

# JAPAN SCHOOL NEWS

Caroline Pover, Inc.

Evergreen Outdoor Center

November 2012, #30

## Chateau School at the Space Center



**Diplomat Masaichi Maehara trying on an astronaut outfit.** SHIORI ANDO

One of the unique events at The Chateau School is its monthly field trip based on the country being studied that month; the first month of the fall term it is the United States of America. Diplomats learned about Native American culture, the "wild, wild west," American science, the bald eagle, bison, recycling, Johnny Appleseed, the musical "Cats," 50 states, Hawaiian hula, and baking corn bread.

The diplomats enjoyed their first field trip

to the JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) Space Center in Tsukuba. The Lollipop and Chocolat class (aged 1–3 years) took their first school trip on an early morning express train and got their first experience exploring life as an astronaut, including trying the staffed manoeuvring unit.

The JAXA agent said that this was the youngest field trip group they had ever welcomed at the Space Center. — RINA BOVRISSE

## New International School orientation & tour dates

New International School's (NewIS) November orientations and tours will be held on the 8th (in Japanese) and the 21st (in English). Sessions are for two hours, starting at 9:15am. Visitors are also welcome by individual appointment.

In addition, NewIS will host a seminar on

"Developing Academic Proficiency in Japanese: The Japanese Program at NewIS and Its Wider Implications" on November 28. Members of the general public are welcome.

Interested parties should call 03-3980-1057 to confirm attendance for orientations or the seminar.

## New term at Education First language centres

A new academic year has started, and Education First (EF) is offering courses in languages such as Spanish, Chinese, German, French, and Italian, as well as English, at schools throughout the world.

EF Malaga in Spain, where students enjoy an annual 320 days of sun, received an average 96% recommendation rate during the past three years. The first week of term was filled with fun activities that included a boat trip, bowling, beach sports, and dining on tapas.

During August, the Barcelona, Madrid, and Malaga centres were inspected by EAQUALS (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality in Language Services), and received excellent feedback, resulting in accreditation for all of EF's schools in Spain. Other schools with EAQUALS accreditation are Cambridge, Munich, Paris, Nice, Malta, and Cape Town. All student certificates will now include the EAQUALS stamp of approval. For more information about EAQUALS, please see <http://www.eaquals.org>.

New students are also welcome at EF language centres in the January term. See <http://www.ef.com> for details. — WAKANA CATCHPOLE

## New campus for Aoba

After the initial delays in construction, Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) finally opened its new campus in Hikarigaoka, Nerima-ku, amid much excitement from staff and students alike.

As the buses pulled into the new parking lot you could see a look of wonder and discovery on students' faces as they got off the bus, eager to explore the new campus and see their new classrooms.

Staff were very happy to see the students run around the big, new playground and enjoy the large space. It was agreed that the green areas of Hikarigaoka make an amazing place for a school.

Staff are looking forward to becoming a part of the Hikarigaoka community, and to a wonderful year ahead. — ROYCE JACOBS



**A-JIS students arrive at the new campus.** A-JIS



## Making animal families with J's International School at Arisugawa Park



**Ana, Shuntaro, Keiko, Irene, Theo, Camilla, and Erik making a frog family.** MANA ORTIZ

Children and teachers had been counting the days on the calendar, waiting for September 28 to arrive. This was not just any other day at J's International School; it was a day when students could eat lunch and play games outside with their classmates and teachers all afternoon, but best of all, their mummies and daddies were going to be there.

For some of the children this was the first time their parents joined them in their school setting, which made a few of them a little curious! "Me mama coming?" Erik (2) said almost every day, pointing at the picnic sign in the classroom calendar, as if he were trying to figure out why his "mama" was coming to his school.

When the day came, the weather was questionable and the school staff weren't sure

they'd be able to go ahead with the outdoor activities. However, the light rain from the morning did not dampen the spirits of the students who were geared up and ready to go. With hopes of clear skies, the classes made their way to Arisugawa Park, with lunch in their backpacks. At the park they were met by mums and dads and, after a quick set-up and a big "itadakimasu," the fun began.

The actual time spent on eating lunch was short because there were a lot of activities on the agenda. One highlight was the "Find Your Animal Family" game, where the objective is to find others who are the same secret animal as yourself, with the only modes of communication being body movements and sounds. Before the game even started you could hear random howling, hooting, and cock-

a-doodle-doo-ing from the crowd. It must have looked quite bizarre for anyone watching this group of men, women, and children bobbing, slithering, and crawling around as they made strange animal sounds, but the J's community was having too much fun to notice the curious looks on the faces of bystanders and passersby.

A "best animal family" contest was held, along with relay races, balloon games, green-light-red-light, "Simon says," and some group singing. The afternoon flew by quickly and soon it was time to go home. Everyone agreed that it was a great day! A small portion of the fun had been captured in the photos taken, which the J's parents can view by logging into the school blog. — MANA ORTIZ

## Halloween bazaar at Shizuoka's Katoh Gakuen



**Emi, Lyra, and Natsumi getting into the Halloween spirit at the bazaar.** TAKETOSHI ISHIKAWA

On a recent beautiful fall weekend, Katoh Gakuen Gyoshu Junior and Senior High School opened its doors for its annual Fall Bazaar, which is entirely organized by students and parents.

Along with Japanese and international food stalls there were a number of events featured that day including entertainment corners for children, arts and crafts centres, theatre groups performing original skits, and a huge array of products, handicrafts, and gift items for sale.

The students also organized several community service projects and collected donations for local and national organizations. Halloween was a popular theme in the bazaar and many of the students and teachers decorated themselves with hats, face painting, and colourful Halloween accessories. It was a great day of fun, celebration, and teamwork.

Katoh Gakuen's English immersion program recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. It was the first English immersion program in Japan. — MIKE BOSTWICK

## Enoshima beach clean-up and study for TIS



**Grade 6 students ponder our reliance on everyday, disposable plastic items.** PAUL FRADALE

On November 7 the Middle Years Programme (MYP) students at Tokyo International School will be participating in a beach clean-up and data-gathering session near Enoshima, Kanagawa Prefecture. The school has entered into a partnership with the international not-for-profit organization Tangaroa Blue Foundation.

In 2004, Richard and Heidi Taylor set up the foundation to raise awareness of marine conservation initiatives and environmental concerns, and to participate in those initiatives where possible.

One of their largest programs is the "South West Marine Debris Project," which gathers debris from beaches around the world, with a special emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region.

Groups are organized to clean a particular beach, but the effort is much more than a simple one-time cleaning session. A commitment is

made to return to the same beach each year and gather debris again; the debris is sorted, classified, and weighed, with the data being sent to the foundation to use. The foundation traces the most commonly found items back to their source and then works with government agencies and industry leaders to enact design or usage modifications, resulting in less debris being released into the environment.

In addition to submitting the data to the foundation, the grade 6–8 students will be using the data themselves in science and mathematics units at school. The grade 6 students will be looking at ocean currents and debris as part of their unit on navigation. The grade 7 students will be using the debris classification as a formative learning experience, creating and using dichotomous keys to sort the debris on the beach while weighing and recording the resulting data. The grade 8 students will analyze the data using basic statistical measurements, express the data using notational formatting, and communicate the data through graphs. They will then draw connections between debris sources such as point of manufacture and usage, and destinations, drawing upon their experiences from their Cambodia residential trip, and looking at the Asia-Pacific region as a unified system. — PAUL FRADALE

## Sports and Halloween activities at Yokohama's Treehouse Montessori

October was an exciting month for the children at Treehouse Montessori School in Yokohama. Not only did they learn about the change of season from summer to autumn, but October brings sports to schools in Japan. So, it was timely for Treehouse to welcome a new PE teacher who is giving weekly lessons, teaching lots of stretching movements and some gymnastic routines — all necessary for the children's balanced physical and mental growth. The new PE teacher will be working throughout the year to prepare the children for the Sports Day that is planned for next spring.

But for all the children at Treehouse, the most exciting thing about October is the annual Halloween Party. The children dressed up in their favourite costumes and got excited about the professional photo shoot in the studio set up in the school. The parents donated yummy food, and the children had made their very own treat bags, which they enjoyed filling with sweets as they went trick-or-treating in the neighbourhood.

In other news for Treehouse: last month the school joined Facebook. Comments on Treehouse Montessori School Yokohama's Facebook page are very welcome. — JENNY VYVIAL

## Saint Maur International School's Adult Enrichment Program



**Saint Maur's recent shodo class for adults.** SAINT MAUR

The Saint Maur Adult Enrichment Program, founded in 1992 by Miss Jeanette Thomas, Saint Maur Head of School, consists of various classes, tours, and excursions offered on a volunteer basis by parents who have children enrolled at Saint Maur, as well as by volunteers from the community outside Saint Maur. The program provides opportunities for parents to develop new friendships and a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural and religious differences.

The shared experiences provided by the program help participants to recognize the role they play, as contributing members of a rapidly growing global community, while clearly demonstrating to the children that education should always remain an important life-long pursuit.

Parents who have children enrolled at Saint Maur are encouraged to freely join any of the many activities offered each year. Parents whose children do not attend Saint Maur, may participate in one-time-only classes, provided that there is space available after the sign-up deadline; however, if they wish to participate in classes on a regular/weekly basis (as opposed to on the "one-time-only" space available basis), they are welcomed to do so, provided that they are willing to reciprocate by contributing to our Adult Enrichment Program by offering an activity on a volunteer basis. Arrangements can be made by contacting the Adult Enrichment Program Director.

Adult Enrichment classes on offer this year range from computers and cooking to crafts and conversation (French, Spanish, English, Thai, and Japanese), as well as a Book Club, seminars on nutrition and faith, training and certification in first-aid, and classes introducing aspects of Japanese culture, such as aikido, Ikebana, shodo, sumi-e, origami, washi doll-making, kimono-dressing, and tea ceremony. Other classes in-

clude music, fitness, volleyball, knitting, and porcelain painting, not to mention various half-day tours and excursions, which are offered throughout the year.

There is no charge to participate in any of the Adult Enrichment classes; however, where applicable, a small fee may be charged to cover the cost of materials, such as flowers for Ikebana classes, paper for origami/craft classes, ingredients for cooking classes, and so on.

In addition to the Adult Enrichment Program, many parents and community members participate in the 'Toddlers' Group, a venue for parents to bring their infants and under-school-age children to play together once a week on campus. The 'Toddlers' Group, run by Saint Maur parents who volunteer to coordinate the program, offers an opportunity for parents to meet and discuss common concerns in a relaxing, friendly environment. The only requirement for parents who do not have children enrolled at Saint Maur is that they must be able to communicate fluently in a language other than Japanese, such as English or French. English or French are the main languages of communication between parents participating in the 'Toddlers' Group.

For more information about Saint Maur's Adult Enrichment Program please email [pengstrom@stmaur.ac.jp](mailto:pengstrom@stmaur.ac.jp) or telephone the school on 045-641-5751. — PHYLLIS ENGSTROM



# Shaping tomorrow's leaders through outdoor education in the Northern Alps

At Evergreen the great outdoors is the classroom, life experiences are the lessons, and life-long outdoor enthusiasts are the instructors. This international team of outdoor professionals' focus on individual participation, teamwork, and communication outside the classroom allows for children to open their minds to new concepts while at the same time discover more about themselves and their peers in a fun and energetic environment. Over the past decade, the Evergreen Outdoor Center has created and conducted educational programs for domestic and international school groups year-round, and run adventure-based outdoor summer camps annually.

Come winter, the instructors at Nagano's largest international snow sports school are passionate about teaching youth how to ski and snowboard. Evergreen run children's ski camps weekly from December through April, as well as season-long race and freestyle camps each weekend aimed at Kanto's international youth with a desire to advance to a competitive level. School groups and parents can rest assured that the internationally licensed instructors at Evergreen will conduct lessons in a safe, fun, and results-oriented manner.

It is Director David Enright's aim to enhance personal, social, and spiritual development, as well as a deeper relationship with nature through

the outdoor youth programs that he and his team provide. "I grew up on the west coast of Canada, camping, canoeing, climbing, cycling, and skiing with family and friends every chance I had, and found that the lessons learned during those

outdoor excursions expanded on concepts taught in the classroom," says Enright. "These experiences have shaped who I am today and have provided me with the leadership skills and self-confidence to overcome adversity in real-life situations."



Students from Tokyo International School admiring the view toward Lakes Aokiko and Nakatsunako. EVERGREEN

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