FROM THE CHAIR
A message from the JETAASA Chair, Carrie Fischer.

WHAT’S BEEN HAPPENING?
Recap on past JETAA events in Southern Alberta.

SPOTLIGHT
Your guide to upcoming events brought to you by the Southern Alberta JETAA, the Calgary Japanese Community Association, the UofC Japanese Students’ Association, and more!

IN FOCUS
Photo highlights of people and places from Calgary, across Canada, and around the world.

CULTURE
» Surfing Shikoku | by Greg Lowan
» Food Review: Sushi Kawa | by Carrie Fischer
» Book Review: A Song For Nagasaki | by Lina Perez

HIGHLIGHTS
Photo gallery of the summer festival season in Japan, submitted by people like you

CONTACT & AFFILIATES
Want to get in touch? Our contact information and information on other Japan-related groups in Calgary.

From The Editor
Summer Lovin’, Free Fallin’
Hello loyal readers! Loyal because you’re reading the 2nd re-vamped edition of the Shinkansen Express and because you’re reading the small “From The Editor” column! Thank you in advance!

Things have been busy here around JETAASA lately. It’s been a very busy past few months with two very successful events in the Spring and many BBQs and Matsuris in the Summer. There have been quite a few updates to the website, a new JETAASA logo, and an increased interest in the Shinkansen Express (our publication on JETWit.com, to note) that we are quite excited about. We hope to generate more interest through our website and newsletter to create a more engaging, active community with our alumni and JETAASA.

Thank you again for reading and I hope you enjoy our Autumn edition of the Shinkansen Express. Just a reminder that we’re always looking for writers or photographers to submit their material and that if you’re interested:

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS DECEMBER 26TH.

The Shinkansen Express is proudly brought to you by:
From the Chair

Summer Update

Hey everyone!

Thank you for your patience with us. We know it’s been a while since you’ve received our newsletter. We’re trying to iron out the kinks on the new system. It’s been busy though! We’ve had the JETAA National Conference, the Pre-Departure Orientation, the Departure Reception and the Summer BBQ!

In the first week of June was the National Conference held at the Delta Bow Valley here in Calgary. The conference was hosted by your very own JETAAASA, along with support from MOFA, and we’re pleased to announce that it was a resounding success. We had delegates from a majority of the JETAA Canada chapters from across Canada in attendance, along with some special guests from CLAIR in New York and the Consulate of Japan in Calgary. I want to give a huge thank you to the delegates, the volunteers, the execs of JETAA Southern Alberta, and from Calgary businesses including The Delta Bow Valley and Sugo restaurant for all the help we received. Thank you!

Later in June, our annual Pre-Departure Orientation took place which we couldn’t have done that without the help of our volunteers either! We showed one short-listed and six alternate-list candidates all the tricks of the trade to prepare for Japan and everyone had a great time. A big thank you to Kinjo’s for supplying our bentos for the day, and I hope everyone’s had a chance to check out their spectacular new NW location!

The Departure Reception at the Consulate General’s home was another success! We got to say goodbye to the new JETs in style, as well as hand our our annual JETAA Southern Alberta USB sticks with a little message from ourselves!

Last, but certainly not least, was our annual Summer BBQ. A resounding success this year, we raised more money for Smile Kids Japan while promoting the JET Programme to park-goers of all ages!

Keep an eye on your email boxes folks! We’re going to be welcoming home the returnees coming up in a few weeks and we’d love to see you there! Doesn’t matter if you’ve been home for a few months, or a few years, all are welcome! Stay tuned, and hope to see you soon!

Carrie Fischer
Chair
JETAA Southern Alberta

Don’t hesitate to get in contact with me at chair@jetaasa.ca
JETAASA | SHINKANSEN EXPRESS | VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2 - AUTUMN 2012

EVENT REPORTS

Spring & Summer 2012

JETAA Canada National Conference
6月8日〜 6月10日 [June 8-10th, 2012]

The last three and a half months have been quite busy for the JETAA Southern Alberta Executive. After holding our AGM the Executive decided to take on the task of hosting the 2012 JETAA Canada National Conference in Calgary. It had been a few years since a Conference was held in Calgary and we felt as a group that it would be great for other Chapters and CLAir representatives to visit Southern Alberta. As none of the members of the Executive had ever participated in planning a conference we were very fortunate to have the support of other Chapters - namely JETAAABC, as they hosted the 2011 Conference in Calgary. We also had lots of support from our wonderful JET Coordinator Robin, JETAAABC, CLAir and MOFA. I am very proud of what we accomplished and believe that we have set Southern Alberta up for a great year of events and garnered a presence for ourselves in the community.

- Jennifer Kennedy

Pre-Departure Orientation
6月3日 [June 23rd, 2012]

Consulate-General Fukuda once again invited all of the new 2012 JET participants into his home for a reception days prior to their departure for their new positions in Japan. Special guest, Alberta Education’s Director of International Educational Services, Waldemar Reimer, gave a short speech encouraging the new participants to enjoy the new experiences about to be offered to them. Guests were treated, as usual, to a delicious array of Japanese food to munch on while enjoying the lovely warm weather in Calgary. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta sent 20 new JETs to Japan this year.

Natsu Matsuri BBQ
8月24日 [August 24th, 2012]

JETAA Southern Alberta held its annual Summer BBQ in Edworthy Park. The day was jam-packed this year, with lots of new things and entertainment.

This year we invited the wonderful Midnight Taiko to play later in the afternoon. Midnight Taiko played four songs for us before opening up the drums to all the guests to give it a try! A special thanks goes to Midnight Taiko for using their amazing music to lure over other park-goers to find out more about us, the JET Programme and our cause Smile Kids Japan.

Another fun addition this year was we had sumo wrestling for the first time! Even our own executive took the amazing opportunity to butt chests and try to throw each other to the mats!

Between donations for food and the garage sale we raised $114 dollars for Smile Kids Japan this year! Thank you again to everyone who came down to support us and our charity.
Upcoming Events - Autumn 2012

OCTOBER
十月 (jyugatsu)


» October 21st  | The CJCA will be holding their Aki Matsuri (Fall Festival) at the Nikkei Cultural Centre with traditional foods such as takoyaki, okonomiyaki, and yakisoba. $2.00 admission, runs from 1:00-4:00pm.

» October 27th  | The CJCA will be holding ‘Sake & Sakanas’ (Japanese Tapas) a sake tasting and Japanese cuisine event. $50 to register, email cjcamain@shaw.ca to register, runs from 7:00-9:00pm.

» Late-October | The JETAASA will be holding a returnees dinner and all alumni are invited! Time and location TBD but details will be emailed out and on our website.

NOVEMBER
十一月 (jyuichigatsu)

» November 3rd  | 文化の日 (Culture Day)

» November 4th  | The JETAASA will begin offering our free Japanese Language Classes for JET alumni. Details to come, keep an eye on our website www.jetaasa.ca.

DECEMBER
十二月 (jyunigatsu)

» December 9th  | The CJCA will be holding a ‘Mochi Party’ at the Nikkei Centre. Details to come, keep at eye on their website at www.calgaryjca.com.

» December 23rd | 天皇誕生日 (Emperor’s Birthday)
Got photos you want to contribute? Send them to submissions@jetaasa.ca

The JETAA Ottawa Delegates

Carrie & Troy presenting on JETAASA’s past events

The JETAA Southern Alberta Board of Executives

The JETAA Canada Representative Greg Joughin

The JETAA Canada Conference 2012 Delegates

A presentation from the Alberta/Japan Twinned Municipalities Association
Got photos you want to contribute? Send them to sajetaa@gmail.com
One sweltering afternoon in early August of 2002, I arrived exhausted at the Kochi airport in south-central Shikoku, the smallest of Japan’s four main islands. Sweating through my poorly chosen Canadian winter-weight shirt, tie, and wool pants and struggling with luggage and surf gear, I was met by Charlie, a high school teacher from Muroto, a small fishing port and well known surfing area on the Southeastern tip of Shikoku that I would call home for the next year. Charlie-sensei mercifully whisked me straight to lunch at a nearby air-conditioned restaurant with a gorgeous view of the sea. We became quick friends, which was fortunate since we would soon be team-teaching English lessons to restless high school students under the auspices of the JET Programme. I later discovered that Charlie had earned his nickname due to his uncanny resemblance to Charlie Brown and the fact that, along with teaching English, he also played the trumpet and conducted the school’s band.

I had enrolled in the JET Programme with three main objectives—to improve my Japanese, gain some formal teaching experience, and surf as much as possible. Over the past five years, I had completed an undergraduate degree at the University of Calgary in Kinesiology with an unofficial minor in Japanese; I had also developed an unbridled passion for surfing. Periodic surfaris to Canada’s West Coast, the northwestern US, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand had whetted my appetite, but I still craved the complete surf experience. Like Arizona’s Rick Kane in the classic, if not cliché, surf film North Shore, I desperately desired to leave my land-locked roots behind for somewhere that I could completely immerse myself in a warm water surf scene.

Settling In

As it turned out, I had arrived near the height of the surf season in subtropical Kochi. Like other areas of Japan that face the Pacific Ocean, Kochi prefecture is regularly blessed by typhoon swells during the summer and fall. Typically originating in the South Pacific and moving northwards, the ideal typhoon stays just far enough offshore to deliver giant swells for surfers without creating too much havoc for towns and villages along the coast.

For experienced surfers, typhoon season is heaven, but for a relative newbie like myself, it was a challenging time to get my sea legs. Fortunately, the Muroto locals were very welcoming and patient with me—especially those who were my students! We devised an exchange system where I would teach them English and they would give me tips on my surfing and Tosa-ben, the local dialect. We informally dubbed our crew the “Muroto Koukou Surf Club” and I soon became known as “sensei” in the lineup, albeit not for my surfing ability.

Southeastern Kochi and neighbouring Tokushima’s surf breaks can become extremely crowded with visitors from the Kansai region during weekends and holidays, however the crowds usually disperse by Sunday evening. Unless the swell is epic, wise locals typically disappear on Friday and re-emerge for a Sunday evening session. However, my enthusiasm was too strong to keep me on the beach during those first few months, so I regularly battled the shoulder-to-shoulder crowds on the weekend, taking and delivering my share of errant board bonks.

It was during quiet mid-week days that I was able to put in lots of hours on relatively crowd-free waves; early mornings and evenings are blissful in Kochi during the summer and fall, with warm water and regular swells welcoming you more often than not. Through daily surf sessions and weekend trips up and down Shikoku’s coastlines, I made steady progress in my surfing.

However, my enthusiasm was dampened at times—dropping in on (cutting off) and running into the top local pro and nearly being sucked out to sea by a giant typhoon swell to name a couple. I also received a lot of teasing when...
I forgot to strap down my board before heading out onto the highway after one evening session—surfboards can really fly at high speeds!

Miyazaki

In mid-October some friends and I decided to finish off the surf season with a long-weekend trip to Miyazaki, a prefecture on neighbouring Kyushu known for its beautiful beaches, slightly more tropical climate, and consistent surf. After getting lost many times trying to cross over to Shikoku’s west coast in an overloaded van after dark, we made it on to the last ferry to the port of Saiki in northeastern Kyushu. Later that night, after several hours spent groping our way down the Miyazaki coastline through a deep fog, we finally reached our first destination, Okuragahama, and quickly tucked in for some much-needed rest.

The next morning we woke to shoulder-high typhoon swell and a packed line-up preparing for a regional surf competition. After a quick morning session we moved on down the coast and proceeded to enjoy three wonderful days of surfing, onsen, and countless driving mishaps. The most memorable might have been accidentally driving down the wrong side of a very busy road—I can’t remember who was driving that day, but I think that he might have been Canadian …

Miyazaki was gorgeous and we all agreed that we would love to live there. I secretly kicked myself for having put it down as my second choice after Kochi on my JET application, but then felt appropriately guilty. Where was my loyalty? What would the Muroto Koukou Surf Club have said? I did, however, have the chance to visit Miyazaki again on a subsequent visit to Japan in 2008. It was still spectacular.

One Last Wave

After a predominantly wave-less winter and several bouts of cold and flu, spring could not come soon enough in Kochi. The swell picked up steadily and we were soon on the brink of another typhoon season; unfortunately this also meant that I was due to leave. My contract was set to expire at the end of July and I had decided not to renew. After a year of teaching English, working on my Tosa-ben, and surfing as much as possible, it was time for me to head home. I had fulfilled my Rick Kane dream and felt good about returning back to a relatively land-locked life in Canada.

My keitai rang early in the morning of my final day. It was Rob, a Kiwi friend, with news of a building typhoon swell. I had already sent my luggage and boards ahead to the airport, so Rob came by with an extra board. We were soon paddling out at Yasudagawa, a river mouth in Southeastern Kochi, into some of the biggest swell that I have ever experienced. Locals and visiting pros alike were dazzling the crowd, dropping into stand-up barrels and occasionally breaking boards.

Rob and I nervously hung on the fringe of the lineup for quite a while; neither of us wanted to be caught unprepared by a big wave or accidentally drop-in on somebody. However, a nice medium-sized swell eventually rose on the horizon. Nobody in the lineup seemed to be going for it so, at the last second, I turned and paddled as hard as I could. The wave picked me up with a power that I’d never felt before. My stomach lurched as I jumped to my feet and dropped down the face. Before I knew it, I had completed a bottom-turn and tucked into a beautiful green barrel. Engulfed behind the turquoise curtain, time slowed down. However, as the rocks on shore loomed closer, I eventually lost my nerve and turned up and over the back of the wave. I paddled back out to meet a beaming Rob who had also managed to catch a wave. It was a great send off to conclude my time in Kochi.

Greg Lowan is now based in Prince George, BC where he teaches in the First Nations’ Studies program at the University of Northern British Columbia. He still gets out for the occasional surf. Visit his website, www.kichigami.com.
SUSHI KAWA

by Carrie Fischer

There are three sushi restaurants on 4th street in Mission, and Sushi Kawa is the most southern, and my personal favourite. According to their website Sushi Kawa was started in April 2000 by head chef and owner Ted Yoshikawa. Bringing the flavours of Osaka combined with what they learned of Canadian tastes in Vancouver Sushi Kawa brings a host of Japanese flavours to Calgary’s food scene.

Sushi Kawa’s décor is almost a café-like setting with a huge big screen TV in the corner either playing the latest news, or the latest sumo bouts. Service at Sushi Kawa is always attentive and friendly. But that’s not why we go to sushi restaurants, is it?

The sushi at Sushi Kawa is always fresh and beautifully if simply presented.

According to their biography, Head Chef Yoshikawa brings his fish to Calgary whole, instead of in pieces like other restaurants. Portions are ideally balanced between fish and rice and flavourful without that faint fishiness you sometimes find at other restaurants.

The true gem, however, to be found at Sushi Kawa is its okinomiyaki. Imagine my joy when I found a restaurant in Calgary that served true okinomiyaki. You’ll get a bit of a look from the serving staff, who will promptly warn you that it’ll take at least half an hour to cook, but honestly, it’s worth it. Hot off the grill, bonito flakes dancing merrily on top, you won’t believe the memories you’ll find again as you taste that first salty bite. Well worth the trip, in my opinion.

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Have a favorite Japanese restaurant? Want to spread the good word? Send your food review to submissions@jetaasa.ca

2204 4 Street SW
Calgary, Alberta
Ph: (403) 802-0058
www.sushikawa.ca
Book Review

Paul Glynn

A Song For Nagasaki (1995)

This book is an account of the life of Dr. Takashi Nagai intertwined with anecdotes of the history and culture of Japan. The first part of the book deals primarily with Dr. Nagai’s spiritual journey. He was born to parents who believed in Shinto. However in university his fascination with the Sciences resulted in him becoming an atheist. Later on his experiences as a medic during the Manchurian Camping (a war between Japan and China), and the example of the family of his future wife lead him to Christianity.

When the second atomic bomb detonated over the Nagasaki suburb in which he lived killing 8,000 people - including his wife - Dr. Nagai relied on his beliefs and taught peace and love. He took the life of a hermit, living in a hut the size of a tea house where he spent his time writing and talking to his many visitors including Emperor Hirohito and Helen Keller. Dr. Nagai died six years after the end of the war from leukemia which he had acquired previously as a pioneer radiology professor and researcher.

I read this book during my time in Japan as a JET and was greatly moved by its unique perspective to the atomic bombing. Paul Glynn did an excellent job in giving this book a truly Japanese feel. Later when I toured Japan with my sister we stopped in Nagasaki and I visited the museum and hut dedicated to Dr. Takashi Nagai. It was a wonderful experience to see that so many decades later he is still admired and respected by the citizens of Nagasaki.

by Lina Perez

Fr. Paul Glynn is a Marist priest who served as a missionary in Japan for twenty-five years. He has written five other books including the Ignatius title Healing Fire of Christ.
Photos by John Nguyen
Photo by Jennifer Kennedy

Photo by John Nguyen

Photo by John Nguyen
HOW TO REACH THE JETAA SOUTHERN ALBERTA:

[ E-MAIL ] info@jetaasa.ca

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK
Want to be the first to know what’s happening? Join our group on Facebook, http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2406291059 or search ‘JETAA Southern Alberta’.

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER
Keep up-to-date on what’s happening with JETAA by following our Twitter feed, @jetaasa

WANNA VOLUNTEER?

JETAA Southern Alberta is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to contribute to our newsletter, stay connected, and join, help out, or even just spread the word to friends and family about an upcoming event. If you are interested, we are always looking for committed volunteers who want to become a part of the JETAA executive committee to help organize Japan-related events and contribute toward a fantastic JETAA community!

SEND AN EMAIL TO info@sajetaa.ca, AND GET INVOLVED
**Calgary Japanese Community Association (CJCA)**

[Website] [http://www.calgaryjca.com/](http://www.calgaryjca.com/)

A local organization that “oversee’s the Japanese community in the city of Calgary”. They regularly hold Japanese-related events throughout the year and welcome the public to attend.

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)**

[Website] [http://www.mofa.go.jp/](http://www.mofa.go.jp/)

The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs website with information on the JET Programme, study and working holiday visas, tax procedures and more.

**JET Programme**

[Website] [http://www.jetprogramme.org/](http://www.jetprogramme.org/)

...last but not least, probably the reason why you’re reading this newsletter right now! No introductions needed.

**Consulate-General of Japan in Calgary**

[Website] [http://www.calgary.emb-japan.go.jp/](http://www.calgary.emb-japan.go.jp/)

The consolate-general of Japan for central Canada which has information about the JET Programme or the Monbukagakusho Scholarship Program.

**JETwit.com**

[Website] [http://www.jetwit.com/](http://www.jetwit.com/)

The alumni magazine, career center and communication channel for the JET Alumni community worldwide.

**JETAA Canada**

[Website] [http://www.jetaacanada.ca/](http://www.jetaacanada.ca/)

JETAA Canada is the national representative that oversees all of the regional chapters in Canada to the international JETAA community.

**JETAA International**

[Website] [http://www.jetalumni.org/](http://www.jetalumni.org/)

JETAA International was created to foster the relationships between JET Programme participants and to create a deeper and broader understanding between Japan and the participating countries.

**Japanese Conversation and Culture Club (JCC)**

[Website] [http://people.ucalgary.ca/~jcc/](http://people.ucalgary.ca/~jcc/)

A student-run group that holds weekly Japanese conversation meetings at the University of Calgary, typically students enrolled in Japanese courses and Japanese exchange students. All skill levels welcome.

Every Wednesday, 4:00-6:00pm, no admission fee, drop-in. Room EDC 154 @ University of Calgary.

**The Calgary Japanese Language Meetup Group**


A social Meetup group for members in Calgary interested in meeting up with native Japanese people to practice their Japanese conversation, from beginner to advanced. All skill levels welcome.

Sign up with Meetup and add yourself to the group to learn when the next meetup is. No admission fee.

**Calgary Japanese Language School**

[Website] [https://sites.google.com/site/calgaryjls/](https://sites.google.com/site/calgaryjls/)

A Japanese Language School that offers classes covering a wide range of Japanese language abilities. Operates out of Queen Elizabeth Junior and Senior High School, 512 18th Street N.W.

Visit their website for admission and registration information.