

JAPAN SCHOOL NEWS

Caroline Pover, Inc.

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MONTHLY NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN JAPAN

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Being British in Aichi International School

During the first term of 2010, students at Aichi International School were involved in a number of activities connected to Britain.

Before the summer vacation, elementary school students were perfecting their cricketing skills in PE lessons, and grade 1 students were involved in an exchange project with Northwood Primary School in London.

Initially, students from both Northwood and AIS exchanged information and opinions about the football (soccer) World Cup via mail. This then extended to sending handcrafted gifts, letters, and photographs.

Finally, AIS students performed a rendition of the "Three Lions" song in an assembly, and footage of their performance can be seen on the Northwood website: <http://www.northwood.org.uk/world-cup-japan-three-lions.html>

As part of the summer school program, students learned about the British author Roald Dahl. Best known for his children's books such as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Dahl would have been 90 years old in September. Students studied both the author and some of his characters, such as Matilda and The Twits.

AIS began another exchange project last month,



Aichi International's grade 1 student Yusuke Tanaka enjoying soccer-related fun during exchange activities with schools in the United Kingdom. AICHI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

with a different school in England. This time the focus is Halloween, with students exchanging all kinds of spooky crafts and goodies. With the Halloween party

being a huge event in the AIS calendar, students are already excited about the prospect of developing international relations further. — MARK REED

Halloween brunch at 57

New York-inspired lounge and restaurant Fifty Seven is holding a special Halloween brunch on Sunday, October 31.

Children are encouraged to come in Halloween costumes to enjoy the special menu; and families, parents' clubs, and schools are all welcome to contact Manager Nick Dempsey for group bookings.

Fifty Seven has a dedicated children's play area within their large venue, so that children can enjoy a wide range of brand new toys and activities in a safe environment. <http://www.fiftyseven.co.jp/>.

RLC's Halloween party

RLC International Preschool enjoyed getting to know their new students last month and welcoming back the old faces. The children are having fun making artwork related to this term's theme of wild animals.

Everybody's looking forward to the Halloween Party at the end of this month, when all the children and teachers dress up for the day and the room is decorated with fun Halloween banners and items. There will be special Halloween snacks and drinks and children will play Halloween games. At the end of the day all students will take home a little goodie bag. — ALIY LICKFOLD

Tokyo Association of International Preschools fifth anniversary celebrations

Tokyo Association of International Preschools (TAIP) is excited to announce their upcoming 5th anniversary party on October 15 from 7:30pm.

The evening promises to be full of casual conversation with fellow TAIP members and associates—complimentary drinks and food will be provided. This is a wonderful opportunity to expand contacts within the international preschool community and also to find out more about how TAIP is working on each school's behalf to provide staff development, parent education, and marketing.

TAIP members include 26 schools and five Associate Members—RBR Inc., Scholastic Japan, RIC Publications, Tokyo CPR & First Aid, and the publisher of *Japan School News*.

With a few added surprises, this party is not going to be the usual stodgy affair. Come and join the party! RSVP <http://www.tokyopreschools.org/>. — ANTHONY TROTTER

English Studio's Halloween parade

Each year, English Studio holds a range of events such as Christmas parties, flea markets, school festivals, and sports days, the latter of which was held this year on September 26. English Studio's most popular events are always their Halloween parties.

With lots of fun games for everyone to play, amazing costumes that the children dress up in, yummy treats for the children to receive, and the

parade through the local neighbourhood, it is no surprise that this is a such a success every year.

This year's Halloween parties are sure to be great fun and will be held on Sunday, October 31, at each of the three schools (Meguro, Mita, and Setagaya).

Anyone can attend, and interested parties should call 03-3798-5829 or email esmita@jiec.org. — SHANE THOMPSON

ASIJ's Middle School goes 1:1



ASIJ's Middle School students share their excitement about the new 1:1 laptop program. ASIJ

The start of the new school year saw The American School in Japan's middle schoolers heading off for boot camp—not for *American Idol*, but to learn how to use their new Lenovo ThinkPads and how the school's new 1:1 program would work. “It was very evident that the students were thrilled with having the computers and the prospect of using them for all of their coursework during the year,” said Jim Erwin, Middle School Instructional Technology Coach.

“Actually, we already had more computers in the Middle School than students, but they

were mostly desktops. The fact that students were already using technology in the majority of classes meant making the transition to one laptop per student was an obvious one,” said Gene Witt, Director of Information Technology Services. “Now access is equitable for all classrooms and all subject areas and students enjoy anytime, anywhere access through our campus-wide wireless network.”

“Our faculty have a wealth of prior experience using technology in their courses and so they are well-prepared to integrate the laptops smoothly into their classes. The teachers will

be using various tools to enable the students to collaborate and explore new ways of expressing their thoughts and ideas through their use of their laptops,” said Erwin. “Teachers had some excellent professional development prior to the beginning of school and there will be ongoing technology workshops offered for the faculty each Monday after school to help them really develop the way we use these laptops.”

One of the goals in moving to a 1:1 laptop environment in the Middle School is to also help focus student learning on the 4 Cs: critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration. Whether it is taking soil samples using Vernier Probeware, working on a shared project via a Wiki or Google Doc or designing and creating multimedia projects on video, students will be able to seamlessly move from one activity to another. “With a laptop I can do more things and can access the internet to research. I can type in a few key words and see a lot of information. I can then choose the material for what I am studying,” said 6th grader Jacob Gagnon.

Student laptops also allow for flexible grouping in classes and during presentations, and the students are encouraged to organize and manage their own work. “It is a great educational tool. I had a laptop in 5th grade and now I have a bigger one and I am well organized with my folders,” says middle schooler Ryan Nishida. “It is easier [to work], as this laptop has all of the programs I need. It is great to be portable,” said fellow student Alicia. — MATT WILCE

New Mac lab at Aoba-Japan International School

Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) recently opened a second computer lab on the second floor of their Sugunami campus, along with a huge upgrade to the third-floor computer lab.

With sincere thanks to the incredible fundraising efforts of the A-JIS Family Community in 2009–2010, A-JIS has been able to add this second computer lab outfitted with the very best and latest technology, and complete a total upgrade of the third-floor computer lab, now an all iMac setup with large 21.5-inch displays that are ideal for classroom learning and interaction.

In addition to the computer lab upgrades, A-JIS also added two mobile laptop carts for use throughout the school, as well as put new iMacs in the library, art room, and science lab.

Along with adding new and upgrading old displays, A-JIS has undergone a complete cabling upgrade to ensure smoother and more reliable operation and maintenance of computers for students.

For further information, call A-JIS at 03-3335-6620, or visit the school's website at <http://www.aobaonline.jp>. — NEAL DILK



Aoba-Japan's latest addition to their technology facilities. AOBA-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Nagoya International School's annual Middle School retreat



Middle school students from NIS enjoying their annual retreat in Inuyama. R. HUGHES

Over 80 Nagoya International School Middle School students participated in the annual Middle School Retreat for three days at the beginning of

September in Inuyama. NIS uses the retreat as a way to form bonds between and among students and teachers in order to help everyone face the joys

and challenges of the year ahead together. Sports activities, games, theatrical skits, and campfires all made for a great time in the wilderness and mountains of Aichi. — ERIK OLSON-KIKUCHI

Creating their world with their own two hands!

During the last week of August, Katoh Gakuen's Gyoshu Junior and Senior High School's Bilingual Program held its annual IB Middle Years Program summer camp in the Susono area in Shizuoka.

The camp provided grade 9 and 10 students with the opportunity to get to know each other better through a series of English-centred academic and recreational activities.

The theme for this year's camp was "With my own two hands." With an emphasis on the areas of interaction, students were made aware of the importance of making peace (Health and Social Education), serving others (Community and Service), cleaning up the environment (Environments), and changing the world (Human Ingenuity) with their own two hands.

Upon arrival, camp participants were put in teams and asked to form their own tribe. Each tribe faced the challenge of coming up with a song, dance, attire, and motto that represented their culture.

All tribes had a chance to showcase their talents. Activities included a model United



Katoh students debating which direction their tribe should move in. KATOH GAKUEN

Nations session, student-created skits, and a series of outdoor and indoor team-building activities. Tribes accumulated points based on certain elements such as originality, creativity, and collaboration within the group. Camp activities culminated on the last night with group presentations about important global issues. The camp was a success thanks to the initiative and dedication demonstrated by all the students and teachers. — CARL HADLEY

NewIS presentations

New International School, as part of its tenth anniversary seminar series, will give a seminar on its Japanese program on Tuesday, October 19, from 9–10:30am, with coffee from 8:45am. Members of the public are welcome.

How can children learn to read and write in Japanese, as well as in English, and in all of the subject areas, without the school following the standardized "kokugo" curriculum of Japanese schools? Come and find out. Call 03-3980-1057 for a reservation. A complete list of the seminars is on the website at <http://newis.ed.jp>.

On that same day, October 19th, representatives from Hampshire College in Massachusetts will be visiting the school. They will be giving a presentation from 2:15–3:45pm, and visitors are also welcome to attend this event, but please call in advance.

Hampshire College is a member of a five-college consortium that also includes Smith College, Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Students admitted to any of those schools may attend classes at any of the others, with a shuttle running between the schools.

TIS family picnic in Meguro



Members of the Tokyo International School community playing in Rinshinomori Park at their annual Family Picnic last month. TOKYO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

On Saturday, September 11, hundreds of children, parents, and staff gathered for the annual TIS Family Picnic in Rinshinomori Park in Meguro. Despite the heat, lots of fun, food, and drink were enjoyed by all.

The purpose of the event is to celebrate and enjoy the family atmosphere that still exists at the school,

which has grown from a handful of children and staff to over 360 students and 70 staff. Many new families also attended and had a chance to make connections with continuing families and staff.

This annual event was cancelled in 2008 and 2009 due to rain and it was fortunate that there was none in sight this year. — DES HURST

Teaching positions

Makuhari International School is looking to hire a kindergarten teacher from January 2011.

MIS opened its doors to 150 children in April 2009. Currently we have 250 children and expect up to 300 for April 2011. We are looking for a dynamic, professional teacher who wishes to make a positive difference to a new and improving school. Excellent remuneration package available to the right candidate.

Successful applicants will be teachers who:

- are well trained, well qualified, committed, and career oriented;
- are dedicated to the profession—who love children and educating children;
- are flexible team-players who wish to continue learning as well as teaching;
- constantly want to improve what we offer the children as well as their own skills;
- want to be part of a team that is committed to building the “Best International School in Japan”; and
- are positive and flexible in nature and always see the glass as half full!

Lastly, there is an expectation at Makuhari for teachers to “think outside the box” and

emphasize the skills that “international children” need to acquire; for example, effectively communicating one’s thoughts, understanding other cultures, and constructing persuasive threads of reasoning.

MIS is a new school within the Tokyo area. We have wonderful facilities, including specialist rooms, and a well-designed purpose-built learning environment for the children in our care, which includes various outside areas such as a large grass field and nature study area. MIS is already gaining an excellent reputation in the area for the quality of teaching we offer.

Please send a CV and letter of application including details for at least two references to Paul Rogers, Head of School.

For further information about our school, as well as the local area, see <http://www.mis.ed.jp>.

Treehouse Montessori School is looking for an assistant preschool teacher who can work part time from January 2011. Montessori diploma or teaching qualification preferred. Prospective candidates should email a resume to Head of School Jenny Vyvial at jenny@tms-school.com.

New building developments for Joy to the World

The days of walking from building to building are in the past for Joy to the World American International School members. Now that the new floor in the main school building is open, all classes are held in the same building on Harimazaka-dori, Koishikawa, Bunkyo-ku.

Joy Tots (18 months – 2 years), pre-kindergarteners (2 – 3 years), and the office (which were all spread over several locations around the block) are now together on one floor in the same building as the kindergarten. Not only is this much more convenient for everybody, but the facilities are more spacious and purpose-built.

The older children enjoy being together with the younger ones, and interaction between the age groups is much easier to facilitate. It is now also easier for parents to communicate with the office staff. The opening of this new floor is a milestone in the 11-year history of Joy to the World Kindergarten. — EUFT VANDEN BERG



A student at Joy to the World American International School putting the finishing touches to decorations on the new floor that finally brings the whole school together under one roof. EUFT VAN DEN BERG

PAL’s new art room

PAL International School has created a new art room, and it is rapidly filling up with materials to be recycled by children keen to express their ideas and use their imaginations. With the recent renovation of the classroom, PAL students have already spent much of the new school year creating their own masterpieces. Find out more about PAL International School at <http://www.pal-school.com/>. — MAKIKO KOIDE



Kentaro proudly showing off his camera. PAL