

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT NEWSLETTER



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By Kaito Gengo
From Japan

I have come to realize that humanity’s creative imagination can be as deep as an ocean, and as high as the sky, while volunteering for an amazingly magical and mysterious event: GlobalFest 2009. My GlobalFest journey started with designing posters. As I did this, I thought, “It’s just another event similar to those that have already passed, such as the Haunted House and the Enchanted Winter Dance.” But because of its superiority to the other events, this annual, beloved event exceeded my thoughts and expectations. There were extremely diverse cultural booths representing countries from all over the world—America to Africa, the Middle East and Asia—along with passionate and professional performances. Over 10 performances were presented on a stage with delicately painted pyramid-like ruins, preceded by enigmatic walls and pillars in the hallway. And that’s not all— created by volunteer’s hands were a numerous amount of different colored leaves that surrounded everything in the Student Union building, turning the HSU into a real jungle.

From the beginning of this quarter, volunteers had been going to the ISP office almost every day to do their jobs. Some volunteers were cutting leaves from rolls of green paper, or bending hard wires to make branches and tree trunks. At first, I was certainly not a motivated person,



To Dear “Insane” LSC

in helping with the event, and the free ticket for volunteers was the only attraction for me.

After I finished designing the poster for GlobalFest, I was put into the hallway section, which is adjacent to the cafeteria on the 2nd floor, and it turned out to be the dirtiest, most exhausting work ever. Our assignment was to create walls that were 6 feet high and 3 feet wide from white styrene foam. We started by scrubbing the surface of the foam, and then we painted them with various light brown colors. While creating and painting styrene walls, two pairs of my jeans and shoes got painted accidentally, and both of my middle fingers had blood on them from being cut twice. My ironic mouth started to mumble, “I don’t deserve destroyed pants and cut open fingers just for the freaking stupid GlobalFest.”

All my complaints lasted until my eyes were caught by the rehearsals for the performance--particularly by my country’s showcase, the Japa-

nese dance. The dancers were very professional and were full of energy towards working as a team. They seemed totally *cool* to me, and they motivated me to try harder. After seeing them, I backed up the magnificent performers with everything I had, and my volunteers and I redesigned and repainted all of the walls to make them look more real.

Now, I am sick of looking at white foam boards, but my conscience has had a turnaround, and I’m satisfied with all of our accomplishments after three hard-working weeks. I’m sure our memories of the event will remain eternally and be kept in us always.

I would like to give my appreciation in this article to those who took part in Global Fest: volunteers, performers, and especially, the “Insane” International Leadership Student Council members who planned the event and made it happen.

B.F.F.



By Miki Sasaki
from Japan

Yasuhara, Saori, and Matsu are my special friends that have been together with me since I first came to the

United States on May 12, 2007. Although two years is a very limited time span, it nonetheless enabled us to become comfortable with one another, and build a mighty bond among ourselves.

Allow me to introduce the three of them. Whenever I have problems or am feeling frustrated, Yasuhara acts as my cushion from any fall-backs. She always pushes me to rise above any situation by instilling confidence in me. "If anybody can do it, so can you!" is just one of the endearing cheers I hear from her. Saori has a strong, firm character, and is always there to bring life to my gloomy mood. Through encouragement coupled with her charming smile, I always feel that life is good, in spite of everything. Matsu's cheerful disposition and sense of humor never fails to put a smile on my face. Her forgetful personality also makes her funny.

Currently, they are back in Japan, but we are very much in touch with one another through sending e-mails, letters, and pictures. I believe physical absence should never be a barrier in sustaining solid friendships. Hoping friendships will last is such a useless thought. Why? It is because "hoping" does not provide a guarantee. Just hoping manifests the lack of mutual trust that fuels any relationship. "Hoping" mirrors doubt, and leaves a person hanging. It is not a matter of hoping, but knowing--knowing that no matter what happens, a relationship will stand the test of time.

Like a plant, a long-lasting friendship needs proper elements to keep it growing. First, it must be sincere. There must be no pretenses or hidden intentions. It demands full unmasking of everyone's personal core, and frankness to point out wrongs, even if it may be hurtful at the time.

Second, it needs trust. In this process, a friend gives themselves openly, thus, there is a manifestation of trust for each other. Third, it must be unselfish. Too much self-centeredness and possessiveness can create a crack in any relationship. And lastly, a friendship should desire the advancement of each other's welfares. It should not lead anyone to a downfall.

More than peace signs in pictures sent, secrets, laughs and shared ideas, friends will stand by your side even during the lowest point of your life. They are the people who we share our lives with. Misunderstandings will come, but surely they will not last long. A Russian writer once said, "People live by the love that is in other people." Well, I am thankful I have found it in Yasuhara, Saori, and Matsu; my best friends for life.

Travel to Learn Something Different



By Nao Watanabe
From Japan

I love traveling although I haven't been to very many countries. I have been to New Zealand, Korea and Canada while I was in junior high and high school, and I enjoyed staying those countries so much.

When you hear the country "New Zealand," what comes up in your mind? If it is a

large flock of sheep baaing, I think you are right. I went to New Zealand for a school trip when I was in ninth grade. Even though I knew that New Zealand was famous for sheep, I was still shocked to see that many sheep. The class from my junior high school actually went to a farm to take care of some lambs. We were chasing after lambs to feed them, but none of us had any experience in caring for farm animals, so we spent a lot of time to catch only 16 lambs. That was a very exciting experience which I think I won't have the chance to do it again.

The trip to Canada was another remarkably fun experience. In the high school, there were only seven Japanese students, so this was a

big step from being surrounded by Japanese people only. I took an ESL class with other international students and immigrants to study English and also the culture and customs. A lot of things were completely new to me, and I loved the class. Imagine 18 teenagers singing a song that explains what nouns are and how they work, doesn't that sound fun? The interactive education style I had over there was something that I loved and I didn't think I would have in Japan.

I stayed with a South African-Canadian family while I was in Port Moody, Canada. They took me to a lot of cultural events to show me the Western world and what it's like to be in a multi-cultural country. The most unforget-

table event that I joined was Penguin Swim. In the city of Port Moody, New Year tradition is to attend the Penguin Swim. The event was all about swimming into Burrard Inlet, an inlet that connects to the Pacific Ocean, with their clothes on. I even saw some people wearing their wedding dresses and tuxedos, and it is very fun to see people wearing strange clothes.

Traveling to other countries does give us remarkable experiences. I never knew that catching lambs is such a hustle or dipping ourselves into freezing water can be a way to celebrate New Year. I am hoping to visit Turkey and Greece in one of these years to explore the Mediterranean culture, I can't wait to know more about this big world.

Happy Muddy Monsters



By Anh Ha
from Vietnam

Along the small road, we were heading to the park near Redondo Beach where we would start our mission: “Park Restoration—Removing ivy”. It was 10 o’clock in the morning; the sun wasn’t up yet but the rain kept pouring down along with the breeze from the sea and we all shuddered with coldness.

We grabbed the tools and went to the park in a hurry.

My body started shaking and my feet couldn’t stay stably on the ground because of the slippery and muddy ground. After a few careful steps, I realized that I had sunk into the mud. I tried to move as fast as I could in order to save my legs from the chocolate-like mud but I failed. When I had eventually escaped from the trap, I then fell down again because of the imbalance of my body. I was completely covered with mud. I looked just like Shrek alive. I supposed I should make myself look as dirty as I could because the dirtier I was would show how hard I had worked for the park by removing ivy.

After clear and precise instruction and with useful tools, we got ready to start the task immediately with excitement. The other three groups had arrived and begun removing ivy earlier than us. As

we soon started working, we realized that we were not simply removing ivy. We also needed to bunch them all together in order to prevent them from spreading and growing. The ivy was tough; some of them are more than five feet in length and pulling those gigantic roots out of the ground was not as easy as I thought. To make it worse, the drilling and the pouring rain from the gray gloomy sky made the ground even more muddy and slippery.

All those hardships did not stop us from working hard because we knew that what we were doing was invaluable and it would help not only the park but also our entire planet. Our planet has been placed in alert due to pollution and a lack of tree plantations. Removing ivy serves to help increase the tree’s reproduction and that’s why our small action will be appreciated.

After working efficiently for three hours, we could proudly say that most of the potentially risky ivy had been removed.

I enjoyed this event because of its practicality and interaction with the earth even though I was completely turned into a muddy monster. I got dirty and even stinky, but I am a passionate muddy monster who loves volunteering. Considering it all, sinking in the mud was not too bad after all. I have an experience now on surviving the mud and especially with removing ivy. I believe volunteering is a great way for us to be able to have a great experience and fulfill our duties by contributing and being a part of society. On top of that, you can show your love and compassion for others and the environment through volunteering.

Red Demon and Blue Demon



By Mariko Fukunaga
From Japan

Once upon a time, Red Demon and Blue Demon lived in the mountain. There was a small village where people lived at the bottom of the mountain. Red Demon desired to be friends with humans, so he decided to put

a standing signboard in front of his house and on it he wrote: “Very peaceful and friendly demon is living in this house. Feel free to come! Tea and sweets will be served.” However, time passed and no one had ever opened the door. People were still afraid of him. Red Demon felt disappointed in himself because no one trusted him.

Blue Demon was trying to help and came to Red Demon’s house with an idea one day. “I will go down to the village to attack people. You will have to punish me in front of them. And then they will realize that you are a gentle demon and become your friends,” said Blue Demon with excitement. Red Demon didn’t think that was a

good idea. But Blue Demon took Red Demon to the village, because he knew how deeply Red Demon wanted to make human friends.

Blue Demon’s idea succeeded. People found out that Red Demon was a nice demon, so they started to visit his house. Red Demon was happy because his dream came true. Red Demon enjoyed his new life with his new friends.

A few days later, Red Demon was wondering and worried about Blue Demon, because Red Demon had not seen Blue Demon since he attacked the village. So he decided to visit Blue Demon’s house with his appreciation of the great idea. However, he found out that the door was locked with a letter lying on the floor in front of the door.

“My dear friend, Red Demon,

I am very glad that you have new friends now. But I am afraid that your new friends may be gone if they see you are hanging out with me; therefore, I decided to leave. I won’t see you again, but my heart will always be with you.

Blue Demon”

Red Demon read the letter again and again and he cried with grief.

This story is one of the most famous children’s stories in Japan. This story is often used in textbooks to teach children about friendship. This story tells us how important it is to understand and trust each other to create friendship. So, I want you to read this story again, and then reconsider about your true friendship.

The Tale of Traditional Vietnamese Rice Cake



By Ami (Thanh Nguyen)
From Vietnam

Each country in the world has their own traditional customs and symbols. But have you ever heard about the tales of those things? When I was young, my mom used to tell me a bedtime story whenever I went to bed. One of those that I can remember is “**The Tale of the Thick ground and the Thin Glutinous Rice Cake**”, which are the traditional food of my country. As any five-year-old kid, I was always eager to hear my mommy’s stories. While she opened the old yellow book and turned it from page to page, I always came up with tons of question about the tale. Why did the ancient people know how to put the ingredients together to create such a kind of food? How could a small piece of deli keep the quintessence of one big country inside? As usual, my mom always stopped my childish actions by rubbing my little forehead and she started reading the story. It always started with....

Once upon a time....

In the Old Kingdom of Vietnam, there was a King

who announced a food preparing competition to find his crown prince. The prince who offers the best dishes would be chosen and their dishes would be recognized as the traditional food of the Kingdom.

At the moment, every prince lived a luxurious life because their mothers, who were queens, would protect and cherish them. Except one prince, he lived a frugal life because his mom had passed away when he was young. His name was Lang Lieu. The young prince lived in harmony with his trusted courtiers and learned many things from them. That’s why he grew up and became a well educated man.

When Lang Lieu heard about the competition, he was very worried. He didn’t have enough money to afford expensive ingredients like the other princes and he could not think of anything that was cheap but also delicious. As a result, Lang Lieu stayed up every night thinking about the dishes. One night, he saw an old, respectable man that was standing in front of his table. He hurriedly bowed his head to greet the man. The young prince revealed his worries about the competition to the old man and he was advised to make the thick round and square glutinous rice cakes for the competition.

Lang Lieu woke up and he realized that he had had a conversation with one of his ancestors in the dream. Next morning, Lang Lieu started to make the cakes. The shell of the glutinous cake was made from glutinous rice and there was green bean paste and fat pork inside. Then, they were wrapped inside banana leaves

and cooked for eight hours. For the thick round cakes, Lang Lieu used new glutinous rice to cook and to pound until they blended together in a big mass of dough. The dough was then made into big round cakes one inch thick.

Finally, the competition came. Each prince displayed his special dishes

and cooked for eight hours. For the thick round cakes, Lang Lieu used new glutinous rice to cook and to pound until they blended together in a big mass of dough. The dough was then made into big round cakes one inch thick. Finally, the competition came. Each prince displayed his special dishes on a big table. The King would walk around, taste the displays and ask the competitor many questions concerning their food. Slowly, the king walked through but he didn’t taste most of the food for he had eaten them before. When the King came to Prince Lang Lieu’s table, he said he wanted to taste the cakes. Many people looked at the simple looking cakes with disbelieving eyes. Prince Lang Lieu cut a piece from each cake and respectfully offered it to his father with both hands. The king tasted the new cake slowly and enjoyed every bit of it. Then, the King asked his son about the meaning of each cake. Lang Lieu replied that the white round cake represented the sky and the square cake represented the earth they lived on. The greenish color of the banana leaves represented the trees which covered the earth’s surface. The green bean paste, pepper, salt, and the fat pork inside represented all the elements below the sky. The whole idea was that



Traditional Vietnamese Rice cake,

people lived harmoniously in the care of Father Sky and Mother Earth. Moreover, the food is simple and cheap so everyone can make it.

The King was very pleased with Lang Lieu’s dishes and he proclaimed Lang Lieu as his crown prince. Prince Lang Lieu later succeeded to the throne and he led his kingdom through peace and prosperity forever after.

The recipes of the cakes were taught to all his peoples, so every family knew how to make these cakes and enjoyed them. Until today, the round and the square glutinous rice cakes are the indispensable food in every Vietnamese family during their New Year Celebration, Tet.

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Korean Folktale—Hungbu and Nolbu



By Jennifer Min
From Korea

Long ago there lived two sons, Hungbu and Nolbu, who were married to women from acceptable families and had children who played happily together on their wealthy father's capacious land that he had left them before he passed

on. Although it seemed like Hungbu and Nolbu got along, the eldest, Nolbu and his family, often badly treated Hungbu's family by making them do the hardest chores and barely gave them enough food to eat. After an argument between the two wives, Nolbu kicked out Hungbu's family empty handed and sent them along the road that went on evermore.

Although Hungbu's family was very poor, he made sure to always have a positive attitude and to find ways for survival by building huts out of sticks and stones and find food to eat from the mountains. One radiant day, small swallows came to Hungbu's hut to build a nest but an unfortunate event soon came when a snake appeared and

killed them all except for one that had a broken leg. Feeling sorry for it, Hungbu took the swallow into his care and bound the leg with a string and set the swallow back in its nest. He was given a white seed as a gratitude for his kindness that eventually blossomed into gourds that spit out gold and silver, fine silk, rice and servants for their family. Hungbu instantly became an affluent man.

After hearing that his brother Hungbu had gotten wealthy, Nolbu went to a swallow's nest, threw a stone at one, brutally tied its broken leg and threw the swallow in the air. He told it to bring him back a seed as well so that he can become rich. When he was given the white seed, he quickly planted it but, be-

cause of his impatience, he decided to open up the gourds early. What he saw was not what he expected because out came frogs and insects wielding clubs and swords and soon Nolbu lost everything he had. He went crawling back to his brother, where he begged for forgiveness and showed great remorse for his selfishness. Having a kind heart, Hungbu welcomed his brother and they shared their wealth as they lived happily ever after.

The moral of this story is that kindness and care will lead you to prosperity but selfishness and ignorance will lead you to adversity.

Taiwanese Bedtime Story—Tiger Aunt



By Fjuki Tsai (Right hand side)
From Taiwan

Most kids love bed time stories. When I was little, I wouldn't go to sleep without a story. There's one that I always remember that goes like this....

Once upon a time, there was a tiger spirit called Tiger Aunt, who lived deep in the mountains. By eating young

children, the tiger could become more powerful. One day, Tiger Aunt left for the villages to look for food. She soon found her new feast while hiding behind a cabin, listening to a private conversation between a mother and her child.

"I need to visit dad, Ally. I have asked your auntie to come and take care of you. She will be here shortly and be wearing red shoes. You have to keep the door locked until auntie arrives!" As Ally nodded obediently and tried to remember all the details, her mom closed the door and left.

Tiger Aunt stayed behind the cabin with her scam planned out. She soon saw Ally's aunt walking toward the house. Tiger Aunt jumped out of a bush, scared the auntie to a faint, tied her up on a tree, and took her red

shoes. Ally saw her red shoes through the gap under the door and let Tiger Aunt into the house. Her "aunt" acted normal, until a rat came out. She was scared by the rat, and she accidentally displayed her tail. Ally realized the fake aunt's true identity with fear. She wanted to escape, but Tiger Aunt stopped her. Ally was tied up with rope and placed in her bedroom alone.

Little Ally tried to untie the rope, but she couldn't. Luckily, a savior arrived. A rat jumped on her and broke the rope tying her up. But it was not a normal rat. It was a rat spirit that came to kill Tiger Aunt. The rat spirit gave Ally three sachets with different magic in them. Tiger Aunt came into the bedroom to find a rope, but no Ally, so she ran out and started to chase after Ally. Ally noticed that Tiger Aunt was after her, so she

tried to run to the back yard, but she was so afraid that she dropped a red sachet on the floor. One red bean rolled out and became hundreds of red beans, right in front of Tiger Aunt. Tiger Aunt tripped on them and fell down, breaking her tooth. Ally then knew that the sachets were magic, so she threw another sachet behind her. Soon, a needle rolled out and became hundred of needles. A loud scream followed. This time Tiger Aunt was furious. She became extremely determined to eat Ally! Ally threw the last sachet and a golden hair fell down from the sky with hundreds of golden rats following. The rats crawled all over Tiger Aunt and, screaming, she ran back to the mountains. Tiger Aunt disappeared, and the people never saw her again.

Past Event Highlights!!



Students having fun at the Karaoke event in Federal Way (Upper Left). Volunteers cleaning up the English ivy in the rain (Upper Right). Volunteer bank volunteers planting trees the Arbor Day (Middle Left). International students guiding American students to draw a picture in the "How to Make American Friends" Seminar (Lower Left). African students in their culture booth at GlobalFest 2009 (Lower Right).

