

IAA NEWSLETTER

ITAZUKE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2026

IAA OFFICERS 2024-2026

PRESIDENT: DAVE GIBSON

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Welcome to the Itazuke Alumni Association Newsletter:

Where you find interesting and relevant news to include updates from the elected officers, interesting Japan articles and reunion information.

Upcoming Reunion Information

- ✓ **Location:** **SAN ANTONIO, TX**
- ✓ **Dates:** **DEC 1-3, 2026**
- ✓ **How to attend:** Link below for Registration Form:
<https://www.itazuke.org/wordpress/documents/Registration Form 2026.pdf>
Register by 5/31/2026 for best rate. Please provide your tee shirt size but only add the cost to your registration if you are ordering more than one tee shirt or are ordering for a non-alumnus. For an extra T-shirt order to be shipped before the reunion provide your ship to address and add the \$10 shipping fee.
- ✓ **Use code **ltzuke** for Hotel Reservation** at link below:
<https://group.tapestrycollection.com/31cs6b>
 - **HOTEL INFORMATION:** Estancia del Norte, a Hilton Tapestry Collection hotel, 37 NE Loop 410 at McCullough, San Antonio, Texas, 78216 (210) 366-2424.
 - **Individual Room Rates:** \$165.41 including tax (\$139 plus 19% tax) for either single or double occupancy. This room rate is guaranteed for one day before and one day after the reunion.
 - Note: Don't forget to give them your Hilton Honors number when you register so you can earn points.
 - We cannot guarantee room availability or group rates for reservations made after October 30, 2026

A Word from our IAA President, Dave Gibson

Greetings IAA members,

Cherry blossoms will be coming to Japan as we plan another IAA reunion. Reality is that our attendance will continue to decline each year due to health and other issues beyond members control. Thus, I am encouraging you to take advantage of this opportunity to reunite and socialize with us.

If you are attending and would like to assist or be a committee member please reach out to our Secretary, Barbara Galloway Berry, Hakatagal71@outlook.com.

Respectfully,

Dave Gibson

IAA President IDS Admin

Welcome IAA Vice President, John O'Brien



We are pleased to announce and make welcome John O'Brien, who has been installed by our IAA officers to the position of Vice President. He has been active with IAA for many years and has made exceptional contributions that benefit us all, detailed below along with an introduction to John in his words.

Like many of us, I arrived at Itazuke and became a full-blown AF BRAT. It was mid-year 1956, 8th grade. I had many of the same once in a lifetime experiences during my time there and a few that many have not.

Due to exceptional circumstances our family returned after I finished ninth grade in 1957. After my high school graduation, I joined the AF, attended tech training at Keesler AFB, and was sent back to Japan as an operator in the USAFSS at Misawa AB. I served a couple more years at SAC HQ Omaha.

Because of this experience, I spent the next 25 years as a computer programmer for AT&T and in 1990 took an early retirement due to MS diagnosis. I was steadily going downhill health wise, so I wanted to use my computer skills to bring back good memories from Itazuke. Back then the Internet consisted mostly of text-based user interest groups called USENET and sites called Gophers.

I was skilled with UNIX and also owned a UNIX based computer so I could use my skills for Itazuke research and development. I found out about Overseas Brats and became friendly with the administration there. They directed me to IAA and I joined around 1996 shortly before the 98 Orlando reunion. I was really disappointed to see that so few people I knew were members and most were officers Brats, because they had organizations and records of retirement locations.

One of my benefits from AT&T was free long-distance calling up to \$60 per month. I obtained some country wide phone directories and the online ones at the time were pretty reliable. I started calling people around the US starting with the most unusual names and had really good luck

finding my class mates. I also employed UNIX email and gathered email addresses for everyone with a certain name and sent them an inquiry. That's how I found several people. One was my friend Sam Cox who was then and still is a university professor.

This all led to assembling the first Itazuke web site. As a sub domain of my provider at the time. It didn't take long for the IAA leadership to recognize the immense benefits of having a full-on website and I contracted with a provider and put the site together. It attracted several hundred new members. Not to mention the cost savings of no longer needing the mailings. My next project was to start gathering all the yearbooks and copying them with help from Bill Burton. Those are now available on the website.

My family and I sponsored the 2003 reunion in Kansas City and I was also elected President of IAA for 4 years.

Greetings from Mary Anderson Baker, Washington State



My Dad received orders for Itazuke Air Base, Japan, while we were living at Cannon AFB, New Mexico. I am the oldest of five kids, so another family adventure was beginning.... again! We were a family of 7 and we gladly accepted the housing! I got my own bedroom ... key to keeping a young teen happy! I entered the realm of being a sophomore! Some of my best friends were Janice Arbuckle, Melanie Dell, Sandy Wildermuth, Nancy Pearl, Lewis Buchanan. I thought everyone lived as we did. I graduated from IHS in 1968. Dad was assigned to Malmstrom AFB, MT & I headed to Portland, Oregon and college.

The reunions every 2 years are so important to keep us joyful and remember what was...

ALUMNI RECENTLY PASSED

Below is a list of recently passed Itazuke alumni or teachers. As you are informed, please forward an email to Barbara Galloway to update the active/non-active email lists.

Send email to: Hakatagal71@outlook.com

Leslie A. Carroll of Seguin, Susan Wilson advised of Leslie's passing. Leslie was in class of 1963 and attended Itazuke from 1961-1963.

Bettye Louise (Leaton) Camp, Obituary February 10, 2019 - Geo. J. Carroll, no other info

Kayleen (Kitty) Louise Sloboden 3/1/1950 - 9/5/2021 (71 yrs)

Robert Swaney - San Antonio, TX CMSGT Robert R. Swaney Jr. USAF (RET.)
1/29/1952 – 11/29/2025 (73 yrs)

Ruby Edna (Alley) Griffith - Teacher at Zuke from 1953-1954.
11/25/1922 – 7/09/2020 (98 yrs)

Recent Gatherings in San Antonio, Texas

by Pam Shupe Lyden

Glynn/Suzie Black, Bruce/Lori Gagne, Pam Shupe/Jay Lyden, and Lynn Black gathered in San Antonio on October 14, 2025. We met at Dorrego's, an Argentinian restaurant overlooking the Riverwalk. It was great to re-connect with fun-filled conversation about the past and what we have been up to in recent years. Meeting up with our Itazuke family is always memorable and it makes you wonder why it took so long to do so. We hope to get more people from the late 60's and early 70's at the December 1-3, 2026, Itazuke reunion in San Antonio. See you there!!



Left to Right:

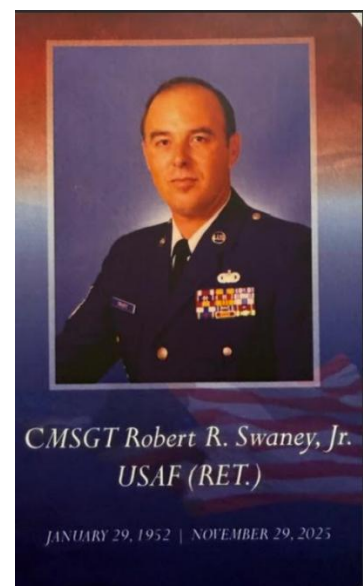
Jay Lyden, Pam Shupe Lyden,
Glynn Black,
Suzie Black, Lynn Black,
Lori Gagne, Bruce Gagne

Another recent gathering in San Antonio was for the celebration of life for Bob Swaney. Bob was a 1970 graduate and had a career in the Air Force. He married his high school sweetheart Yvette Cisneros, another Zuke graduate. They have 2 beautiful daughters and all reside in the San Antonio area. It was nice to meet their friends and family. People traveled from several areas and the stories about Bob were funny!!



ctrl+ click to open
Obituary for Bob
Swaney below:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/san-antonio-tx/robert-swaney-12635101>



A DREAM FULFILLED-MY RETURN TO HAKATA

By Barbara Galloway Berry, Class of 1971

(written 7/12/2025)

In 2015, my husband John was invited to teach a course at Handong International Law School in Pohang, South Korea. The Law School Dean sweetened the deal by saying that if John agreed to teach a two-week course, the school would also pay for my way there. They would also provide an apartment for us to live in during our time there. Of course, we said yes. A short time later, when John was working on the travel plans for the trip, he asked me to check and see what it would cost to fly from there to Fukuoka. We had always wanted to go back to Hakata, as that is where we met, but work schedules and other priorities had always prevented it. I checked the flights and learned it would be very reasonable; in fact, it would be cheaper for the law school to pay for our way home from Fukuoka than from Pohang, so it was a win for all of us.

I must admit at this point that I was clearly never very good at geography. When I stood on the beach at Hakata, I always imagined California was on the other side. How funny is that?! Not till many years later did I realize it was South Korea that lay on the other side. That became very clear to me in a most memorable fashion the day we flew from South Korea into Fukuoka and literally flew right over what had previously been Hakata Base or Brady Annex, whichever name you knew it by. The Point, as we knew it, is a dramatic landmark; there is no mistaking it when you see it. I cannot begin to describe the feeling I had when I saw it: the excitement, the wonder that we had finally fulfilled our dream, the amazement at how unchanged the beach was!

We spent a week in Japan; the first 4 days in Fukuoka, and the last two at Hakata (we really needed a whole additional week there). Our stay at Hakata was literally “going back home”. Hakata was the last place I ever lived with my family. When we left Japan in 1971, I went to the States to go to college while the rest of the family went to dad’s next duty station in Chicksands, England, for two years. Although I did spend the summer between my freshman and sophomore years with them in England, it really was just a visit, and I never again lived with my parents after that summer. Also, Hakata is the longest tour of duty my father ever had. I was able to do all four years of high school there, which never happened before or after. The country, the people, our experiences, the length of time we were there-- all these factors make Japan the “home of my heart”.

When the US Government turned the base over to the Japanese in 1973, instead of capitalizing on that beachfront property like American developers would have, the Japanese turned the property into a National Park. It is called Uminonakamichi Seaside Park, Saitozaki, Japan, <https://uminaka-park.jp>. The Seaside Park is worth the visit. As they do with everything else, the Japanese have made it a beautiful place for everyone to enjoy. A Ferris wheel and other rides for children, a camping area for teens, flower meadows, horseback riding, a golf course, and of course, the beach are just a few of the attractions there, along with cafes.

We stayed at the Luigans Resort, which is built on the site of the former Officers Club. <https://www.luigans.com/en/>. It is an absolutely beautiful resort, and offers its guests free bicycles, which we rode all around the Seaside Park on what had formerly been base roads. Probably the most thrilling thing for me was that the beach looked exactly as it did when I lived there, but with a lot more ground cover on the dunes. The Japanese are cultivating groundcover to prevent erosion and save land mass.

Along the beach road were overlooks at various points, and I am about 99% sure one of them is situated just where I used to go onto the beach from my family's house. Our home was at the corner of Mater Drive, immediately across the street from the NCO Club. The tennis courts were to the left of the Club looking at them from the street. I would walk into the woods between the tennis courts and the Club, through the woods and up over a few dunes onto the beach. I could look to my left and see the Point, and to my right was the beach house. They were about equidistance from my entry point. So, when we stopped at one of the overlooks, I saw the Point to my left, and the spot where the beach house stood (but is no longer there) to my right; it surely seemed like the overlook was right where I entered the beach from my house.

The Point, which when we lived there only had a large flat concrete pad on top, is now home to a Gallery that includes a beautiful event venue overlooking the beach, a gallery displaying items that wash up on the beach, and large windows that offer a panoramic view of the Genkai Sea. If you ever get the chance to return to Fukuoka, it would be worth it to take the ferry from there to the Aquarium at Uminonakamichi Seaside Park and spend the day visiting this beautiful place. I promise you it will be worth the "walk down memory lane". We packed so much into that week, and there is much more I could tell you about our very memorable time there, but I will end with this photo of me on the overlook I mentioned. Shikanoshima is in the background.



Barbara Galloway Berry at Uminonakamichi Seaside Park

Volunteer IAA Newsletter Team:

- ✓ Rhonda Halmrast Lebron rhonlebron@gmail.com
- ✓ Pam Shupe Lyden plyden@ebo-consulting.com
- ✓ Mary Anderson Baker chapperb1@gmail.com
- ✓

****** Please send all submittals for the next newsletter** via email addressed to one of the volunteers above.

Treasurer's Report for 2025 from Teresa Green

IAA is in good financial position at the end of 2025 with total assets at **\$18,174.69**

Expenses were minimal due to a reunion off year. Expenses shown in red, income in blue.

- ✓ Nevada business renewal for 2025 and 2026 **\$151.25**
- ✓ ZOOM annual renewal of **\$159.90**
- ✓ Supplies and postage of **\$45.73**
- ✓ Income consisted of a Refund from the 2024 reunion at the Columbus Trade Center of **\$438.84**
- ✓ Interest Earned of **\$1.22** (a sad amount!)
- ✓ Member donations of **\$1280.00**
- ✓ Tax filing of the 990-N to the IRS was completed for the Itazuke Alumni Association.

THANK YOU to the 24 members who donated in 2025!

A reminder that our donation month is July, watch for donation instructions to come.

Website Updates from Teresa Green

Alumni had noticed when they went to www.itazuke.org that they would get a warning that the site was not a secure site. Many web browsers were posting this message to alert users that encryption was not being used. The warning was not significant to our website as we were not collecting financial or personal data, but users were confused by the message and reluctant to proceed.

So, this problem has been eliminated by adding an SSL certificate for encryption. This message should no longer occur on most browsers.

The registration form for the 2026 reunion has been uploaded to the website with all the details for this spectacular upcoming reunion. Register by 5/31/2026 for the best discounted registration rate.

If you have any problems with the website, please contact me at teresajgreen@me.com.

***LUCIA PIERCE, ASIAN ART EXPERT to provide lecture at upcoming reunion!**

Lucia will discuss Japanese art and culture over the last 50-60 years with a focus on Kyushu and Hakata Dolls. Lecture will be 40-45 minutes, concluding with a 15 minute question and answer period. There are 2 lecture times available to attend during the upcoming 2026 IAA reunion.

Lucia Pierce graduated from high school at The American School in Japan and received a B.S. and M.S. from New York University, in education and Asian studies education respectively, and an M.A. in East Asian Studies with a focus on Chinese history, from Yale University. Lucia was the founding director of the Chinese Studies Program at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, DC, and the founding Head of Education and Public Programs at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Freer Gallery of Art which together form the National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution. She served as the Assistant Dean of Admissions for the inaugural class of NYU Shanghai and the Director of External and Academic Events for NYU Shanghai. After nine years in China, Lucia retired from full time work and returned to DC where she is an independent consultant.

ANNOUNCING: OFFICIAL 2026 REUNION T-SHIRTS



This beautiful tee shirt was designed by Ryan Chambers, great-nephew of Reunion Co-Chair Lucy Webb.

*Shown above are the back and front views. We encourage those attending the reunion to purchase a T-shirt **in advance** to wear enroute to the reunion. **How fun to see all arriving in their Itazuke T-shirts!!** Attendees receive a T-shirt at the reunion registration table upon arrival, which is included in the registration fee. Keep your second T-shirt clean for the group photos!*

To order: Fill in the number and sizes desired and complete the address information below and send with a check made payable to:

Itazuke Alumni Association, c/o Barbara Berry, 2502 Savannah Oaks Bend, Abilene, TX 79602 or submit payment to PayPal or Zelle to itazukealumni@gmail.com.

___ Small ___ Medium ___ Large ___ XL **\$25EA**

___XXL ___XXXL **\$30EA / PLUS SHIPPING FEE \$10/EA**

Please ship the T-shirts indicated above to:

Name _____

Street address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

(Note if you are registering to attend the reunion, please provide your tee shirt size but only add the cost to your registration if you are ordering **more than one tee shirt or are ordering for a non-alumnus. One T-shirt is included in the cost of registration so if you wish to have the extra T-shirt(s) shipped before the reunion please provide your shipping address and the \$10 shipping fee.)**