

Japan ASCD

September/October 2006 Newsletter



Susan Hagenson, Japan ASCD—President for 2006-2007, is a 6th grade teacher at St. Mary's International School in Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan.

Here's her opening message for the new academic year.

Membership is available on-line at www.jascd.org for institutional and individual memberships.

Early-bird discounts are available until October 31st so join now!

Welcome to all new and returning Japan ASCD members! We have an exciting year planned for you and hope you take full advantage of your membership.

One of my goals as president is to further increase recognition of Japan ASCD so we are the first organization that comes to mind when you are looking for high quality professional development. You can help us achieve this goal by talking to your colleagues about Japan ASCD and encouraging them to become members as well.

New this year is the chance to win either 50% off your Spring Conference registration fee or \$50 worth of books at the Spring Conference. To be entered in the drawing, you must have registered online by the end of October. If by chance you haven't signed up yet, simply visit our website, www.jascd.org and follow the simple steps.

Our Spring Conference is the highlight of the year, and this year's speakers and themes include:

- 1 Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs—Curriculum Mapping*
- 2 Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson—Differentiating Instruction*
- 3 Dr. Constance Kamii—Mathematics in the Early Childhood Classroom*
- 4 Karen Boyes—Brain and Learning Styles*
- 5 John Brunsting—Math and Learning Styles*

Although you undoubtedly recognize several of the presenters, throughout the year we will share more information about each speaker so you can select the session that best fits your needs. See you March 2 and 3rd!

Japan ASCD also offers two Saturday workshops we call "Try-It-On Monday" as the focus is just that...practical information you can put to good use right away. Save the date for our first TIOM October 21 and watch for upcoming details on the sessions to be offered. Invite a friend to attend a TIOM with you to see what we are all about.

We are also interested in more two-way communication with our membership. Although we traditionally ask for your input at the end of the Spring Conference, this year look for us to ask you how you've implemented something you've learned at the conference in your class, grade level or school. You may even be featured in our newsletter!

Thank you again for your continued support of Japan ASCD. We have enjoyed a rich, 15-year history of offering high quality professional development in Japan and look forward to serving you in the years to come.

*Susan Hagenson
President, Japan ASCD*

Encounters

It's always an amazing thing when something which had previously been shrouded in mystery is suddenly revealed and made familiar. It's equally remarkable when something which has always been "around" but unknown or inaccessible to us is one day made an immediate part of our experience. It's like that, for example, when we attend an event or activity for the first time and someone is present whom we've always seen "around" but never really got to know. After getting to know them, we realize how much we have been missing out on a valuable friendship or life-enriching hobby during all the weeks and months they had "been right there" but we simply never connected up with them.

It's very much like that, meeting the international school educators in Japan ASCD! Many DoDDS educators (like me until last year) see the name Japan ASCD and meet some of the DoDDS people involved with it, but without ever really getting to know the organization. We may even spend years teaching for DoDDS here in Japan with the international schools just being one of those things which is "around" or "out there" in our environment. Then we end up at a Japan ASCD conference or a "Try It On Monday" (TIOM) event. Those of us in DoDDS who are lucky enough to get to a TIOM session or a Japan ASCD conference or, better still, attend a conference and subsequently get actively involved with the Japan ASCD Board, suddenly find that an invisible door or window has opened up and the whole mysterious "other" world of the international school community that is all around us. It really is almost like discovering Brigadoon or stumbling into Narnia! It's a case of parallel universes suddenly communicating!

DoDDS educators in Japan hear about international schools but usually only through an occasional sports activity or from individual kids who transfer between the two systems. Japan ASCD is the only bridge I know of through which the vast, fun and educationally exhilarating community life of both DoDDS and the international schools comes fully and vibrantly together.

I'm still thinking about (and using in my classes) both the books ("Self-Theories") and the techniques I picked up at the Japan ASCD conference last spring. I am still in regular communication with colleagues like Kay Taylor and Cheryl Dubberly who got me involved with Japan ASCD before they transferred to Europe. And I e-mail almost daily my Japan ASCD colleagues in the international schools. DoDDS educators and the community of international school teachers and principals have a great deal to give each other. Japan ASCD is certainly the best (and arguably the only) way to do it.

Thomas Amend (U.S. History and Humanities Teacher, Yokosuka Middle School) is a new member of the board of Japan ASCD. He is the Facilities Coordinator as well as DoDDS Site Liaison Representative.

**Japan ASCD presents
its
Fall TIOM (Try It On Monday)
on
Saturday, October 21st, 2006
at the
International School of the Sacred Heart
Hiroo, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
(www.jascd.org for more info)**

A Five Hundred Dollar Scholarship for a College-bound Student

To promote and support higher education, Japan ASCD proudly announces an opportunity for Seniors at your school to win a \$500.00 (or yen equivalent) scholarship. They will write an essay about living in Japan and how it has impacted their education and life. Find out more in the brochure which will be distributed soon at Educators' Day, the October TIOM and uploaded to our homepage at www.jascd.org. There are two prizes—one for a student at DoDDS and one for a student at an international school.

This scholarship is another way that Japan ASCD is giving back to our membership. After discussions last May and an unanimous vote at our first board meeting, it has been decided that the scholarship will be an initiative for this year with presentations at our Annual Spring Conference on March 2nd and 3rd.

Information will be e-mailed to members and posted on the Japan ASCD website.
www.jascd.org

Annual Spring Conference—March 2nd—3rd

Join us for the 16th Annual Japan ASCD Spring Conference in March of 2007. As educators, we should look not only at the cognitive abilities of our learners, we need to look at the whole learner. In lieu of that understanding, this year's conference theme, ***Educating the Whole Child: Honoring the Passion and the Power of the Learner***, enhances the importance of our purpose as educators. Hear from our general session speakers **Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs** and **Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson** on how our understanding of curriculum and differentiation focuses on our work with the whole child. Understand the developmental issues that relate to the understanding of mathematics for our young learners

with **Dr. Constance Kamii** and discuss learning styles with our experts, **Karen Boyes** from New Zealand and **John Brunsting** from the United States. Our speakers this year are advocates for the children we teach. From a Piagetian scholar to responsive and thoughtful researchers, the Japan ASCD conference promises to enrich our lives as educators. More information on this year's conference can be found at www.jascd.org. We look forward to seeing you at the conference.

Cris Lozon, Conference Chair, is from the Early Learning Center of the American School in Japan, Roppongi Hills. Cris has contracted some of the top presenters in education for Japan ASCD's 16th Annual Spring Conference - 2007. See you there.



The Early-bird Special for Memberships (until October 31st)

By going to our website and signing up for individual or institutional membership, you will be eligible for the 50/50 draw. Individual members also receive a 25% discount.

What is the 50/50 draw? The first winner of the 50/50 draw will be awarded a 50% discount off the Spring Conference fees and second winner will win a \$50.00 voucher for books from our Educational Resources table at the Conference.

All members, individual and institutional, must register regardless of how payment is made. Institutional school members should select 'Institutional Member Yen Draft' and proceed from there.

Register now! Get your name in the raffle!

Get your name in for the
50/50 Raffle
by going to our website
www.jascd.org
and
clicking on Acteva
to register your membership
so your name will
automatically
be eligible for the draw
to win
50% off conference fees
or a
\$50.00 voucher for books

BOOK REVIEWS by Katie

**6+1 Traits of Writing:
The Complete Guide for the Primary Grades**
By Ruth Culham

Ruth Culham masterfully reveals the magic of writing for students and teachers alike. This is a wonderful book for helping students on their beginning journey into writing. There are clear rubrics, writing samples, book title suggestions, and conference comments for each trait. The 6+1 trait songs are my favorite part. Setting the key qualities of the traits to familiar melodies is a wonderful way to teach children. This book is a must-have for the primary teacher's professional library. Ruth Culham's Using Picture Books to Teach Writing with the Traits is also a wonderful resource for primary teachers. I own both books and they are continually "loaned out" to colleagues.

Nurse Matilda: The Collected Tales
by Christianna Brand
Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone

Have you ever wondered where the soon-to-be a-classic movie "Nanny McPhee" came from? Christianna Brand's character Nurse Matilda is the basis for Nanny McPhee. The character from the book and the movie are in perfect harmony. The story line from book to movie was changed considerably, however the basic plot of very mischievous children stayed the same. The book makes a good read aloud for young children because the children in the book do very naughty things, it's predictable, and makes for a great compare and contrast between the book and the movies. Nurse Matilda: The Collected Tales is three books in one. I found that reading one of the books

was enough because of the repetition; on the other hand, young children love repetition.

Inkspell
by Cornelia Funke

Have you ever read a book that touched your heart and soul? Cornelia Funke's Inkspell has touched mine! Inkspell and its predecessor Inkheart speak to a love of books and reading. The characters live in the modern world and inside the world of books. Characters are moved from one world to another by the special skill of masterfully reading aloud. The author has captured my heart with the following quote:

But her old friends, the books Meggie had already owned before they had moved in with Elinor still lived in the box, and when she opened the heavy lid it was almost as if half-forgotten voices met her ears and familiar faces were looking at her. "How well worn they all were.... 'Isn't it odd how much fatter a book gets when you've read it several times? As if something were left between the pages every time you read it. Feelings, thoughts, sounds, smells....' and then, when you look at the book again many years later, you find yourself there, too, a slightly younger self, slightly different, as if the book had preserved you like a pressed flower... both strange and familiar." —Cornelia Funke, Inkspell, 2005. I would recommend this book to children 12 years old to adults.

Katie Straub is the Literacy Facilitator at Yokota East Elementary School. Katie has just joined the Board as the Membership Chair. We look forward to more reviews in the next newsletter from anyone who can recommend a great book for educators. Submit to info@jascd.org



Japan ASCD serves a diverse educational community enriching teaching, learning and cross-cultural communication.

— Japan ASCD Mission Statement

The Japan ASCD Board of Directors will strive to do its utmost to serve the educational community in Japan. We would appreciate any suggestions or comments from you. Write to info@jascd.org.

The 2006-2007 Japan ASCD Board

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