a very, very, verrrrrry relative word...). I mean, you enter a convenience store looking for your daily dose, and you're hit with about 300 metal cans. Coming from a canless coffee culture, how am I supposed to react? The first time it happened, I blacked out and found myself lying in a puddle of my own drool with the handle to the refrigerator case lodged up my nose... Not a pretty sight. Since I'm a self-proclaimed (don't mind if I do) compassionate altruist, I don't want to see this happening to your pretty little faces. My task shall be to tackle this obstacle course of caffeine, and thus to enlighten you, my fellow clueless gaijin, on the topic of Japanese canned coffee (Think I can get a Nobel Prize for this?) Everyday this workweek I will try a new type and rate each as thoroughly and honestly as I can. Note: the recent accusation of kickbacks from Coca Cola is not true – I just really, really like Fresca.

day 1- georgia café au lait

I was feeling quite Euro-chic this morning, and since I had no tight leather pants (laundry day, damn it!) I decided to hit up the most French looking coffee I could find. This was the clear winner. The milk portion reminded me of,

ummm, how do I say this without implicating myself in some way? Breast milk. I might have some issues, and Mom if you're reading this; I hope you're happy because this is what happens when you nurse a child until they're 11. **Overall taste:** 3 lactating breasts out of 5. **Caffeine kick:** 2 shaky fingers out of 5.

day 2- georgia 5 blend

Since I was wearing my newly cleaned (and bright red might I add; feast your eyes ladies!) pants, I was feeling quite ostentatious. Thus, I chose the most pretentious coffee I could find; this happened to be it. The name itself does not promote pretense, but the 5 "blends" more than make up for it. Not only does it boast two different types of mocha, Regular and Washed, it also has some obscure "blend" called Mandheling - which sounds like a painful German S&M trick. "Ja, You come to Helga's for ze Mandheling, now take ze pants off!" Not even Starbucks has reached this level of "I have no idea what I'm drinking, but hey it sounds good!" Side note: Breast milk taste still apparent. Another side note: I am beginning to like it. Don't judge me! **Overall taste:** 3 S&M whips out of 5 **Caffeine kick:** 4 shaky fingers out of 5.

day 3 roots inspiration

I am a firm believer that one's morning coffee should not only provide caffeine, but should also symbolize one's feeling for the day... Ok, that's a load of horse poo! Still, I decided to test that theory by trying this little beauty on for size. The can itself screams inspiration with a shiny gold and turquoise exterior, and the catch phrase, "The waist-wave can provides optimum heat control combined with the HTST process in the pursuit of the authentic coffee flavor." makes me want to tackle all kinds of enormous feats.

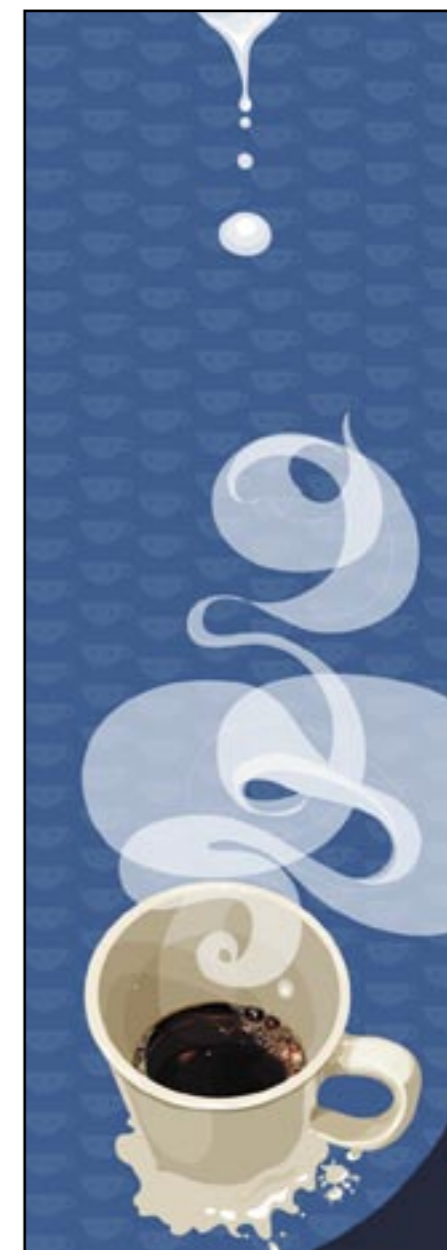
Nothing says inspiration like the HTST process. Only in Japan could a can of coffee actually admit to the act of pursuing authentic coffee flavoring...at least they're honest. Truth be told, this pursuit does lead to a more coffee-like flavor, though my theory was a bitter failure. **Overall taste:** 4 challenges conquered out of 5 **Caffeine kick:** 3 shaky fingers out of 5.

day 4 boss rainbow mountain blend

Let me tell you a little secret: boss is the macho man's coffee. Not only does it have the manliest man and the greatest actor of the universe as its "face" – Tommy Lee Jones – it has some shady old white dude smoking a big pipe on the front of the can. It also manages to incorporate very festive rainbow colors. An accurate comparison for the Rainbow Blend would be to the 70's super hip music group "Men at Work" or, for you ignorant folk, the "YMCA guys." Bear with me here: so you're staring at these ultra macho looking Indians and construction workers up on stage, but you're a bit confused. These guys are shaking their booties like Beyonce and singing like Barbara Streisand. You're not quite sure what image they're trying to portray, so ultimately you just ignore the fact that the policeman is wearing tight black leather and enjoy the show. Basically, after you get past the confusing exterior of this coffee, it's actually pretty damn tasty. In fact, it tastes the most like coffee out of all the cans I've had so far. Nice work Tommy! **Overall taste:** 5 Tommy Lee Jones out of 5 **Caffeine kick:** 3 shaky fingers out of 5.

day 5 wonda morning shot

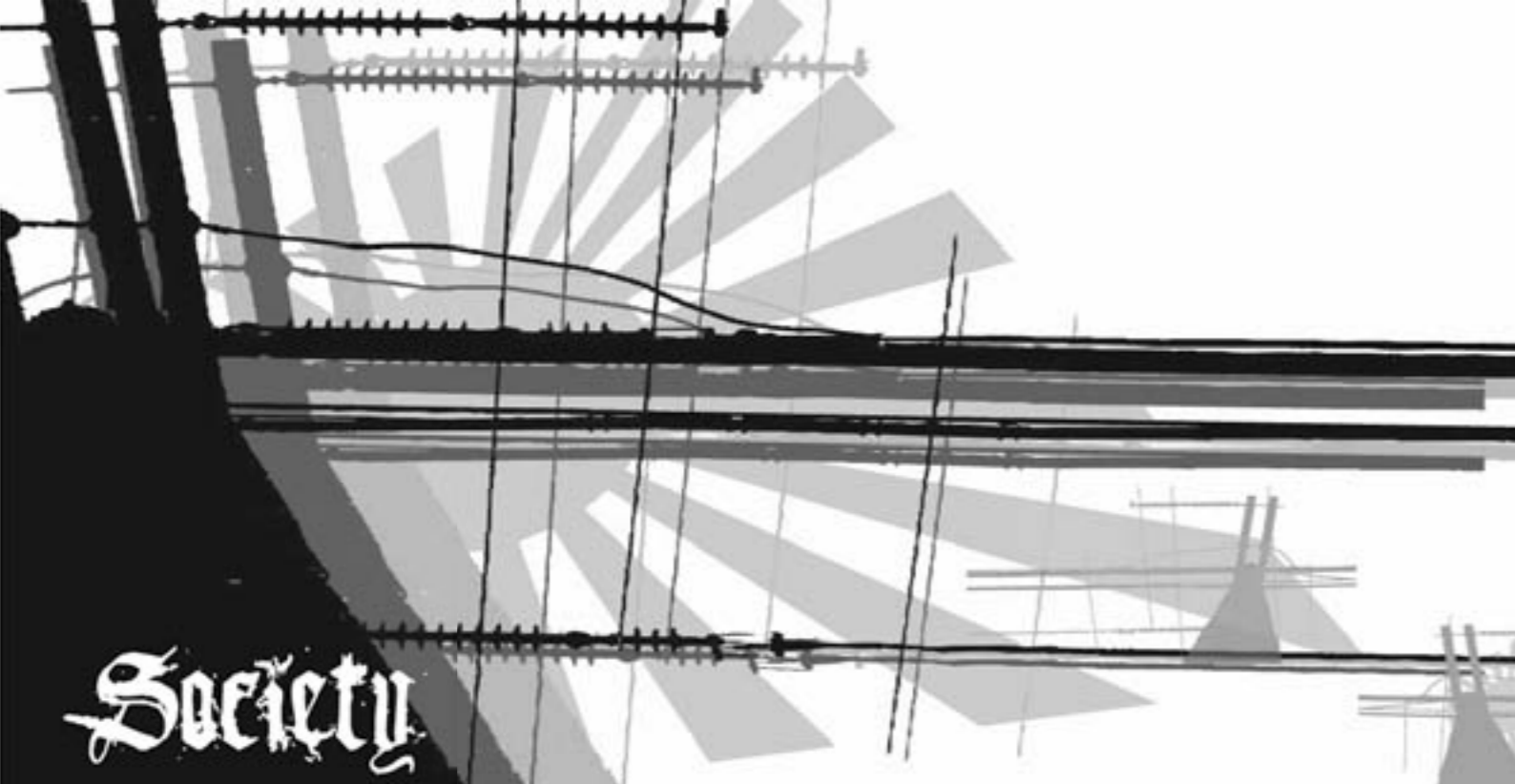
Good God. The tender, heartwarming exterior to this coffee is a farce! One look at this can and you'll think that drinking this coffee would be on par with resting upon your mother's bosom as a wee lad or lass. What a dirty little trick Wonda has played on us! No wonder the conbini clerk gave me that "Oh shit dude, I'll put \$50 down that you're not gonna make it back here tomorrow" look... About five minutes after ingesting this lil' SOB, my left eye began to twitch like that token crazy guy whom everyone bikes past on their way to school. I was out of control! I spent first period wandering around the teacher's room with a mop on my head pretending I was George Clinton. Since I do this every Friday, no one seemed to take notice of



my crazy eye problem. It only took a few hours for the caffeine to die down, but that was like a bad trip. Instead of a sunrise, they should get a picture of Ozzy Osbourne on the front – not a geriatric one from today, but perhaps from 20 years ago, when he looked like he might snap at any moment and start bashing the crowd with his microphone. **Overall taste:** 1 dead brain cell out of 5 **Caffeine kick:** 5 kicks to the groin out of 5

Upon reflection of this exciting adventure into the world of Japanese canned coffee, I have come to the logical conclusion that if you drink this stuff you will look like Tom Cruise, run faster than a speeding wolverine, and improve your IQ by 10 points.

Ok, maybe not, but it's damn convenient! Enjoy!



Society & Politics

jeremiah mckain

out with the old, in with the new

September 26th, 2006 marked the end of an era in Japan. On that day, former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi officially stepped down, taking his maverick leadership style and signature “lion’s mane” hairstyle with him. On that same day, his successor, Mr. Shinzo Abe, was officially elected to take his place. While Mr. Koizumi was well known around the world (at least for his aforementioned hairstyle and obsession with Elvis!), I imagine that many of our readers may be asking themselves “Just who is this Abe fellow anyway?”

While a meaningful answer to this question is difficult to posit just a few months into Abe’s administration, we do know a number of significant things about the man. While likely unfamiliar to most foreign residents, Abe has been a visible and vociferous figure in Japanese politics for some time. His political pedigree, which counts for quite a bit in this country, is second to none. His father was a successful politician in his own right, and his grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi (a founder of the LDP and the architect of the modern US-Japan security treaty), remains one of the most famous prime ministers of the post-war era.

Abe was born into this prodigious pedigree on September 21st, 1954. Though his family hailed from the small town of Nagato in Yamaguchi Prefecture, young Shinzo was raised in Tokyo at the feet of his powerful father and grandfather. As a boy, Abe was a witness to the often violent street protests by leftist opponents of the US-Japan security treaty – an experience that would profoundly affect his ideological development later in life. He attended Seikei University, graduating with a degree in Political Science, and for a short time pursued graduate studies at the University of Southern California. He returned to Japan without a degree however, and after a short stint in the private sector, began to work his way through a series of government jobs.

Elected to fill his deceased father’s seat in the Diet in 1993, Abe climbed the ranks quickly, gaining real notoriety in 2002 when he took a hard line on the return of the Japanese abducted by North Korea. Most recently, he served as Chief Cabinet Secretary in the fifth and final Koizumi cabinet – a position that put him directly in line for the premiership. That Abe would succeed Koizumi was a foregone conclusion months before his ascension to office and, as such, media scrutiny before the election tended to focus on not if, but how, Abe would govern.

Abe is an unabashed conservative. According to his writings, he adopted these principles largely in reaction to the leftist ideology that prevailed in academia and in many public sectors during his youth. He is dedicated to revising Japan’s post-war constitution and initiating educational reforms: in fact, he has made both issues a priority for his administration, despite the risky political footing surrounding them. Abe’s goal of revising the Constitution’s war-renouncing Article 9 has only lukewarm public support at present, and as such, Abe has remained guarded, calling for debate and discussion rather than specific changes. He has outlined a time table however, stating that he would like to see constitutional revision occur “within the next 6 years”.

Critics say that Abe sits too far to the right and that some of his positions are better suited to the 1950s than the 21st century. In education especially, Abe’s calls for a more “patriotic” perspective in teaching Japanese history and

for an end to gender neutral education in public schools strike many as arcane and arrogant. Yet, conversely to what one might expect as a result of his positions on gender, Abe enjoys considerable support amongst women. Some analysts have attributed this phenomenon to Abe’s very visible relationship with his wife – something Japanese politicians are not known for.

In foreign policy, Abe seems to be a realist, and has already taken steps to mend Japan’s relationships with South Korea and China – ties which were severely strained by his predecessor’s repeated visits to Yasukuni Shrine. The first real test of Abe’s administration came during his initial fence-mending trip to South Korea after North Korea tested its first atomic bomb. Abe handled the crisis masterfully, calling for and eventually getting stiff U.N. sanctions, but still reining in right-wing reactionaries by reiterating his support for Japan’s non-nuclear principles and calling for a diplomatic solution to the problem.

Whether Abe will continue to enjoy foreign policy triumphs and successfully advance his domestic agenda remains to be seen. While he enjoys considerable public support at this time, his administration is still in the “honeymoon” period. Yet if early indications can be believed, Abe seems poised to follow in the steps of his predecessor: the advancement of a controversial and contentious agenda in defiance of tradition and his party’s old guard. For Japan-watchers, the next few years will be interesting indeed. Questions and comments regarding Politics and Society can be addressed to kartng@gmail.com.



Who's who in Hyogo

tori lowe

Name: Jade Opie

Please call me: Anything BUT Jaido, Jeedo, Jaiydo or any other katakana derivative

School and Location in Hyogo: Toyooka Senior High in Tajima

How we know you: I am lucky enough to have a wonderful big house and host parties

Birthday: 10 November 1982

Born and raised: Beautiful Perth, Western Australia

Family: 5 and a puppy

University and Degree: Sustainable Development at Murdoch

Other jobs you have had: Bra Fitting Specialist at Bras N Things, waitress, teacher

Travels: All over Japan, all over Australia, Thailand and Cambodia

Shumi wa nan desuka: movies, reading, travel

Favourites...

Food: Mexican

Sports: watching the AFL grand final was the sportiest thing I've done lately

Music: I have no idea what's current anymore..... though since a certain concert I've been listening to a LOT of Madonna

Shop: There's not a lot in Toyooka, so anything that's NOT Uniqlo

TV Show: I have satellite TV so every English show is my favourite

Movie: Indecent Proposalwhat would YOU do??

Most Proud Achievement: learning to snowboard

Best life experience: being in Japan I'd have to say

Motto to live by: What's for you won't go past you.

I remember when... I ate umeboshi for the first time...bad times, bad times

What are you drinking? Right now, hot water... tonight, red wine

Why should we elect you President of the World? I would make all bad JTES disappear...

Do you have an alibi for the Fire Extinguisher Incident at Yashiro? Haha, I wasn't there but I heard all about it...I wonder what'll happen next year!

Best thing about Japan so far? Difficult to answer: the snow, the travel opportunities, all the fun I have had with friends...

My top tip for teaching: Laugh!

When the class is TOO QUIET I... Ask the kids random questions if only for my amusement

Bribery for students: YAY or NAY? Yay, everything in moderation.

jade opie



Name: Ryan Pain

Please call me: Thor

School and Location in Hyogo: Sumoto Senior High School, Awaji-shima

How we know you: I didn't think you did – hence this wonderful little exercise!

Birthday: 29/12/1983

Born and raised: Born in the leafy countryside of Sussex, England; raised on the sun-kissed, sandy plains of Western Australia (Perth).

Family: Parents, sister, brother, dog.

University and Degree: University of Western Australia – Arts & Commerce.

Other jobs you have had: I was once employed as a 'Sandwich Artist' when I was a sunshine-spewing, pimple-faced 15 year old. I only lasted 2 weeks, however, as it was discovered that I was feeding customers raw bacon. To this day I'm still owed the \$10 I paid for the apron and hat. I also stacked shelves expertly in a supermarket for a while.

Travels: All throughout Europe (you need to go to Berlin), South-east Asia (average at best, you don't really need to go here.)

Shumi wa nan desuka: I'm still to come across something that holds my interest long enough for it to be deemed a 'hobby'.

Favourite...

Food: kebabs, cheese, Okonomiyaki, lasagna, toasted ham & cheese sandwiches.

Sports: Soccer & Golf. I played with 11 of my fellow teachers 2 weeks ago and I won. (see Most Proud Achievement)

Music: minimal/deep techno, electro, house; ambient and experimental electronica. No singing, guitars or gangsters, thank you.

Shop: there are 2 Carhartt stores in Osaka!

TV Show: Curb Your Enthusiasm, The Office, Amazing Race, Extras, Coupling, The Apprentice, Seinfeld, Black Books...

RYAN PAIN

Movie: None spring to mind, I don't watch a lot. Fight Club was very cool, but didn't really like the fighting parts.

Most Proud Achievement: (see Sports.)

Best life experience: Attending a basketball camp with the Perth Wildcats basketball team when I was 11. I got my photo taken with James 'The Alabama Slammer' Crawford.

Motto to live by: "Don't put your hands where you wouldn't put your face." I have no idea what this means.

I remember when... I thought the word 'chimney' was spelt and pronounced 'chimley'. Aahhhhh the good old days.

What are you drinking? Right now? Ooo.

Why should we elect you President of the World? I would replace all footpaths and sidewalks the world-over with Travellators.

Do you have an alibi for the Fire Extinguisher Incident at Yashiro? Yes, I was on the roof.

Best thing about Japan so far? My uncanny, against-all-odds ability to eat with chopsticks: some of my co-workers are still awe-struck.

Other interesting trivia: I can sucker-fart on demand.

My top tip for teaching: If you can't get a response, overturn a few desks.

When the class is TOO QUIET I... polish my "Le Er" High Performance Assembled Plastic Air Gun, available from your local matsuri for just 300 yen.

Bribery for students.. YAY or NAY? Yay. Tims Tams work well.



Blame Japan

Allow me to be honest: my first few months in Japan have not been easy. I'm sure that a lot of you understand what I am talking about! Recently I felt the relief of having someone else admit that adjusting to this new life has been tough, so I thought I would attempt to share that feeling...

During this initial period of adjustment, I have had multiple moments where I truly believed that bad things were simply "Japan's fault." That time when I dropped twelve eggs in the supermarket car park and then managed to spill the survivors all over my kitchen table? Japan's fault. That never would have happened if I was at home, and of course it had nothing to do with my dire clumsiness... That time when I fell into a gutter? Again - Japan's fault. It obviously had nothing to do with the rusted through piece of metal that that was covering it. It is Japan's fault and no one else's that I still have to walk past a Lorna shaped hole in that piece of metal every time I leave my house.

However, I must also say that Japan is to blame for a large part of my life back home: a martial art called Jui Jitsu. Ironically, this is an art that anyone I have yet to meet in Japan has actually heard of. One of my teachers gave me a reason: she asked her father, who has done Judo for many years, about Jui Jitsu and he told this story. Many years ago there were multiple forms of martial arts in Japan, all very similar just using different names: Jui Jitsu, Aiki Jitsu, Judo etc. Someone came up with the idea of merging

them to create an all-encompassing style. This idea was widely opposed, so a competition was held to determine the best martial art. Judo was triumphant that day, which is why Judo is now so well known and well spread, and other styles, such as Jui Jitsu, have disappeared into obscurity. I don't know how much truth there is to this tale, but I like the idea of it as a sort of "fighting fairy tale." It's just a shame that Jui Jitsu was not the hero of the tale...

I may not agree entirely with the insinuated weakness of Jui Jitsu in that story, but I have found that I can keep a little piece of my home life while here in Japan by joining in the martial arts. It may not help with the clumsiness, but it helps prevent me from placing the blame for it immediately on Japan!

I found a local Judo club who has kindly let me join their ranks. Judo does not entirely satisfy my craving for martial arts, but it does help in relieving the tension of quitting Jui Jitsu cold turkey. In a way, Judo is a good change for me, as it teaches new ways of doing and understanding things that may eventually help with my chosen martial art. The way I feel about Judo is similar to the way a smoker might feel towards a nicotine patch: it helps, but it's never quite as good as the real thing!

One similarity in the training is the opportunity to train and fight with people of all shapes and sizes. One minute I'll be training with a six year old boy who would be easily blown over by a stiff breeze, and the next I'm up against an



Four year-old Keita, Taekwon-do
Chiori Nakamizo

adult with a black belt who looks like a bulldozer wouldn't shift him. At home, I am usually the smallest person in the club and there is nothing I hate more than people holding back because of my size and gender, especially if they have less experience than me! Here, when training with the youngsters, I have to be careful not to use my strength against them, while still presenting them with the challenge that fighting me clearly is. After all, they are better than me at Judo, I just happen to be bigger than them!

My other challenge is training with the adults - all of them men and all of them considerably larger than me. Often, they train with me but refuse to attack, which is frustrating not only because it is protection that I don't need, but because it makes training downright boring. The ones that really fight are the fun ones to train with because of the challenge. Even if I lose the fight, I can at least take comfort in the fact that I got a really good workout! Furthermore, winning is a great feeling when you know you were not helped along the way - often this victory surprises my opponent just as much as myself!

Recently, enjoying the "I don't have to work!" situation provided by Sports and Culture Day, I attended and participated in the Hyogo Martial Arts Festival. The day began with the invigorating sound of taiko drums, followed by some karate students kick-starting the demonstrations. The highlight of their section was a set piece performed to music by the Karate

master. He wore the strangest hakama (over trousers) that I have ever seen - and I have seen pink ones with stars on them - as well as what I believe they were calling an "energy mask." Though the mask made him fairly comical, his movement was very powerful.

Next up was an impressive demonstration of kata and aggressive sparring by Shorinji Kempo specialists. What I find most shocking is their ability to train without mats: to land heavily on a solid wooden floor and then to get back up for more of the same. However, if you watch closely you can see how they surreptitiously land on their feet before falling to the floor - not I blame them!

Aikido, on the other hand, made use of some very lovely mats! This martial art is much like my preferred Jui Jitsu, except that they use grab attacks instead of punches. The similarities put me on the edge of my seat and made me anxious to get back into my own white pyjamas again!

No martial arts festival would be complete without some good old fashioned board breaking. This was eventually provided by those in Taekwon-do after they wowed us with their high flying, high kicking bendiness. I've always seen board breaking as a rather futile exercise - after all, how often are you likely to be attacked by a plank of wood? However, hearing the crack that echoed through the hall, I could certainly imagine the feeling of satisfaction that accompanies the trick.

(continued from previous page: Life as a first year JET)

Finally, I have to admit that my favourite demonstration was not even a Japanese art – I truly enjoyed the spectacular display of Kung Fu. One demonstrator did an amusing and impressive rendition of Jackie Chan's drunken Kung Fu, with lots of great weapon work and acrobatics combined with an equal balance of performance and fighting.


The time finally came for me to don my white suit and show off my own skills, so I signed in and happily received my free towel which depicts all the arts represented at the festival. Don't laugh – it's a great souvenir and I plan to show it off at my club back home! The afternoon gave us the chance to try our hands at the different arts and I know that I was not the only JET there seeing what was on offer. I am sure that many of them also felt like I did – conspicuous, self-conscious and somewhat unsure their ability to fit in.

I was happy to meet a Japanese lady named Mindy, who speaks English and actually lives in the village next to mine, and she helped me out a lot. As a small crowd formed to watch the foreigner fight, I took on a man much bigger than me and though I didn't lose the fight, I definitely showed why I only wear a Judo white belt! At the end of the session, however, I was kindly beckoned to be in the group photograph with all the adult black belts, much to my embarrassment.

The day was exhausting, but made me feel really good about myself – it's amazing what endorphins can do for the mood! I was also less inclined to blame Japan for the lack of buses back to Himeji train station, as I was far too busy blaming Japan for the lovely glow I was feeling. It seems that I am less inclined to fight Japan as a whole when I am able to fight with its individuals. This is a good thing – I think my odds are better against the individuals!



(top>down)
Budosai - Hyogo Martial Arts Festival opening
Karen
Taekwon-do, kicks, board-breaking
Chiori Nakamizo



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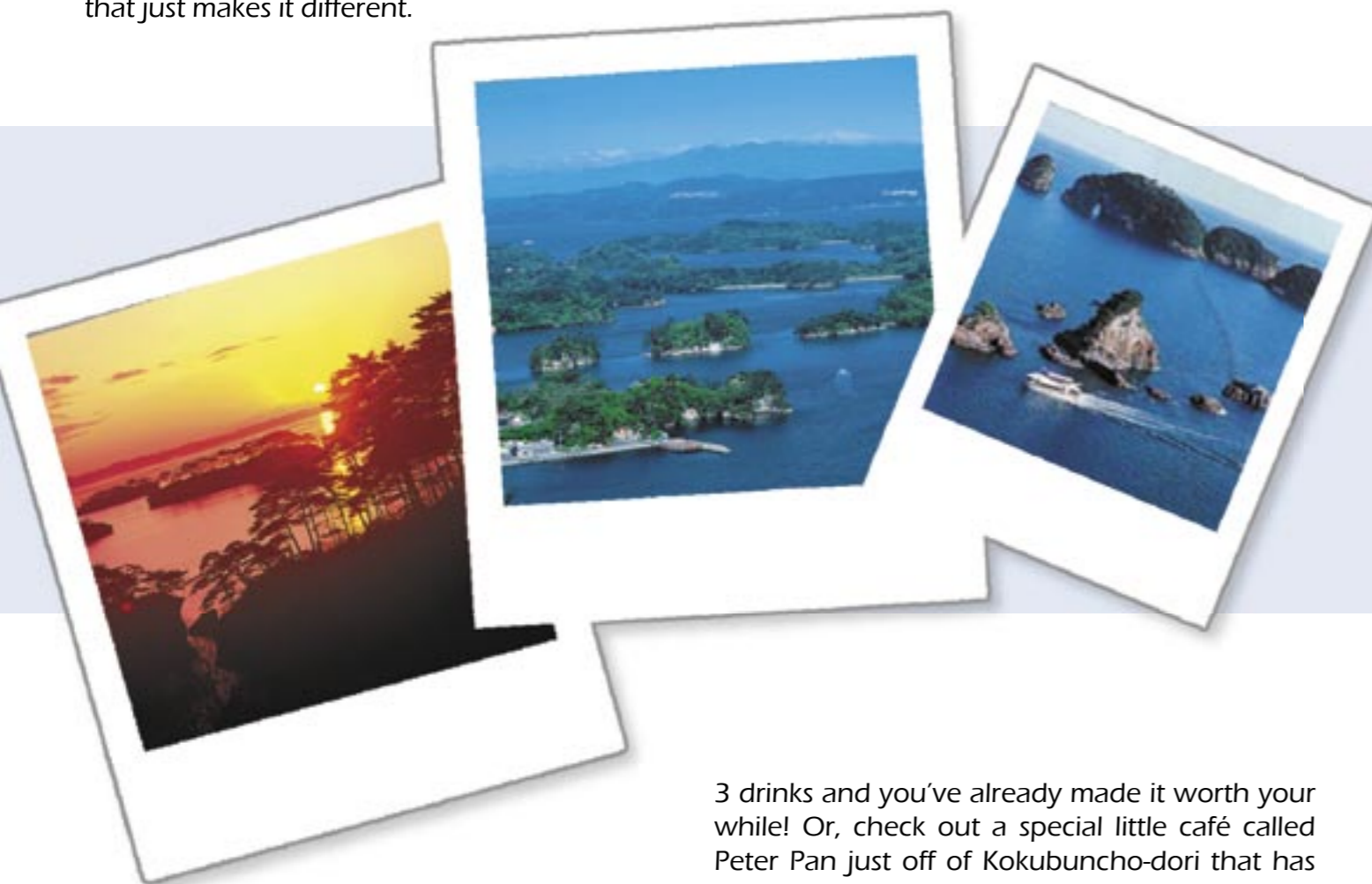
JAPAN: travel review

jeff weese



sendai

Sendai is different from any other city in Japan. Stepping out of JR Sendai station in Miyagi-ken onto the tree lined boulevards gives off a vibe of ...well, not Japan! This place is not a concrete metropolis like most cities in Japan have become. Don't worry - there are still enough karaoke joints, izakayas, and Doutor Coffee Shops to make you feel at home, but there is something about Sendai that just makes it different.



While Sendai accommodations may seem expensive at first, cheap deals can be found on <http://jalan.net> for as low as 3000yen per person per night. After you've checked into your hotel on the first night, check out the surplus of nomihoudai specials at one of the many bars on Kokubuncho-dori. For as far as the eye can see, neon lights will beckon you to 90 minute, 1500 yen all-you-can-drink specials. That's right kids -

3 drinks and you've already made it worth your while! Or, check out a special little café called Peter Pan just off of Kokubuncho-dori that has wall-to-wall vinyl for your viewing and listening pleasure. It is hard to spot, located up on the 3rd floor, but you can see the sign - a record sitting in a cup of coffee - from street level.

During the day, Sendai has enough covered shopping streets to keep you busy for hours, and they are far better than the ones in Kobe or Himeji. Some of these are even lined with trees and benches where you can stop to give your wandering feet a break.



(left>right)
opposite page:
Matsushima Bay
this page:
Osaki Hachimangu
Momiji (Jeff Weese)
Gyutan (cow tongue)

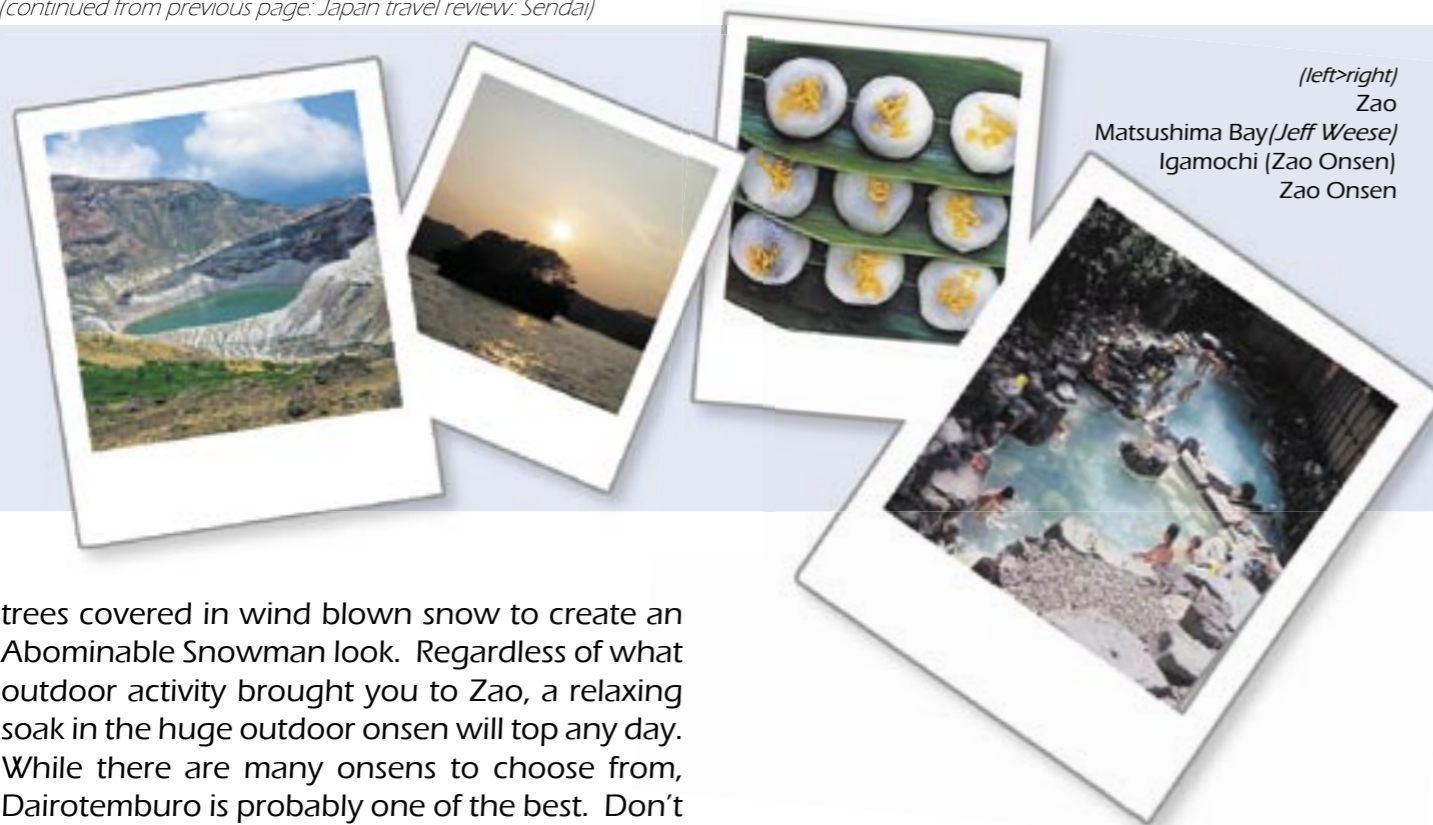
If it's your stomach that needs attention, pop into an izakaya or gyutan (cow tongue) restaurant. Sure, you can order gyutan anywhere in Japan, but the Sendai is the place of origin, and its gyutan is said to be tastier. It is usually served with barley rice, ox tail soup, and pickles. If you really want to grab the tongue, visit Tasuke restaurant where, in 1948, Masta Sano Keishiro conceived the concept of eating cow tongue. To this day, it is still considered one of the best places in Japan to taste this Sendai specialty.

After lunch, take a stroll to Osaki Hachimangu just outside of the city. Built in 1607, this shrine is a good example of the plush architectural style that characterizes the Momoyama Period. It is free to wander around, and the colors and style are different to anything we have here in Hyogo.

If you head all the way to Sendai, you can't skip out on visiting Matsushima: only a 30-minute ride on the Senseki Line will put you at Matsushima Kaigan Station. Matsushima is one part of the "scenic trio" in Japan, along with

Miyajima (Hiroshima-ken) and Amanohashidate (Kyoto-fu). Matsushima is dotted with over 260 islands, in a range of sizes and shapes, but almost all are topped with lush green trees. The islands are best seen by taking a scenic boat cruise through Matsushima Bay at dusk. Some of the cruises start at just over 1000yen for a one-hour cruise. Really, words or photos cannot do this area justice; you will just have to check it out for yourself!

If you have an extra day in the Sendai area and are not sure what to do, take a one hour bus or train over to Yamagata. From there you can catch a bus up to Zao in just 40 minutes time. No matter what season you visit Zao, it is said to be beautiful. I can only speak for the fall, but famous slopes in the winter, beautiful cherry blossoms in the spring, and fantastic hiking in the summer all seem like good enough reasons to visit this little town nestled in the towering mountain peaks. If you have the time, hike up to Okama Crater Lake. While its color actually changes throughout the day depending on the sunray movements, the postcards in town all boast a radiant chemical blue color. If skiing is what calls you, you will also be able to check out the "Snow Monsters" that haunt the mountainside come January and February. The "Snow Monsters" are really just



(left>right)
Zao
Matsushima Bay (Jeff Weese)
Igamocho (Zao Onsen)
Zao Onsen

trees covered in wind blown snow to create an Abominable Snowman look. Regardless of what outdoor activity brought you to Zao, a relaxing soak in the huge outdoor onsen will top any day. While there are many onsens to choose from, Dairotemburo is probably one of the best. Don't let the strong sulfur smell put you off dipping into the inviting milky blue water! You also shouldn't leave Zao without tasting some cherries or pears, although if you go in the off season, you may have to settle for cherry or pear flavored candy.

And so you ask, "How do I get to this wonderful place called Sendai?" From the Osaka/Kobe area there are 14 daily flights to Sendai between ANA and JAL. The prices vary widely, but you can find deals for as low as

11000yen each way if you book in advance! If it is a scenic trip you desire, the Shinkansen is also an option. You will have to transfer at least once in Tokyo and the journey will take about 5 or 6 hours of your time and around 20000yen out of your wallet, but hey, who doesn't love a good Shinkansen ride!

Sendai may not be at the top of everyone's list of places to go in Japan, but I think it deserves a gander. It makes a great base to explore the Tohoku region and will also give you a chance to explore a different kind of Japanese city. Happy travels.



Kobe Regatta & Athletic Club

Recently arrived in Japan?

Here are two ideas to improve your quality of life:

1. Find the nearest 100 yen store;
2. Come and join The KRAC.

The KR&AC is a Sports & Social Club for people living and working in Japan; we currently have 21 different nationalities and our own clubhouse/bar/restaurant/gym/badminton/tennis courts.

Do you want to play indoor soccer?

It's free for members. Badminton? Same deal. Free weights? You guessed it: Free!

Maybe you want to go and have a drink where everyone knows your name?

We have regular Happy Hours, Tues – Sat 6-7:30pm. A good place to meet people and have a laugh, we are pretty casual down here.

Want to explore the area but also save some money?

We have discounts available in many local shops and restaurants for our members.

Need some advice on where to go and what to do in Japan?

Many of our members have spent years living in Japan. We have a network of contacts built on years of experience. If you need help with something then someone at the club knows the answers.

Play Sports?

Soccer, tennis, softball, rugby, cricket, darts, field hockey, rowing, sailing and we can help you if you want to play golf.

Need a convenient meeting place before you head out for the night?

We are a 10 minute walk from Sannomiya JR, Hankyu & Hanshin Stations.

Want a place to book a party/function/meeting?

We do it all the time, give us the details and our (friendly and pretty chilled out) staff will help.

Finally; most people who join tend to stay in Japan for longer than they initially planned. We must be doing something right.

So, now you know what we offer; how can you not join?

Pop in for a visit anytime and speak to some of our members/barflies.

December Events are Open to Non-Members!!
KR&AC Christmas Party: Saturday, 9th December
From 6:00pm. JPY4,000 for Full Christmas Dinner with all the
Trimings, Wine & Entertainment.
Book now to avoid disappointment!

If you join the Club now, you can take advantage of current Membership Campaigns for Under 27s; Single Ladies, and Zero Yen Campaigns. Membership Prices available from as little as JPY6,000 a month, and the joining fee has been completely waived!!

Contact the Office

for an Information Package & Application Form:

Tel: 078-231-2271 from 10am to 7pm except Mondays

Email: info@krac.org

How do you get here?

Visit the KR&AC website at www.krac.org for a map & directions to the Club

Kobe Regatta & Athletic Club
Founded 1870

The Couch Revolution★

Surf's Up!★

kaila krayewski

A couch. It's something that nearly everyone has. It's one of those basic pieces of furniture that is an essential part of any living room. We spend some of our happiest, most relaxing moments on our couches—taking a load off after a long day of work, sneaking an afternoon nap on a lazy Sunday, or watching a movie while eating popcorn on a first date. Couches are indispensable parts of our houses and essential parts of our lives.

That's what makes the impetus behind CouchSurfing International (CS)—an internet database of open arms; people who are willing to take in total strangers for a night or a month, to sleep on their couch, and shoestring travelers looking for more than the Holiday Inn experience in their travels—so strong.

What started in 2003 as a small project by a young entrepreneur and his close friends has grown into a network of over 130,000 people from all corners of the world.

Those aged 18-24 make up almost half of CS's members. Undoubtedly, the network appeals to young budget travelers looking to save money on a place to rest their heads.

There are currently 12 CS members in Hyogo. Japan-wide, there are over 300, from as far south as Hirara, Okinawa, to as far north as Nayoro, Hokkaido.

Going along with the no-money-exchanged philosophy of CS, joining and using the web site is completely free. The CS web site is incredibly user-friendly. Members can create profiles, and then click on a link to see who is traveling around their area. After that, they can check which members are living the most North or South, East or West, who speak the most languages, who is the most popular, etc. How easy is it to use? Just click on the 'Couch Surf' link, and enter your search parameters. Let's say a surfer were going

to Florence, Italy, and wanted to stay with a female, older than 22, but no older than 34, who speaks English. Enter the search parameters... and instantly, you've got three profiles that fit this description.

Marcel Verhaag, 51, has used CS to couch surf in Denmark and Malaysia. On his way to Denmark, he left his CS search to the very last minute. "I searched just one night before I went there," says Verhaag. "The person I preferred to stay with responded immediately, [and was] very understanding and helpful. My stay there was fantastic and we have been in touch since."

The United States and Western European countries make up a large percentage CS's members. CS has been criticized for being an organization with members predominantly in the first world.

Jim Stone, 29, is an administrator for CS. He explains that the reason for this skew is that it is predominately the first world that has internet access.

Another concern is safety. CS is based on social capital and blind trust. In an ideal world, it's a no-fail system. But many would argue that this is not an ideal world, and there is plenty of room for things to go wrong.

For this reason, the organization has implemented several measures to make CS a viable option even for women traveling alone. A traveler can verify the credibility of his or her potential host using various methods.

There is the vouching system. The idea is for members to vouch for other members, showing that individuals are trustworthy candidates as couch surfers, or as hosts. The catch—only those who have already been vouched for by three members can vouch for others, and the meeting between the voucher and the vouchee must take place in person.

Another method for members to acquire 'credibility' by donating \$25 to CS on their credit card—through this, administrators can verify that their name and address are correct. They will then send a code to the member's home mailbox, which he or she can input into their profile, and become a 'verified' member.

Once members have met up with one another, they can leave references on each other's profile wall for anyone to see. These references can be good or bad, but the rule is, they have to be factual. This is a great way to see who is fun to stay with, who has a dirty apartment, or who makes others uncomfortable. References cannot be deleted, and they cannot be written anonymously.

Despite these safety precautions, according to the company's statistics, there are 15 per cent less women using the web site than men.

Jasmine Legatos, 22, is one of those women. Legatos has surfed couches in Paris, Rome and Florence. She says that she trusts people straight away based on their online profile. "I look at their references," she says, "and if you get a bad feeling when they open the door and you meet them, I guess you are free to leave."



Legatos, who lives in Ottawa, Canada, hosted two male surfers from Switzerland on their cross-Canada tour. At no point was she worried for her safety, she says. "They were very cool and [had] lots of interesting things to say," says Legatos. "I think that's why people do CS, over and above the free room deal."

As one can imagine, such an in-depth system requires a large workforce. Stone says that CS runs solely on member support.

Stone, who himself has surfed over 150 couches, is one of the many members who work for CS on a volunteer basis—the company has no paid staff. He says that CS has exploded in a big hurry, gaining about 2000 new members a week. "Now we're all of a sudden a big organization," he says, explaining that CS is in the midst of forming a more defined organizational structure.

CS's mission is ambitious. It plans to change the world, one couch at a time. "We're changing the world through human connections," says Stone. "I consider it a pay-it-forward type of thing where seemingly small exchanges of hospitality and new, immediate friendships with strangers crossing cultural barriers contributes incrementally to a better world."

So check it out. You might be taking a step towards social evolution that transcends capitalism. Or you might be just getting a free night's sleep. Either way, you win. **www.couchsurfing.com**



ESS: English sensei spirit

tori lowe

I am lucky enough to have a couple of fairly high level classes that also have low numbers in 2nd and 3rd year high school. This next lesson plan was really fun for those classes; however, I would not recommend attempting this with a larger-sized class PARTICULARLY if their English level is low. It would be a logistical nightmare!!

You have probably heard of this game before: 2 Truths and a Lie.

Materials: 2 handouts

Handout 1 should look like this:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Give the students as much space as you think they will need to write a sentence or two about themselves.

Handout 2 should be a list down the page of "1, 2, 3", like a multiple choice answer sheet in an exam with a place for a name before the choices eg:

| | | | | |
|-------|---------|---|---|--|
| Name: | Answer: | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Name: | Answer: | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Name: | Answer: | 1 | 2 | 3 Etc etc (enough for every member of the class) |

Method: The students have to write 3 things about themselves: two things that are TRUE, and one that is FALSE (in any order). You should give an example of your own, trying to fool the students – it's a good time to boast about how good you are... try and get the students yelling "eeeeeeeeehhhhh?!?" in disbelief of your awesomeness! Give the students about 10 minutes to come up with 3 sentences. The JTE and I went around the room making sure the sentences were grammatically sound. Some students found it hard to get inspiration, so you might have to help them out.

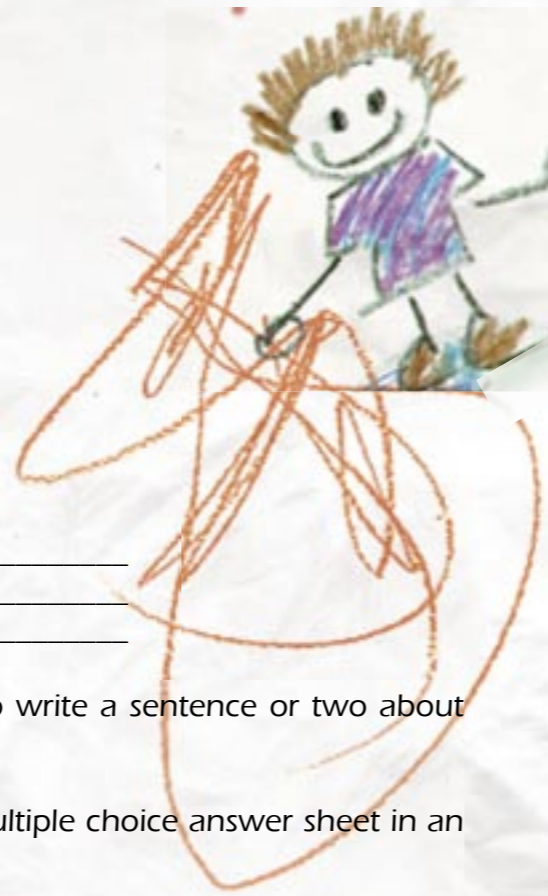
The students should then take turns in reading out their 3 "facts". The other students should mark on the page which one they think is FALSE.

Once every student has had their chance to read their sentences, go over the answers one by one. If you have plenty of time left, you can ask each student a question about their sentences.

I gave a small prize to the student who fooled the most classmates, and the student that had the most correct answers.

This game works really well with adult English conversation classes. I change it by making each person tell 3 short stories. You can learn a lot about people with this exercise!!

I hope you get an opportunity to use this idea! If you have any lesson ideas that work, please let me know! My email address is torilowe@hotmail.com. I am looking forward to hearing from you!



let's enjoying fun!

Please be inspired to send in anything amusing that you come across, such as a sign,

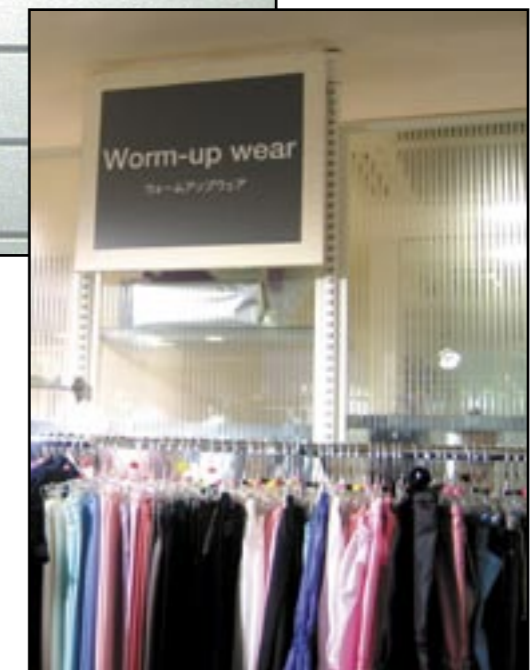
a t-shirt, an incident, or whatever.

Student submissions get some of the best feedback.

Please submit them in their original writing, warts and all.

You can send a story or a picture or both to:

submit.hyogotimes@gmail.com



(above): Chinese English, submitted by amy plesse
(L): Toll road sign - jeff weese
(R): A dance shop in Osaka. - karen
(R): Santa is japanese! - jeff weese



english!

submitted by ryan chapman

Read closely...sometimes one little letter can make a big difference!

Who is your Hero or Heroine?

My heroin gives a lot of smiles to many people. When someone is sad and hard, they are full of smiles after the heroin gives a lot of energy and courage. Everyone likes heroin very much. The heroin will have been given a lot of smiles and please many people. I long for the heroin. I want to be a such heroin.

.....



OUT AND ABOUT IN HYOGO...



hyogo ajet:
mt rokko hike
- karen

hyogo ajet:
bingo night
- amanda brown

hyogo ajet:
halloween quiz
- brenda mckinney



Second Chance

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Hematology Astrology

robin crowder

december 2006



As the December holidays approach, you are probably scrambling around, trying to pick out the perfect Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa, Ramadan or other holiday gifts, but don't let yourself get stressed out as you're known to do. Overcome your shyness in social situations by accepting an unexpected invitation around the 12th – you'll be glad that you did! Everything will fall into place if you keep a positive attitude.

Single As: The plasma cells clot a little too quickly and you find your latest prospect's heart is no longer bleeding for you. Chin up, the new year promises new opportunities!

Attached As: Your partner has some rowdy plans for the holidays – throw caution to the wind and give in to your wild side!

Lucky Days: 4, 18, 20

You are a man or woman on a mission – finish up classes, pack your bags and take off for a way away land! A word of warning however; take a moment to breathe and "check your list twice" or you will find that you're missing something very important...like a passport! At school, you clash with a teacher over a certain lesson towards the last week of school, but let it slide this time or you'll face animosity come January. Around the 9th your social life kicks into high gear and you are the life of the party so roll with it.

Single Bs: Watch what you say around new acquaintances because your unintentionally-flirtatious comments could be taken the wrong way.

Attached B: Leave the dishes unwashed, the lesson plans unfinished and take a much needed break with that special someone around the 17th.

Lucky Days: 1, 6, 17

A couple of drinks this holiday season and your love for the sound of your own voice will bring mixed reactions early in the month. To smooth the waters, take charge and organize something fun and unpredictable. Use your extra energy to help out at school during exams – your efforts will not go unrewarded. A previously difficult situation changes for the better.

Single Os: Don't let your passion for exaggeration get the better of you: with a new potential suitor around the 15th, simple is best.

Attached Os: With relationship waters a little rocky right now, that special holiday celebration you were planning seems a little pointless, but don't lose momentum! Follow through on the project and reap the rewards.

Lucky Days: 14, 26, 29

It's time to stop being indecisive about holiday plans or you will find yourself alone and bored in Hyogo! Be confident in your choice and take on the responsibility of encouraging others to join you. The white cells are multiplying, making you feel more tired than usual, but ganbatte because an individual task suddenly becomes a group effort around the 8th. You will be a key mediator in the slightly tense politics of this new group.

Single ABs: Hot and cold feelings for your current flavour of the month start to get a little frustrating for the recipient and you will be asked to clarify your intentions. Think carefully before answering.

Attached ABs: You sense a problem approaching with that special someone, but luckily your intuition picks up on it before it turns into a major clot. Be proactive and implement a solution before the tiny wound needs stitches.

Lucky Days: 2, 10, 28

compiled by amanda brown

DECEMBER/JANUARY EVENTS: KANSAI

CONCERT LISTINGS:

December 5: Jamie Cullum

Osaka Kouseinenkin Kaikan, Geijyutu Hall
OPEN 18:00 START 19:00
6,000YEN (adv.)

December 7: SAKEROCK

Shinsaibashi CLUB QUATTRO
OPEN 18:30 START 19:30
2,500YEN (adv.drink fee charged@door)

December 15: The Ordinary Boys/Five O'Clock Heroes/Keith

OSAKA : IMP HALL
OPEN 6:00pm / START 7:00pm
PRICE 5,500JPY (tax incl. / all standing)

January 7-8: My Chemical Romance

OSAKA : ZEPP OSAKA
OPEN 5:00pm / START 6:00pm
PRICE 6,500JPY (tax incl. / 1F:standing 2F:reserve seat/ plus 1 drink charge)



January 9: Rancid

OSAKA : ZEPP OSAKA
OPEN 6:00pm / START 7:00pm
PRICE 6,500JPY (tax incl. / all standing / plus 1 drink charge)

January 10: Basement Jaxx

Osaka BIG CAT
OPEN 18:30 START 19:30
6,000YEN (adv.drink fee charged@door)

January 15: The Killers

OSAKA : NAMBA HATCH
OPEN 6:00pm / START 7:00pm
PRICE 6,500JPY (tax incl. / all standing / plus 1 drink charge)

January 25: Evanescence

OSAKA : ZEPP OSAKA
OPEN 6:00pm / START 7:00pm
PRICE 6,500JPY (tax incl. / 1F:standing 2F:reserve seat/ plus 1 drink charge)

January 29: Scissor Sisters

NAMBA HATCH
OPEN 18:00 START 19:00
6,500YEN (adv.drink fee charged@door)
(1F:Standing / 2F:Reserved Seat)

Coming soon to Kansai:

Tool (February), Muse (February),
Snow Patrol (February), Yo La Tengo (February)

FESTIVALS: *courtesy of Japanvisitor.com*

Akou Gishisai

14 December

Ako, Hyogo Prefecture

Traditional dances and warrior parades as an annual memorial to the legendary '47 ronin' (wandering samurai) who committed suicide to avenge their master.

47 Ronin Festival

14 December

Bishamon Temple, Yamashina, Kyoto

A procession commemorating the 47 Ronin with people in traditional costume walking from Bishamon Temple to Oishi jinja in eastern Kyoto.

Kasuga Wakamiya Festival

17 December

Kasuga Taisha, Nara

A chance to see rarely performed traditional dances at a festival that has been observed every year since it began in 1136. A two-hour procession (owatarishiki) through central Nara begins at noon from the Prefectural Office followed by around seven hours of dances.

Shimai Kobo

21 December

To-ji Temple, Kyoto

The last festive market of the year honoring Kobo Daishi with over 1600 stalls selling antiques, foods and just about everything else.

Shimai Tenjin

25 December

Kitano Tenmangu Shrine, Kyoto

The last festive market of the year at this large shrine in north-west Kyoto.



ART&COMEDY:

Musee d'Orsay: Impressionists from Paris Kobe City Museum

JR/Hanshin/Hankyu Sannomiya Station
Open 9:30am - 4:30pm, Closed Mon.
Admission 1500yen/1100yen/600yen

Shinji Ogawa - Interfering Worlds

(Famous Western works altered by erasing, supplementing, or substituting elements)
The National Museum of Art Osaka
Subway Yotsubashi Line, Higobashi Stn, exit 2
Open: 10am - 5pm, Closed Mon.
Admission: 4yen20/130yen/170yen

CLASSIFIEDS!

For Sale

os9 desktop mac for sale....printer scanner included....best price goes....**call 090-9998-5482**

For Rent

Flat for sublet over Christmas..beauuuuutifully furnished 11th floor bright and warm!! all mod cons...ill do you a great deal...**call 090-9998-5482** for more details.

WANTED: your classified ads!

Do you have something to sell? Is there something you want to buy? Do you have language classes to give up or want to take on some more? Are you looking for a language exchange partner...or maybe just that special someone?

Make sure to include not only what you are advertising but also all your contact details. Send your ads by the 15th of every month to:
submit.hyogotimes@gmail.com

TENTATIVE DATES FOR AJET EVENTS:

- December** 9th – Christmas Party, Akashi
- January** 27th to 28th – Tajima Ski Trip
19th – Mid-year event (after mid-year conference)
- February** 9th to 12th – Hokkaido Snow Festival Trip
17th – Okayama Naked Man Festival
- March** Elections for AJET committee (Handover in April)

To stay updated about upcoming events please join our
Hyogo Ajet yahoo group at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/hyogojets/>

