



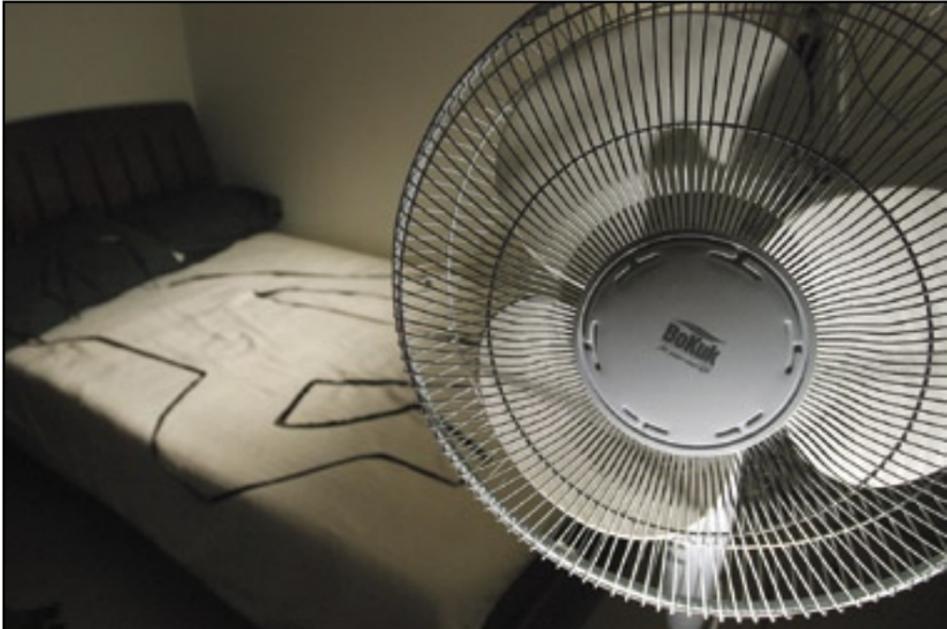
THE ULSAN PEAR

VOL. I ISSUE VI

an urban survival guide to the industrial capital of Korea

SEPTEMBER 2004

THE SILENT KILLER: The Pear discovers the chilling truth about 'fan death'



"I know a guy who knew a guy whose cousin's teacher's brother died!" PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

BY FIN MADDEN
THE ULSAN PEAR

The quiet humming as it sits in the corner sends chills down my spine. On quiet nights I lie there awake, staring, fearing. I don't want to become yet another

statistic, I don't want to die of fan death. Again.

Fan Death. The rumours run like wildfire. Whispering in the streets and alleys, mentions in the news. What is this killer, this plague? Why does it only affect people in Korea?

If you sleep with a fan on and the doors and windows closed, you will die. I don't mean dead tired, I mean six feet under. Pushing up daisies. Dead. I know: while researching this article it happened to me. Don't worry; I got better.

But why? For many years I have slept with fans on in Waygook (that place that is outside of Korea). Why does the harmless house fan become a killer in Korea? 'The main cause of death seems to be asphyxiation. "Excessive exposure to such a condition lowers one's temperature and hampers blood circulation. And it eventually leads to the pa-

If you sleep with a fan on and the doors and windows closed, you will die.

ralysis of heart and lungs," says a medical expert' (Korea Herald). Asphyxiation can also happen if the fan is too close to the face. The continued forced air leads to difficulty in breathing and eventual death.

Now, this isn't the only reason to fear fans. The devious little devices are doing more than just lowering your body temperature. That electric motor that seems to be humming away harm-

SEE MOLECULAR PAGE 2

FOREIGN MONSTERS? Or are we just misunderstood?



Oh, you so handsome ^^! PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

BY EILEEN KEAST
THE ULSAN PEAR

We've all had a similar experience: a woman carrying her groceries nearly falls over outside Homeplus when you take off your bike helmet; a small child stops in the street, points a finger at you and yells "waygookeen!" Or maybe some shop owner looks you over dubiously when you request to try on the medium size, and then helpfully steers you over to the "large" sizes.

It's at these times that we ask ourselves, "What do they really think of us?" We're almost all guilty of stereotyping Koreans - what are their stereotypes of us?

Here are a few statements, made by foreigners that I

ran by my Korean friends. "They think we're enormously endowed." Not surprisingly, this one came exclusively from waygook guys. I couldn't get a Korean to comment on this, but I did hear an odd counter-rumour, too bizarre to exclude from this article, that while Korean men agree that western men, in general, drive a bigger vehicle, Korean men compensate by delivering a larger load. I was a bit lax in my research in this area, I'm afraid, but if anyone has any "hands on" experience in this area and can either confirm or deny, feel free to e-mail the Pear and let us know.

"They think we're filthy." This one most Koreans I spoke to agreed with. This

SEE HELLO...PAGE 7

KIMCHI AND GINSENG: THE KOREAN METHOD OF HEALTH MAINTENANCE Could Kimchi save your life?

BY MARTY REHDER
CONTRIBUTOR

Is there something that Koreans know that the World Health Organization should be told about? Is there a cure for SARS sitting right here in Korea while the rest of the world waits on edge for the next outbreak to occur? Last year's SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) scares that hit China, Japan, the U.S and Canada had little impact on the lives of Koreans. Not a single person in Korea came down with the dreaded pneumonia-like disease, even though it was

first diagnosed just a few hundred kilometers away in China. Multiple people in Japan have also contracted the disease. Why is it that countries on either side of the Korean peninsula have had a number of SARS outbreaks, but not a single case

Why is it that countries on either side of the Korean peninsula have had a number of SARS outbreaks, but not a single case has been diagnosed here?

Koreans know. It's the kim-



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

Spicy red cabbage saves thousands

chi. Or at least that's what they believe.

The logic behind it is not without merit. Kimchi is the ubiquitous Korean side dish of pickled cabbage,

garlic and red pepper. It is present at every meal, and is eaten by both young and old. The logic goes like this: All Koreans eat kimchi all the time. No Koreans con-

SEE CURE-ALL PAGE 2

HELP THE PEAR!
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the Ulsan Pear 2004

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Dear Readers,

Over the past few months the Pear has brought you a variety of different themes, from transportation and recreation to nightlife and 'high culture.' This month we provide a very different array of articles. Our team of intrepid reporters have gone to great lengths to get the truth about many Korean myths and urban legends. I'm happy to present the September issue packed with titillating exposés.

Dave Harvey
info@ulsanpear.biz

Molecular division. . .

lessly is also plotting your demise. Another chilling excerpt from the Korea Herald testifies to another of the fan's many devious modes of destruction: 'Based on the statement, the police assumed that Kim most likely had died

The motor's electric spark divides the oxygen molecule, changing it from an O2 to a CO2 molecule. The other is that the fans blades simply destroy the oxygen atoms.

from suffocation after she fell asleep in her room with an electric fan in motion the previous night. Fans can remove oxygen from the air.'

Fan death has been explained to me in two ways, both of which I am led to believe are true by their simple scientific plausibility. The first is that the motor's electric spark divides oxygen molecules, changing them from O2 to CO2 molecules. The other is that the fan blades simply destroy the oxygen atoms.

The figures of recorded fan deaths are disturbing: during one short week in 1997, 10 people, including a 16 year old girl, died of fan death (as reported by the Korea Herald).

These needless deaths don't just happen to Koreans, either. Two years ago one of these vicious atom-smashers claimed the life of a Canadian teacher in Mokpo. The fan was reported as the official cause of death.

Fans don't just kill. They can injure and infect. I, myself almost lost a finger earlier this summer to one of these malevolent machines. A close friend of mine caught tonsillitis (as diagnosed by their doctor) from a brand new infectious appliance.

There are a few possible explanations for the exclusively Korean nature of fan death. It seems that in other countries apartments are built differently, allowing more circulation of air when the room is sealed. Also, Korean physiology is different than that of foreigners. Finally, Korean fans are designed differently. This is why so many sheltered foreigners don't believe in fan death: the conditions in their countries just aren't right for this fatal affliction.

Avoiding fan death is quite simple. It is the old air in your sealed room that kills. Fresh air is the cure. Just leave your window or door open a crack and you'll be fine. With fresh air circulating and renewing the supply of oxygen there is little chance of death. Please, just don't take any chances. Beware, be careful.
finmadden@yahoo.ca

Cure-all, End-all. . .

tracted SARS. Therefore, kimchi prevents SARS. Although the rules of logic do not specifically work that way, it seems plausible enough. There are several studies on garlic, a prime ingredient of kimchi, and its abilities to produce an antibiotic, virus-fighting compound called allicin. While several labs and universities around the world have conducted studies on garlic, there is yet to be definitive proof that garlic and kimchi have a positive effect on viruses such as SARS. Even so, the numbers are hard to deny. Naturally, the claim that kimchi can prevent SARS has given some entrepreneurs additional ammunition to promote kimchi as a preventative for AIDS as well. The logic surely doesn't hold up here, though. As of December 2003, an estimated 8,300 Koreans had the HIV virus.

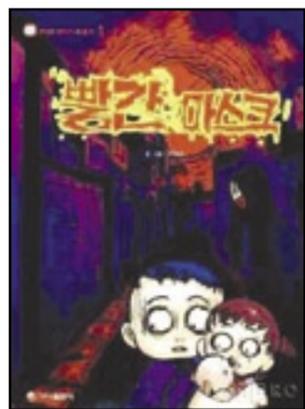
Yet another gastric delight that is popular in Korea, is ginseng. Ginseng's reputation and popularity are unparalleled by any other herb, especially in Asia. Ginseng's influence is cumulative and slow, and usually not noticeable within days. Ginseng's action is also rather gentle, non-specific, and broad, which is the reason why ginseng is a general ingredient for almost every Asian herbal formula. Grab anyone in Asia and ask what to do if you are tired, weak, sick, or want to improve your health

and become stronger. He or she will recommend taking ginseng. Hundreds of herbal supplements proclaim that the addition of ginseng will dramatically (choose all that apply to you) improve circulation, act as an antidepressant, increase energy, enlarge the penis, and so on. One of this author's favorite tag lines on ginseng products is "Enjoy the fresh taste, fill your body with superfluous nutrients."

Whatever ills befall you, there's sure to be a cure in Korean food, medicine or supplements. After all, Korean culture has been around for over 5000 years. Koreans must know something about staying healthy. However, it isn't all as good as it might seem. South Korean life expectancy is just 8th in line when compared to its 15 Asian neighbors.
martygeek@yahoo.com

“AM I PRETTY?” WHAT WILL YOU ANSWER WHEN RED MASK ASKS?

BY ANNE BELL
CONTRIBUTOR



For those of you who teach kids for a living, around last April or May, you may recall your kids chattering on about something called ‘The Red Mask.’ It was quite a hot topic, and with their darling mangled English the children were able to explain that Red Mask is a ghost... she kills people... at night...watch out!!!

Many of us trying to interpret these bits and pieces with our empirical, ghostless, Western upbringing were a little perplexed as to the nature of this story. Is it an urban myth or did Red Mask really exist...?

In an effort to answer these questions and shed a little more light on this character that has so gripped the im-

aginations of our munchkin charges, I turned to the best source of information, the munchkins themselves. I asked two of my classes of elementary kids to write a few lines about the mysterious Red Mask. Here are the top compositions from both classes:

She is a Red Mask and a ghost. She can run. She is very fast, and she can tear the mouth from ear to ear. She has mask and knife. She doesn't like cinnamon (same gyepee candy) and gaegyeon. She asks, "I'm beautiful?" One student says, "Yes, you're beautiful." Red Mask tears from ear to ear. One student says, "No, you aren't beautiful." Red Mask stabs with her knife.*

by Cindy (김효정), age 11

*gaegyeon is the Chinese-Korean word for dog [犬]

Red Mask is a Japanese person. Red Mask is a woman. She has long hair. She wears a long coat and puts on the red mask. She's tall and also she can run very fast. Last two things are, she has a big mouth and she's a killer.

The story of Red Mask begins when she has a small mouth. She went to get plastic surgery to make her mouth big. One day when she was sleeping, she accidentally yawned, and so her mouth got ripped. She killed herself. So she started killing people. She asks, "Am I pretty?" and when people say, "Yes, you are pretty" she will make their face the same as hers, or if they say, "No, you're not" she will kill them. Red Mask is a really scary killer.

by Caroline (홍미란), age 12

After repeatedly interrogating my students, the details of the story remain fairly consistent. There's a lone point of disagreement as to whether she likes or dislikes cinnamon candy. The red



mask is actually a surgical mask, and how badly she carves up her victim's face depends on what blood

"She killed herself. So she started killing people. She asks, "Am I pretty?" and when people say, "Yes, you are pretty" she will...

type they have, with type O blood receiving the most devastating full-face slash. So it would turn out that Red Mask is quite a tormented and grisly character. But where did she come from? Is she just a story sprung from the overactive minds of kids, or does she have a creator?

Turns out our first clue should be Japan. Red Mask is after all a Japanese woman, and her story is quite a twisted and anguished one. It is therefore not surprising that the story of Red Mask does in fact originate from Japan, from a manga comic book nonetheless. Furthermore, not only did the Red Mask story first appear as a manga, but in the very specific subcategory of ‘Girls’ Horror Comics’. Apparently this genre has been alive

and well for over a decade in Japan.

The original author of the Red Mask story is Inuki Kanako, who has earned the interesting title of ‘Queen of Horror.’ Red Mask was published in Japan in 1995, and Red Mask 2 was published 1997. Curiously, the Korean translation was only made available in Korea in

July 2004. This was preceded by at least two Korean versions of the story, both published in June 2004. Regardless, our students were talking about this story long before anything was available in Korea and surely their vivid descriptions of Red Mask are far more interesting than any trifling publication details. anninator2003@yahoo.ca



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Restaurant Review: Paprika



PHOTO: JASON TEALE

BY DANIEL CURLEY
CONTRIBUTOR

1522-5 Samsan-dong,
Ulsan
(052) 257-5100

The phenomenon of eating in hefty stretch-elastic sweatpants has returned. Paprika, located in Samsan-dong behind the Hyundai department store, offers an all you can eat lunch and dinner buffet for those of

you who are true Thanksgiving eaters, in addition to a well-stocked side menu.

The food is great, and made fresh while you're eating, but the buffet is a little limited and the fajitas, well, aren't really fajitas. The items on the side menu are extensive and quite good.

The drinks menu is pretty standard. The wine selection, however, is by far one

of the most wide-ranging in Ulsan.

Paprika offer a wide selection of pasta sauces, a moderate selection of pizzas and a few other Italian foods. The sushi selection is vast, tasty and the portions are considerable, in the world of sushi anyway.

The décor, both inside and out, is serene, although the chairs are a little firm

and don't readily endorse a long-term stay. Overall, the service was good, with some exceptions. Unless you're brewing the beer, it shouldn't take 15 minutes to serve.

The initial cost of the salad bar is a little steep: 16,500 won for lunch and 22,500 for dinner. Is it worth it? Yes. The buffet holds up against most large-bellied westerners and there's a strong likelihood you'll leave satisfied.

If on your first pass around the buffet you don't succeed in absolutely gorging yourself, stick around and try again. There doesn't seem to be any clear time frame, and if there is indeed one, it's doubtful they'd enforce it.

There is only one problem: with the quantity of food offered, it seems a massive oversight that the plates are only a shade bigger than a small man's hand. I suggest bringing your own dinnerware.

On my imaginary rating scale, Paprika rates a four out of five.

EVENT CALENDAR

This is where you can find what's happening, who's meeting and who to talk to about anything in Ulsan.

BOOK CLUB- Meeting once a month at McKenzie's to discuss, critique and rave about a pre-selected book. The first meeting will be Wed, Sept. 15th at 11pm
More info: emkeast@alumni.sfu.ca

HAE KOM PLAYERS- Welcome to anyone who is interested in the production of a play to debut September 18. Meet at the statue in front of Ulsan University (Mugeodong) Sundays at 6pm.
More info: sokoredfury@yahoo.com

HASH HOUSE HARRIERS- Every second Sunday (Sept 5, 19, Oct 3) this drinking group with a running problem meets at the foreigners' compound in Bangeojin.
More info: blakegc@attglobal.net

JAM SESSION- Always open to newcomers, this musically driven group meets most Saturday nights at 11 at Woodstock bar.

RUGBY- The Ulsan Ugliers meet most Sundays to play touch rugby. Matches happen on the shores of the Taehwa river.
More info: ulsanrugby@yahoo.co.uk
www.ulsanrugby.bravehost.com

SOCCER- The Won Shot Wanderers are back and playing various teams around the city. We are now in a Busan league.
More info: wonshotwanderers@hotmail.com
www.wonshotwanderers.bravehost.com

There are also pick-up soccer games in Mugeodong on Tuesday mornings at 10.
More info: buckleyj7@hotmail.com

STREET HOCKEY- Hockey in Korea? A number of people play in the Taehwa-dong area, sticks are available.
More info: benchwarmersbar@yahoo.com

ULTIMATE FRISBEE- New players always welcome, Ultimate Frisbee is played on the riverside by the Taehwa hotel every Sunday at 4pm.
More info: usluts@yahoo.com

WRITERS' GROUP- Every other Wednesday (Sept 8, 22 and Oct 6). Share your work, critique, be heard or just listen at McKenzie's at 11pm.
More info: sokoredfury@yahoo.com

If you have any events you would like listed here, let us know: info@ulsanpear.biz

WON SHOTS AND UGLIES' FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

The Won Shots and The Ulsan Ugliers would like to thank all those in attendance at McKenzie's on August the 20th. We raised 500,000 won which will be split by the clubs to buy much needed soccer and rugby gear.

www.wonshotwanderers.bravehost.com

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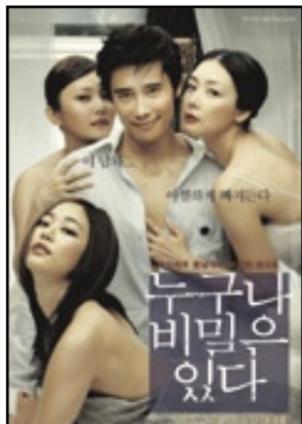
KOREAN CINEMA CORNER

With Jason Teale and assistance from Cho Hae Nim

Everybody Has Secrets

DIRECTOR: Jang Hyun-Soo

STARRING: Lee Byong Han, Choi Ji Woo, Kim Hyo Jin, Joo Sang Mi and a special guest appearance by Jan Jay Hoon



I went into this thinking it was perhaps a suspense/horror movie about someone who is keeping a "deadly secret." I was wrong. This is a movie about three sisters and the playboy who bangs them all.

The movie starts off with the princess sister dumping her boyfriend. I'll call him "the ass-wipe" because he spends most of the movie being one, getting beaten up and crying like a sissy girl. The princess sister then meets the stylish playboy dude. In typical style, all the chicks think he's hot because he looks like that guy off the X-note commercial and drives a Benz CLK convertible. At this point, there is a lot of squealing and lame dating crap happening in the movie.

The next part focuses on the affair with the nerdy, yet cutie sister... who also has sex with the playboy dude. Take note, in true Korean style the change-overs are indicated with cartoon anime versions of the sisters. The comedy here comes from the nerdy sister's lack of experience in the matters of sex, which leads to some strange reading on her half and some hilarious scenes involving traditional Korean cuisine and sexual imagery.

The movie finishes with the story of the ajumma sister... who also gets boned by the playboy guy. She is the hot chick married to the fat rude guy who appears in all of the Korean movies that I have seen. So anyway, there

is some weird flirting with her while the stupid yet cutie princess sister has no idea what is going on. Minutes before the guy marries the princess he has sex with the ajumma sister, while in her han-bok. Gotta love this family.

The movie ends on a happy note as everyone goes back to their respective partners. Apparently lying, cheating and adultery are what really brings a family together. So I guess that the playboy was really doing this family a favor by humping all of the sisters and giving them all dirty secrets. What a hero.

This movie was a little too "16 years old / making out on your mother's couch" for me. It did have some sex in it but it was all sort of prime time TV sex which is anti-climactic and boring. There are numerous funny scenes with some hilarious slapstick style Korean comedy. The appearance of a Korean singer who plays the perverse and goofy brother is what held this movie together for me, but only because I had no idea what the hell they were saying. This is really more of a romantic comedy than the slasher flick I was hoping for.

WHERE THE F*CK IS EVERYONE?



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

WITH FILTHY O'NASTY WA Bar, Ilsan Beach

Looking to escape the concrete jungle? Do you want to feel a cold beer slide down your throat? Do you want to breathe the semi-fresh sea air? Well, head down to Ilsan Beach in Bangeojin.

The WA Bar at Ilsan Beach is one of the newest on the list of the Wa franchises that cover Ulsan. The difference is that this one has the feel of a beer garden back home. This makes for a nice change to sitting in the little booths of the Korean hofs.

If you are after a party atmosphere and feel the urge to get drunk and go swimming, this is the place for you. The WA Bar is located about 150 meters from the beach. Friday and Saturday evenings are like one big par-

ty at the Wa Bar. The streets are packed with young people and the bar has a good mixture of Koreans and Waygooks.

The beer choices are great here, with the Wa Bar draught costing 3000W for more than a pint of beer. When looking for a change from Korean beer, there is an extensive choice of international beers from Europe, Canada, the USA and even Australia and New Zealand. However, they will wreck your bank balance as well as your liver, as imported beers are expensive here.

If you haven't experienced Korean bars and their drinking habits, hit this place. If it's your birthday, be sure to mention it to the staff. The birthday special is a sight to behold. Back home it would be considered a fire hazard, and could possibly land you in jail.

The atmosphere in the WA Bar is what sets it apart. On weekends there is a cocktail show which is well worth a laugh. The music is the latest upbeat and lively Korean tunes. Combined with the outdoor seating, it makes for a great place to just sit and get drunk.

Getting to Ilsan beach is easy, whether it be by bus or taxi. If you are catching a cab, tell the driver "Ilsan hae-su-yuk-jang," and in most cases the driver will also answer to "Ilsan beachy." By bus, you can jump on the 104 from old downtown or the 401 from Lotte Department store.

Leave the concrete jungle and head down to Ilsan beach. Stop in at the WA Bar and enjoy these warm summer evenings while they last.

FILTHY SAYS

WA Bar, Ilsan Beach

- Outside seating
- Cheap WA Bar draft
- Good place to socialize with Koreans
- Party atmosphere all night
- Home away from home



Filthy gives WA Bar: 4.5 Shamrocks out of 5

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Where the F*ck is everyone? Know of a happening new joint? Tell us where it is and we'll send our crack team of alcoholics and social misfits to investigate and get you the straight goods. info@ulsanpear.biz



What's in the poisonous green bottles?

"Where else in the world has the issue of industrial pollution been solved by bottling it and selling it back to the populace as a dinner accompaniment?"
landofsoju.netfirms.com



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

BY JOHN BUCKLEY
THE ULSAN PEAR

Back in Ireland we make a potent brew, mainly from potatoes, wheat and barley. It is called potcheen. It can range from 50-180 alcohol proof. It's highly illegal to make this evil tasting drink and you could end up in prison if convicted for doing so.

Here in Korea, they make a drink which has an almost identically bad taste. It is called Soju. Its main ingredients are rice, sometimes sweet potatoes, wheat, barley and "other" grains. It can range from 48-90 proof. Instead of it being illegal it is a cultural artefact and is one of the driving forces behind the Korean economy.

These days Soju is mass produced by dozens of factories

around Korea ostensibly in the traditional method of boiling and fermentation. I visited the Jinro Soju Distillery at Masan. I was able to gather that this distillery was opened for international customers in 1997; that almost all beverages produced here are exported and that the biggest Jinro factory is at Incheon where about 3,000,000 bottles of Soju are produced each day. I delicately brought up the issue of whether the traditional methods and ingredients of soju-making were still adhered to and that we foreigners have often heard it said that Soju is chemically produced nowadays. I was assured that while every

About 3,000,000 bottles of Soju are produced each day.

process at the plant was automated, no chemicals of any sort were added. Only natural ingredients were used. With this brief explanation I also received a six-pack of soju to assuage my fears.

With annual sales of over 200 million cases in 80 countries, Soju, or 'Asia's answer to Vodka', as the Koreans like to proclaim it, is well placed in the leading

distilled spirits category in the world. In fact the www.progressivebeverages.com website goes as far as to say, "With annual international sales of over \$14 billion in 80 countries, soju is the best selling distilled spirits category in the world. To the surprise of people, soju outsells vodka almost four to one." I have been unable either to substantiate or refute this claim.

While personally it's not my poison, Soju and its popu-

larity here in Ulsan do intrigue me. It is one of the first authentic Korean cul-

"...soju is the best selling distilled spirits category in the world. To the surprise of people, soju outsells vodka almost four to one."

tural experiences that any foreigner will experience as the stuff is almost unavoidable.

PROJECT LOTTE LOTTERIA DEMYSTIFIED



PHOTO: JASON TEALE

BY MATT WURDEMAN
CONTRIBUTOR

My goal: to answer the age old question that has stumped Korean and foreigner alike. Just what the f*** is a Kimchi Burger?

Over the past month I have tried every "happy priced" item on Lotteria's menu. Since then I have gained 15

pounds, a 3rd testicle has dropped, and I've developed a slightly unhealthy crack/Lotteria addiction. (I'm not sure which one yet.)

Not wanting to go too big too soon, I decided to hold off on the Kimchi burger until I was a more grizzled Lotte veteran. So I tackled the Big Rib Sand. The first

Many soju- drinking rituals revolve around the ages of the persons involved. When offering a glass of soju to a much older person, one should hold the bottle with two hands. To people your own age, with the right hand. A person never holds the bottle with the left hand when pouring nor the glass with the left when receiving. It is only older Korean men who can receive a full glass of soju (50ml) as custom says that it is only them and not younger men or women of any age who have earned this right. When drinking a glass of Soju with older Ko-

reans you should turn your neck and hide the glass with the left hand so as not to show the drinking directly.

A 330ml bottle of Soju costs less than 1,000 won in any shop. This article doesn't but probably should carry a health warning. Soju bottles in their various, 330ml, 1.5l or 3.0l sizes should definitely carry a health warning but don't. Your brain cells are your loss the following morning.

buckleyj7@hotmail.com

thing I discovered: Sand is short for Sandwich. Now you know. My first bite was heaven, taking me back to the days of the McRib sandwich I grew up with. But after reaching the middle it rapidly began to taste like dirt, and I couldn't finish it. The same was true of every other Western themed item on the menu.

The Bulgabi and Bulgogi burgers were far superior to the previous ones mainly because they maintained a consistent non-dirt taste from start to finish.

The Shrimp Burger is very similar to a fishwich back home. I was still unclear about the "Rye" in the other burger. How do you add rye to shrimp? But upon unwrapping it I found it is actually the bun that is rye. How silly of me. Imagine my surprise when one day I looked at the register and

realized I had accidentally ordered the Spicy Squid burger. With the intrepidity of Lewis and Clark, and my eyes closed, I pressed on. I found it not only spicy, but delectable.

And finally, the Kimchi Burger. Honestly, I expected two buns surrounding a heaping pile of kimchi slathered in Thousand Island dressing. What I got couldn't be further from the truth. The Kimchi burger is actually a Bulgogi burger, except the buns are patties of kimchi fried rice. By far the greasiest item on the menu, it's also one of the tastiest. No longer be afraid, for the mystery is now solved.

My work now done, I walked out of Lotteria with my head held high and my gut out, for I had faced my demons and won.

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Who Ya Gonna Call?



'Ring out your dead'

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

BY JASON TEALE
THE ULSAN PEAR

It's one in the morning and I just got back from ghost busting on Munsu Mountain. In my last article I mentioned that bells are used by Koreans as ghost

busters. Well, not to pass up a good opportunity to make an ass out of myself, I decided to try my hand at ghost busting.

The Koreans that I spoke to on this topic seemed to be divided on the subject of

whether or not ghosts really exist. My kids were completely confused, telling me that they only saw ghosts on TV. I think they were holding out on me.

Internet searches proved to be less than helpful. Yes, there are ghost stories and tales of haunted areas, but nothing that really told me the truth. The Koreans that I asked just smirked and looked at me as if I was insane. Not much help there. So I thought, what better way than to go to the source and find out first hand?

So working off some information from a less than sane source, I decided to get prepared. My weapon of choice was a 4 oz. brass bell from a hiking supply store located

across the Taehwa. After seeing the trailer for *Van Helsing*, I decided to bring my trusty BB gun along too, just in case...

12:10 am. Arrived at Munsu Mountain. Accidentally squashed a frog. Shot a tree with BB gun while riding past on scooter. Laughed like an idiot and continued on to observatory parking lot.

12:13 am. Realized that there were people there and that riding up in the middle of the night with specialized ghost busting equipment (BB gun, flashlight, brass bell) and skull helmet would not look too good to the people who were probably hiking up to the temple to pray.

12:16 am. Started looking for ghosts.

12:20 am. Got bored, started shooting random objects for fun.

12:22 am. Got really bored and ran out of stuff to shoot at. Decided to go home.

12:30 am. Ran out of BB's trying to shoot frogs from scooter. Decided to put BB gun away so no one else thought I was crazy. Accidentally parked beside dark and creepy tomb of someone. Decided to ding my bell. Nothing happened. Dinged it again. Nothing. The sonic boom from my tiny but powerful ghost busting bell must have obliterated any ghosts in the

area. Got creeped out and went home.

So with the numerous interviews, and research performed for this article I found out this: nothing. Ghosts may or may not exist. Not everyone believes in them, but some people do. Hiking bells may or may not actually kill ghosts. I didn't see any for the time I was out in prime ghost territory, so it just may have been the bell... I don't know. This is a culture rooted in tradition and superstition. I am sure that the older generations of Korean people believe more in ghosts than the younger generation. This generation has Starcraft and horror movies to keep them up at night.

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Hello! Where are you from?! . . .



PHOTO: JASON TEALE

You lookin' at me?

was the one assumption they didn't even try to be polite about.

"Yes," said one source, whom I shall only refer to as "J." "You don't take off your shoes in the house. I clean my house every day,

but whenever I go to a foreigner's house, I see dirt, old dishes, and empty beer bottles. It's very dirty."

Given that many foreign teachers came here directly from university, where we likely either lived in shared

housing with lax housecleaning rules or with forgiving parents, it isn't surprising that our housekeeping styles don't impress Korean visitors. Granted, some of us do clean our apartments with military conscientiousness and consistency, but on the whole, you can't really blame Koreans, whose apartments I have found to be spotless, for having a poor opinion of us in this area.

"They think we're easy or at least morally lax when it comes to sex." This one prompted the most in-depth responses from Koreans, and exposed the sharp difference in perceptions of foreigners between the older, more

xenophobic generation and younger, outward-looking Koreans.

"Hmm...not easy," said one of my sources, wrapping his arms around my shoulders in a friendly hug, just more...free. Korean women and foreign women have different ideas about sex. Maybe some people who only see foreign women on TV or in movies think yes, they always want to have sex. But I know many foreign women, and I think they are not easy. I think it is easier now to have one night stands with Korean women. Seven or eight years ago, this was not possible, but now, yes."

Another aspect of this is Koreans' perspectives on foreigners (mostly men) dating Koreans. Among older Koreans, there is strong disapproval.

"If their daughter has a child with a foreigner," said one of my Korean co-workers, "they won't acknowledge him as part of the family. They want their grandchildren to look like them. Here, some people are still not used to the idea of mixing blood. They think it's bad." Which confirmed the suspicion that I already had: to some Koreans, I don't just look different, but am, in some fundamental way, an entirely different sort of species altogether. Which,

given that the Korean word for foreigner, "waygookeen," literally means "not Korean," isn't that surprising.

Even among younger Koreans who are used to hanging out with foreigners, there are negative perceptions of Korean girls who date foreign men. My coworker phrased it bluntly for me: "People think that she's trading sex for free English lessons. They think all the foreign man wants is sex, and all she wants is to practice her English. It's hard for people to think that they just like each other."

A lot of the negative attitudes that Koreans hold towards foreigners, I discovered, have to do with resentment about the continuing American military presence on the peninsula. While most Koreans preface their statements about the Americans with professions of gratitude for their help, the overwhelming sentiment seems to be that it's time for them to leave.

"It's like you have a fight with your brother," a friend explained to me, "and your neighbour comes to your house. He helps, he stops the fight, and you're grateful to him. But then he stays, he has sex with your daughter, maybe he hits her. You're still happy he helped, but now, you want him to leave. It's time for him to go."

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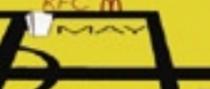


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ENHANCING YOUR MOJO KOREAN STYLE

An interview with a hospital administrator and health professional



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

Man's best friend or source of 'man power'?

BY KEITH ZUFELT
CONTRIBUTOR

Mr. Park was approached in an attempt to get to the bottom of the whole "man power" myth. The following are excerpts from a conversation I had with Mr. Park, written in the best Konglish that I could scribble down.

Q: Mr. Park, we are often told that these products are good for our "Man Power" What exactly do they mean by man power?

(Laughing) Yes, yes, I understand. It mean most often your endurance and performance in a sex. (Points to his groin).

Q: I've heard that deer antler helps a man's power. Is this true? Have there been scientific studies performed to test the effectiveness of deer antler on people's "manpower"? How does it help?

Yeah yeah.... It is the prove. Not just for the man but for the woman, the child the old people.

Q: Are there specific types of deer or only Korean deer?

Korean deer is very nice I think but is very rare. But Korean people is import deer antler from Australia and from Canada.

Q: Would fresh deer antler be better than the powdered stuff they sell in pharmacies? For example: If you caught a deer and ate his antler would that be good?

Yes the farmer is have the deer. Ulsan has the very famous farm in the deer. Some mens go to the farmer and

they kill the deer and with straw suck the blood and drink and eat the antler. But is prohibit in Korea for this but some man do this.

Q: Would female deer antler be good for woman power? (Referring to caribou)

No, only the man deer antler is good. The woman can use the man deer antler for the healthy condition but is not for increase the man-power.

Q: What would happen if a man took female deer antler?

No the woman deer antler is has no effect. Is not use for the medicine.

Q: A Korean friend of mine insists that beau-shin-tang will help my 'manpower'. Is this dish popular in Korea? I've heard only men eat this, is this because it is good for manpower? If a woman was to eat dog would she become more manly?

I don't like taste of the dog meat but is good. Many man eat this food. Is eat first hot day, middle hot day and last hot day. Woman eat too but not many the woman. Is

good for the body health. Is woman so cannot have the effect of man. My internal medicine doctor is prescribe sometimes the dog meat for quickly recovery from the major surgery. In ancient times many man and dog very good friend and so dog meat and man's muscle is contain many same thing. Dog meat is human muscle good matchy so for speed recovery.

Q: Will any dog do? If your dog died could you eat it? Could you steal your neighbor's dog?

The man grow the dog and dog is just for the eat. Is not the pet dog. In old times before if you see dog and you kill and eat the dog but maybe is neighbor's dog.

Q: Does cat improve your 'manpower'? If dog is good for manpower could cat be good for 'womanpower'?

This the funny thought. The cat is not delicious I think. Woman is not matchy with cat. 'Womanpower' is funny thought, but man eat cat is very disgusting thought I think.

Q: Every time my friends go to the doctor they receive an injection in their asses. What is in this injection?

Ahhh yes. You recommend to your friend is find new Doctor. Doctor in Korea is give many injection is do for financial reason. In my hospital injection is give for medical reason. Pill is slow absorbing in stomach and injection is get into blood quickly. Injection is antibiotic for maybe infection or the bacteria.

Q: Why does the nurse always slap your ass?

This is not normal situation for you? In Korea all the nurse is give the injection is hit your hip.

Q: I can only think of two reasons in the western world for slapping someone's ass. The first is a mother with a naughty child using the slap for discipline. The second is in a sexual way.

Yeah, yeah ok..sex ok...You think when you get injection that maybe nurse likes you? (Smiling, making the male half of the doggy position movements and slapping a pretend ass). "Do you want some of this?" he asks his pretend mate.

Thank you very much Mr. Park for enlightening the foreign community on some of the mysteries of Korea.
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