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NEW WAYS TO SHARE INFORMATION AND OCTOBER EVENTS IN KANSAI AND CHUBU



Jay Ponazecki jponazecki@accj.or.jp

With the support of the Communications Advisory Council, co-chaired by ACCJ Governors Jonathan Kushner and William Swinton, the ACCJ is very focused on adopting new ways to capture the content of our 500-plus events each year and on using more digital tools in our programming.

Last month we launched—for the first time in ACCJ history—live streaming of an ACCJ speaker event. We will be expanding these efforts and always welcome your feedback and recommendations. Last month we also launched a new member idea/suggestion box (ideabox@accj.or.jp) to make it easier for you to email us your terrific ideas as you think of them.

2014 ACCJ Kansai Charity Walk-A-Thon

Building on the experience of our Chubu Chapter, which launched the ACCJ's first charity walkathon in 1991, our Kansai Chapter has been gathering members, families, friends and supporters for a fun day outdoors since 2006—alternating annually between Kobe and Osaka. Last year 2,000 people gathered in Osaka. This year we return to Kobe (see page 47).

Registration for the 2014 Charity Walk for Working Mothers starts at 10 a.m. on October 18, at the Canadian Academy on Rokko Island. In addition to the Walk-A-Thon, there will be live entertainment, international food booths, a charity raffle with great prizes and a children's play area. The participation fee is ¥1,000 for adults and ¥500 for children, but please consider donating more. Food and drink tickets will be sold separately on site. Please also consider supporting working women and their families living under difficult circumstances by making a donation that will allow us to invite them to the Walk-A-Thon free of charge.

Supporting working women and helping raise the awareness of issues impacting women in the workplace have been ongoing themes of the Kansai Walk-A-Thon. This year's event is sponsored and supported by more than 50 companies—including many ACCJ member companies—that actively promote diversity. The Kansai Chapter is proud over the years to have donated ¥36,306,000 to 18 NPOs that support working women. The beneficiaries of the 2013 Kansai Walk-A-Thon were: the Work and Child Raising

Counseling Center, the Osaka Gender Equality Foundation, the Sakai City Family Support Center and the Sanno Children's Center.

The ACCJ Board of Governors will hold its next meeting at the Kobe Portopia Hotel on October 17, so that Board members can participate in the Walk-A-Thon the next day. After the meeting, there will be a panel discussion with the Union of Kansai Governments followed by a welcome reception for the new Consul General for Osaka/Kobe, Allen Greenberg, with the Japan America Societies of Osaka and Kobe and the Japan America Women of Kansai. I hope many of you will join us at the panel discussion, the reception and the Walk-A-Thon. I am very much looking forward to spending time with ACCJ members and guests and their families in Kansai later this month.

If you would like to register to attend, become a Walk-A-Thon sponsor or become a sponsor of one or more working women and their families so that they can attend the Walk-A-Thon free of charge, please email the Kansai ACCJ Office at kansai@accj.or.jp. Thank you in advance for supporting this important annual event.

2014 Chubu Workplace Diversity Symposium

On October 23, the Chubu Women in Business Committee is holding a half-day symposium on "Diversity in the Workplace: Broadening Cultural Understanding and Empowering Women." It will focus on strategies to increase global potential for companies in Japan by strengthening cultural awareness and promoting diversity in the workplace. For more information regarding the program, how to register and sponsorship opportunities, please email the Chubu ACCJ Office at chubu@accj.or.jp.

The Chubu Chapter has developed strong working relationships with various Japanese government entities and business associations in the Chubu region. Thanks to Steve Burson's strong leadership, this year the Chubu Chapter has been able to leverage these relationships in putting together this symposium with enthusiastic support from the local community. The fact that Aichi Prefecture's Deputy Governor Akiko Yoshimoto will be one of the featured speakers is good evidence of this support. Dean Foster, an internationally renowned intercultural training specialist, will be another featured speaker. •



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PRIDE OF PLACE



Brandi Goode
brandi@custom-media.com

One of the most lauded Japanese virtues is modesty, as Governor of Texas Rick Perry observed during his recent visit to Tokyo. Having spent half of my formative years in the lone-star state, I had to chuckle when he admitted that trait is one not generally shared by Texans and Japanese. In his interview with the *ACCJ Journal*, Perry went on to proudly describe—just as a beaming father or satisfied entrepreneur would—Texas's economic achievements under his tenure as the state's longest-serving governor, and what this means for those of us in Japan (see page 12).

His appearance should be of particular interest to members with an eye on the 2016 presidential vote, as Perry is rumored to be the current frontrunner for the Grand Old Party. Texas–Japan ties are on the rise, particularly in the sector that fuels the state's economy: oil and gas. On October 1–5, the Greater Houston Partnership's delegation is visiting Japan to promote business interests in this, among other, fields of growth.

And for a balanced approach, if you'd like to hear from a Democratic state leader, the ACCJ will host Governor of Virginia Terry McAuliffe on October 15.

Good timing

It has been a busy time for the Japanese government, with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's September cabinet reshuffle having made headlines. It was aptly timed around the World Assembly for Women in Tokyo (September 12–14), at which Abe's wife, Akie, was a keynote speaker. The proportion of females in Abe's advisory circle is now nearly 30%—the goal Abe has set for women in leadership by 2020.

As soon as this Diet session, we may see a bill presented to the legislature that would require companies to set targets for

promoting women, a move that will surely be championed by many. The government also announced the opening in Tokyo next year of a United Nations Women's office, which should spark even further initiatives to bring more women (back) into the workforce.

I also received a kind email from Misato Oi, who was featured in the July *Journal* article "Holding Our Future in Their Hands." Oi participated in a speaking circuit this summer, in part thanks to aid from ACCJ President Jay Ponazecki. We published one of her inspirational haiku in the July issue, and she was kind enough to share a new poem following her experience this summer. See the full version in my editor's article online, on the *ACCJ Journal* website.

New faces

We introduce some new writers in this October issue, as well as a new Tech column. I am constantly reading articles about innovative companies, individuals, and products that are emerging in Japan and the United States, giving us plenty to share in the monthly space.

The *ACCJ Journal* is perpetually on the lookout for professional writers to season its pages. If you or someone you know is interested, drop me a line anytime. •



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SAMURAI & COWBOYS

Rick Perry: Japan is America's most important ally

By Brandi Goode

Unlike his 19th-century predecessor with a shared surname, the governor of Texas extolled the Japanese hospitality received on his first visit.

"It's another time, another Perry, and any American who visits Japan can feel he is among friends," said Governor Rick Perry, referring to Commodore Matthew Perry's incursions into Japan in the 1850s.

Making friends across the Pacific seems a priority for Perry, who has been rumored as a potential presidential candidate in the next election. The governor added Japan to his itinerary after receiving an invitation to the World Economic Forum in Tianjin, China, saying it was important "to come and sit down while we're in the neighborhood." Like the current US government leaders, Perry is keenly aware of maintaining diplomatic relations with Japan and China, and was quick to skirt political questions during an interview with the *ACCJ Journal*.

Instead, his speech to a sold-out crowd at an ACCJ event on September 8 focused on trade—specifically the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement—energy, and the shared values that fortify the US-Japan alliance, which he called America's most important.

The Texas miracle

He also did a fair share of boasting about his achievements and the Texas economy, which, in contrast to a majority of US states in the past few years, has posted remarkable

growth. Media have come to refer to the phenomenon as the "Texas miracle," a term that does not sit well with Perry.

"I don't like to call it a miracle. Miracles are things you can't explain; this you can, and it's pretty simple," he said.

Perry went on to outline his four steps to economic progress.

1. Keep the tax burden light enough to encourage growth. There should be just enough income to allow government to fulfill people's expectations, such as maintaining roads and education standards.
2. Establish a regulatory policy that's fair and predictable. This is crucial, he said, to attracting investment, as companies will spend money and hire staff in a place where they know the rules are not going to change in the middle of the game.
3. Maintain a legal system that doesn't allow for oversuing. Perry said Texas has enacted the most sweeping tort reform in the nation, which discourages frivolous lawsuits. Perhaps this is not Japan's greatest concern, however.
4. Improve policies regarding public schools, which should be held accountable for educational standards. This translates into a skilled workforce. Perry said a key reason for eBay and other companies' decisions to relocate to Texas hinged on the availability of skilled labor in the state.

Companies will spend money and hire staff in a place where they know the rules are not going to change in the middle of the game.

This is great for Texas, but can the model be replicated in Japan?

According to Perry, it can be copied anywhere. "The hard part is finding men and women to implement these changes in policy," he said, perhaps hinting at his own ability to reform the US economy if elected president.

A key part of this four-step formula is lowering corporate tax, an issue at the forefront of debates in Japan. Just this April, Toyota Motor Corp. announced its decision to move its headquarters to Plano, Texas, after 50 years in California. The lower cost of living and tax structure were primary factors in the decision.

Perry is well aware of the tenets of Abenomics, which he supports wholeheartedly. He endorses a reduced corporate tax, because, "It just works. People will argue against it forever, but the reality is that businesses will risk their capital and hire people if government makes this commitment [to lower taxes]."





“The TPP is one of the defining opportunities of this generation.”

annual trade. “Measured by their combined economic potential, you’re not going to find two allied nations as essential to one another as the United States and Japan, in the progress we can make and the good influence we can have,” he added.

“This is a test of leadership.”

Partners in energy

As commerce was Perry’s primary motive—at least that which was stated—for visiting Japan, energy trade was a key theme. With the shutdown of nearly all of the nation’s 42 nuclear reactors, Perry said Japan “could and probably will be a major purchaser” of Texas’s liquefied natural gas (LNG), which he called Tokyo’s “new fuel of choice.”

The state has been ramping up its production of shale gas and is keen to set up purchasing agreements with other economies. In fact, many Japanese concerns have become involved in shale-gas production in Texas, in anticipation of new policies under debate.

Japan currently relies on outside sources for 90 percent of its energy, and thus any potential long-time supplier must be “secure, stable, and friendly,” to guarantee cheap and abundant energy.

Energy security is a global concern, Perry emphasized. “For years in America, we’ve talked and talked about the goal of energy security. Just about the last thing this or any country needs is to depend on foreign governments that use energy as a strategic lever, manipulating supplies to suit their own designs,” he said.

“All it takes is the courage of the leaders to replicate what happened in Japan in the 1980s, and I am quite confident it can happen again.”

Much of Perry’s talk reaffirmed his belief in a limited federal government, a topic that is also pertinent in Japan as new responsibilities are shifted to regional governments under the Abe administration.

“There are always governments that act as if they can overtax, overregulate, and just generally interfere in business and employment, without inviting bad consequences,” he said.

“Whether it’s Europe, Asia, the Americas, or anywhere else, the same broad principles are going to hold true. The more a nation respects labor and capital, the more it will prosper over time. The more secure a country is in the rule of law—with equally clear limits on the power of the state—the better off its people will be in so many ways.”

With this he highlighted how the greatest periods of economic growth in the United States, including under the administrations of John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, coincided with the times of greatest economic freedom. Businesses in Japan are certainly hoping his message rings true with leaders here.

Vote yes for TPP

Japan and the United States, as the two biggest economies participating in the TPP, have a “singular responsibility,” Perry said, to advance negotiations.

Calling the agreement “one of the defining opportunities of this generation,” Perry stressed that both nations must stay focused on all they stand to gain if the pact is approved, and that secondary interests should not be allowed to interfere with the larger goal of freer trade.

He pointed out how our two economies account for nearly one-third of global domestic product, and share some \$300 billion in

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Shared values

Japan and the United States—even Texas—share common values.

On the state level, both sides are conservative. Texan and Japanese businesses are compatible in many ways, and commerce is as strong as ever between US and Japanese companies. After the ACCJ event and interview, Perry met with JR Group to discuss plans for a high-speed rail line between Houston and Dallas. So far, the commercial partnership has gone well.

One media outlet described the interaction of Japanese and Texas interests as “the spirit of the cowboy

meeting the spirit of the samurai,” which Perry calls “a formidable consideration.”

On the national level, Perry emphasized our nations’ shared beliefs in democracy and the rule of law. Geopolitics and economic interest are but some of the things that unite us, he said, but above all “we are joined by conviction in an alliance of values.”

And this, he said, if we continue to manage it well, will bolster the security architecture of the Asia-Pacific region.

While Perry declined to admit ambitions for the presidency, he was not shy about his goal of increasing

“[The United States and Japan] are joined by conviction in an alliance of values.”

opportunities for Texas businesses in Japan, in the defense sector in addition to energy. Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. has its headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas, after all.

Governor Perry concluded by praising Japan’s achievements and current direction of reform.

“A strong Japan is good for America and this region.” •

If Texas were a country

(as it once was)



JAPAN



TEXAS

GDP	\$4.90 trillion	\$1.14 trillion
Population	127 million	26 million
Population Density	836 per square mile	98.1 per square mile
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Global economic rank	3rd	12th*
Highest point	12,389 feet	8,750 feet
Political representation of ruling party	Liberal	
	Democratic Party	Republican Party
	Upper house (House of Councillors)	Upper house (Senate)
	115 of 242	2 of 2
	Lower house (House of Representatives)	Lower house (House of Representatives)
	295 of 480	24 of 36

*According to US Bureau of Economic Analysis and World Bank figures

Casino Complex Plans Major Investment



MGM is betting big on Japan.

The head of MGM Resorts International has said the company plans to invest about ¥1 trillion to build a first-class resort in Japan when and if the law permits (*PokerNews.com*, September 9).

James Murren, MGM CEO, said, “We believe that the [Japanese] market could be the second largest in the world,” next to Macao.

Murren has been to Japan six times so far this year, to assess

potential sites for the planned complex in various cities.

In Tokyo, he has targeted the current site of the Tsukiji fish market, which is set to be relocated next year. He also visited Osaka and spoke to Governor Ichiro Matsui about the company’s aspirations to develop an integrated resort complex that incorporates aspects of Japanese culture, and which utilizes the latest technology for high energy efficiency.

US Company Consults on Fukushima Toxic Leaks

The Japanese government is consulting with a Utah company to help address radioactive leaks at Fukushima (*Deseret News*, August 22).

Cross Marine Projects is one of several global companies consulted for a solution to the roughly 72,000 gallons of radioactive water that daily leaks into the Pacific Ocean from the Fukushima Dai-Ichi Nuclear Power Plant.

Cross has proposed injecting hydrogels into cracks in the soil that would harden to form a barrier wall. The technology is one the company has used for several years. President Jim Cross said it would be more durable than the ice barrier the government and Tokyo Electric Power Co. have been testing in recent months. Plus, he claims his technology would cost only a fraction of the \$450 million estimated for the ice wall.

Domestic Leader Building Defense Arm

Fujitsu Ltd. has announced its acquisition of a US defense technology company (*The Japan Times*, August 26).

GlobeRanger Corp., based in Texas, makes a radio frequency identification system for managing information on various weapons. Fujitsu is looking to enter the US national security market, following the loosening of regulations on Japan’s export of weapons and related technologies in April. In fiscal 2013, Fujitsu conducted about ¥40 million in transactions with the Japanese Ministry of Defense.

The electronics maker has reportedly also set its sights on the global defense industry beyond US and Japanese borders. In the UK and Australia, it currently conducts defense-related operations through subsidiaries.

Mobile Alliance Sees Bright Future

A US-based phone carrier has been taking a page from Japan’s book to expand its product offerings, according to a company official (*PC Magazine*, August 27).

Sprint, which was acquired by parent company SoftBank in 2013, is working to bring more Japanese items to US consumers. In mid-August, Sprint began offering Sharp Co.’s Aquos Crystal phone to its US customers through a joint process with SoftBank.



The Sharp Aquos Crystal phone launched in the United States in August.

Collaboration between the provider and its Japanese parent has given both businesses access to new suppliers and more negotiating power, according to Sprint’s head of product development. Now the US company is looking at not only SoftBank’s relationships with phone makers, such as Sharp and NEC, but also the possibility of offering its customers other devices, such as phone cases and security cameras, which are sold through SoftBank in Japan.

Nanosheets Could Help Burn Victims

Researchers from Japan and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have made great strides in the use of nanosheets for treating burns (*The Malay Mail Online*, August 17).

Addressing the 248th National Meeting & Exposition of the American Chemical Society, Japanese scientists presented a novel way—using biodegradable nanosheets—of protecting burn victims from bacterial infections. Tests have shown the sheets block common bacteria for three days before renewed application is needed. This reduces the frequency with which wounds would require dressing.

The MIT team introduced biodegradable nanosheets that allow controlled delivery of topical drugs. This would make possible the targeted treatment of one area of the body, while preventing the exposure of vital organs to drugs.

Researchers in both countries are now planning large-scale animal and safety tests.

Nations Fare Well in Economic Poll

A recently released economic survey has ranked the United States third and Japan sixth in terms of economic competitiveness (BBC website, September 2).

The *Global Competitiveness Report 2014–2015*, published by the Geneva-based World Economic Forum, lists the same 10 countries in the top 10 spots for the third consecutive year, although their rankings are slightly different.

Japan beat Hong Kong and the Netherlands this year to move up two spots, while the United States leapfrogged Finland and Germany to achieve third place.

Switzerland took first place in the poll, followed by Singapore. There are a dozen factors in the assessment, including institutions, infrastructure, health and education, market size, and macroeconomic environment.

NFL Coach Signed by Kyoto University

A former National Football League (NFL) player has signed on as the new linebacker coach at Kyoto University (*The Japan Times*, September 1).

Adam Seward says he has wanted to live in Japan since his days at the University of Nevada. He previously coached football in the country while working to earn his Masters of Business Administration. Seward played in the NFL for five seasons from 2005, and had previously worked at NFL representative offices in Mexico and China.

The university's team, the Gangsters, was prominent in the Japanese college football scene in the 1980s and early '90s, winning six Koshien Bowl national championships. However, the team has not done well in recent years.

Kyoto University's head coach Daisuke Nishimura said, "If he remains with us, we want him to be our defensive coordinator next year."



Seward played five seasons with the NFL.



Nanami Nagura receives a handmade electric guitar as her prize.

Virtuoso Air Guitarist Claims 2014 World Title

A Japanese woman has beaten the former world air-guitar champion, who hails from the United States, in the 19th Air Guitar World Championships (Deutsche Welle, August 30).

Nanami Nagura, whose stage name is Seven Seas, took the crown from last year's winner, Eric "Mean" Melin, at the tight

competition held in Finland. She is also the Japanese national champion.

Nagura was chosen after a third-round "air-off" with second-place winner Matt "Airistotle" Burns, who is the 2014 US champ. The two finalists had only one chance to hear the song "Sweatmaster" before beginning their performances.

WORTHY CAUSES

This year's event will help women, children, and the homeless

By Barbara Hancock and Kevin Naylor

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan's Charity Ball funds most of the Tokyo chapter's philanthropic activities, and is an outstanding way for members to give back to the community in which we live. The Chubu and Kansai chapters have charity walkathons that fund charities in their local communities.

Annual charitable giving by the chamber goes back to the 1995 Kobe Earthquake, at which time it raised about ¥35 million. It was then that the Community Service Advisory Council (CSAC) was established as a continuing chamber effort. Every year, with recommendations from the chamber leadership, CSAC and the Charity Ball Committee select a group of charities to support, which are considered our "primary charities."

Over the past few years, efforts have been focused on the recovery of, and rebuilding in, Tohoku. With our selection this year you will see that we are still looking to support the recovery through the JKSK and the Taylor Anderson Memorial Fund. At the same time, the chamber remains committed to supporting local charities, which also have high-priority needs that must be met.

We would like to take this opportunity to again thank our ACCJ member companies for their ongoing, generous support of the worthy causes, in spite of these challenging economic times. It is due to these annual donations of



time and funds that we can all take great pride in constantly raising the bar for our charitable efforts. Following are the charities selected as recipients of donations from this year's Charity Ball.

Community Service Fund

The Community Service Fund is an ACCJ board-run fund with the mission to administer members' contributions in support of deserving community service projects. The fund is also used for emergency requests that come in throughout the year. Beneficiary projects include various activities of the American business family and youth communities, as well as selected Japanese social welfare organizations. The purpose of the grants is to assist in the community service goals of the recipients.

The JKSK organizes volunteer trips to organic cotton farms in Fukushima.

JKSK NPO (Empowering Women Empowering Society)

The JKSK has its roots in an organization formed in 1887, when a group of top political and business leaders in Japan gathered to form the Joshi-Kyoiku-Shoreikai (Society of Promoting Women's Education and Leadership). The organization helped open a women's school in Tokyo, which today has become the Tokyo Jogakkan Schools for Women.

With a group of friends, Mitsuo Kimata, founding president of The Body Shop in Japan, decided to revive the spirit of the original JKSK so that women would be better prepared to take on leadership roles in every area of Japanese society. She formed the current JKSK and launched its operations in January 2002.



Smiling Hospital Japan hires entertainers to support children spending long periods at the hospital.

The ACCJ has supported work that the JKSK has been doing in the Tohoku region to promote the active involvement in various workshops and projects of women in the area. The group organized a Women's Leadership Network to address immediate and long-term needs in several locations. In the near future, the JKSK will bring a group of female Asian leaders to Fukushima to organize workshops. The goal is to share expertise and experience in handling crises, so that disasters such as that which occurred in Tohoku can be better dealt with and understood. www.jksk.jp

Mike Makino Fund

The ACCJ Mike Makino Fund for the Homeless is maintained by the ACCJ, for charities that focus on helping the homeless and hungry in Japan. Through the fund, the chamber has financially supported the "onigiri project," in which volunteers distribute rice balls to feed hundreds of homeless people in Tokyo areas such as Ueno, Yoyogi, and Shinjuku parks.

As in the past, this year the Mike Makino Fund will support the Tokyo Union Church and the Franciscan Chapel Center, both of which sponsor and support the *onigiri* project. As Paul Fukuda of the Tokyo Union Church's Mission for Our Homeless Neighbors project recently noted, "It was found that two *onigiri* [per day] contained enough calories

to keep these poor men and women alive until they could get back on their feet." Readers can watch a heartwarming video on the project and an interview with Fukuda on the ACCJ website.

The fund also supports the Sanyukai Homeless Center, which provides mental and physical care for those in need, medical care by volunteer doctors, as well as food, clothing, and shelter for the homeless.

The ACCJ Mike Makino Fund was named after the ACCJ's dear friend and long-time contributor to CSAC, Shojiro (Mike) Makino. Makino identified and vetted many of the charities the chamber has supported over the years and helped to establish the original ACCJ Fund for the Homeless. He passed away suddenly on October 10, 2009, at the age of 80. In naming this fund in his honor, Makino's legacy lives on.

"It was found that two *onigiri* [per day] contained enough calories to keep these poor men and women alive until they could get back on their feet."

Smiling Hospital Japan


According to Smiling Hospital Japan's mission, "Happiness helps healing." The organization's mission is to lift the spirits of children in the hospital, especially those who are very weak with low immunity levels, and those obliged to stay long periods. It does this by engaging professional artists to provide entertainment.

Smiling Hospital Japan was established in February 2012 and became a registered nonprofit in December of that year. It started visitations the same year, and the concept has been well received by the children affected, their families, and hospital staff.

The ACCJ's donation will help to fund a year's worth of regular visits so the children have something to look forward to and can even participate in the programs that are presented. www.smilinghjpj.org



The Taylor Anderson Memorial Fund organizes fundraisers to support families in the Ishinomaki area.



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Although she was lost in the tsunami after helping to guide all her students to safety, Taylor's inspiration and generous spirit lives on.

Taylor Anderson Memorial Fund

Taylor Anderson was teaching English in the coastal city of Ishinomaki when the earthquake and tsunami struck on March 11, 2011. The 24-year-old American woman had long wanted to become a bridge between the United States and Japan, a country that had intrigued her since childhood. Her dream was realized by becoming an assistant language teacher under the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme.

She taught at kindergartens and elementary and junior high schools, and was loved by her Japanese students because of her enthusiasm, dedication, and kindness. Although she was lost in the tsunami after helping to guide all her students to safety, Taylor's inspiration and generous spirit lives on.

Her parents, Andy and Jean, believe she would have wanted them to carry on her dream and passion. They set about helping the children of Ishinomaki by creating reading corners in schools, inviting students to the United States, and implementing other projects. Alumni of her high school, St. Catherine's in Virginia, were instrumental in raising initial funding.

To continue implementing these projects, the Taylor Anderson Memorial Fund was established by her parents and supporters in Japan in December 2013. In collaboration with nonprofit and other organizations engaging in Tohoku recovery efforts, the primary mission of the fund is to help students, schools, and families in the Ishinomaki area recover from the disaster.

www.taylorandersonmemorialfund.org



Children enjoy outdoor activities at the YMCA camp.

About 40 children attend the camp each summer.



YMCA Challenged Children's Project (YMCA/ACCJ Ohisama Camp)

The YMCA Challenged Children Project began in 1987 in cooperation with the National Council of YMCAs of Japan and the Tokyo YMCA.

The project's goals are to:

- 1 support through camps, the development of challenged children in order that they might develop self-confidence and skills for independent living and learning, and to support facilities for the challenged; and
- 2 support and promote integration of challenged children into

mainstream society, by holding friendship camps, and to provide experience and training for current and future volunteers and professionals.

The funds raised by the ACCJ Charity Ball are used to support the YMCA/ACCJ Ohisama Camp, a Tokyo YMCA Center program held in late summer. At the camp, an expected 40 children with conditions such as Asperger's Syndrome, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, information processing disorders, and other learning/developmental disorders can enjoy the outdoors and participate in group activities. •



Barbara Hancock is vice president of Media Sense K.K., and chair of the ACCJ Charity Ball Committee.



Kevin Naylor is a sales director at en world Japan K.K. and is vice chair of the ACCJ Charity Ball Committee.

Photos in last month's "History of Giving" article were provided by Keyshots.com.

WHAT DO EBAY, WHATSAPP, AND AMAZON HAVE TO FEAR?

Japanese online services seek success abroad

By Richard Jolley

Competition in the US personal tech and e-commerce markets could soon be heating up. While firms such as Facebook, Amazon, and eBay still dominate the domestic market, some new, Japanese faces are set to make an appearance.

The fields of personal tech and e-commerce are continually growing in Japan. The country is currently fourth in the top five for business-to-consumer (B2C) ecommerce sales, according to the eMarketer online marketing platform. B2C sales in Japan were estimated at \$140.35 billion for 2013, just behind the UK with \$141.35 billion—and way ahead of Germany with \$53 billion.

In the case of personal tech, specifically apps, Japan is a high-growth market. According to research by the IHS and App Annie, the app market is seeing a 4.4-fold year-on-year expansion.

Whereas last year, Americans spent about one-third more on apps from Google Play and Apple's App Store than the Japanese, by this year, Japan's 127 million people were outspending America's population of 310 million by some 10 percent. A main reason for this is the rise in popularity of smartphone gaming. In the past year, Japanese spending on gaming apps spiked 400 percent, outpacing spending on all other apps by a factor of 15. The rest of the world spends only twice as much on games as other apps.

It may have taken a while, compared with much of the rest of the world, but Japan is officially in love with smartphone technology. eMarketer predicts there are about 76.5 million smartphone users in 2014, accounting for some 70 percent of mobile phone owners—a level of penetration similar to that of the US market.

It is fair to say the rise of ecommerce and the take-up of these new handsets are driving a boom for online retailers and app developers. Of the two, app developers are the most forthright about their plans to export their success to the rest of the world, particularly the United States.

Smart shopping

Take Mercari, which has created a thriving business around its re-sale shopping app for people to buy and sell their items on smartphones. The company has announced its US launch, and Ryo Ishizuka, co-founder of Mercari and president of US operations, is confident that the firm can bring something new to the US market.

"We are the only consumer-to-consumer re-sale shopping app, selling a variety of items and focusing on the mobile platform, right now. Though Craigslist and eBay are great services, they were founded during the desktop computing era. Our app is specifically designed for smartphones—it's portable, fast, and fun," Ishizuka said.

"We want to be a global company and introduce our app all over

the world. We believe that we can help create a better, more efficient society where it's easy for everyone to buy or sell items they no longer need. Entering the US market is the first step to achieving that goal."

On Line

Mercari is not the only app developer with its eye on foreign markets. Line, the app-based messaging service, is also reportedly preparing to launch in the States after winning over consumers in Japan and other parts of the world. The company reportedly has some 175 million active monthly users; compare this to WhatsApp, a leading global messaging platform, which has around 465 million

The Mercari app was specifically designed for smartphones.



active monthly users (according to figures from BNP Paribas). But Line is hoping to narrow the gap through penetration of new markets, especially the United States.

As reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, Takeshi Idezawa, Line's chief operating officer, has said that countries such as the United States are priorities for the company's growth.

At its core, Line is a mobile messaging app with lots of great features. There are things you would expect, such as free voice and video calls, photo sharing, and messaging. But add to that the 10,000-plus emoticons and stickers—a key revenue driver for the service—that users have downloaded in record numbers. Most people in Japan are familiar with two of Line's main characters—Brown, the laid-back bear, and Cony the bunny—if not because of the app, then due to the company's keen merchandising using them. It is hoped that US consumers develop the same level of affection for these characters as have the Japanese.

Time will tell if people in the United States take to Line and its offerings but, so far, the signs are positive. Line is attracting consumers in Central and South America, having successfully launched in



Brazil and reporting 10 million registered users in Mexico. With the expanding Hispanic community in the United States, there's reason to believe Line will have already established a following there by the time of its official launch. Even at this early stage, the company has debuted advertising campaigns on Hispanic networks Telemundo and Univision, in what seems to be a clear statement of intent.

Appetite for expansion

Thus, it appears that Japanese app developers have a well-defined vision of where the future lies. But it would be amiss not to mention Tokyo's online retailers, specifically Rakuten. This vendor has given a strong indication of its plans for expansion, not least with the \$1 billion acquisition of Ebates, a US-based cash-back site.

Line has used Cony the bunny and Brown the bear as key merchandising tools.



Richard Jolley is an IT and business writer living and working in Tokyo.

The deal, which Rakuten says will enhance its own offering, has quickly followed another US acquisition in the shape of e-commerce app Slice. While Ebates pays its members cash every time they shop online, Slice consolidates users' purchase history. It tracks shipments and allows consumers to instantaneously retrieve their buying history.

It is easy to see where both companies can extend Rakuten's international presence, and consumers won't have to wait long for further deals, since senior executives have talked about finding additional missing pieces for the online company.

Considering the recent moves of these three companies—Mercari, Line, and Rakuten—Japan seems set to challenge the dominance of many of the US enterprises that first seized upon the Internet's possibilities. Entering a new era of mobile Internet, Japan hopes to bring a different perspective to the marketplace—one that US consumers will appreciate. "I think Japanese users are some of the most advanced when it comes to mobile," said Mercari's Ishizuka, adding that, "This makes the Japanese mobile space very competitive, and I believe that we can offer our experience to the rest of the world." •

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ENGAGEMENT AND INFLUENCE IN JAPAN'S PUBLIC POLICY

Interview with Jakob Edberg, managing director, GR Japan K.K.



Custom Media

Jakob Edberg co-founded GR Japan K.K. in 2010 and has helped guide the company to become Japan's leading dedicated government relations and public affairs consultancy.

"GR Japan was born of the conviction that government relations approaches used elsewhere in the world, coupled with policy expertise and the right team of people, would be very effective in Japan. Many businesses let precious opportunities to engage go to waste because of a lack of familiarity with Japan's decision-making processes. One of GR Japan's goals is to solve that problem by helping clients put together and implement workable plans with clear goals, targets and timelines," Edberg said.

In September 2014, the GR Japan team presented a policy paper in Singapore on the policy landscape under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Edberg asserts Abenomics is changing the playing field in Japan.

For more information on these issues, please see this month's insert.

ACCJ Journal: Why did you launch this policy briefing now?

Edberg: This is an important moment in Japanese policy-making. The new Abe Cabinet started a Diet session at the end of September in which many structural reforms are up for debate. We think this presents a real opportunity for foreign firms, whether they are operating here already, or considering Japan for the first time.

"Overall the reforms presented this year are appealing, and there is a sense that the leadership supports change."

How does the Cabinet reshuffle figure into planning?

The overhaul of the Abe Cabinet indicates the government's priorities in the year ahead. The stability of the previous cabinet—the longest serving in Japan's post-war history—was welcome, but some LDP [Liberal Democratic Party] members felt excluded. So Abe has had to balance appeasing them, while choosing the advisers he wants, and boosting his public approval.

His choices for the new cabinet reflect this. He prioritized continuity, with the new key appointments being Yuko Obuchi and Yasuhisa Shiozaki to head METI [the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry] and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, respectively. But he also reached out to centrist factions by appointing Sadakazu Tanigaki as secretary-general.

Abe is also likely to try to continue beyond the end of his term as LDP president, which ends next September. That is one reason he hobbled his strongest challenger for the party leadership, Shigeru Ishiba, with a cabinet post.

What is most significant about the proposed regulatory reforms?

Overall the reforms presented this year are appealing, and there is a sense that the leadership supports change. In particular, the drive to streamline and lower corporate taxation is critical given that the current tax system is full of special measures for special interests.

In which industries do you foresee the most change?

Japan's energy policy is a highlight. The country's energy future hinges on factoring in nuclear reactor restarts and the use of other energy sources such as LNG [liquefied natural gas] and coal. It also ties in with electricity market reform, another vital subject up for discussion.

The medical sector has also been identified as an engine of growth, a source of homegrown innovation, and a beacon for international investment. The sector is undergoing major regulatory reforms, despite the tension between fiscal constraints and the need to reward innovation. There are a host of other bills awaiting scrutiny during the upcoming session. Which are enacted and which run out of time is a question of political maneuvering.

The outcome depends on conversations yet to take place. •



LABOR MOBILITY SHOWS SIGNS OF MOVEMENT

By John Amari

At the height of summer, the government of Japan announced its intention to create an advisory committee to consider proposals to increase labor mobility in the country.

Many of the government's ideas are similar to those advanced in an ACCJ Viewpoint, "Add Flexibility to the Labor Contract Law to Address Burgeoning Social Inequality While Spurring Economic Growth," published in March. The proposals also reflect those made in the chamber's 2010 white paper.

Two people with key roles in drafting the viewpoint—Barry Hirschfeld, vice chair, Growth Strategy Task Force (GSTF) and Women in Business Committee, and Bryan Norton, chair, Globalization and Labor Diversity Committee—welcomed the government's announcement.

For Hirschfeld and Norton, any proposed labor mobility reforms—including an additional, flexible contract for workers returning to employment after a break—should promote the role of women in the workforce, thereby contributing to one of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's flagship goals.

"If Japan is really going to bring more women back into the workforce," Norton said, "then the government needs to promote an employee contract that will bring them back in as full-fledged employees."

If that happens, Norton added, not only will the Abe administration be more likely to achieve its aim—

which includes a goal to increase the number of executive-level women to 30 percent by 2020—but Japan's growth strategy will also get a much-needed shot in the arm.

Inequality in the labor market, and subsequent low productivity, has been a problem here since the 1970s. Since then, the country has had a largely two-tiered labor market divided into regular (*seishain*) and non-regular (*hiseikishain*) employees, Norton said.

Regular workers are relatively secure in their positions and, typically, join a company as graduate recruits. Non-regular employees, 70 percent of whom are women, are usually hired on a contract or temporary basis, and often include returnees to the workforce, such as mothers back from full-time childrearing.

Non-regular workers comprise almost 40 percent of the workforce in Japan, but receive much lower salaries compared with their regular counterparts (¥1.7 million and ¥4.7 million, respectively).

Companies, furthermore, are loath to invest in staff who are not considered full-fledged members of the workforce, which results in low productivity.

Like Norton, Hirschfeld believes a supplementary employee contract scheme is needed that allows women returning to work and those changing jobs mid-career back into the workforce as regular employees.

"The idea is, we create a contract mechanism that, in law, turns out to be a signpost that says: 'This is a formal way for someone who is

reentering the labor force to do so as a regular worker, and to receive any necessary training,'" Hirschfeld said.

The proposed contracts scheme, he said, should be extended to foreign workers, such as international students graduating in Japan who wish to stay and contribute to the economy.

As reported in the *Nikkei* on August 24, the government's planned advisory committee—which will be jointly administered by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare—will consider all aspects of labor mobility policy, including possible changes to labor contract laws.

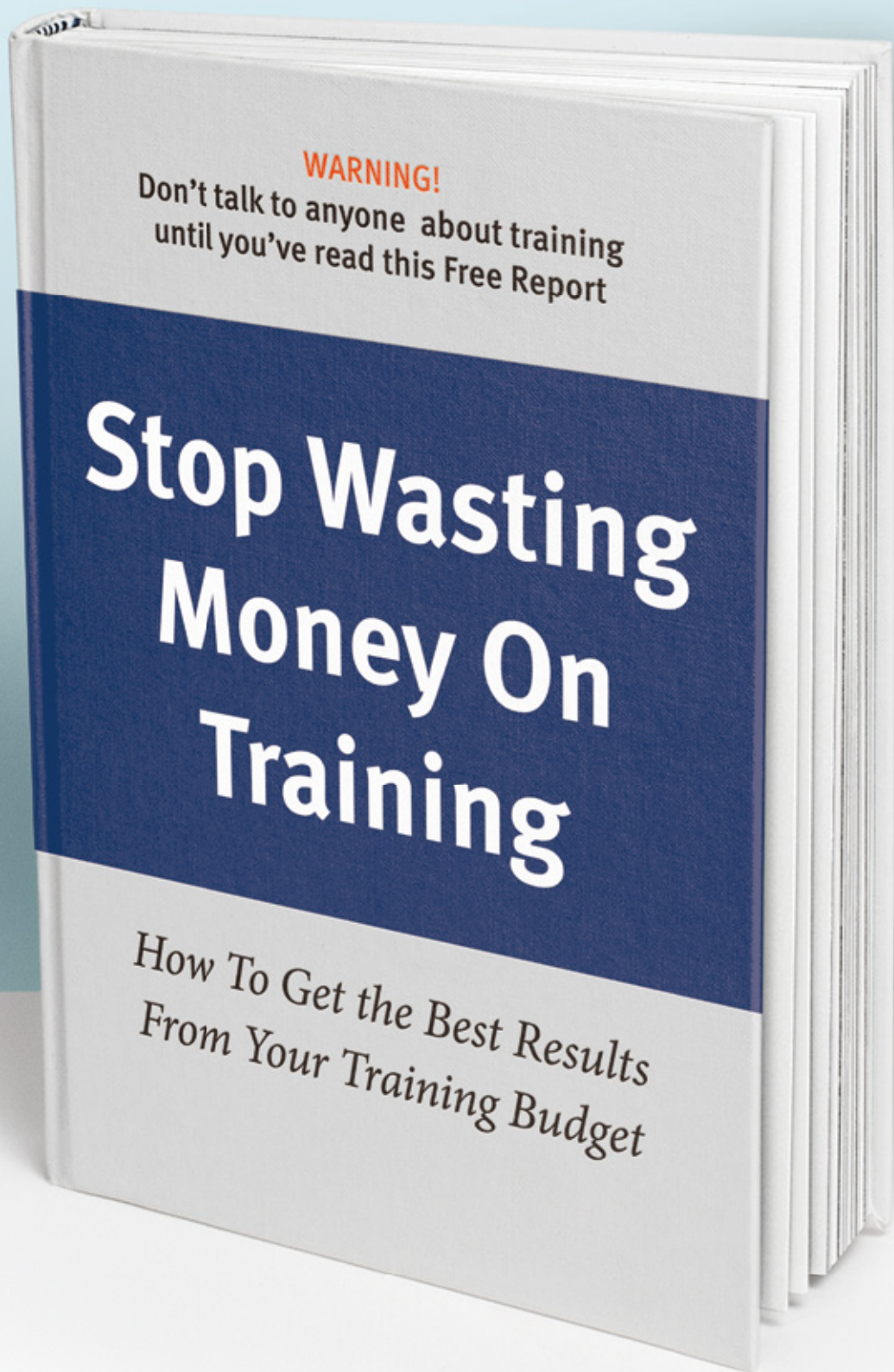
One likely proposal for the advisory committee's consideration, the *Nikkei* reported, is a scheme under a judge's authority where severance pay of about one to two years of an employee's salary is awarded in cases for which an employee's termination has been deemed "invalid" and when the parties involved agree to have a judge rule on the matter.

Although the details are pending, this policy change would be a first in Japan—a country where the only recourse a judge currently has in such cases is to reinstate the employee to the company, a situation that is often less than satisfactory.

The advisory committee's recommendations will be presented to the Diet in 2016. Hirschfeld and Norton, meanwhile, are optimistic the government is on the right path to ensuring labor mobility. •



John Amari is a consultant, writer, and researcher who has worked for a United Nations agency.



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First Japan entrant in Creative Business Cup

By Patricia Bader-Johnston



For the first time this year, a Japanese business will be represented at the Creative Business Cup, a contest rewarding innovative ideas. Lina Sakai-Watanabe will pitch her company, Fermentstation, to a global audience of entrepreneurs and venture capitalists at this year's Cup, to be held in November, in Copenhagen.

Sakai-Watanabe was a finalist in the awards presented this year through the Entrepreneur Mentoring Initiative (EMI), a suite of programs supported by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan. Her company was selected by a special EMI committee decision as the "most creative business" entered, and was thus chosen to participate in the 2014 Cup.

Fermentstation helps rural communities in the Tohoku region while creating distinctive Japanese rice-based products.

The Creative Business Cup strives to promote and strengthen the business skills of entrepreneurs in the creative industries, as well as

recognize winners and role models who will inspire others. Last year, two 22-year-old women from Croatia won with Teddy The Guardian, a plush toy embedded with sensors to monitor the vital signs of young children in hospitals. After winning the contest the Croatian team was able to pre-sell 38,000 Teddies!

Daniel Rosen of TokyoDex will also participate in the 2014 Cup as the nominee of nonprofit Five-Planets ISH. TokyoDex is an artist collective equipped to assemble a customized consortium of talent for any creative project.

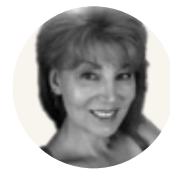
The selection process for next year's Creative Business Cup representative from Japan kicked off in September, supported by Five-Planets and the committee responsible for the EMI and The Entrepreneur Awards Japan, as well as Keio Media Design.

Beginning in 2015, the Creative Business Cup will be introduced into the existing EMI suite of awards granted each year, which includes the US Embassy's Award, the ACCJ Director's Award,

Lina Sakai-Watanabe will speak at an ACCJ event on October 3.

the Groundbreakers Award, and the Venture Generation Award. The winner of the Cup will be announced as part of The Entrepreneur Awards Japan ceremony to be held early in 2015. This year's ceremony was hosted at the residence of U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy.

Applications are being accepted through November 10, and all applicants will need to pitch their products to the selection board. Finalists from the pitching phase will be automatically entered into the EMI applications process, and will need to present a detailed business plan in December. The winner of the first Creative Business Cup Japan Award in January 2015 will be assigned a mentor to help them prepare for next year's international Creative Business Cup, which will again be hosted in Copenhagen.



Patricia Bader-Johnston is the founding chair of EMI/TEAJ, and advisor to the Tokyo Business Development Center.

Who is eligible?

- ✓ Japanese nationals residing, studying, or doing business in Japan
- ✓ Permanent Residents of Japan (of any nationality) residing, studying, or doing business in Japan
- ✓ Individuals only (no teams)
- ✓ No age restrictions

Got a winning idea?

If you could embed circuits directly into any material, or on any surface—in any shape or size—what would you design?

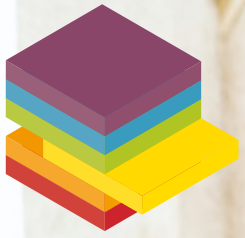
Wearable electronics, paper telephones, or cardboard tablet computers are just some of the possibilities. Can you imagine new kinds of wearable baby monitors, or better ways of tracking participants at the

Olympics? Ideas supporting the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games are encouraged.

The sky is the limit for submissions. Winners will receive support from 2015 Creative Business Cup sponsor eSurface Technologies Ltd. to bring their ideas to market.

www.esurface.com | www.esurface.co.jp

Innovative ideas across multiple creative industries will be accepted. These could pertain to fashion, the arts, film, consumer products, food, advertising, or anime, to name a few. A working business plan is required for all submissions. •



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PRITZKER TO PUSH FOR DEEPER TIES

Trade mission will focus on energy and healthcare

By Andrew Wylegala



Secretary Pritzker with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in India.



Pritzker and Kerry at an interview during the U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue in July.

On October 19, U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker will arrive in Tokyo with 20 US companies on a trade mission to Japan and South Korea. The secretary's visit will be the first US Cabinet-led trade mission to Japan in over a decade.

Focusing on the mutually important energy and healthcare sectors, and enhanced trade between the United States and Asia,

the secretary will meet with US and Japanese companies, as well as senior Japanese government officials.

As Secretary Pritzker stated, "[Our] presence throughout the Asia-Pacific region is longstanding. During the early days of the Obama administration, the president made a deliberate decision to deepen US engagement with the Asia-Pacific region. We have made a long-term commitment to the region, and no



Andrew Wylegala is the minister counselor for commercial affairs at the Embassy of the United States Tokyo.

matter what crisis or opportunity may emerge, our expanded presence here will remain a cornerstone of our foreign and economic policy."

Secretary Pritzker will highlight that expanding our shared prosperity is a pillar of President Barack Obama's Asia rebalance. "This effort means deepening our trade and investment ties with existing partners—such as [those participating in the] Trans-Pacific Partnership," Pritzker said.



Ethan Schwalbe, ACCJ associate director for external affairs

CS-J and ACCJ Hone Social Media Skills

Thirty-six of our colleagues from the Commercial Service and the U.S. Department of State gathered at the Embassy of the United States in Tokyo's American Center Japan for two-and-a-half days of exercises and discussions. The workshop was aimed at improving participants' capacity to communicate effectively in the digital sphere.

Ethan Schwalbe (pictured), associate director for external affairs at the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, worked alongside US Foreign Service staff representing about a dozen markets. In line with the ACCJ's mission, he brought the valuable private sector viewpoint to bear in discussions. •

MARATHON MAN

Nagoya consular officer has lofty ambitions for coming years

By Adam Miller

Stephen G. Kovacsics first came to Japan in 1992, when he studied for a single term at Temple University's Tokyo campus. Since then, he has also lived in rural Hiroshima Prefecture for three years, working in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme. Kovacsics jokes that everyone he knows who has visited Japan almost always returns: "I don't know many people who come to Japan just once. We always seem to find a reason to come back."

Thankfully for Kovacsics, he has been posted for the next three years in Nagoya, where he will be working as the principal officer of the American Consulate, Nagoya. But this is by no means his first

time in the hot seat, having served as consular officer in Nigeria and Kyrgyzstan, and political/economic officer in Belarus and Russia.

In an interview with the *ACCJ Journal*, before delving into the various tasks his new role entails, he made it very clear that his "main priority is taking care of American citizens." This is a demanding task in and of itself, but he explained that there is an added responsibility placed on his shoulders: "I'm also here to promote US business, culture, and education."

This he does in a number of ways, from creating and solidifying international business ties, to encouraging exchange programs between Japanese and American

educational institutions. He said that while some of these exchanges are aimed at high school students, the majority are arranged with university students in mind. When asked how he sells the idea of studying in the United States, he replied with a knowing smile.

"It doesn't usually take a lot of convincing. Interest in studying in the US is quite high. Students have logistical and other concerns, and I help them through those," he said.

The United States clearly has a very strong presence in Japan, and is a nation that is viewed positively by the majority of the population. Even so, Kovacsics is still extremely determined to broaden the scope of the people the consulate reaches.



Adam Miller has been living and writing in Japan since 2008.

ACCJ-Chubu Welcomes New Consul

By Jonathan Hobbs

To welcome Stephen Kovacsics to his new post, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan's Chubu chapter held a breakfast on August 27 at the Hilton Nagoya. At the event, Kovacsics said he had been focusing on getting acquainted with local political leaders, and had already met with officials from four regions in Aichi Prefecture.

During his tenure, the consulate will provide more diverse services, such as notarization, a service that was previously unavailable in Nagoya.

Kovacsics is excited to be working with the ACCJ to

promote American business interests in Chubu, the heart of Japanese manufacturing. He also expressed excitement about U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy's visit to the area, which will be her first.

Kovacsics arrived in Nagoya this summer to assume his new post after studying Japanese for a year at the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute in Yokohama. He has served in the Foreign Service since 2003, and speaks Japanese, Russian, Hungarian, Arabic, and French.



“I’ve run 16 full marathons, and, despite my growing belly, I plan to run the Osaka, Kyoto, and Shizuoka marathons in the coming months.”

One of the major ways in which the consulate targets a wide demographic is through its Guest Speaker Program. Kovacsics was noticeably proud of the project as he explained the details. In short, prominent entrepreneurs, business people, public figures, and creative thinkers from the United States come to Japan to talk about their expertise, experiences, opinions, and ideas. Planned on the upcoming roster are topics from Japan/USA/India trade to “promoting and encouraging women in leadership positions.”

Programs such as these, as well as other functions organized by the consulate, allow members of the Chubu chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan

(ACCJ) to rub shoulders with some of the most influential people in Central Japan.

Kovacsics was keen to point out that, although forming connections between ACCJ members and prominent Japanese figures is not really the consulate’s job, creating an environment that fosters such ties is very important.

It is evident that Kovacsics takes his work extremely seriously, but it is equally clear that he enjoys his role. This dichotomy of seriousness and enjoyment is mirrored in his pastimes, which range from playing the drums in a rock band to having a healthy appetite for running.

“I’ve run 16 full marathons, and, despite my growing belly, I plan to run the Osaka, Kyoto, and Shizuoka marathons in the coming months,” he said.

The wall in his office is decorated with marathon medals from the four corners of the globe, but he said his personal best time was clocked in his hometown, Philadelphia.

Fittingly, the medal hangs beneath a picture of Rocky Balboa triumphantly punching the air as he overlooks the Philly skyline from atop its art museum’s steps. Kovacsics may also face uphill struggles during his time here, but much like his fictional counterpart, he has the determination to achieve his goals, no matter how big they may seem. •

<http://nagoya.usconsulate.gov>

Stephen Kovacsics speaks at an ACCJ breakfast meeting on August 27.



ACCIDENTAL HEROINE

Pet hotel entrepreneur saves
hundreds of animals post-disaster

By Elizabeth Handover



Isabella Gallaon-Aoki rescued dogs, ducks, rabbits, and even a pig from Fukushima.

Three years ago, in the days following the Fukushima nuclear disaster, a phone call from a woman in distress catapulted Isabella Gallaon-Aoki into an unforeseen selfless and courageous rescue of hundreds of abandoned animals.

Gallaon-Aoki, who is part British and part Italian, originally came to Tokyo to learn Japanese. She met her husband here, and after several years moved with him to Niigata, his native home.

After having two children, she became interested in animal welfare, joined a local animal help group and got trained in animal rescue techniques. The animal group focused on saving as many abandoned animals as possible from the local welfare center, by getting them adopted or at least finding temporary foster homes.

After adopting a rescued dog of her own, Gallaon-Aoki personally observed how many animals were put down as the welfare center deadline hit before new homes could be found. She became convinced that an animal shelter was the answer, as this would be more efficient and sustainable. It could save many more lives by

providing a place to house animals for longer periods of time, until they could be adopted.

Isabella also saw a market need for a pet boarding facility. Many existing pet hotels, despite being expensive, only offered accommodation in small confined cages, and the care was unsatisfactory. Every time she travelled, she took her pets all the way down to Kobe, where they could have more space.

She felt that other pet owners, when given the opportunity, would naturally prefer to leave their pets in a spacious, pleasant environment with fresh air and opportunities for exercise. This was exactly what Gallaon-Aoki and her husband were in an excellent position to offer; they could provide an enjoyable holiday for pets so their owners could enjoy their own trips with a clear conscience.

Gallaon-Aoki was also motivated to try her hand at an entrepreneurial venture, by establishing a profitable pet hotel business. This, in turn, could help fund an animal rescue shelter. Animal Garden Niigata was thus started. All went well at first, business increased steadily, and the Animal Friends Japan shelter was set up shortly thereafter.

Call of duty

Then the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami hit.

Gallaon-Aoki's first response to the disaster was to set off for Sendai and then go up to Iwate, to help animals in need. But when she got there, she found no animals to rescue. All had been swept away, together with their human owners.

Soon she started hearing reports about the situation in Fukushima. On March 21, a call came in from a woman whose dog had been left behind when the family was evacuated from Okuma. No one



Like their owners, pets can enjoy a relaxing holiday, at Animal Garden Niigata.

Through dire necessity, she has honed her entrepreneurial skills, using creativity and resilience to keep the shelter going for over three years.

had been allowed to take pets, and evacuees had been told that they would be back in their homes within two to three days.

In reality, the family had been shipped out immediately to Nagasaki. The woman was crying with desperation as she described how her dog had been left chained up with no food or water. She begged Gallaon-Aoki to go to her house and rescue him.

With no thought for her own safety or the consequences of the actions she was about to take, Gallaon-Aoki immediately agreed to do whatever she could.

She realized that it would be hard to access the exclusion zone. But, having lived in Japan for many years, she gambled that barriers would be manned by police only during daytime hours. What she hadn't reckoned on were the impassible mountain roads, which had been damaged or cut off by massive rock falls.

That first trip took many hours and involved inching along perilously narrow roads with no guardrails. This turned out to be more life-threatening than entering a radiation fallout zone. At nightfall, she successfully snuck in through a checkpoint, found the woman's dog, and took it back to Niigata with her.

In the weeks that followed, the calls for pet rescues came flooding in, and she kept returning to Fukushima. She ended up rescuing

a staggering 700 animals altogether, including cats, dogs, ducks, chickens, rabbits, and even a pig. This was far beyond anything that Gallaon-Aoki had expected.

She reached out to the community for funding, and many people kindly supported the shelter with donations, which made the huge project possible for the time being.

Gallaon-Aoki's initial plan had been to take in the animals temporarily and care for them until their owners could reclaim them. She hoped to find homes for unclaimed animals in due course. But as time went by, she was faced with growing difficulties. Many pet owners never returned to claim their animals, and very few people were willing to take in a pet that they feared had been irradiated. Furthermore, month by month, donations were drying up. Thus, a project intended as a short-term solution became a long-term logistical and financial burden.

Yet, Gallaon-Aoki has stayed true to her courage and convictions. Through dire necessity, she has honed her entrepreneurial skills, using creativity and resilience to keep the shelter going for over three years and to care for her huge extended "family" still in residence.

The accidental heroine is putting her entrepreneurial skills to good use in rebuilding her business. Times are changing, the economy is finally growing, and Gallaon-Aoki



Many loving pets are still in need of homes.

is gradually bringing her pet hotel back to commercial success. With an increasing number of people going abroad for vacations, she is confident that more and more clients will employ her services.

There are many beautiful pets still waiting for homes at the shelter. For more information on pets for adoption, visit www.animalfriendsjapan.org. To learn about the countryside accommodation at Isabella Gallaon-Aoki's Animal Garden boarding facility, go to www.animalgardenjapan.com, or email Gallaon-Aoki directly at animalfriendsjp@yahoo.co.jp. •



Elizabeth Handover is co-chair of the ACCJ Women in Business Committee and president of Intrapersona K.K., Lumina Learning Asia Partner.

elizabethhandover@luminallearning.com

SHARE YOUR STORY, ENHANCE YOUR BRAND

English novelist and travel writer Bruce Chatwin (1940–89) can be credited with giving the Moleskine brand its seemingly obscure name in the late 20th century. The handy, pocket-sized notebooks, called *carnets moleskines* in their native France, were his accessory of choice when recording the details of a scene while travelling, accounts that would later be fodder for his prizewinning novels.

“To lose a passport was the least of one’s worries: to lose a notebook was a catastrophe,” Chatwin mused. A small French bookbinder ceased production of the notebooks in the mid-1980s, and the present-day Moleskine brand was born in Milan in 1997, bringing back to life the legacy of great artists and thinkers, who used the brand’s predecessor notebooks to capture their words, images and ideas.

Pablo Picasso and Ernest Hemingway figure among the creative icons who wouldn’t be caught in a café or crosswalk without their little black books.

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SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE JOB SEARCH

LinkedIn is an important tool in the networking toolbox

By John Ghanotakis, Amir Khan, and Timothy Trahan

Most young professionals belonging to the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) utilize social media in some way. Based on informal feedback to the Young Professionals Group Subcommittee, LinkedIn tends to be the most common online social media tool for professional activities, especially when looking for work.

When I first came to Japan in the mid 1990s, e-mail and the Internet were just emerging as mainstream tools for work. As a young professional, your opportunities were more limited for learning about a company or job opportunities. Besides reading international publications, working with recruiters, and attending job fairs, you could go to one of the many weekly or monthly networking events. Or, you could use the *ACCJ Membership Directory* and other similar publications to reach out to members at their place of work.

The Japan Times and other publications had weekly job listings that sometimes covered two full pages and included a number of business jobs for entry level and experienced candidates. A few employment websites were launched around that time as well. These were all helpful tools, but none of them offered a platform for networking.

Job seekers use LinkedIn to apply directly for jobs advertised, or to conduct searches within the site to see who is working at a company and what types of roles are available.

It's not uncommon to look someone up after meeting them at an event, and even send an invite to connect right away. A candidate's LinkedIn profile becomes a live marketing tool to help land a job or at least capture the interest of a potential employer.

As Cliff Rosenberg, managing director of LinkedIn Australia, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia, said at an ACCJ event last year, "You are in essence your own chief marketing officer, and you drive your online professional brand to get to where you want to be."

The number of Japan-based user profiles (Japanese nationals and non-Japanese residing in Japan) now numbers over 1 million, with a majority of those users being employees at foreign firms.

The last few job offers I have received came through LinkedIn. In all cases, I was in touch with recruiters or even had direct communication with the line managers of companies where I wanted to work. In some cases, I did not get to meet the first contact person face-to-face until much later in the interview process. For one job, I didn't meet the person until I had already signed the employment contract!

When looking for contacts online, I was able to begin corresponding with the company via LinkedIn introduction requests from my existing network. I also had success by viewing the profiles and contacting the members of certain LinkedIn groups to which I belonged.

A candidate's LinkedIn profile becomes a live marketing tool to help land a job or at least capture the interest of a potential employer.

At one point, I was flown to another location in Asia at the expense of the hiring company, to meet a line manager I had contacted via a LinkedIn invitation expressing interest in his department's activities and the company's business in Asia. I did not even have to provide a resume, as he just downloaded my LinkedIn profile.

Not all interactions on LinkedIn produce the same positive results, and that is one of the things that has not changed about the hit-or-miss nature of networking in person or online, regardless of the tools being used.

A well-rounded job search includes a number of different components, and social media is now often an important element in achieving success. Nowadays, when you want to know more about a person, instead of saying, "Why don't you Google him," we may soon be using phrases such as "I LinkedIn you." •

Cliff Rosenberg, managing director of LinkedIn Australia, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia, speaks at an ACCJ event last year.



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—Dan Underwood, managing director



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DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

By Jared Campion

As I write this, many of my Facebook friends are pouring icy water over their heads. This online campaign for ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) research was started by mistake, went viral, and brought in over \$100 million in one month. This is one of the widest-reaching social media phenomena to date, as it touched people across the world. In Japan, people from members of the general public to celebrities and company directors accepted the challenge.

Chances are that your company is not a charity, and people are not going to pour buckets of icy water over their heads and send you money. Still, the ice bucket challenge shows us two things:

1. Japanese are just as likely as others to share interesting content through social media.

Recently there have been some good examples of viral marketing in Japan. One campaign by Suntory had high school girls running around pulling ninja moves, and many viewers did not realize it was an advertisement—until the last few seconds. I am interested in seeing how well the video promoted the company's drinks. Suntory disabled commenting on the video, so it is hard to gauge people's reactions.

Making a video go viral is no small task. While it's best to connect the benefit of the product with the video content, if possible, sometimes it is easier to leverage an already

viral video to get publicity—which brings us back to the ice bucket challenge.

Several brands have “baptized” their products in ice, including Samsung, with its waterproof smartphone. The company challenged Apple's iPhone to the same dare; nice dig. This leveraged the popularity of the challenge in a way that showed Samsung's sense of humor.

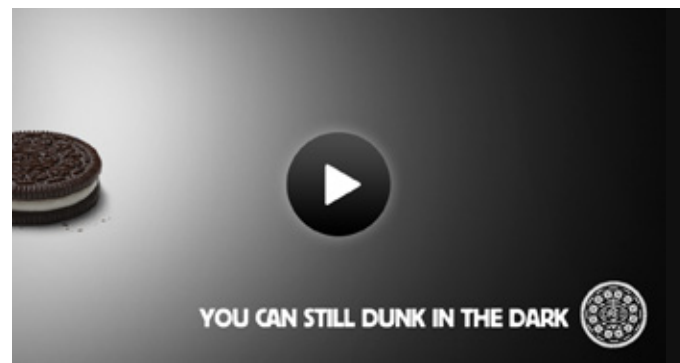
However, leveraging buzz from a charity also could be frowned on, which leads to my second point.

2. Viral campaigns on social media always draw some degree of negative backlash.

A friend of mine who directs Japanese TV shows once told me that a new TV program had been canceled after it received fewer than 10 complaints about a character littering in an episode. The show was then seen as risky, and the producers would have preferred no feedback to negative comments.

Companies in Japan want to avoid a damaging “social media firestorm” at all costs. However, I think part of social media marketing is understanding that you cannot please everyone.

Around the world, marketing teams and company directors closely monitor the effects of their activities. They should be especially concerned if theirs is a leading brand in the industry, as they have much to lose. But it seems that in Japan, the conservative nature of



The Oreo Super Bowl campaign won Cannes Lions and CLIO awards in 2013.

business is leading to weakened social media content.

As the famous marketer David Ogilvy said, “You cannot bore people into buying.” Creating interesting social media content is not a simple task for large companies. Last year we saw Oreo post a picture with the caption “you can still dunk in the dark” minutes after the lights unexpectedly went out at the Super Bowl game, which caused great publicity buzz. The campaign was assembled on the spot, and all leaders had to sign off on the idea right away. Plus, the timing had to be executed perfectly.

In social media marketing, what holds the message is not the billboard's screws and bolts, but the people. You cannot pay them to spread your message; they have to want to share it. So it had better be something new. The greatest challenge lies in making content worth sharing.

For creative, nimble organizations, social media offers the chance to gain a huge number of customers, without a huge budget. •



Jared Campion does direct marketing consulting for startup companies, and is senior digital marketing headhunter at Robert Leonard Consulting.

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—Aya Miyashita,
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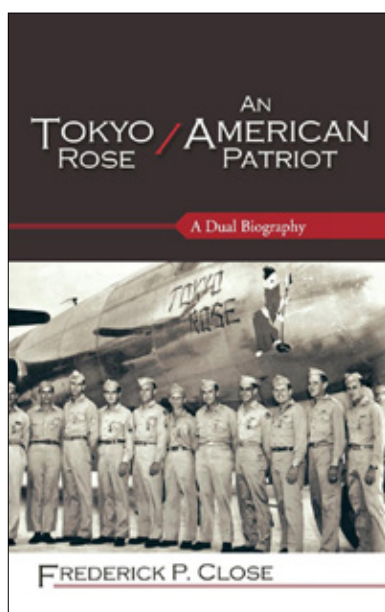
Wartime tale of radio broadcaster convicted of treason

By Vicki L. Beyer

A woman known as Tokyo Rose was a famous radio propagandist during World War II, or so the story goes. However, according to Frederick P. Close, Tokyo Rose never existed. The woman convicted of treason for being Tokyo Rose was Iva Toguri (1916–2006), a Japanese-American caught in Japan when war was declared. Close's book, *Tokyo Rose/An American Patriot: A Dual Biography*, traces Toguri's life and makes a number of startling disclosures and bold suppositions about Tokyo Rose.

Born in California in 1916 as the child of Japanese immigrants, Toguri grew up an extroverted tomboy. If she hadn't been born a girl, her father would have brought her into his mercantile business. Instead, she found herself traveling to Japan in late 1941 in her mother's stead to care for a maternal aunt who was seriously ill. Through various administrative glitches, she traveled without a passport and, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, found herself unable to obtain one, or to receive any other form of assistance from the U.S. Embassy Tokyo.

Thus Toguri was trapped in Japan, viewed with distrust by her own government, her Japanese relations, and the *kempeitai* (Military Police Corps). To survive, she worked a variety of jobs that allowed her to leverage her English language skills. Eventually, Toguri was recruited to work at the military-operated Radio



Tokyo, where two POW broadcasters selected her to introduce musical numbers for one of their programs.

On air Toguri called herself Orphan Annie. There is no evidence that she ever used the name Tokyo Rose. In fact, there is no evidence that anyone ever broadcast under that name, yet countless American sailors and soldiers recalled the taunts and seductive comments of her broadcasts.

The US military so believed in Tokyo Rose that they arranged to drop over Tokyo a package addressed to her containing a selection of albums and a requested play list. At the end of the war, the press and the US military wanted to identify Tokyo Rose, and became convinced that Toguri was she.

Toguri denied it, but ultimately capitulated to being called Tokyo Rose for a number of reasons.

This led to a roller coaster of investigations, innuendos and, ultimately, a trial in the United States for treason. Toguri was prosecuted based on alleged broadcasts attributed to Tokyo Rose and convicted based on purchased and perjured testimony. It is a sordid tale.

Toguri served seven years in a federal prison, and when she was released on good behavior, the Immigration and Naturalization Service commenced deportation proceedings against her. Although she successfully fought deportation, Toguri dared not leave the United States again, lest she find herself unable to return. In 1976, she was pardoned by then-President Gerald R. Ford.

Close styles his work a “dual biography” and attempts to draw parallels between Toguri's life and that of Tokyo Rose. Alas, it is difficult to compare the life of a real person to the life of a fictitious one, and the dual biography device doesn't quite work. But that in no way diminishes the value of Toguri's story, or the demonstration that Tokyo Rose never really existed, except as an amalgamated racial stereotype fostered in collective imaginations in the fervor of wartime hatred.

In the end it is the story of how an innocent but inept individual could find herself convicted of treason on behalf of the imaginary siren. It tells us a lot about attitudes of the time. •



Vicki L. Beyer is a vice president of the ACCJ.

FIRST SOUND FROM THE FUTURE

Hatsune Miku weaves her magic for US audiences this fall

By Roland Kelts



Not all trends sweeping the domestic market in Japan strike gold with overseas audiences. The exceptions are headliners such as *Pokemon*, Hello Kitty, and the manga series *One Piece*, with its record-breaking 345-million print run worldwide. Most Japanese pop culture phenomena are for the home crowd only. Sports manga, such as *Slam Dunk*, rarely find a mass audience in the United States. Even trendy fashions, like last decade's *yamamba* girls with their towering platform soles and bronzed faces, fail to charm most foreign tastemakers.

In the '80s, when I was a teenager set free in Tokyo streets by my Japanese mother, I was entranced by quirky Japanese idol groups, fantastical haircuts, and animated television graphics. Still, I didn't think any of it would register with my peers in America. It was altogether too light, too cute, too whimsical and self-conscious: a brightly twisted mimicry of Western tropes. Why opt for

a cheery, slippery copy when you can get the hard-won original in New York, London, or Los Angeles?

I was wrong about a lot of it. After *Godzilla* became a global sensation, several Japanese pop icons filled the screens and streets of Western cities.

Sushi went from weird to cool. Obscure Japanese rock icons such as The Yellow Magic Orchestra became cult classics, and the band's chief composer, Ryuichi Sakamoto, moved to New York. Animator Hayao Miyazaki's confections became DVD standbys for American parents, and Miyazaki won an Academy Award in 2003. Animated rock bands became cutting edge via Britain's Gorillaz. American monster and sci-fi movies such as *The Matrix*, *Cloverfield*, *Pacific Rim*, and this summer's blockbuster *Godzilla* nodded homages to their land of origin.

Parts of the colorful Japan I encountered as a teen had arrived on the global stage. But which parts? And how would they stick?

Virtual celebrity

Enter Hatsune Miku, Japan's virtual pop star. Her name translates roughly as "the first sound from the future." Like Hello Kitty, she is a blank slate—an animated pop star whose songs are created by her fans, written for her via a software program called PiaPro. She dances, gyrates, and croons via computer, and her only defining characteristics are visual and statistical. She is a diminutive five-foot-two-inches tall and weighs all of 96 pounds (44 kilograms). She has very long, blue pigtailed and wears a big necktie with a very short skirt. She is a drawing in the imagination. When she performs live, she is a hologram swaying and prancing before a backing band of live musicians.

"She doesn't exist," said her creator, Hiroyuki Itoh, of Sapporo-based Crypton Media. "Never has."

That may be technically true, but she's about to appear before a sea of American fans in Los Angeles and New York via a project called Miku Expo.

The shows are slated for October: two in Los Angeles, at the Nokia Theatre L.A. LIVE in the newly revamped downtown district, and two in New York, at The Hammerstein Ballroom.

Miku was the opening act for Lady Gaga's North American tour in May. Crypton's Kanae Muraki said the exposure helped drive interest in this month's expo. "We want it to be more than just a concert. Through exhibitions and workshops, we want to introduce works created by many contributors, to make the event one where the audience will be able to participate in the entire act of creation."

It's hard to argue against the success of a pop star who has no hang-ups. Miku, by virtue of being virtual, won't have drug addictions, spousal fights, or pneumonia on tour. She will be what you want her to be: cute, pig-tailed, live, and alive.

Naomitsu Kodaka, cofounder and CFO of TokyoOtakuMode Inc., which provides platforms for *otaku*

(obsessed fans) via its website and a Facebook page with nearly 16 million "likes," said Miku may be the network's most popular character.

"I think one of the reasons she's so popular is because *otaku* can collaborate openly with the character without commercial concerns," he says. "Plus, they can be both artist and audience, creators and consumers."

Consider Facebook and Twitter: All the content is user-generated, and the creative team can relax at their desks and enjoy the stream.

"Other Vocaloids (avatars) are popular, just not as popular as Miku," said Ian Condry, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who is a specialist in Japanese popular culture and teaches a section on Miku. "[She] was the first to cross the threshold of quality voicings, the first to be presented as a character with a look."

Putting the pop in popular

The US shows in October will be expensive and labor intensive, with a team of over 20 technicians from Japan manning computers backstage to make the hologram look alive. But will the experience be magical?

The answer, from fans in the United States, seems a resounding yes. Tickets for all four shows were selling briskly at the time of writing, according to the show's US promoter.

Overseas fans of Japanese pop culture are well-acquainted with the naked artifice. "We don't care if it's real," one Miku fan told me at this summer's Anime Expo in Los Angeles. "We just care if it feels real."

Hatsune Miku's global success mirrors that of Hello Kitty, who just turned 40 years old. Recent articles asked if Kitty was really a

**"We don't care if it's real.
We just care if it feels real."**

cat or a girl, English or Japanese. It is liberating to realize that such questions are beside the point. Kitty is very much what you want her to be, like a haiku poem, or a Zen *koan* (a paradoxical question that forces meditation and reflection).

"To me, it seems hard to frame [Miku] as simply a user-generated content platform," argued Rebecca Suter, a professor of Japanese Studies at the University of Sydney. "Miku has a name and a gender, much closer to an anime character, something artificial but personified enough to become an object of emotional investment. What is interesting is that Miku's appeal goes well beyond the relatively niche audience of Japanese [and non-Japanese] *otaku*."

For Suter, Miku's trans-cultural draw is rooted in the character's tabula-rasa (blank slate), enabling fans and users worldwide to see (and hear) in her whatever they want.

"It reminds me of Haruki Murakami's literature in the way she appeals to different audiences for different reasons. For a Japanese customer, Miku can be read within familiar frameworks of idol culture and the attraction to manga and anime characters, which she resembles; for a foreign customer, she has the exotic charm of 'Cool Japan,' and can be the object of techno-orientalist fascination."

Miku's version of Cool Japan hits LA and NYC this month. We'll soon see if she can strike chords in American audiences as well as she can sing to them. •



Roland Kelts is a Japanese-American writer, editor, and lecturer who divides his time between Tokyo and New York. He is the author of the acclaimed bestseller *Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture Has Invaded the US* and the forthcoming novel *Access*. His fiction and nonfiction

have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *Psychology Today*, *Playboy*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. Kelts authors a monthly column for *The Japan Times*, and is also a frequent contributor to CNN and NPR. Find him online at: <http://japanamerica.blogspot.com>

VISION FOR TOKYO

Mitsui Fudosan driving Central Tokyo revitalization

Custom Media

The artists' impressions show gleaming tower blocks rising above the Tokyo cityscape, cleverly designed atriums thronged with shoppers, diners and visitors, and open spaces that enhance the greenery that already dots the heart of the metropolis.

And while they may only be images of the final structures, Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd. is committed to bringing these buildings to life in the few short years before the eyes of the world are on Tokyo as the host of the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Mitsui Fudosan, the largest real estate developer in Japan and a core company of the Mitsui Group, has ambitious plans to redesign the skyline of Tokyo and offer vast new amounts of cutting-edge office space, but still holds a deep obligation to the district that has been its home for more than 300 years.

"Nihonbashi is and always has been the company's base and, as a company, we began to feel concern around 20 years ago when the name and brand value of this area began to decline," explained Toshihiro Mochizuki, leader of Mitsui Fudosan's office leasing department.

"We have a very close relationship with this neighborhood, the companies that are here, and the people who live and work around us," he said. "To us, it was imperative that we help to rebuild the value of Nihonbashi."

In recent years, the company has undertaken a series of major redevelopment projects in an area that was the real heart of the city in centuries gone by, a center of trade, culture, finance, and commerce.

On the east side of Chuo-dori, Mitsui Fudosan has already finished the Coredos project, a series of retail,

office, and residential facilities, while further investment has gone into the Mitsui Memorial Museum, the Nihonbashi Mitsui Hall, a new Toho Cinemas complex, and a renovated Fukutoku Shrine, which has taken care of residents' spiritual needs for more than 1,000 years.

The redevelopment has swiftly had a positive impact, Mochizuki said.

"There has been a significant increase in the number of visitors to Nihonbashi, with the urban shopping mall concept of the Coredos buildings proving particularly popular with young people," he said.

Mitsui Fudosan has also been the driving force behind the acclaimed Tokyo Midtown project, which opened in 2007 and brings together business, retail, meeting, and hotel functions with residential services, green spaces, and cultural attractions such as the Suntory Museum of Art.



The Shin-Hibiya Project
in front of Hibiya Park

The ultimate aim is to bring foreign companies that have shifted their regional headquarters to other cities in the Asia-Pacific region back to Tokyo.

Five new flagship projects

With the 2020 deadline fast approaching, the developer is building on the knowledge earned in previous schemes for no fewer than five new flagship projects. For each of these, the priority is offering top-quality office space in the most sought-after parts of the city, while simultaneously ensuring tenants are able to apply diverse styles of working.

Already well under way is the first of the developments, the Shin-Hibiya Project, alongside the landmark Imperial Hotel and opposite Hibiya Park.

“The building is scheduled to be completed in late 2017 or early 2018, and the aim is not simply to construct an office block, but to add value to the area,” Mochizuki said.

As well as retail outlets and restaurants, the added value in the Shin-Hibiya project—as in the other four major developments—may include the incorporation of five-star hotels, theaters, rooftop bars, high-end dining locations, and even facilities for an international school.

“These buildings will all also benefit from the most up-to-date defenses against natural disasters, with the latest seismic damping equipment installed and a fully operational business continuity plan in place,” said Mochizuki. “Our first priority will always be to protect the well-being of our tenants, and the disaster-prevention measures will include back-up electricity generators and supplies of water. We will also carry out regular training drills to ensure that staff and tenants are prepared for any eventuality.”

Mochizuki added that the ultimate aim is to bring foreign companies that have shifted their regional headquarters to other cities in the Asia-Pacific region back to Tokyo.

“We are committed to providing a large number of high-quality buildings because we want to attract those multinationals back,” he said.

“In the last decade or so, too many companies have moved their regional operations to Singapore or Hong Kong, but now we have the support of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the national



The shop and restaurant zone in the atrium of the Shin-Hibiya Project

government to win them back,” he said. “The current Japanese government is being very positive and aggressive in that ambition, and we are optimistic it will happen, given the planned changes in the taxation system and the broader recovery of the Japanese economy.

“We believe there will be a lot more foreign companies based in Tokyo in five years’ time,” he added.

Mitsui Fudosan’s four other flagship developments include the Nihonbashi 2-Chome Project, which is closer to the company’s home turf and is being carried out in conjunction with department store giant Takashimaya. Scheduled to open in the spring of 2018, it will be followed the next year around the Muromachi 3-Chome Project, a complete redevelopment of the company’s existing headquarters buildings in Nihonbashi.

Around the same time, the Otemachi 1-Chome development will open alongside the inner moat of the Imperial Palace and with expansive views across the largest green space in the city. The final development will be the Yaesu 2-Chome Project, on the east side of Tokyo Station, although this scheme is likely to still be under way around the time the Olympic Games roll into town.

“We want to dramatically change the landscape of downtown Tokyo by around 2020,” said Mochizuki. “We have the experience and skills to do that, and we have set our sights on that deadline.” •



Park view from the terrace of the Shin-Hibiya Project



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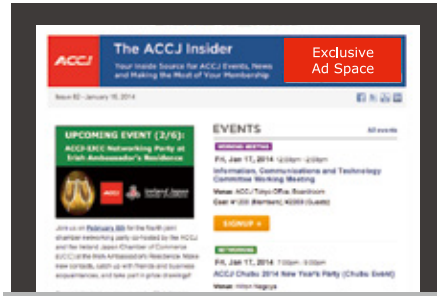
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WALK FOR WOMEN

Kansai Walk-A-Thon

Translated and edited from original text
by Maiko Mochizuki

Date: Saturday, October 18, 2014
Time: 10:30am to 4:00pm
Venue: Canadian Academy (Rokko Island, Kobe)
Adults: ¥1,000 | **Students:** ¥500

www.facebook.com/ACCJKansaiWalkathon

On October 18, the 9th ACCJ Kansai Walk-A-Thon will take place at the Canadian Academy on Rokko Island, in Kobe.

The event was established to raise money for organizations serving the needs of working women.

Encouraged by the women-friendly Abenomics agenda, ACCJ Kansai leaders believe that providing women with more opportunities in the workplace can contribute to broader economic development in Japan. This is especially true as most Japanese women face a glass ceiling that prevents them from pursuing careers or returning to work after having children. The Kansai Walk-A-Thon aims to help women break through this glass ceiling.

The walkathon was started in 2006, and is held annually on the

third Saturday in October. It is sponsored and supported by more than 50 multinational Japan-based companies that are actively promoting diversity, such as P&G, Eli Lilly, Bayer, and Hilton.

The Kansai Walk-A-Thon is not simply a walking event. It offers beneficial programs for working women and mothers, live entertainment, international food booths, a raffle with great prizes, a kids' play area, and much more. It is both educational and fun for the whole family. The event is open to the public, and more than 2,000 people attend every year, making it a top fundraiser for ACCJ Kansai.

Since the inaugural event, the ACCJ Kansai Walk-A-Thon has donated a total of ¥36,306,000 to 18 nonprofit organizations that support working women. •

INNOVATIVE EVENT VENUE

Residential atmosphere and culinary entertainment await



Residence Basil features a lively show kitchen.

Grand Hyatt Tokyo has revamped its second-floor event space to unveil a new venue concept: The Residence. It is the first major renovation since the hotel opened its doors 11 years ago.

The enhancement reflects the Grand Hyatt Tokyo's pursuit of excellence, as a leading hotel that is ever ready to offer novel products and services. The second-floor event space has been transformed into an innovative venue, offering an artistic residential atmosphere and entertaining culinary experiences to be enjoyed in a versatile and comfortable setting.

Two event venues are now available to guests, Residence Basil and Residence Anise. In Residence Basil, a lively show kitchen with bronze accents and spotlights turns the room into a functional space offering culinary entertainment. The atmosphere stimulates all five senses and

presents a distinctive dining experience, not to mention an array of imaginative event possibilities.

Residence Anise emanates comfort, has state-of-the-art lighting, and features two large screens. The result is a sophisticated yet intimate setting.

The renovation extends to the foyer, a space that has been reinvented. It now is a stylish gathering place called The Gallery, designed to enable guests to spend quality time there, relaxing together during an event or a party. The foyer has been designed with a residential focus, to make guests feel they are at a friend's home. The sofas, bookshelves, hat racks, and charming artistic décor serve to enhance the ambience.

In addition, debuting with the upgrade are six private spaces, together called The Salon. An area with rooms such as these had been requested by guests, for use by brides and their attendees on their wedding day. The rooms feature

an oversized mirror, a make-up dresser, and ample space for the bride to prepare for one of the most memorable times of her life. The Salon can also be used as a green room to accommodate VIPs who are waiting to present at conferences, events, and parties. •

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The Gallery encourages guests to relax in a home-like environment.



1 — ACCJ Kansai leaders met with the newly arrived Jason Hyland (center), deputy chief of mission, U.S. Embassy Tokyo; U.S. Consul General Allen Greenberg (third from right); and Helen Hwang (second from right), principal commercial officer, U.S. Consulate General Osaka-Kobe, at the Rihga Royal Hotel on August 29. Participants shared views on current developments in the Kansai region and updated the officials on the ACCJ Kansai chapter's vision, goals, and activities.

3 — Rie Nakamura, president of Yume no Machi Souzou linkai Co., speaks at an ACCJ luncheon titled, "Not a Salaryman: A Japanese Entrepreneur Shares Her Experiences," held on September 9 at EGG JAPAN.

4 — Ruth Jarman Shiraishi receives a certificate of appreciation from Ray Proper, Independent Business Committee-Chubu chair, after "Starting up and Successfully Navigating Your Business in Japan," an event held on September 4 at the Coat of Arms Pub and Restaurant in Nagoya.



2 — Larry Dressler, organizational and leadership development consultant, speaks at the interactive ACCJ workshop, "Leading in the Fire: How to Bring Greater Calm, Clarity, and Courage to High-Stakes Situations," held on September 1 at the Tokyo American Club.

5 — The Living in Chubu Committee hosted a networking event on August 22 at the Meitetsu Department Store Beer Garden. Attending were (from left): Bruce McCaughan, Living in Chubu Committee chair; Anthony Gilmore, Business Programs Committee vice chair; Deryk Langlais, Mobility Manufacturing Committee chair; and Steve Brown.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit www.accj.or.jp for a complete list of upcoming ACCJ events or check our weekly e-newsletter, *The ACCJ Insider*.

October 6

Designing a Career within a Japanese Multinational Corporation

October 17

ACCJ - JASO Joint Welcome Reception for U.S. Consul General Allen S. Greenberg (Kansai Event)


October 23

Using Business Information in Japan

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HOW TO BE LIKEABLE AND TRUSTWORTHY WHEN SELLING

The first six seconds decides everything

By Dr. Greg Story

It has always been astonishing to me how hopeless some salespeople are in this country.

Over the past 20 years, I have been through thousands of job interviews with salespeople. My company teaches selling techniques, so we see a broad gamut of salespeople coming through the door. We also buy services and products, and thus are on the receiving end of the (lack of a) sales process by salespeople.

On-the-job training is the main pedagogical system in Japan for training the new salesperson. This works well if your boss has a clue and knows about selling. But often, what you get is hand-me-down techniques that are ineffective. These techniques are then poorly executed in the hands of the newbies.

As consumers, we like to buy, but few of us want to be sold anything. We like to do business with people we like and trust. We will occasionally do business with people we don't like and very, very rarely with people we don't trust—but neither is our preference. The million-dollar question is, “What makes you likeable and trustworthy?”

Building rapport in the first meeting with a prospective client is critical for establishing likeability or trust. When you think about it, this is the same as in a job interview. In both cases we enter an unfamiliar environment and greet strangers who are brimming over with doubt and skepticism. If a salesperson cannot handle a job interview and build rapport straight away, it is unlikely they are doing much better out in the field.

So, what needs to be done? First, pay attention to posture. Standing up straight communicates confidence. Also, bowing from a half leaning posture, especially while still on the move, makes a person look weak and unconvincing. Walk in standing straight and tall, stop, and then bow or shake hands, depending on the circumstances.

If there is a handshake involved, drop the dead fish (weak) grasp and the double-hander (gripping the



forearm with the other hand). The latter is the classic insincere politician special. Some Japanese have become overly Westernized, in that they apply a bone-crushing grip. Teach your Japanese team how to shake hands properly. Overly weak or strong grips impinge on building that all-important first impression.

You only have a maximum of six seconds to get that first impression correct, so every second counts. When you first see the client, make eye contact. Don't burn a hole in the person's head, but hold eye contact at the start for around six seconds and smile. This conveys consideration, reliability, and confidence—all attributes we seek in business partners. Combine this with a greeting and the usual pleasantries.

The next step is crucial. We segue into establishing rapport through initial light conversation. Japan has some fairly unremarkable fallbacks in this regard,

usually remarks about the weather or the distance travelled to get to a meeting.

Also, be careful about commenting on a prominent feature of the surroundings. I was in a brand-new office the other day that has a really impressive moss wall in the lobby. My hosts have likely heard obvious comments about the moss wall from every visitor who has preceded me. Boring!

Teach your salespeople to say something unexpected, intelligent, and memorable. In the previous situation, try, “Have you found that team motivation has lifted since you moved to this impressive new office?”; or, “Have you found your brand equity with your clients has improved since moving here?” This gets the focus off you as the salesperson and on to the client and their business.

The very first seconds of meeting someone are vital to building the business relationship. Simple errors in posture, greetings and conversation can be our undoing. Let's get the basics right to make sure that we totally own that first impression. •



Dr. Greg Story is president of Dale Carnegie Training Japan.

THE THIRD PILLAR

This regular column is devoted to brief advocacy updates from various committees. As one of the three pillars of the ACCJ—along with information and networking—advocacy consistently features prominently in the work of the chamber.

Diet Doorknock

Preparations are now underway for this year's Diet Doorknock on October 28-30. As in years past, organizers are targeting 100 to 150 Diet members for discussions, and expect to meet with 40 to 60 of them for half-hour sessions, including photographs.

On the agenda this year are: Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, labor mobility (see page 25), and innovation and entrepreneurship. A planning meeting will be held for confirmed participants on October 22.

Integrated Resorts Task Force

The Diet is expected to pass legislation allowing integrated resorts during the next session starting in the fall. This first-stage legislation will be quite preliminary, but it will direct a new inter-agency group of

bureaucrats to draft detailed implementing legislation within one year. The ACCJ Integrated Resorts Task Force would like to help the inter-agency group with information on global best practices to facilitate what will certainly be an intense drafting process.

Our task force has held several meetings to discuss our recent viewpoint and achieve a consensus. More than 40 members participated in our first working meeting, plus about 10 members have contributed to drafting portions of the viewpoint. After the viewpoint is approved, we intend to meet with key Diet members and the inter-agency group to discuss our recommendations and to offer them our help going forward.

In the Diet session that ended in June, the integrated resort bill was introduced in the lower house cabinet committee, and discussion was extended into the next session. Immediately after the last session,

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Singapore and toured both integrated resorts there, commenting on the positive benefits for Japan.

Tokyo 2020 Olympics Task Force

Marking one year since Tokyo's selection as host of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the ACCJ has joined forces with nine other foreign chambers of commerce in Japan to establish the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics Foreign Chambers Leadership Committee.

The Committee unites our chambers in support of the preparations for Tokyo 2020, to share relevant information, best practices, and business and volunteer opportunities for members. Contact Jonathan Kushner, committee chair, for more information. •

Viewpoints recently released on the ACCJ website:

Healthcare Committee

"Promote Oral Care to Prevent Periodontal Disease and Dental Caries"

Internet Economy Task Force

"Implementing Japan's New Cybersecurity Strategy"



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DOORKNOCKS WORK



Samuel Kidder

As we prepare for our fall Diet Doorknock, it might be interesting—at least for me—to see where we were when I first took the executive director position in 2006, and compare that to where we are now.

In 2006 we were going in to our visits with Diet members with 17 approved viewpoints in hand. This year, we have 32 active viewpoints as of this writing. Past experience teaches us that this number will increase as committees submit new advocacy positions in the lead-up to the Doorknock. So, by the simplest

measure, it seems we have a lot more to talk about with Diet members than we did eight years ago.

If we look more closely, it is clear that for some viewpoints our position has prevailed, while for some we have made considerable progress but are still seeking improvement (rule-making transparency, for example). There are others we're still working on, and are likely to continue doing so.

Precursor to TPP?

A major theme of the '06 Doorknock was our push for "the United States and Japan to commit to the vision of concluding a bilateral Economic Integration Agreement, or EIA." Now that we are down to the details in the multilateral Trans-Pacific Partnership discussions, it is clear that we are way beyond committing to a vision and exploring a framework for addressing issues.

We can also point out that meeting with the ACCJ can have a very positive impact on a Diet member's career progress. Eight years ago, we met with Eriko Yamatani, who then held the position of assistant to the prime minister on educational

Meeting with the ACCJ can have a very positive impact on a Diet member's career progress.

revitalization. This year, we will be requesting to meet again with Yamatani, who now has an expanded portfolio in the cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Meeting with the ACCJ not only has boosted the careers of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Diet members, but also has worked well for New Komeito member Akihiro Ohta, who now holds an office with the Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Ministry. Yoichi Masuzoe went on from his chat with us to be elected governor of Tokyo, and Sadakazu Tanigaki, at that time already a former minister of finance, continues to be a political heavyweight as secretary-general of the LDP.

Current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was unable to meet with us in 2006, but we did have a chance to sit down with him during our Doorknocks in 2009 and 2010.

So my point is: the Doorknock works. We make progress on the issues. We meet the right people. And we gain valuable insights and build useful relationships that we can use to further the ACCJ's mission in Japan. •

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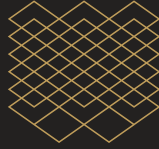
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