

NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

June 2013
Volume 45 No. 6
¥400



DEAD IN THE WATER?

Tokyo's Olympic bid struggles to stay afloat



+

Is Toru Hashimoto digging his own political grave?

Kisha Clubs are not all they're cracked up to be

A talk with Richard Lloyd Parry

Online dating: the ins and outs

Five generations of outsiders in Japan



Corporate leaders need to champion organisational transformation to succeed in today's complex international environment.

Revitalising corporate Japan

A prescription for growth



With talk of Abenomics, a weakening yen and booming Japanese equities sweeping the nation, it is easy to forget that corporate Japan requires bold leadership to make the transformative organizational reforms that will enable it to be globally competitive on a long-term basis.

This report identifies and analyzes fundamental issues essential for corporate leaders and media organizations interested in how Japan can successfully compete against nimble, fast moving international competitors.

Contact
 David Jansen
 david.jansen@us.pwc.com
 090.4226.3704

PwC helps organisations and individuals create the value they're looking for. We're a network of firms in 158 countries with close to 169,000 people who are committed to delivering quality in assurance, tax and advisory services. PwC's clients range from some of the world's largest and most international organisations to local entrepreneurs. In 2012 we provided services to 419 of the Fortune Global 500 companies and 443 companies in the FT Global 500. Tell us what matters to you and find out more by visiting us at www.pwc.com.

© 2013 PwC. All rights reserved. Not for further distribution without the permission of PwC. "PwC" refers to the network of member firms of PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited (PwCIL), or, as the context requires, individual member firms of the PwC network. Each member firm is a separate legal entity and does not act as agent of PwCIL or any other member firm. PwCIL does not provide any services to clients. PwCIL is not responsible or liable for the acts or omissions of any of its member firms nor can it control the exercise of their professional judgment or bind them in any way. No member firm is responsible or liable for the acts or omissions of any other member firm nor can it control the exercise of another member firm's professional judgment or bind another member firm or PwCIL in any way.

In this issue

The Front Page		4
President's message	Georges Baumgartner	
Letter to the editor		
Click on this Online dating	Steve McClure	
<hr/>		
Loose lips		6
Stumbling on the path to Mt Olympus		8
Hashimoto's "high noon"	Justin McCurry	
<hr/>		
Profile		10
Richard Lloyd Parry of <i>The Times</i>	Gavin Blair	
<hr/>		
Book excerpt		12
Yokohama Yankee	Leslie Helm	
<hr/>		
How come The Boso Boys consider FCCJ		14
Saturday Night Live the best gig in Kanto?	Roger Sherrin	
<hr/>		
Halls of Power <i>Kisha</i> club concerns	Ayako Mie	16
<hr/>		
Exhibition		17
The Floating World Through Blue Eyes	Peter MacIntosh	
<hr/>		
Obituary		18
Marvin Petal		
<hr/>		
New members		18
New in the library		18

New at the Club



Just like his father, Harry Ryall was late to the deadline but eventually put in his appearance on April 24. Harry, who tipped the scales at slightly over 3.7 kg, and mum Kanako – who sacrificed her career in the FCCJ's bar to generate a new future member – are both doing well.

NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

Volume 45, Number 6 June 2013

contact the editors
no.1shimbun@fccj.or.jp

Editor Gregory Starr
Publisher John R. Harris
Art Director Andrew Potheary
www.forbiddencolour.com
Assistant Editor Geoff Tudor
Editorial Assistants Naomichi Iwamura, Angela Erika Kubo, Elena Omura, Tyler Rothmar, Albert Siegel
Photo Coordinator Akiko Miyake

FCCJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Georges Baumgartner, Swiss Radio and Television
1st Vice President Martin Koelling, Handelsblatt
2nd Vice President Masaaki Fukunaga, The Sanmaru
Secretary Suvendrini Kakuchi, Inter Press Service
Treasurer Jonathan Soble, Financial Times
Directors at Large Lucy Birmingham, freelance
 Yoshio Murakami, IHT
 Yozo Hasegawa, BS Japan and Radio Nikkei News
 Tetsuo Jimbo, Video News Network, Inc
Kanji Charles Pomeroy

FCCJ COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Associate Members Liaison Joan Anderson
DeRoy Memorial Scholarship + Professional Development Masaaki Fukunaga
Entertainment Sandra Mori
Exhibitions Bruce Osborn
Finance Jonathan Soble
Food & Beverage Michael Penn
Freedom of the Press Khaldon Azhari
House & Property Martin Koelling
Human Resources Masaaki Fukunaga
Improvement Mary Corbett, Ed Merner
Information, Technology Policy Council Tetsuo Jimbo, Video News Network, Inc
Koeki Yoshio Murakami
Library/Workroom Suvendrini Kakuchi, Koichi Ishiyama
Membership Monzurul Huq
Marketing Advisory Mary Corbett
Movie Edwin Karmiol, Karen Severns
Professional Activities Beryl Tung, Rick Wallace
Photo Archive Lucy Birmingham
Publications John R. Harris
Shadan Hojin Kaz Abiko, Yoshisuke Iinuma
Special Project Haruko Watanabe
Sports Duke Ishikawa
Kanji Advisory Panel Charles Pomeroy

Foreign Press in Japan Justin McCurry

The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan
 Yurakucho Denki Building, North Tower 20F,
 1-7-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006.
 Tel: (03) 3211-3161 Fax: (03) 3211-3168
www.fccj.or.jp

Published by the FCCJ

All opinions contained within Number 1 Shimbun are those of the authors. As such, these opinions do not constitute an official position of Number 1 Shimbun, the editor or the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan. Please pitch and send articles and photographs, or address comments to no.1shimbun@fccj.or.jp

Cover by Andrew Potheary. Hand photo: Dreamstime

President's message



THE NEWS WILL COME TO MANY AS A RELIEF. AND NO ONE IS MORE relieved than me. I will not be president for life of the FCCJ. "*Touchons du bois*," as we say in French – "touch wood" – because I still have a few weeks.

Last month I wrote that since no competent successor had stepped forward, I feared I would be obliged to run for a fourth term.

In the interim, Lucy Birmingham has volunteered to run for president in the Club's upcoming election. A director-at-large active on the current Board, a seasoned contributor to TIME and other reputable outlets, Lucy is better qualified than me to represent the FCCJ. Her Japanese is far superior. She is more diplomatic than me, and exponentially more charismatic. So I can retire in good conscience knowing FCCJ Members have the option to choose her to replace me.

Three years ago, the business and finances of our Club were headed toward disaster. Having previously served five years as Treasurer I could see this clearly. Convinced we had one last chance to put the Club back on a sustainable course, I ran for president in order to do that.

Three long years later, I cannot say the job is done. But we have overcome the inertia of endless disagreement to enact fundamental reforms that give the FCCJ a decent chance of long-term survival.

Some claim I misrepresented the Club's finances in order to create a sense of crisis. But you don't need a forensic accountant to gauge who is telling the truth. Declining revenue from membership and F&B is a fact evident in our financial statements. With a history of antagonistically deadlocked Boards and rotating-door management, could anyone credibly claim good governance over the long term? Has the past decade been a time of prosperity for other organizations in Japan – or for journalists? Take a look at the condition of our carpets. And that's what anyone can see.

Other grave deficiencies that became apparent to the Board could not be publicized without huge effort to amass evidence able to stand up in court. So we decided it was better to change the future than fight the past.

This much was clear to us. Journalism is the *raison d'être* of the FCCJ. F&B operations were developed to support journalism and not vice versa. Our labor costs were unsustainable. And, fundamentally, it makes no sense to have a rotating committee of foreign journalists manage a large hospitality operation. Not only is that not our business, it is madness.

It took over two years, but last fall we succeeded in outsourcing the FCCJ's F&B operations. This will have a significantly positive impact on the Club's finances, short and long term. Should a future Board be displeased with the current operator, they can be replaced. But it makes no sense to revert to the status quo ante.

In conjunction with outsourcing, to ensure our journalistic mission has appropriate legal stature in Japanese society, the Board also moved to secure public-interest non-profit (*Koeki*) status. Due to changing laws the decision could not be put off, and I would like to thank the many volunteers – especially Yoshio Murakami – whose heroic effort enabled us to submit our application last month.

To apply for whichever new status, general or public interest, we had to ratify new Articles of Association. This required the consent in a referendum of two-thirds of Regular Members – not just two-thirds of voters, two-thirds of those eligible. Thirty years ago a relatively non-controversial measure failed to pass because the same hurdle was too high.

In this case, the clique that loudly opposes every reform tried to turn the referendum into a vote of confidence in our Board – and their most zealous partisan went to the office to scrutinize every ballot. He must have been disappointed: 77.8 percent of eligible voters supported our initiative, while 8.7 percent heeded his call to vote "No."

Incredibly, not even such a democratic landslide dissuades this clique. Unable to prevail at the ballot box they have launched three separate lawsuits, causing the Club to incur more than ¥2.5 million in legal bills from Sept. last year thru April. That's roughly ¥1,250 from each Member's pocket – and counting.

Not to mention the distraction, which we have done our best to overcome. Staying focused until the last day of our term, the current Board has launched an initiative to give the FCCJ an online presence to support its public-interest mission. And this month we will appoint a new General Manager.

Unfortunately, I have run out of space to thank all those whose support has been critical over the past three years. But I will squeeze in thanks to Treasurer Jonathan Soble. I am also out of time – but that is a relief.

– Georges Baumgartner

Letter to the Editor

AS MANY MEMBERS ARE AWARE, DECISIONS BY the current Board of the FCCJ with regard to the Food & Beverage operation of the Club have been controversial and led to negative reactions on the part of many of the Regular as well as Associate members. This is only one of several instances of the untransparent decision-making that seems to be characteristic of the present and preceding Boards.

The FCCJ plays a unique and important role in Japan. It has the freedom to present cases and causes that touch everyone without being subjected to the limitations that apply to the Japanese press. However dissatisfaction with the way the Club is run endangers the continued existence of the Club.

These Boards decided fundamentally to alter the character of the FCCJ by outsourcing the services of its restaurant and bar facilities on the basis of faulty logic, and incorrect assessment of the Club's present finances. Many Associate members wish to see the relationship between staff and members typical of a private and non-commercial Club restored. They did not join the Club to be subjected to the commercial treatment they are now getting as a result of outsourcing F&B operations.

Management of an organization like the FCCJ fundamentally requires good financial analytical skills and good business sense, leading to carefully considered decision making that takes into account the interests of all stakeholders, including the Club's employees. This kind of experience and knowhow are not typically part of the background of a working correspondent. For that reason the FCCJ in the 1990s rewrote the bylaws to establish the post of general manager along with the appropriate delegation of responsibility.

Besides business experience, financial expertise and experience is also extensively available among the Associate membership. Associate members are happy to make their knowledge available to the Club. At the same time many Associate members want to have a bigger voice in the way the Club is run and to be better informed by the Board of its actions. This has now become a matter of urgency and cannot wait till the possible election of Associate members to the board in 2014.

We have formulated suggestions on how to address what we see as shortcomings in the Club's governance. For more details please see: <http://fccj-needs-reform.com/recommendations/>

We are asking for support from the membership.

Thank you,

– Stephen Church
Rick Dyck
Robert Kirschenbaum
Willem Kortekaas



CLICK ON THIS

Steve McClure on the ins and outs of online dating between foreign men and Japanese women

A THIRTY-SOMETHING FEMALE FRIEND of mine recently decided to get back into the dating game after breaking up with her boyfriend. A generation ago, she would have hit the singles bars. Instead, she's taking her search for Mr. Right online by signing up with dating websites catering to lonely souls like her.

My friend happens to be Japanese. And judging from the many websites offering to make matches between foreign men and Japanese women, she'll soon be deluged with pledges of undying love from foreign men for whom the females of these islands are the quintessence of feminine charm and beauty. The stereotypes and cultural clichés of "Madame Butterfly" and Bachelor's Japan appear to be alive and well.

Leaving aside the vexed question of why those seeking true love should circumscribe their search to specific ethnicities or nationalities, a Google search for "Japan dating sites" yields page after page of results. They range from the serious to the scabrous and salacious. The latter category includes <http://erolin.net>, which provides English-language information about "dates" with "escorts," as well as information about "gaijin welcome adult stores in Japan."

Here are some other representative samples of love in the age of cyberia:

Soulmates Japan (www.soulmatesjapan.com) seems to be on the up-and-up. The profiles of lonely hearts of both sexes have the ring of sincerity – which is always so hard to fake. And the photos on display show people who look reassuringly (or perhaps depressingly, depending on what you're looking for) ordinary.

The bilingual site goes out of its way to caution users about the pitfalls of seeking romance on the internet: don't ever send money to people you meet online, don't give out too much private information, and arrange to meet in a public place the first time. The site also helpfully warns users to be on guard against married miscreants. "It's unfortunate, but some married people do use online dating services and try to hide the fact they are married," Soulmates' operators state in the About Us section. "Of course they may have legitimate reasons for using the site

but often they are just looking for some fun on the side." Shocking, but true, I suppose. *Caveat amator*, after all.

JapanCupid.com is another slick-looking website that comes up when you do a search for Japanese dating portals. It has a pleasant, friendly feel, in contrast to the somewhat clinical vibe of Soulmates. Some of the photos verge on the prurient – one wonders what sort of "friend" a young lady attired in a maid costume is seeking, for example – but the site looks legit on the whole.

Then there are sites like **Japan Woman Dating** (www.japanwomentating.asia), which features photos of attractive young women who, despite the website's name, appear to be Chinese. I signed up with the site (using a fake name), and found myself directed to the chat section of website **AsianBeauties.com**, which "shows all those beautiful Orient women currently online and ready to Live Chat" (no necrophiliacs, please). The site sorts available chatters according to the helpful but somewhat subjective criterion "beautiful ladies first." "I am kind-mind and happy and simple girl and i like to enjoy life in the right way which i want to found someone can share the beautiful life with me together," writes a lovely-looking young lady named Qian.

"I like western man and i like the way they treat ladies." By the time you read this, Qian will presumably have been snapped up by the Western man – or men – of her dreams.

Here in Tokyo, there's always **Metropolis** magazine's personals section, which like the rest of the mag, can be accessed online (<http://classifieds.metropolis.co.jp/category/personals>). Most people here are looking for marriage partners, although one Japanese woman recently placed an ad that lends new meaning to the phrase "affairs of the heart:" "Seeking sincere, gentle, and well-educated American medical doctor (cardiologist is preferred) to understand my condition and give me advice for long-term friendship." One hopes her efforts to find true love and sound medical advice in one handy package are not in vein. ①

Steve McClure publishes the online music-industry newsletter *McClureMusic.com*. He has lived in Tokyo since 1985.



LexisNexis®

Discount LexisNexis
Subscriptions
for FCCJ Members

The FCCJ is pleased to offer members a substantial discount on subscriptions to LexisNexis' news database service, Nexis.com

The Members-only deal allows for flat-rate access at **¥7,900 per month** - offering big savings on a service that normally costs **¥126,000 per month**

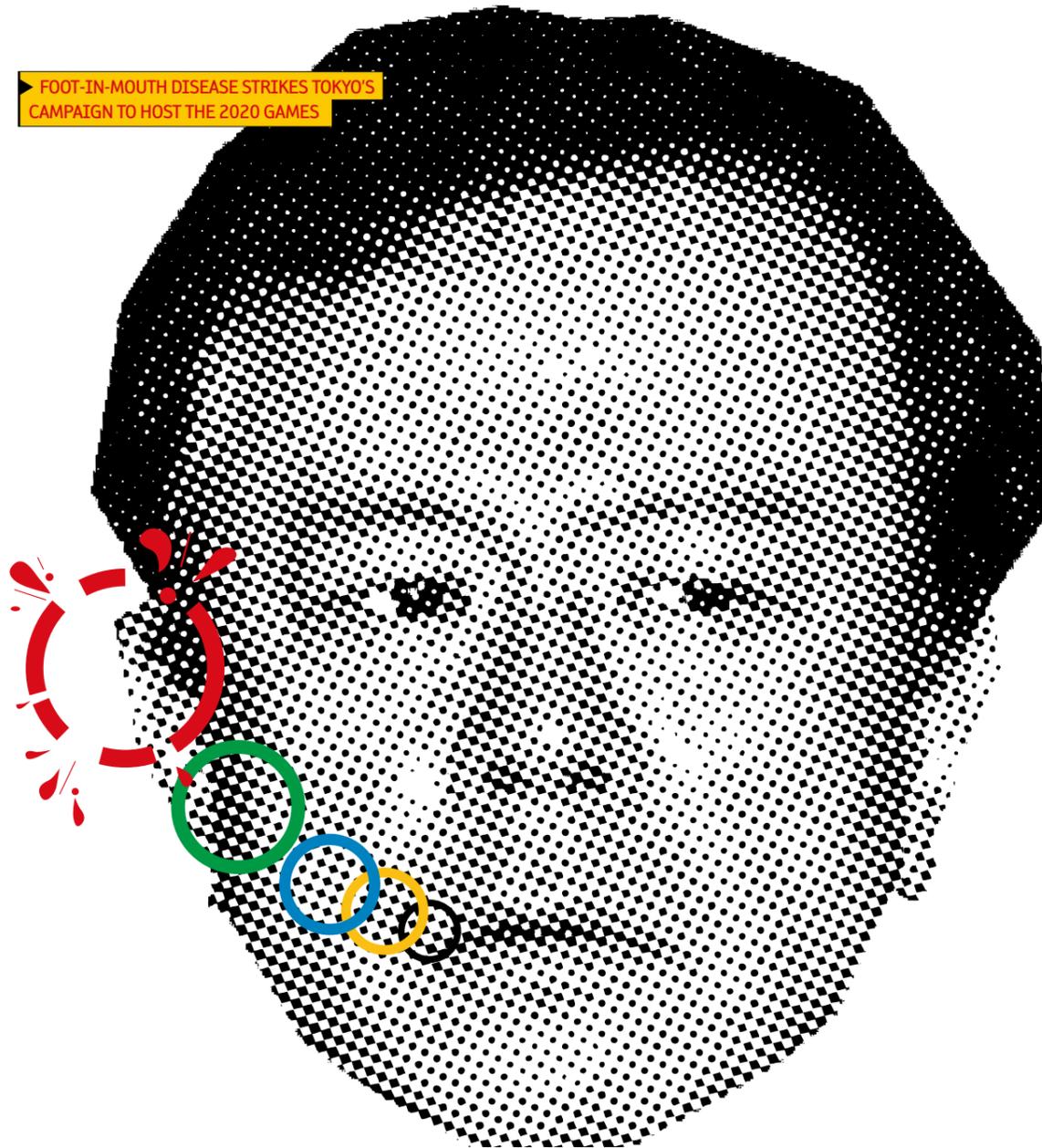
The service will be billed by the Club. The FCCJ benefits from all subscriptions sold under this arrangement.

Nexis provides access to news and information from more than 34,000 sources, including Kyodo News, Jiji, Yonhap, Xinhua, AP, Reuters, AFP, all major world newspapers and specialist news sources. Also included is a database of U.S. and international company information, biographical databases, country profiles and a U.S. legal database.

For those already in on the secret, the application form is available on the FCCJ website or from the 19F Club office.



▶ FOOT-IN-MOUTH DISEASE STRIKES TOKYO'S CAMPAIGN TO HOST THE 2020 GAMES



Stumbling on the path to Mt. Olympus

by Justin McCurry

If Tokyo fails in its second consecutive attempt to become host city of the Summer Olympics, the blame game would have no lack of potential targets. The furor surrounding recent comments on wartime sex slaves by the mayor of Osaka, Toru Hashimoto, and the perception that diplomatic expediency, not conviction, led the prime minister, Shinzo Abe, to honor official apologies for Japan's wartime conduct

have hardly helped the country's standing overseas, particularly in Asia. But there is no more worthy a target than the man who occupies the office of the capital's governor, Naoki Inose.

In an interview with the *New York Times* in April, Inose displayed breathtaking ignorance of Turkey, and of IOC rules banning bidding cities from commenting on bids by rival candidates.

Displaying the same gift for diplomacy as Shintaro Ishihara, the man he replaced as governor, Inose said of Istanbul's bid: "So, from time to time, like Brazil, I think it's good to have a venue for the first time. But Islamic countries, the only thing they share in common is Allah and they are fighting with each other, and they have classes."

Having stomped over Turkish religious and cultural sensibilities, Inose also sailed

close to the IOC wind by highlighting perceived weaknesses in Istanbul's vision for the Games. "I don't mean to flatter, but London is in a developed country whose sense of hospitality is excellent," he said. "Tokyo's is also excellent. But other cities, not so much."

He went on: "For the athletes, where will be the best place to be? Well, compare the two countries where they have yet to build infrastructure [or] very sophisticated facilities."

The remarks drew an angry response from Turkey. The country's youth and sports minister, Suat Kiliç, took to Twitter to denounce them as "unfair and saddening," and a clear violation of the Olympic spirit.

Spying an opportunity to capitalize on Inose's intemperance, Kiliç pointed out

nous Inose had acquired since becoming governor quickly evaporated. Inose claimed that the *New York Times* interview had focused on "a small number of comments" and did not reflect his "sincere and wider thoughts" about the bidding contest. Then, in an inexplicable show of conceit, he went on Twitter to say that the debacle had at least taught him "who are my enemies and who are my allies."

Inose, it must be said, had inherited a tricky Olympic brief from Ishihara, whose attempt last spring to buy the Senkaku set off a bitter territorial row that continues today. Ishihara's long record of provoking China will not have gone unnoticed by IOC delegates, and it is not unreasonable to believe that Chinese members of the committee will use their

and innovation" that the city hopes will secure it victory when the IOC votes to decide the 2020 host in Buenos Aires on Sept. 7.

Aside from drawing on Japan's technological prowess, advanced infrastructure and stable source of funding, Tokyo is promising a "downtown" Games in which 85 percent of the venues are located within a five-mile radius of the Olympic Village.

"The city enjoys the largest GDP of any city in the world," Takeda said. "It already has a Games fund of US\$4.5 billion in the bank, as well as full government financial guarantees."

The city can count itself fortunate that its most powerful elected representative betrayed his prejudices when he did. The consensus among Olympic-bid watchers is

TOKYO MAY HAVE ESCAPED OFFICIAL CENSURE, BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THE INOSE STORM HAS BLOWN ITSELF OUT.'

that Istanbul officials "haven't made any impairing comments about any other candidate city until now, and we won't."

Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, even suggested – only half jokingly – that Shinzo Abe withdraw Tokyo's bid. Abe, who was in Turkey in May to secure a US\$22 billion deal to build a nuclear facility there, politely declined, but said he would be the "first to applaud" Istanbul if it is named host city on its fifth attempt.

One wonders who was briefing Inose in the messy aftermath of publication of the *New York Times* article. Initially, the governor resorted to the time-honored tactic of blaming the messenger, accusing the newspaper of taking his comments out of context. He appeared to have forgotten that the interview had been conducted by Hiroko Tabuchi, a Japanese journalist, and Ken Belson, an American reporter who speaks Japanese, in the presence of an interpreter upon whose translation the article was based.

In response, the *New York Times* said in a statement that it was "completely confident in the reporting for our article."

When Inose's apology finally arrived, it came with a large helping of hubris. "I regrettably acknowledge, however, that some of my words might be considered inappropriate and consequently would like to offer my sincere apology," he said. "I want to keep campaigning strictly in accordance with the IOC rules that one should not criticise other cities."

Yet again, though, what little media

influence on African and Asian colleagues to try to scupper Tokyo's bid. Inose, remember, was Ishihara's deputy and his favoured successor.

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* speculated that Inose's record-breaking election victory late last year had gone to his head, to the detriment of Tokyo's bid. "We are very concerned how the Tokyo governor's remarks will affect the voting behavior of IOC members of other countries, particularly those from Islamic countries," it said in an editorial.

It was left to Tsunekazu Takeda, the likable – and no doubt exasperated – president of the Japan Olympic Committee, to pick up the pieces.

"Although [Inose's] sincere thoughts differ from the content of the story published, he acknowledges that his comments related to another bid city and religion may have conflicted with the IOC guidelines and, as a result, offered his profound apologies," Takeda said in a statement.

The show of contrition worked: the IOC said it had noted Inose's remarks but would not be taking action, simply reminding "all candidates of the rules pertaining to the bidding process."

In a recent appearance at the FCCJ, Takeda went to great lengths to avoid any detailed discussion of "Inose-gate." "Inose made remarks for which he has apologized and the IOC says the case is now closed," he said. "We're totally focused on delivering the best possible Games. Is that clear?"

Takeda repeated Tokyo's three-pronged Olympic mantra of "delivery, celebration

and innovation" that the city hopes will secure it victory when the IOC votes to decide the 2020 host in Buenos Aires on Sept. 7.

As Tokyo, Istanbul and Madrid enter the final, frantic phase of lobbying – beginning with presentations to the IOC in St. Petersburg at the end of May – none can afford to be complacent.

Tokyo may have escaped official censure, but that does not mean the Inose storm has blown itself out, says Owen Gibson, chief sports correspondent for the *Guardian*.

"Such is the weird world of international sports diplomacy that this sort of thing can have a lasting impact," Gibson told *No.1 Shimbun*.

"It was particularly unfortunate that his comments could be compared unfavorably with Istanbul's 'East meets West' rhetoric. If you look at all the recent winning bids – Beijing, London and Rio – in different ways they have all campaigned on a message of opening themselves up to the world, hosting a global celebration. But Inose's comments seemed to run contrary to all that."

That said, Inose's outburst at least demonstrated that Tokyo "really wants to win" the contest, added Gibson, who has covered two Olympic bids and interviewed the governor in London earlier this year.

There are, though, flaws that Tokyo must address between now and September. Japan has already hosted the summer Games, in 1964, when it persuaded the IOC that the

event would demonstrate Japan's emergence from the ashes of war to become an economic force and a responsible member of the international community.

While the 2020 campaign has received high marks for logistics and practical considerations, it lacks the "emotional resonance" of almost 50 years ago, says Gibson.

Yet using the Games to demonstrate Japan's continuing recovery from the March 11, 2011 triple disaster could prove counterproductive. Every time bid officials offer justified reassurances about radiation levels in Tokyo, they remind the rest of the world that Fukushima Dai-ichi power plant remains vulnerable; and when Takeda describes Tokyo as "safe" – as he did several times during his FCCJ appearance – he invites inevitable questions about the perennial threat to Tokyo from a major earthquake.

Even so, Gibson, noting that Tokyo had hired the same agency London and Rio used to write their speeches and produce promotional literature, believes the city is "still very much in the race. There's no doubt Istanbul's is the more expansive, expensive vision, but if there is a sense that Istanbul is too much of a risk, then Tokyo will benefit.

"Tokyo has to sell itself more effectively between now and September and prove that the Japanese people really want to host it, something that has undermined its bids in the past."

A question mark hangs over just how enthusiastic Tokyo residents are about the prospect of hosting the Games. "In general, people in Tokyo and the rest of Japan don't seem that interested," a Japanese writer for a weekly magazine who has written about Tokyo's bid told No.1 Shimbun.

"Tokyo has hosted the Olympics before and the Nagano Winter Olympics in 1998 created a lot of debt," the writer, who did not wish to be named, said. "Japan itself is in debt, so people don't understand why the Olympics should be a priority. I can understand the motivation behind Madrid and Istanbul's bids, but not Tokyo's."

As the three candidate cities enter the decisive stages of the bidding contest, Tokyo may come to thank Inose for his outburst. Given the events of recent weeks, Japan's Olympic officials at least know they must find a way to keep Tokyo's troublesomely loquacious governor in the shadows for the remainder of the campaign ... before irreparable harm is done. ❶

Justin McCurry is Japan and Korea correspondent for the *Guardian* and *Observer* newspapers in London, and Tokyo correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*. He also reports on Japan and South Korea for France 24 TV.

▶ EXPECTATIONS FOR FIREWORKS FROM OSAKA'S "BAD BOY" MAYOR WERE MET BY REPEATED PLATITUDES AND A CHANGE OF COLORS



ALBERT STEIGEL

Toru Hashimoto at the Club

Hashimoto's "high noon"

by Justin McCurry

Monday, May 27, was one of those days when the FCCJ effortlessly lived up to its reputation as a place where the news is made.

Well before the main event was due to begin at noon, the conference room was teeming with writers, photographers and camera crews jostling for position. And all this for a locally elected politician who has never run for national office and, after the month he has had, possibly never will.

The hardworking members of the

Club's Professional Activities Committee had been trying for some time to secure an appearance by Toru Hashimoto, whose recent appraisal of Japan's wartime history and advice on the sexual behavior of U.S. servicemen in Okinawa saw him eclipse even the prime minister, Shinzo Abe, as the country's most talked-about politician.

Having refused several requests to speak at the Club since last year, Hashimoto's policy of remaining close to his political base in Osaka began to weaken in mid-May,

when he told local journalists that Japan's use of tens of thousands of wartime sex slaves during conflicts in China and on the Korean peninsula had been "necessary" to maintain discipline among frontline troops. Around the same time, it emerged that he had told a U.S. commander during a visit to Okinawa that his troops should frequent the island's commercial sex establishments more often; that way, he said, they would be less inclined to assault local women.

His "comfort women" remarks drew predictable criticism from South Korea and China, while a State Department official in Washington described his Okinawa

fight, he apologized for his advice to U.S. soldiers on how to rein in their sexual energy, describing his remarks as a knee-jerk response borne of "a sense of crisis" over rapes and other crimes involving U.S. military personnel. "My real intention was to prevent a mere handful of U.S. soldiers from committing crimes and strengthen the Japan-U.S. alliance and the relations of trust between the two nations," he said.

"I understand that my remark could be construed as an insult to the U.S. forces and to the American people" and was inappropriate. I retract this remark and express an apology."

WE WITNESSED THE UNLIKELY EMERGENCE OF HASHIMOTO THE TIRELESS CAMPAIGNER FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

advice as "outrageous and offensive." The 43-year-old mayor must have been startled by the strength of feeling his comments had generated overseas. For the first time since he and Shintaro Ishihara created the Japan Restoration Party last December, his brand of rightwing populism was again being dissected by the likes of the *New York Times* and the BBC.

He was left with little choice but to agree to talk directly to foreign journalists in Tokyo. Initially, he would do so only on his terms, with plans made for a live link between the FCCJ and Osaka, to be moderated by Eric Johnston, Osaka bureau chief of the *Japan Times* and a familiar face at the mayor's press conferences at Osaka city hall.

Within 24 hours, Hashimoto's handlers informed the Club that he would be making the arduous journey along the Tokaido after all. He was greeted by more than 400 people in a room buzzing with expectation of another headline-making gaffe or, at the very least, a spot of mudslinging in the direction of the international media corps.

In the end, Hashimoto shed his politician persona and returned to his professional roots as a highly successful lawyer following, it should be noted, a strangely flattering introduction by the FCCJ president, Georges Baumgartner.

Perhaps we should have known that, as far as the sex slave and Okinawa issues were concerned, the most colorful copy had already been served up and digested. Hours before his appearance, Hashimoto, having been briefed by a "task force" comprising MPs from the JRP, attempted to strike a more conciliatory tone.

In a long statement designed, perhaps, to soften up journalists spoiling for a

change of tack, and a mild ticking off for journalists. In referring to military brothels as a necessity, he had been evoking the feeling among armies around the world during World War II. He had not, he insisted, ever meant the description to be interpreted as a personal endorsement of sexual slavery.

Over the course of almost three hours, we witnessed the unlikely emergence of Hashimoto the tireless campaigner for women's rights. "I find it extremely deplorable that news reports have continued to assume the opposite interpretation of my remarks and to depict me as holding women in contempt," he said. "What I intended to convey...was that other nations should also sincerely face the fact that their soldiers violated the human rights of women.

"I am totally in agreement that the use of comfort women by Japanese soldiers before and during the World War Two was an inexcusable act that violated the dignity and human rights of the women in which large numbers of Korean and Japanese were included."

For a man who owes some of his electoral success to his disdain for the ambiguous language employed by his mainstream political foes, Hashimoto sent his audience into a stupor with a speech that was as vague as it was repetitious. Yet for all the earnest condemnations of the comfort women system, there were times when the watery form of a nationalist politician came into sharper focus.

Soon after reassuring the audience that the 1993 Kono statement should remain intact, he criticized it as ambiguous on the extent of direct state involvement in rounding up and trafficking girls and women as

young as 13 to work in military brothels.

"The argument of many Japanese historians is that there is no evidence to show that the will of the state was used to systematically abduct or traffic the women. A 2007 government statement, approved by the Cabinet, also concluded there was no evidence to show the will of the state was used for the systematic abduction and trafficking of the women."

Hashimoto resorted to the time-honored tactic among historical revisionists of attempting to dilute Japan's wartime guilt by sharing it around. "It is not a fair attitude to blame only Japan. Sexual violation in wartime was not an issue unique to the former Japanese army," he said. "The issue existed in the armed forces of the U.S., the UK, France, Germany and the former Soviet Union, among others. It also existed in the armed forces of the Republic of Korea. The world is trying

to put a lid on all of these facts."

At one point, he came dangerously close to accusing surviving sex slaves who have claimed they were snatched from their homes by Japanese military police of lying. Instead, he noted, "from a historical point of view there is a debate over their veracity."

The most uncomfortable moments came when he was twice asked about his former role as a legal adviser to an association of "restaurants" in the Tobita red-light district of Osaka that, according to one questioner, "even junior high school students" knew doubled as brothels. Citing attorney-client privilege, Hashimoto said only that his former clients "would have been investigated" by the authorities had they been involved in any illegal activities.

Whether or not the comfort women furor has irreparably harmed Hashimoto's political ambitions remains to be seen. In any case, reporters in Osaka have speculated that he has grown disillusioned with politics and is looking for a way out.

Eric Johnston wrote in the *Japan Times* that some Hashimoto watchers believe "he is tired of being a politician, wants to end his political career and return to the more financially lucrative world of television punditry, and figured the quickest way to do that was to make himself unpopular."

That could explain his apparent insouciance when asked about his party's chances in July's upper house elections, amid a new poll showing public support for the party at just three percent in May, compared with nine percent a month earlier. "If Japanese voters reject my recent comments then, yes, we will lose seats in the elections," he said. "Then the party will have a discussion about whether I should continue to lead it." ❶



Richard Lloyd Parry of *The Times*

by Gavin Blair

His interest piqued by a two-week trip to Japan that he won as a prize on the cult British teenage TV quiz show *Blockbusters* in 1986, Richard Lloyd Parry returned several times to the country that was to eventually become his base as Asia Editor of *The Times*.

Lloyd Parry “wasted quite a lot of time at university doing plays, and thought for a while that I wanted to be a director.” But he was already beating a path into the fourth estate during those student days at Oxford, through summer jobs working on the *Observer’s* art pages and the *Evening Standard’s* “Londoner’s Diary,” the latter a gossip column that he says was “the breaking ground for quite a lot of journalists.”

“One moment of enlightenment I had working on the Londoner’s Diary was when the editor told me he wanted me to call up some cabinet minister about something ridiculous like his pet tortoise. At that moment I realized that the one secret of journalism is that you if you have their phone number, you can call up whoever you like and ask them whatever you like.

“For non-journalists, there’s sometimes a sense of mystery about what journalists actually do, and what the skills are; there are no skills really, it’s something that anyone can do, but you spend all your time doing it.”

While freelancing in London after graduation, he managed to land a contract to write a Japan guidebook. That took him back to Japan in 1993, where he visited the FCCJ for the first time, before finishing the book in London.

He was able to return once more in 1994. *The Independent* had shuttered its Tokyo bureau and “wanted someone cheap,” giving Lloyd Parry the chance to string for the paper, his knowledge of the country compensating for a lack of news reporting experience.

“The Kobe earthquake happened the day after my interview, so Japan was in the news again. I came out in March. The [Aum cult’s] sarin attack on the subway happened while I was stopping off to visit a friend in Pakistan, so I arrived two days after that with a lot to do,” he recalls. “That was a big year, with the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war, the Murayama Statement and the unraveling of the bubble economy beginning to

show itself in corporate scandals.”

Shortly afterwards he found himself also covering the Korean Peninsula, and traveling around Southeast Asia stringing for the British broadsheet. It was in Indonesia that Lloyd Parry says he cut his teeth on “conflict coverage,” charting the downfall of the Suharto regime and the brutal violence that accompanied it.

After 9/11, he was sent to cover Pakistan and Afghanistan, where his reports on the effects of U.S. bombings on Afghan civilians are among the work he says he still takes some pride in.

‘ONE SECRET OF JOURNALISM IS THAT YOU IF YOU HAVE THEIR PHONE NUMBER, YOU CAN CALL UP WHOEVER YOU LIKE AND ASK THEM WHATEVER YOU LIKE.’

“The sad truth – and this is one of the reasons I like to write books – is that most of the time when you look back later at newspaper articles, they don’t read that well really. The value was in the freshness and the contemporaneity.”

With two acclaimed books – *In the Time of Madness: Indonesia on the Edge of Chaos* and *People Who Eat Darkness: The Fate of Lucie Blackman* – already published, and one on the 3/11 disasters on the way, Lloyd Parry says he has ambitions to author more.

“I love the excitement of news, daily deadlines, being on the road, going somewhere without knowing what’s really happened. But inevitably, you find that you are repeating yourself in stories. You chafe

at the limitations of newspapers; by their nature, the articles that run in them are short. When you know a place well, you want to do justice to its subtleties, and 130,000 words are just enough,” he says with a smile.

Being able to continue to cover Korea and Southeast Asia since moving to *The Times* in 2002 has been both a privilege and a vital reason keeping him in Tokyo, says Lloyd Parry.

“News-wise, for a British newspaper, Japan can go very quiet. After a few weeks in Japan, it’s very exciting to go to Indone-

sia, Burma or Iraq. But after a few weeks in Baghdad, you just feel tearfully grateful to come back to Tokyo. I appreciate Japan even more for being able to visit those rockier places.”

Now the father of two small children, Lloyd Parry says he is less eager to jump on the next plane when a major conflict breaks out.

“I didn’t do the Arab Spring, which if I didn’t have young children, I think I probably would have done,” he says. “The reason is not actually the danger of being killed – because I was just as attached to my own skin before I had kids. It’s that spending extended periods away is not fair on the family.”

Despite the relative decline in Japan’s appeal to the global media, he believes it will remain an important story for some time to come.

“It’s a really creative, fertile culture,” he says. “Economically, China is going to dominate the region, but culturally it’s way behind. News editors in London are not yet interested in the fashions and morals of Chinese schoolgirls. But Japanese schoolgirls still have that iconic status. I think that will remain true for a while.

“Having been here quite a few years now, I’ve seen Japan go in and out of fashion a number of times.”



Gavin Blair covers Japanese business, society and culture for publications in America, Asia, and Europe.

ANDREW POTHECARY

▶ IN HIS NEW BOOK, A FORMER CLUB MEMBER AND LONG TIME RESIDENT RECOUNTS HIS SEARCH FOR HIS FAMILY ROOTS - AND HIS OWN IDENTITY

Yokohama Yankee

by Leslie Helm

Try as we might to be objective, we reporters invariably bring our personal preconceptions and prejudices to the stories we write. Because of Japan's tendency to set itself off from "outsiders"—that strong sense here of "we" versus "they"—many of us have a love/hate relationship with the country. That ambivalence is magnified when you come, as I have, from a family that has lived in Japan as outsiders for 144 years. And it's magnified even further when, for most of that time, your family, as part Japanese, has never quite fit in.

Working as a young reporter in Japan for *Business Week* from 1982 to 1986, I never thought of such things. I was covering a trade war, and I was reporting for the American side. But while writing for the *Los Angeles Times* in the early 1990s, I faced two very personal crises that made me re-examine my attitudes towards Japan. The first was the death of my half-Japanese father who had never really found a home in either Japan or America, and had died an unhappy man.

The second was the decision my wife and I made to adopt Japanese children. It seemed natural at first, but I found myself having doubts. I couldn't explain them at the time, but today I suspect they had something to do with our family's efforts over the generations to hide our Japanese heritage.

Although we happily adopted Mariko, followed soon afterward by my son Eric, I remained ambivalent toward Japan, and I wondered if I could be a good father with that attitude. That's what set me on the road to explore my family's long history in Japan. My book, *Yokohama Yankee*, is about that journey, about my effort to rediscover the past and to reconcile my Japanese self with my Western self.

Since my family story is so intertwined with modern Japanese history, the book is also about Japan's efforts, over the past century and a half, to reconcile its national identity with a world so dominated by the West.

When my German great-grandfather arrived in Yokohama in 1869, Japan was hiring foreign experts in a mad rush to catch up with the West. My great-grandfather, who had fought in the Austro-Prussian War, was hired as a military adviser to a warlord in Wakayama.

Later, he married a Japanese woman and started Helm Brothers, a stevedoring and forwarding company that would grow to be among the largest foreign-owned companies in Japan. Twice the company was wiped out together with most of Yokohama: once during the Kanto earthquake of 1923 and again during the fire bombings toward the end of World War II. My grandfather, an American, spent the war in California where the family had to hide their Japanese heritage to avoid being sent to internment camps.

Understanding what happened to my family over that turbulent century helped me to understand my father, embrace Japan and be a better father. It has also forced me to look at Japan's problems from an insider's perspective as well as that of an outsider.

Excerpted from *Yokohama Yankee: My Family's Five Generations As Outsiders In Japan* (Chin Music Press, 2013)

Just Another Gaijin?

ONE EVENING ABOUT A MONTH AFTER Dad's funeral, I was browsing the magazines on display at a train platform kiosk when I saw the banner headline on a copy of the *Bungei Shunju*, an intellectual journal. "Kenbei," it read — contempt for America. I bought it and flipped to the special report. My heart quickened as I began reading the essays. This was incredible! Here were Japan's leading industrialists and intellectuals declaring that the United



States was a nation in decline. The chief executive of a giant electronics company said he wouldn't buy American semiconductors because they were shoddy. A Japanese novelist said the noble America she had once admired had turned into a self-centered bully. An economist advised the United States to focus on its one true expertise: farming.

The next day, I began reporting for an article about this growing disdain for America. My article, *In Japan: Scorn for America*, appeared in late October 1991 on the front

page of the *Los Angeles Times* and was picked up by newspapers around the world. My editors loved it. A friend at the State Department said President Clinton, who was preparing for his upcoming trip to Japan, had commented on it. I loved the attention.

Two weeks later, I received a packet of letters from readers that had been forwarded to me by my editor. The letters were all about my kenbei story. The first few were complimentary and I smiled, but as I read on, the blood drained from my face.

My heart pounded as I continued to read the letters. The raw anger and hatred they expressed frightened me. Later I heard that anti-Japanese graffiti had popped up in parts of Los Angeles. I felt like a child playing with matches who had started a fire he could not control.

work early. Since my wife Marie was still in Seattle, I took the subway three stops to the Foreign Correspondents' Club to grab dinner. The Club was on the twentieth floor of an office building on the edge of Ginza, a popular shopping district. Visiting dignitaries gave press conferences at the club. Reporters met with sources for dinner or drinks.

I walked to the bar and sat at the "correspondents' table" where a few regulars gathered. Sipping our beers, we discussed the latest news: perhaps it was the story about the latest politician to deny Japanese soldiers had ever massacred civilians in Nanjing, China. I can't remember. What I do remember about that night was a distinct shift in how I looked at myself and my role as a reporter. I had always felt a sense of

died at sixty-four without ever finding a place where he belonged.

After dinner, I took a detour home through Shibuya, the heart of Tokyo's busy entertainment district. I followed the crowd off the train, down the stairs and out the turnstiles. I stopped at the pedestrian crossing, but more people kept coming from behind, and soon I was packed as tightly on the sidewalk as I had been on the train. I gazed up to see a teen idol dance across a fifty-foot screen that dangled on the other side of the street somewhere between heaven and earth.

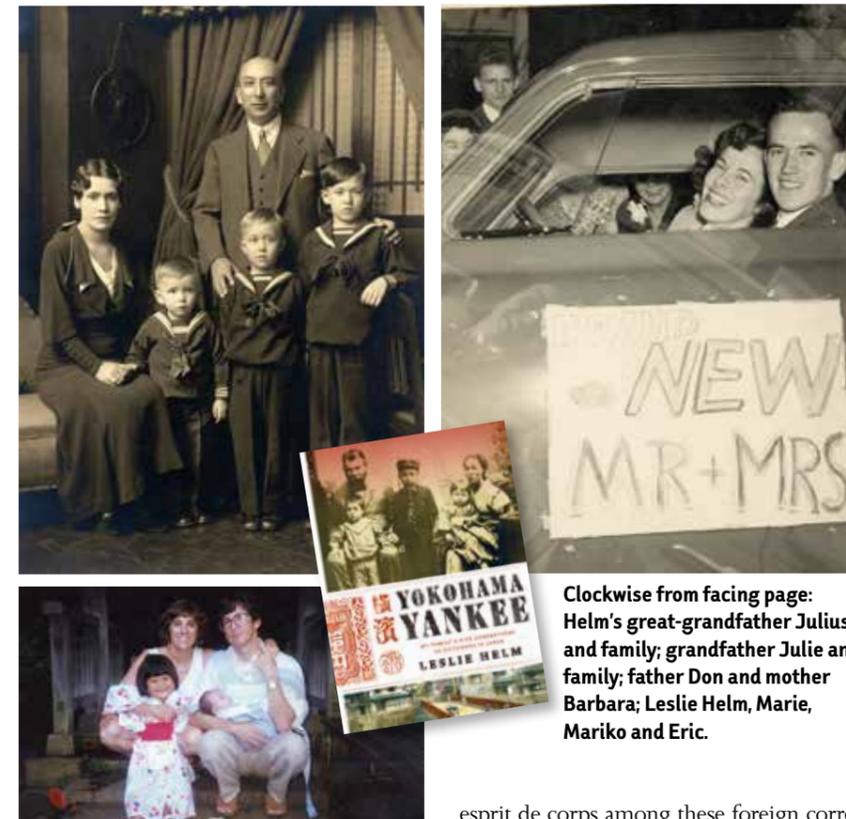
When the light turned green, we surged forward, and for a moment, as a wall of people moved toward us from the opposite side, we looked like two armies converging in battle. I slipped away from the crowd down a narrow lane. I walked past restaurants and bars whose kitchens pumped out smoke that smelled of grilled fish and burnt soy sauce. An old fortune teller who always placed her small table in the middle of the lane, split the flow of pedestrian traffic like a rock in a stream. Her wrinkled face, bowed low over the table, reflected the yellow light of her square paper lantern.

At an electronics store, I stopped to look at a long row of television screens where a boyish-looking man with a blue blazer, scruffy brown hair and goggle-eyed glasses stood frozen, staring out from a passing stream of grey-suited salarymen. It took a moment for me to realize that it was my face being captured by the store's camcorder.

"Irasshai, irasshai (welcome)" shouted a young salesman. He put his back to me as he tried to lure passersby into the store. I walked on to an area where every surface — telephone booths, utility poles, walls and ground — was plastered with small flyers advertising prostitutes. If I had been of another generation, I might have called one of those phone numbers. If I climbed a low hill to the left, I would have found myself on one of the quiet, dimly lit streets that surrounded this entertainment district. There, in a love hotel that charged hourly rates, I could have had a private rendering of Shibuya's flashing, thumping sensory sea.

Shibuya was the mecca for Japan's youth, but I was neither Japanese nor young. Perhaps it was the unexpected reaction to the kenbei article. Or perhaps it was Dad's recent death. Whatever the reason, I felt as if I had been let loose from my mooring and was drifting rudderless. ❶

Leslie Helm is editor of *Seattle Business* magazine (www.lesliehelm.com)



Clockwise from facing page: Helm's great-grandfather Julius and family; grandfather Julie and family; father Don and mother Barbara; Leslie Helm, Marie, Mariko and Eric.

Had I been fooling myself? I knew Americans regarded their country as the greatest nation on earth. Of course they would be upset. Wasn't that what made kenbei such a good story? Ever since the end of World War II, Japan had played the role of obedient disciple to its American teacher. Now, it seemed, Japan was coming into its own. It was a legitimate story. And yet, I had a nagging feeling. Was I simply reporting a trend or was I venting some deeper personal hostility toward Japan?

Distracted for the rest of that day, I left

esprit de corps among these foreign correspondents — a feeling that we were a special breed reporting an important story. Now I felt disengaged. Weren't we just cycling through variations on the same tired story about Japan's insular ways? The intimacy I felt toward my fellow reporters was real, but the sense of community was not. We were like members of a packaged tour. We enjoyed being together, but when the tour ended, we might never see each other again. So if this wasn't my true community, what was? Lodged uncomfortably at the back of my mind, like a tiny pebble caught in a shoe, was the reality that my father had

How come The Boso Boys consider FCCJ Saturday Night Live the best gig in Kanto?

by Roger Sherrin

The Boso Boys feature Roger Sherrin – a good ol’ boy from Dallas, Texas, who can sing the paint off a pickup truck, and pick good, too – along with Shinjiro Mori – who may just play Japan’s meanest blues guitar. On June 15, they’re fixin’ to drive in from Chiba to perform in the FCCJ’s Main Bar.

In a famous scene from the *The Blues Brothers* movie, after a long sweaty performance at Bob’s Country Bunker, Jake Blues goes up to the bar’s owner and asks, “Bob, about, ah, our money for tonight?” Bob replies, “That’s right... ah... 200 dollars, and you boys drank 300 dollars’ worth of beer!” Already broke from feeding the band and at the point of stealing gas, the Blues Brothers are forced to cut and run, chased by Bob and The Good Ol’ Boys, the country band they had impersonated to get the job. I always thought that scene was hilarious and over-the-top – until it really happened to my band, The Boso Boys. As I’ve discovered, if it’s tough being a local musician in America it’s way tougher in Japan.

One night, after three hours playing to a packed house in Machida, we asked the bar owner about the ¥500 per customer music charge he promised. After claiming we had only drawn 26 customers (when we’d counted over 37) he first deducted an “entertainer’s tax,” then withheld a fee for collecting the music charge on our behalf, and graciously said he was waiving the usual “hall rental and sound system fees.” As we were heading out the door with what money was left, the owner, just like Bob, reminded us to pay our ¥17,000 bar tab. By the time we paid for parking, I had to tell the band members, “Guys, we can split up about ¥800 each, or blow it all on dinner at Denny’s.”

Then there was the time we made a contract with Topanga, a bar popular with surfers on Chiba’s Pacific coast near where we live. The Boso Boys were to produce and provide the sound system for a show with two bands, in return for the proceeds of a door charge. Topanga’s owner – ironically also named “Bob” – was to benefit from the food and drink sales from over 40 people. But after delivering several hours of music, we were approached by Bob who demanded a “hall rental fee.” And he still can’t figure out why we’ve never played his venue again.

I’ve got lots more stories like these, but only one about an establishment that treats musicians with respect and fairness. That is the FCCJ and its long-running Sat-

urday Night Live, which is our favorite place to perform.

We were introduced to Saturday Night Live three years ago, after blues guitarist Shinjiro Mori and I sat in as guests with the night’s featured performer, J.J. Vicars. Bless her heart, over drinks after the show, Sandra Mori of the Entertainment Committee said, “We’re going to invite you guys back.”

So back we came with the whole band that year and the year after. Each time, Sandra, Dennis Normile and other volunteers on the Entertainment Committee have shown us every courtesy and compensated us fairly. Everything is taken care of, including dinner and parking. The FCCJ staff have been equally supportive and a pleasure to work with, and the audience always warm and welcoming. The heartening environment encourages performers to give their best entertainment efforts for Saturday Night Live guests, and attracts top talent to the Club.

That is why The Boso Boys are looking forward to Saturday, June 15 and celebrating our third year of performing for FCCJ members and guests.

WHY IS JAPAN SO TOUGH FOR MUSICIANS?

In Japan, as a musician you are considered either a hobbyist or a professional – there is nothing in between. And you are only considered a pro once the corporate media establishment says so. One way to be considered a pro is if you are in a pre-fabricated, corporate-produced pop group (with an uncanny ability to sing slightly out of tune). Then you’ve got it made – at least for two years until a newer model is launched. You may also be accorded pro status if you were popular 20-30 years ago. The thing is, if you haven’t been on TV – no matter how talented or hard-working – you are a hobbyist here.

For starters, it’s hard for those of us who strive to master our instruments, and who can actually sing on pitch, to understand the appeal of J-Pop. Why do audiences swoon over performers who show no objective evidence of musical talent?

According to Meiji University experts

on “Cool Japan” culture, the inability to sing on pitch is in fact the primary endearing characteristic of J-Pop performers. They win sympathy and support because Japanese audiences appreciate *ganbaru* spirit more than talent. And anyway those shortcomings can be overcome, electronically in the studio or by lip syncing in “live” performances.

What’s missing in Japan is the hard effort that aspiring pro musicians worldwide go through as they dream of a big break – holding down day jobs and living their musical dreams at night. It’s pay-

on which to strut their stuff. When they don’t actually demand cash from the band – which puts a whole new spin on “paying your dues” – live house owners expect each person in a four-piece band has family, friends and colleagues who feel obligated to turn out if invited to an event. Some bands may bring actual fans, too. That’s what the live house owners depend on – and many don’t bother with marketing or even pretending to promote upcoming acts.

We come up against this all the time. Often when The Boso Boys follow up on an invitation to perform at some live house, we

COME ON OUT JUNE 15 FOR AN EVENING WITH THE BOSO BOYS: REAL LIVE MUSIC DOWN-HOME TEXAS STYLE

ing dues that makes you good... but you need an opportunity to pay them.

Take The Beatles. Although hailed as an overnight success in 1964, Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *Outliers: The Story of Success*, estimates that by the time their big break came, the “Fab Four” had logged over 10,000 hours of live performance time.

The lesson here is that if your country or culture hopes to produce popular music with any kind of depth or transcendent value, you need low rungs on the ladder, sustainable opportunities for talent to develop.

Many Japanese have natural talent and put in lots of work to master an instrument. Everywhere you go, you see instrument shops, music instructors and rehearsal spaces for rent. But in popular music at least, there are few bridges to a professional career.

Instead of a system that provides opportunities, Japan has a business model that is primarily aimed at exploiting musicians – making them pay for the chance to perform rather than employing them to entertain customers.

The “Live House” system is unique to Japan – another Galapagos aspect of this archipelago. Everywhere else I’ve ever played – in the U.S. or Europe – the deal is that venues pay musicians to play in order to draw in patrons and keep them eating and drinking. Smart venues know how to pick the kind of music their customers like and promote new talent. Only in Japan do musicians essentially pay bar owners for a stage

find ourselves presented with a long list of conditions, including: the band must purchase a set number of tickets or to guarantee a minimum number of guests; outrageous demands for hall or equipment rental fees; and more. Meanwhile, some of these venues are charging customers admission fees anywhere from ¥2,000 up to ¥10,000.

Japan’s music business model is dysfunctional. It discourages local talent from developing past a hobby level; it restricts creativity and variety; and it makes live music less accessible. Some of the people I play with here in Japan are world-class talents, but have no hope of making even a modest living from it. And the current system doesn’t even work for the live houses. The last decade has seen half of Japan’s live entertainment venues go out of business.

If Japan wants to do more than just pretend it’s cool, changing this system would be a good place to start. Until that happens, the FCCJ’s Saturday Night Live will stand out as one of the few venues that offers local musicians a fair deal.

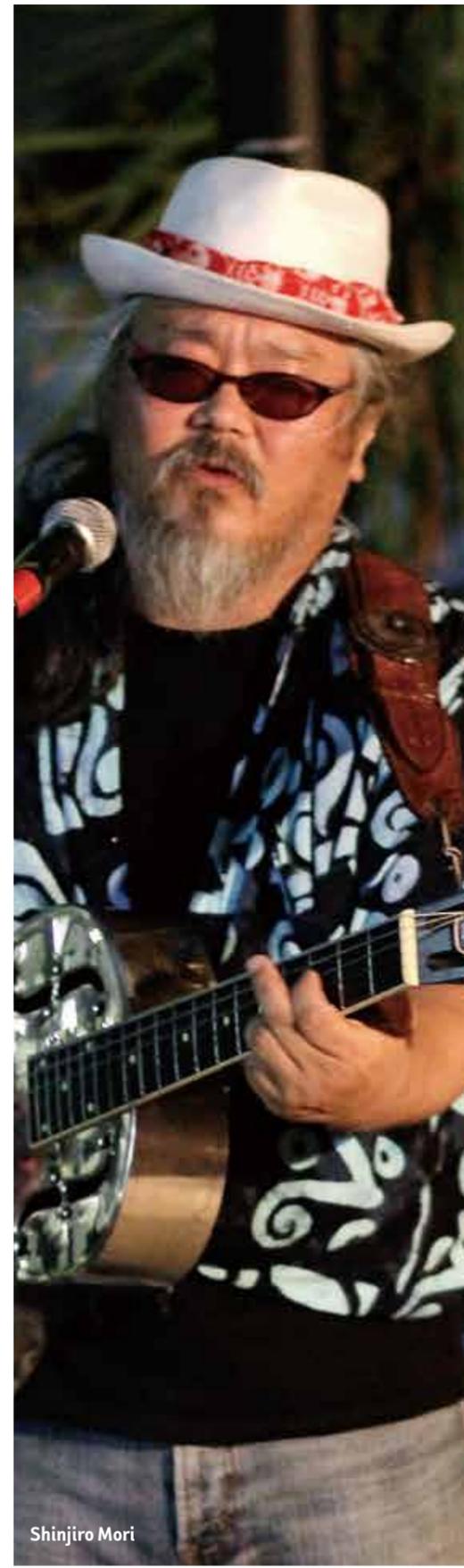
So come on out on June 15, and enjoy an evening with The Boso Boys. You’ll get real live music played by real live musicians – down-home Texas-style, with no artificial ingredients. And no cover charge. ①

Roger Sherrin is lead singer for The Boso Boys, who offer an energetic mix of authentic Americana roots-rock, blues and country music. Retired from the U.S. Army, Roger is an Executive Coach with an MBA from Hitotsubashi University and London Business School.



Roger Sherrin

PHOTOS: JOHN LANCASTER



Shinjiro Mori

HALLS OF POWER

Ayako Mie asks the perennial question: "So you want to belong to a *kisha* club?"



Deputy Prime Minister Aso's faction to the author: you're not invited

I have a confession to make. I'm a regular member of the prime minister's *kisha kurabu* and an associate member of the Diet *kisha kurabu*, with all of what might be called the perquisites that go with it. In other words, I get to attend the regular press conferences where I and the other reporters have a chance to grill ranking members of both the ruling and the opposition camps and sometimes have a casual chat with lawmakers.

I know that freelance journalists and reporters affiliated with non-Japanese media are often not eligible or have a hard time getting membership in the "establishment," and they often cry foul as they are denied access to first-hand information and reporting opportunities.

I've heard the *kisha* clubs described as the "root of all of journalism's evils" as well as a "hot bed for collusive relationships" between the Japanese media and politicians due to its closed nature. But, after five months as a member of this "elite" group of Japanese press corps, I'm kind of disappointed; I'd have to say that the power of the *kisha* clubs is far more myth than reality.

What's said in the press club confines does not often consist of, or lead to critical information, because ranking officials only repeat what's already out. Some people might disagree with me, believing that they would do a far better job than the press club reporters in prying knowledge from the tight lips of the politicians. But I'll remind you of something that I'm sure you already know: like any country, it is the personal relationships with your sources that will eventually lead to the tip of iceberg.

And that is the hardest part of covering Japanese politics – because building such relationships costs money, takes human resources and time, as well as experience and teamwork.

I (and most of my foreign colleagues, I believe) can't compete, for example, with the *ban kisha* reporters of the Japanese media, who are embedded so deeply with the prime minister and other political heavyweights that they follow them around all day long, everywhere from the bathroom to costly overseas trips.

But that's how they thaw the ice with politicians. That's how they get the chance to

booze with them and belt out some memorable late-night karaoke favorite. That's how they get them to remember who they are.

Can I afford to spend every day chasing one person hoping that he will give me an exclusive some day? Am I prepared to pay visits to a source really late at night or early in the morning for the sake of getting one piece of a document a few hours before my competition?

It's a dilemma that I face every day, which sometimes leads to anxiety attacks. Despite the fact I love reporting politics and remain fascinated by it, I'll never have the same amount of information that was collected by the infantry battalion of NHK reporters next to me. I cover both the ruling and the opposition camps alone while other Japanese media have dozens on the same beat.

Ayako Mie is a staff writer covering politics for the *Japan Times*.

And unless cloning becomes a reasonable possibility for a poor journalist, I'll never be able to spend enough time with one ranking lawmaker to forge a good relationship, even though I make sure to pay courtesy visits to the lawmakers I become acquainted with, and never turn down any invitations for gatherings.

Am I the one whining now? I suppose a little bit. So I remind myself that good reporters are always walking a fine line between being an insider and a very talented investigative reporter.

I tell myself to remember the journalists who excelled in investigative journalism without being a member of the *kisha* club, like Takashi Tachibana, the prominent journalist who broke the stories about the bankroll politics that led to Kakuei Tanaka's downfall.

I tell myself the universal fact that one does not need the *kisha* club if one is really good at building sources and has excellent news judgment and good hunches.

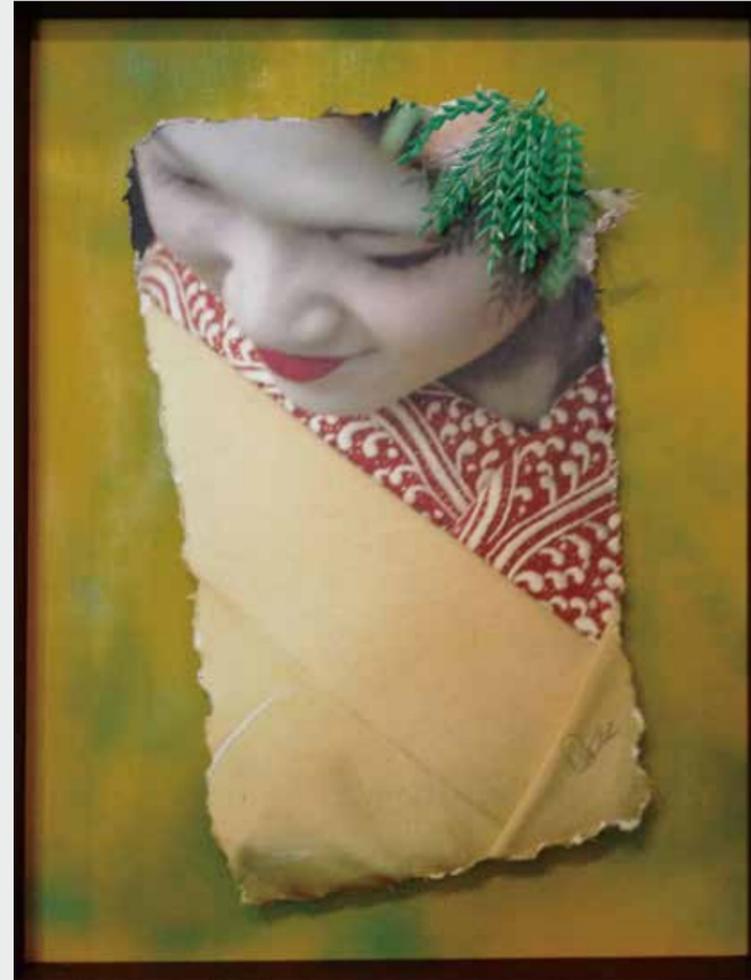
And finally, I remind myself that my job is not covering incremental stories but reporting on the big picture, and helping demystify the complicated Japanese political system for non-Japanese readers. Since that requires monitoring daily developments, as everything is connected in Japanese politics, camping out at the *kisha* club or having access to the Diet building helps.

Even with my coveted membership, however, I am occasionally confronted with the disappointingly closed nature of political reporting in Japan. Just the other day, I got a call from the office of the *Ikokai* group, the *habatsu* – or faction – of Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso, who also doubles as the finance minister.

They wanted to let me know that I was not invited to their upcoming dinner gathering, because I – or to be more specific, my newspaper, the *Japan Times* – was not a regular member of the Diet *kisha* club. Nor, as I was surely aware, was I the Aso faction's *ban kisha*. They were clearly letting me know that even within the *kisha* club, there is a hierarchy: regular members, followed by associate members.

So I missed one good opportunity to get acquainted with the LDP politicians. But am I going to let it affect my pursuit of good journalism? I don't think so. 🗨️

FCCJ EXHIBITION: THE FLOATING WORLD THROUGH BLUE EYES



photographs by Peter MacIntosh

PETER FIRST ARRIVED IN KYOTO IN 1993. IT WAS THIS CITY THAT inspired Peter to pick up his camera and brushes and begin a new career in the arts.

It didn't take long for him to find his niche: the world of the geisha. Although off limits to most, thanks to very important introductions by leading members of the community, Peter soon found the geisha opening their doors to him and his camera (albeit slowly). Through his training in such arts as traditional dance, calligraphy, *sumie* (Indian-ink painting) and flower arrangement, Peter has taught his eye to capture the real beauty of his subjects by sharing an understanding of arts training. This mutual respect and trust allows the geisha to relax, giving him complete freedom and a unique perspective to create his work.

Peter MacIntosh, originally from Canada, was the first foreigner to take geisha and maiko overseas without a Japanese intermediary. He lives in the geisha district of Kyoto. www.kyotosightsandnights.com



FCCJ

Where the news is made...
Be part of it.



The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan is a modern members' club for the ever-changing world of journalism and for associate members from all walks of life.

Located in the very heart of Tokyo on the edge of the legendary Ginza and the Marunouchi business district, the FCCJ is the ideal venue for networking, entertaining, dining and relaxing and...

making the news

For more on the benefits of membership for yourself or a colleague, contact Naomichi Iwamura at iwamura@fccj.or.jp or 03-3211-4392 for further details



NEW MEMBERS



After studying Social Sciences at the University of Lausanne, **DANIEL ESKENAZI** began his journalistic career at Radio Suisse Romande in the French part of Switzerland, followed by a stint of writing for different magazines and newspapers. He then joined the Geneva-based newspaper, *Le Temps*, as an economics and finance correspondent in Zurich. Eskenazi also began producing video interviews after the internet became a must for newspapers. His primary interests include the topic of renewables. He is taking on a new challenge as a freelance journalist in his recent move to Tokyo.

REGULAR MEMBER

Daniel Eskenazi, *Freelance*

PROFESSIONAL/JOURNALIST

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
Shinko Yuri, *Sci-Tech Communications Inc.*
Yasushi Kudo, *The Genron NPO*

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Ronald Haigh, *Toyota Motor Corporation*
Kazunobu Takita, *HTL Capital Advisors*
Motohiro Kurosawa, *Kurosawa & Masumura Law/Accounting Office*
Fumio Tomino, *Japan Overseas Educational Services*
Kenkichi Yoshida, *Booom Corporation*

NEW IN THE LIBRARY

Dear Life

Munro, Alice
Alfred A. Knopf

Hisaichi no Kikigaki 101

The Tokyo Foundation & Kyozen
no Mori Network
Gift from The Tokyo Foundation

Tensai. Isai ga Tobidasu

Sony no Fushigina

Kenkyujo

Shinko Yuri & Mario Tokoro
Nikkei BP
Gift from Shinko Yuri

Anata ga Waratte Iru to Ureshii

Hisano, Tokuko
Bungeisha
Gift from Keiichiro Tominaga

Kurosawa Akira no Jyujika

Sashida, Fumio
Gendaikikakushitsu

Photo Exhibition

Japan Press Research Institute
Japan Press Research Institute
Gift from K.K. Kyodo News

Amoeba Management

Inamori, Kazuo
CRC Press
Gift from Kyocera

Zainichi Gaikoku Tokuhain

Pomeroy, Charles ed.
Japan Press Research Institute
Gift from the Publisher

Tabi suru Taiwa

Zana Imae & Nobuko Kyo
Shumpusha Publishing
Gift from Maki Wakiyama

Lean in

Sandberg, Sheryl
Alfred A. Knopf

Killing Kennedy

O'Reilly, Bill
Henry and Holt

OBITUARY - MARVIN PETAL



FORMER FCCJ Member Marvin Petal died on April 17 in Oxnard, California after a battle with cancer. He was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada on January

15, 1929. He graduated from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1948, with a degree in journalism. While he was there he wrote for the *Seattle Post Intelligencer*. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean conflict and while in Korea, he wrote for the *Pacific Stars and Stripes*. He returned to Los Angeles in 1954, where he worked for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* and *KTLA-TV*.

He was a talented writer who wrote scripts and acted in early television. Later he wrote for the *L.A. Examiner* and did post-graduate work at UCLA. The

Twilight Zone episode, "Five Characters in Search of an Exit" was adapted by Rod Serling from Marvin's script "The Depository." Marvin covered business and economics for *McGraw Hill World News* for 22 years. He wrote many cover stories for *BusinessWeek* and other *McGraw* magazines. In 1970, he led a 12-member journalist group to interview Chiang Kai-shek.

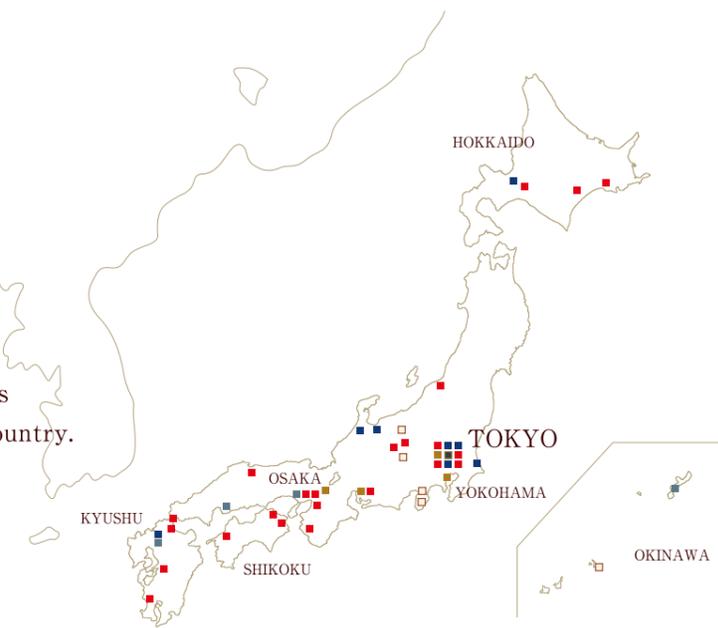
From 1964 thru 1970, Petal was Tokyo Bureau Chief for *McGraw-Hill World News*. After his return to the U.S. and his retirement from *McGraw Hill*, Petal did writing, editorial and public relations work for various publications and businesses. Marvin is survived by his wife, Diane, his former wife Ruth, three children, a son-in-law, and three grandchildren.

Memorial services were held at Hillside Memorial Park in Los Angeles on April 21. 📍



The best to you
no matter where,
no matter when.

Tokyu Hotels now offers you six Luxury, City, Resort, and Business hotel brands in major cities and tourist areas throughout the country.



www.tokyuhotels.com





Innovation
that excites

WHAT IF YOUR PHONE COULD MAKE YOUR CAR COOLER? REMOTE CLIMATE CONTROL



SMARTPHONE CONTROL APP



100% ELECTRIC NISSAN LEAF

Remote climate control is available using select Internet-enabled mobile phones.
Model and license plate may vary by country.

nissanwhatif.com