



The Japan Exchange and Teaching Alumni Association of British Columbia



Serving the JET Set since 1995

Volume 10, Number 4

Newsletter

Winter 2005

あけましておめでとうございます！

Akemashite omedeto gozaimasu!

It's time to celebrate the Year of the Rooster! We are pleased to invite all JETAABC members and their guests to the

2005 JETAABC Annual General Meeting and Shinnenkai

When: Friday, January 28th, 2005
(AGM 6:00pm, Shinnenkai 7:00 - 9:00pm)

Where: The Art Institute of Vancouver,
1090 W. Georgia Street, Suite 700, Vancouver
Phone: 604-782-5348

Please RSVP to Greg Joughin at social@bc.jetaa.ca or phone 604-438-4747 at your earliest convenience.

Please note that we encourage all of our members and their guests to attend. Therefore, if you are traveling a long distance to come to the AGM (e.g. Vancouver Island), please contact Joseph Luk at secretary@bc.jetaa.ca or phone 604-782-5348. JETAABC may be able to subsidize some of the transportation cost of the Shinnenkai and we will help find a place for you to stay.

Annual General Meeting

(6:00 - 7:00 pm)

Election of our new Board of Directors and other important JETAABC Business. Please consider running for a position! See page 3 for job descriptions and check the JETAABC web page (www.bc.jetaa.ca) for the latest updates.

Shinnenkai

(7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)

Japanese and Western food and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided. This is a great chance to meet and catch up with fellow alumni in a friendly atmosphere.

Special update: We will be auctioning off three gorgeous framed photographs from the JET Eye exhibition! Postcards will also be available for sale. All proceeds to the Red Cross relief efforts in Southeast Asia.

Happy New Year! See You There!

Greetings from the JET Desk at the Consulate

Steve Chevalier

Recruitment for the 2005-2006 JET Programme has come to a close as of November 19, 2004. Going into its 19th year, interest in participating on the JET Programme is still high. We spoke with almost a thousand potential candidates through information sessions and career fairs in B.C. The Consulate thanks all the alumni who helped us promote the JET Programme, this year. Alumni are very important in generating enthusiasm for the programme through relating their first-hand experiences to applicants. Next up in February is interviewing and ranking all the applicants who passed the written application part of the process.

Staff from CLAIR visited Vancouver in early November to talk about issues surrounding the JET Programme. One of the new changes is the creation of a third year Elementary School ALT position. ALTs in their second year can apply for these positions, if offered by their Contracting Organization. Those who are not successful in obtaining the position will simply continue in their current contract position. Among other activities, CLAIR held an information session at the University-College of the Cariboo and enjoyed meeting with the JETAABC Board of Directors.

The Thirteenth Annual JET Programme Essay Competition is underway. Past or present JET participants are welcome to submit essays in hopes of winning one of several cash prizes. Topics to choose from include:

- *Grass Roots Internationalisation at the Local Level
- *Foreign Language Education
- *International Exchange through Sports
- *The JET Programme Experience
- *The JET Programme Experience and How It Has Affect My Life after JET

Details and entry forms are available through the CLAIR website at www.jetprogramme.org. Entries must be post-marked by Friday, March 11, 2005.

Consulate General of Japan Vancouver

800-1177 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6K-2K9

Inquiries: (604) 684-5868

Fax: (604) 684-6939

www.vancouver.ca.emb-japan.go.jp

Steve Chevalier and information on the JET Programme:
culturalcentre@consuljpnvan.com

As for the rest of this issue:

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Got something to say? Say it in print! Email newsletter@bc.jetaa.ca. Next issue deadline: TBA

Membership Update

As a group, JET Alumni tend to move a lot. Therefore, our alumni database is always heading towards disarray. If your address or email has changed recently, you can update your information with the Membership Coordinator by sending it to membership.bc@bc.jetaa.ca. The new JETAABC Forums (www.bc.jetaa.ca/bb) are another convenient way to update your contact information. Thanks!



The JETAABC newsletter is now available online on the JETAABC website and Forums (www.bc.jetaa.ca). If you are currently receiving a hard copy and would prefer to read the electronic edition, please email the Membership Coordinator at any time to let us know. We'll send an email when a new issue is posted. Its just that easy!

Take This Job...

President

Acts as the official representative of JETAABC. Liaises with the Japanese Consulate, CLAIR and other chapters throughout the world. Chairs the Board of Directors meetings. Advises and coordinates all JETAABC activities in conjunction with the Board of Directors and delegates duties and responsibilities to volunteers.

president@bc.jetaa.ca, Angie Freedman

Secretary

Prepares the agenda for and takes minutes at meetings. Forwards the agenda and minutes to the various committee members. Maintains the official minute book and all files and correspondence for JETAABC.

secretary@bc.jetaa.ca, Joseph Luk

Treasurer

Maintains records of JETAABC's finances and is responsible for making bank deposits, balancing the cheque book, and monthly reporting on the financial activities to the Board of Directors. In conjunction with the Board of Directors, prepares the application for the CLAIR grant-in-aid, and liaises with CLAIR on matters related to this. The treasurer is one of the signatories on the JETAABC bank account.

treasurer@bc.jetaa.ca, Matt Fedoruk

Membership Director

Updates membership information and contact information of all alumni in the JETAABC database. Liaises with the Japanese Consulate in obtaining updates and additions to the membership list. Encourages alumni to join JETAABC.

membership@bc.jetaa.ca, Bobby Taylor

Preparation Seminar and Social Coordinator

This position involves organizing several social events and the annual Preparation Seminar for new JETs, which is usually held in June. The social events should take place at various times throughout the year.

social@bc.jetaa.ca, Greg Joughin

Career and Personal Development Coordinator

This position involves organizing the annual Re-Entry & Career Seminar in October. The position also involves developing and organizing on-going career-related events such as Think Tanks, resume building workshops.

careerseminar@bc.jetaa.ca, Stephenie Gold and Zamiha Virjee



Newsletter Editor

The most visible part of JETAABC is our quarterly newsletter. This position involves collecting and editing articles for publication. This person is also responsible for liaising with printers, organizing distribution and working with a

set budget and deadlines.

newsletter@bc.jetaa.ca, Christine Rowlands

Technical Coordinator

This person is responsible for the JETAABC website, and other technical related responsibilities such as archiving documents online. This person also moderates the JETAABC discussion forums and the Yahoo! email list.

webmaster@bc.jetaa.ca, Andrew Eisenberg

Volunteer Coordinator

Solicits and directs volunteers to the appropriate sub-committee. This person also serves as the primary contact for potential volunteers.

volunteer@bc.jetaa.ca, Jane Leung

Programs and Services Coordinator

This position involves organizing the mentoring program and liaising with volunteer organizations such as Tonari Gumi. This person is also responsible for developing and managing educational programs.

services@bc.jetaa.ca, Dianne Cook

Cultural Programs Coordinator

Coordinates the Japan Suitcase Program, cooking classes, and other cultural special events.

cultural@bc.jetaa.ca, Nina Inaoka

Director at Large

The holder of this position is a member of the Board of Directors. There are no specific duties assigned to this member, but he or she is expected to help out or take on new projects that cannot be filled by other directors. For example, previous tasks have been submitting reports to the Minister of Finance and by-law revision and drafting.

director@bc.jetaa.ca, Damien Vilaysane

Senior Advisor

This is an elected position, to be filled by someone who has previously served on the Board of Directors.

advisor@bc.jetaa.ca, Kristin Olson

...And Fill It!

Run for a Position on the 2005 JETAABC Executive

If you are interested in running for a position on the Board of Directors and would like more details about the job, please contact the current person at the email address listed.

JETAA International Attempts To Unite The World

Paul Donovan, Kitakyushu City ALT 1991-1994, Past President JETAABC

At the JETAA International Meeting held in Portland, Oregon in early November 2004, the JETAA Country Representatives and JETAAI Executive members met with CLAIR and Ministry of Foreign Affairs representatives for a three-day discussion about issues related to the JETAAI and its future. I was not able to attend but received quite a few reports back from the meeting. One of the largest single items discussed at this meeting was the new Content Management System (CMS) that is being developed.

I have been involved with JETAA International every since I was the President of JETAABC. One of the common themes of almost every JETAA International Conference has been to find a way to improve communications between chapters and alumni. For years, each chapter has been a stand-alone unit with little interaction with other chapters. In 2000 and 2001, the structure of JETAAI was put into place, country representatives were elected and a more solid organization was put into place. Alas, communication was still extremely limited and too many things were not being discussed and shared.

JETAAI came to Vancouver in 2002 for the International Conference. At that conference, we received yet another report on how to make a centralized database of alumni from around the world; this was probably the second time such a report was given at an international conference. Alas, that report was not followed-up on. When I made my special presentation at the 2002 conference about a new centralized web site for JETAAI and JETAA chapters around the world, I received a standing ovation (well figuratively speaking that is, they didn't literally stand up and applaud me). At the time, my goal was to unite all the JETAA chapters and JETAAI together using the web site as a common tool. I even offered to host the individual chapter web sites for a ridiculously cheap price using the services of my company, Living Productions. My desire was to encourage chapters to have a web site, and to use their web sites more effectively to communicate with their members, other chapters and JET alumni from around the world.

At the International Conference in February 2004 in New York, I and fellow alumnus Scott Norman of Detroit, made a video presentation to the participants about the web site and a common, centralized database. One of the attendees at that conference was Paul Reid. He saw what we were attempting to do and received the blessing of that gathering to follow through with the web/database planning. Since that time, Paul has worked feverishly on the plan, talking with

CLAIR and MOFA and JETAAI Executive members. He brought his plans to the International Meeting in Portland this past November, and after considerable discussion received the nod of approval to actually make the first steps of this new Content Management System.

CLAIR and MOFA will finance the development of the new CMS. There are four alumni that will be working on the development: Paul Reid; Stuart Cruikshanks of Perth, Australia; Scott Norman of Detroit; and myself, Paul Donovan. Living Productions will be the contractor for the project, but the four of us will be doing the main programming and development.

This new CMS is full of exciting opportunities for alumni around the world. Not only will we develop a web site that allows for more open communication between chapters and alumni but we will develop a centralized database of JETAA's over 30,000 members, which is currently managed so poorly, for alumni from all over the world. The aim is to formally announce this new CMS to the JETAA International Conference to be held in Japan in May 2005, and to returning JETs who are in Japan now. We are exploring providing JET members with permanent email addresses that will be used as their membership account control so that alumni will be able to maintain their own accounts and information.

We are asking all chapters from around the world to provide us with input into things that they would like to see available in this new CMS. We have had huge discussions about security and privacy of the data. Our team wants everyone to know that we are fully aware of the need for security and privacy. Before anything is released to the open Internet world, we will do our best to ensure that full security is in place.

If you are interested in following the development of the new CMS, or want to assist with working on the development team, please feel free to contact me at: paul@livingproductions.com. We welcome suggestions and ideas from each and every one of you as the CMS is developed. We anticipate that this Content Management System will never stop developing which means we hope you will be always giving us feedback and ideas.



Connect to JETAABC the Easy Way

JETAABC is one of the largest and most active JETAA chapters out there, and one of the reasons for that is the variety of ways members can stay connected. Besides the quarterly newsletter, we have a Yahoo! email list and the new JETAABC Forums page.

Signing up for the Yahoo! email list brings the latest JETAABC news to your inbox, and allows you to broadcast your message to over 500 members throughout BC. To sign up, just go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jetaabclist/join>.

To access job postings, upcoming events, Board of Director happenings, discussions, and links to JETAA and Japan resources, register your genki self on the new Forums at www.bc.jetaa.ca/bb. The bulletin board is self-regulated and features new content every day.



JETAA France Comes A-Callin'

Paul Donovan, Kitakyushu City ALT 1991-1994, Past President JETAABC



“Here is a gift from JETAA France to thank you for your special efforts with our web site,” said Yvonne Chu-Kit, Vice-Secretary for JETAA France, as we sat over coffee at Blenz on Robson and Bute on a cool, late October evening. Why was Yvonne in Vancouver? Why was she giving me French wine?

Some of you may know, on the first weekend of November the Country Representatives and the Executive members of JETAA International met in Portland, Oregon for an International Meeting. Yvonne was on her way to the meeting representing France. She chose to stop into Vancouver on her way because she'd heard so much about us. I guess the JETAA International Conference held here in 2002 so got the attention of JETAA France's representative that Yvonne just had to come and visit Vancouver.

It was really interesting to listen to Yvonne talk about her history as a Asian-French citizen and hear the French accent coming from an Asian person. Her family has a very interesting history; suffice it to say, her grandparents and father have ties to Montreal from decades ago, so she also has some interest in Canada (some family still live in Montreal).

JETAA France is a small chapter with only a handful of members at this time. Although France has been sending JET participants to Japan since almost the beginning of the programme, the numbers have been quite small. Every year they only send about 10 new ALTs or CIRs to Japan. Currently JETAA France has less than 100 members, most of them in the Paris region with a small number outside of Paris.

Yvonne was quite proud to talk about the accomplishments of French JETs in Japan. Most of them go as CIRs and work in International Associations in Japanese cities. Many of the alumni who return to France often find themselves in high demand for their Japanese skills. A fair number of their alumni are now working in careers that have something to do with Japan, or they take their experience and trade it into a good international job. Many alumni have furthered their education in International or Asian Studies.

It was a pleasant evening having coffee with Yvonne. We continued over to Thai House for dinner, where we switched into French and I had a chance to exercise my language skills even more (to say they were rusty is an understatement). I dropped her off at her B&B in the West End late in the evening.

Sometimes we forget about the other chapters around the world. We don't take the time to get to know what is happening with them. I work a lot with JETAA International and their web site so I have some encounters with other chapters. Even still, I don't really know much about how other chapters are operating and what kinds of things are happening. We are always proud that JETAABC is one of the most active chapters in the world, in terms of local activities, but we need to do some explorations with other chapters to see if we can gain more knowledge about what is happening in other places.

Karaoke Madness

Christine Rowlands



Next to a massage, karaoke is the best stress-buster I know. My favourite karaoke bar in Vancouver is the lounge of the Dufferin Hotel (900 Seymour Street), where you can sing 7 nights a week for the price of your drinks. Unfortunately, my non-JET friends aren't quite so enthusiastic about singing badly in public. If you are suffering some karaoke withdrawal and want to get your friends to go with you more often, here are my tips for a happy Vancouver karaoke time. Don't you feel better already?

- Seduce your virgins gently. Do NOT force them to sing. EVER. If possible, go to a bar rather than a box so they can see other participants (you included), good and bad, get up there and sing. Always emphasize that participation is what really counts at karaoke, not voice talent.
- Get to the bar earlier rather than later if you plan to sing more than one song. Tipping the host doesn't hurt either.
- Support other performers. Clap, sing along, listen. Everyone likes a good audience.
- Stay off the stage when its not your turn! Nobody wants to see your drunken self grab the extra mike or dance in circles around the performer. Okay, maybe its kind of entertaining. Just try not to crash the songs of strangers, and don't crash every one of your friends' songs either.
- Share the songbook? And buy your table a pitcher while you're at it.
- Try to pick songs you know well that are in your vocal range. If you get up there and find the key is too high or low, ask if they can adjust. If not, do your best.
- If you must practice beforehand, do it someplace where you can sing LOUD. Especially for a belter (say, Joe Cocker's "A Little Help from My Friends"), singing it yourself on the bus may not translate well to the karaoke stage.
- Last but not least, do not drive to or from your karaoke experience. Sobriety and karaoke just don't go together.

Kodo

Bobby Taylor

Being a JET, you may remember that there was always a festival being held somewhere, celebrating something. Whether it was a planting or harvest festival, a festival of fireflies or horned beetles, a festival to bring in the new year or to celebrate midsummer, there was always one reason or another to crack open a bottle of sake and join in on the festivities. More often than not, taiko were being drummed on a stage or float somewhere in the midst of celebration.

I was deeply moved by taiko the first time I saw it, and studied it almost religiously for three years while I was on JET. I saw many groups perform, and in fact, performed with several groups. But the group that most sent shivers up my back and put me in awe the first time I watched their performance was without a doubt: Kodo.

Kodo first formed in 1981 and is based on Sado Island in the Sea of Japan. The group was founded on the philosophy of preserving Japan's traditional performing arts. Originally living and practicing in an old converted schoolhouse, the group now occupies a 25 acre plot of land that is home to Kodo Village. Keeping in line with the group's philosophy, most of the structures in the village (main office, dormitory, cooking and dining hall and giant rehearsal hall) are derelict farmhouses that have been reconstructed to suit

their modern functions.

Another interesting fact is that each member of the group runs 10km each and every morning, and at each meal there is at least one dish that is home-grown on the land.

With a very grass-roots approach to living, there is nothing grass-roots about their performance. A highly polished and choreographed tour de force, each Kodo performance is an intoxicating pulse of visual sound.

And with that being said, Kodo is coming to Vancouver. The Queen Elizabeth Theater will be alive with the sound of taiko on February 14, 2005. To see this level of taiko being performed in Vancouver is an opportunity not to be missed. And to see, hear and feel Kodo is an experience both taiko enthusiasts and those with only an inkling of interest in taiko will be sure to enjoy.

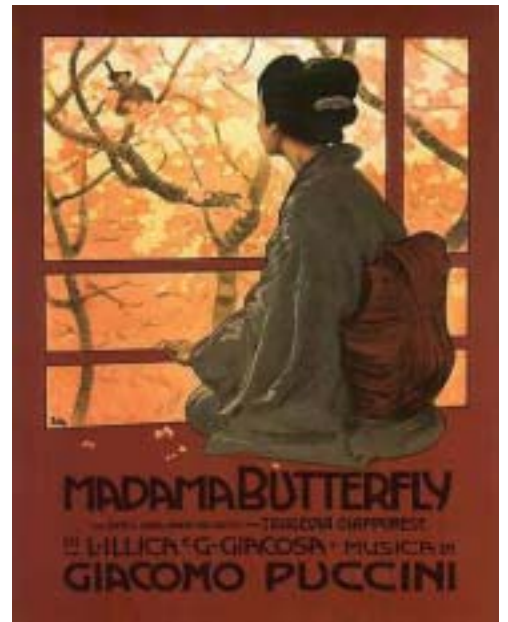


Places We Were Things We Did Around JETAABC in Fall 2004

We were active in putting on events and promoting JETAABC in the community this fall. Greg Joughin organized several well-attended Food Nights at restaurants scattered across the city, including Yoshoku-Ya downtown, Akiyoshi in North Vancouver and Van-Ya in East Van. The foodies among us loved trying out new restaurants and meeting other JET alumni in a very informal setting. More please.... About 30 alumni and guests came out to party with local wine and food gurus Halfaglass (www.halfaglass.com) at the October 16 Welcome Back Party and JET Eye Photo Exhibition at Nikkei Place in Burnaby, and one person went home with a framed print from the show. We're definitely going to put on a party with those wine guys again... On Saturday October 23, JETAABC presented the Re-Entry and Career Seminar. The morning was devoted to topics like reverse culture shock and coming home. In the afternoon mini-sessions gave attendees an opportunity to hear from volunteer speakers, such as the always-inspiring Toshimi Ono from SFU's Japanese Culture and Communication Program, about careers and "Finding Your Passion". The day ended with an informal happy hour of sushi and cold drinks. Several JETA members mysteriously appeared when the food did. Hmmm... On November 21, the Board of Directors welcomed Mr. Nakada, Mr Kawana and Steve Shipley from CLAIR Tokyo and Mr. Takashi from CLAIR New York. Angie, Greg, Matt and Joe gave Consulate staff and the CLAIR representatives a presentation on JETAABC activities and goals for the future (which can be downloaded from the Bulletin Board here: <http://www.bc.jetaa.ca/bb/viewtopic.php?t=257>). The meeting was followed by a thousand-course dinner at Guu with Otokomae in Gastown. If anyone is thinking of running for a BoD position this year, know that invitations like this are one of the perks... In December things wound down as Board members became busy with their own holiday preparations. We also wanted to leave things in the New Year open to the new Board of Directors (you?) who will take the reins at the January 28, 2005 AGM... On December 11, several JETAABC members joined Mokuyokai for a matinee of the Vancouver Opera performance of Madama Butterfly. Many thanks to Nina for organizing the event and getting everyone tickets at a nice discount... The Board of Directors held an informal meeting and social on December 16 at Wazubee on Commercial Drive followed by the ever-popular Japanese activity of bowling... And finally, to wrap up the year, Bobby Taylor's grandfather kindly lent JETAABC the use of his mochitsuki equipment for a traditional mochi pounding at Nikkei Place on December 29. Akemashite omedetou gozaimasu! Now, who wants our jobs?



Akiyoshi's Daikon Pari-Pari Salad



MOCHITSUKI (MAKING RICE CAKES)
もちつき

Kine (Pestle)

Usu (Mortar)

Bowl of water

With the New Year drawing near, people traditionally pounded steamed rice to make New Year's rice cakes. These days most people buy pre-made rice cakes at stores.

正月が近づくと正月用のもちをついていたが、最近では、店で買ったりする。

Illustration from page 30 of *Japan at A Glance*, International Internship Programs, Kodansha: Tokyo, 1997

Winter Events Calendar

January

Annual General Meeting and Shinnenkai 2005

Friday, January 28

Meeting: 6:00 pm

Shinnenkai: 7:00 to 9:00 pm

Come out, run for a position on the Board of Directors, and stay for delicious food and drinks.

Art Institute of Vancouver, 700-1090 West Georgia Street, Vancouver

RSVP to Greg social@bc.jetaa.ca or 604-434-4747

Coming from out of town? Contact Joe secretary@bc.jetaa.ca or 604-782-5348

February

Kodo: Drummers of Japan

February 14

Queen Elizabeth Theatre

One of the world's most celebrated and popular performing companies, KODO brings their "One Earth Tour" to Vancouver. An exhilarating performance of dance and song with the sounds of a variety of musical instruments and the legendary traditional taiko drums of Japan. www.kodo.or.jp
www.ticketmaster.ca or 604-280-3311

March

13th Annual JET Programme Essay Competition

Deadline: March 11, 2005

Details and entry forms here: http://www.jetprogramme.org/e/new/new_e_essay.html

Jan-Ken-Pon! Family Games Day

Saturday, March 26 2005

National Nikkei Heritage Centre

6688 Southoaks Crescent, Burnaby

Learn about and play with traditional Japanese toys and games, including "Go" and "Karuta." Highlights will include a "Jan-Ken-Pon" tournament, sports day races and craft activities.

Further details on the Nikkei Place website: www.nikkeiplace.org.

Ongoing

Mokuyokai Donwakai Pub Nights

Third Thursday of Every Month

Fox & Fiddle Pub, 300 West Georgia Street

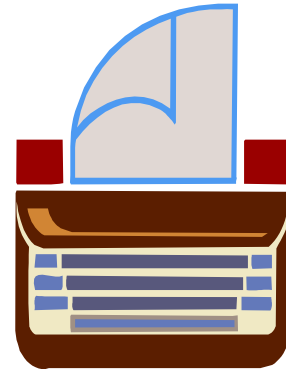
For JETAABC members, this is a great opportunity to meet

Mokuyokai members, socialize, network and have a good time!

All attendees must pay for their own drinks and a small charge of \$2.00/person for non-members as a contribution towards shared appetizers.

Check the Events section of the JETAABC Forums at <http://www.bc.jetaa.ca> for the latest events.

What would you like to see more of in the newsletter? News from Japan, news from alumni around BC, food and recipes, interviews, careers? Write about it! Eternal gratitude and your name in print awaits at newsletter@bc.jetaa.ca.



Throughout the year, JETAABC sponsors a number of events and career seminars, and produces a website and quarterly newsletter. Have an idea for an event, an article, or just want to say Ogenki desuka? Contact us!

By mail

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Vancouver, BC

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On the Web: www.bc.jetaa.ca

By e-mail: info@bc.jetaa.ca

Making a payment for a JETAABC event? Use our new PayPal account: payment@bc.jetaa.ca

Muchos arigatos to Steve Chevalier, Paul Donovan, Bobby Taylor and Damien Vilaysane for contributing!