

Hyogo Times

October 2007



Contents

Messages

- 4.....from the editor
- 5..... from the PR

Every Month

- 16.....Love and Relationships: Secret Relationships
- 18.....Life as a First Year JET: Sports Day
- 20.....Politics: The Yasukuni Shrine
- 23.....English Sensei Spirit: Telephone Conversations
- 26.....Getting to Know Randoms Jets
- 28.....Read and React: Immigration Policy

Features

- 6..... Takasago Autumn Festival
- 8..... Japanese History and Culture Lesson
- 12.....How to Get to Where We Want to Go
- 14.....Special Interview: Lovely Jubbly
- 22....Sumo: Japan's Big Boys
- 30.....Top 10 Places to Go Alone
- 32.....Recipe from the Editor: Fudge Brownies
- 34....Kansai Concerts



Awaji Island, Golden Turd Shrine

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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>

So autumn has come upon us. For all of my fellow Australians, this means that we will soon be getting emails from friends about how lovely the weather is over there. I hope you don't get too homesick! Of course, autumn is a lovely time in Japan. You will soon be hearing of all the best places to check out the changing leaves: a major event on the Japanese-Conversations-We- Must- Have calendar!

The major news for the *Hyogo Times* this month is that our hard-working Design Editor, Emily Duncan, has overloaded herself with study and is now unable to continue in her role at the *Hyogo Times*. I would like to thank Emily on behalf of the Hyogo AJET committee for her hard work on the

From the Editor

Hyogo Times for the last 5 months. It's been great working with her! Good luck on the JLPT!

So, next month we will have a new Design Editor: Watch this space!

It's not all doom and gloom though! This month I am proud to announce two new regular columnists! Paul O'Shea will be taking over the Japanese politics role. I found his first instalment about the Yasukuni Shrine to be both interesting and informative... we can all learn something new in the *Hyogo Times*! Rebecca Tucker has also come on board with a regular read and re-act column as well. Her articles have reminded me that there is a

big world outside of our little Japan bubbles! Just makes you think!

Good luck in the next month! I hope to see you all at the next few events on the AJET calendar!

Tori



From the PR



1. A mummy - With maybe 2 rolls of cheap toilet paper, you can turn yourself into what is not only a very scary monster, but also a classic that even the old grandmas and grandpas around can see and enjoy!

2. A Pirate - What is more awesome than a Pirate?? Really easy to pull off, too! Wear some old baggy pajamas, stop showering and shaving

and shaving 4 days in advance, and bend an old butter knife into your own hook! To top it all off, the more drunk you get the more in character you become!

3. Salary Worker - Put on the one suit you brought for Tokyo Orientation, and fall asleep on the train. (Optional, bring a pink Nintendo DS and play it as well)

4. Ninja - Stay home, and tell everyone how awesome of a ninja you were that no-one even saw you!

That should be sufficient to get you on the right track to finding the perfect Halloween Costume. See you all soon! In Costume!!

Until next time, take care of yourselves, and each other.

Brandon

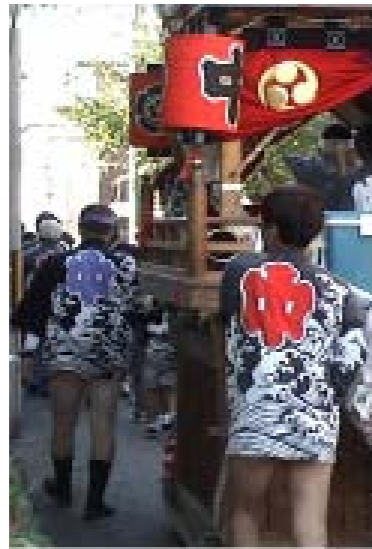
BOO! Did I scare you, my Hyogo Trick-or-Treaters? Don't worry, I'm not trying to steal your candy, I just want to wish you a happy October! It has finally cooled off, and you don't have to hide in your air conditioning any longer. What will you do with this added freedom? No doubt you should all have Halloween weekend marked on your calendars for good fun, and maybe a few drinks....or 20.

Being the considerate and thoughtful PR that I am, I thought maybe I would help you out a bit this frightful season. With all the 3 day weekends behind us, and winter break planning beginning, you may not have much extra cash for the truly important things like... your Halloween Costume! That's right, I have thought long and hard and come up with a short but good list of great costumes that you can pull off with minimal preparation and most importantly, little cash.

Takasago Autumn Festival

Catherine Reid

Every night for the past week I have been mesmerized by the beating of the drums (*taiko*) and locals chanting as they practiced for their autumn festival celebrations. On the 10th and 11th of October every year the locals of Takasago gather to celebrate the harvest and give thanks to the gods for a good crop. It is a tradition dating back many hundreds of years when agriculture and fishing were common activities in this area.



Parading the children's yatai through Takasago's streets

For the week preceding the Takasago Autumn Festival the sounds of the *taiko* and locals chanting "yo yasa" (no real translation but something like "lift together") echoed through the streets for hours each evening after dusk. Locals from each neighbourhood in the city gathered to practice lifting, hoisting and carrying their decorated floats (*yatai*). Only men participate in this, giving a demonstration of their strength. Four teenage boys sit inside each *yatai*

drumming in time with the men chanting "yo yasa!"

Day one (October 10th) is the more ceremonial day of the festival. Many children and their parents take part in day one ceremonies, some rising as early as 4am to prepare for their day. Children along with their parents, parade their (smaller) *yatai* through the streets whilst chanting and keeping the beat on the *taiko*. The children pull their *yatai* (whereas the male adults carry their 2 ton *yatai*) around their neighbourhood. They look adorable all dressed in their 'happy coats' proudly displaying their neighbourhood's name.



Children dance to keep the evil spirits away.

shrine called *mikoshi*. The *mikoshi* is a sacred palanquin in which the spirits of the gods are transported. It is black and gilded with gold. A phoenix at its centre symbolizes longevity. It is paraded through the streets by the young men of



the shrine. The gods are returned to the shrine and the *mikoshi* is returned to its 'garage', both events occur during long, elaborate ceremonies.

Day two is all about entertainment. A crowd of hundreds, possibly thousands gather near the shrine in anticipation. There are six *yatai* present. Many friends and family members are there to cheer and support their neighbourhood teams. Each team challenges the others in a competition of strength and endurance to see who can hold and hoist their

the city. It is preceded in the parade by 2 *yatai* with dancers, a float containing harvested rice flanked by Shinto priests and two goblins (which certainly scared the young children in the crowd). Immediately preceding the *mikoshi* are 50 primary school children whose job it is to keep the evil spirits away. At every corner along the route the parade halts as the children dance and wave their shide (bamboo sticks with white paper tails) to scare away

yatai the longest. To me there seemed to be no clear winner as all teams held their *yatai* for the specified times possibly resulting in a draw. Each *yatai* was lit up with bud lights so watching all six *yatai* bounce up and down through the sea of supporters was entertaining coupled with the intense sounds of each drum and each team chanting. Even today the chant is still wedged in my brain and will be for many years to come!

the evil spirits while the men carrying the *mikoshi* rock it from side to side. This is enjoyable for the gods and apparently the more violent the rocking is, the more they enjoy it. A small child follows the *mikoshi* on a white horse. He is dressed in a traditional style costume and wears a long single horned hat (like a unicorn). He symbolizes God's child. His horse walks in three circles while holy men chant as the *mikoshi* is rocked and the children dance. The parade lasts for several hours as they make their way back to



Japanese History and Culture Lesson

Meiji Ideology and the Search for a National Identity

Tori Lowe

Meiji Nation Building: Part Three of an epic three part series...

In 1889, the desire to create a distinctly Japanese-style government and institutions came to fruition with the drafting of the constitution (Tipton 2002, p.56). The drafting of the constitution was a long process and was written with considerations to all aspects of the nation-state. One of the main concerns was with how to harmonize contradictions between the liberal Western system and the despotic emperor system (Daikichi 1985, p.57). The Meiji oligarchs had to make legal and political provisions within the constitution that would enable them to continue their bureaucratic dominance once the parliamentary government was in place (Gluck 1985, p.22). Despite authoritarian aspects of the constitution, it provided the means to establish a popularly elected Diet (Lu 1997, p.333). National unity was hoped to be achieved by means of the national assembly- a way to mobilize loyalty and evoke a national identity with the Meiji government (Tipton 2002, p.56). A national assembly was a way in which to include the population in the new state. The constitution institutionalized Meiji ideology.

Although the national assembly was promoted as a 'gift from the Emperor,' it would not have been developed had it not been for the efforts of those involved in the People's Rights Movement (Tipton 2002, p.56-57). The People's Rights Movement was a large self-education of the people that was of epochal significance as a grassroots social and political movement (Daikichi 1988, p.71). The People's Rights Movement is evidence of the growing momentum of interest in the nation and state's affairs, and discontent with the new government amongst members of lower classes in Japan. Its staunch opposition to governmental policies, however, played an important role in strengthening the state. The government's response to the movement was to expand political control mechanisms and institutions, such as the police, to centralize power over political activities and organizations (Tipton 2002, p.56). The People's Rights Movement was also the main force behind the government finally accepting that it had to introduce a constitution and a parliamentary system. Although the constitution was not as democratic as the People's Rights Movement had envisaged (Mackerras 1995, p.195), the government's response to the uprising undermined the movement.

The promulgation of the constitution finally established the state in Japan (Gluck 1985, p.21). From this point, the government had a definite framework from within which to really begin the task of 'nation building.' In the build up towards the writing of the constitution there had been a proliferation of discussion amongst the general population on national spirit, national thought, national doctrine, national essence, nationality- a 'nation mindedness' had arisen (Gluck 1985, p.23). The establishment of the constitution provided the government a more secure base from which to develop a national ideology. The constitution emphasized the position of the Emperor and encapsulated the dominant ideology of the early twentieth century: the tennousei ideology¹, or ideology of the Emperor system (Gluck 1985, p.5).

¹ Although it was not named this until the 1920's, it was established during the late Meiji period (Gluck 1985, p.5).

Of course, the key feature of the Meiji state was the Emperor, and the Imperial family was an obvious institution of which to exploit for nationalist causes. The Meiji government manipulated the 'unique antiquity' of the Imperial house (Anderson 1991 p.96) in order to legitimize its own position of power in Japan. The Emperor was the central symbol of the political structure, and it was written in the constitution that the Emperor was 'sacred and inviolable' because he was the descendant of a dynasty that had reigned in an unbroken line for ages past (Tipton 2002, p.57). The Emperor became the symbol of a Japan that had always existed, and the government linked themselves to this idea. By utilizing a sense of tradition and history, the new government created an 'official nationalism' (Anderson 1991 p.96).

A contradiction in the establishment of a 'nation' in a non-Western country is made apparent in relation to the Emperor. Although the government used the historical aspects of the imperial household to evoke patriotism within the general population, they used the Emperor as a leading example of modernity. The imperial palace was located in Tokyo and became heavily linked with Japan's emergence as a commercial industrial nation. The Emperor also used the new train system that symbolically joined the Japanese nation together (Tipton 2002, p.66). Whilst the Emperor was a symbol of a nostalgic past, he was also the embodiment of modernity. Powerful solidarity around the Emperor became regarded as Japan's biggest asset in terms of its place in the world order: Japan may not have been equal to the West in literature, architecture, technology, economic strength and all other aspects of modernity, but it did have one prevailing feature of a modern nation-state, and that is intense loyalty of the subjects to the sovereign (Oguma 2002, p.12).

The Emperor's connection with Shinto was also a way of linking the every day customs and habits of the people to the nation-state. An important feature of Japanese national culture is Shinto, the indigenous and prehistoric beliefs and practices of the Japanese (Smart 1993, p.229). Even in the early Meiji years the government had used Shinto as 'the Great Way of the New Era,' sending state missionaries to inspire such notions into the Japanese population in 1869 (Gluck 1985, p.3). Prior to the Meiji period, Shinto had no comprehensive organizational structure or doctrines, which had to be rectified if Shinto was to become unified and thus more useful in creating an homogenous Japanese cultural identity (Tipton 2002, p.67). The government attempted to make Shinto the official ideology (Smart 1993, p.229). Shinto was heavily linked with Buddhism, which the government saw as a regressive religion due to its previous relationship with the Tokugawa Shogunate, so before the government could use Shinto as their own ideology they had to separate it from Buddhism (Smart 1993, p.229). In fact, the government removed all overtly 'religious' elements of Shinto that could have been divisive to the authority of the imperial rule, and instead used Shinto as a 'ritual and ethical system of practice' (Smart 1993, p.229). Rather than make Shinto a doctrine of 'truth', the government used it to the practical means of creating loyalty to the Emperor.

One of the main features of Shinto is the worshipping of the spirits of ancestors. Japanese people saw ancestor worship as a way in which to ensure eternal life for oneself - Shinto highlights the position of the Japanese individual as a link in the ancestral chain, rather than a 'fully self-contained individual distinct from the flow of life' (Daikichi 1985, p.23). It was generally considered important to have the means to preserve the ancestral home as ancestor's god-like spirits were said to return home at certain times during the year. The desire to preserve the ancestral home in order to achieve eternal life encourages the Japanese people to live their lives with qualities of diligence, frugality, harmony and honesty, because the fulfillment of ancestor worship apparently made life worth living (Daikichi 1985, p.24). During the period of the Meiji restoration many families, particularly in the rural areas, became increasingly impoverished and unable to afford to pay homage to their ancestors. The government evoked the position of the Emperor as a direct

descendent of the divine Gods in Shinto mythology (Smart 1993, p.233). Loyalty to the Emperor, which also came to mean loyalty to the state and the nation, became associated with ancestor worship. The Japanese people were encouraged to work hard for the Emperor - employing Shinto ethics as a means to strengthen the sense of belonging to the family-nation.

The tennousei ideology was extremely successful in uniting the Japanese people (Gluck 1985, p.5). Its success can be contributed to the way that the ideology was disseminated to the population - which was through the education system. The Emperor himself was a great supporter of education and often made trips to local schools (Nagai 1971, p.45). Education became an important feature of the Japanese nationalist landscape and the government focused its ideological efforts through primary schools (Tipton 2002, p.60). The curriculum was based around government ideologies of reverence to the Emperor, loyalty, filial piety, harmony, modesty and moderation, benevolence, pursuit of learning and arts, morality, public good and common interest, respect to the constitution, observance of laws, courage and prosperity.

Ideology was not only coming from the government, but also from amongst the population. In fact, the strongest ideological views were being published by journalists, intellectuals and other public figures not associated with the government, who produced a 'disproportionate amount of public opinion' (Gluck 1985, p.10). The government came under attack for not paying enough attention to the spiritual wellbeing of the population (Gluck 1985, p.10). There was a vast amount of commercial publications condemning materialism, commending patriotism, questioning socialism and urging Japan on to greater prestige as a world power (Gluck 1985, p.10). Although the publications were often critical of the government, in many ways they helped to create solidarity amongst the population similar to that which the government was seeking.

The creation of Japan as a nation-state had begun with governmental revolution, but the nature of the new government with its progressive Western ideas of 'civilization' and complete national unity soon included the vast majority of Japanese citizens. By the end of the Meiji Restoration, Japan was an established nation-state. There was strong national sentiment, and people in Japan from all social classes were beginning to imagine themselves as Japanese citizens and part of the Japanese nation-state. The Imperial family, education system, Shinto and military as government institutions played an important role in engaging the population with the state. The government could not have had any success if they did not initiate a sense of nation that the population could relate to. So, whilst a lot of the changes were apparently from the 'top' down, the people at the top had to always consider how the rest of the population could be included.

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How To Get To Where We Want To Go...

Jeff Weese

Winter vacation may seem like ages away...but getting started on your travel plans NOW is going to save you money and splitting headache! Winter vacation is a perfect time to get out and explore all that Asia has to offer OR go back home to escape Japan for a little while and refresh yourself with Westernization and normality. The quest begins with deciding how to go about purchasing the most expensive but most necessary part of travel outside of Japan....airfare! It can be difficult to find a deal when you are buying tickets right after the Japanese family of 3 who was willing to drop 300,000 yen each on a 3-day package to Los Angeles just to go to Disneyland for a day! Don't get too discouraged though, because there are many options out there.

Picking up an English newspaper such as the Daily Yomiuri and glancing at the half

page ads from No 1 Travel and HIT Travel gets your heart racing a little when your eyes freeze on the 15,000yen fare to Seoul, Korea...DON'T assume that is what you will actually pay from these guys. Those fares are usually for a random day in the middle of a week when essentially no one can travel, on a flight connecting through Kazakhstan, AND THEN they add all their taxes. Return on a Sunday tax, fuel tax, airport tax, leave on a weekday tax, extra low fare tax, I'm having a shitty day today so I'm gonna tax you tax! You name it, they'll tax it! While these prices are deceiving, it IS a good place to start looking. Next, hop on the computer and send out an email to ALL of them...it can't hurt to compare prices! Below you will find the web addresses for some of the well known travel agents catering to foreigners in Japan;



No1 Travel (Kansai) <http://www.no1-travel.com/kix/no1air/index.htm>

HIT Travel <http://www.hittravel.co.jp/index.php?lang=ENG>

IACE Travel <http://www.iace.co.jp/english/>

AirNet Travel <http://www.airnetjapan.com/index2.php>

World Express Travel <http://www.wexp.co.jp/e-index.htm>

No1 Travel dominates the market and while their prices can be reasonable, price discrimination and unprofessional service are some of the things you may come across. If you are looking to go on a holiday with a Japanese friend or significant other, you may receive a different fare than them. They mark some of their fares for Japanese only or Gaijin only! I think in most countries this is illegal....but of course, this is Japan! If you do choose No1 Travel to assist you in your travel plans, steer clear of Noreen, the manager at the Kobe branch. Her customer service has been consistently unprofessional with unreturned phone calls and emails, then lying about them, as well as mistaking inquiries as a reservation requests but never telling you that she has booked it! There have not been as many complaints about the Osaka branch except for their pushy sales tactics saying, "There is only 1 seat left so you MUST book and pay today!"

HIT Travel and AirNet Travel are worth submitting inquiries to, but their websites are sometimes difficult to navigate and rarely do the web searches produce anything but a message to call the company for a quote.

I have heard great things about IACE Travel including low prices and good customer service, but have yet to experience it for myself.

World Express Travel on the other hand I have had plenty of experience with and can recommend them with the highest regard. They are a small outfit based just across the street from JR Sannomiya station. Their response time for inquiries or general questions regarding your reservation is very timely and their customer service is very personable. I have dealt the most with Shinzo who will work his hardest to accommodate your reservation request until the day before departure if necessary! When you are searching for quotes, I highly recommend you talk to one of the friendly faces at World Express!

Finally, there are the web based travel



services from America such as www.orbitz.com, www.travelocity.com, and www.expedia.com that occasionally have lower fares, but sometimes there are hurdles to jump such as the ticketing issue. Sometimes they require you to take paper tickets, which must be sent to an address in America, but if the price is low enough, may be worth it!

Want to do something a little different? Japan being an island makes ferry travel possible as well. There are international ferry services between Japan's major port cities and China, Taiwan, Korea, and Russia. From Osaka/Kobe, the routes to China and Taiwan (via Okinawa) are the most logical while the ferries to Korea can easily be caught from Fukuoka (Hakata) or Shimonoseki. Ferries in the direction of Russia usually depart from Hokkaido or the Japan Sea Coast of the Tohoku Region. You can find more information about international ferries at, <http://www.seejapan.co.uk/transport/sea/international.html>.

Wherever your travels take you for the holidays, good luck booking your flights and have a great trip!

This article was originally written to be published in the July issue of the Hyogo Times. Apologies to Jeff for the late publication of his article!

Lovely Jubbly Hyogo AJET special discount for October and November!!!!



What is Lovely Jubbly you ask? Every time Ayame would create a masterpiece at Vidal Sassoon Hair Academy London, her instructor would praise her by exclaiming, "Lovely Jubbly my dear!" She gives much credit to her mentor for becoming who she is today, and decided to name her salon in name with him in mind. Ayame is a scuba divin' lovin', a lookin' for a boyfriend, hair cuttin' machine who can't wait to get her fingers working in your hair! From her studies abroad, she acquired an amazing level of English as well as knowledge of Western styles...that's hard to come by in this country folks!

Ayame knew from an early age of 10 that she wanted to be a hair stylist and followed her dream through Kobe to London to Tokyo back to London and is now in the Himeji area with her own salon...Lovely Jubbly. Not only do we get the full meal deal when we walk into Ayame's salon, as foreigners, we get the added bonus of her using only foreign products on us! Plus, if you are a Hyogo AJET member, you will receive 20% off on all services in the months of October and November! She offers a wide range of

of services from cuts to perms to traditional Japanese kitsuke and she is trained and qualified to do color tone and color analysis so that your hair may match your skin tone! That's more than I ever knew you could get done in a salon! Maybe that's just not something they offer at Supercuts when you get your \$9.99 haircut?!?! Do you want to take advantage straight away... need Ayame to squeeze you in next week? If you have a handle on basic Japanese, you can ring 079-233-1186 and speak to her or any of her staff (they can only speak a bit of English). If you would feel more comfortable sorting this all out in English, it is best to email Ayame at ayame@lovelyjubbly.jp and she will get right back to you.

You can access the salon by getting down to Himeji and hopping on a Sanyo (not JR... but across the street under the Sanyo Dept. Store) Ltd. Exp. or normal train and getting off at Shikama station. Turn left out of the ticket gate, right at the road and it's on your left just a few blocks down! You can find more information on the Lovely Jubbly website at <http://www.lovelyjubbly.jp> No excuses for looking shabby at the next Hyogo AJET event!



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Give
us a Buzz!

Love and Relationships

Under a Veil of Secrecy:

The Pros and Cons of Secret Relationships

Brenda McKinney

On a recent trip home, I found myself in a very *Sex and the City* type situation. If you have ever watched the show, you might remember when Carrie first met Mr. Big for the first time, *way back when*. Before he was Mr. Right, or even had a chance to be *Mr. Wrong*, Big was the guy who Carrie feared was using her for a secret relationship. In Carrie's case, the scenario obviously didn't seem positive. Our protagonist was worried her date was keeping things on the *down-low* because he was embarrassed to be seen with her. But let's face it, if both parties are in on this little secret, having an undercover (no pun intended) romance *can* be exciting and sexy. There are a lot of different reasons why people chose to keep things quiet, and a lot of them aren't bad...

So to get back to my *personal* little Carrie Bradshaw moment, it all came about when I went home for a few weeks this summer. Now, for a girl who is fast to write to all of Hyogo that long-distance relationships *do not work* (and has a few stories to tell from the last year), I wasn't sure even getting involved with anyone at all was a good idea. But things just kinda happened, as they are sometimes want to do, and it turned out to be a lot of fun. And despite a mixed history of dating people that live on other continents (or maybe because of it), it just seemed natural to keep it very personal (as in, on a two person *need-to-know* basis) as the affair started to heat

heat up. Under a pretense of our romance being temporary, politics were probably the biggest reason for the secrecy. It seemed right to just forget "things" and have fun without the external influence of our friends and families who might have been skeptical about a short-term romance given everything that's happened with similar situations. And while it lasted, it was exciting and fun. But the secrecy can't last forever, right?

If this really were *Sex and the City*, you'd probably have Carrie Bradshaw sitting at her laptop, candidly telling you about her Big Apple escapades. And to be honest, I love the character and its show for its honesty and humor. But while Carrie and Big may have provided hours upon hours of relationship drama (or *relief*) for a lot of us in the past, it's not hard to figure out that a lot more *real-life* relationship drama (both secret and not) goes down in the JET community than even the tales on the popular website *Big Daikon* will let on. So while I can't tell you what time will bring with my personal little vacation rendezvous (all bets are off with the LDRs, folks), here's a few things to consider if you do happen to find yourself looking down the nose of a confidential connection of your own.

Secret Relationships - Ten Pros and Cons to Consider:

10. PRO – There's a reason movies and dramas are full of secret relationships. They're HOT, right?

9. CON – According to a recent University of Georgia study, secret romantic relationships often lead to lower levels of relationship quality. If you're doing more than just enjoying the moment, testing the waters, or are looking for more than a temporary thing, it might be a good idea to discuss taking things a little more public with your partner.

8. PRO – Keeping things quiet allows you to focus on the fun or experiment with different types of people without the influence of others. An opportunity also exists to reveal secrets yourself or conceal others. It might be good for those who are shy, too, to break out of their shells a bit.

7. CON – If both partner's aren't on the same page about the status of the relationship (or level of secrecy); someone is going to get hurt. This could also happen if one person wants to take things into the open when the other doesn't, or if one person has different intentions for keeping things mum than their partner (such as a current significant other they're cheating on or an overly concerned ex).

6. PRO – Less politics. This pertains to race, culture, gender or a past together. And besides, who doesn't want to play Romeo and Juliet once in a while?

5. CON – Depending on exactly how

"quiet" you are keeping things and how serious they get, some people feel guilty about keeping their relationship from those closest to them, or as the UGA study points out, it can add stress to both partners and those around them.

4. PRO – More one-on-one time, which means you can also finally go to all those couple-places you have wanted to go to with someone, and not just your buddies (Kobe is full of them).



3. CON – Your friends, family, and/or local hangouts usually make up a big part of who you are. By not integrating your secret other into your normal life, they are probably missing out on seeing and learning about the whole picture of who you are.

2. PRO – If your relationship is of the star-crossed variety (you have limited time together, you're from different countries, heck, you don't speak the same language)... it's a good way to keep things interesting and make the most of the time you do have.

1. CON – The healthiest relationships I know are those in which each person is actually a better person because of the other person. They are proud of each other and proud to be together. At some point, you might find yourself looking for this deeper fulfillment. I mean, openness, honesty, communication, and trust are key, and you might get stuck on the surface level if you keep things private too long. Again, just make sure you're on the same page.

"Love is fire. But whether it's gonna warm your heart or burn your house down you can never tell." – Jason Jordan

Life as a First Year JET: Sports Day

Heather Whited

Let me just come right out and say that I'm not much of an athlete. I work very hard at avoiding most forms of physical exertion, especially ones that involve teams and balls or anything or where I run at all. Needless to say, the idea of sports day at my junior high school scared the hell of out me.

At the start, I seemed to be able to avoid the chaos pretty well. I attribute this to the fact that is seemed for a while like the teachers at my school had confused me with a vampire. Whenever there was practice and I headed outside to watch, a flock of Japanese ladies proclaimed that the sun was too bright and that I should wait in the staff room. When I managed to sneak past them out into the sunlight, I was ushered into the shade where I waited out an afternoon of working out by napping with the older teachers, only waking when the *taiko* scared me out of my daydreams. This was a set up I was just fine with. By the time I went home, I was refreshed and even better; my ultra fair skin was saved from sunburn. I did feel a bit guilty as

as I packed up to leave and watched the others in their sweat stained clothes, but I promised myself I would make it up to them later when school activities didn't involve hurdles and relays.

I think my teachers caught on as well that my that my high heels and skirts were were a sign that I'm a person who isn't comfortable out on the baseball field. Unfortunately though, I couldn't use my clothes as an excuse forever. One of my JTE's approached me at the end of my first week with a concerned look on her face to ask

me if I had different clothes for sports day.

"*Sumimasen*, Miyata-sensei," I said. "All I have at home at blue jeans and skirts."

I watched her expression as her face wrinkled up and tried to decide if my confession had gotten lost in translation or if she didn't believe me.

"And pajamas," I added with a laugh.



Miyata-sensei considered this with a certain level of seriousness.

"What color?" she asked.

Apparently, my answer of 'pink' wasn't acceptable, so I borrowed a pair of track pants from a friend, bought some sneakers and tried, now that I was in costume, to find my inner sports enthusiast. This wasn't easy considering that the running joke at my school quickly became approaching me to ask if I was going to run on sports day and then bursting into laughter. I supposed I earned that with all my afternoon naps in the company of the geriatric set. I was determined to prove myself though, even if it meant risking pink shoulders and sweat.

Sports day came along with a mighty typhoon. We set up the tents in a downpour that broke just in time for opening ceremony. While I watched the students marching past the spectator's tents, a JTE at my school walked up with an amused smirk on his face. It was just my luck to teach half of my English classes with the coach of the soccer team.

"Are you ready for the race?"

I pointed to my track pants in answer. To me, they said everything.

"Good. The students are very excited."

I couldn't respond without lying to his face, so I pretended to take more pictures and waited out my fate. We broke for lunch and the next event afterwards was supposed to be my race. Had my bento not been so delicious, I wouldn't have had much of an appetite.

As we walked back out onto the field, I felt the first drops of rain on my face. It turned quickly back into the downpour from earlier as the sky let down an onslaught on sports day. The teachers gathered around each other. There was a serious conference. Kocho-sensei frowned excessively and nodded a lot. Eventually, one of the PE teachers got

on the microphone and made an announcement that sounded dire, although I wasn't entirely sure since I don't speak Japanese.

"What's going on?" I asked

the nearest JTE, the woman who earlier scorned my pink pajamas as appropriate sports attire.

"Cancelled," she said.

I know that never in my life will my luck again be that good. I'm comfortable with that. Sports day comes but once a year, after all, and I've got another year to work up some good karma to call in a favor next September.



The Yasukuni Shrine

Paul O'Shea

While in Tokyo last month for the JET orientation, I nipped out for an afternoon to take in the Yasukuni shrine, a large Shinto shrine in which the souls of all Japanese war dead are consecrated. Why, I'm sure you're asking yourself, would I run the risk of missing out on such vital information as 'Drink-driving is illegal in Japan' and 'if you're American your driving license is only valid for one year,' to visit a shrine lost in the urban sprawl that is Tokyo? Well, you've probably already come across the almost unbelievable gaps in some Japanese people's knowledge of their own history, and if you haven't – don't worry – you will. Try bringing up the South-East Asian death railway, the Korean "comfort" women, or the Manchukuo puppet state in casual conversation and see what happens (great way to make Japanese friends by the way!). Similarly, many just don't understand why the rest of Asia gets so upset by the prime minister's annual visits to the Yasukuni shrine. So why does the rest of Asia get so upset, what role does the Yasukuni shrine play in both Japanese domestic and foreign politics, and why did this Paddy go on the hop (Irish for skipping class!) to see it?!

Well, as well as consecrating the Japanese war dead throughout history (some 2,500,000 odd souls), there are some 14 class A war criminals enshrined at Yasukuni. Take for example Iwane Matsui, the general who presided over the so-called rape of Nanking, which claimed somewhere between 150,000 – 300,000 lives, or Hideki Tojo, the virtual dictator of Japan until 1945. Imagine a similar memorial in, say, Germany, and you can begin to see the reason this place is such a major issue. As a Westerner, more interesting than the shrine itself is the Yushukan, a large war museum adjacent to the shrine. This museum is the spiritual home of Japanese right-wing revisionism and details a peculiar version of Japanese history which will come as a big surprise to most Westerners.

However, before I continue, I should point out that we too come prejudiced with our own versions of history. We should remember that both the U.S. and Japan were imperial powers competing for resources, influence and ultimately superiority in the Pacific hemisphere. Since presidents McKinley and T. Roosevelt the U.S. had been steadily establishing itself as a global

power, flexing its muscles in Latin America and the Pacific region (the Philippines, Guam, Panama, Cuba, etc...). Meanwhile, since it's humiliation of Russia in 1905 in the Russo-Japanese war, Japan had been busy building itself an empire modelled along Western lines. The so-called 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,' as the Japanese named their empire, was ostensibly an attempt by Japan to liberate the Asian colonies (such as Burma, modern-day Myanmar) from

their European and American colonial masters. Unfortunately for many of those who were liber-

ated, the Japanese turned out to be as bad if not worse than their predecessors. Still, one must remember that at the time, massacring the natives was not unusual. Britain was busy testing chemical weapons on the Iraqis, America killed up to 250,000 Filipinos (many of whom were innocent civilians) in the Philippine Rebellion, and, well, Germany, the Soviet Union, let's not go into that here. Also, as with the English, the French, the Americans, (etc...) the Japanese liked to cast themselves as a civilising influence on backward barbaric cultures. Indeed today, still, many Japanese will preface the phrase 'Japanese culture' with words like 'original', 'unique' or 'special'.

So, bearing in mind the historical context of Japan's actions and its own self-justifications for war, let's return to the Yasukuni shrine and the Yushukan museum. The Yushukan's version of history is interesting, if historically suspect. In Asia, Japan was not an occupying force, but a liberating one, while the annexation and occupation of Korea was a 'partnership.' The bombing of Pearl Harbour was an act of self-defence, which Japan was forced into by President F. Roosevelt. Unlike the Russian troops who looted and pillaged wherever they went, the Japanese troops behaved impeccably (Allied POWs – the ones who survived at least – and pretty much all the occupied Asian countries would beg to differ on that one). While not entirely mainstream, a disconcertingly large number of Japanese do subscribe to this version of events – not a result of collective amnesia, but rather disinformation – Japanese school students are simply not taught about the full truth about their past (Japan is not the only Asian nation guilty of this, as both Korea and China do the same).

Going back to the shrine itself, as I mentioned the annual prime ministerial visits have caused huge controversy in the East Asian world, and have been a thorn in the side of good relations between Japan and virtually all of the Asian countries affected by WWII. The Prime Minister (hereafter PM) from 2001-2006, Junichiro Koizumi, made a point of visiting the shrine every



The Yushukan

August, on or close to the anniversary of Japan's surrender to the US. While incensing the other East Asian nations, these visits worked to increase his domestic popularity, at least among conservatives; a large and politically important group in what is a pretty conservative country. His successor, Shinzo Abe, broke from this tradition this August, stating that he would not visit the shrine "as long as the issue remains a diplomatic problem" (although it transpired that he had visited the shrine in a personal capacity in April of this year). Though a conservative himself, Abe's decision to steer clear of the shrine opened up the diplomatic playing field for Japan, as the Yasukuni shrine has been one more stick for the Chinese and the Koreans to beat Japan over the head with. Unfortunately for him not all his foreign policy was as successful, and he resigned earlier this month (literally as I write!) following his failure to extend the Japanese Defence Force's Indian Ocean refueling mission, supporting the NATO forces in Afghanistan (a topic for next month I think!) – the final straw following a summer which saw a string of scandals, the forced resignation of several prominent cabinet members, and the loss of the Upper House. When you read this, the new PM should have been announced, and he come next August (or perhaps even before then) the Yasukuni question will raise its ugly head once more. A new PM looking to shore up domestic support and avoid following in Abe's footsteps may well find that sacrificing good relations with Japan's Asian neighbours is worth it in order to stay in power – who knows, if Abe hadn't broken with the (of course highly questionable) tradition of praying at Yasukuni every August, maybe he'd still be PM today . . .



The Yasukuni Shrine

Japan's Big Boys

Catherine Reid

Sumo is and isn't a large part of the Japanese lifestyle. For some people it consumes a significant amount of their time but others make little time for it. For foreigners, sumo represents the cultural side of Japan that one, whilst living in the country, must experience at some point. It offers a rare insight into one of many traditional aspects that hopefully Japan never loses. I recently had the opportunity to attend a sumo tournament in Osaka but having only a little understanding of the sport, prompted me to do a little research.

It is thought that sumo was first performed in Japan in 453 by Chinese wrestlers at the funeral of a Japanese Emperor. The earliest forms of sumo have been documented as far back as the 8th century where there were few rules and the unarmed wrestlers often fought to the death. There was also a strong association with Shinto religious ceremonies, many of which are still performed today. In the 16th century the use of the *dohyou* (ring) was first introduced for tournaments. The original sumo wrestlers are thought to have been *samurai* (warriors).

The *dohyou* is made from a mixture of clay and sand. It is 34 - 60cms high with a diameter of 4.55m. It is bounded by *tawara* (rice-straw bales) which are partially buried in the *dohyou*. Around the outside of the ring there is a fine layer of lightly brushed sand to determine whether a wrestler has touched the outside of the ring. In the centre there are shikiri-sen (two white lines) where the wrestlers

stand behind to make their charge at each other. Wrestlers (referred to as *rishiki*) wear only a *mawashi* (silk loin cloth) during a fight. It is approximately 9m long and 60cms wide. It is folded in 6 parts and wrapped around the waist 4-7 times depending on the size of the *rishiki*. Their hairstyles, fashionable in the Edo Period (1603-1867), resemble a ginko l

leaf but also act as a form of head protection if a *rishiki* was to fall during fight.

There are about 800 *rishiki* (from trainees to professional) in Japan. There are six divisions in sumo, with the wrestlers in the highest two divisions the only salaried wrestlers (*sekitori*). The highest division (*Maku-uchi*) and the second highest (*Juryo*) comprise of only 42 and 28 wrestlers respectively

The wrestlers in the four lower divisions are paid only a subsistence allowance and must do chores at their training stable. The *Yokozuna* (grand champion) is the highest ranked *rishiki*. Sumo has a very strict hierarchy which is based purely on sporting merit. Once promoted to the *yokozuna*, he must maintain his high performance standards or he must retire. A *yokozuna* is never demoted. There have been only 62 *yokozuna* in the 300 years since the position was introduced into sumo. The current *yokozuna* is Asashoryu, a Mongolian.



Sumo tournaments are held six times a year in Japan, with each tournament lasting for 15 days. Prior to competing each day, the *rishiki* partake in the *dohyou iri* (ring entering) ceremony wearing a *kesho-mawashi* (a silk apron with elaborately embroidered patterns costing AUD\$4000-\$5000). Rituals are performed firstly to attract the god's attention by clapping the hands together then holding the arms out with the palms up to show he has no concealed weapons. Leg lifts and a heavy stomp on the *dohyou* drives out any evil spirits. *Rishiki* then change into their fighting *mawashi* and await their turn. Each

rishiki fights once per day (for those in the top two divisions). They are called into the ring then again perform certain rituals including; leg stomps, clapping, rinsing out the mouth, wiping the body with a paper towel and throwing salt into the ring to purify it. Once the rituals have been performed, each *rishiki* takes his position behind the *shikiri-sen* and charges his opponent. Fights are usually brief. The loser is the first to touch the ground with any part of his body, apart from the feet, or the first to touch the ground outside the ring. Once the fight is complete the *rishiki* return to their side, bow to each other then the *gyoji* (referee) points his *gunbai* (war fan) towards the winner. The tournament winner is the *rishiki* who won the most bouts over the 15 days.

Life for a sumo wrestler is highly controlled and disciplined. The Sumo Association determines the behaviour of wrestlers, even going so far as banning wrestlers from driving after one was seriously injured in a car accident. When youngsters enter sumo they must grow their hair long for the *chonmage* (topknot). They must wear a *chonmage* and traditional Japanese clothing whenever they

are in public. Junior wrestlers live in communal dormitories within their training stable. *Sekitori* have either their own room or apartment (if they are married). In the training stables, the juniors rise about 5am for their training sessions which are then followed by chores such as cooking and cleaning. The *sekitori* rise later and train after the juniors. The wrestlers don't eat breakfast but have a large lunch. A "sumo meal," *chankonabe* generally consists of a simmering stew of various types of fish, meat, vegies and rice all washed down with beer. This is followed by an afternoon nap, a routine to ensure weight

gain. In the afternoon the junior wrestlers attend school classes or do chores. The *sekitori* are free to relax, reply to fan mail, etc. In the evenings they go out and socialise with their sponsors, whereas the juniors must stay at the training stable or attend a social event with the *sekitori* as his man-servant.

Due to their lifestyle, sumo wrestlers have a lower life expectancy of approximately 60-65 years. Post retirement, they tend to develop diabetes, have high blood pressure and suffer from heart attacks. Their excessive alcohol intake can lead to liver problems. They de-

velop arthritis and joint related problems from the stress placed on their joints by their heavy frames. Making a career as a sumo wrestler is certainly challenging. There is fame and fortune there, but only if you work very hard and make countless sacrifices to succeed.



A young man cooking chankonabe

English Sensei Spirit

Angela Nicholson

Telephone Conversations

Most first year high school textbooks have a section on using the phone so here's an idea to get you started on your telephone lesson plan. Start out by using the key phrases and example conversation sheet. In whatever way works for you, go through and explain the key phrases. Most of the phrases are quite simple so it shouldn't take the students long to pick them up. After you have done that, demonstrate the example conversation with either your JTE or a volunteer student. To make this a little more interesting and fun I have two plastic telephones (kid's ones) that make ringing sounds.

Next, get the students into pairs and have them practice the dialogue. Encourage them to remember as much as they can and to not look at their sheets, this will help them to sound more natural and hopefully they will remember it better. When they have rehearsed the conversation a few times and are comfortable with it, it's time for the next step. Write up one of the new situations on the board, complete with the underlining and do the example conversation again, this time placing the new information in the appropriate place. (Note: The new situation cards have been deliberately made easy for lower level students. If you students are of a higher level, change the cards so that they have to change the information to fit into the conversation properly. Also, make sure you have the cards pre-cut for

easy distribution).

Check that the students understand what they have to do and then break them into pairs again. This time, get them to sit back to back so that they can't see each others faces, just like in a real call. This has the added advantage of making them speak louder. One person in each pair should get a new situation card. They are the caller. Give the receiver a small sheet that has a weekend schedule on it. (I haven't added it here because you can do it easily yourself, just make up a small table with Friday, Saturday and Sunday split into Morning Afternoon and Evening. In each space, e.g. Friday morning, put in a space for them to write who and what). Once they have finished their phone conversations the receiver must write down their plans in their schedule. If a new plan clashes with one that's already been established then they need to say that they are busy.

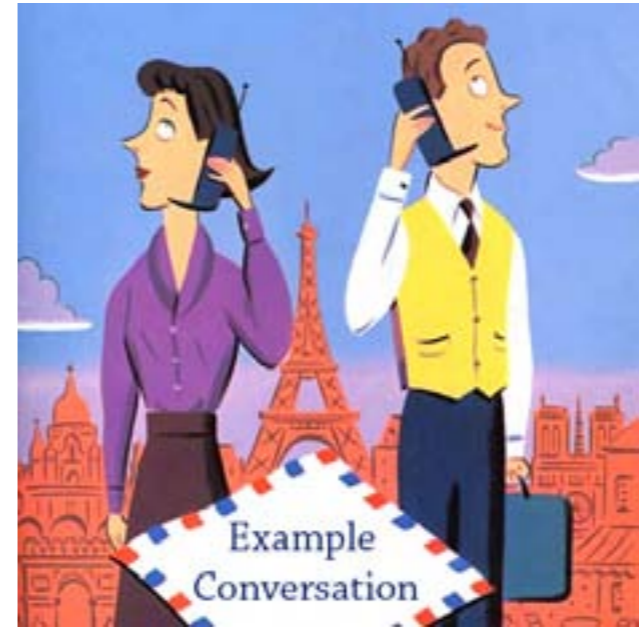
Once all the pairs have finished their phone call, rotate the callers so that they are calling a new person (with the same info as before). After a few times get the pairs to swap roles and then rotate the new callers in the opposite direction to the previous group. That way they will not be practicing with the same people.

Telephone Conversations



Key Phrases

Caller	Receiver
Hello. This is <i>(your name)</i> .	
Is <i>(friend's name)</i> there?	This is <i>(name)</i> speaking/ Speaking.
May I speak to <i>(name)</i> ? (Polite form).	
	She's/ he's not here at the moment.
Can I leave a message?	Would you like to leave a message?
Can you please tell him/her...?	
I'm calling about...	
I'm calling to tell you...	
	Thank you for calling.



Situation: Angela is calling Eddie-sensei to ask if he would like to go to the movies on Thursday night.

A: Hello. This is Angela. Is Eddie-sensei there?
E: This is Eddie speaking.
A: Hi. I'm just calling to ask if you are busy on Thursday night. The new Harry Potter movie is playing in Sanda at 9 o'clock. Would you like to go?
E: Yeah, that sounds great. OR Sorry, I'm busy Thursday night.
A: Ok. See you then. OR Ok, maybe next time. Bye.
E: Bye

Other Possible Scenarios

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Saturday morning. There is a sale on this week-end at the Daimaru Department Store.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Sunday afternoon. There is a Film Festival on in Kobe.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Sunday morning. There is a baseball game on at Homei High School.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Saturday night. You are (I am) having a party at your (my) house for your (my) birthday.



* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Sunday afternoon. There is a big festival in Kyoto.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Friday night. You are (I am) having dinner with some friends at Bishnu Indian Restaurant.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Saturday afternoon. There is a picnic near Himeji Castle.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Friday night. A new Starbucks has opened in Sasayama and you (I) want to try their coffee.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Saturday night. There is a concert on at the Town Hall.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Friday. You are (I am) going to Universal Studios Japan.

* Call and ask your friend if they are busy on Sunday. Your (my) family is going on a day trip to the beach in Tottori.

Getting to Know Random JETs



Name: Michael Thomson

Please call me: Mik or Mike

School and Location in Hyogo:

Iwaya Chugako - Awaji Island

How we know you: YOU know me, Tori, as a drinking buddy.

Birthday: February 9th

Born and raised: Surrey, U.K.

Family: 1 older sister

University and Degree: De Montfort - Business Studies with Sociology

Other jobs you have had: Paper-boy/Machinist/Recruitment Consultant/Office Monkey

Travels: Oz/ U.S./ Asia

Shumi wa nan desuka: Gaming, food appreciation, drinking, travel

Favorites:

Food: Ika sashimi

Sports: Diving, tennis, hiking

Music: Electronic or indie rock

Shop: Konan

TV Show: *The Young Ones*

Most Proud Achievement: Passing my driving test first time

Best life experience: Completing 3 week hike around the Annapurna Mountain range in Nepal climbing to 5400M

Motto to live by: "Treat others how you would like to be treated"

I remember when...penny chew's actually cost just 1p.

What are you drinking? Orange juice

Best thing about JET so far? The opportunities

Why should we elect you President of the World? I'd create a Palestinian State

Funniest story involving a student? 1 nen had been doing present continuous tense. 1 boy asked "Are you killing people?"

My top tip for teaching: Plan to do as little talking as possible.

When the class is TOO QUIET I... Finish what I'm doing in 2 minutes and get them standing up/ running to the board type stuff.

Bribery for students.. YAY or NAY? Nay.

Read and React:

Immigration Policy

*"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."*

-From "The New Colossus," by Emma Lazarus,
as inscribed on the Statue of Liberty

Are you frustrated here? Do you feel isolated and out of touch? Chances are that if you do, you see yourself as an immigrant. If you were just a visitor, a tourist, you would be hanging out in Kyoto or Tokyo, meeting other foreigners and other Japanese who speak English. You would be looking at stunning temples and visiting the trendiest nightclubs. You would be having the time of your life.

As an immigrant you might do these things also, but you must also integrate into daily life, which is much more difficult. What percentage of the English teachers who arrive here ever really integrate? How many learn Japanese fluently and can truly fend for themselves in Japanese only, without any English help?

We all came here with a goal of immersion. We want to learn the Japanese language, have Japanese

friends, and fend for ourselves. We would like to learn to read the utility bill without bringing it to school, or go to the grocery store and read the labels by ourselves. But, how many of us will ever live this reality? I suppose you never understand how difficult it is to truly integrate until you face the challenge and realize that it might be easier to cling to the life you once had than it is to learn how love your new home.

Of course, Japan doesn't exactly make easy to be an immigrant. Visitors are welcomed and actively recruited, but the barriers to immigration in Japan are steep. Japan's cultural identity is broadening somewhat, but Japanese citizens as a whole are not yet ready for a large segment of their population to be foreign-born.

Can that attitude change? Japan is



currently facing a serious challenge. The plummeting birth rate means Japan will either have to act as a forerunner and reinvent an economy not based on youth, or allow more immigrants to enter and actively participate in society. How will the Japanese react to more foreigners, especially non-white foreigners from countries they have a hostile history with (Korea, China, the Philippines)?

Before you judge Japan, take a look at your own country. What is the immigration policy there? Most Western countries have had some sort of protectionist immigration policy, and continue to do so. So, what are you gonna do about it? Will you influence immigration law in your homeland



when you return now that you know how difficult it is to be an immigrant?

Immigration policy isn't simple, of course. Even if they have the best intentions, societies must still struggle with difficult questions. Who do we admit? Are different religions ok? How about people with radically different political viewpoints? Will we require immigrants to learn English, or will we just make it as easy as possible for them? Will the goal be assimilation, or just acceptance?

Then there's the BIG question. How many people do we admit? In Jared Diamond's book *Collapse*, he likens First World countries to lifeboats, with unskilled immigrants from overpopulated and under-resourced countries scrambling to save themselves from poverty and neglect. How many people can we accept into our opulent First World lifestyle without overtaxing the system and sinking the boat?

Whatever your stance, get involved when you get home. Volunteer to teach ESL, or join a political campaign. Study immigration law, or just talk to that person advocating English as an official language and give him your opinion. You know what it's like to be an immigrant, and he probably doesn't. It's up to you to make a difference.

Top Ten Places to go Alone

10. Shopping at Porto Bazaar in Tarumi. Factory outlet shopping with all of your favourite brands; and less of those annoying couples that you find at places such as Harbourland.

9. Joining a club of some description. Japanese people are crazy about hobbies; you can do just about anything here... from hip hop dance to flower arranging. And you will have an answer to the inevitable question "What do you do hobby?"

8. The local Warner Mycal. Going to the movies by yourself is not lame. Ever. You get to watch the movie uninterrupted, and usually can score a decent seat no matter how late to the show you are...

7. Starbucks. Take a book, settle down in the couches and drink loads of coffee. You will literally bounce home!

6. A night out on the town in Kobe. There are loads of bars that are single-person friendly. Bar Trinity, Blue Fox, and Polo Dog all have bars you can sit at; and generally really friendly staff. Drinking in a bar alone is so Piano Man- and everyone loves the Piano Man. Just don't get completely trashed, and you will be fine!

5. Join a gym. The aerobics classes are a hoot, but you really don't want anyone you know to see you flopping around in lycra with a bunch of similarly lycra-clad obaachans.

4.The onsens. There is really nothing like relaxing quietly in a steaming hot bath- in your own time schedule. Yeah, they are good for social occasions too, but alone can be a much more relaxing experience.

3. The local izakaya. Sit at the bar and shoot the shit with the salarymen on their way home from work. Many a great night to be had at these places. Find yourself a regular spot and you will find yourself feeling like a part of the community. The 'late-night-drinking-and-eating-and-talking-it-up' community.

2. On a random bike ride. Get on that Mama-Chari and just ride! You can go wherever you like and get completely lost but always find your way home- without a friend complaining about your lack of sense of direction. Just leave early in the morning. You'll be amazed at what is down that street you have had no reason to go down before...

1. TOKYO! Lose yourself in the magnificent city. It is one of the few major cities in the world that you can walk around alone without fearing for your life. Only a short plane ride (very cheap if you book 2 months in advance... check out Skymark - <http://www.skymark.co.jp/>) or a shinkansen ride away; it is easily affordable and exciting. And will make for a great blog post to your friends back home! (You could title the post "Look at me I'm awesome"). Tokyo- YAY!

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*products not included



Fudge Brownies

A Chocolaty Delight!



The Ironic Chef is out being ironic this month, but here is a *Recipe From The Editor* to fill the gap!

Ingredients:

½ cup margarine or butter	1 teaspoon vanilla	
2 ounces unsweetened chocolate (Meiji BLACK works well)	¾ cup flour	Frosting
1 cup of sugar	½ cup chopped nuts	

Method:

Grease an 8x8x2 inch baking tray, set aside. In saucepan melt the margarine and chocolate over a low heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Using a spoon, lightly beat until just combined. Stir in the flour and nuts.

Spread batter into the prepared baking pan. Bake at 175 degrees C for 30 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Frost or glaze top. Cut into bars. Makes about 24 if you cut them small enough.

Calories: Uncountable.

Fat: Yes.

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Kansai Concerts

October

**20th - The Nightfillers/
Veltpunch/Hunting
Pigeons**

Helluva Lounge

2000 YEN

Open 18:00, Start 19:00

**20th - FOUNTAINS OF
WAYNE**

Club Quattro, Shinsaibashi

6000YEN (adv. with 1 drink)

Open 18:00, Start 19:00

November

15th- The Shins

Club Quattro, Shinsaibashi

5800YEN (adv. with 1 drink)

Open 18:00, Start 19:00

**27th- Linkin Park
(supporting act, Yellow
Card)**

Osaka Chuo-taiikukan

8500YEN

Open 17:30, starts 18:30

28th- Yellow Card

IMP Hall, Osaka

6300YEN

Open 18:00, Start 19:00

December

6th- Daft Punk

Kobe World Memorial Hall

8000YEN

Open 18:30, Start 19:00

For more information on other concerts check out www.creativeman.co.jp and www.smash-jpn.com.