

# JAPAN SCHOOL NEWS

Caroline Pover, Inc.

Evergreen Outdoor Center

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## Taiko drummers support Tohoku



**Members of The British School in Tokyo's taiko drumming group, excited to be supporting the town of Koamikura on the Oshika-hanto peninsula in Tohoku.** MIYABI ARASHI TAIKO SCHOOL

Members of the Ohana International School in Tokyo, The British School in Tokyo (BST), Miyabi Arashi Taiko School, and RIKEN Institute communities have spent the past six months raising money to support a small fishing village in Tohoku during its recovery after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

Having visited the Oshika peninsula as a volunteer during Golden Week of that year, Ohana International School Director Shelley Sacks was overwhelmed by its beauty, despite the obvious destruction. When her friend, Caroline Pover, who lives on the peninsula for part of the year supporting the various communities, approached her about raising money for Koamikura, Shelley didn't hesitate

in responding in the affirmative.

Together with the broader Ohana community, which includes BST, Miyabi Arashi, and RIKEN, along with many other individuals, they managed to raise ¥1.5 million. This money has been spent on repairing the roof of the town shrine and also the steps to the shrine — the entire town was swept away and the steps to the shrine damaged to the point that for the past two years it has been impossible for villagers to reach it.

At the time of going to print, 50 people from these Tokyo communities are preparing for the long journey to Oshika-hanto to meet the local people for the first time and to join them as they celebrate with the first Koamikura matsuri since the earthquake.

## Japanese storytelling art in international schools

Kazuyo Burland, a former NHK newsreader, is now revitalizing the popularity of "kamishibai" (Japanese storytelling) by introducing it to international schools in Japan.

The origins of this ancient art of storytelling go back to the twelfth century, when it was used by Buddhist monks to tell tales with morals.

Kazuyo has always enjoyed introducing Japanese culture to people from around the world, and has performed at the American School in Japan, St. Mary's International School, and Tokyo International School. Her storytelling is appropriate for students from kindergarten up to high school age. For more information, please email [kb@mike.co.jp](mailto:kb@mike.co.jp).



**Kazuyo Burland performing her kamishibai show at ASIJ in 2011.** AMERICAN SCHOOL IN JAPAN

## New International School of Japan announces fifth annual summer program

New International School (NewIS) of Japan is happy to announce its 5th annual summer program for children from the ages of 4 to 15. It is a fun program with activities and presentations planned around themes. This year's theme will be "Time."

Children of any nationality are welcome to participate. The program is open to members of the wider community, as well as to current students. The classes will be held from 10am–2:30pm, Monday through Friday, with no school on July 15, which is a national holiday.

Students may join a two-week program from either July 9–23 or July 24–August 6, or a full month program from July 9–August 6. There are four classes a day, including one music class. The other three classes are: English only, Japanese only, Mandarin Chinese only, Italian only, two classes in English and one class in Japanese/Mandarin Chinese/Italian, two classes in Italian with one class in Japanese/Mandarin Chinese, or a program in Japanese to prepare for the Japanese high school entrance examinations.

There will be a maximum of 12 students for a

class with one teacher, or up to 20 students for a class with two teachers. An aftercare option to 4pm will be provided, as well as a school bus option to routable locations. The tuition will be ¥140,000 for the one-month program, or ¥75,000 for either of the two-week programs. A ¥20,000 registration fee is charged for new students only.

The school uniform will not be required, but parents will be expected to provide a box lunch and drinks for school.

For further information, please call 03-3980-1057 or see <http://newis.ed.jp/summer.html>.

## Open house at Katoh Elementary School



**Asahi and Kazusato, with fellow Katoh students, performing at a recent open house. KATOH ELEMENTARY**

On February 16 and 17, Katoh Elementary School held an open house. Students' artwork and writing were displayed in both English and Japanese.

Students in the Immersion Program performed songs, dances, plays, and presentations in English. First grade students sang songs and recited poems.

The second graders recited a choral reading of "Frog and Toad" under the theme of friendship. Third graders read poems and presented shape stories that they had written in maths class.

In the upper grades, the students presented in family groups and also performed individually. Fourth grade students gave oral reports in groups about "schools around the world." The students also sang a song called, "School is Cool" and did a square dance. The fifth grade presented booklets they made about their United States trip experiences and sang English songs they learned for the trip and their ASIJ exchange. The sixth grade presented individually their independent projects with an oral presentation and a project board.

All in all, the students did an outstanding job and many families were present during the successful open house weekend. — JOANNA POLIKAITIS

## Exhibition and open day at St. Alban's Nursery



**Artwork on display at St. Alban's Nursery open day last year. GILMA YAMAMOTO-COPELAND**

The children at St. Alban's Nursery have been getting crafty in preparation for their upcoming exhibition on Monday, April 29. The exhibition and open house runs from 10am until midday, and everyone is welcome to attend.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to see the progress that the children have achieved during the past year. Teachers will be on hand and happy to answer any questions that visitors may have about the school.

There will be lots of fun activities in the playground, such as face painting, water balloon play, jewellery making, cupcake decoration, and more, so please do bring your children along. — GILMA YAMAMOTO-COPELAND

## J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo 1965

On March 4, the International Olympic Committee delegation arrived in Tokyo for a facilities inspection. While the new Olympic bid is underway, adults wax nostalgic about the 1964 Tokyo Games, as well as the economic boom years of the 1960s.

Shogo Oketani's novel *J-Boys, Kazuo's World, Tokyo 1965* (Stone Bridge Press, 2011, translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa) tells the story of Kazuo, a nine-year-old living in Tokyo after the 1964 Japan Olympics.

Mr. Oketani began the novel when living in Northern California, where everyone eats tofu. "Most Americans think Japanese love tofu, and of course, we do eat a lot of tofu in Japan. But when I was a boy, I hated it," he recalled.

In California, Oketani came across an article about the passing of Bob Hayes, who won two gold medals in the Tokyo Olympics — the 100m where he broke the world record, even while running on a chewed-up lane in borrowed spikes, and the 4 x 100m relay, also setting a world record. The article jogged Oketani's memory, so he created the character of Kazuo, a boy who hated tofu and

wanted to be a good athlete like Bob Hayes. "Hayes was the Usain Bolt of his time," Oketani said.

In the 1960s, there were lots of American cartoons and dramas on Japanese TV every night, which Japanese kids like Oketani loved. He began to write scenes of 1960s Tokyo through the eyes of a boy who grew up influenced by American pop culture. The fifteen stories that became *J-Boys* describe several months in the life of nine-year-old Kazuo and his friends, looking into their future.

Mr. Oketani and Ms. Udagawa visited the American School in Japan, using *J-Boys* as a springboard to introduce aspects of traditional Japan, the influence of American culture, daily life in the 1960s, and social concerns such as migrant workers and bullying. Weighty topics (urban expansion, the effects of war) balance with lighter ones (rock and roll, school lunches) to create a book that interests readers while inciting curiosity about social issues.

More international school visits are planned for 2013. For more information or to arrange a school visit, see <http://www.j-boysbook.com>. — LEZA LOWITZ

## Learning about jobs at J's

Going to Kidzania for a field trip was a great way to start off "Occupations" month at J's International School. Teachers touched on options the children might have in life, however, more than anything, it was important to them that they instill in the children the confidence that they were capable of achieving anything they put their minds to. It was heart-warming to hear the children's dreams — so motivated by passion, imagination, and interest, and free of restrictions of what is socially acceptable as a "good job."

The children went crazy over the school's very own NASA space station and rocket, created by the teachers. Gravity was the only thing that kept them from really flying into space!

Other activities during Occupations month included a visit from the police department and their mascot Pipo-kun, where everyone was able to get on the shirobai motorcycle. There was also a mini field trip to the local fire station.

For frequent updates on J's International School, please "Like" their page on Facebook. — MANA ORTIZ



**J's International students exploring the teachers' NASA space station and rocket. MANA ORTIZ**

## Numeracy week at Horizon Japan International School

This year's Numeracy Week at Horizon Japan International School was filled with lots of learning, fun, and prizes. Every day, the students participated in the "Morning Challenge" games, answered the "Questions of the Day," drew cartoons about mathematics, practised for World Maths Day, and worked on their statistics projects, where they were asked to gather information about the school, and represent this information using a graph.

The joy peaked on the last day, March 6, which was not only Numeracy Day but also World Maths Day. The primary school students enjoyed several activities in various stations that challenged their knowledge of number facts, shapes, and estimation. The secondary school-aged children had a maths contest, where classes competed against each other, and the winners were grade 7. Overall, it was a fun week and everyone is looking forward to next year's Numeracy Week. — SELCUK BASAK



## Cezars Café launch



**Bread freshly baked by the parents at the German School, after a Cezars Kitchen class. CEZARS KITCHEN**

Cezars Kitchen has lots to celebrate at the moment, having just secured its first preschool “kyushoku” account, and also launching their new brand of coffee shop (Cezars Café) at a Japanese university.

While most international schools either provide school lunches prepared onsite and served in a canteen-style, or have bento-style lunches brought onsite, the “kyushoku” system, traditional in Japanese schools, means that the meal is prepared in bulk at an offsite, central kitchen or “kyushoku centre,” then finished and plated onsite.

The children play a part in the serving of the food, learning about nutrition along the way, and the whole process is considered to be an important part of the school curriculum. Monarch International Preschool in Yokohama, are now providing lunches to their students using Cezars Kitchen but in a traditional Japanese style.

Cezars Café is the first of Cezars coffee shops, launching next month. These coffee shops provide Hawaiian gourmet coffee drinks, but also smoothies, blended drinks, and Italian sodas. There will also be freshly baked cookies, pies, and muffins. These small coffee shops work well at universities, for schools with older students, and also on business premises.

Cezars Kitchen’s baked goods have long been popular with the international community, with several schools running baking classes onsite. The German School in Yokohama has run an especially successful program, with Cezars’ chefs running a monthly baking class for parents. Cezars’ Director of Food Service, Phillip Smith, said, “We encourage our chefs to work within the community, and one way they can do that is to respond to the community’s needs. If our community wants a baking class, we’ll give them a baking class!”

## Spirit Day at ICAN

International Christian Academy of Nagoya (ICAN) celebrated Dr. Suess and Spirit Day with pyjamas and reading. Students and teachers wore pyjamas all day as they went about their regular activities. Students had a great time as they chose the books that they liked to read just for fun, and others that they read for their academic classes.

ICAN has monthly Spirit Days, each with a different theme. There has been a Senior Citizens Day, monochromatic Day, Crazy clothes day, twin day and, many more.

ICAN strives to make learning fun yet also challenging, for all students. Spirit Days are just one of those ways. The school would like to invite everyone to its annual spring festival to be held on April 13 from 11am–2pm. There will be game booths, international food stalls, musical groups, traditional Japanese drums, and many other fun things to do. Please call the office for more information about the festival or any of the other activities going on at ICAN.

The school is open for prospective parents to see all of the creative and challenging things going on, by appointment, on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 9–11:30am. The office number is 0561-62-4196, and is available from 8am–4pm Monday through Friday. — CHERI DOOD



**Fifth and sixth grade students snuggled up with friends as they read together. CHERI DOOD**

## Reacting to the Past: a new pedagogy to Japan

“Reacting to the Past” (RTTP) is an exciting educational approach that gets students engaged in learning in a way that allows them to develop invaluable critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork skills. The pedagogy has been in action for more than a decade now across the United States, but for the first time it is coming to Japan.

On May 11–12, there will be a two-day workshop for teachers of all subjects with students ages 12 and up. Three RTTP experts will come from the United States to lead participants through one of four RTTP “games.”

The workshop will be held at Sophia University in Tokyo where some classes are already using the approach. JALT members pay ¥2,800, non-members pay ¥4500. Registration closes April 27. Registration URL: <http://peatix.com/event/10350>. — JIM MCKINLEY

## EF September intake for university transition program in America

Along with cherry blossom viewing parties everywhere, this season is the beginning of a new year for schools and offices in Japan, and everyone is full of new goals and dreams.

For those hoping to go on to higher education overseas, Education First’s (EF) University Transition Program provides a good opportunity to travel abroad. The program starts in September, so students have plenty of time to prepare for their departure.

This program is designed for high school graduates who want to earn a bachelor’s degree from an accredited American university. During the program the students will improve their academic English skills; and acquire crucial academic, study, and research skills; as well as complete academic coursework towards their program of study.

During this program, one not only prepares for university study, but can also earn up to 21 university credits, which can be transferred to a bachelor’s degree program of their choice. This program can be completed in two or three terms depending on the student’s English and academic abilities. Once the program is completed, the student is on track to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in their chosen field in just over three years.

In order to gain admittance to a bachelor’s degree program, applicants must meet minimum entry requirements. For more information on the course, please email [kozue.mitsu@ef.com](mailto:kozue.mitsu@ef.com) or call 03-5774-6210.

For general information on EF University Preparation Abroad, check out <http://www.efjapan.co.jp/university>. — WAKANA CATCHPOLE

## Brand new kindergarten furniture sets for sale

An international school in Japan has brand new kindergarten furniture for sale, for ¥15,000 per set of four chairs and a table. The material is plastic, suitable for young children, and the available colours are green and blue. Please phone 03-5875-5435 or 080-3505-2247.





# What are YOUR children doing this summer?!



Evergreen Outdoor Center's five-day and 12-day residential summer camps in the Japan Alps are the perfect escape back to nature; full of fun and outdoor learning for children.

Based at scenic and pristine Lake Aokiko in Nagano prefecture, campers stay in lakeside cabins surrounded by lush green forests, so they will really feel like they are in nature. By the end of the camp, our counsellors can almost always see a unique change occur in the campers. For one thing, they begin to look around more and use all their senses to a degree that they would not regularly do in the urban environment. Campers can feel the wind and water on their faces, listen to animal sounds in the woods, and take in beautiful vistas while breathing fresh mountain air.

Hiking into the mountains, getting out on the lake and rivers, and exploring the forests come easily to children, and they can get their feet wet (literally) in many fun and exciting outdoor sports. Evergreen's professional guides and instructors use outdoor people-powered sports like canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing, canyoning, and rafting not in a competitive way, but with the objective to instill communication, friendly teamwork, support from new and old friends, and, of course, to introduce that element of adventure that children lean toward naturally. Five-day campers will sleep in tents on their overnight camping trip away from our Lake Aokiko base camp, while 12-day campers will travel to Togakushi Village for a two-day camp excursion in an area famous for NINJA and steeped in mystery, deep in the mountains of Nagano.

Many of Evergreen's summer tours are family oriented, so parents, siblings, grandparents, and even family dogs are more than welcome to meet with campers on weekends and let them show you just what they have learned and accomplished. Evergreen's combo day tours are an affordable and fun option that includes two activities per day as well as a healthy lunch from our organic "Roots Café." And remember: you don't have to "rough it" if you don't want to because Hakuba has plenty of quality accommodations and hot springs to allow you a weekend getaway with the whole family.

Children between the ages of 8 and 16 are more than welcome to join our summer camps. Younger and older children are separated for some activities to make it fun for everyone.

For more information, please have a look at our website at <http://www.evergreen-hakuba.com> for dates and summer camp registration forms.

The whole Evergreen Summer Camp Crew and I are looking forward to meeting you and your children this year at the Japan Alps International Summer Camp!

See you in the Alps!

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