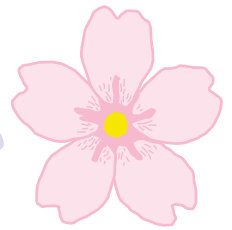


# JLGC Newsletter



Issue No. 44 Fall 2002

## CLAIR UPDATE



### 16 Candles, the Conference and the Cat

By Archie Mochizuki  
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“Is that a cage that I see?”  
“Yes, that’s a cage....and there’s  
definitely a cat in there!”

A visit to the Quarantine Department at Narita Airport did not happen just once, but approximately 3 times this year. It seemed that spouses and children were not the only dependents accompanying the large number of participants taking part in the 16th year of the JET Programme. One Coordinator for International Relations-Tokyo Orientation Assistant (CIR-TOA) became an expert on what to do when bringing pets into Japan despite the fact that prior to departure, all travelers were advised not to!! This year, the orientation took place from July 28th to 31st (A) and from August 4th to 7th (B).

As in previous years, terminals 1 and 2 of Narita Airport were filled with the energy of new and present JETs. CLAIR staff, Tokyo Orientation Assistants (TOAs) and travel agents (clad in sky-blue JET Programme t-shirts selected by a charismatic female

British Programme Coordinator to match the uniform of the Japan World Cup Soccer team) who volunteered their time to guide the new participants. Looking at the faces of the new JETs, one could see the effects of the lengthy journey as well as a sense of



*Pets, which are popular traveling companions, often end up in the Quarantine Department at Narita Airport.*

relief at finally arriving in Japan. The sheer volume of luggage showed that the limits proposed by the airlines were generally ignored. Snowboards, keyboards, surfboards, bicycles, portable gym sets – the list went on and on. It definitely looked like the limits were broken and the costs incurred for extra baggage went way beyond what was expected. Why so much baggage? These youngsters were preparing for a year away from home in

a foreign country very different from their own. A year promising new experiences, new beginnings, new friends and new perspectives. And although a year may seem like a long time, the time flies by swiftly.

The day was long, stretching from 5:00am to 11:00pm. And it wasn’t over yet. Narita Airport was just the prelude to the 3-day orientation that was to follow. Once the bus ride from Narita Airport was over, the Keio Plaza Hotel venue was suddenly filled with the gleeful banter of foreign

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*Masthead: The sakura, or cherry blossom, is Japan’s cherished national flower. Special hanami parties and excursions are held during blossom time each year.*



## 16 Candles, the Conference and the Cat

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youths. Perhaps it was the excitement of finally arriving in the center of Japan and being surrounded by the incandescent neon lights that spelled Tokyo. For others, it may have been the thought of finally leaving home and tasting the flavor of independence. More than likely, it was something bigger than that. The reality was that these foreign youths were the participants of a prestigious international exchange program known to be the largest and most successful of its kind in the world.

If you were to watch the entire 3-day orientation on fast forward, you would see over a thousand people scurrying to workshops located on the ground floor, as well as the 46th and 47th floors, of the hotel. You would see those new participants listening intently to the speeches given by the ministry officials at the opening ceremonies. The elevators were continuously packed and long lines formed just waiting for them to arrive. People wanted information on what they were to do here in Japan and what the program was all about. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology held sessions for the Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) while CLAIR and the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications provided information for the Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs). TOAs ran workshops focusing on life in Japan while JET Programme supervisors from various prefectures held information meetings. Despite the fast pace, the jetlag and the immensity of the orientation, the new participants took notes intently and tried to make sense of it all. It may have been information

overload, but it is always better to have too much of something than too little of it.

Things went relatively smoothly and thankfully no major mishaps occurred. There were some JETs who fell ill and needed to rest or be taken to the hospital. One Programme Coordinator had to take it easy due

to the pressures of the all-consuming daily activities. But, underneath the sweltering heat of the Tokyo fall sun, the orientation ran its course. The hustle and bustle of the 3-day event came to a close and the new JETs were on their way to the prefectures that would be

their home for a year or more. Like *hanabi* (fireworks) that race across the fall sky at night, all that remained is the quiet moment after everyone has gone home.

And the cat? It arrived safely in Kyushu.



*The 3-day orientation was held at Keio Plaza Hotel, Tokyo for the new JETs who have just arrived in Japan.*

### **All About the JET Programme For Those Who Are Interested in Living and Working in Japan**

If you would like to obtain more information about the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme or know of someone who is interested, please check the following links:

[www.mofa.go.jp/j\\_info/visit/jet/outline.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/jet/outline.html) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

[www.jetprogramme.org](http://www.jetprogramme.org) (Council of Local Authorities for International Relations)

Recruitment begins in autumn of every year for positions commencing in July and August of the following year.

To download an application form, please visit the following links:

US – [www.embjapan.org](http://www.embjapan.org)

Canada – [www.embassyjapancanada.org](http://www.embassyjapancanada.org)

## Kanazawa and Buffalo



Kanazawa  
City Emblem



Buffalo  
City Seal

The City of Kanazawa in Ishikawa Prefecture and the City of Buffalo in New York State have had a sister-city relationship since 1962. They marked their 40th year anniversary in 2002.

Kanazawa City is located northwest of Tokyo, on the Japan Sea, and has a population of about 450,000. The city is one of Japan's foremost castle towns and boasts many places of historic and aesthetic interest. It also has many flourishing traditional crafts such as gold leaf, *Yuzen* (formal *kimono*), and pottery. In contrast to its policy of valuing architectural and cultural traditions, recently the city has begun to promote modern development. A look down any of Kanazawa's streets illustrates the coexistence of modern and traditional styles.

Buffalo City, located on the shores of Lake Erie, is known as the "Queen City of the Lakes."

Niagara Falls, one of the world's seven natural wonders, is only 25 miles away. It has hot and dry summers and very severe winters. After the building of the world's largest storehouse in 1843, Buffalo developed as a gateway to the East. The nearby Erie Canal supported the early growth of iron industries and mills. Buffalo also owes its reputation as a cultural and academic city to the existence of the world-class Albright Knox Art Gallery, the Buffalo Philharmonic, and the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Until now Kanazawa and Buffalo have

implemented a variety of exchange activities, including visits from sister-city delegations to each of the cities and cultural and academic exchanges. To celebrate this 40th anniversary year, a delegation of twenty people from



*"Common Ground World Project in Kanazawa." The completed work is a curved section assembled into one large spiral. Shown in this picture is Mr. Tamotsu Yamade, Mayor of Kanazawa City (left) and Mr. Neil Tetkowski, ceramic artist (center).*

Buffalo, headed by Mr. Gleed, the executive assistant to the mayor, visited Kanazawa last July. During their stay in Kanazawa they paid a courtesy visit to Mr. Yamade, Mayor of Kanazawa, tried on Japanese *kimonos*, and joined an exchange meeting with public elementary school students.

In conjunction with their stay, Kanazawa City also celebrated the "Common Ground World Project in Kanazawa," produced by Mr. Neil Tetkowski, a ceramic artist from Buffalo. This project is a collaborative work that includes both people and materials from

188 countries. This work of art illustrates the spiritual and genetic thread that connects all people, tying us together with hope and inspiration. It is an environmental work sponsored by the Division of Sustainable Development at the United Nations. The project includes clay presented by Kanazawa City in 1998. In Kanazawa, about 100 participants from various age groups with some connection to Buffalo placed their handprints in a spiral pattern in the clay to make this sculpture.

At the same time this delegation was visiting Kanazawa, a delegation of seven members from the Kanazawa City Council, headed by Mr. Kohichi Kawa, Chairperson, visited Buffalo. They paid a visit to Mr. Masiello, Mayor of Buffalo, visited the Japanese gardens, and participated in an exchange meeting with members of the Buffalo-Kanazawa Sister City Committee.

Kanazawa has given a lot of thought to what a city should be, and has worked hard to honor their history, promote scholarship, and enrich their local culture. These days, a worldwide "borderless society" is being created and exchanges between peoples are increasing. Kanazawa has seven sister cities in seven countries, including Buffalo. The city makes aggressive efforts to expand its exchanges with the entire world and promote personal, cultural, and industrial exchanges. All of Kanazawa hopes that the exchanges of citizens through the sister-city program will contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world.





Kagawa Prefectural Emblem

## Kagawa Prefecture

### Beautiful Island Place

Kagawa Prefecture is situated in north-eastern Shikoku, which itself is in southwestern Japan. This area enjoys a so-called “Seto Inland Sea climate” which means it is mild throughout all of the four seasons. Kagawa enjoys more than 2,100 hours of sunshine per year and, with an average annual rainfall of just 1,100mm (43.3 in), is one of driest prefectures.

#### A Prefecture Rich in Sightseeing

Kotohiragu Shrine is an ancient shrine dedicated to the guardian god of the sea. It is situated at Mt. Zozu, which stands 521m (1,709 ft.) above sea level. To reach the Main Shrine, one must climb 785 stairs. Those hoping to reach the Inner Shrine must tackle 1,368 steps which lead almost all the way to the peak of the mountain. Famous throughout Japan, Kotohiragu Shrine attracts millions of visitors each year from all over the world.

Yashima is a roof-shaped lava plateau, which takes the form of a peninsula rising out of the Seto Inland Sea. It is well known as the site of the famous Gempei Battle in 1185. The name Gempei is derived from the two clans involved, the Genji and the Heike. The view from the observatory at the top of the mountain is spectacular, offering a wonderful panoramic view of the Seto Inland Sea area and its many beautiful islands.

Ritsurin Park is a traditional stroll-type garden created over 350 years ago in the style of the Edo feudal lord. The park is arranged against Mt. Shiun near the heart of Takamatsu City, and features numerous ponds and hills. Beautiful in every season, Ritsurin Park delights visitors from all over

Japan. It is blessed with beautiful scenery in all four seasons: cherry blossoms in the spring, lush, green foliage in the summer, gold and red leaves in autumn and snow-covered landscape in winter.

The Seto Ohashi Commemorative Park is a memorial park located on the coast, situated at the Shikoku end of the Seto Ohashi Bridge. In the park there are many buildings to explore, such as the Seto Ohashi Bridge Memorial Hall. Additionally, the panoramic view of the Seto Ohashi Bridge is breath-taking. The bridge spans the calm, blue sea, and the many beautiful islands that lie between Okayama and Kagawa.

#### Food

Kagawa prefecture’s *udon* noodles are so famous that one always thinks of *Sanuki* (the ancient name of Kagawa) when one hears the word *udon*. Made from a superior quality of wheat and salt, these thick and tasty noodles are a must for every visitor. *Somen* noodles are another well-known kind of noodle produced in Kagawa. Also made from a superior quality of wheat, this noodle is kneaded by hand and is then



A picturesque scene from Ritsurin Park, featuring numerous ponds and hills.

stretched out into extremely thin threads and dried in the sun.

#### Industries

Popular traditional industries in Kagawa include Takamatsu’s lacquerware and *bonsai* trees, Marugame’s round *uchiwa* fans, glove manufacturing (particularly in Shirotori Town), the production of *somen* on Shodoshima Island and stone processing in the towns of Aji and Mure. Today, various new genres of local industry are emerging from among these traditional industries and adopting their special techniques and high standards of quality.

#### Globalization

Today, Kagawa has been making impressive strides in globalization. Kagawa currently has 21 sister-city affiliations, including links between the prefecture, its

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