

JAPAN SCHOOL NEWS

Caroline Pover, Inc.

Evergreen Outdoor Center

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A land before time at J's

ICAN students help Hurricane Sandy victims

International Christian Academy of Nagoya (ICAN) students in third and fourth grades truly understood the pain and feelings of loss when Hurricane Sandy struck coastal areas in eastern United States earlier this school year.

As part of their Bible lessons, they discussed how they could help people in the affected areas, and collected money to send to one of the teacher's mothers whose church was a collection site for supplies. They collected over US\$200.

Blankets for families and toys for children were purchased with the money that the students collected. Students also sent notes of encouragement to the families who lost their homes and their belongings. Through this activity, students learned how to share with others in times of need and to share God's love with others.

Students were excited when a photo of the blankets and toys was shared with them and to receive thank you notes from the families that benefitted from the items. — **CHERI DOOD**



Comforting gifts donated by ICAN students. ICAN

Valentine's at St Alban's

The children at St Alban's Nursery were thrilled to get their first taste of snow for 2013 last month, and enjoyed being outside and playing in it. This month brings their favourite holiday, Valentine's Day. Daddies will join the nursery for the day and make crafts with the children to decorate their homes. They will also make special presents for mum and of course decorate (and eat) lots of cookies. — **GILMA YAMAMOTO**



Fathers visiting St Alban's last year. ST ALBAN'S NURSERY



Mio with her dinosaur at J's International School last month. MANA ORTIZ

Dinosaurs were the big topic at J's last month. This theme is a favourite for children and teachers alike, full of information and images that tickle the imagination. "I think I'm a carnivore," one of the children thought out loud, looking at his lunch.

Students learned that even though it took a couple of hours to make their own fossils, this is not necessarily the case with real fossils.

The children chipped, scraped, and dug away at a large clay mass, uncovering many "real" bones, and were excited to see a whole life-size baby dino skeleton finally formed. By the end of the month, palaeontologist was on the list of "what I want to be when I grow up." Staff anticipate and welcome this list lengthening as the months go by. — **MANA ORTIZ**

Spectacular carols at A-JIS

With improvements to the new facility, Christmas at Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) took on a new meaning, with the added benefit of holding events in the school's very own gymnasium. The last holiday season was an amazing experience for everyone at A-JIS; teachers, parents, and students had a wonderful time. From the terrific holiday decorations to the many events held, the Christmas spirit was felt throughout the school.

The Christmas Carolling Spectacular was one of the highlights of the holiday-themed events. Students and teachers walked the halls and the outside community singing their collective hearts out. It was a truly exciting moment for the kindergarten students when the carollers stopped outside their classes for a few songs. There were two incredible holiday concerts during December. The lower elementary school and kindergarten Christmas program had students dressed in amazing costumes, singing and dancing for the pleasure of friends and family. The middle and high school Winter Concert was also a success. There was a great mix of performances, including the A-JIS hand bells, the A-JIS choir, and beginning and advanced band, as well as a performance by the family community volunteer choir. Everyone who came to the concert had a great time listening and even singing along.
— ROYCE JACOBS

Chateau welcomes the New Year Japanese style

Last month, Chateau School diplomats got to experience the sacred customs of the Japanese New Year, visiting Meiji Jingu to make a wish and participate in the Kigan ritual. They waited patiently with many visitors, also looking forward to starting the year, before walking behind the curtains and into the shrine building where people were praying. They listened to the sounds of the big drum and the beautiful flutes, and watched the Yamato-Mai dance.

After returning to Chateau School, the diplomats cut green leafy vegetables into small pieces to make the seven-herb porridge (*nanakusa-gayu*); it is meant to bring longevity and health. The scent of the herbs was quite unusual and everyone had a different reaction to it.

Later, diplomats enjoyed a Japanese tea ceremony, preparing their first cup of "matcha" green tea in handmade ceramic bowls decorated with bamboo paint. The drink was accompanied by traditional Japanese pastries from Kyoto, placed on gold foil in appreciation of the coming year.

This month, diplomats will celebrate the Chinese New Year, and explore Chinatown in Yokohama, enjoying the dragon parade and festival. — SHIORI ANDO & DIANA MOTYOVSKI

Treehouse Montessori School's snow woman

2013 kicked off to a good start at Treehouse Montessori School in Yokohama with children doing "kakizome" as part of learning traditional Japanese calligraphy during Japanese Culture Week. This is an annual event held on the first week after the winter holidays. Children excitedly looked forward to using Japanese "fude" (writing brush) to create Japanese characters in black ink and to sign their own name either in English or Japanese. The Japanese calligraphy class is now part of the regular curriculum.

The following week was another exciting time for the children when they made a beautiful "snow woman" from the snow that had piled up in the school garden after some unexpected weather. Each child was given some colourful mittens and participated in making and decorating her with various objects from the classroom, such as yarn, shells, pinecones, sponges, twigs, and pails. She was unanimously named "Carol."

Treehouse Montessori School Yokohama strives to provide a warm and home-like environment for children to learn at their own pace by focusing on each child's unique personality. The school was established in March 2001 and will soon be celebrating its 13th year.

The school has a broad range of Montessori-based academic programs, as well as music, creative arts and crafts, outdoor physical education, indoor aerobics and stretching,



Poppy Stacey building part of the snow woman at Treehouse Montessori School in Yokohama last month. JENNY VYVIAL

musical concerts, and cultural outings and activities.

Children from ages one through six from all nationalities and backgrounds are welcomed. Please inquire at the school directly or check <http://tms-school.com>. — JENNY VYVIAL

Children enjoy snow play at Horizon Sendai



Children at Horizon Japan International School Sendai enjoying snow that fell in its big playground. BARIS ARUK

NewIS February seminar on multi-age education

This month's New International School (NewIS) seminar will be held on February 13, from 9:15–11:15am. The topic is "The Multi-age Classroom: A Vygotskian Approach to Education and Language Acquisition."

The seminar is open to the public as well as to current families at NewIS, and will be professionally interpreted and therefore available in both

English and Japanese. Certificates of attendance will be issued.

Please call the school on 03-3980-1057 to confirm attendance.

NewIS is a child-centred, dual language, multi-age school that serves children from preschool through to grade 10. For more information, see the school's website at <http://newis.ed.jp>.

Katoh Elementary celebrates its 20th anniversary

Last year Katoh Elementary School celebrated the 20th anniversary of its landmark immersion program through ceremonies, a play, and a gorgeous white tablecloth luncheon.

The play, *Tiger of the Seas*, was the first event and was performed by the White Horse Theatre group from the UK. The students laughed throughout the play as the silly characters ran through the audience and encouraged them to participate by using props, songs, and cheering.

A more formal ceremony took place at the end of November at the elementary school, marked by speeches from Dr. Katoh, Dr. Bostwick, and Vice Principal Satoh.

Dr. Bostwick explained to the children why the anniversary was important to the school and that 20 years ago many people did not think it was possible to teach children the Japanese national curriculum through the medium of English. People also thought children would lose their Japanese identity and first-language proficiency in Japanese. None of these fears came to pass and Dr. Bostwick told our students that their achievements have shown that 20 years later the

school is strong, successful, and has set a new standard for education in Japan.

At the luncheon reception, former graduates and teachers joined current students and staff to enjoy lots of delicious food and the opportunity to reminisce. There was also a slide show of the history of the school and a video from a US television news magazine about a graduate who helped develop new technology at MIT to provide amputees with advanced prosthetics. The various events allowed everyone to see how much the school has accomplished after venturing into uncharted territory 20 years ago! — JANE WILKES



Katoh students and staff at November's 20th anniversary ceremony. KATOH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EF's new University Foundation Year program

Higher education takes you to the next level in your academic career — gaining further knowledge in the field you're interested in, taking charge of your choices, and heading where you want to be in the future — whatever stage you are at now and whatever age you are.

For those interested in entering universities in English-speaking countries, Education First (EF) is now welcoming aspiring young students into a University Foundation Year Program starting in September 2013.

This is a six- or nine-month program of study that helps international students fulfil language and academic requirements for university entrance in an English-speaking country. This additional year of secondary school studies is required for students seeking higher education in the United Kingdom and is highly recommended for students who wish to study in the United States, Canada, Australia, or Singapore. Intended for high school graduates, this program bridges the gap between a student's previous education and what is expected of them at a university abroad. Successful graduates of the program are guaranteed admission to one of EF's 150 partner institutions.

Students learn essential study skills such as essay writing, critical thinking and group work, as well as academic English. The program also provides an overview of local customs and educational systems. Studies can be specialized with academic coursework in business, information technology, law, media and communications, tourism, sports science, art, and science and engineering.

For students whose English is not yet strong

enough for the foundation program, the EF Academic English Program helps establish strong English fluency to meet enrolment requirements of any university preparation abroad program.

Hsiu-Te Lin from Taiwan chose EF to improve his TOEFL and SAT scores, which students generally need to be qualified for most bachelor's degree programs. "I was accepted at Suffolk University, Rochester Institute of Technology, Northeastern University, and the University of Miami," said Hsiu-Te. He joined EF's UFY in Boston, and then eventually enrolled in Northeastern University.

For more information on the course, please email kozue.mitsu@ef.com or call 03-5774-6210. For general information on EF University Preparation Abroad, check out the website at: <http://www.efjapan.co.jp/university>. — WAKANA CATCHPOLE



EF students at a previous overseas university preparation program. EDUCATION FIRST JAPAN

Jingumae International Exchange School science week

Jingumae International Exchange School (JIES) held its annual numeracy and science week during the first week of January. The children were mixed into their "suisha" groups (mixed age and ability groups) and enjoyed a week full of interesting and enjoyable activities. These included group numeracy challenges like building towers to support raw eggs, and numeracy and science jeopardy.

The whole-school topic was racecars. Each grade had to work on a different aspect of racecar design such as wheels and axels, body shapes, lightweight materials, gradients and surface friction of ramps, and bodywork. On the final day, the children shared their newfound knowledge with their suisha group and worked together to build a racecar and ramp. The winning group was the one whose car travelled the furthest and looked the "coolest." Overall, the week was a great success and everyone is looking forward to next month's literacy week. — KENAN ULU



JIES students and staff during its annual numeracy and science week. JINGUMAE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE SCHOOL

HJIS open day Feb. 23

Horizon Japan International School (HJIS) Yokohama is holding an open house on Saturday, February 23, from 10am–12:30pm, and welcomes parents who are considering the school as well as members of the local community interested in getting to know the school better.

The day will include a presentation and tour of school facilities, with opportunities to speak directly with teachers and staff and ask questions throughout.

The presentation will cover the HJIS educational philosophy, an overview of the HJIS curriculum, introduction to teachers and other staff, and an overview of supplementary activities such as after-school programs. Following the information session, light refreshments will be available for visitors and teachers, enabling them to mix and talk freely.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Ms. Ozeki by phone at 045-584-1945, fax at 045-584-1946, or email at hjis@horizon.ac.jp. Please note that parking space is not available.

Ski Japan this winter with Evergreen Outdoor Center



CASI-ACMS snowboard instructor courses

The Canadian Association of Snowboard Instructors (CASI) is the professional snowboard teaching body in Canada, and they aim to train and certify snowboard instructors, and ensure that a standard of safe and efficient snowboard instruction is maintained.

People who wish to become members of CASI must attend and pass a Level 1 Instructor certification course. Courses are held at various locations worldwide. Evergreen Outdoor Center is an official foreign course provider.

CASI certification comprises four levels. Level 1 is an introductory course designed to teach instructors how to introduce snowboarding to beginning riders. Level 2 places more stress on the intermediate level of riding skills. Level 3 focuses on advanced skills, and Level 4 focuses on expert riding techniques, teaching, and pedagogy skills.

Evergreen Outdoor Center is holding CASI Level 1, 2, and 3 courses in February and March, with availability as follows: March 14–16 (Level 1), March 6–9 (Level 2). The Level 3 courses are currently full.

Candidates will receive coaching on their riding and teaching skills, with the goal of reaching the level standard in both areas. They will also receive suggestions and strategies for long-term development.

Past courses have run very smoothly and received great feedback from students and CASI examiners. Evergreen plans to add ski instructor courses next season to complement the snowboard courses. There are also plans to implement a full residential program to train registrants in snowboard and ski instruction and race and freestyle disciplines, as well as avalanche training, Japanese language, and culture. A race and freestyle club will be starting February 2 and will run until March 31.

To enroll in any of the CASI courses, contact Evergreen Outdoor Center with your name, date of birth, sex, postal address, and email address. For more information, see <http://www.evergreen-hakuba.com/snowboard-instructor-course.html>.

Kids ski & snowboard lessons on Hakuba's Happo-one

Evergreen is the premier English ski school for children's ski and snowboard lessons in Hakuba, where parents relax and kids smile. Not only can your child improve his or her skiing/snowboarding in a fun environment with international instructors and other children from all over the world, but you and your better half can make some turns for fun or explore the area.

Evergreen's school is the ideal ski-in ski-out set-up, with the office, meeting area, public toilets, rest area, daycare room, their own "Roots Cafe" serving delicious vegetarian food and drinks, and a lift-ticket booth nearby.

Evergreen Outdoor Center offers group and private lessons in skiing and snowboarding for infants and children.

The infants program is designed with young beginning skiers in mind and is ideal for getting your infant on the slopes. Lessons are conducted on the "Magic Carpet" moving walkway.

The children's group ski and snowboard programs offer smooth transitions from total beginner through to advanced, and children will feel positive and proud of themselves as they see continual day-by-day skill development. Children are placed in groups based on their level and instructors discuss their progress with school managers daily to ensure that they are always placed in the group most suited to their needs. Additionally, kids in group lessons learn to ski or snowboard while having fun and making friends with kids their own age.

For one-on-one lessons or lessons for private groups of friends/family, Evergreen has instructors ready to give your child focused training that is specific to their needs, to help them take it to the next level on skis or a snowboard. Evergreen helps them make the most out of their time on the ski-field, whether they ski once a year or every day in winter — whatever their level, instructors will focus on what they need to improve their skill, confidence, and style.

For more information see <http://www.evergreen-hakuba.com/japan-ski/kids-lessons.html>. Full- and half-day sessions available until May.



Another winter season is well underway and what a Great Winter so far. Our staff of Professional Ski & Snowboard Instructors are excited to meet you and your family in Hakuba this season for great snow and big smiles.

- ❄️ Ski & Snowboard Instruction
- ❄️ Youth Race & Freestyle Club
- ❄️ Snowshoe & X-Country
- ❄️ Family & Daycare Services







www.evergreen-hakuba.com

The Youth Race and Freestyle Club runs every weekend from January to the end of March and members are able to choose which dates to attend. Evergreen Coaches make learning fun as they teach the fundamentals of good skiing techniques. As participants progress in their training and skills development coaches will introduce higher level alpine ski and racing techniques while still emphasizing that skiing is fun! Please inquire for details. 0261-72-5150