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WEEKENDER

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reluctant of us to get active. In our feature on pages 8-9, in Yoyogi Park) to the conventional. On page 20, Ian de on page 25, there's an Olympics for kids to take part in this

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Answers from Crossword #31 (Weekender Jul 18)

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FAMILY FOCUS



The Walsh Family

n 1995, Jonathon, who was living in New Zealand, relationships Jon says, that, "Every day we are teachand Harumi, in Japan, became pen-pals after a mutual friend introduced them to each other. For four years they corresponded, first on paper and then by email, before meeting for the first time face-to-face in 1999. By that time, their emails had already taken on a more romantic tone and meeting in Japan, where Jonathon was stopping as part of an Asian backpacking tour, only concluded that they were in love with each other. Two weeks after meeting, Harumi introduced Jonathon to her parents as her boyfriend, and for the next two years they committed to a long distance relationship, visiting each other whenever they could.

Three years of very expensive phone bills later (one month Harumi's phone bill was more than the cost of a flight to Auckland) and the couple decided that something had to change. Jonathan moved to Japan in 2002 and in April 2003 they got married.

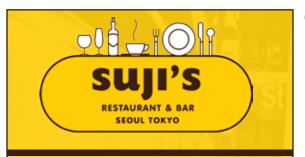
Life has been good since they have been living together here in Tokyo. Talking on international

ers and students...we learn and teach each other about our respective cultures, countries, and languages—it is incredibly stimulating."

On February 6 of this year their daughter Serena was born. Serena was born five weeks earlier than expected and arrived just two and a half hours after the initial contraction! Both parents were indeed in a state of shock but both mother and child (and father!) are happy and healthy. Serena is now six months old and the whole family has just recently started going out together.

Jonathon adds that they have had a sleepless but wonderful first few months with Serena, and so that he can spend more time with his daughter, he has recently quit his morning job and now works from home during that time. When not changing nappies, he runs his company, Business Grow, a rapidly growing company specializing in providing editorial content and advertising services to Japanese and foreign businesses.

Are you happy with the medical services available in Japan? To register your opinion on the medical services available to foreigners here, go to www.weekenderjapan.com and take part in our survey. The survey will be online for an extended period of time and the results of the 2008 Weekender Medical Services Survey will be published in depth later this year.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR, by Danielle Tate-Stratton



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THO

Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo is a comedic ballet by men in toe shoes and tutus. This award winning ballet company was founded in 1974 with the goal of providing a playful parody of traditional ballet. These dance enthusiasts are known around the world and perform pieces such as Giselle and Paquita. Now, the troupe is coming to Tokyo, August 2, 5pm, and August 3, 4pm at Tokyo Kosei Nenkin Kaikan in Shinjuku. ¥6,000-¥8,000, tel. 03-3409-8205, www.trockadero.org.

Share the spirit of Hawaii at a special Aloha Night celebration at Roy's Tokyo Bar and Grill in Roppongi. From 7pm, ¥12,600.

Today is the highlight of the August 1-3 **Hachioji Matsuri**, where 1,500 participants carrying six four-ton portable shrines begin to start battling (also known as buttsuke, or literally, hitting). The festival is near Hachioji station on the Chuo line. www.hachiojimatsuri.jp.



AUG NOM ACCJ members and their guests are invited to a discussion on the success of the Yokoso! Japan campaign on increasing foreign tourism to Japan. 3-4pm, for more information: http://tinyurl.com/5vxhm7.

R&B funk legend Charlie Wilson from the Gap Band plays tonight and tomorrow at the Billboard Live club in Tokyo MidTown. 7 and 9:30pm, ¥10,500. Tel. 03-3405-1133 or visit www.billboard-live.com/club/t_index_e.html for info.

The fireworks season continues with the Enoshima Fireworks at Katase Enoshima station on the Odakyu Line (or Shonan Enoshima on the Shonan Monorail). The boom factor is 5.000 and the show is on from 7:15–8:15. Tel. 04-6624-4141 for more information.

Seven-member Japanese dance group the **Diamond Dogs** perform Fantastic Musical's A Midsummer's Night Dream through August 6 at Ginga Gekijo on Tennouzu-Isle. The show is a reinterpretation of Shakespeare's play with both classical and original music. Tel. 03-3498-9999 for tickets, ¥7,000-¥8,500.



American drummer Will Calhoun and jazz and fusion guitarist Stanley Jordan take to the stage at the ${\bf Blue\ Note}$ in Minami-Aoyama tonight and tomorrow at 7 and 9:30pm, ¥8,400, tel. 03-5485-0088.

Continue celebrating the romantic Tanabata star festival today through August 10 at the **Asagaya Tanabata Festival** near Minami Asagaya station. The highlight is sure to be the elaborate kusudama decorations. Tel. 03-3312-6181 or visit www. **asagaya.or.jp** for more information.

Enjoy the Deco-Crafts Gallery for Kids through September 23 at the National Museum of Modern Art Craft & Design in Chiyoda-ku (the nearest station is Takebashi). Free-¥200, tel. 03-5777-8600.



00



Start off your weekend at the Garden Theater Café at Tokyo MidTown. Through August 24, the large lawn area behind MidTown will be converted into a modern take on the drive in theater concept. Classic movies (think Singin' in the Rain) will be screened every night from 7:30pm and you can view them from one of three zones—The Theatre Zone (¥1,500), with comfortable chairs and headphones, the Lounge Zone, which rents out cushions, or the Café Zone with tables and chairs. Food is served until 10pm and the area will stay open until dawn each day.

Aloha Night with Roy Yamaguchi at Roy's Tokyo Bar and Grill

he aloha spirit will be in full swing at Roy's in Roppongi this August 1 and 2. Roy's Tokyo Bar & Grill is playing host to its namesake chef, Roy Yamaguchi, for a supervised special course that also features Hawaiian singer Amy Hanaialii, who produced the 2007 Hawaii Tourism Japan theme song. The evening, which includes entertainment, a lei from Hawaii, and hula, costs ¥12,600. Roy promises a delectable multi-course menu that includes fresh angel hair pasta with oysters, a filet of beef with Thai curry risotto, and a special dessert.

In a recent interview, the personable Yamaguchi, who went to school at Zama American High School, explains that: "What I do is always make a special menu [that] isn't on the restaurant's general menu... The taste [of the specific country] really doesn't determine what the outcome is. We try to work with local

growers and purveyors and to utilize what's fresh."

Chef Yamaguchi was originally introduced to cooking through home economic classes at Zama, where he is still president of the alumni association, but became truly inspired to cook when he moved to the US for school, attending the prestigious Culinary Institute of America (CIA). Following graduation from the CIA, he trained further in restaurants, prior to becoming an Executive Chef in LA. He then opened his first restaurant, 385 North.

In 1988 Roy opened his first restaurant in Hawaii and began working to promote the region's cuisine. He is also Hawaii's first James Beard Award winner. The James Beard Awards have been likened to the Oscars by TIME Magazine, and are awarded nationally in a variety of categories, such as chefs and restaurants and restaurant design and graphics.



Enjoy a major music festival in Chiba this weekend as you head to **Summer Sonic** at Makuhari Messe in Chiba. The two-day lineup includes The Sex Pistols, Coldplay, Alicia Keys, the Verve, and many, many more. One day ¥15,500, two days ¥28,500. www.summersonic.com.

Tokyo's biggest fireworks display takes place tonight with the **Tokyo Bay Fireworks**, which boasts a boom factor of 12,000. The show is from 7–8:20pm, but arrive early as viewing spaces go quickly! The closest stations are Kachidoki, Hamamatsucho, and Toyosu.







Fabrice Hyber: Seed and Grow is at the **Watari-Um Museum of Contemporary Art** through August 31. ¥800–¥1,000, Tue, Thur–Sun: 11am–7pm, Wed: 11am–9pm, nearest station is Gaienmae, www.watarium.co.jp.

The **Imperial Hotel Tokyo** in Yurakucho plays host to the *Imperial Hotel Jazz Festival* today and tomorrow from 2–8:30pm. The event features the Julliard All-Stars, Lee Jung Silk, a Korean sax player, Coco Zhao, a Chinese vocalist, and more. \$15,000 for one day, \$26,000 for two. Tel. 03-3504-1111 for more information.

The Fratellis, an upbeat rock trio from Glasgow, are in Japan for Summer Sonic and play a solo show tonight at O East in Shibuya at 7pm. ¥6,000, tel. 03-3462-6969.





The **Fukagawa Hachiman Festival** is one of the three biggest shrine festivals in Tokyo and takes place through August 17. During the festival, water is splashed on the 120 portable shrines being carried by the crowd (who also calls out "wasshoi"), which is why this is known as the water-covering festival. The nearest station is Monzen Nakamachi, for more information: www.tomiokahachimangu.or.jp.

Help celebrate the 100th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Brazil with a celebratory *taiko* concert by the Amanojaku ensemble at the Nerima Bunka Center at 2pm. Also August 13, 7pm. ¥4,000–¥4,500. Tel. 05-7003-9999, http://amanojaku.info/EProfile.html.

The Lohas Classical Concert will be arranged and performed by Ryuichi Sakamoto with various musicans today and tomorrow at the Akasaka Act Theater at 7pm. \$6,500, tel. 03-5436-9600.





Visit **The Galaxy Theatre** on Tennozu Isle to watch *Drumstruck*, an interactive African percussion show. August 12–24, various times. **www.hpot.jp** or tel. 03-3490-4949.

Head to to Tipness for a summer workout and while you are there, pick up the newest issue of *Weekender*, our special style issue, due out today.

In the years following, Roy has opened 37 Roy's restaurants, along with stints on *Iron Chef USA* and six seasons as the host of PBS-TV's *Hawaii Cooks* with Roy Yamaguchi.

Despite his undoubted distinction as a celebrity chef, Roy says that he's more comfortable behind the scenes, where he works on creating menus to "Accomplish something new for our guests. We have a lot of guests who come all the time and want to make something special for them and something that they can really enjoy eating."

Come down to Roy's in Roppongi and see for yourself what this talented chef has created whily enjoying the aloha spirit at this great event.

Tel. 03-5474-8181 or visit **www.roysrestaurant.com** for more information.



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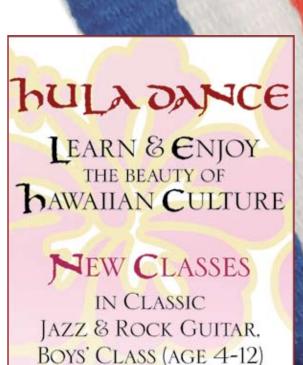
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FEATURE

Athletic Inspiration

Have your own Olympics in Tokyo, by Danielle Tate-Stratton

hile at first glance summer in Tokyo may not seem like the ideal time and place to workout, with heat and humidity regularly reaching scorching levels, we all know that staying active—year round—is truly what's best for our bodies and minds. Besides that, if beach (and therefore bikini) season being in full swing isn't enough to motivate you, then surely the perfectly toned and athletic bodies of the nearly eleven and a half thousand athletes competing in the Beijing Olympics this month will inspire even the most avid armchair athlete to action! Given that the athletic endeavors we stick to tend to be the most enjoyable ones, here's a roundup of the sports and activities available to expats in Tokyo, from the typical (soccer, tennis, volleyball), to the more unique—laughter yoga anyone? With the range of activities available there will be something suited to every member of the family.

Water Sports

perhaps the most logical of all ways to active in Tokyo this summer is in and water. If your family is involved with TAC, consi up active 'water babies' for their Mudsharks swim of a variety of children's classes. Parents can also loo ters swim programs available. For casual swimmers of places in Tokyo to beat the heat. Try, for instance, t dren's Castle pool in Aoyama, which is open to those of up (from ¥100). For parents with young children, this coul with a day at the castle (www.kodomono-shiro.or.jp/engl

Outdoors, try the pool at Shiba Koen, run by the Minato from July 1-September 15 (the rest of the year it plays double Entrance (for two hours) ranges from free (preschoolers and the in Minato-ku or who hold a Shinshin shogaisha techo) to ¥400 f complex with both lap and lounge pools in the Meiji Jingu co is JR Sendagaya), costing ¥1,000-¥1,500 for the day. In addition their own pools; check with your local ward office for more

Those interested in diving can visit the Yokohama of Japan's largest aquatic complexes, the water arena.

If you'd rather be on the water, Tokyo's bayside l for that as well. The Tokyo Sail and Power Squ (www.tspsjapan.org) is a unit of the United St Squadrons and offers courses, safety certificati regular events to get you out on the water.



sporting world, court sports dominate Tokyo's athletic landscape. Fans of basketball can get on the court with the American Basketball Club, who welcomes expats and Japanese of all levels to join their weekly games just ten minutes from Shibuya. To join, email Sam Arnold at sabatokyo@hotmail.com, or tel. 070-5578-7404. Well-known expat activity group the Tokyo Gaijins also offer weekly pickup games on weekdays as well as weekends. These games are for all levels of men and women and all nationalities. Send an email to basketball@tokyogaijins.com to find out more and be put on their mailing list.

While tennis courts in Tokyo are notoriously hard to book as an individual, thanks to the power of numbers, tennis enthusiasts have plenty of places to rally this summer. For a more structured environment (and a place for your kids to play), look no further than Krissman International Tennis School (www.tennisintokyo.com), which offers adult classes in various locations around Tokyo and with group, semi-private, and private formats. Krissman is also the perfect place for the very youngest of Federers and Williamses to get their start—with United States Tennis Association-certified coaches, soft balls, and mini racquets, the Little Tennis Program is designed for kids as young as three. If you're someone who just wants to knock the ball around, the Tokyo Gaijins are, again, a great solution. Offering fairly regular games around Tokyo, this drop-in group arranges sessions based for all levels. Visit www.tokyogaijins.com to sign up for the mailing list and read the tennis club's guidelines as to each level.

For an indoor court sports, try badminton, where the casual player may find their perfect home with the **Tokyo Badminton Club** in Setagaya, which promises: "Short-time participation, and being late, or leaving early is OK." Don't let that fool you though; while the club certainly seems to cater to beginner and intermediate players, there are sessions open to those with advanced and higher skills as well. Visit the website, http://bad80.hp.infoseek. co.jp/iudexE.html, to read a detailed description of what the club considers to be each level and to find out when and where they're playing next.



league for men. Through Footy Japan you can also contact the British Football Academy, which offers classes for kids 3-15, with something for the most casual kid to the serious athlete hoping for a scholarship

in the US. They also run regular camps in conjunction with local international schools as well as ladies training sessions each Sunday afternoon. Footy Japan also regularly organizes tournaments throughout Tokyo, visit

look into the Tokyo Gaijin RFC, who are Tokyo Cup First Division semi-finalists and Hong Kong 10s Plate

and joining Chiba-based cricket team the Ichihara Sharks, who train year-round at their indoor nets and then play in a spring league. Find out more about joining in on this refined sport when you visit www.ichiharasharks.com. A little bit closer to home, Paddy Foley's also has a team involved in two cricket leagues around town. Visit www.paddyfoleystokyo.com/pfc for

Girls looking to leave it all on the pitch are invited to try Gaelic football with the Japan Gaelic Football Association, which holds regular training as well as traveling to tournaments such as the Asian Games. Yes, guys, there's a team for you too. Find out more at www.japangaa.com. If getting down and dirty in a scrum is a bit much, consider donning your whites

If a rough and tumble field sport is more your style, look into **rugby**, of which there are several teams in Tokyo. Try, for instance, the Tokyo Crusaders Rugby Chub, who are looking for players of "any nationality, size, speed, skill level, and IQ." Email: join@tokyocrusaders.com. More serious scrum-halfs might want to

www.footyjapan.com to find out about any of these programs.

more info.

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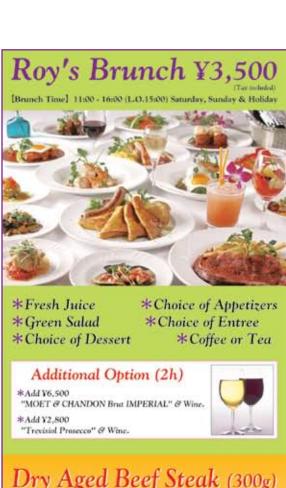
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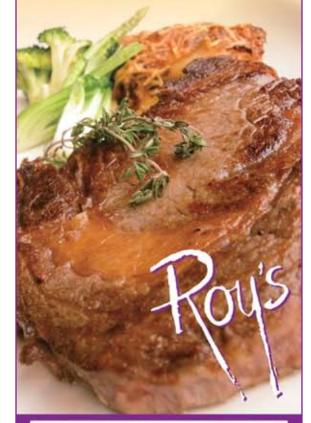
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MOVIE REVIEWS BY WILLIAM CASPER

Sex and the City

n more ways than is usually the case, this is probably a pointless review. At this point in the evolution of our species, you are already a fan of Sex and the City, or you are not and this blown up, big screen version of the hit HBO series will cause no one to leave their particular camp. You'll like if you already like it and you won't, if you don't. Rather than merely expand a typical episode, the producers have chosen to stuff the contents of a whole series in to one exhausting 148minute spree which even the most ardent fan might find an experience akin to wolfing down a giant tub of ice cream in one sitting; it's tempting in theory, but gorging is seldom satisfying.

As one who has never paid much attention to the comings and goings of these four particular New York girls about town (well perhaps girls isn't quite accurate), not surprisingly, the film does not stand up well as an entity away from the series. Too much insider knowledge is assumed and despite Jessica Sarah Parker's voiceovers, I got the over-whelming feeling I'd walked in on a story that was halfway through the

telling. There were some mildly amusing moments, lots of shopping stuff, and that seemed to be about it. But what do I know? I own two pairs of shoes.



One thing I do find puzzling is the way the film has been attacked in certain quarters for portraying the character's lives as unrealistic. Its also been said that all the serial shopping stuff is fantasy and has very little baring on real working women's lives. Unrealistic? Fantasy? When almost every Hollywood movie ever produced has fed into some kind of male fantasy—the violence, the cars, the guns, the girls (and here girls is the right word)—surely a little name brand shopping isn't the worst fantasy a person can indulge in is it?

Across the Universe



ords are flowing out like endless rain into a paper cup—sadly, none of them can quite capture the magnitude of awfulness presented here. Almost that's saying everything about this love-story-set-in-the-60s musical, based on the songs of the Beatles, is dreadful. So dreadful in fact that Across the Universe (ATU) quite the barker for possibly plants its flabby, laughably pretentious, backside in the 'so bad its good' category. Only time will tell. One would have assumed filmmakers everywhere the decency would have learnt their lesson all those years ago, with the Bee Gees awful film version of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, but apparently not.

Where to begin? It's difficult, there are scenes of such excruciating embarrassment that it is sometimes hard to keep looking at the screen. Worse, because it uses (in the way, say, McDonalds uses cows) Beatles songs-songs we all know and if not love, can at least hum along to—it all feels horribly personal; like watching your grandmother lap dancing or something equally unpleasant.

The laughable plot has Jude (Jim Sturgess), a shipbuilder in Liverpool, in what looks like the 1930s, going to America and meeting Lucy (Evan Rachel Wood), Max (well) (Joe Anderson), Sadie (Dana Fuchs), Prudence (TV Carpio), and guitarist Jo-Jo (Martin Luther McCoy), who apparently thought he was a loner, in New York in the cool happening 1960s. The act of shoehorning these Beatle themed names into the paper-thin plot is about as creative as this whole exercise gets. As Jude and Lucy fall in and out of love, every cliché of America in the 60s is wheeled out and danced around by longhaired hippy types. There are cameo appearances from Bono, in the most embarrass-

ing sequences of all (and something), Eddie Izzard as Mr Kite, who at least has to deliver his lines tongue



very firmly in cheek, and Salma Hayek dressed as a sexy nurse, writhing around brandishing a morphine filled syringe. Despite that kind of imagery, ATU is closer in tone to the gentler big screen interpretation of iconic hippy musical Hair than, say, Ken Russell's version of the Who's rock opera Tommy—the film is very coy about what inspires all the psychedelic imagery in various character's heads for example. It also shares some of Hair's anti-Vietnam concerns but adds nothing politically or philosophically and at no point gets anywhere near the emotional impact of Hair's finale; incredibly it actually feels more dated, too. Interestingly this trashing of a British institution, the Beatles PLC, was written by a couple of veteran British TV writers with a string of worthy credits, Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais. I suppose when you are struggling to make ends meet the way the remaining Beatles and various spouses clearly must be, the 10 million dollars they received for allowing use of the songs, though tellingly not the Beatles versions, is a satisfactory return for the further diminishment of a legacy. Jai guru deva om, indeed.

WEEKENDER'S FAVORITE MOVIE THEATERS

ROPPONGI: Roppongi Hills Cinema. Roppongi 6-10-2, Minato-ku. 03-5775-6090. In the Roppongi Hills Keyakizaka Complex, facing the Mori Tower, Hibiya Line Roppongi Station. Showing: Speed Racer, Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, The Chronicles of Narnia; Prince Caspian, Made of Honor. www.tohothe-

SHIBUYA: Shibuto Cine Tower, Dogenzaka 2-6-17, Shibuya. 03-5489-4210. From JR Shibuya station, take the Hachiko exit to the large intersection (to Dogenzaka). Go up the road, and it will be on your left (across from Shibuya 109). Showing: *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, The Happening,.* http://gmap.jp/shop-1533.html.

Bldg. 03-3202-1189. JR Shinjuku station East Exit, number B13. Walk towards Nishi-Shinjuku station; the theater faces this station. Showing: Speed Racer, Rec, The Chronicles of Namia: Prince Caspian Ghost in the Shell,

ODAIBA: Cinema Mediage. Daiba 1-7-1, Minato-ku. 03-5531-7878. Across from Tokyo Teleport Station, just behind the Fuji TV building. From the Yurikamome line's Daiba station, cross the street. The cinema is next to Aqua City Odaiba. Showing: *Made of Honor, Speed Racer, Dr. Seuss Horton Hears a Who!, In The Valley of Elah, Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, The Chronicles of Namia: Prince Caspian www.cinema-mediage.com.*

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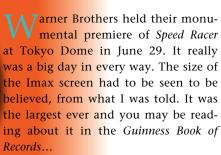
MOVIE PLUS WITH BILL HERSEY



udos to Perth, the hometown of the late and great 28-year-old Australian actor Heath Ledger, who passed away from an accidental drug overdose in NYC recently. As a tribute to Heath, Perth named a new 87million dollar theater in his honor.

You can see the man and his talent as the Joker in Warner Brothers' latest Batman film Dark Knight. There's talk about an Academy Award nomination for Heath on this. It happened once before with James Dean who was killed before the release of Giant.





The highlight of the exhibition was an elevated platform with a life-size replica of a Mach 5 racing car, where guests could take photos in front of the car. The well over 20,000 people who attended that day included film, music, fashion, and sports celebrities.

The young star of Speed Racer, who also gained fame for his role in *Into* The Wild, led the parade of local celebrities for a short appearance on the stage before the film. After the film I really enjoyed dinner with a group of Warner Brothers people at sumo champ Konishiki's restaurant, Unbalance, which was just a short walk from the venue. The Hawaijan food was excellent.

The next day there was a good turnout at the Speed Racer press conference. In addition to the star Emile Hirsch, pop star Jin Akanishi, who dubbed Emile's lines in Japanese, and Aya Ueto who did the same for actress Christina Ricci, met the press. Emile said he drives a black Toyota and feels he's a safe driver who likes to follow the rules, "Please tell your readers not to try the stunts they see at home or on the road," he added. Jin. who's a good friend, told me "dubbing is not easy," but Emile really praised him for his work.

Jin recently released his first English single. He picked up the title, Love Juice, from a cocktail menu. Oh well. We play the song a lot at the New Lex and customers seem to like it.

4. Motorcycle Club President Yumiko Ozaki and her husband Hiroki

5. Actress Sayuki Shirai, Taekwondo Champion Masato Tomioka, Russian model Anna, Ceremony Corp President Tsukasa Shiga

6. K-1 Fighter Hiri and Bill



1. The Kano Sisters, Kyoko and Mika Okuma.

2. Hiroyuki Sanada, Roberta Ireton, Emile Hirsch, Charo and Bill Ireton, President of Warner Entertainment Japan. 3. Roberta Ireton and the star of the movie Emile Hirsch at the premiere in London.

SHINAGAWA: Shinagawa Prince Cinema. Takanawa 4-10-30, Minato-ku. 03-5421-1113. Across the street from Shinagawa station, in the Shinagawa Prince Hotel. Showing: *Speed Racer, In The Valley of Elah, Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, August Rush, 21, 27 Dresses, The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian, The Bucket List.* www.princehotels.co.jp/shinagawa/cinema/index.html.

YOKOHAMA: Toho Cinemas Lalaport. 4035-1 Ikebe-cho, Ysuzuki-ku, Yokohama. 045-929-1040. JR Yokohama Line, Kamoii station. Take the North Exit; theater is on the first floor of the Lalaport Complex. Showing: Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull, Speed Racer, Made of Honor, The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian. http://yoko-

w.weekenderjapan.com



Big Trouble—Surprisingly good, low budget ring David Schwimmer Simon Pegg and Al

88 Minutes—Al Pacino should change his agent to avoid this kind of hi concept low execution mess. He has 88 minutes to solve his own murder. I hate it when that happens.

a mid-life crisis on a road trip, is badly let down a poor script and a story lacking conviction. Going for laughs it misses badly. With

The Assassination of Jesse James—Despite being ravishing to look at this subdued epic, it might be best watched at home where at least you can stretch your legs after the first couple of hours. With



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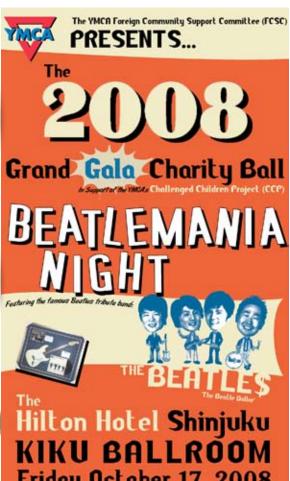
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FINE DINING BY ROBERT FORREST

Kamomaru

Duck all round

Thave a good feeling about duck," said the owner to the chef of Murakami Seisakujo. It seems he also had a good feeling about Yutenji, uprooting from his garage-like restaurant under the train tracks of Nakameguro and moving to a parking lot one station down the Toyoko Line. So out go the tarpaulin sheets and Kawaisan's white-board listing the season's vegetables, and in comes pale terracotta paint and a vase of sunflowers to lift the curious warehouse he has selected instead. Having arrived late following the wrong route, we rather wished he had settled in those characteristic ill-chosen backstreets instead of the empty parking lot we eventually found him in, but the building itself is rather more curious, its wooden elevations and peaked roof in contrast to the generic concrete blocks around it. Once inside, those neatly framed windows and washed walls turn to give the impression of a 1930s changing room. So still as spartan as before.

What had not changed was the warmth of the greeting we received. Co-diner was a regular at his secret grotto down the road for many years, savoring the splendid array of fish and vegetables of such honesty that one questioned the need of any other izakaya. Kawai san obviously remembered and we were promptly shown to our table and the familiar squiggles of his *kanji* on the menu. Last time, co-diner had rather enthusiastically ordered cod milts, a surprisingly generous sprawl of what seemed like marshmallow walnuts. But no need to worry about that now that wings have usurped fins, though we did miss his vegetable diary.

courses priced at ¥5,000, ¥6,000, and ¥8,000; all middle one and a couple of beers (Premium Malts,

With each dish that arrived, very reasonable given the quantity there was a slight groan of how tity and quality that is served. we were going to fit it all in. But We opted for the middle one and believe me, you find a way.

wine list should the mood take you. It did not take us, this being a quiet Sunday evening preceded by an afternoon on the beach, so we settled for white moustaches as the first plate arrived. And now you should make your reservation. Vegetables, heaps of them, all sliced and quartered and served raw with a bubbling anchovy and avocado sauce that surprisingly contains milk, oil, and garlic, too. A fabulous combination that rather defies cooking logic—but dip the radicchio or scoop with the pumpkin and suddenly you are convinced.

Before we tackle the next course, let us get the bad news out of the way: the duck was dry. The middle menu specifies duck confit and this should be a warm mush of meat falling off skinny bones with crispy skin, but ours desperately needed a layer of goose or ,dare I say, duck fat during its slow roast. This was our only criticism, but given the theme of this place it is, I am afraid, a rather significant one. On the same plate was a small heap of salad and new potatoes, unpeeled, topped with a divine dollop of basil butter. Read that last bit and now imagine how perfect that is.

Such is its richness the duck left us feeling full—so giving us fresh house-made tofu next was an excellent

Best table: Anywhere is fine, but if you are in a large group then private rooms are available upstairs. **Prices:** As mentioned, set menus start from ¥5,000 Location: "East Exit Yutenji Station, hang a left from 9804 or see www.e-e-co.com/kamomaru.html.



choice. Much lighter than it looks, the taste bridged mild cheese and wet dough, and cleaned the palette for the bamboo stakes that followed. I must admit I have not seen bamboo served this way, still wrapped in its papery layers scorched by the grill. You need to take these off first and add a blip of miso paste with the tip of your chopsticks to the remaining soft spear. And then you will see why pandas eat so much. On the same plate was white asparagus, also grilled, served with finely crushed pink rock salt in a smooth, white bowl. But the bamboo was better.

Time for the second duck dish, but not before we were distracted by a wig of onions Louis XIV would have been proud of. In front of us was placed a rustic stone stove with a metal pan on top, within which bathed defeated ducks and rolls of spring onion in a soy-source based sauce. Upon this was piled those onions. Light the stove, however, and watch the hairpiece wilt into the broth—not for too long, mind, you don't want the duck overcooking. Snatch it from the pan with your chopsticks, then sprinkle on top the dried juni-The menu itself is simple, offering a la carte and set per berries you have just crushed with the provided

pestle and mortar: suddenly there is a firm crump of flesh while the familiar brown sweetness engulfs your tongue, offering a new way to enjoy this bird.

Kamomaru is about experiencing

in case you wondered) though there is a full-blooded foods, as much as flavors, and each ingredient is visceral and untainted. Courses are pure and involve eyes and fingers as much as tongue and nose. Unfortunately, the room is not as intimate as the meal, but compensating for this was our final main, a wonderful comforting urn of rice and duck in a dashi broth muddled with egg: zousui. This arrived in yet another charming pot with a scratched glaze like a seadog's sweater and a small dish of cracked flakes of seaweed. Add. stir. and tongue a texture that mixes runny omelette with tapioca pudding while picking out nuggets of breast with vour teeth.

> With each dish that arrived, there was a slight groan of how we were going to fit it all in. But believe me, you find a way. Even when the ice cream finally made its way to our table, so the sharp house-made wafer urged the pile to be consumed. This is, as I say, convincing stuff. The clatter of diners and variety of the previous menu from Kamomaru's predecessor will be missed, and no longer can Kawai-san be watched from the counter as before. Instead he has brought a unique theme to this pleasant part of Tokyo that makes a welcome change to the familiarity of so many of the city's menus. We are still puzzled by his choice of location, but at least parking is not a problem.

underneath the train tracks. And then walk 370 steps until you hit the parking lot." Contact: Call 03-3710-

DINING

Fifty Seven

A taste of Manhatten in Roppongi, by Zach Luscombe







The roasted beet salad, great for summer



East-coast style pork

Of course there had to be dessert and there is none better to go for than cheesecake—after all, it's New York inspired!

et me take you to a place you can spend in first class, mingle with the coolest of crowds, conduct your business in VIP-style, or romance your date in medium rare and still makes my mouth water as I the '57 Room.' On top of all that, you'll indulge in fine cuisine from Chef Fumio Yonezawa.

Fifty Seven is a New York inspired, east meets west restaurant, offering Tokyo a new kind of dining and evening experience. Chef Yonezawa's hard work and determination in his young career provides food from the heart, rather than from the books, and the combination of Asian and South American flavors gives your pallette an experience you'll be sure to remember.

Fifty Seven has been rejuvenated by director Gerard Eady—service is attentive to your needs and chefs are willing to accomodate dietary requests. The menu changes on a seasonal basis and the bar offers many New York styled beverages and liquors. Selection is ample with various vodkas, gins, brandies, and whiskies. While you're at it, start off with the Central Park made from plum liqueur, vodka, chili, and mango sauce—the spicy kick really brings out the sweet flavors. The wine list has a selection from California, South Australia, and other international locations

For starters, the roasted beet salad made with gorgonzola, walnuts, and honey mustard sauce has a great combination of flavors: it's a great fresh and cool dish for these warm summer evenings. I had this with another appetizer, the sweet shrimp and citrus fruit ceviche. The shrimp was lightly poached to give it a delicate texture with citrus, lemon grass, and coriander flavors. Other notable appetizers were the cajun dirty rice risotto with duck confit, and a grilled swordfish with greens in mint calamansi and black olive oil.

My entrée was the grilled lamb chops with caramel lemon confit and gorgonzola lamb. It was cooked write this paragraph. Flavors were excellent and the combination of lamb and gorgonzola really tied this dish together. I highly recommend this entrée with the cauliflower and gruyere gratin as a side dish, and both paired perfectly with the Ravens Wood Cabernet. Another entrée shared at the table was fried soft shell crab on greens with a spicy mustard mango sauce. This is what I enjoy so much about South American flavors, the mixing of a little bit of spice with the sweet—a little known trick in bringing out flavors you want to accentuate. I would probably order this more for lunch than dinner and it could even be a shared appetizer for a table of four. Other great entrees were the root beer-braised short ribs, slow poached salmon with sweet paprika confit, strawberry, and tarragon, and the Yamagata fillet mignon.

Of course there had to be dessert and there is none better to go for other than cheesecake—after all, it's New York inspired! The espresso flavored cheesecake with hazelnut sauce was delightful and you might as well add in a Bailey's on the rocks to go with that!

Fifty Seven also comprises of a Japanese Kompa Room either for private business meetings or for the traditional group dating experience where four guys will sit down with four ladies and meet for the first time. The Belvedere VIP room may also suit your desires for an entertaining evening. Like I say, if you're looking for a new social and dining experience in Japan, check out Fifty Seven.

For reservations at Fifty Seven call 03-5775-7857 or see the website at www.fiftyseven.co.jp for more details.



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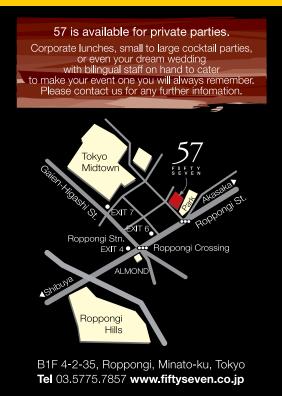
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Untamed Waterton Consider a holiday away from it all but the beauty of nature, by Benjamin Freeland

hen New Zealand's picturesque southern Alps were selected as a stand-in for Tolkien's Middle Earth for the Lord of the Rings film trilogy, many residents of Canada's two westernmost provinces mused as to whether their beloved Rocky Mountains and adiacent foothills, forests, and grasslands would have made an altogether more spectacular setting for Peter Jackson's cinematic spectacle.

While the many visitors acquainted with western Canada's two most famous mountain resort towns, Banff and Jasper, will all attest to the staggering beauty of the Northern (Canadian) Rockies, the sheer vastness and wildness of western Canada's mountain terrain is seldom appreciated as most international visitors do not venture far from Banff or Jasper before taking the bus or train back to Vancouver or Calgary. South of Banff, however, a third National Park region sits atop the south western-most corner of the province of Alberta, bordering British Columbia to the west, and the US state of Montana to the south. It is here in Waterton Lakes National Park and the neighboring Glacier National Park in Montana, that the Northern Rockies are at their wildest and most unadulterated. in a sparsely populated and relatively hard-to-access corner of the continent, and where human activity has barely made a ripple.

Take a map of the North American continent and find the point of convergence between Alberta, British Columbia, and the US border. The surrounding perimeter, which encompasses Waterton Lakes National Park to the northeast, Glacier NP to the south, and BC's Kootenay region to the northwest, represents one of the wildest and most unspoiled corners of the continent. The crystal-clear glacier lakes and rivers that etch the landscape contain some of the cleanest, purest water anywhere in North America and are home to numerous native species of fish. Wildlife abounds in International Peace Park as a salute to the bonds of peace the region like few other places. Deer and mountain goats easily outnumber human beings here. Moose, elk, and bighorn sheep are also common sights as they of its pristine mountain, highland, lake, and wetland

here are also home to a wealth of bird life, including woodpeckers, magpies, jays, and birds of prey such as the golden eagle and other distinctive animals such as the pikas, snowshoe hares, martens, and the region's innumerable gophers (the bane of Alberta ranchers' lives due to their cattle and horse leg-breaking holes) also call the area home. Perhaps more important than all, however, is Waterton's relatively small human population, mostly concentrated in the quaint, postage stamp-sized Waterton Townsite, a characteristic that the region's human (and without doubt non-human) inhabitants would like to see maintained.

While the region's original human inhabitants, (the Piikáni (Peigan), Káínaa (Blood) and Siksiká (Blackfoot), who together form the long-resilient Blackfoot Confederacy) can rightfully claim a millennia of history in the area, Waterton's recorded human history is scarcely over a century old. Formed in 1895 as Canada's fourth national park and named after the network of glacier-carved lakes around which the park converges, Waterton Lakes NP remained largely uninhabited until the founding of the Waterton Townsite in 1911. Even with this development, the town's population remained small, due primarily to its remoteness from Canada's twin transcontinental rail lines. Nevertheless, Waterton's star did rise, particularly after the construction of the grand Prince of Wales Hotel in 1926-27, a development that sought to lure American visitors across the border during the prohibition era. The subsequent years saw Waterton emerge as a popular summer retreat, with many of the summer cabins built during this era still standing today.

The town was also once home to western Canada's premier big-band jazz venue, the Waterton Dance Pavilion. In 1932, Waterton Lakes merged with its stateside counterpart, Glacier, to form the Waterton-Glacier and friendship between the two countries. Designated as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve in 1979, in light

> ecosystems, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was subsequently made a World Heritage Site in 1995. While local business people, politicians, and park officials have sought to improve the

keep a keen watch for the region's endemic carnivores, area's tourist infrastructure in order to facilitate more which include wolverines, lynx, wolves, mountain visitors, western Canada's best-kept secret remains a lions, and of course, the region's iconic and much- remarkably unspoiled place and few in the region that

Wildlife abounds in the region like few other places. Deer and mountain goats easily outnumber human beings here.

feared black and grizzly bears. The alpine woodlands would care to see that situation change.

TRAVEL



selling points, this does mean that access to this stunning tract of mountain wilderness is relatively challenging. Unlike Banff and Jasper, no trains connect Waterton Lakes NP with the outside world, relatively few buses go there, and the nearest international airport (Calgary) is over three hours' car journey away. The most spectacular approach to the park is from the east, from the outlying municipality of Pincher Creek, where the mountains rise abruptly from the Great Plains in a spectacular collision of geological and ecological regions. It is here, that with the beautiful contours of the Prince of Wales Hotel stands sentinel over Upper Waterton Lake, the deepest body of water in the Canadian Rockies.

remoteness

remains one

of its primary

oark rangers can occasionally seen patrolling the area on rseback, Mountie-style,...

Ranging in elevation from 1,290 meters at the townsite to nearly 3,000 meters at the summit of Mt. Blakiston, Waterton offers innumerable scenic trails, the best known of which is the Crypt Lake trail. This, an eight-hour jaunt through Rocky Mountain wilderness and around a lake that is often covered with ice even in August. The Crypt Lake trail makes for an accessible but fairly demanding hike and apart from a daily round-trip ferry link between the trail and the townsite, no amenities are to be found anywhere and hikers here can expect nothing but untamed backcountry. Another ferry service links Waterton Townsite with Glacier National Park, courtesy of Waterton Inter-Nation Shoreline Cruise Co., whose venerable 80year-old vessel sails between Waterton Townsite and Goathaunt, Montana (well known as the US's leastbusy international port) between two and four times a day (depending on the time of year). To the south in Glacier, is a further range of scenic hikes, as well as the spectacular Going-to-the-Sun Road, an extraordinary feat of road construction that was completed in 1933 and never fails to raise motorists' heart rates!

Townsite Life

Back at the Townsite, visitors can expect a smaller, lesscommercialized version of that which they would see further north in Banff and Jasper. The town is refreshingly free from chain coffee shops or fast food outlets, and many of the town's businesses are still owned by families who settled in the town in its first decade of existence. Open cafes and lakeside restaurants line Waterton Townsite's main street, where meandering deer mingle with visitors and locals and the town's art galleries and performance spaces spotlight a steady lineup of artists and musicians from surrounding communities. Local theater troupes contracted by Parks Canada can be seen performing vignettes on the his-

> tory of the region and park rangers can occasionally be seen patrolling the area on horseback Mountie-style, hearkening back to the park's legendary first warden, the famously roguish frontiersman John George 'Kootenai' Brown. Forever glistening alongside the townsite is Upper Waterton Lake, a lake whose bone-chilling, glacier-originated water scares off all but the most masochistic of swimmers, but is nonetheless a magnet for canoeists, kayakers, and windsurfers, the latter of whom benefit from the region's

Nature suprises around every corner notoriously windy weather. The park's rivers and lakes abound with trout and other freshwater fish, making the park a popular fishing destination and golf enthusiasts can enjoy the superb Waterton Lakes Golf Course to the east of the townsite. The park's devoted team of wardens provide a full range of services aimed at educating visitors about the region's diverse ecosystem and volunteer activities such as 'citizen science' programs and weed busting efforts targeting invasive plant species are open to members of the public keen to give something back to the park.

For travelers eager to escape from crowds and immerse themselves in pure, unadulterated wilderness, it is difficult to imagine a better choice than Waterton Lakes National Park and the neighboring Glacier NP. While the area is relatively harder to access than western Canada's better known national park regions, Waterton more than makes up for it, both in the wildness of its wilderness and in the timeless down-home charm of its namesake townsite. Where mountain view and prairie sky collide, Waterton glistens like Rivendell, the Elven outpost in Lord of the Rings, beckoning with the promise of serenity and adventure.

Getting there and around: Waterton Lakes NP the park, Greyhound Canada provides bus services from both Vancouver and Calgary to the nearby tors can hire a taxi to the park. During peak season (July–August) shuttle buses are often made available personnel. Car rental is probably the best option, and is available from international and domestic head. Once in the park: there are numerous touring options, including Waterton Shoreline Cruises, ous points during the year. **Other Information:** A brand new website, **www.mywaterton.ca**, was comprehensive one-stop source of information on all things Waterton. The site offers extensive infor-

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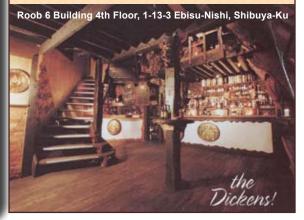
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- new purchase
- re-finance an existing loan
- equity take out from an existing property for other investments

Market Timing

For markets you expect will become more expensive in the future, get in now and ride with the wave of price increases, rather than trying to come in at a later date, after the prices have increased dramatically.

BUSINESS COMMENT

A Long Way from Olympus

With all eyes on Beijing in the run up to the Olympic Games, it's worth reflecting that it's not that long ago that only Western nations played host to what is now a truly global event. The 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympics (the XVIII Olympiad) broke that pattern, winning out in round one of voting over Detroit, Michigan, Vienna, and Brussels. It also became the first televised event to be broadcast across the Pacific. There were rebroadcasts all over the world, putting post-war Japan back on the map; the broadcasts signaled by Yuji Koseki's distinctive

The Olympics were good for Tokyo in many ways. The city's infrastructure benefitted hugely—elevated expressways, new hotels, and specially created venues that are still with us today. What is now the National Stadium hosted the opening and closing ceremonies as well as track and field, and the Nippon Budokan—now one of the city's most popular concert venues—was built to accommodate the newly introduced judo events. Perhaps most striking was Kenzo Tange's Yoyogi Gymnasium which still looks futuristic today. No doubt Tokyo Governor Ishihara hopes that a successful bid for the 2016 Games will give a similar boost to the city.

London certainly has high hopes for the 2012 Games, summed up by the concept of "Towards a One Planet Olympics." The organizers put sustainability at the center of the Olympic bid, making a commitment to maximize it through the various stages of building, the venues, and infrastructure, running the Games themselves, and then long after. The five pillars of this concept are combating climate change, reducing waste, enhancing biodiversity, pro-

moting inclusion, and improving healthy living. An independent scrutiny body has been set up to monitor progress and ensure that the organizers live up to their commitments.

The official Olympic website (www.london2012. com) recently listed a tally of items that have so far been reclaimed. These will be stored and then used, "to create aesthetic and practical features ... including paths, paving and paving inlays, benches, planters and lighting, and water features."

The list to date (courtesy of the site):

80 lamp posts

160 manhole covers and 187 gulleys

18 square meters of clay and slate roof tiles

Two tons of red bricks

117 tons of Yorkstone

100 tons of cobble/granite

41 tons of paving bricks

35 tons of paving slabs

1,200m of granite kerbs

4,200m of concrete curbs

As the world's resources are ever more threatened and the awareness of the need for sustainability grows, this could well become a pattern for future events on this scale. Bidders for 2016, please take note.

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Has Tokyo Got What it Takes?

Will the 2016 bid bring gold to Tokyo? by Danielle Tate-Stratton

enerally, athletes are seen as the undisputed Jstars of the Olympic Games. There are, however, hundreds of people who work incredibly hard for many years to ensure that one other star shines brightly over the course of the games—that of the host city. Olympic committees hope that the Olympics will bring attention, long-term growth and industry, and, perhaps most importantly, money to their city and, as an extension, country.

Bid cities must show the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and their local governments that the citizens near the games support the bid and one of the techniques they use to gain popular support is the promise of future riches for the city. Unfortunately, budgets don't always go as planned, and not all cities come out ahead.

Looking ahead, Tokyo is hoping to host the 2016 Summer Olympics from August 12-28 of that year. Having already hosted a successful Games in 1964, Tokyo's Bid Committee is hoping to beat out competition that includes Rio de Janeiro and Madrid when the IOC announces their decision in 2009. With a bid budget of between 5.5 and 7 billion yen, it is not an inexpensive undertaking to convince the world that Tokyo is ready to host once again. Funding for the bid will be split between the Tokyo Metropolitain Government (¥1.5 billion) and funding from within the private sector.

The Bid Committee is campaigning on the basis of Tokyo 2016 being the most compact and efficient Olympics to date. With plans to reutilize many of Tokyo's'64 venues such as the stadium in Komazawa

Olympic Park and the Yoyogi National Gymnasium in Yoyogi Koen very little new construction or land acquisition would be needed. For instance, for a Games occurring in 2016, Tokyo would be building only two new venues, echoing the successful model of LA. Additionally, Tokyo boasts a strong transportation network which bid organizers contend would easily be able to accommodate the additional traffic seen by the Games. The Tokyo Olympics would be the most compact ever, with all but two sports (soccer [qualifying games] and sailing) as well as the Olympic Village and Media Center being located within a tenkilometer radius, or within approximately 20 minutes traveling time. The new venues, including a Tadao Ando designed stadium, are expected to be built on reclaimed waterfront land on Tokyo Bay, helping to continue the revitalization project started in areas such as Odaiba.

Thanks to existing infrastructure and already inthe-works improvements to the city's transportation networks including three ring-roads designed to help alleviate congestion, Tokyo looks as though it could follow Los Angeles' highly successful model by taking advantage of a large city used to millions of people as well as existing venues to minimize costs and transportation loads. If it is able to do that, Tokyo could well follow in the footsteps of past Games such as Los Angeles (summer, 1984), Calgary (winter, 1988), or Atlanta (summer, 2006), all of which broke even or posted a profit once the Olympic Flame was extinguished. To find out more about Tokyo's bid for the Games, visit www.tokyo2016.or.jp/en.

BUSINESS INTERVIEW

Moving Made Easy

Marie Teather talks with Asian Tigers



fter relocating the foreign community to and Afrom Japan for ten years, this August Asian Tigers will be celebrating their first decade of operation in Japan. Weekender catches up with Andrew Olea, Director of Sales and Marketing, to find out about the challenges and triumphs of an industry that we simply couldn't get here without.

At that time we had no customers and so it was almost like starting up our own business. Other relocation companies were already established here and so getting contacts was quite a challenge. We have, however, grown to being the market leader here in Japan.

How did you get to that position?

We have a great reputation, we provide great customer service, and through this we have had lots and is unavoidable. lots of referrals.

What difficulties did you face in trying to make your presence known?

Trying to find the correct contacts to liaise with is very difficult in Japan without an introduction. Also, cold calling doesn't work like perhaps it does in other countries. Of course, companies are always changing and so trying to keep abreast of the correct contacts and teams to talk with can also be challenging.

What kind of clientele do you relocate?

Mostly it is high and upper management professionals, traders, lawyers, etc. We work with all of the major financial institutes here in Japan.

How have you seen your clientele change over the past ten years?

The foreign community has changed a lot and ten years ago people were very wary to move to Japan. Today it is a much sought-after post and setting up life here is much easier than before. These days, we find that most people don't want to leave when their time is up and people are actually sad to have to go. One of the drawbacks of being an expat is that you eventually have to leave!

How about the number of women relocating to Japan?

Yes, we have seen an increase in women relocating as the leading spouse. We move a lot of couples who are both relocating though their work and also a lot

more single women are moving. I think it is most difficult for the wives of partners who have been relocated. It takes them a little longer to make contacts and to find their niche here.

How do you stay in contact with clients after they have moved?

On arrival we give them a welcome pack and we arrange welcome events in the first six months so How difficult was it starting up in Japan ten they can meet people from different companies. We have coffee mornings for the wives who are not working and we also try to stay in touch with our clients throughout the year.

What difficulties do people face when moving back to their home countries?

Problems usually come through a lack of time to plan and prepare, although sometimes when a company decides to relocate an employee at short notice, this

June and July, when the international schools, close is obviously the peak time for families wanting to move back and so at this time we are at our busiest: advance notification helps.

Have there been any changes with the shipping procedures over recent years?

Fuel prices are going up and so freight and trucking charges are increasing. Since 9/11 in 2001, there have been a lot more inspections and quarantine procedures mean it can take longer to ship personal goods home. Most foods can no longer be imported and Australia, especially, has strict quarantines on soils and untreated woods. Of course, this is an unavoidable part of our industry and this is something we have learnt to work with. We take care to advise all of our clients on issues that may effect their move back.

In light of the rising costs do you think a client could cut costs by arranging a move back on their own?

Unfortuantely the costs are unavoidable for everyone and to try and arrange a move back alone would most certainly take a lot more time and money. Going through a company like Asian Tigers means you can take advantage of reductions in costs.

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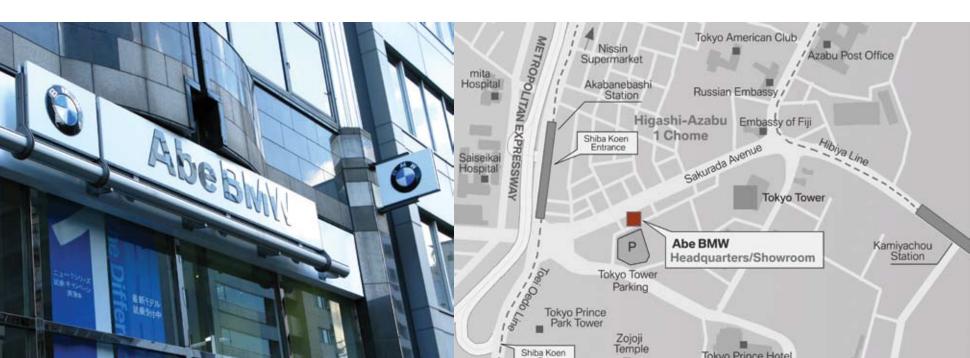
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BUSINESS

EIRE's Irish charm

Leading the IT Service Industry, by Rob Goss

Since being launched in Tokyo 12 years ago by Irishmen Paul Timmons and Matthew Connolly, EIRE Systems has established itself as one of Japan's leading providers of professional IT project management, consulting, and managed services. With Timmons and Connolly still at the helm, the company can now boast a team of over 100 in Tokyo, and has successfully expanded its operations to Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, and Dublin. Want to know more about what EIRE does and why the company is a success? Read on.

"EIRE's core services can be divided into three areas," says EIRE's business development and marketing manager, Ruairi Hatchell. Through its managed services, EIRE helps to manage the IT requirements of approximately 30 to 40 clients with head counts in the region of 10 to 1,500 employees. "Often these clients do not have the required budget for a full-time IT resource and therefore rely on EIRE Systems to provide daily, weekly, or monthly support to help ensure their systems are protected and running smoothly, in addition to EIRE providing IT recommendations as their IT requirements evolve," Hatchell explains.

Beyond managed services, EIRE's IT project management and design services cover everything from infrastructure project management and relocation management to business continuity, planning, and disaster recovery, while its IT outsourcing services can provide clients with high-quality IT professionals on short- or long-term contracts.

EIRE caters predominantly to clients in the financial sector, serving companies ranging in size from five-person hedge funds to multinational banking organizations with staff numbers in the thousands.



IT help is at hand

Recently, however, Hatchell says EIRE has also been expanding its client base to other sectors. "EIRE has recently done work in the retail and hospitality sectors in Tokyo, helping to set up flagship stores in Omotesando, as well as project managing the IT set up for a major international hotel chain in Shinjuku," he says. EIRE is also the main IT contractor on the renewal and rebuild of the Tokyo American Club.

With EIRE's main client base in the financial sector feeling the effects of sub prime, Hatchell says there is a constant need for EIRE to evolve and improve as a company in order to meet its clients' requirements, in the most cost-competitive way. One way EIRE continues its evolution is through its commitment to the personal development of its staff. "Making sure our employees are correctly trained is key to our success, and we encourage our employees to study new fields," Hatchell says. "By constantly seeking the best from our employees we are able to respond and provide a high-value, efficient service across the board in order to ensure client satisfaction."

To find out how your organization can benefit from the combined IT expertise of the people at EIRE Systems, visit **www.eire.co.jp**



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Bark of Approval

Hinataya Pet Hotel, by Emily Co

There comes a time where one has to leave one's four-pawed best friend behind. Feelings of guilt may overwhelm you and worst case scenarios may replay over and over like a damaged video on an endless loop. I know because I'm a mommy to a little Rapscallion Pomeranian named Peanut. Like all other pet owners out there, I worry about the kind of people I'm leaving Peanut with and am concerned for his happiness, safety, and the quality of care he's receiving. Hinataya Pet Hotel does much to chase those nagging anxieties away. Their treatment towards their animal guests is warm and loving and they will strive to make your pet feel right at home. This firmly goes hand in hand with their core belief of "taking care of their guest dogs, rather than just keeping them."

Hinataya Pet Hotel opened five years ago in order to meet the need for a place to leave your dog that treats pooches more like family, rather than mere mammals lower down in the food chain. Popularity soon called for two more branches. The three hotels are located in Setagaya-ku Sakura, Suginami-ku Shimotakaido, and Oota-ku Higashimagome, and for those who live too far away, Hinataya's drop off and pick up services make it all the more convenient.

Because of the hotel's strict regulations, owners will never have to worry about the welfare of their precious ball of fur. There is even an age limit of ten years (although in certain cases exceptions will be made if the canine is in top physical condition). 'Guests' of Hinataya are also required to have updated rabies shots and vaccinations and must not be under any medication or medical treatment. A photo will be



Welcome to the Hotel Hinataya.

emailed once every few days for the purpose of reassuring owners of their pet's well being. Each guest will be properly cared for, according to their own needs, and will be taken for a walk individually two to three times a day. If, in any event, your dog becomes ill, Hinataya staff will be sure to take quick action by taking it to a veterinarian immediately. During the day your pet will enjoy the spacious free roaming area where it can rest, socialize, and play with other animals. In special cases, dogs may be separated off into smaller sectors if they are unable to get along with the other guests.

And, there's an extra bonus for the pampered pooch—grooming services that even provide hot spring baths or mud packs depending on choice, of course. Owners that leave their beloved Fidos with Hinataya,can easily put aside their worries. However, there is one very dangerous risk I am a bit hesitant to mention. There exists a very likely possibility that your pooch may not want to come home!

For more infomation on the Hinataya Pet Hotel call Sachi Yamada on 03-3429-0601 or see www.hinataya.com.



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SCHOOL'S IN

Proud to be Different

The Musashikoyama International School, by Norman Munroe

It was probably when I was sitting in the school's lobby waiting to interview principal Embry Ramon Williams and watching a couple of Japanese kids go by, chattering away in English, with one little girl walking on all fours bent over backwards acrobatically, that it occurred to me that maybe the Tokyo Musashikoyama International School, was, perhaps, actually different.

Or maybe it happened when a four year old looked solemnly at me and declared that "school is fun," before running off to join his schoolmates and teachers who, by the sounds of laughter and activity, were having a ball in the school's big playroom.

Certainly, the school's philosophy, as stated on its website, seemed to be in line with the behavior that I observed. In a country where assimilation and 'groupthinking' is generally accepted as the norm, their individualistic approach to education borders on being revolutionary. The school's philosophy also claims that, "our kids cry when it's time for them to go home. They just don't want to leave. This is what sets us apart from other schools."

Just the beginning

Fighting words, indeed. However, as the school draws to the end of its first year of operation, principal Williams and his staff appear to be well on the way to perfecting their approach to education. Tokyo Musashikoyama International, however, marks just stage one of the fulfillment of a dream that the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania native has developed over the 17 or so years that he has been in Japan, having come here from the United States, as he put it, "on a whim."

After arriving in Tokyo, in 1991, from Hawaii, where he had worked for a while, Williams amassed a variety of teaching experience ranging from elementary through to high school, business English, TOEIC. TOEFL, as well as teaching English to airline employees. It was while he was working at Kanda School of Foreign Languages that he "was inspired to do my own thing": start his own school.

"...our kids cry when it's time for them to go home. They just don't want to leave..."

Also an exponent of Wing Chun kung fu, and having taught kung fu to adults for some time, Williams started to look for an opportunity where he could combine his desire to teach kung fu to kids as part of a wider and more radical approach to early childhood education. He is also a certified salsa dance instructor and this, too, was to be incorporated into the educational approach.

The chance came when the elementary school that previously operated at the premises where his school is located, close to the Musashikoyama station on the Tokyu Meguro Line, offered him a job. After working there for three years, Williams ended up purchasing the school and after re-organizing it he is forging ahead with his vision to teach English to a variety of groupings of both kids and adults, on occasion incorporating elements of dance and kung fu, as well teaching those arts separately.

As he put it: "I want my kids to be well-rounded, so we have a curriculum. A lot of kindergartens don't have a curriculum. It's just, like, arts and craft and playtime. So I'm using a curriculum kind of based on the American style, using American textbooks."





Fruits of learning

The student body, about 40-strong at the moment and hailing from a variety of countries, is divided into three age groupings. The youngest set, dubbed the 'Grapes', has kids ranging from one and a half to just under three years. The 'Cherry' group contains the 3-4 year olds, and the 'Peaches' group comprises the oldest kids, at 5-6 years of age. All age groups do subjects such as language arts, math, science, PE, and social skills. Of course, the length and make-up of the lessons are adjusted based on the age, attention span, and level of the various age groups. All classes are taught in English and, in fact, the school is an 'English-only zone'. There are six teachers in all and the student to teacher ratio is kept low, with an average of 10-12 kids in each class, attended to by a head teacher and an assistant teacher.

Embracing challanges

"We're trying to introduce everything they're going to get in first grade [elementary school] so when they get there they'll have a grasp of it, if not being able to do it totally," Williams says. "My kids, when they leave here, I expect to be able to write simple sentences, read simple sentences, [single-digit multiplication, subtraction, multiplications [using] zero and one,] at a minimum...I think they can handle it, so I give them as much as they can handle to challenge them."

These core activities are complemented by a host

of other activities such as 'Mommy's English', English lessons for mothers to enable them to keep up with their children's English skills, and Saturday kindergarten and elementary courses, as well as a four-week summer program.

The school, as it existed previously, was a Japanese-only institution in terms of language of instruction and much of the

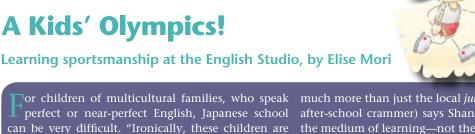
strong parental support stems from seeing the marked improvement in their children's English-language ability. The school's flexible approach to offering childcare and after-school services, along with attendance incentives for students and a pragmatic approach to fee-paying, including extending partial scholarships to deserving kids whose parents may have financial difficulties, also helps.

Williams' ultimate dream is to develop a school for the performing arts, inspired by the 1970s American TV show FAME, where most of the artistic disciplines such as music, dance, arts and craft, and acting, would be taught. All of this will require more space than he currently has available and he is actively seeking a larger space to move into. Embrey Ramon Williams and his team at Tokyo Musashikoyama International School, so far, seems well on their way to realizing their goal of being different and special.

International School in Japan, see www.tmisij.co or call

SCHOOL'S OUT

A Kids' Olympics!



can be very difficult. "Ironically, these children are embarrassed by their fluency," says Shane Thompson of The English Studio. Children who have returned to Japan after a long stay in an Anglophone country and whose English is at a native, or near-native level, experience a similar loss of identity and alienation. "They could also be suffering from reverse culture shock and finding it hard to readjust to life back in Japan." Luckily, English Studio provides a learning environment that these children need. "We aim to be

much more than just the local juku," (Japanese for an after-school crammer) says Shane, "where English is the medium of learning—not the focus—and we definitely see ourselves as a community organization.'

Founded in 1985, English Studio offers a comprehensive program of ESL courses and two hugely popular annual sporting festivals provide an opportunity for all levels of English learners to mix and participate in an array of outdoor activities. This summer, the Summer School Olympic Event and later in the year, a schoolwide Sports Day, will be held where students from the Setagaya, Mita, and Meguro campuses all compete.

Summer Olympics

The Summer School has been running since 1992 and offers a week-long animation activity and a focus on Japanese and international festivals. This year, unsurprisingly, the third week's theme is the Olympics. As well as participating in sports, the students will also learn about the pageantry, ethos, and traditions of the games. "The focus is on participation, of course, but also on sportsmanship and the Olympic spirit as a whole," says Shane. As a climax to the Olympicthemed week, which begins on the 11th of August, the children will be taken by bus to a sports center in Iidabashi where they will be able to take part in, amongst other activities, baseball, basketball, tennis, and badminton, plus, the ever-popular electric bull rodeo. "In the past, this has proven to be the most popular activity, with the children and adults alike," Shane smiles. "It gets quite competitive."

Children will be organized by age range, with two groups per range. Children from outside the school are also encouraged to participate, as long as they have registered for the event two weeks beforehand. During the week-long run-up to the event, the children create their own uniforms, medals, and mascots, and are asked to complete a feedback sheet after the event. The children are looking forward to their day in Iidabashi with Kano, a six years-old girl, saying: "I am looking forward to playing many sports games at the excursion," and Mizuki, aged eight, said she wants to do badminton.





ming games. My favorite sports are basketball, swimm jump-rope, and hula-hoop. I want to learn about swimmi

The annual school-wide Sports Day is another chance to show off sporting skills, with all three sister schools participating against one another. Children of all ages attend, from kindergarten to 10 years old, and parents are warmly encouraged to join in with the scoring, judging, as well as the parents' flag relay. Favorite activities such as bowling, Frisbee, balloon, and the fan race can be expected, and again, the focus is on sportsmanship, participation, and team spirit, (although there is a strong element of competition between the three schools).

The date set for this year is the 28th of September at the Tokyo International School. "Definitely, the baton gets raised every year," say Shane, although the highlight of the day is always and undoubtedly the organized cheering. The teams work on a cheer routine and points are awarded for choreography, involvement, and excitement. For a small donation to cover costs, children from outside the school are also warmly welcome to join in with the fun throughout the day.

It seems that, whereas a lot of schools claim to focus on learning through participation, English Studio's two summer sports activities prove they mean what they say.

For more information on the school and how you can take part in either the Summer School or the Sports Day see **www.englishstudio.jp** or by contact the head office on 03-3798-5829.

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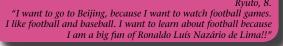
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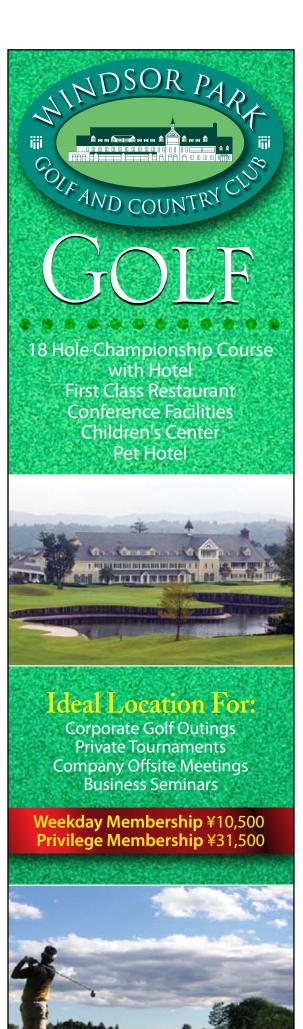
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SPORTS



Strong and Supple is a Snap

A new approach to working out, by Jeffrey Libengood

The Olympics and the excitement of athletics and Characteristics of function include: sports on the world stage spawn a variety of emotions. For some, it's the enjoyment of seeing the spirit of competition—the athletes performing at their best. For others, it sparks thoughts of the shape you were once in and how it's time to get in better shape after letting yourself go for too long.

For many, the attempt is short lived and often ends in throwing in the towel. Getting in shape typically conjures up the same old thoughts of struggling with diet while joining a gym and hammering out sweaty exercises like bench presses, arm curls, and stom-

ach crunches. Listen, we all know what to do to improve; exercise and eat right. But why aren't we all doing it? That answer is simple. Programs are inefficient, too long, and not fun! A workout shouldn't take an hour! Thirty minutes of weight training is plenty! Of course, the last reason for failure is that some people are just plain ole lazy.

'Diet' produces thoughts of failure—low calories, hunger pangs, bland foods, struggle, etc. Results simply don't seem equal to effort. I'll pose this question—if you have attempted getting in shape numerous times before only to quit a few weeks later for whatever reason, what makes you think this

time will be any different? Unless

you choose to do it 'right from the start', you will quit fast. FlexBands are easier and more efficient on joints again. Humans are creatures of habit. If you only do what you've done before, you'll only get what you got before. Any physical action is first a mental thought. Our thoughts change according to our emotions. If you're 'struggling' with your new 'resolve' because it's not fun or gets no results, your emotions will wane and before you know it, any excuse is all that's necessary to make you quit...again. A mental commitment is required for a change. The body always follows what the mind tells it to. No exceptions.

A new approach

I'll introduce you to a training style that will change your life. No more gym memberships, no more excuses. It will change your outlook on training; allow far more 'functionality', creativity, freedom (in movement and location), durability, portability, and costs about the same as a one-month gym membership. It's 'Functional FlexBand Training'. No, not the little tub-

Athletic movement has taught us a lot about function. Function can simply mean 'how you move'. Injuries have also taught us how the body 'reprograms' itself to function when proper and certain levels of function are removed. The body compensates to create movement by always running away from pain or weakness and towards the position of compensation or strength. That is why you will get knee pain with a poorly functioning low back or vice versa. This functioning also applies to being a mom or a businessman. After all, function is merely movement! Quality results come from combining proper functional training with consuming quality calories—at the right time.

Multi-planar: Real-life movement occurs in 'planes', front/back, side/side, rotation, or combinations thereof. Certain movements accent certain planes, like standing on one leg (stair climbing and walking) accents the frontal (side/side) plane. Functional training exercises in all planes, unlike the standard gym programs, which are only front to back.

Multi-joint: Beaver's axiom states that, 'The body only recognizes movements'. Life's movements, such as picking up your child, swinging a bat, or sweeping a floor involve numerous joints moving simultaneously.

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bands one can also train slow or

than barbells or dumbbells making them more recommended for people over 40 or those with joint pain.

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set of bands, contact Jeff on 090-3903-6390, thefitnessdoctor@gmail.com, or see www.jeffsfitness.com.

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PARTYLINE WITH BILL HERSEY

Dieter Spranz' Retirement Party at the Austrian Embassy





n Ambassador Jutta Stefan-Bastl, Tan-inzoku Jewelry President Noboru Taka,



Ogawa/Parekh Elegant "Golden Door"













I'm starting out this column at a Seattle's Best coffee shop on one of the outdoor terraces of the beautiful Mediterranean-style Greenbelt Mall in Makati, Manila. I just walked through the huge, well-landscaped gardens (ponds, waterfalls, Philippines-inspired statues, and so much greenary). The Ayala family, who is behind many of the Philippines' most awesome developments, love and respect nature. You'll see this in any of their many projects. I also joined the many locals at the mall chapel for a bit of meditation. It's an inspiring building to say the least.

I took Philippine Airlines (PAL) flight 431 from Narita at 9:30am, Sunday, July 6th. There was good food, attentive service, and all kinds of in-flight entertainment. As I really didn't sleep the night before, I pretty much passed out for the four hour and forty minute flight. As there's a one-hour time difference, I landed at Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 1:15pm.

Immigration and custom formalities were fast and courteous and I hopped in an airport taxi; Sunday traffic was light and I was in my room at the Manila Pavilion (by Luneta Park) in less than half an hour. As always, I fell in love with the dog—a black Labrador—at the hotel entrance. Once Benji (that's his name), the oneand-a-half year-old dog had sniffed my bags, he offered me his paws—first the left and then the right—welcome to the Philippines! The weather was nice, so I caught some rays and a bit more sleep by the hotel pool.

On Thursday, July 10, I spent a few hours at the Eye Referral Center near Lunetta Park where I had my semithe center, one of Imelda Marcos' projects, a few years ago. At that time, my timing was right. At the entrance, I got my VIP pass (that's always nice) and went upstairs to the light, bright, well-equipped examination room, got the preliminary exams, and met a super young eye specialist, Dr Perfecto Cagampang. In our session, I discovered that Doy (his nickname) is an encyclopedia

of information on his country. He's always smiling, has a great personality, and has become a good friend who has helped me discover lots of off the beaten path adventures in his colorful and exciting country. If you visit Manila, drop by and see Doy. The center has the latest equipment, the staff are really friendly and professional, and it costs a fraction of what you'd pay here. The center is located at 430 TM Kalaw. St. Ermita, tel. 525-9360.

Before flying back on Saturday, July 13th in the afternoon I relaxed in PAL's VIP lounge at Terminal Two at the Ninoy Aquino Airport. Once again, traffic was light and immigration/check-in procedures were fast. I always enjoy PAL's VIP lounge and the staff, many who I know by now, are really great. You can relax in the comfortable leather furniture, watch different films on one of the large TV monitors, or get a massage in a mechanical massage chair that really works!

What really surprised me in these days of cost cutting everywhere is the lounge's buffet. As a PAL guest you have a big variety to chose from; there's my favorite—the local Arroz Caldo porridge, cream of corn soup, dim sum, pasta, meatballs, salads, sandwiches (Adobo, beef burgee, smoked chicken with cream cheese, and pork with pineapple), sushi, fresh fruit, and mango crepes. In addition to all that, there's just about any kind of drink that anyone could ask for. Needless to say, I pigged out so I had to pass on the truly good in-flight meals on my trip back.

I'll have more about all the new happenings in annual checkup. Thanks to a good friend I discovered Manila soon, for now it's back to our city's busy social

Embassy Events

Over at the Austrian Embassy residence, Ambassador Jutta Stefan-Bastl, her husband Peter Stefan, and Tanaka Kikinzoku Kogyo KK President Hideva Okamoto hosted a reception on the occasion of the retirement of



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PARTYLINE WITH BILL HERSEY

Peru/Japan Friendship Reception















Dietmar Spranz. He's been the President and Master recent renovations include the new Executive Suites, of the Austrian Mint for ten years. The special evening included a welcome speech by the Ambassador, greeting speeches by Mr. Spranz and Mr. Okamoto, and a toast by Hoseki No Tamaya President Fukabayashi.

Glitz and glamour were added to the event by a gorgeous model wearing a solid gold dress in the Philharmonic Gold Coin Fashion Show. After the show there was a superb buffet of Austrian food where guests had the opportunity to get to know each other better.

There was lots of class, as well, when Infinity Creations' Atul Parekh and his partner, noted jewelry designer Kazuo Ogawa, hosted several days of opening receptions for their new venture, 'Golden Door.' The salon for culture, couture, and coiffure is, as I knew it would be, unique and the epitome of good taste.

Kazuo had his wife, daughter, and two sons helping there and talk about nice people! I. of course, feel the same way about Atul's remarkable family; his wife Hema was in Mumbai finishing another book on vegetarian cooking, his son, Alok, who's here now, was in London at that time, and daughter Avesha was in New York City, where she works for Lehman Brothers. Others I met when I was at the Golden Door included Sanjeeva Gupta and his chic wife Rashim. Sanjeeva recently joined Shinsei Bank as one of their top executives.

The Golden Door is located on the first floor of Plaza Edogawabashi at Sekiguchi 1-23-6, Bunkyo-ku, tel. 03-3228-0028. It's actually behind the Chinzan-so Gardens and Four Seasons Hotel.

There is lots of upscale development in the area now and Atul has promised me a report later.

It was yet another enjoyable evening at the home of the Peruvian Ambassador Hugo Palma and his wife Kirsten. The occasion was to celebrate Peruvian-Japanese Friendship day.

As with anything the Palmas do, the interesting people, superb Peruvian buffet, and warm ambiance added up to a thoroughly laid-back and enjoyable evening. I did take time out to check out a huge book on Colombian festivals on one of the tables there. As an anthropology major, I now have so many more reasons besides visiting one of the world's wonders—Macchu Pichu—to get myself to Peru.

Hilton Happenings

I've had the good fortune and privilege of having a good working relationship with Hilton Hotels for many years. Even so, it never ceases to amaze me how those at Hilton Tokyo never slow down and always come up with something new and exciting. The

the Executive Lounge, the Marble Lounge, the gym and pool area, and the addition of a chic chocolate boutique. It's easy to see why the hotel was recently awarded four pavilions ('order of comfort') and two stars for their acclaimed French restaurant Twenty One in the Michelin Guide Tokyo 2008.

Hilton has reached new heights with the opening of the 506-room Hilton Niseko Village located at the base of the magnificent 1,309 meter Mount Annupuri in Hokkaido. The full-service, deluxe Hilton-managed hotel is Japan's premiere mountain resort offering unparalleled year-round winter and summer outdoor activities in an unbeatable location.

Hotel facilities include indoor and outdoor onsens, a spa, fitness center, and a huge—the largest in Japan lobby fireplace where you can relax after a full day of fun activities. These include a superb ski area, golf, horseback riding, fishing, ropes courses, white water rafting, and adventure options. As in all Hiltons, the guest rooms are comfortable, completely equipped, and tastefully decorated.

There is a wide variety of restaurants and bars serving both western and Japanese food. The media had the opportunity to enjoy some of the Hokkaido specialties (yogurts, salads, soups, cheeses, etc.) at the reception after the Hilton Niseko Village press conference at the Hilton Tokyo recently. It was all so delicious and so healthy. I hope to spend a few days at Niseko Village soon. For more info, visit www.hilton.co.jp or www. hiltonworldresorts.com. Meanwhile, I really recommend you check out the Hilton Niseko Village yourself. I know it's very special.

On the Move

I just got a nice postcard from Sonia Striegel who is really enjoying a summer break on one of the Philippine's most beautiful islands—Palawan. In addition to island hopping, Sonia took a boat down the awesome underground river there. I stayed at the fabulous El Nido resort near Palawan a few years ago. That was a super getaway. Sonia and her husband Frank are both very popular teachers at St. Mary's. He spends much of his spare time working as a counselor with boy scouts. The Striegel's older son Frank Jr.'s recent travels included some time in Vietnam, which "he really enjoyed." Their youngest son, Mark, a champion wrestler has been back for school holidays. He attends classes at the University of San Diego.

Sumo champ and entertainer Konishiki and his gorgeous wife, Chie, were back from Hawaii for a

Segafredo Zanetti Espresso www.segafredo.it



The Latin Divas Adriana Soriano, Graciela Osella, Gabriela Belocopitow (now in Buenos Aires), ICBS President Norma Polski, and Betty



PARTYLINE WITH BILL HERSEY

Mandarin Oriental Tokyo Director and General Manager Christian A. Hassing, his wife April, Segafredo's Sayaka lijima, and Daisuke Noguchi.



The Okura Hotel's Nunzio L'Olivia and his son Achille.

In and Around



Lise Frederiksen, wife of outgoing Danish Ambassador Freddy Svane and Kathleen Dierick, wife of the Bulgarian Ambassador Johan Maricon at a savonara lunch for Lise at the Grand Hyatt.



National Azabu Supermarket's Store Manager Dale M. Toriumi and his wife Keiko at Warner Brothers' Speed Racer premiere at the Tokyo



Bill Hersey at the New Lex with pop stars Crystal Kay and Jin Akanishi (Kat-tun).

Hilton Niseko Village Press Conference



Travel guru Sandra Mori, Life and Dream Tokyo Bureau Chief HK Kang, and PR man Joshua P. Warnken



Greg Davis and Robert Heldt (both of Outdoor Japan) with Gotemba Golf Club teaching pro Bennett I. Galloway.



Citigroup Principal Investment Japan Vice President Daniel O. Cox and Hilton Tokyo General Manager Christian Baudat.



Hilton Niseko Village General Manager Daniel Welk, Hilton Hotels Vice President Oded Lifschitz, and Luke Hurford, General Manager Niseko Village.

"Hotel facilities include indoor and outdoor onsens, a spa, fitness center, and a huge—the largest in Japan—lobby fireplace..."

month. During their stay in Japan, there was a big welcome party for them at Konishiki's restaurant Unbalance near Tokyo dome. I'll have photos from that really fun event later. Konishiki, who weighed about 670 lbs has lost a lot and plans on losing more. He returned to Hawaii in late June and sponsored a big charity party near his and Chie's home on Wainae Beach near Honolulu. It was a first on that side of the island and about 650 people gathered for a day of food, music, fun, and games. My thanks to the always helpful Executive Support International Executive Director Michael Ghiglione, Bill and Charo Ireton, and others who donated prizes for the charity. There are a lot of good people out there.

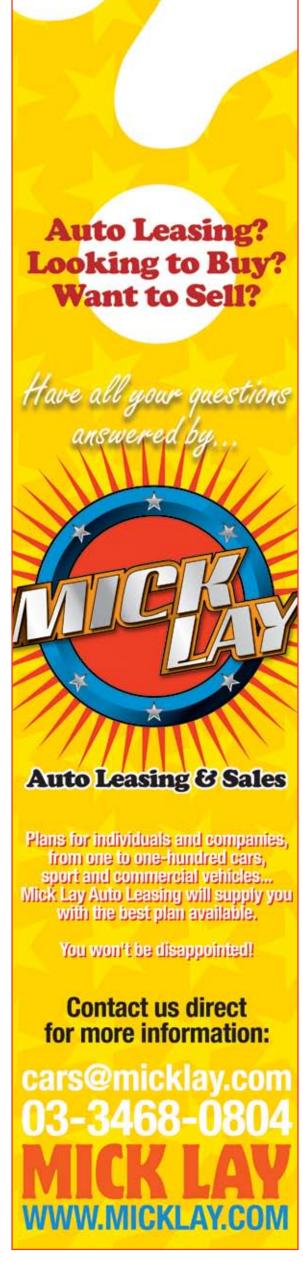
Congratulations

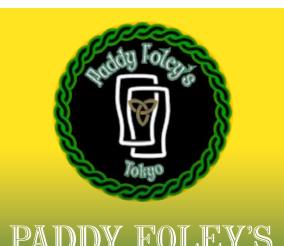
To construction and development tycoon Minoru Mori, who celebrated his birthday on July 14th. I

saw Minoru and his wife Yoshiko at US Ambassador Thomas Schieffer's, and as always, he had a great golf (I think) tan.

Also to HIH Princess Takamado, one of the most capable and hardest working ladies I have the privilege of knowing. She's always involved in so many worth-while projects, but there is just no space to list them all here. Anyway, the Princess' oldest daughter Tsuguko is back after finishing her studies at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and on July 22 her daughter Noriko turned 20, which makes her an adult here in Japan. The late and truly great Prince Takamado has so much to be proud of.

For fun, color, excitment and pure energy take your kids to the magical *Muscle Musical 2008*. You'll enjoy it and they'll love it. The show runs through September 7 at the Shibuya Muscle Theatre across from the Shibuya Ward office. See http://m-m2002.com for details.





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ARTS WITH OWEN SCHAEFER

Photomedia is the Message

s the world stands transfixed to televisions screens. Awebsites, and newspaper photographs of the Olympic games this summer, few will pause to consider the nature of the photographic media linking them to events thousands of miles away. Photographs, film, and video not only serve to transmit messages, but to record memory, or arguably, to become the very medium of memory. It is this ability to capture, or appear to capture, discrete moments in time or repeat flows of past time that have been lost to our perception that has fascinated artists since the first daguerreotypes were taken. And it is these questions of memory, time, and conceptual distance that the 10 artists taking part in the exhibition entitled Trace Elements investigate.

The show is a collaborative project between Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery and Performance Space in Sydney, Australia, and features "photomedia" works from both Japanese and Australian artists. The term photomedia here is a useful catch-all for any and all photographically related media, including video, film, and a few more difficult to define methods. "Trace Elements" is definitely one of Opera City's most considered and cohesive shows in some time. And with the exception of Jane Burton's Wormwood series of photos—quite unfairly orphaned in the gallery's dreaded hallway-each artist seems to merit equal space for consideration.

Perhaps topping the difficult-to-define category is Kazuna Taguchi's work. Taguchi first clips images from magazines—chiefly women's faces—and places them in a montage; she then paints a near-photorealistic copy of the montage, and, in a final distancing step, takes a photo of the canvas, which is exhibited as a gelatin-silver print. The results are more fascinating than they might sound. The prints themselves are low-contrast and mirror-like, their ghostly and unreal images divorced from, yet echoing, their mass-media roots.

Video and film take up an equal portion of the show. Chie Matsui's work She Dissolves appears at odd intervals on small screens throughout the exhibition, as though it were a live feed from some hidden room. In the unedited video, the artist repeatedly climbs up through a hatch in the floor of a small room, walks



across and disappears down a second opening into a hidden pool. From there, we hear her swim back, unseen, to the first hatch where it all begins again. The performance continues uninterrupted for more than half an hour. And with the repetition doubly repeated on different screens throughout the exhibition, it seems to go on forever-to the point at which the woman does begin to dissolve at least metaphorically into her task, if not physically.

On the Australian side, Alex Davies Dislocation, which allows four viewers in a room to watch themselves on tiny monitors as a series of characters appear to interact with them. Above all, it illustrates just how strangely familiar the idea of watching oneself from a detached position has become, and the effect is by turns spooky, amusing, and even creates a sense of community among viewers as they react to the nonexistent figures sharing the room.

But for social depth and impact, it is difficult to beat Genevieve Grieves' five-channel video installation Picturing the Old People, in which she painstakingly recreates the process of nineteenth century photographers taking staged photographs of aboriginal peoples. The videos are based on actual archival photos, but explore the relationship between the photographers and their subjects. The reenactments call attention to their own falsehood, and by association, the falsehoods in the process of the original photos, which were intended to capture the essential "nature" of aboriginality. It is a careful and multi-layered piece that rewards the patient viewer.

Australian Photomedia (to Oct 13) Tokyo Opera City Art and Sat) Closed Mon. 09-5353-0756. www.operacity.jp

CROSSWORD #32

Across 3. Self respect (5) 1. Pilfered (6) 7. Greek goddess, Zeus' daughter (6) 2. Ancient Iran (6)

8. Site of 2006 winter Olympic

games (6) 9. Test (5)

12. 80s-90s USA star athlete (5) 14. Perspire (5)

15. Track and field events (UK) (9) 11. Participants (9) 16. Hissy fit (7)

17. 24/7 (3-4)

19. Olympic goal (4,5) 22. Right (5)

23. King of talk shows (5)

24. ... of the Titans (5) 26. Admit (in the hall of fame) (6)

27.Chuan. Chinese martial art

21. Winner's cup (6) 24. Adorable (4)

3. Huff and puff (4)

4. And others (2,2)

6. Borrowed (2,4)

5. Archery missiles (6)

10. Good example (4,5)

13. Fame and fortune (7)

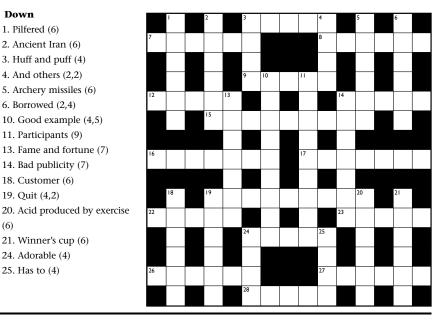
14. Bad publicity (7)

18. Customer (6)

19. Ouit (4.2)

25. Has to (4)

28. Third planet from the sun (5)



WEEKENDER PICK-UP POINTS

Aoyama Daiichi Mansions, Ritz Carlton Aoyama TELL, Virgin Atlantic Airways, Sin Den, Kinokuniya, Samrat Azabudai H&R Consultants/Relolapan Suji's, Cosmo PR, Tokyo Lease Corporation **Azabujuban** Magellan, Nissin World Delicatessen, Oakwood Residences. Temple University, UFJ Bank, Paris Miki, Right Brain Research, **Chofu** American School in lapan **Ebisu** Happy

Days Preschool, My Lebanon, Samrat, Segafredo, The Footnik, The Westin, What the Dickens, Va Tout, Good Day Books Ginza Ash Hair-Essensuals, Nissan Hanzomon British Embassy Hiroo Across Travel, Kato Gallery Fram Store, Meidiya, National Azabu Supermarket. Azaru Supermarket, Samrat, Segafredo, Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club, Priya, Tokyo Physio, International School of Sacred HeartJingumae

Gold's Gym, Boudoir, The King Clinic **Kamiyacho** American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, Hotel Okura, Town Cryer, Asian Tigers, Atago Green Hills Residence, 911 (Mad Mulligans) **Meguro**Party Palace, The Tave Minami Azabu Hiroo International Clinic The New Sanno **Mita**Australian Embassy,
English Studio **Moto**-**Azabu** Global Kids Academy, Gymboree,

Nishimachi Intl School. Zen Healing **Nihonbashi** National Australia Bank Cakes, PAL International School, Samrat Odaiba Daily Yomuiri **notesando** Fujiman **Omotesando** Fujimama Roppongi, 57, Aoyama Book Center, **Azabu Dai** Ichi Mansions, Bernd's Bar. Bourbon Street. Grand Hyatt, Hotel Ibis, Nakashima Dental, Oakwood **Roppongi** T-Cube, Paddy Foley's, Roppongi Hills Club

Roppongi Hills Residence Roti, Roy's, Samrat, Tipness, Internationa Clinic, Tokyo Midtown Clinic, Tokyo Skin Clinic, Zest, Va Tout, Devi Fusion Setagaya Sakura International School, Seta International Preschool, Seisen International School, Boarding Kennel Hinatya, Shiba Nakai Immigration Services Shibakoen Tokyo Gifted

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Japan Times **Shibuya** Beacon, No.1 Travel, Tower Records, HMV, Tableaux, British School Shinagawa TY Harbor Brewery, Embassy of Columbia **Shinjuku** Hilton Tokyo, No.1 Travel, Grand Hyatt, Park Hyatt, Samrat, Dubliners, Virgin Megastor, YMCA Suginami Aoba International School Takanawa Samrat, Tokyo nerican Club, Crown Relocations Toranom

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