

Eagerness To Learn Impresses School Principal



Principal Peter Kurita

"Japan is even more modernized than I had expected it to be," claims Principal Peter Kurita of Richvale School, back in Canada after spending the summer in the Orient.

Mr. Kurita spent most of his trip in southern Japan, where his grandmother lives, but also spent a week in Hong Kong and another week in Vancouver, Seattle and Honolulu.

As a teacher, Mr. Kurita looks a strong interest in Japan's educational system. He

returned to Canada very much impressed with the children's eagerness to learn.

He attributed this eagerness to the national desire for an increase in the standard of living. According to Mr. Kurita, incomes in Japan are only about one-third of ours.

Japanese children attend elementary school for six years, and junior and senior high school for three each. Competition to get into university is strong, and for

many, getting into a top university is almost an obsession.

Cost of going to university in Japan is low enough that anybody who does well enough at school can afford to go, he said.

Although the teaching profession is very highly respected, it is not rewarded with spectacular pay.

Most of the scars resulting from World War II have been erased. Mr. Kurita suggests they weren't very

deep in the first place, since the government was totalitarian in nature and not overwhelmingly popular.

After the war, the Japanese population almost idolized America and Americans. Mr. Kurita was of the opinion the occupation troops were not really suited for adulation, since most of the "solid citizen" types had been demobilized after the war.

Japan is basically a peace-loving nation, Mr. Kurita explained, and is much bet-

ter equipped to fight economic battles.

Mr. Kurita expressed concern that Japan is having some difficulty in adjusting to the democratic system.

There is too much of a tendency to let the other fellow do it, he explained. In many cases, the other fellow has leftist sentiments, he said.

This has led to a swing towards the left in government and even left-wing domination in many non-government organizations such

as unions and student clubs, according to Mr. Kurita.

There is a startling contrast between east and west in many aspects of everyday Japanese life.

Although Japanese women are completely westernized in dress (unless she is past 60, her living room is still sparsely furnished, as is the ancient Japanese custom.

"The only living room furniture is often a low table and a television set," Mr. Kurita chuckled.

In sports, baseball has become the country's number

one sport. Tennis, swimming and golf are other popular American imports but judo and Japanese fencing continues to be popular.

Although it is almost impossible to get a ticket to the traditional Japanese drama on short notice, television has invaded the Japanese entertainment world.

Mr. Kurita saw such shows as Gunsmoke, Father Knows Best and Surfside Six in Japan, with Japanese dubbed in. He estimates 40 per cent of Japanese TV fare is American.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki, levelled by the dropping of the atomic bombs have since been rebuilt. There is little or no bitterness towards the U.S. over the bombs, the principal said.

Mr. Kurita was alarmed to find very few people who had learned a lesson from the bombings.

What is the Japanese attitude towards Canada? Most of the people Mr. Kurita met were under the impression Canada was part of the United States.



(STAFF PHOTO)

Receive Diplomas At Graduation Exercises

Twenty-five students attended graduation exercises at Crosby Heights School last week to receive diplomas for successfully completing Grade 8 examinations. (Front row left to right) J. Richardson, L. Kerfoot, L. Groves, V. Williams, S. McAlister, S. Wuohela, C. Munroe, J. Knight. (Second row) M. Urstein, J. Whitfield, B. Harrison, D. Dennis, D. Bridge, G.

Mahon, R. Polesello, P. Gray, N. Munroe. (Back row) R. Huber, A. Miltenburg, S. Sim, F. Shaw, A. Wallbanks, A. Burgess, L. Buchan and V. Buckingham. Missing when picture was taken were: D. Adams, M. Allen, B. Hassall, R. Jones, H. McPhaden, C. Olsen, M. Patton and G. Allen.

Nature Notes

By Richmond Hill Naturalists

"The object of a naturalist's group is not only the dissemination of knowledge about animals and plants but also the actual increasing of such knowledge," (James Fisher in "Watching Birds").

On October 19, at the regular meeting of the local naturalists' club (8 o'clock sharp) in the library everyone will have an excellent opportunity to increase this knowledge by taking part in a quiz arranged by John Lunn. Rolph Davis will be the junior member speaker. Do be on time because you will not want to miss the colored slides which several members have taken this summer.

Each season brings certain "specialties" usually due to

Common Mushroom, Morel, Shaggy Mane, Ink Cap, Oyster Mushroom, Parasol Mushroom and all Puffballs, providing the latter are pure white when cut through. Also avoid all old and water-soaked and unsound specimens. Many of the lawns in town (possibly one of them is your own) are repeatedly producing edible mushrooms, especially the Shaggy Manes. After you have identified them why not enjoy eating some of these savoury fungi?

On the club's field trip, October 14th to a woods on the 3rd concession above the Gormley Sideroad, several people picked mushrooms. It was almost a treasure hunt because the recently fallen leaves had to be wished aside before the mushrooms could be seen.

The autumn colors had been reduced to a more subdued tone which was equally beautiful as compared to the more brilliant hues of ten days ago. The birds were frantically eating, in preparation for colder weather and also for their long flight south. In doing so they moved quickly to identify them all. A large flock of robins flew into a berry-laden buckthorn shrub and, in a matter of minutes, had eaten all the fruit; golden-crowned kinglets fitted here and there in the partially naked branches; rusty blackbirds, sounding exactly like creaking hinges, vied with the raucous calls of the blue jays as to whom would claim the most attention; a marsh hawk and a red-tailed hawk swooped and soared over some nearby fields; a shy hermit thrush peered out of some shrubs; white-throated sparrows scratched noisily under the berry bushes; the winter birds (nut-hatches, chickadees, downy and hairy woodpeckers) were also there; an ordinary green frog hopped around; a turtle ambled across a roadway, possibly in

search of a wet area to hibernate and a cottontail rabbit bounded hither and yon.

These observations proved that appearances can be deceiving. From the roadside this particular woods looked quietly beautiful, with possibly very little promise of activity. How rewarding it can be to take time to STOP, LOOK and LISTEN!

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To Hold Benefit Night For Ill Fellow Worker

Employees of Ontario Hydro in Richmond Hill have announced plans for a special benefit night for a fellow worker, November 2. The fellow worker is Frank Pratt, 41, who became disabled with a progressively crippling disease a year ago.

Organizer of the benefit night is Phil Mock, another linesman with Hydro. It will be held at Richmond Hill Community Hall.

The story of what Mr. Pratt's co-workers have done for him is enough to at least partially restore the oldest cynic's faith in human nature.

Mr. Pratt has been in hospital twice since the discovery of the illness. His hospital bills are extremely high and his only income is a meagre disability pension.

All 70 employees of Hydro have been helping to make up his pay check, weekly, since his illness began.

Married, and with four school-age children, Mr. Pratt had been employed with Hydro for 16 years and was considered a top linesman.

Before joining Hydro, he fought with the Canadian army in Belgium and France, and is a member of Hydro Legion No. 444. He is also a member of the Richmond Hill United Church.

Born in Kettleby and educated at Thornhill Public School and Harbord Collegiate, Toronto, Mr. Pratt is married to Audrey Giles of Richmond Hill.

The Pratts are parents of four children, Gordon 16, Raymond 14, Lorraine 13, and Marilyn 11.

Organizers of the benefit are asking for donations of cash staff.

and prizes to absorb all costs, so that ticket revenue will go to the benefit fund.

Information on the event can be obtained by writing to Frank Pratt Benefit, Ontario Hydro, Box 300, Richmond Hill.

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