

AJET

CONNECT

News & Events, Arts & Culture, Lifestyle, Community

02.2015

IT'S SNOWTIME – TAKE TWO

P.54



PLUS

JAPAN AIRPORT GUIDE

P.38

DIY WINTER FACE MASKS

P.22

TASTES OF HOME

P.40



The Japanese Lifestyle & Culture
Magazine Written by the International
Community in Japan

MAKE A DIFFERENCE. USE YOUR SKILLS.

SERVE YOUR FELLOW JETS.

2015-2016 AJET NATIONAL COUNCIL.



DEADLINES

ELECTED POSITIONS:

Platforms due by Saturday, February 14th.

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

Applications due by Monday, March 16th.



Elected Positions

Contact the current holder of the position you want to run for about your intent. Then submit a platform statement in English and Japanese to exec@ajet.net by February 14th, 2015.

Appointed (non-elected) Positions

Contact the current holder of the position you want to apply for about your intent. Then submit your materials to election@ajet.net by March 16th, 2015.

See the [elections page](#) on AJET.net for full details about running for office, what to expect as a National Council member and sample platform statements in English and Japanese.

WHAT ARE ELECTED POSITIONS?

Elected positions include the 3 members of AJET's Executive Council and 11 Block Representatives. Here's a quick outline of their duties:

Chair

Chief representative voice of AJET

Vice Chair

Ensures an efficient executive body

Treasurer

Supervises the AJET budget

Block Representatives

Connects JETs to social and professional opportunities. Also represents their local community on a national level.

You can find more information [here](#).

WHAT ARE APPOINTED POSITIONS?

Appointed positions apply directly for specific jobs within AJET. These jobs include managing AJET.net, organization our translations, and running Connect magazine. Here's a quick outline:

Translation and Interpretation Coordinator

Oversees a variety of translation projects throughout the year

Online Publications Editor

Manages, edits, and coordinates contributions to Connect Magazine

Head of Visual Media

Designs the layout of AJET Connect, signs, posters, business cards, etc.

Website Coordinator

Manages AJET.net and all AJET emails

CIR Representative

Ensures that CIRs have a voice in AJET

You can find more information [here](#).

ELECTION TIMELINE

- 02/14 Platform submission deadline
- 02/15 Campaigns begin
- 02/16 Online voting begins at 8:00 JST
- 03/02 Voting ends at 23:59 JST
- 03/05 Results announced
- 03/16 Appointed positions application deadline
- 03/21 Appointed positions results announced

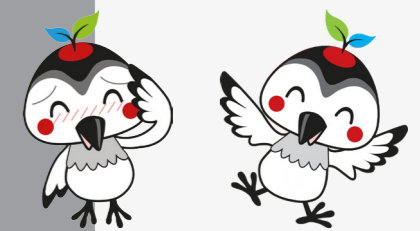


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HEAD EDITOR

Steven Thompson

GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT

Patrick Finn

SECTION EDITORS

Nathan Berne
Hiroshi Fukushima
Erica Grainger
Simon Griffin
Erika Klein
Lacey Lee
Tom Legge
Colin O'Neill
Nick Powers-Maher
Verity Townsend

ASSISTANT DESIGNERS

Sterling Diesel
Hannah Killoh

CORPORATE ADVERTISING

Patrick Loyer

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Michelle Castro

COPYEDITING

Ola Weber

CONTRIBUTORS

Sofara Aiono
Alexandra Brueckner
Mary Cagle
Saira Chambers
Chris Chong
Miles Davies
Mike DeLue
Tim Franklin
Sean Hofman
Marika Jackson
Jackie Marzan
Courtney Nikolay
Chris Smith

Jaclyn Thompson
Laurel Williams
Sabrina Zirakzadeh

COVER PHOTO

Josh Del Pino

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS

Jess Bertubin
Keilani Conger
Kadokawa
Natural Eight
Simon Griffin
Lauren Jeffers
Jessica Louise
MBS
Rachel Peterson
Nick Powers
Sony Music
Alicia Sparnon
Trevor Swann
Shiori Tsuda
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This edition, and all past editions of AJET Connect, can be found online [here](#). Read Connect online and follow us on [ISSUU](#).

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The first part in a new ongoing series, we take a look at the 'modern girl' fashion movement, popular in 1920s and 30s Japan.



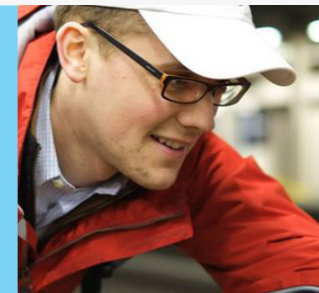
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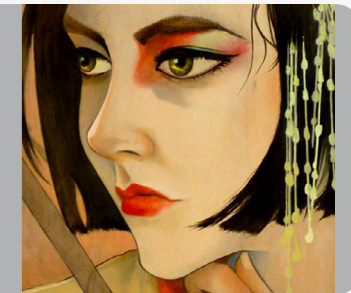
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Our 4 Spotlights this month include a Mexican chef, a make-up photographer, an artist, and a newborn baby.



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Steven Thompson
Head Editor
4th-year Fukushima ALT



LETTER FROM THE AJET CHAIR

Sandy Cheng
National AJET Chair
4th-year Kobe ALT

CLICK ME TO SEND YOUR THOUGHTS ON ANY ARTICLE IN CONNECT!

CONNECT IS LOOKING FOR A NEW HEAD EDITOR. It's sad, but true. My time as captain of the Goodship Connect is drawing to a close in May, and I'll need to start grooming a worthy successor. It's no exaggeration for me to say that my work with this magazine has been one of the most important things I've done, from my humble beginnings as a contributor ([May 2012 issue](#), if you're curious), to Events section editor, to here. Connect is a lot of work each month, but believe me when I say it's a labor of love to work with such great stories and such an amazing team.

Being head editor of Connect means working with talented writers, photographers, section editors, designers, artists, and more to make a community magazine that's as interesting and informative as it is entertaining and beautiful. The biggest thing I learned in these two years is how to rely on the strength of others to accomplish more than I ever could alone. Everyone's ideas, skills, and creativity make a monumental task manageable and even fun. If this all sounds like something you'd be interested in doing, I absolutely encourage you to [email me](#) and ask some questions about the job.

As the next Online Publications Editor (Connect Head Editor's official, fancier title), you'll work as part of National AJET to not only create Connect each month, but to improve things for all members of the AJET community (past, present, and future JETs). The work can be difficult, the hours are long, and sometimes it can be a thankless job, but making a small difference in the lives of others (even if that's just giving people a chance to tell their Japan stories in a digital magazine) is worth it. Don't you think?

EVER HEARD THIS STORY? Once upon a time, a Mie JET described a spirit animal for each year of JET life. 1st-year JETs received the **Rabbit**, often seen everywhere, bright eyed, and high spirited. 2nd-year JETs represent the bold **Tanuki**: cunning, wary of youth, and suspicious of their new-found sempai status. 3rd-year JETs are **Pandas**, comfortable, astute, and a little quieter about their choices. 4th-year JETs take on the mantle of the **Owl**, wise, watchful, reflective beings, and excellent allies. Finally, the 5th-year JETs stand tall as **Unicorns**, proud, rarely seen enigmas of magic rainbows. What animal are you? Who will you be next year? Or will you just go back to being human? Wherever your choices lead you, when you're a JET, you're a JET all the way! AJET and JETAA are here to support you, both as a present, and an alumni JET.

For all your soon-to-be-humans out there, AJET is currently collaborating with DISCO International to set up a JET-exclusive Career Forum! Thinking about staying on in Japan? This is an excellent opportunity to learn what it takes, and meet some of the business who want to meet you! Right now, assisting departing JETs with their life beyond their JET position is one of our top focus areas, so stay in touch with us for more upcoming information on this and more exciting events in the near future!

Speaking of exciting, if you're re-contracting, **why not consider running for National AJET?** Step up into a leadership role that can see you enacting changes that make a real difference for JETs! This is a fantastic opportunity to gain experience and develop amazing leadership skills, while making connections with people in Japan and internationally! If you've got guts, determination, willpower, tenacity, and a great work ethic, this challenge is for you! The election process is now underway, so head on over to [ajet.net](#) and apply now!

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COMMENTS

COVER SUBMISSIONS



Send your photos for next month's cover to connect.editor@ajet.net. Photos must be submitted by the 25th of the month and include your name, prefecture, and title (if applicable). Photos must belong to you, and be of high resolution (1280x720, 300dpi, or higher).

Catrina Caira
Hokkaido



Josh Del Pino
Shimane



Wendy Ng
Okinawa



Catrina Caira
Hokkaido



Catrina Caira
Hokkaido



Wendy Ng
Okinawa



NEWS & EVENTS

P.10 Events Calendar



P.15 In the News



ERIKA KLEIN connect.news@ajet.net

February means...a post-winter holidays excuse to eat all of the chocolate! Not that I actually need such an excuse, but I'll take it. Oh, and I suppose it's also a good opportunity to express your appreciation for your friends and loved ones in your life, and perhaps to reflect on your progress thus far on your New Year's resolutions. But mostly...dark chocolate. Enjoy!



LACEY LEE connect.events@ajet.net

Good February to you all! I hope all readers enjoyed a great new year and made a few resolutions worth sticking to. As for me, I experienced my first snow in Japan, which was very exciting and added to a fantastic week of travel. I saw some great sights, went temple-hopping, and ate tons of food! And I plan to do even more... Here's to a great year ahead!

P.16 Snow Sculptures



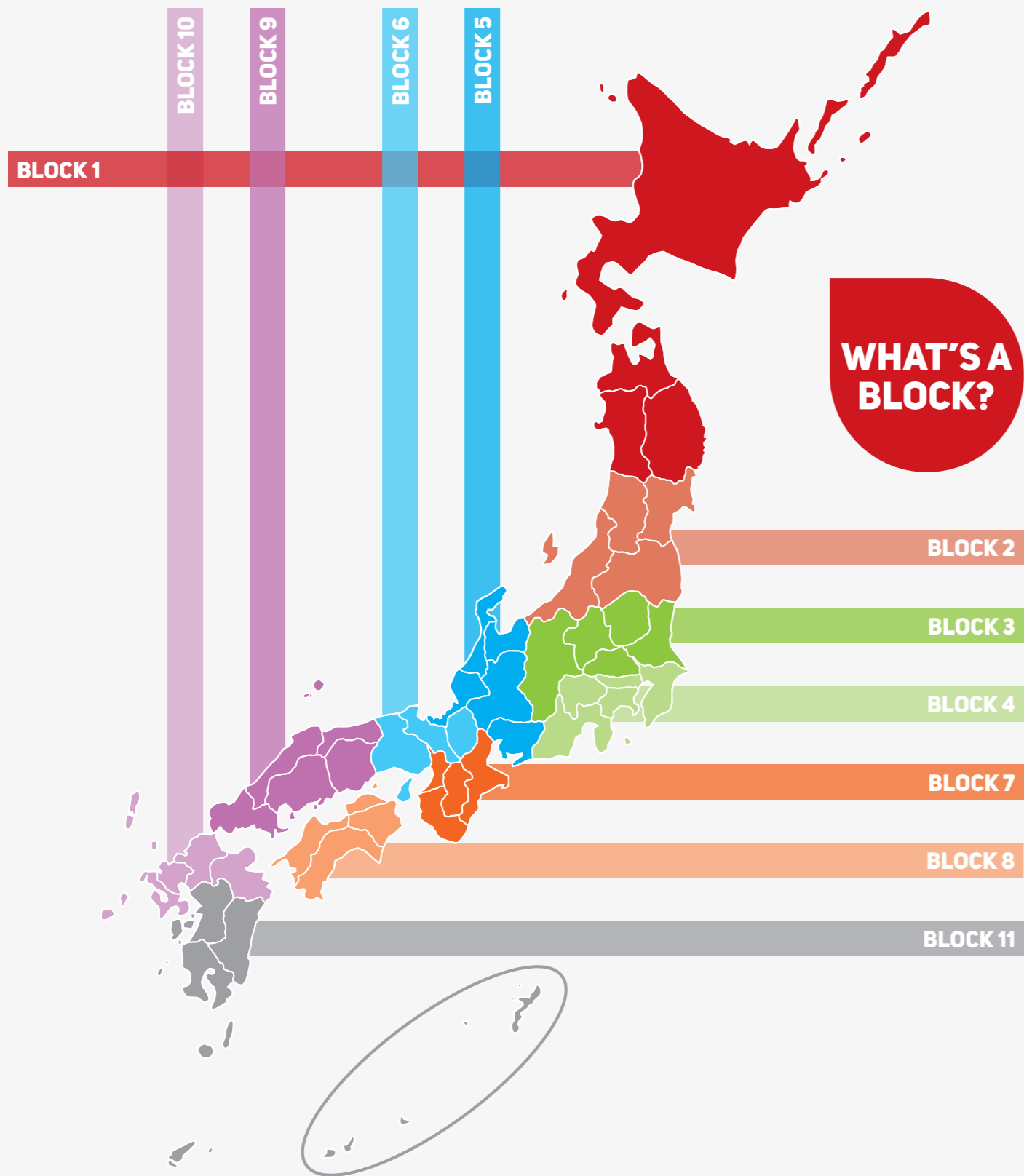


EVENTS CALENDAR

FEBRUARY - MARCH

Hello everyone! I hope you enjoyed a fantastic New Year, maybe even attend a couple of special year-end, year-start events. There's more where that came from. Due to the January issue having no events calendar, we're featuring events from mid-February as well. It's short notice, but check them out if you're in the area! May you resolve to attend several fantastic events this year!

Got an event of your own you'd like added to the calendar? Send us an email, or visit the [AJET website](#).



SANRIKU RAILWAY "KOTATSU TRAIN" 2014-2015

Kuji, Iwate
12/6/14-3/29/2015 - [Website](#)

BIG TREE PAGEANT FESTA IN KORIYAMA 2014-2015

Koriyama, Fukushima
11/21/14-2/14/15 - [Website](#)

TSURUOKA WINTER FESTIVAL LIGHT-UP 2015

Tsuruoka, Yamagata
12/12/14-2/27/15 - [Website](#)

ZAO ONSEN ICE MONSTER LIGHT-UP 2015

Yamagata, Yamagata
12/27/14-2/28/15 - [Website](#)



FURANO KAN KAN MURA (SNOW NIGHT FANTASY)

Furano, Hokkaido
12/23/14-3/10/15 - [Website](#)

GARINKO-GO II DRIFT ICE EXPERIENCE 2015

Mombetsu, Hokkaido
1/20-3/31 - [Website](#)

40TH SOUNKYO HOT SPRINGS ICE FALL FESTIVAL

Kamikawa, Hokkaido
1/24-3/29 - [Website](#)

SNOW AND FIRE FESTIVAL 2015

Mishima, Fukushima
2/14 - [Website](#)

65TH MINAMIUONUMA SNOW FESTIVAL

Minamiuonuma, Niigata
2/14-15 - [Website](#)

2ND SENDAI WINE FEST

Sendai, Miyagi
2/22 - [Website](#)

FUKURODA FALLS WINTER ILLUMINATION 2015

Kuji-gun, Ibaraki
11/1/14-2/15/15 - [Website](#)

SAITAMA-SHINTOSHIN STATION ILLUMINATION

Omiya-ku, Saitama
11/8/14-2/15/2015 - [Website](#)

NAMAHAGE SEDO FESTIVAL 2015

Oga, Akita
2/13-15 - [Website](#)

YOKOTE SNOW FESTIVAL (KAMAKURA, BONDEN) 2015

Yokote, Akita
2/14-16 - [Website](#)

HACHINOHE ENBURI 2015

Hachinohe, Aomori
2/17-20 - [Website](#)



NIIGATA SAKENOJIN

Chuo-ku, Niigata
3/14-15 - [Website](#)

JIGOKUDANI YAEN-KOEN "SNOW MONKEY MOUNTAIN" (WINTER SEASON)

Shimotakai, Nagano
11/14-3/15 - [Website](#)

WATARASE KEIKOKU RAILWAY ILLUMINATION 2014-2015

Midori, Gunma
12/7/14-2/28/15 - [Website](#)

119TH MITO PLUM FESTIVAL 2015

Mito, Ibaraki
2/20-3/31 - [Website](#)

HOT SPRING CAPYBARAS 2014-2015

Ito, Shizuoka
11/22/14-4/5/15 - [Website](#)

STRAWBERRY PICKING IN EMA

Izunokuni, Shizuoka
12/15/14-5/6/15 - [Website](#)

LAKE KAWAGUCHIKO WINTER FIREWORKS 2015

Minamitsuru-gun, Yamanashi
1/17-2/23 - [Website](#)

HYAKUDAN HINAMATSURI 2015

Meguro-ku, Tokyo
1/23-3/8 - [Website](#)



CHICHIBU WHISKY MATSURI 2015

Chichibu, Saitama
2/22 - [Website](#)

JAPAN AMUSEMENT EXPO 2015

Mihama-ku, Chiba
2/13-14 (Public Day is 2/14) - [Website](#)

YOKOHAMA CHINATOWN 2015 LUNAR NEW YEAR

Yokohama, Kanagawa
2/19-3/5 - [Website](#)

KATSUURA GRANDE HINAMATSURI 2015

Katsuura, Chiba
2/20-3/3 - [Website](#)

TOKYO MARATHON 2015

Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo
2/22 - [Website](#)

GERO WINTER ONSEN FIREWORKS STORY 2015

Gero, Gifu
1/10-3/28 - [Website](#)

SETO CITY HINA DOLLS TOUR 2015

Seto, Aichi
1/31-3/8 - [Website](#)

SHINHOTAKA ONSEN NAKAO KAMAKURA FESTIVAL 2015

Takayama, Gifu
2/1-15 - [Website](#)

GODAIRIKISON NIN-O CEREMONY

Fushimi-ku, Kyoto
2/23 - [Website](#)

BAIKA-SAI PLUM FESTIVAL

Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto
2/25 - [Website](#)

NAGASHI-BINA

Sakyo-ku, Kyoto
3/3 - [Website](#)



LOCO MOCO SUNSET ENDLESS SUMMER 2015

Chuo-ku, Tokyo
2/28 - [Website](#)

AKITA SAKE TASTING

Minato-ku, Tokyo
3/5 - [Website](#)

FOODPIA KANAZAWA 2015

Kanazawa, Ishikawa
2/1-3/15 - [Website](#)

15TH NYUZEN RAMEN MATSURI 2015

Nyuzen, Toyama
2/21-22 - [Website](#)

5TH OKUNOTO B-GRADE GOURMET CHAMPIONSHIP

Suzu, Ishikawa
2/22 - [Website](#)



KYOTO HIGASHIYAMA HANA TOURO (LIGHTING UP) 2015

Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto
3/6-15 - [Website](#)



NANRAKUEN PLUM FESTIVAL 2015

Uwajima, Ehime
1/31-3/1 - [Website](#)

KOCHI MANGA FESTIVAL 2015

Kochi, Kochi
2/21-22 - [Website](#)



MATSUE HORIKAWA TOUR "KOTATSU SHIP"

Matsue, Shimane
11/10/14-4/10/15 - [Website](#)



7TH YAO ROBOT FAIR 2015

Yao, Osaka
2/11 - [Website](#)

OSAKA AUTO MESSE 2015

Suminoe-ku, Osaka
2/13-15 - [Website](#)

KAGOSHIMA SHOCHU MATSURI

Kita-ku, Osaka
2/23 - [Website](#)

27TH BIG HINAMATSURI 2015

Katsura, Tokushima
2/22-4/5 - [Website](#)

TOSA NO OKYAKU 2015

Kochi, Kochi
3/7-15 - [Website](#)

SHUNIE (OMIZUTORI)

Nara, Nara
3/1-4 - [Website](#)

AWASHIMA SHRINE HINA NAGASHI

Wakayama, Wakayama
3/3 - [Website](#)

HATSUUMA TAISAI (FIRST COLT FESTIVAL)

Matsusaka, Mie
3/6-8 - [Website](#)



SHIMANE AQUARIUM WINTER-ONLY PENGUIN PARADE

Hamada, Shimane
12/6/14-3/31/15 - [Website](#)

MATSUE OBOUSAN CAFE

Matsue, Shimane
2/13, 3/13 - [Website](#)

BICCHU-URA-DAIKO (TAIKO DRUM) 2015

Soja, Okayama
2/15 - [Website](#)

SAIDAJI EYOU (HADAKA MATSURI) 2015

Higashi-ku, Okayama
2/21 - [Website](#)

HINASE OYSTER FESTIVAL 2015

Bizen, Okayama
2/22 - [Website](#)

NATURAL MARKET IN SHIMONOSEKI VOL. 24

Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi
3/1 - [Website](#)



**TAKEHIKO INOUE
INTERPRETS GAUDÍ'S
UNIVERSE**

Nagasaki, Nagasaki
12/20/14-3/8/15 - [Website](#)

USUKI DOLL TOUR 2015

Usuki, Oita
2/5-3/22 - [Website](#)

**UNZEN HOTSPRING FLOWER
LIGHT-UP**

Unzen, Nagasaki
2/7-28 - [Website](#)

**KINGDOM OF FLOWERS AND
LIGHT TULIP FESTIVAL 2015**

Sasebo, Nagasaki
2/14 - [Website](#)

**21ST GOTO CAMELLIA
FESTIVAL**

Goto, Nagasaki
2/14-3/1 - [Website](#)

**NAGASAKI LANTERN
FESTIVAL 2015**

Nagasaki, Nagasaki
2/19-3/5 - [Website](#)

**HIToyoshi KUMA HINA DOLL
2015**

Hitoyoshi, Kumamoto
2/1-3/22 - [Website](#)

**KUMAMOTO CASTLE SPRING
FESTIVAL 2015**

Chuo-ku, Kumamoto
2/1-4/5 - [Website](#)

**NAHA CURRY GRAND PRIX
2015**

Naha, Okinawa
2/20-23 - [Website](#)



**UMESHU FESTIVAL 2015 IN
FUKUOKA**

Dazaifu, Fukuoka
2/20-22 - [Website](#)

**THE FUJIWARA OPERA,
MADAME BUTTERFLY AT
MIYAZAKI MUNICIPAL
CULTURAL HALL 2015**

Miyazaki, Miyazaki
3/6 - [Website](#)

**15TH ANNUAL TAMAYURA
ONSEN KAGURA MATSURI**

Miyazaki, Miyazaki
3/6-21 - [Website](#)



**STRANGE MAZE: TRICK ART
EXHIBITION**

Tomigusuku, Okinawa
12/5/14-2/15/15 - [Website](#)



IN THE NEWS

NOVEMBER - JANUARY

NOV. 16

In spite of PM Abe's efforts for economic growth, Japan's economy enters a recession in the 3rd quarter ([Source](#))

DEC. 14

PM Abe wins snap election, allowing him to likely remain in office for up to four more years. However, the record low voter turnout—presumably due to lack of widespread public support of his policies, but few viable leadership alternatives—appears to weaken his “renewed mandate” ([Source](#))

DEC. 15

Female candidates (totaling 16.6% of all candidates) win only 45 of the 475 Lower House seats in the snap election, in spite of PM Abe's proclaimed “womenomics” goal to empower women and increase their representation in positions of authority ([Source](#))

DEC. 17

Japanese university decides to retain lecturer Takashi Uemura, a former journalist who covered the disputed “comfort women” issue, despite threats of violence from ultranationalists ([Source](#))

DEC. 18

South Koreans begin collecting signatures to help Japanese proponents of Article 9 win Nobel Peace Prize, hoping to preserve Japan's pacifism in the face of PM Abe's aspiration to change Japan's Constitution ([Source](#))

DEC. 19

Scientist Haruko Obokata resigns after failing to reproduce controversial results from her previously lauded and highly publicized research on stem cells ([Source](#))

DEC. 29

In a notable increase in cooperation, Japan and South Korea agree to share information on North Korea's nuclear program using the U.S. as an intermediary ([Source](#))



Photo - Catrina Cairra

Winner - Daejeon, Korea

THE SAPPORO INTERNATIONAL SNOW SCULPTURE COMPETITION:

THE ALTS WHO BECAME “TEAM NEW ZEALAND”

SOFARA AIONO (HIROSHIMA)

Originally published in the Hiroshima Wide Island View, March 2, 2014. You can read the original story, and other great stories [here](#).

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THAT one is asked to represent their country in an event in which they have absolutely no experience, or knowledge about. So when I was asked to fill a spot on a special team and told casually, “Yeah, nah, you’ll pick it up in no time”, I excitedly made preparations for another level of cold. The team was the New Zealand Snow Sculpture team, and we became part of the 65th Sapporo Snow Festival—a major highlight of the Japanese calendar. Having to borrow all my snow gear from fellow team members, it would seem bizarre for a guy coming from the tropical islands of the South Pacific to want to go anywhere near the sub-zero conditions of Hokkaido! However, my whole experience in Japan so far has been lived according to the principle of ‘YOLO’, so I eagerly jumped on board.

In its 41st year, the International Snow Sculpture Competition welcomed nine national and municipal teams: Hawaii, Hong Kong, Malaysia, New

Zealand, Poland, Singapore, Thailand, and Sapporo Sister City teams Daejeon, Korea and Portland, Oregon. Unlike other sculptures at the Snow Festival that are prepared well before the opening day, the International Competition is a work-in-progress over four days, giving attendants the chance to interact with the competitors. Although it can sometimes feel like being an attraction in a zoo behind a roped area, it is a fantastic opportunity for Japanese visitors and local elementary schools to practice their English. Internationalization at its best!

As with anything typically Kiwi, our three-man team was made up of three JET ALTs with no funding, decent tools or team uniforms; but what we lacked in professional sponsorship, we made up for in enthusiasm and the ability to support the local economy with a love of Sapporo beer. Mata has participated in the event four times since coming to Japan and has a background in the art of traditional



Team New Zealand

Maori carving, whilst our second team member Simon Daly (Hokkaido ALT) has been part of the team for five years, and like me, had joined as a first year ALT with no experience. It should be stated here that the teams we were up against were highly skilled professionals with some heavy financial backing. I’m talking about artists and specialty chefs (the ones that craft butter/ice/sugar sculptures in fancy restaurants), who are selected from many applicants. Team Hawaii were flown to Sapporo in business class by their major sponsor, Hawaiian Airlines, and they were even being paid overtime to be at the event! By comparison, our team took five days of *nenkyu* each and paid our own travel arrangements.



Ice Sculpture Event
Photos - Sofara Aiono

Although the team largely decides the design of the sculpture, most team sponsors request that it reflects an aspect of their home country. This year, our master sculptor Matarahi 'Mata' Skipper (Saijo ALT), proposed a classic rugby ball and the iconic Silver Fern: two symbols that are largely synonymous with our country in the international sporting arena.

provide financial back up.

From my experience this year, it would be inaccurate to call this event a 'competition', because there were no bitter rivalries to be found. Even on the first day, we were borrowing tools from our better-equipped Singaporean friends, sharing Cantonese and Korean meals, *kampai*-ing over Polish vodka and laughing big hearty laughs

MAKING NEW FRIENDS AND SHARING CULTURAL EXPERIENCES IN ONE OF THE MOST AESTHETICALLY BEAUTIFUL, FOREIGN-FRIENDLY, AND OPEN-MINDED CITIES IN JAPAN HAS BECOME ONE OF MY BEST MEMORIES HERE SO FAR.

So how did three giant Kiwi lads find themselves competing against some renowned sculpture professionals? Long story short—funding cuts and a change of leadership from our primary sponsor meant that the only way to still have a team, was to have a team that could fund themselves. Luckily, the New Zealand Embassy in Tokyo were willing to sponsor our entry, even though they couldn't

with the Hawaiians and Portlanders.

Although Team New Zealand didn't place, I feel truly blessed to have been part of this event, and the festival as a whole. Making new friends and sharing cultural experiences in one of the most aesthetically beautiful, foreign-friendly, and open-minded cities in Japan has become one of my best memories here so far. It

reminded me why I made the decision to become a *gaijin* in this special country.

I highly recommend visiting the Sapporo Snow Festival, or at least visiting Sapporo once during your time in Japan—with a liberal atmosphere in the night-life district of Susukino, some of the best seafood and beverages in the land, a fascinating history of the indigenous Ainu people, and of course, that classic Japanese *omotenashi* that we've all come to appreciate, there are many great reasons to visit.

Sofara Aiono is a second-year ALT living in the inaka of Mihara City, Hiroshima. He enjoys camping in the beautiful mountains of the prefecture or on the islands of the Inland Sea, and is always on the hunt for haikyo (abandoned buildings). When not out of the house on the weekend, he's at home trying to cook the perfect Hiroshima-style okonomiyaki, which quite often ends up being a messy Osaka-style okonomiyaki!

CONNECT-S

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Tel: 042-982-4811

Email: tengu@alishan.jp

Web: <http://store.alishan.jp>



New Zealand, Pre-carving



Done! Rugby Ball & Silver Fern



New Partnership with SIT Graduate Institute!

\$5,000 scholarships for JET alumni

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- International Education
- Intercultural Service, Leadership, and Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation
- Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable Development

SIT Graduate Institute

a program of World Learning



Application deadline: February 24, 2015

Learn more at graduate.sit.edu.

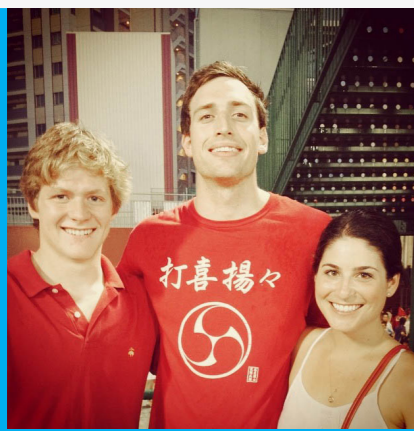
THIS MONTH IN... ARTS & CULTURE



VERITY TOWNSEND

connect.culture@ajet.net

February is here, which, according to the optimist, means it won't be long before Spring! Lately, I have been eating lots of home-dried persimmons and relaxing in onsen to stave off the cold. My goal for this month is to successfully make some Valentine confections for a certain special someone. I'm hoping they come out better than the matcha and white chocolate cookies I made last year...they weren't exactly bad but they were definitely mysterious-tasting. But it's the effort that counts, right?



COLIN O'NEILL

connect.entertainment@ajet.net

No Valentine pics for February but, as you can see, I'm at least bleeding red. Repping my seasonal Hiroshima Carp fan gear and longing for spring training to approach, I have to catch myself. Usually when I go to baseball games, I remember exactly why I hate baseball games. I guess the cold winters and houses made of paper make you go a little crazy, longing for anything that represents warmth. Cheers to long underwear and stay up homies!



ERICA GRAINGER

connect.fashion@ajet.net

February is one of my favorite months of the year! Why? Firstly, my birthday falls on Feb 23rd – Yaay! Secondly, there's Valentine's day. Since I'm a romantic at heart, this is easily one of my favorite days of the year. "Take away love and our earth is a tomb," Robert Browning believed. Last year, I enjoyed Baba's Chocolate curry. This year, I have a secret surprise planned. Can you keep a secret? Good, so can I!

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VS



JAPANESE FASHION IN FILM: 1920s & 30s

MOGA/MODERN GIRL

SAIRA CHAMBERS (KSJ OWNER AND WRITER)

Photos - Saira Chambers

COMMENTARY

Published with permission and thanks from the Kawaii Study Japan website article [“Moga/Modern Girl - Japan’s Flapper”](#) originally published August 21, 2013.

MOGA, SHORT FOR MODERN girls, モダンガール, *modan garu* might be considered the flappers of Japan during the Taisho era (1912-1926). Both in dress and attitude, these girls embraced a “Western” perspective.

consumerism and *bourgeoisie* standards of living. These women were often depicted smoking in cafes, and earning their own salary. This is a stark contrast to the typical women who would be entirely dependent on and in service to their family. This break in tradition followed the introduction of mass Western culture in Japan. Indeed the fashions of the moga imitated the “Western” flappers down to the bob hairstyles.



Feminine Prints

They favored emotional, and financial independence. They also chose sexual partners freely, and embraced new notions of courtship as viewed on the silver screen. This fad could also be described as placing an emphasis on



Traditional Yukata



Modern and Hip

This shift from women as modest subservient caretakers to extravagant self-interested consumers didn’t last long, as the Great Depression and nationalist ideals in the 1930’s squandered the fad.

JAPANESE SILENT FILM: A BRIEF PICTORIAL INTRODUCTION

VERITY TOWNSEND (HYOGO)

COMMENTARY

THROUGHOUT THE 1920S AND 1930S, a plethora of silent films were made in Japan but due to a multitude of causes—the 1926 Great Kanto earthquake, wartime destruction and occupation censorship—only a small fraction survive until this day. Like Western silent films, many of the Japanese ones have written captions, however there was also a tradition of *benshi*, narrators who would provide live spoken accompaniment to on-screen events.

KURETTA IPPEJI (A PAGE OF MADNESS)

Teinosuke Kinugawa (1926)

Based on a short story by the famous novelist Yasunari Kawabata, this is haunting avant garde film dealing with the inhabitants of an asylum.



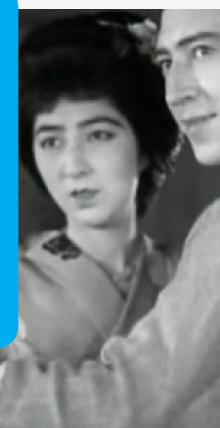
WATCH
HERE



MINATO NO NIHON MUSUME (JAPANESE GIRLS AT THE HARBOUR)

Hiroshi Shimizu (1933)

This beautifully shot film set in Yokohama tells the story of three girls who all fall for the same man.



WATCH
HERE



DIY WINTER FACE MASKS: TRIED AND TESTED

SABRINA ZIRAKZADEH (OKAYAMA)

WITH WINTER COMES COLD WIND, DRY AIR, AND RUNNY NOSES, causing beautiful skin to become chapped and irritated. Biking to work, hot, dehydrating caffeinated beverages and face masks (the sick kind) don't help either. By November, my skin is a wreck!

This year, to save money, I've been testing different homemade face masks. Specifically, face masks that deal with winter issues such as bad breakouts, dry skin, irritation, and flakiness. I tested these masks with some friends; Jessica, Rachel and Keilani. Between us, we had four different skin types; sensitive, problem (prone to breakouts and irritation), combination, and normal skin. We tried:

SPICY RENEWAL MASK

TSP:
TEASPOON
TSBP:
TABLESPOON

INGREDIENTS - ¥50

- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon

IDEAL FOR

Exfoliation, glow, moisturizing, deep cleansing

INEFFECTIVE FOR

Treating breakouts or inflammation, combination skin.

PROS

Highly recommend for winter skin care! Our skin had a visible glow. Any scaly patches and blackheads were scrubbed off by the nutmeg and cinnamon. The exfoliation meant regular routines were more effective in the following days. Problem skin and normal skin testers reported fewer breakouts that week.

CONS

The exfoliation did cause minor irritation to my sensitive skin, and the combination skin tester had some issues with oiliness for two or three days.



OVERALL ★★★★★★☆☆

An inexpensive and wonderful start to repairing winter skin damage, with less daily breakouts or pampering.

AVOCADO MOISTURIZING MASK

INGREDIENTS - ¥250

- 1 mashed ripe avocado
- 1 egg white
- 1 tsp lemon juice

IDEAL FOR

Inflammation, moisturizing, sensitive skin.

INEFFECTIVE FOR

Exfoliation, deep cleansing, long-term skin care.

PROS

Huge quantity! I froze ten extra servings. This mask took care of dry, scaly patches with the remaining dry bits gone after a good moisturizing.

CONS

After three days, the effects were completely gone. The three other testers reported the same results; great immediate results that vanished after two or three days.

OVERALL ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆

A great pampering, but no long-term benefits or serious skin repair.



MOISTURIZING MASHED BANANA MASK

INGREDIENTS - ¥100

- 1/2 mashed banana
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

IDEAL FOR

Sensitive skin, long-term skin care, and deep moisturizing!

INEFFECTIVE FOR

Breakouts, inflammation, and deep cleansing.

PROS

The best mask for moisturizing! Soft luscious skin with no irritation or breakouts caused by overly-oily skin! Everyone noticed the softness and glow lasted for over a week, with no negative side effects!

CONS

"Problem skin" and combination skin testers reported their skin felt greasy and no improvements in breakouts.

OVERALL ★★★★★★☆☆☆☆

This mask is great for any type of skin, especially for treating and preventing dryness, and can be stored for future use!



ACNE-FIGHTING CITRUS MASK

INGREDIENTS - ¥150

- 1 egg white
- lemon juice (1/2 lemon)
- 1/2 tsp honey

IDEAL FOR

Breakout prevention and acne treatment, glow, and compound skin.

INEFFECTIVE FOR

Sensitive skin, moisturizing.

PROS

A miracle for pimples and blackheads. My problem skin tester reported this mask cleared up some breakouts and actively prevented them for over a week! Also, the lemon juice coupled with the honey creates a good balance between moisturizing and oil-fighting for combination skin.

CONS

My sensitive skin developed dry patches, which needed five days of frequent, heavy moisturizing.

OVERALL ★★★★★☆☆☆☆

Recommended for acne, problem-type and oily skin, however avoid if you have dry or sensitive skin.

So, four inexpensive, easy face masks for treating winter skin problems. The verdict? Better skin for less cost. Each recipe makes six or more masks, so leftovers can be stored for the following week or a pampering party. Here's to a happy new year with happy, renewed skin!

Sabrina Zirakzadeh is a third year ALT living and working in rural Okayama prefecture. She has frequent face mask parties to help relax in between work, traveling, songwriting, and selling her soul to NaNoWriMo every winter. Check her out at [Jupiter-Star](#) or follow her on Twitter [@JupiterStar!](#)

Honey will help your skin make it through the winter.

Photos - Sabrina Zirakzadeh, Jessica Louise, Rachel Paterson, & Keilani Conger



LEMON
JUICE ZAPS
BACTERIA

COMMENTS

THE WORLD OF NOH THEATER

LAUREL WILLIAMS (NAGASAKI)

Sheaky Demon Spirit

Photos - Laurel Williams

FOR THE LAST 32 YEARS, Shimabara Castle in Nagasaki Prefecture has been the setting for a fall night of Kyōgen and Noh as part of the Shimabara Onsen Shiranui Festival (しまばら温泉不知火まつり). Lit by torchlight on an outdoor stage, guests can imagine what it was like to watch these classical forms of Japanese theater in feudal Japan.

KYŌGEN & NOH

Kyōgen (狂言) are short plays that are traditionally performed during intermissions in a single Noh performance or in a break between two separate Noh plays. They are comical in nature, often featuring common folks as the main characters. The cast for a Kyōgen piece typically has two to three actors.

In contrast, Noh (能) are full-length plays that are serious and formal in tone. The plays are often adaptations of stories found within the classic epic, The Tale of Genji. The characters are usually members of nobility, but there are also god-like, demon, and ghost characters depending on the play.

The cast of a Noh play is significantly larger than one

in a Kyōgen piece. Specifically, there usually consists a *shite* (lead character), a *waki* (supporting character), a *kyogen* (another character), an eight-member *jiutai* (chorus), four *hayashi* (musicians), and one to three *koken* (stage attendants).

There are some similarities between Kyōgen and Noh. Both are characterized by large, draping costumes of layered robes and *hakama*, with Noh costumes being understandably more regal than those featured in Kyōgen. The costumes of the chorus

and musicians are uniform in color and appearance so as to not take the attention away from the lead and supporting characters.

Additionally, both forms make use of fans and wooden masks. According to the Japan Arts Council, Kyōgen has about 20 different types of masks, while Noh has about 60. The masks are designed in such a way that they appear to indicate different emotions, based on how the actors hold their heads.

In Noh, a *shite* dons the mask



Nephew Donning a Demon Mask to Trick His Aunt for Sake



Satisfied Newpew Sits After a Successful Trick



Plain Dress Dance of Takasago



Plain Dress Dance of Takasago

as an indicator of their role, gender, and character. A *shite* may change masks at certain points in a performance to indicate a transition in the character's state of mind or a possession of the character by a spirit.

HISTORY

Noh, like a majority of ALTs on JET, had a predecessor. Noh's predecessor went by the name of *Sarugaku* and originated in China. It came to Japan during the Nara period and it's broad performance style incorporated song, dance and acrobatics. Over time, *Sarugaku* began to splinter into more specific performance styles, including Noh.

It was during the Muromachi period (1337 to 1573) that Noh became what we know today, due largely to the work of Zeami Motokiyo. The son of notable Noh actor Kanami Kiyotsugu, Zeami became a star in his own right at a young age.

During one of his early performances, Zeami caught the eye of shogun Yoshimitsu Ashikaga. Under the shogun's

patronage, Zeami was able to make Noh a distinct and popular form of theater amongst the nobility and samurai classes. He further ensured his influence in Noh by writing not only his own plays, but also guidelines for Noh and theater theory.

Noh continued to be refined over the years by Zeami's successors and other schools of Noh until the Edo period. At that time, the Tokugawa shogunate made Noh an official art form. This furthered Noh's prestige in the world of Japanese theatre, but it also led to Noh becoming rigidly regulated in its style and structure. While this deprived the art from continuing to evolve, it helped preserve it as something from a time long past.

NOH TODAY

The Tokugawa shogunate further aided Noh's survival by establishing five troupes to carry on the art. The five troupes continue to perform to this day. Each school is run by the *iemoto* system, which was inherited by generations through a main family.

While Noh plays were historically performed by boys and men only, women now also study and perform Noh. To date, there are around 200 women who are professional Noh performers.

For those looking to see Noh on stage, there are several options (both indoor and outdoor) around Japan. A primary one is the National Noh Theatre in Tokyo. Tickets range from about 2,000 to 10,000 yen.

To find a theater or Noh performance near you, try using [this site](#). They provide a list of regional events (in Japanese only).

SOURCES

1. [The Japan Arts Council](#)
2. [The-Noh.com](#)
3. [The Ohtsuki Noh Theatre](#)
4. [The Shimabara Onsen Shiranui Festival](#)

READ ABOUT MODERN NOH ON THE NEXT PAGE



A jealous Lady Rokujo (left) is confronted by a miko (female shaman, right) in Zeami's play *Aoi no Ue*.

Musicians Set the Mood
Photos - Laurel Williams

MODERN NOH

LAUREL WILLIAMS (NAGASAKI)

HIDEKI NODA & MODERN NOH

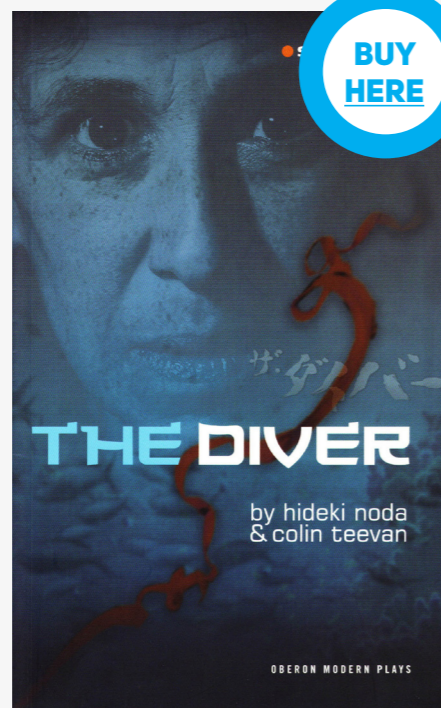
Traditional Noh plays can prove daunting to many. Despite being a part of Japan's foundation in theater history, Noh often comes across as overly long and stilted to modern theatregoers. Still, similar to the continued focus on Shakespeare, Noh has its importance in study. Hideki Noda—playwright, director, and actor—has realized this.

NODA'S LIFE & THE THEATRE

Hideki Noda (野田秀樹) was born in Nagasaki Prefecture in 1955, but moved to Tokyo when he was four years old. He wrote his first play when he was 16. While studying law at Tokyo University, he formed his first theater troupe, Yume no Yuminsha (1976–1992). After spending a year studying theater in England, he returned to Japan in 1993 to create his present performing company Noda Map.

Post-England, Noda began staging plays for Japanese and English casts. His work has since been performed for audiences in Japan, England, South Korea, Thailand, and the United States. For English adaptations of his Japanese scripts, he often collaborates with Irish playwright Colin Teevan.

Noda's work can be characterized as a fusion of modern situations with classical Japanese tales and theater styles. Such was the case for his 2008 modern Noh play *The Diver*.



THE DIVER

Performed in London in 2008, *The Diver* presents a woman called Yumi (played by Kathryn Hunter), who is being held as the suspected murderer of two children. The woman, claiming memory loss, can only appear to dissociate others and herself as characters from the Noh plays Aoi no Ue (Lady Aoi) and Ama (Pearl Diver Woman).

Prosecutors, seeking the death penalty, have called in a psychiatrist (played by Noda himself) to get her fit for trial. The psychiatrist must sift through Yumi's nonsensical storytelling, which is a distorted representative of her past actions, to discover the truth. The actors, but especially Hunter, had to play multiple roles to convey the woman's madness and shifting personalities.

To further allude to its Noh influences, Noda makes use of fans, masks, and a choreography style common in Noh. The results are a play that pulls you into a swirling undercurrent that grips you until you get to the heart of the woman's crimes.

Interested in learning more about Hideki Noda and his work? Check out his site Noda Map (available in Japanese and English) [here](#).

Laurel Williams is a fourth-year ALT in Nagasaki Prefecture. When not practicing kyudo, shodo, or sado, she serves as the Layout Designer for Nagazasshi, Nagasaki's premier magazine. Future plans include taking a train all the way from Kyushu to Tokyo and rediscovering what this sleep business is all about.

COMMENTS

Photos - Wesley Julian

WE ARE TOHOKU TOMO:

AN INTERVIEW WITH WESLEY JULIAN

COLIN O'NEILL (SHIMANE)

Hampden-Sydney College graduate, JET Programme alumnus, film director, and—most importantly—a friend to Japan, impressive doesn't even scratch the surface of describing Wesley Julian's résumé. After the earthquake and tsunami hit the Tohoku region of Japan in March 2011, Wesley changed his career path to focus on supporting the area he had called home for two years. Working with other Hampden-Sydney alum, he created the documentary TOHOKU TOMO. Below is an excerpt from our exclusive interview with Wesley. For the full interview, click [here](#).

Where were you on March 11th, 2011?

I was in graduate school at the University of Richmond in 2011. But the twist in all the plans is March 11th. I was actually in Japan in Miyagi Prefecture when the earthquake happened.

Oh man.

My spring break as a grad student was the same time as Osato Junior High School's graduation. I cooked up this idea of me coming back and surprising my former students at their graduation.

BUT THE TWIST IN ALL THE PLANS IS MARCH 11TH. I WAS ACTUALLY IN JAPAN IN MIYAZAKI PREFECTURE WHEN THE EARTHQUAKE HAPPENED.

So what happened?

I really wanted to stay in Japan and help out but I would have been more of a burden than anything. So,

I returned to America but I knew I was going to go back – and I did that summer to go volunteer.

I started talking about how we could get more money to Japan. We thought, well, we could organize a volunteer

WE'VE DONE 15 SCREENINGS AROUND AMERICA, AND WE WERE FORTUNATE TO BE ABLE TO PREMIER IN SENDAI, JAPAN IN AUGUST OF 2014.

At which point was the decision made to document what you had been a part of in Tohoku?

In 2011, I was interviewed by the Discovery Channel for their documentary, "Megaquake: The Hour That Shook Japan". They came to Virginia, interviewed me, and I was intrigued by what the director was doing. I was still a graduate student at the University of Richmond but in 2012, I accepted a job offer at the Consulate of Japan in Chicago, and moved there in February. There, I got involved with the JET Alumni Association (JETAA) of Chicago. That fall, Daniel Martin, a JET alumnus, and

team, go volunteer, and document this to make a movie highlighting other volunteers as well.

Did you always know that you were going to be the director?

I mean I think so? I originally was going to go over with, just like, a GoPro to make a very base film project. But thankfully, one of my buddies from high school, Philip Holbrook, who had been living out in LA, was a director of photography. I called him up, sold him on the idea, and he was on board. He elevated *Tohoku Tomo* to an actual film. So there were only 3 of us: Philip Holbrook, myself, and then

東北友

TOHOKU TOMO

TWO OF
WESLEY'S
PROJECTS113 PROJECT
RECLAIMING TOHOKU

SO THERE WERE ONLY 3 OF US: PHILIP HOLBROOK, MYSELF, AND THEN TIM SHRAEDER. THAT'S IT.

Tim Shraeder. That's it. Tim did social media, marketing, set up our website, started our [Kickstarter video](#), and designed the posters.

How long did it take to get the film where you needed it to be?

We launched the Kickstarter the week of March 11th and then left for Japan for 2 weeks on March 17th, 2013. Over the course of 1 year, a new crew was formed. Again, Daniel Martin and I were on the team and then Elizabeth Gordon, a JET alum as well, formed the post-production crew. Then we contracted James (J.L.) Hodges—who

graduated from Hampden-Sydney in '05—and his company [OVERCOAST MUSIC](#) to soundtrack the film. We premiered on March 12th, 2014 in Chicago.

How many screenings have there been so far?

We've done 15 screenings around America, and we were fortunate to be able to premier in Sendai, Japan in August of 2014. Jason Jones, a JET alum who also completed Japan's MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports,

Science, and Technology) Scholarships, volunteered to translate and subtitle the whole film. Because of him, we were able to premier the film in Japan.

In 2015, how many shows do you have lined up?

Confirmed for 2015 we have shows in Nebraska at Film Streams Omaha, Anime Milwaukee in Wisconsin, the Chicago School of Professional Psychology in Chicago, and more. We have Tohoku Tomo Week (#TTWeek) coming up in March too. From March 7-March 14, 2015, we want to host as many screenings as possible around the world to raise support for Tohoku.

So is this what you're currently doing full-time?

I'm working with *Tohoku Tomo* and, most recently, "The 113 Project". I went back to Japan in August 2014 with another film crew to do a short film series we are calling, "The 113 Project".

How can people see *Tohoku Tomo*?

On our [website](#), there is a form that says "Click here to fill out a screening request". People can fill out the screening request and say, "I would like to have a screening here." Any organization, group, or university that would be interested in showing the film, they can click on that to start the conversation about bringing the film out. We'd love to have more screenings for #TTWeek.

For more information on Wesley's film, visit [Tohoku Tomo](#) or contact Wesley on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#). Also, be sure to read the full interview with Wesley [here](#).



We all feel overwhelmed at times, and the additional stresses of living abroad can sometimes make these issues more difficult to deal with.

Services at Overseas Counseling Service are provided by a former JET who understands what it is like to be a JET living in Japan. Services are available via Skype or Email

I support many issues including: relationships, anxiety, depression, low mood, adjustment, life changes and many other unique circumstances.

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BATTLE ROYALE AND THE BREAKFAST CLUB COULDN'T BE MORE DIFFERENT.

One movie depicts a bleak dystopian future of Japan. The other features high school students in detention on a Saturday. One film shows a Japanese girl impaling her classmate with a sickle. The other has Emilio Estevez disrobing to sleeveless spandex and angrily punch-dancing while high on reefer. These films occupy very different cinematic realms. But, they both share a common goal of challenging the status quo within their genres, or as Jay Z would say, *change the game*.

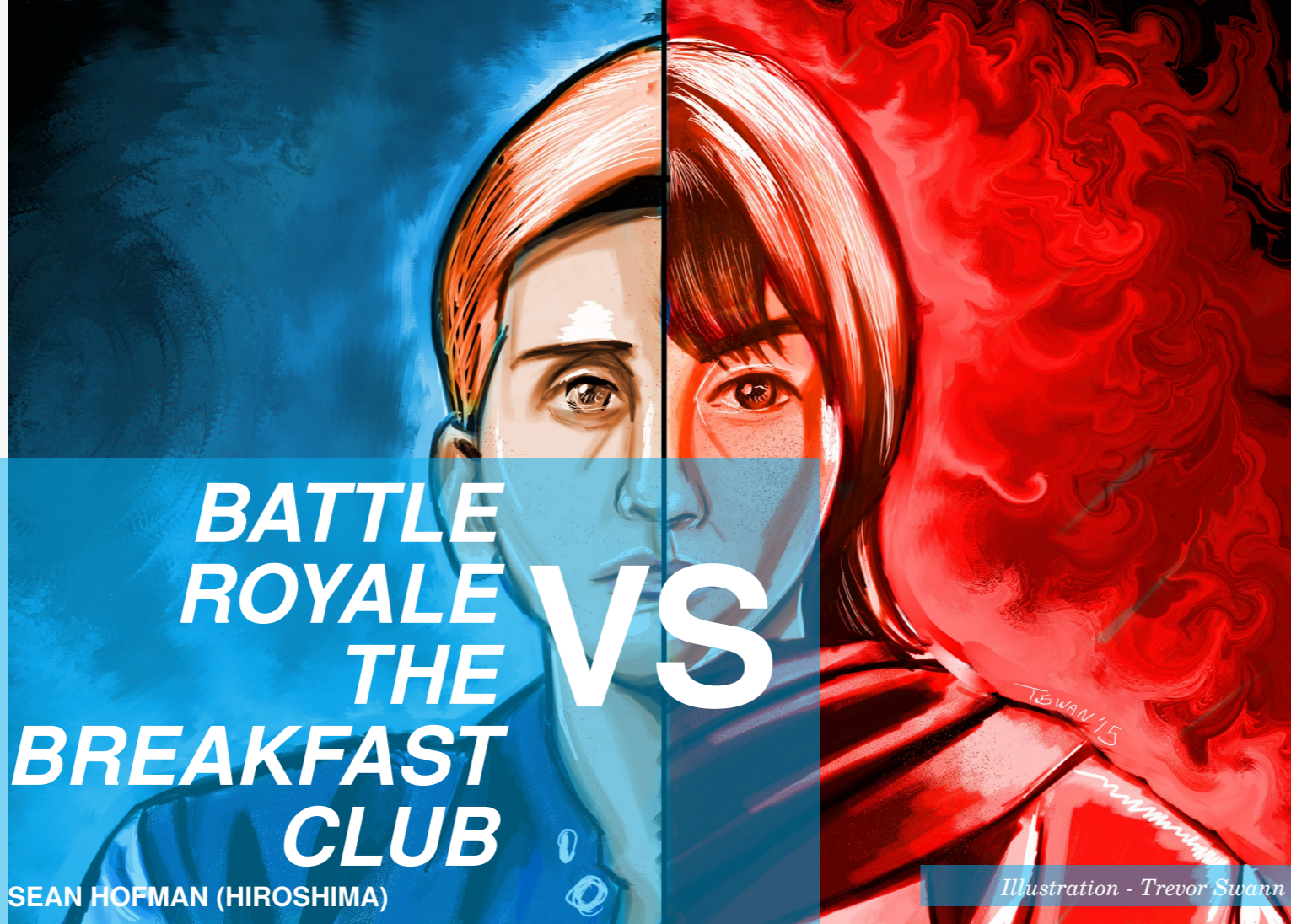
LET'S GET FAMILIAR

Directed by Kinji Fukusaku, and adapted from the novel by Koushen Takami, *Battle Royale* takes place in an alternate reality where Japan is verging on social anarchy. To control the population, the government enacts a protocol



Dancing, High on Reefer

where a random selection of students are chosen to fight to the death. Imagine *The Hunger Games* without the stupid names/costumes, and WAY more violent.



SEAN HOFMAN (HIROSHIMA)

Illustration - Trevor Swann

In *The Breakfast Club*, directed by John Hughes, five students from different social circles of high school life find themselves stuck together in Saturday detention. The kids try to tolerate their differences while under the watch of their overbearing principal. As the day wears on, hijinks ensue while the students find they have much more in common than they originally thought.

BRO MOVIES

Japanese pictures and “high school” films are, historically, culprits of clichéd typecasting. During the 1900’s, Japan was culturally dominated by MEN and that reflection in cinema was clear. Influential samurai films (*chanbara*) such as *Seven Samurai* and *Rashomon* cemented

the centralized male on the big screen. The men were the main protagonists or antagonists and were granted dynamic demeanors, either heroic or wicked. The women, contrarily, were portrayed more uniformly as spiritually strong, yet reserved. Often filling the *geisha* role in films like *Ugetsu*, women were often at the mercy of men through violence, intimidation, and hierarchy. Cinema played the wingman for Japan’s “bro’d out” society.

HELD BACK BY HOLLYWOOD HIGH

American cinema is no exception to perpetuating stereotypes, especially in the “high school” genre. Since the 1950’s, Hollywood has made and remade films, over and over, on the plight

of adolescent teenagers. The 1980’s spawned a golden age of teen dramas portraying the high school experience. Movies like *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, *Porky’s*, and *Sixteen Candles* set the standard for depicting the cliquy nature of American schools. Each film had the real world effect of strengthening the stereotypes attached to the common cliques they were aggrandizing. So if you were no stranger to flood pants and pocket protectors, the whole world now had a name to call you.

I AM ONNA, HEAR ME ROAR

Kinji Fukusaku and John Hughes were both dissatisfied with the cinema landscape and they sought to make change. In *Battle Royale*, Fukusaku flips and

DDT’s the passive feminine dynamic right onto its head. On an island where ethical codes and social norms are thrown out the window, the girls become the aggressors. Departing from Japanese films of the past, females are the ones who act out in brash, emotional ways. The femme fatale character, Mitsuko, uses her cunning and sex appeal to lure her bewildered classmates into horrible deaths. The boys play the more collected yet submissive role, often at the mercy of their female peers. Fukusaku wanted to smash the audiences’ expectations of what women were capable of, and he used a sledgehammer to do it.

NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE

John Hughes also wanted to change viewers’ perspectives on personality stereotypes. The caricatures are presented in their crystallized forms in the opening credits. Each

parents. *The Breakfast Club* dismisses the preordained social hierarchy that existed in past “high school” films by simply portraying teens as equals navigating the high school experience.

SO WHAT?

They say that life imitates art. I’m not sure who ‘they’ are, but they do. And if that’s the case, our perspectives as an audience need to be challenged. The power of cinema comes from its ability to shape culture. Fukusaku and Hughes knew that change in the paradigm of cinema could be reflected in the world we live in. They dared their audiences to view the characters we were used to seeing in a completely different light. So if life indeed imitates art, then I’m ready to don my spandex and punch-dance with these haters who think they got me pegged.

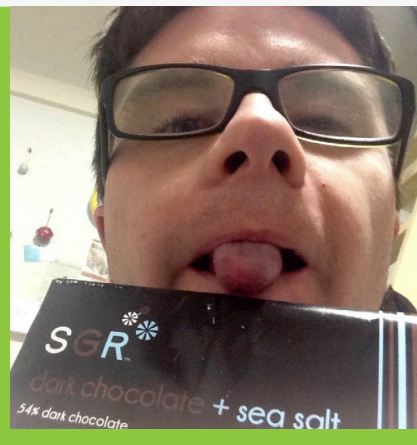


Femme Fatale, Mitsuko

character behaves as we would expect from their labels. However, the students shed these conventional traits as they find that they’re all struggling through the same issues. After a weed-smoking catharsis, ‘Emiliooooo’ drops a bomb on his peers. They come to realize that they all share the fear of becoming their

If you want to find Sean, check your local bar or a good ramen shop. And if it absolutely can’t wait, send an email to him.

THIS MONTH IN... LIFESTYLE



NICK POWERS-MAHER

connect.food@ajet.net

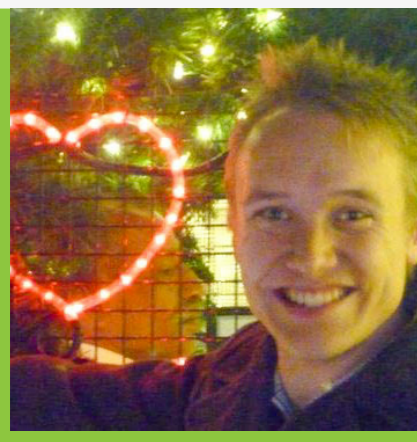
I'm still reeling from eating at the #1 Southern barbecue restaurant in the United States, a mere ten minutes from my parents' house, and stuffing myself with burgers, chicken, and biscuits. This month, I'm contemplating learning some North Carolina specialties in my toilet-sized kitchen, to keep me from feeling too homesick. I'll also be gorging on chocolate, chocolate, chocolate...just because.



TOM LEGGE

connect.travel@ajet.net

This month I've been looking at flight deals websites like Secret Flying for some crazy prices. Highlights have included Manila - Dubai return for 54 cents! Check it out if you have some time this month.

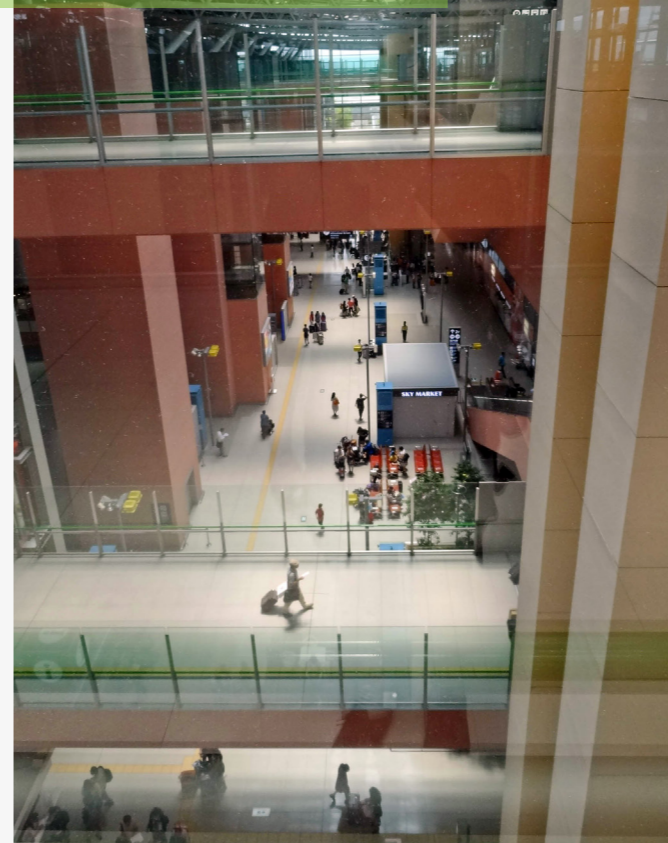


SIMON GRIFFIN

connect.travel@ajet.net

It's cold! In fact for many of us, February is the coldest month in Japan, and since architects here don't believe in insulation most of us can feel it for ourselves, both inside and out! The flip-side of February is that we're nearly over the worst of winter, and from here on, the weather will start to improve a little as we move into spring, and like many of you, I can't wait!

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Island of Mystery



JAPAN AIRPORT GUIDE

TOM LEGGE (HIROSHIMA)

FSC - FULL SERVICE CARRIERS
LCC - LOW COST CARRIERS

START BY FINDING THE AIRPORT YOU'RE LOOKING TO TRAVEL FROM, AND SEE WHICH CARRIERS OPERATE THERE AND WHICH DESTINATIONS THEY TRAVEL TO. ALL AIRLINES ARE LISTED BY THE IATA CODES, THE SAME CODES USED ON FLIGHT NUMBERS.

GETTING OUT OF JAPAN HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER, but many people are unaware of the vast array of options available to them. Obviously it's not feasible to produce an exhaustive list, but this guide should ensure that you are up to date on which destinations available from which carriers at airports near you. Happy flying!

GENERAL DESTINATIONS

- A Asia
- B Europe
- C America
- D Oceania
- E ROW

SPECIFIC DESTINATIONS

- 0 Domestic (Japan)
- 1 Australia
- 2 Cambodia
- 3 China
- 4 Finland
- 5 Germany
- 6 Guam (USA)
- 7 Hawaii (USA)
- 8 Hong Kong
- 9 Korea
- 10 Malaysia
- 11 Myanmar
- 12 Philippines
- 13 Russia
- 14 Singapore
- 15 Taiwan
- 16 Thailand
- 17 UAE

AIRLINE CODES

3K Jetstar	DL Delta	MU China Eastern
5J Cebu Pacific	EY Etihad	NH ANA
7C Jeju Air	HA Hawaiian	OZ Asiana
7G Starflyer	HX Hong Kong Airlines	PR Philippine Airlines
8M Myanmar Airlines	IJ Spring	R3 Yakutia
ADO Air Do	JH Fuji Dream	SQ Singapore Airlines
AK AirAsia	JL Japan Airlines	SU Aeroflot
AY Finnair	KA Dragonair	TG Thai
BC Skymark	KE Korean Air	TW T'Way
BR EVA	KL KLM	TZ Scoot
C Misc Chinese Carriers	LH Lufthansa	UA United
CA Air China	LJ Jin Air	UO HK Express
CI China Airlines	LQ Solaseed	VN Vietnam Airlines
CX Cathay Pacific	MJC Mandarin Airlines	VNL Vanilla Air
CZ China Southern	MM Peach	ZE Eastar

TOKYO NARITA (NRT)

Destinations: A, B, C, D, E

FSC: All major airlines. NH and JL hub

LCC: AK (10, 16), 5J (12), ZE (9), UO (8), 3K (1), MM (0), TZ (14, 15), IJ (0), VNL (8, 9, 15, 0)

Note: Has limited domestic connections so you may find transfer difficult without changing from HND.

CHIBA



TOKYO HANEDA (HND)

Destinations: A, B, C, D, E (fewer than Narita)

FSC: All major airlines. NH and JL hub.

LCC: AK (10), ADO (0) UO (8), BC (0), LQ (0), 7G (0)

Note: Some flights, such as the HK Express (UO) flight, arrive after the last bus leaves. A taxi even to Shinagawa is around 10,000 yen. Plan carefully!

OSAKA KANSAI (KIX)

Destinations: A, B (limited), C, D, E

FSC: Quite a few major airlines

LCC: MM hub. Many more LCCs with destinations in A.

Note: Allow plenty of time to get from Shin Osaka to the airport. Public transport is well connected but options are confusing and even the shortest journey takes over an hour.

OSAKA

FUKUOKA (FUK)

Destinations: A, B (Netherlands),

FSC: Most Asian carriers have a presence here

LCC: 3K (14, 16), 7C (9), LJ (9), MM (0), IJ (0), 7G (0), TW (9)

Note: The airport is very close to the city centre, only two stops from Hakata shinkansen station. Super convenient. Great connections to 14.

FUKUOKA

NAGOYA (CHUBU CENTRAIR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT) (NGO)

Destinations: A (inc Abu Dhabi), B (Helsinki, Frankfurt), C (Detroit)

FSC: C*, NH, CX, DL, EY, AY, JL, KE, LH, PR, SQ, TG, UA, VN

LCC: AK (10), 5J (12), UO (8), 7C (9), 3K (0), BC (0)

Note: The number of long haul airlines from NGO is declining with services being pulled due to low passenger numbers.

NAGOYA



KAGOSHIMA AIRPORT (KOJ)

Destinations: 0, 3, 8, 9, 11 (charter), 15

FSC: NH, CI, MU, JH, HX, JL, KE, 8M

LCC: 3K, MM, BC, LQ

Note: KOJ is the second busiest airport on Kyushu after Fukuoka.

KAGOSHIMA



SHIZUOKA AIRPORT (FSZ)

Destinations: 0, 3, 9, 15

FSC: CA, NH, OZ, CI, MU, JH

Note: The nearest railway station is Kanaya, about 6km from the airport.

SHIZUOKA



HIROSHIMA AIRPORT (HIJ)

Destinations: 0, 3, 9, 15,

FSC: CA, NH, OZ, CI, MU, JL

LCC: IJ (0)

Note: Direct return flights to Taipei can cost 100,000 yen return!

HIROSHIMA



OKINAWA (NAHA AIRPORT) (OKA)

Destinations: A, many 0

FSC: C*, OZ, NH, KA, BR, HX, JL, MJC, 8M (charter)

LCC: Many, many carriers servicing mainly 3, 8, 9, 15 and 0

Note: BC hub. They service eight domestic destinations from here.

OKINAWA



NIIGATA AIRPORT (KIJ)

Destinations: 0, 2 (charter), 3, 9, 13 (charter)

FSC: NH, MU, CZ, JH, JL, KE, R3 (charter)

LCC: ADO (0)

Note: There is a subsidised limousine bus service from Niigata Station which takes about 20 minutes.

NIIGATA



TOYAMA AIRPORT (TOY)

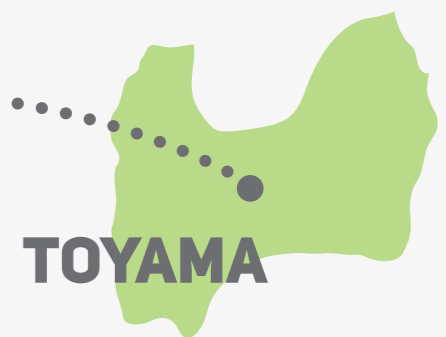
Destinations: 0, 3, 9, 15

FSC: NH, OZ, CI, CZ

LCC: ADO (0)

Note: The airport is 20 minutes from Toyama Station.

TOYAMA



SAPPORO (NEW CHITOSE AIRPORT) (CTS)

Destinations: A, many 0

FSC: C*, SU, NH, CX, BR, HA, HX, JL, KE, SQ, TG, UA

LCC: Numerous carriers servicing mainly 9, 15 and 0

Note: Sapporo is a 24 hour airport and the route to Tokyo is the second most flown (in terms of passenger numbers) in the world.

HOKKAIDO



SENDAI AIRPORT (SDJ)

Destinations: 0, 3, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16 (seasonal)

FSC: CA, OZ, NH, BR, HA, JL, TG, UA

LCC: ADO (0), MM (0), BC (0)

Note: There are a large number of charter flights to Sendai from as far abroad as Switzerland.

SENDAI



TASTES OF HOME



IT'S THE TIME OF YEAR FOR STAGE 2 TO hit hard, and for us to decide whether to head home or stay in Japan another year. If you're feeling detached, Stage 2-y, and homesick, try finding some tastes of home for comfort. Included here are some recipes from around the world.

SWEET POTATO CURRY POUTINE

Chris Smith (Kagawa)

They say that home is where the heart disease is. So remedy your homesick blues or just bulk up for winter with a Japanese twist on this Canadian staple.

- 1 large sweet potato
 - 2 curry cubes
 - 200 g cheese (cheddar or gouda)
 - 2 Tbsp olive oil
 - salt
 - pepper
 - garlic powder
 - onion powder
 - paprika
1. Soak sweet potato in cold water for 1 hour.
 2. Preheat oven to 230 C.
 3. Cut sweet potato into even strips.
 4. In a large bowl add oil, paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, salt & pepper to taste.
 5. Toss fries to evenly coat.
 6. Spread fries out on baking sheet, and bake for 20-30 minutes, flipping halfway through.
 7. While fries are baking, boil 500 ml of water.
 8. Add curry cube to water and stir. Simmer until gravy is thick.
 9. Add cubed cheese to fries during last 5 minutes of baking.
 10. Pour gravy over cheese and fries, top with sliced green onion.
 11. Enjoy!



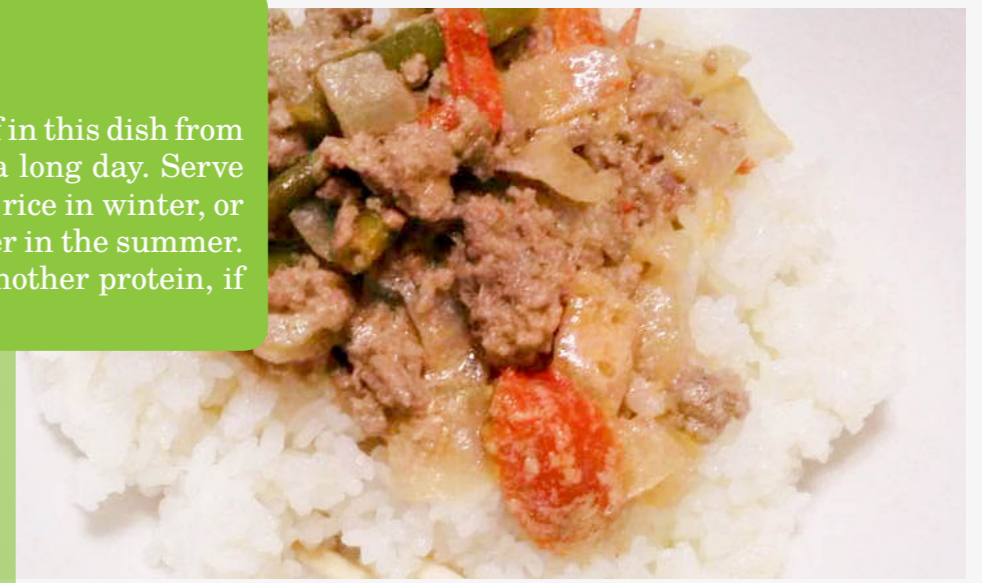
Photos: Chris Smith, Jackie Marzan, & Nick Powers

TINAKTAK

Jackie Marzan (Shizuoka)

The coconut milk-infused beef in this dish from Guam is a satisfying end to a long day. Serve it over a steaming bowl of hot rice in winter, or with your favorite ice-cold beer in the summer. You can substitute beef for another protein, if you want!

- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- 400 g lean ground beef (or other protein)
- 1 can coconut milk
- 1 pkg cherry tomatoes
- 1 pkg fresh string beans, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 lemon (or more to taste)
- salt and pepper (to taste)
- red pepper flakes (optional)



1. In a large pan, warm a tablespoon of oil on medium low heat. Add garlic and onions. Sauté on low heat until fragrant.
2. Turn heat up to medium high. Add ground beef. Season with salt and black pepper as you brown it.
3. Turn heat down to low. Stir in coconut milk, tomatoes and string beans. Season with red pepper. Let simmer for 5-10 minutes, covered.
4. Before serving, squeeze lemon juice over tinaktak and stir.



SOPAS

Jackie Marzan (Shizuoka)

This is a Filipino version of chicken noodle soup, but the difference is that we use butter and milk to bring out the sweetness of the vegetables, and we've hacked it to use macaroni instead of noodles.

- 1 1/2 Tbsp butter
- 2 pkgs diced chicken
- 5 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup milk
- 2 cups elbow macaroni or shells
- 3 sticks celery, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- salt and pepper
- onion, diced



1. In a pot, melt butter using medium heat. Add onion and sauté.
2. Add chicken. Season with salt and pepper as you brown it.
3. Add chicken stock and milk.
4. Turn up the heat, and bring soup to a boil. Add macaroni.
5. When macaroni is cooked, reduce the heat to low. Add celery and carrots. Cover pot and simmer for 5-10 minutes.

MULLIGATAWNY STEW

Jackie Marzan (Shizuoka)

- 2 TBSP OLIVE OIL
- 1 ONION, CHOPPED
- 1 STALK CELERY, DICED
- 2 CARROTS, PEELED AND DICED
- 2-3 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED
- 1 TBSP GINGER, GRATED
- 2 APPLES, PEELED AND DICED
- 1 CAN DICED TOMATOES
- 2 TBSP CURRY POWDER
- 2 TSP CUMIN
- 2 TSP PAPRIKA
- 1 TSP CINNAMON
- 1/2 TSP CARDAMOM (OPTIONAL)
- 1/2 TSP TURMERIC
- 1/2 TSP BLACK PEPPER
- 1/4 TSP DRIED THYME
- 1/4 TSP RED PEPPER FLAKES (OR CAYENNE PEPPER)
- 1/2 CUP RED LENTILS, UNCOOKED (OR RICE)
- 3 CUPS CHICKEN OR VEGETABLE BROTH
- 1/2 CUP COCONUT MILK (UNSWEETENED)
- 1/2 CUP TOASTED CASHEWS
- 1/4 CUP GREEN ONIONS (GREEN AND WHITE PARTS), CHOPPED



FOR DIFFICULT INGREDIENTS, REMEMBER THAT YOU CAN ORDER ONLINE FROM SITES LIKE IHERB, TENGU, THE MEAT GUY, AND THE FLYING PIG.

1. Heat butter in a large pot over medium-high heat, and sauté the onion, celery, and carrots for about 5 minutes, until they begin to soften.
2. Add in garlic, ginger, apples, and tomatoes, and sauté for 3-5 minutes.
3. Add in all of the spices and stir to coat everything. Add in lentils and broth, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 25-35 minutes. Add more broth if needed.
4. Blend about 1/2 of the soup in a blender, and return it to the pot. For smoother soup, blend more.
5. Add salt and pepper if needed, then coconut milk.
6. Top with green onions and cashews, and serve!
7. Makes enough for 3-4 people.



COMMENTS

Photos - Miles Davies

THE STUDIO GHIBLI MUSEUM

MILES DAVIES (TOKYO 2009-2010)

Welcome to the world of Ghibli!

COMMENTS

HIDDEN AWAY IN A CORNER OF Kichijoji's Inokashira Park, is the most magical place in Tokyo—perhaps in Japan. For anyone who has ever been mesmerized by the films of Studio Ghibli, whether as a child or adult, you will be enchanted all over again by the museum devoted to its works.

Opened in 2001, the museum was designed by Hayao Miyazaki himself, who said he wanted to create an uplifting and relaxing exhibition, where the building itself is part of the experience. He aims to make every visitor feel more enriched when they leave than when they entered.

Walking into the grounds is like stepping into another world and being transported back in time. On the ground floor there is the Saturn Theatre, where unreleased Ghibli shorts are shown at regular intervals, so make sure you leave time for that. The special and permanent exhibitions are on the upper levels. You have a variety of options of how to reach them—whether you take the grand staircase, the 1930s lift, or the tight spiral staircase that runs through the centre of the building. The exhibitions take you through mock-ups of the Ghibli studios themselves,

littered with drawings, sketches, and knick-knacks from the films. It's a Miyazaki-lover's fantasy. You'll also find scenery from the films, such as the food stall where Chihiro's parents meet their fate in *Spirited Away*.

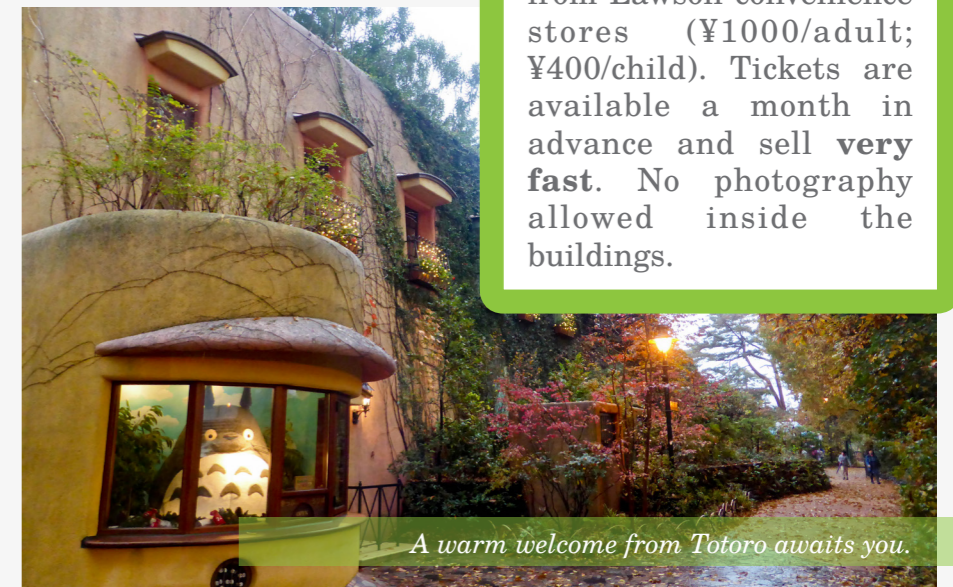
After exploring the twists and turns of the interior, the roof garden and Laputa robot awaits. From the top of the building, you get a fabulous view of the multi-layered landscaped gardens and the courtyard lying in the shade below.

Discovering the world of Ghibli is just like being transported into a mish-mash of the charming stories that the studio has produced over the last few decades. There's so much to do and see

around every corner; it's sure to delight both children and adults alike.

Miles is a long-standing Japan enthusiast, after having lived in Tokyo for 18 months. He's now taken to travelling the globe, and has lived on three continents and traversed five. He blogs about his adventures at [travelling-miles](#) and writes travel articles at [milestravellingaway](#).

From Shinjuku Station, ride the JR Chuo Line to Mitaka (20 minutes). A community bus from Mitaka Station, south exit, bus stop #9 to the museum costs ¥210/adult; ¥110/child (15 minutes). Museum tickets must be purchased in advance from Lawson convenience stores (¥1000/adult; ¥400/child). Tickets are available a month in advance and sell **very fast**. No photography allowed inside the buildings.



A warm welcome from Totoro awaits you.

JAPAN'S ISLAND OF MYSTERY

EXPLORING MINAMI DAITO

TIM FRANKLIN (OKINAWA)

FOR MANY OF US, THIS IS THE ONE OF THE WORST TIMES OF YEAR. *It's cold, it's snowy, it's miserable! But it's never too early to be thinking about warm travel plans for the year, and what better way to whet your appetites than with a collection of pictures from one of Japan's most stunning islands: Minami Daito, part of Okinawa prefecture. So turn that kotastu up high, and eat another mikan while we whisk you away...*

SWIMMING ON MINAMI DAITO PRESENTS ITS OWN SET OF CHALLENGES. THE WAVES ARE OFTEN UNPREDICTABLE AND CONSTANTLY CHANGING SO CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE ARE WARNED TO NEVER VENTURE TO THE OCEAN ALONE. THE SHORE'S RAZOR SHARP VOLCANIC ROCK LANDSCAPE IS QUITE UNFORGIVING TO THE UNFAMILIAR. EACH YEAR INEXPERIENCED SWIMMERS AND UN-EXPECTING FISHERMEN ARE SWEEPED AWAY BY ROGUE WAVES.



MINAMI DAITO IS THE EASTERNMOST OKINAWAN ISLAND, FAMOUS THROUGHOUT JAPAN FOR BEING ONE THE FIRST PARTS OF JAPAN TO BE HIT BY ANNUAL TYPHOONS. OFTEN GETTING THE FULL FORCE OF STORMS, THE BRUTALITY OF THE OCEAN IS NEVER MORE APPARENT THAN VIEWED FROM THE JAGGED ROCKY COAST. MINAMI DAITO HAS NO SANDY BEACHES TO CALL ITS OWN. THE ISLAND WAS FORMED BY AN UNDERWATER VOLCANO AND CORAL REEF PUSHING ITS WAY HIGHER AND HIGHER ABOVE THE OCEAN SURFACE.

Franklin Photography

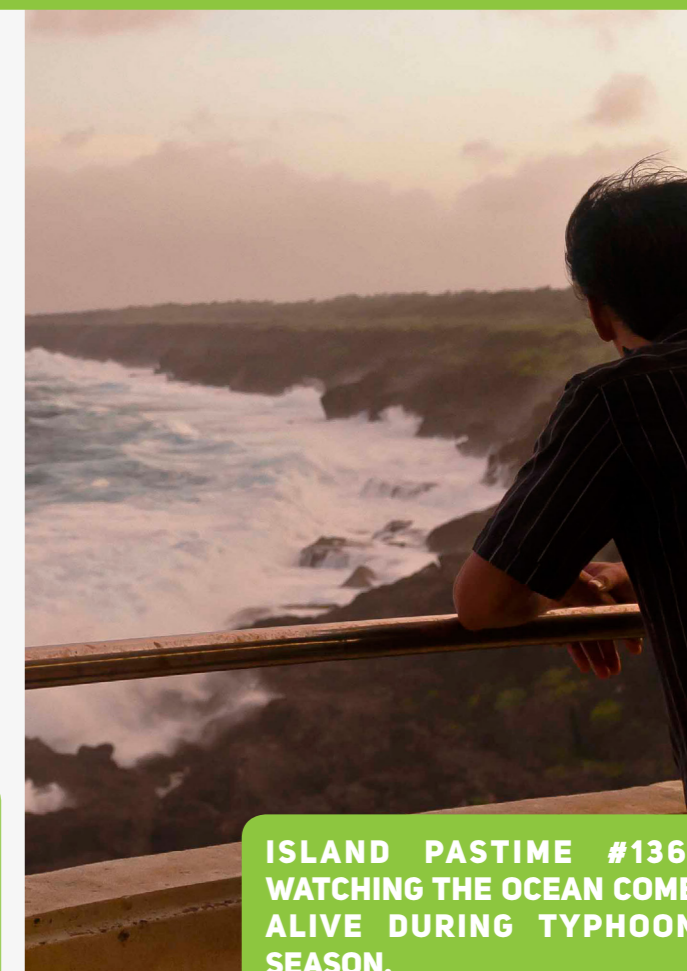


ECOLOGICALLY SPEAKING, MINAMI DAITO IS A WONDER OF BIODIVERSITY. MINAMI DAITO FALLS ALONG THE PATH OF SEVERAL BIRDS' MIGRATORY ROUTES BRINGING SEEDS FROM PLANTS AND TREES FROM AS FAR AS AFRICA.



THE ISLAND AS A WHOLE TAKES ON THE SHAPE OF A BOWL. THE OUTER EDGES ARE THE HIGHEST WITH THE INLAND AREAS DROPPING DOWN TO SEA LEVEL. SUGARCANE FIELDS FILL THE LANDSCAPE AND PROVIDE QUITE A SHOW IN FEBRUARY WHEN THESE GIANT HARVESTERS CHOP THEM DOWN.

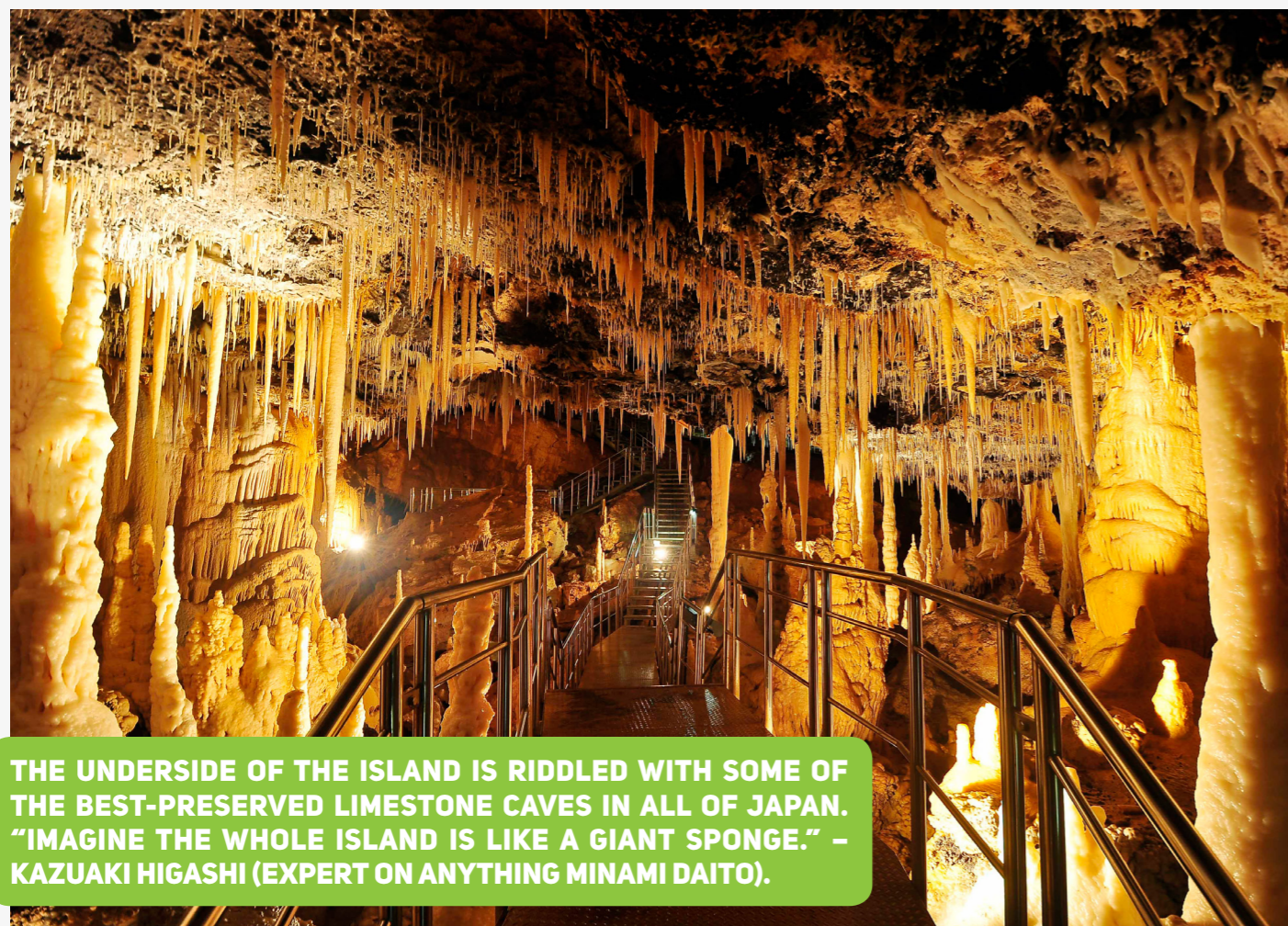
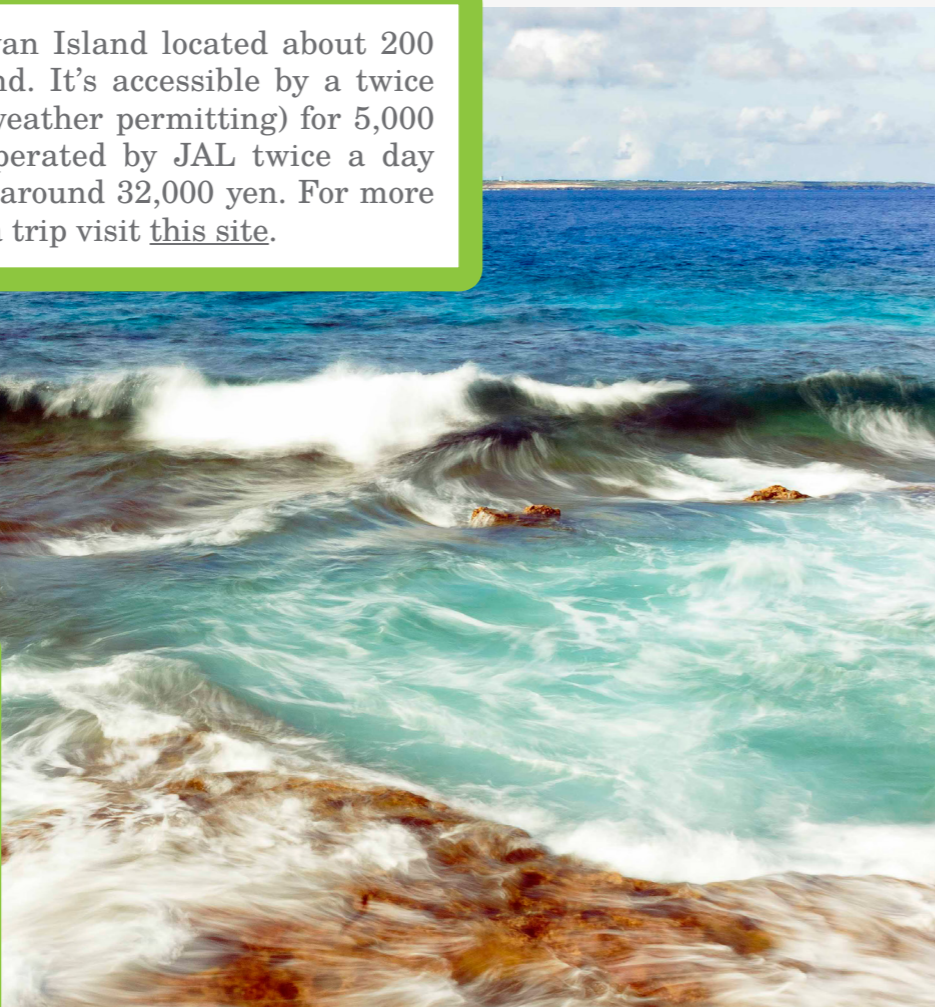
The island was originally discovered by a Russian submarine during the early 1800s becoming known as South Borodino Island until later being claimed by Japan in the early 1900s. The island's first inhabitants were pioneers from Tokyo's neighboring island Hachijo-jima. From this early settlement a unique culture began to develop as more and more Okinawans settled as well. Minami Daito Island is the only place in Japan in which Okinawan and mainland Japanese cultures are intertwined and celebrated.



ISLAND PASTIME #136: WATCHING THE OCEAN COME ALIVE DURING TYPHOON SEASON.

Minami Daito is an Okinawan Island located about 200 miles east of the main island. It's accessible by a twice weekly 15 hour ferry ride (weather permitting) for 5,000 yen, or a one-hour flight operated by JAL twice a day (morning and afternoon) for around 32,000 yen. For more information about planning a trip visit [this site](#).

STRONG CURRENTS AND SOME OF THE DEEPEST PARTS OF THE OCEAN MAKE UP THE 5-MILE DIVIDE BETWEEN MINAMI AND ITS NEIGHBOR KITA DAITO (TOP OF THE IMAGE). KITA DAITO IS THE ONLY OTHER INHABITED ISLAND WITHIN ABOUT 200 MILES.

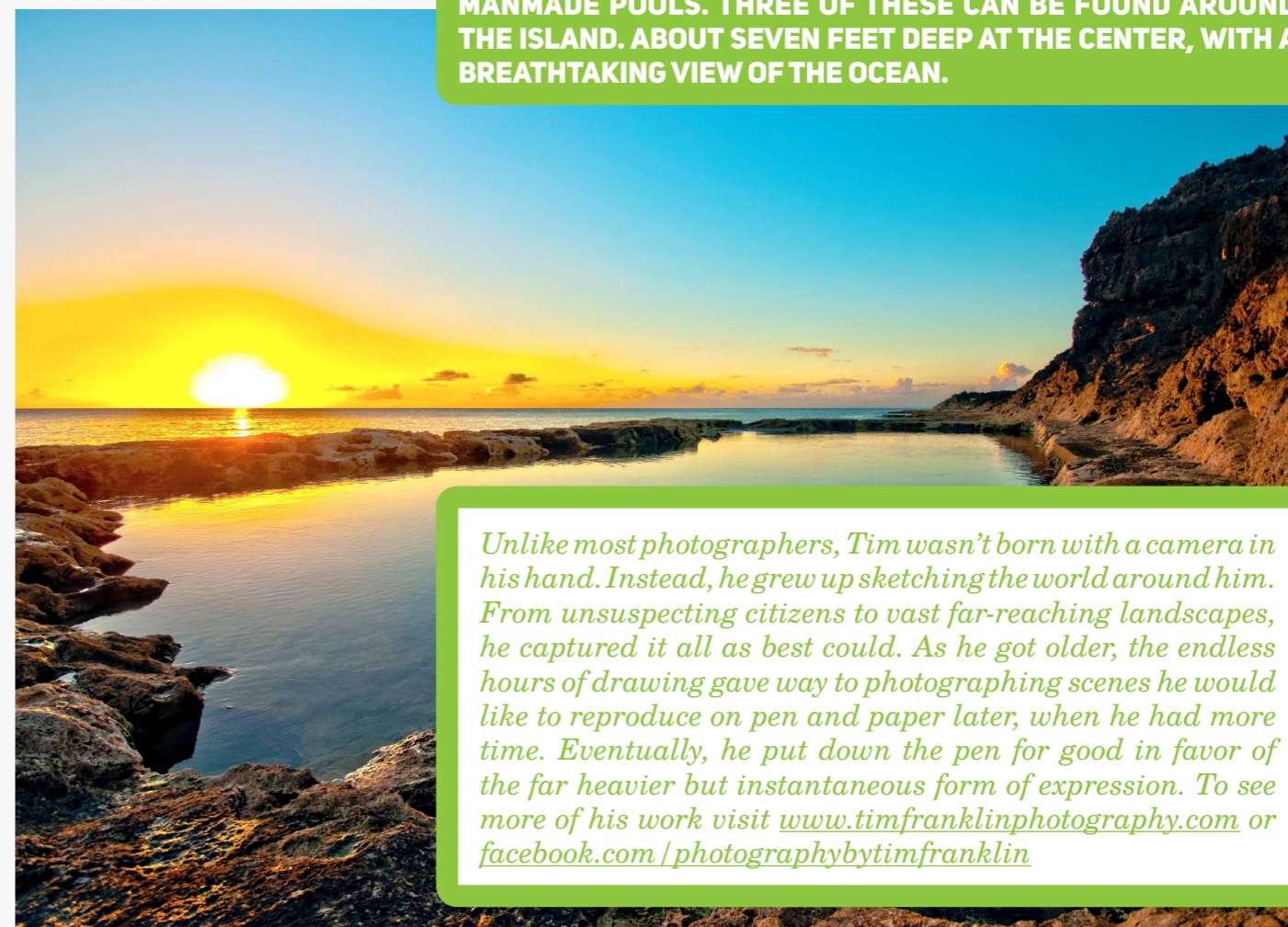


THE UNDERSIDE OF THE ISLAND IS RIDDLED WITH SOME OF THE BEST-PRESERVED LIMESTONE CAVES IN ALL OF JAPAN. "IMAGINE THE WHOLE ISLAND IS LIKE A GIANT SPONGE." – KAZUAKI HIGASHI (EXPERT ON ANYTHING MINAMI DAITO).



THE ISLAND IS ALSO FAMOUS FOR THE SUGAR CANE TRAIN THAT ONCE RAN ACROSS IT.

SAFE PLACES ARE PROVIDED FOR SWIMMING IN THE FORM OF MANMADE POOLS. THREE OF THESE CAN BE FOUND AROUND THE ISLAND. ABOUT SEVEN FEET DEEP AT THE CENTER, WITH A BREATHTAKING VIEW OF THE OCEAN.



Unlike most photographers, Tim wasn't born with a camera in his hand. Instead, he grew up sketching the world around him. From unsuspecting citizens to vast far-reaching landscapes, he captured it all as best could. As he got older, the endless hours of drawing gave way to photographing scenes he would like to reproduce on pen and paper later, when he had more time. Eventually, he put down the pen for good in favor of the far heavier but instantaneous form of expression. To see more of his work visit www.timfranklinphotography.com or [facebook.com / photographybytimfranklin](https://facebook.com/photographybytimfranklin)

THIS MONTH IN... COMMUNITY

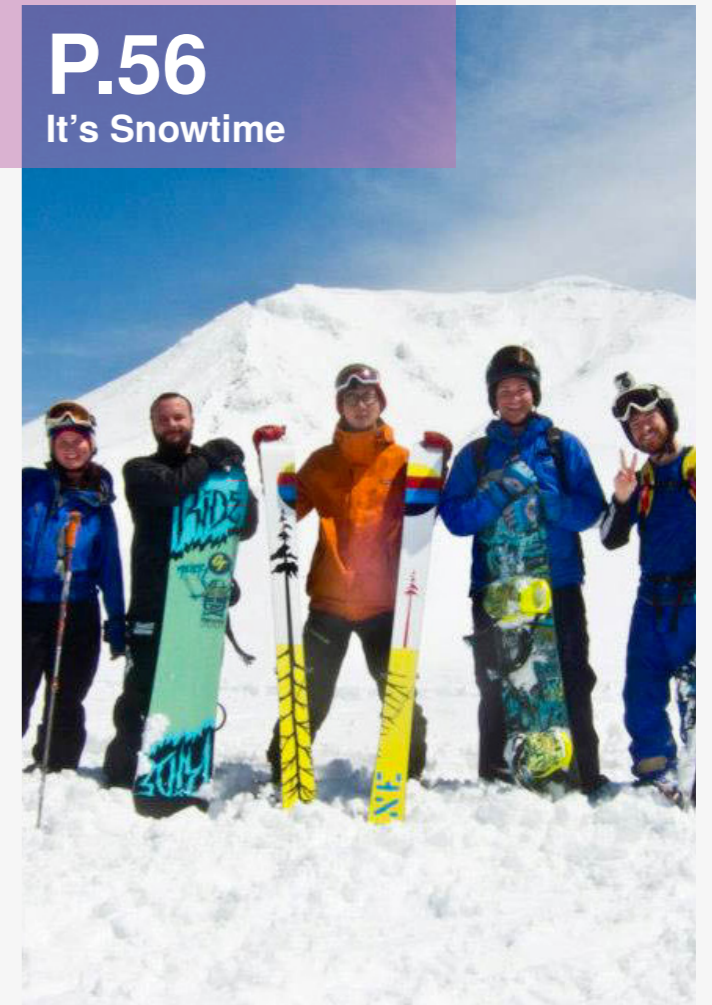
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Artists, Take Arms!



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It's Snowtime



HIROSHI FUKUSHIMA

connect.sports@ajet.net

It's February, so it's best time for snow sports. It's when the powder snow is at it's peak. Embrace the colder weather!! Many have already made the pilgrimage to the epic snow sites of Hakuba and Niseko. Fortunately I got lucky and will be running the Kumamoto Marathon. (Many marathons are lottery based entries). If you have any winter shenanigans to share let me know. Tell the world about your youthful adventures.



NATHAN BERNE

connect.volunteer@ajet.net

Cupid's a punk. He means well, but ... there's just no sense in waiting around for it!! Dates and soul mates aside, my most pressing goal in February is the Saidai-ji Eyo Hadaka Matsuri, right here in Okayama!! Watch for us on the news on Feb. 21st: your international AJET-born team will brave the elements, battle the inebriates, and slice through holy terrors untold for that prize. Whatever you like, love, or felicitate, get out and grab hold, and then tell us all about it. Make some noise, and love what you do!! JE SUIS CHARLIE!!!!

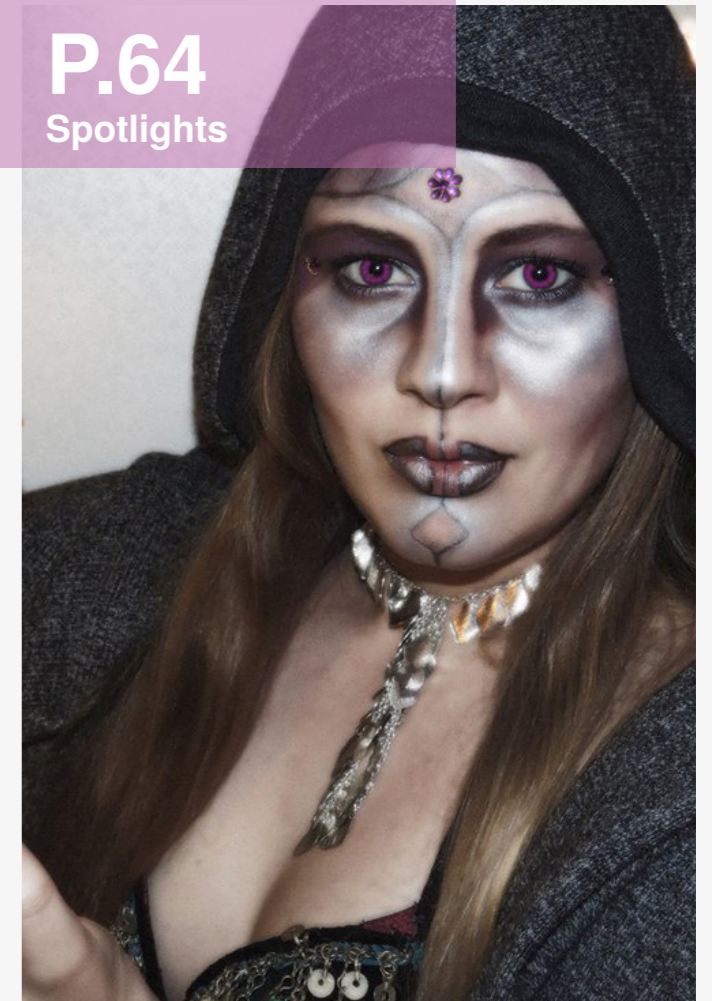
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Comics



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Spotlights



ARTISTS, TAKE ARMS! SUPPORTING TSUNAMI SURVIVORS

COURTNEY NIKOLAY (IBARAKI)



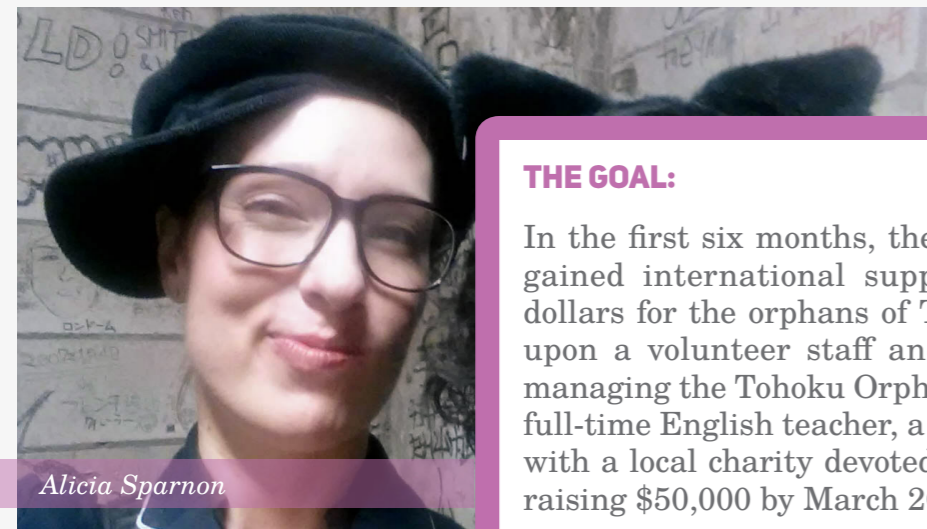
WHY NOT JAPAN: BACK TO TOHOKU

Several years ago, Alicia Sparnon, a former JET from Australia and a current English Language Teacher in Osaka, volunteered with Why Not Japan, an organization that hosts a variety of bus

visited school buildings that were damaged or affected by the disaster. The bus tour participants were shown nearly irreconcilable before-and-after pictures of the property, and were told powerful stories of the day the tsunami hit.

I would have been absolutely devastated had this happened in my town. I imagine their surviving friends would be, too.”

Working alongside the property owners, Alicia and the Why Not Japan volunteers planted a garden: a visual metaphor for the start of something new and full of life. Inspired by the



Alicia Sparnon

THE GOAL:

In the first six months, the Tohoku Orphans’ Project has gained international support and raised thousands of dollars for the orphans of Tohoku, but still relies entirely upon a volunteer staff and contributors. In addition to managing the Tohoku Orphans Project, Alicia Sparnon is a full-time English teacher, a music student, and a volunteer with a local charity devoted to childhood cancer. Her goal: raising \$50,000 by March 2016.

tours throughout all 47 prefectures. As a charitable outreach organization, Why Not Japan caught Alicia’s eye with its goal of demonstrating how Japanese landscapes have maintained their beauty and allure since the earthquake of 3/11; taking aim at both Japanese and foreign visitors alike.

However, during this particular tour in the Tohoku region, Alicia and her group

As an English teacher and orphanage volunteer, Alicia was profoundly affected as she saw first-hand what remained of the school buildings, and she began to imagine what she would have felt had her own students been inside those same falling walls on March 11th.

“My students are like family to me,” Sparnon recalled of this memorable day. “They are like my own children, and

sights and stories from her day of service, Alicia began to brainstorm how she herself could use her artistic skills to benefit the affected surviving children in the Tohoku region.

“I wanted to do more,” she explained. “I wanted to help, but at the time I didn’t know how ... until now, that is.”

The result? The Tohoku Orphans’ Project.

THE PROJECT BLOOMS

The Tohoku Orphans’ Project itself first took shape as just a few original songs for a potential album for fundraising, along with a memorial photo project, and plans for a short documentary. In the ensuing months, the Project has morphed into a pleasant surprise for Alicia, as volunteers have begun to integrate their own interests and passions into the initiative, and have been able to organize successful events for the charity across multiple arenas.



Gian Micah Bernal on Guitar

A native of the Philippines, musician Gian Micah Bernal grew up near some of the most volatile typhoon and earthquake activity in the world. As a volunteer for the Tohoku Orphan’s Project, he relates to and understands the terror of the 2011 Tohoku devastation first hand, and was eager to get involved from the beginning.

“Every year in the Philippines,” Bernal said, “When disaster strikes, we lose homes, livestock, crops, and lives. I relate personally with the children from the orphanages on how it feels to lose everything we hold dear. That is why I want to send them a message: Be strong, never lose hope, and always keep on looking forward to your future.”

A songwriter herself, Alicia nurtures connections to both local and international artists, musicians, and recording professionals in the media industry, and has thereby worked to expand the reach of the Tohoku Orphans’ Project worldwide. At present, the group’s scope has already extended to include active volunteers from Australia, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Taiwan.

Among the international contributors, a group of recently featured performers

included Rika Osaka (Japan), Ken Obata (Japan), Felix Harrison (United Kingdom),

BRINGING VOLUNTEERS AND PARTICULARLY ARTISTS TOGETHER FOR THEIR CAUSE, THE PROJECT SEEKS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE ORPHANS OF THE TOHOKU TSUNAMI DISASTER THROUGH A NUMBER OF ARENAS, INCLUDING RECORDED MUSIC, VISUAL ARTS, AND PERFORMANCES THROUGH VARIOUS FUNDRAISING EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

and Gian Micah Bernal (Philippines), who each volunteered performances and song writing skills over the last few months. As part of the Project’s initiative, the

group helped produce and record several original songs for the Project’s [Soundcloud page](#), as well as a set of acoustic songs featuring lyrics by Alicia herself.

The Tohoku Orphans’ Project grew from her singular vision to a joint humanitarian initiative. Since its inception, the Project brings together like-minded people from all walks of life, and sets high goals for future years. Bringing volunteers and artists together for the cause, the project now seeks to raise funds for the orphans of the Tohoku tsunami disaster through a number of arenas, including recorded music, visual arts, and performances featured in various fundraising events throughout the world, such as a Halloween event in Himeji last year.

SKATEBOARDS AND SALSA!

Kelly Schmidt, a Project volunteer, had the idea to incorporate Halloween into a fundraising auction event on October 19th in Himeji, Hyōgo.

“I have fond memories of many a Halloween night

out with family and friends, and of carrying a UNICEF box door-to-door,” Schmidt explained. “It seemed to me that there was no more fitting an occasion than Halloween



This past October, musician volunteers Gian Micah Bernal and Felix Harrison performed a mini live set at Varit, a live music house in Kobe, and collected another \$170 through pass-the-hat donations.

Their performances can be viewed on the Tohoku Orphans' Project [YouTube](#) page.

Harrison, Sparnon, & Bernal

to raise money for the kids, and to hopefully give them some smiles too."

Held at a popular live music spot in Himeji, the Halloween charity auction event included salsa dancing, a live DJ, skateboarding, guitar lessons, private English and Spanish conversation lessons, and even a three-song set time slot between the bands The Yabai and Lead the Blind.

"After the Tohoku disaster, there was much media coverage and charity fundraising," added Schmidt. "But, as with all calamities, enthusiasm waned and was displaced by other pressing issues. The need remains, however, for the numerous kids orphaned by the disaster."

"The [Halloween] auctions served to enrich the lives of both the highest bidder, and

the person donating their time through human connection," Sparnon said. "At the same time, it served to raise money for the orphans of Tohoku."

And raise money it did. The Halloween charity auction raised an impressive \$2,000.

THE PROJECT'S PROJECTIONS:

Alicia's full vision for the Tohoku Orphans' Project centers around various other forms of art, and looks to include both the production of a record, and a short documentary to highlight the affected families in the

region. In addition, she has also focused upon creating a series of one-of-a-kind art pieces for the charity auctions, and within the next few weeks, the Project will be launching a website to receive donations through a PayPal account.

At present, the Project is seeking more interested volunteers and talent, including musicians for live performances and recordings, a sound engineer for album production, event hosts, fashion designers, donors, and anyone else who would

If you would like to get involved with the Tohoku Orphans' Project, contact Alicia Sparnon [here](#).

Until then, follow the Tohoku Orphans' Project on [Facebook](#) for regular Project updates.

Courtney Nikolay has lived in Takahagi, Ibaraki since the summer of 2014, and teaches English at several schools throughout the area as an ALT for JET. A well-versed adventurer with a history in community service and bungee jumping, she plans to pursue a degree in Outdoor Adventure Education after exploring Japan for at least another year.



CLICK ME

"AFTER THE TOHOKU DISASTER, THERE WAS MUCH MEDIA COVERAGE AND CHARITY FUNDRAISING," ADDED SCHMIDT. "BUT, AS WITH ALL CALAMITIES, ENTHUSIASM WANED AND WAS DISPLACED BY OTHER PRESSING ISSUES. THE NEED REMAINS, HOWEVER, FOR THE NUMEROUS KIDS ORPHANED BY THE DISASTER." - KELLY SCHMIDT

CHECK OUT THEIR SOUNDCLLOUD AND YOUTUBE

"MY VISION FOR THE TOHOKU ORPHANS' PROJECT IS TO HELP THE SURVIVING CHILDREN," SPARNON SAID. "I VOLUNTEER IN AN ORPHANAGE, SO I KNOW HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS: TO BENEFIT THE ORPHANAGE, AND NOT THE CHILDREN...I WANT THEM TO KNOW THAT THEY ARE LOVED, THAT THEY ARE NOT FORGOTTEN, AND THAT PEOPLE CARE." - ALICIA SPARNON



Halloween Fundraiser at Mocco



Surveying the Weckage
Photos - Alicia Sparnon & Shiori Tsuda

IT'S SNOWTIME — TAKE TWO

MIKE DELUE (HOKKAIDO)

Last December we told you how to get started. Hopefully you've had a little time to get used to the hill, because this month it's about letting you know where to use your stuff and show it off.

WHERE SHOULD YOU GO?

Regardless of how long you've been skiing or boarding, if you're new to Japan you'll need to know where to go. If you live in the East or in Hokkaido you might have a local hill, perhaps with night-skiing and your school may even have ski classes, but if you're not so lucky, never fear! There are resorts spread across the nation. The southernmost resort in Japan (Gokase Highland) is in Miyazaki prefecture, and the colder it gets the more plentiful the turns. So, unless you live in Okinawa, you've got no excuse not to be on the mountain. Ask around, and you'll likely meet with enthusiastic hobbyists who can make recommendations, or debate over which hill is better (which could lead to your PE teacher being 10 minutes late for 4th period...)

THE BEST OF JAPAN

However, for a big ski trip and the best conditions, you may want to travel to one of the more popular resort

areas. **Nagano** makes for a great base city with an overwhelming number of hills in close reach and any terrain you could ask for on offer. Its ease-of-access by public transportation from the major metropolitan areas, snow quality, and foreigner-friendliness really make it an ideal option.

On the other hand, while it may take a bit more effort, the world-renowned snow quality and long season mean perhaps you should make your way to Japan's other winter sports playground: **Niseko**, in Hokkaido. While far for some, it is the obvious choice, with a brilliant mountain and lots of options for tours, training and facilities, even for those less-than-confident in their Japanese abilities.

Both of these cities are beautiful destinations surrounded by resorts and with lots of options for a fantastic vacation. Niseko is also on the annual Hokkaido AJET Snow Tour in early February along with the Sapporo Snow Festival and some other Hokkaido highlights to be seen with other JETs from across the nation. Probably the best way to be introduced to Big Ezo.

MISS PART ONE OF THIS STORY? READ IT ON ISSUU OR AJET.NET

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

What's that? You're a real gnarly pow-hound, are ya? You can probably get their fill at either of those two world-class locations, but you may find the hills a bit packed, and during busy times the freshies might take some work

and watching. Experienced pow-hounds looking to get off the beaten track a bit may want to hit up the "resorts" in easy reach of **Asahikawa** (Furano, Asahidake, Kurodake) or book a few days at **Rusutsu** which made it onto Powderhounds.com's top three resorts in the world for those keen on the deep stuff. For the enthusiast, the powder here makes up for the lack of Après-ski activities.

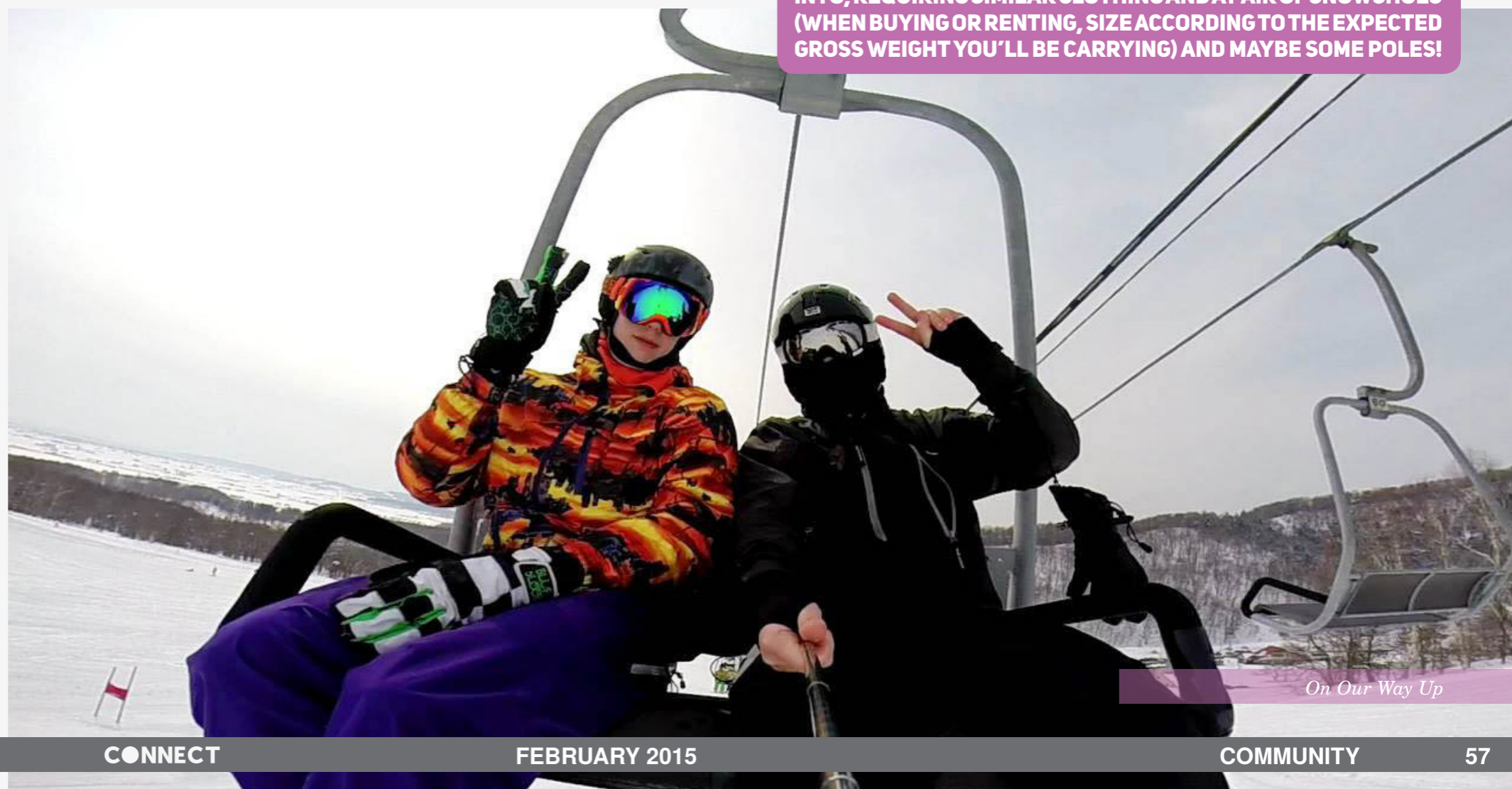
ALTERNATIVE SNOW FUN

If all of this plummeting down mountainsides isn't really your jam, you don't have to be stuck inside all winter. Snowshoeing is one of the easiest snowsports to get into, requiring similar clothing and a pair of snowshoes (when buying or renting, size according to the

expected gross weight you'll be carrying) and maybe some poles! It's a great way to get out in the winter.

There's also cross-country skiing, if you want to be in arguably the best shape ever. Or you can try the loud and obnoxious (but unbelievable fun) to be had on a snowmobile. Ice skating rinks

SNOWSHOEING IS ONE OF THE EASIEST SNOWSPORTS TO GET INTO, REQUIRING SIMILAR CLOTHING AND A PAIR OF SNOWSHOES (WHEN BUYING OR RENTING, SIZE ACCORDING TO THE EXPECTED GROSS WEIGHT YOU'LL BE CARRYING) AND MAYBE SOME POLES!



On Our Way Up

DOS AND DON'TS:

○ **DO: check the mountain reports.**

Whether you're trying to plan a trip for a group with a variety of ability levels, or sitting in your hotel room at 4am trying to decide which hill to hit, a quick look at the mountain reports can make your job much easier. With details on facilities, conditions, runs, access, and anything else you need to know [SnowJapan](#) is a great online English resource.

○ **DO: talk to the locals.**

You never know when you're going to make new friends, and they may just have some good advice for you. Sometimes a little Japanese practice on the lift turns into learning about that secret spot the locals keep on the down low.

○ **DO: push your limits.**

Hit that run you've never tried. Try that trick you never land. The worst that'll happen is you fall down. No big deal, brush it off and move on. This **doesn't mean** getting yourself hurt or overreaching though. Regardless, you're well protected right? Because you're smart and wearing a helmet right? Good. Wear a helmet.

✗ **DON'T: sit in the middle of the run.**

This goes for everywhere. We all get tired, but snowboarders get a real bad wrap for this. If you're new to snowboarding (or skiing) and you get tired, pull off to the edge of the run and make sure there's good visibility from above. Don't sit below landing zones, just below rises that might hide you from anybody above you, or in the middle of the piste. If you fall, dust yourself off and get up. If you need to recover, do it off to the side. Better yet, take a break inside.

✗ **DON'T: be afraid to fall.**

Fear of falling is one of the easiest ways for your skills to progress at a snail's pace. You're strapped to a piece of wood falling down a mountain covered in frozen water trying not to die; you're probably gonna fall over. If it's happening a lot that means you're learning something. Be smart. Wear a helmet.

✗ **DON'T: be an off-piste idiot.**

We all love slackcountry, fresh lines and deep powder. The difference between "clearly safe" and "uh oh..." is grey and fuzzy for some, and a hard line for others. Exercise good judgment, read the avalanche reports, talk to locals, and don't put yourself in too much danger. If you're going truly off-piste, then you should know what you're doing (avalanche certification is available in English here), have a similarly educated friend with you, be kitted out with your probe, shovel and beacon, and know how to use them. Going backcountry without this knowledge and equipment is stupid, dangerous, irresponsible and evident of a profound disrespect for everyone else and for the mountain. Be safe!



Photo Break at Asahidake

are pretty cheap and easy if you live close enough to a big city. For those with no fear of pain, heights, or plummeting to their death, you could try ice climbing! I hope you don't mind if I politely decline in advance your kind invitation to join you, though.

There's not enough time (er, well, column space) here to get into it all, but suffice it to say "It's cold!" is no excuse not to be out and about and getting some exercise in

Japan this winter.

So get keen kids, and get cracking. The snow's falling here in the deep north and it'll make its way south like a colder, more exciting version of the spring sakura bloom in reverse. There are mountains to be conquered, admired, and then fallen off of. There are lines to be had, and epic spills to be caught on your buddy's

GoPro (then uploaded to YouTube and laughed at by the entire internet)! We leave you with a short list of Dos and Don'ts for your time on the hill.

Mike DeLue, a third-year ALT, based in Higashikagura-cho, Hokkaido, home to Japan's best ski resorts. Mike earned his first few turns in Honshu while occasionally attending classes at KGU between drunken Osaka shenanigans. After returning stateside and being beaten into submission by the icy Pennsylvania slopes (and a pair of alpine snowboarders with no fear and no sense of self-preservation), he has temporarily retreated to the powdery goodness that is Hokkaido. There he seeks to conquer the Daisetsuzan year-round by foot, snowshoe, snowboard and motorcycle.

FEAR OF FALLING IS ONE OF THE EASIEST WAYS FOR YOUR SKILLS TO PROGRESS AT A SNAIL'S PACE. YOU'RE STRAPPED TO A PIECE OF WOOD FALLING DOWN A MOUNTAIN COVERED IN FROZEN WATER TRYING NOT TO DIE; YOU'RE PROBABLY GONNA FALL OVER.



Greeting Life-riders

COMICS



MARIKA'S COMICS

Marika participated in JET from August 2013 - 2014 in Akita Prefecture. Her comic hobby started there and now she is back in New Zealand, working at an International English school in Japanese student services. She enjoys drawing comics in her free time.

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#)

M.I.C.K.E.Y.



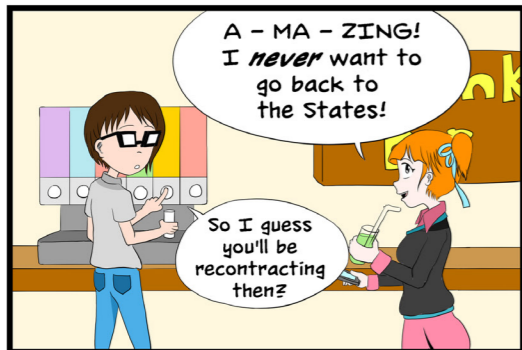
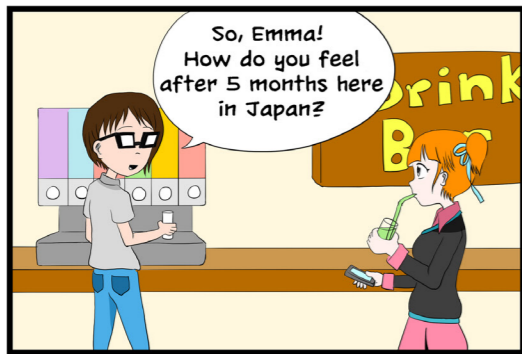
LET'S SPEAK ENGLISH by Mary Cagle

Mary Cagle is an ALT in Miyagi prefecture. When she's not teaching elementary school kids, she's probably drawing comics! Besides Let's Speak English, she also draws a weekly action adventure comic called Kiwi Blitz. You can read both for free at marycagle.com and kiwiblitz.com!

THE ETERNAL QUESTION



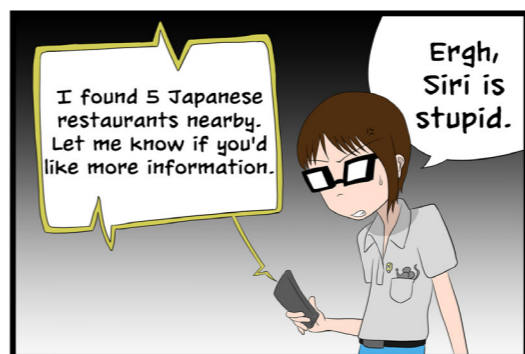
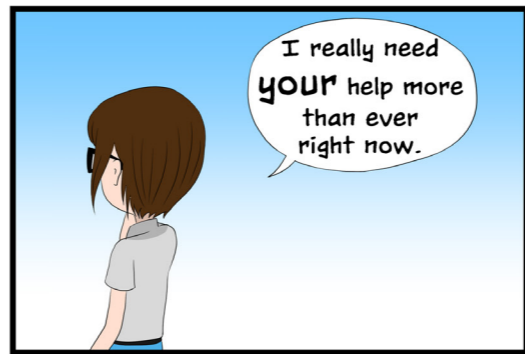
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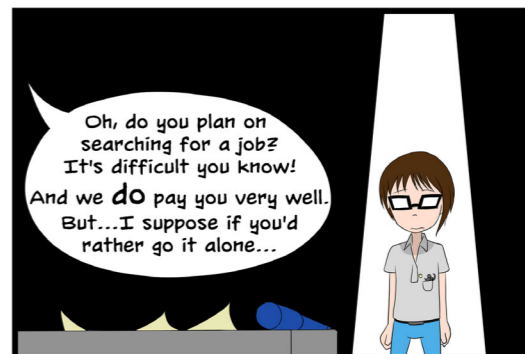
Q and A



Personal Assistance



It's Dangerous to Go Alone. Here, Sign This!



JET PEEVES by Chris Chong

Being a JET is easy, but making other people care about our experience is a challenge like no other. JET Peeves is an attempt to share my experiences as an ALT by highlighting every facepalm moment in my daily life.

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Tumblr](#) | [YouTube](#)

SPOTLIGHTS

SPOTLIGHT NOMINATION?
 Know someone in the community doing something neat or noteworthy? Nominate them for next month's Spotlight at connect.editor@ajet.net!



JULIAN PEREZ (FUKUSHIMA)

Meet Julian Perez! Originally from Cuernavaca, Mexico, he came to Motomiya, Fukushima at the end of 2002, because he had always wanted to live in Japan.

During his early days in Japan, he joined an organisation called Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). He became a JICA English teacher and medical trainer, helping Japanese doctors and nurses go abroad to give aid to Third World countries. It was a very rewarding and fulfilling experience, enabling him to use his medical degree to help others.

In 2003, he started running cultural food events. One of its primary goals was to establish and promote cross-cultural ties between Mexico, Japan and foreign countries. These were held 2-3 times a year, helping many people learn about Mexican culture and cuisine. This love of cultural cooking led to him opening a restaurant in Fukushima in 2006, called 'Don Jalapenos'. He's hosting his next event there on Valentine's Day, Saturday February 14th, with chocolate and cheese fondue! You can contact Julian at his restaurant: 'Don Jalapenos', Koriyama-shi, Toramaru-machi, 20-29, ph. 090-6258-1229.



LAUREN JEFFERS (KYOTO)

Lauren Jeffers is a third year teacher from northern Kyoto with a passion for surreal self-portraiture. Coupled with an interest in costuming and creative make-up, and armed with her trusty Nikon Coolpix P510, she sets out to express herself through her photography. Her inspiration generally comes from strong emotions sparked from songs, movies, quotes and experiences, which she then seeks to recreate in her work. Working in self-portraiture comes with its own set of challenges in that she is required to work both sides of the camera simultaneously. She jokes that she has now become very good at using the timer on her camera to get the shots just right. She really enjoys the whole process from make-up and costume, to the post-production editing, and loves experimenting with new ways to share her thoughts with others.

For anyone looking to get started in creative photography she encourages that they should not feel limited by a lack of experience or equipment. There are a lot of good sources out there, from blogs and articles to online tutorials and other artists' work. So, find a style that suits you and get snapping! Her work can be found on her [Facebook page](#).



TASNEEM KAUSAR

Tasneem Kausar is an artist based in Yorkshire, England. From an experience in high school maths class, where she became intrigued by the anime eyes the girl next to her was drawing, Tasneem's deep interest in Japan began. Her works are heavily influenced by an eclectic mix of manga, ukiyo-e prints, art nouveau and fashion illustration. It is her belief that Art is a form of escapism, which should take the viewer away from reality for as long as they like.

After graduating from Bradford College with an Art and Design degree, she set up her own business, Kiro-arts—named after her beloved chinchilla, Kiro. She splits her creative time between traditional and digital painting, illustration, craft and teaching workshops. She is also the director of MAJIKKON, Huddersfield's anime, manga and comic convention.

When not working on her next piece, you can find Tasneem seeking inspiration from music, thought-provoking books and long nature walks with her camera. Check out her work at [Kiro-arts](#).



LULI KAFKA BROOKES (OKAYAMA)

The New Year springs new life. On January 15th, 2015, Okayama Prefecture witnessed another exceptional miracle! After months of anticipation, local CIR Kayne Brookes and wife Taeun Kim Brookes welcomed a healthy new baby girl into the world! Weighing a healthy 3502 grams, Luli Kafka Brookes has taken her first breath, witnessed her first snowfall, and will see her first brush with Valentine's Day—all in her first month on earth. Congratulations to Kayne, Taeun, and Luli Kafka from all of us at Connect!



CONTRIBUTING TO CONNECT

Connect is a magazine for the community in Japan, by the community in Japan. Everyone is welcome to write, no matter your experience or style! If you have an idea you want to see in these pages, reach out to our Head Editor, or any of our awesome section editors. We'll work with you to make it the best it can be and share it with our audience of thousands. Not every article needs to be an essay! We feature interviews, infographics, top-ten lists, recipes, photo spreads, travelogues, and more.

Contact Head Editor Steven Thompson at connect.editor@ajet.net with your submissions, comments, and questions.

ARTICLES

Write about something you're doing. Write about something you love. Tell us a story.

SPOTLIGHT

Tell us about someone in your community who's doing something neat and noteworthy. Cooks, collectors, calligraphers—we want to hear about the inspiring people around you.

COMMENTS

Let us know what you think. Click the comment button at the end of any article, or interact with us on Facebook, Twitter, and issuu.com.

PHOTOS

All of Connect's photos are provided by the community, from the cover to the articles and everything in between. If you're an aspiring photographer and want your work published, send it to us at connect.editor@ajet.net.

HAIKU

Each month Connect will feature haiku from our readers. Haiku are simple, clean, and can be about anything you like! If you're an aspiring wordsmith with the soul of Basho, send all of your haiku along with your name and prefecture to contest@ajet.net.

COMICS

You asked for it, and now Connect features comics. Whether you're a desk doodler or a published artist, we want to see your panels and strips about life in Japan.



CONNECT WITH US

Interested in contributing to Connect? Want to stay up-to-date on interview opportunities, photo requests, and Connect announcements? Sign up to be a contributor at the [Connect Contributors Circle](#) online to receive updates from us, pitch your ideas, and discuss with the Connect staff and community.

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