



# THE ULSAN PEAR

VOL. I ISSUE VII

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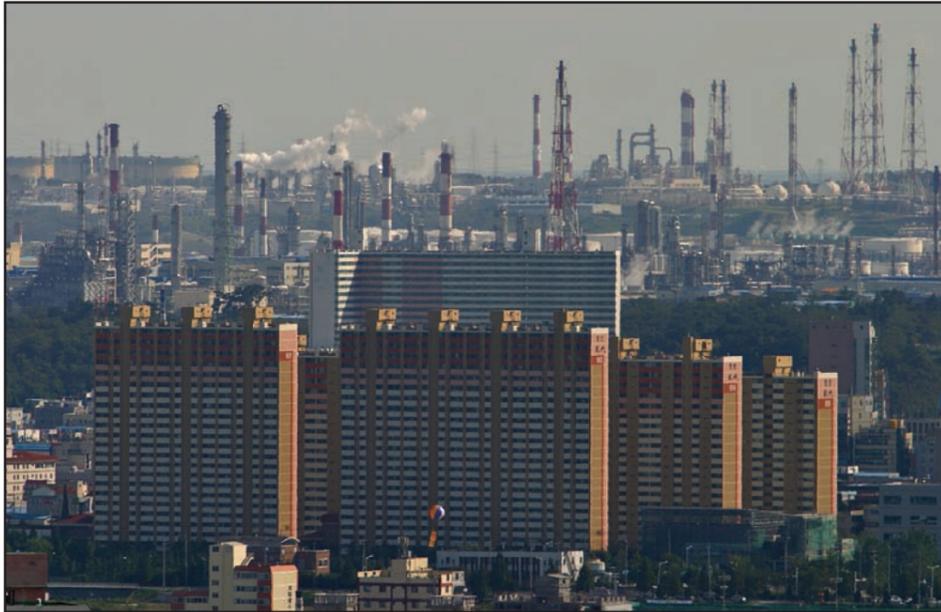
OCTOBER 2004

## JUST WHAT ARE WE BREATHING?

BY EILEEN KEAST  
THE ULSAN PEAR  
RESEARCHED BY  
MEHUL PATEL

It has probably occurred to you more than once, as you wondered on a smoggy morning where the mountains disappeared to or admired the dramatic light and smoke show of the petro-chemical complex, that living in Ulsan isn't the best choice you ever made for your health.

There is no question that Ulsan is a polluted city with a desperate air quality problem. But, just how bad is the situation, and are we putting ourselves at risk by living here?



The Heart of Heavy Industry.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

Ulsan authorities are by no means indifferent to the question of air quality. They maintain a frequently

updated website displaying the air quality index (AQI) of several Ulsan neighborhoods.

[You can check it out for yourself at: [http://air.ulsan.go.kr/aqi/aqi\\_main.html](http://air.ulsan.go.kr/aqi/aqi_main.html)]

Somewhat conveniently, the AQI of the petro-chemical complex never seems to be available however.

*There's no question Ulsan is a polluted city with a desperate air quality problem.*

So how bad is it?

Sometimes, it's really bad. The first day we checked on the AQI of the dong where we run every morning, it was purple. To put this in perspective, the scale starts

at green, goes through yellow, orange, red, purple and ends at maroon.

The US Environmental Protection Agency advises that at this "very unhealthy" level of air pollution, anyone, even if young and healthy, can experience serious health effects. Avoiding moderate and heavy exercise (e.g. running) is strongly recommended.

However, on other days monitoring stations across the city report green (good).

SEE AIR QUALITY PAGE 2

## SECRETS OF THE TEA FIELDS

BY ANNE BELL  
CONTRIBUTOR

If you search "green tea health benefits" in Google you'll get over 367,000 results.

From its humble beginnings as a medicinal brew in China, modern scientific evidence continues to attest to a variety of health benefits associated with green tea.

In addition to its medical benefits, green tea is imbued with a long history of spiritual and mental benefits.

While green tea is sometimes thought to be a uniform beverage consumed throughout East Asia, a wide variety of teas exist, varying from region to region.

More than 4000 years ago in China, tea was brewed with onion, ginger, and orange. This concoction was thought to help stomach problems, bad eyesight and a variety of other ailments.

Nowadays, there is plenty of scientific attention devoted to the pharmaceutical properties of this seemingly innocuous leaf. Its primary benefits include protecting against cancer and cardiovascular disease.

The magical components which make this possible are known as antioxidants.

These agents work to neutralize free radicals, which are unstable molecules naturally present in the body.

SEE GREEN TEA PAGE 4



Boseong Green Tea Fields.

PHOTO: ANNE BELL

BY AMY CHITWOOD  
CONTRIBUTOR

*"Oriental medicine interprets a disease as a manifestation of physiological disharmony of the whole body, not as an isolated, local abnormality of the body."* – Association of Korean Oriental Medicine

I first met Dr. Kim Seong Gyu, Ph. OMD, in May of 2002, when my battle with allergies in Ulsan was driving me nearly to the point of insanity. I had tried every Western medicine possible and nothing was working.

It was suggested that I try acupuncture and I scoffed at it at first. Then after several more days of a runny nose, wheezing, and itching eyes I came to realize it might be

the only option I had left. From the first day of my treatment I knew that I had stumbled into something mysterious yet incredible, because it worked better than any western medication I had ever tried.

Since that point, I have been receiving treatment at Dr. Kim's clinic for over a year and a half and I have come to deeply trust his knowledge of medicine.

He was kind enough to sit down with me and let me interview him, as he shared some insight into his own background, what to expect at a Korean Traditional Medicine clinic, and what exactly are the different options in treatment.

SEE CLIMBING PAGE 3

**HELP THE PEAR!**  
WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED READING THIS RAG, PASS IT ON TO YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY, CO-WORKERS AND STUDENTS!

the Ulsan Pear 2004

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Dear Readers,

I've just returned to Ulsan after a lengthy vacation back home and so am looking at this city once again through fresh eyes. After the clear, clean air of the West Coast of Canada, returning to the industrial excess of Ulsan was as surprising and shocking as it was the first time around.

This month, we've delved into some of the important health issues relating to your stay in Ulsan. It may be the Industrial Capital of Korea, but just how bad is the pollution here really? Check out Eileen's article for some fascinating insight. Keith's article on his hospital visit will surely make anyone double check the health insurance.

Over the next few months we've got some interesting issues lined up and more than ever we're looking to solicit your input. November's issue is going to focus on unique travel opportunities in Korea, so please submit your best stories!

Finally, to all my colleagues here at the Pear, I have to commend them on their great work in keeping this paper afloat in my absence.

Joel Burslem  
Publisher/Editor-In-Chief  
info@ulsanpear.biz

## AIR QUALITY AN ISSUE IN ULSAN

This seems especially true after a rain or on a Monday morning.

Nevertheless, we were a bit doubtful of these readings, and so we calculated the AQI ourselves using the numbers the city provides on hourly levels of pollutants. Surprisingly our results were the same.

*The 'Ulsan lung' is no urban myth.*

In comparison to major cities in North America, Ulsan isn't actually doing that badly however.

We compared pollution levels in downtown Ulsan with those in downtown Atlanta, and found that while Atlanta's air quality peaks and dips more regularly with rush hours, the overall average is about the same. Whether this is good news for Ulsan or bad news for Atlanta is a matter of interpretation.

Ulsan's principal air pollutants are minute particle matter (dust that is small enough to get deep into your lungs and even into your bloodstream) and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). Both are products of industrial and vehicular exhaust.

Prolonged exposure to both of these pollutants can have

serious health side effects. Exposure to high levels of minute particle matter and SO<sub>2</sub> is linked to aggravated asthma, painful breathing, chronic bronchitis, and even premature death.

In fact, a study carried out in Seoul and Ulsan from 1991-1995 showed that there was a strong positive correlation between high daily levels of sulfur dioxide and ozone (another product of industrial and vehicular exhaust) and mortality rates.

So, the 'Ulsan lung' is no urban myth, and these pollutants are what's responsible for the appalling lack of visibility on Ulsan's worst days.

emkeast@alumni.sfu.ca



Thar' she blows!

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

### SULFUR DIOXIDE FACTS

FACT: The annual average visible distance in Korea decreased from 13km in 1996 to 10km in 2000.

Source: Air Quality Policy Division, Ministry of Environment.

FACT: Sulfate particles are the major cause of reduced visibility. SO<sub>2</sub> is generated by industrial facilities such as petroleum refineries, cement manufacturing, and metal processing facilities or from electric utilities, especially those that burn coal.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

FACT: Major air pollution sources in Ulsan are industrial installations, vehicle traffic and space heating during the winter months.

Source: Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, College of Medicine, Yonsei University, Seoul.

FACT: In 2000, South Korea emitted 19,430 metric tons of SO<sub>2</sub> per km<sup>2</sup> of populated area (2<sup>nd</sup> highest concentration in the world).

Source: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Columbia University

#### Ulsan's Sulfur Dioxide Emissions

Item	Unit	Avg.	Annual Pollution Rate						Goal of year 2003
			1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	
SO <sub>2</sub>	PPM/year	0.02	0.018	0.014	0.014	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.010

Source: Ulsan Metropolitan City

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## TRADITIONAL MEDICINE WORKS

### Where did you attend school?

I attended Kyung Hee University in Seoul from 1977 until 1983 and I studied Korean Traditional medicine there. After graduating from university in 1983, I was able to obtain a government license to practice Korean Traditional Medicine.

I opened my clinic in Ujeong-Dong in 1984. It took another five years after opening my clinic to get my PhD in Korean Traditional Medicine.

### Why did you choose Korean Traditional medicine?

My grandfather was a famous Korean Traditional Medicine doctor in Ulsan long ago. I heard about him when I was a young boy, and perhaps the stories were an inspiration for my chosen profession.

As a doctor, I also enjoy helping people, which is also why I became a member of KOMSA (Korean Oriental Medical Service Team Abroad).

KOMSA is an organization that sends doctors to less developed countries in

order to show them what Korean traditional medicine is about and how it can be used as an effective treatment option.

I have traveled to many countries with KOMSA, including India, Ethiopia, and Laos, and we will travel to the Philippines this year.

### What can I expect when I visit a Korean Traditional Medicine clinic?

The doctor will most likely have you lie down on a heated stone table with your shoes and socks off. He or she will then feel certain points (meridians) in your forearms. This is how they determine the flow of 'ki' or energy in your body.

The doctor will then ask you several questions about how you are feeling, your bodily functions, and your lifestyle. Answer truthfully-it will help with determining treatment.

Initially, the doctor may use what looks like a ballpoint pen with a small needle inside and perform a series of quick clicks with the needle on points of your body. This action begins to redirect the flow of ki in the body.



Dr. Kim hard at work.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

### What kinds of treatments are available?

**Acupuncture** - This is when a needle is inserted at a specific point in the body. By doing this doctor is able to control and redirect the flow of energy (ki) in your body to the vital organs that need it most.

There are several kinds of acupuncture, the most common being ear and hand. With hand acupuncture, the doctor will insert thin needles into points of your hand and leave them in for about fifteen minutes.

With ear acupuncture, the doctor will insert tiny needles

into your ear, and tape them so they stay in for a day.

**Moxibustion**- Here, mugwort flowers are pounded and shaped into a cone or stick. This is then placed on the area of the body and allowed to burn. Burning the cone draws heat to the area that is "cold", therefore restoring the flow of energy to the area.

**Herbal Remedies**- Many Oriental Medicine doctors make their own herbal concoctions if you are in need of a certain mixture. Often they don't taste great, but are very effective healing medications.

**Cupping**- The doctor will apply a series of needle-points to the place that is in need of treatment. He or she will then apply a vacuum suction in a glass cup over the area. This is done to draw out the 'bad' blood. [It sounds medieval, but this method is very effective and quickly eases pain as it draws new white blood cells to the affected area]. This is great for deep muscle or ligament injuries.

### What do you think of foreigners trying Korean Traditional Medicine?

I think it's a good idea. It is wise to seek out other treatment options when you are

feeling ill. It's a different kind of treatment that many foreigners are unaware of but I would encourage them to try for themselves before passing judgment.

### How is Oriental Medicine different from Western Medicine?

Oriental medicine deals with healing the mind and spirit to get to the root of the physiological problem. It is often very effective with chronic illnesses. Western medicine focuses on immediate treatment of a specific area with chemicals or other methods. Even though I am a Korean Traditional Medicine doctor, I support using Western medicine, or both if needed.

Dr. Kim's clinic is in Ujeong-dong, across the street from the McDonald's. There are many clinics in Ulsan - the Korean name for an Oriental Medicine doctor is "Hanwisa" (한의사), or just look for the bubbling pot signs.

If you are interested in learning more about Korean Traditional medicine, Dr. Kim suggests you check out the Association of Korean Oriental Medicine web site ([www.koma.or.kr](http://www.koma.or.kr)).

[aec977@yahoo.com](mailto:aec977@yahoo.com)

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## TEA'S MEDICINAL BENEFITS

Free radicals are thought to contribute to the development of several diseases. It just so happens that tea contains a high proportion of antioxidants. In addition, tea possesses antibacterial properties, helps prevent tooth decay and aids weight loss.

Aside from its numerous medical benefits, tea possesses qualities which lend itself to mental and spiritual benefits as well.

In East Asia, tea has been integrated with meditative and religious ceremony for centuries. Tea has often been used as an offering to the gods, and there has long been a close association between green tea and Buddhists, particularly the Zen Buddhists.

Since the preparation of tea greatly affects the taste of the brew, the method used to prepare the tea has received a great deal of scrutiny, and led to the development of intricate tea ceremonies.

The Samurai warriors of Japan, who were deeply schooled in Zen, created a highly ritualized tea ceremony to cleanse and purify their minds.

Lu Yu, a Chinese poet who wrote the first definitive book on tea preparation in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, said that "the ritual of preparing and drinking tea represented a code of symbolic harmony and order reflecting the ideals of cosmos and society."

The Korean Buddhist monk Cho Eui found tea to be so

spiritually engaging that in 1824 he retreated to a hermitage in Jeolla province for 40 years to contemplate the Way of the Tea and compose poems on the subject.

Sitting in a hut for almost half a century reflecting upon the inner meaning of a cup of tea may not appeal to everyone, but even the most mundane of us can appreciate the mind-clearing and calming effect of a good cup of tea.

But which tea to drink? There are many 'teas' to choose from, such as mint, ginger and chamomile tea.

Technically, however, those are infusions, whereas true teas all come from the same plant, the Camellia Sinensis. From this humble plant springs black, oolong, and green teas.

The difference between them is a matter of processing. Green teas are picked and then quickly dried, whereas oolong and black teas are left to oxidize for a while before being dried, black teas for a longer period than oolong teas.

Korean green teas are particularly green, and have a unique taste. Most Korean green teas come from Jeolla province, with plantations being found on the slopes of Jiri Mountain and at the beautiful Boseong Tea Plantation, south of Gwang-ju. Some tea is also grown on Jeju Island.

Finally, an unusual tea is also commonly consumed in Korea, that likely you have been served in a café, restaurant or by a coworker. This is the hyun-mi blend, which is unpolished ground rice mixed with green tea, and explains why it tastes a bit like cereal.

This blend not only has additionally nutritional value, but cuts down on the astringent qualities of green tea, as well as thriftily extends the volume of tea.

*whereisanne@gmail.com*



What's in your cup?

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

## EVENT CALENDAR

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

### SPORTS

**HASH HOUSE HARRIERS** - Every second Sunday (Oct 10, 23) this drinking group with a running problem meets at the foreigners' compound in Bangeojin.  
More info: [blakegc@attglobal.net](mailto:blakegc@attglobal.net)

**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](mailto:ulsanrugby@yahoo.co.uk)  
[www.ulsanrugby.bravehost.com](http://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](mailto:wonshotwanderers@hotmail.com)  
[www.wonshotwanderers.bravehost.com](http://www.wonshotwanderers.bravehost.com)

There are also pick-up soccer games in Mugeodong on Tuesday mornings at 10.  
More info: [buckleyj7@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:usluts@yahoo.com)

### ARTS

**BOOK CLUB** - Meeting once a month at McKenzie's to discuss, critique and rave about a pre-selected book. This month's book is "Blindness" by Jose Saramago.  
More info: [emkeast@alumni.sfu.ca](mailto:emkeast@alumni.sfu.ca)

**HAE KOM PLAYERS** - Welcome to anyone who is interested in the production of a play.  
More info: [sokoredfury@yahoo.com](mailto:sokoredfury@yahoo.com)

**WRITERS' GROUP** - Every other Wednesday (Oct 6, 20, Nov. 3). Share your work, critique, be heard or just listen at McKenzie's at 11pm.  
More info: [sokoredfury@yahoo.com](mailto:sokoredfury@yahoo.com)

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

**SPANISH CONVERSATIONAL GROUP** - All levels are welcome. For anyone who wants to learn or just want to brush up on their Spanish skills.  
More info: [sokoredfury@yahoo.com](mailto:sokoredfury@yahoo.com)

If you have any events you would like listed here, let us know: [info@ulsanpear.biz](mailto:info@ulsanpear.biz)

Excellent Korean Tea Site:  
[www.sogang.ac.kr/~anthony/kortea03.htm](http://www.sogang.ac.kr/~anthony/kortea03.htm)

Raw tea facts:  
[www.teahealth.co.uk/th/facts/8.htm](http://www.teahealth.co.uk/th/facts/8.htm)

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# KOREAN CINEMA CORNER

With Dan Barham  
mrbarham@yahoo.ca

## SILMIDO (Sil-Mi Island)

DIRECTOR: KANG WOO-SUK  
CAST:  
KANG IN-CHAN (SOL KYUNG-GU)  
HAN SEUNG-PIL (CHUNG JAE-YOUNG)  
CHOI JAE-HYUN (AHN SUNG-KI)  
SERGEANT JO (HUH JIN-HO).



As with any film based on historical events, dramatic license is taken with the story. Under the direction of director Kang Woo-suk the film moves along steadily without getting too caught up in the army brutality - brutality that I at least have come to expect from any Korean military movie and the clipped, staccato dialogue that accompanies movies of the genre.

What takes this movie that step above is Kang's ability to use the historical framework to comment on Korean history. Specifically to comment on Park Chung Hee's Korea, a period when the growth of South Korea and the termination of the Red threat was more important than civil liberties the deaths of a 'few' disposable civilians. Kang asks 'What kind of Korea created Unit 684 and then abandoned it?'

While this movie is at times violent and the comic relief a bit predictable, this is an excellent movie that not only will entertain you, but also offer a bit of an education in Korean history.

Check it out at your local DVD store, this movie shouldn't be hard to find and is well worth watching.

One of this past year's two blockbuster films, Silmido is one of those stories that would be excellent if it were just fiction.

However, that this film is based on true events makes it all that much more intense, since the whole time you're sitting there going, something like this did actually happen!

After the films release, the Korean government finally admitted that 'Unit 684' did actually exist. Though it didn't say much else on the matter. It's this element of fact behind the fiction that takes viewing this film to a whole other level.

The film begins in the year 1968, as a North Korean unit steals into Seoul; their objective is to assassinate then Korean President Park Chung Hee. The North Korean attack is stopped before they fulfill their objective

and the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) considers the idea and decides that a retaliation is fair play.

The KCIA recruits 31 men, most of them civilians with criminal records and sends them to Sil Mi Island, or 'Silmido.' Under the supervision of the Air Force these men were trained for two years to prepare for their mission: Attack Pyongyang and assassinate the 'Great Leader' Kim Il-sung.

However as governments often do, things changed while the men were in training and when North/South relations thawed in 1969 the KCIA decided to abandon the project, abandoning the men of 'Unit 684' at the same time.

These are the events that the film 'Silmido' is based on.

# WHERE THE F\*CK (WAS) EVERYONE?

WITH JAMES DUGGAN



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

24-5  
At Ulsan Univeristy  
Theatre  
Sept. 18, 2004

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004 I had the pleasure of seeing 24-Five, a six actor one-act ensemble piece staged by The Hae Kom Players at Ulsan University.

Written by Matt Wurdeman, and collectively directed, the play was well attended by a largely foreigner audience of nearly 200 people, which, according to Wurdeman, was the biggest single showing the play has pulled.

Having visited the same theatre a few weeks before for the well meaning but often hard to follow production of Peter Shaffer's Black Comedy, I was looking forward to another enjoyable night out and was not disappointed.

Curtain up.

A simple and Spartan set of six black metal folding stools and an equal number of simply adorned actors.

All lying asleep, all waking and preparing for their day, which is, the play seems to say, their everyday and, by extension, our everyday.

The play consisted of a series of six well-delivered if maybe not too cliché monologues interwoven with the common thread of workplace activities, starting with the morning ritual of coffee and ending with the cab ride home.

Each character, the coffee shop worker (Patrick Smith), the office manager (Rachelle Mirion), C.E.O (Matt Wurdeman), bartender (Emily Thompson), taxi driver (John Buckley) and waitress (Jen McDonald), would in turn expound upon the drudgery of their work, and then there would be a transition to the next monologue.

I was pleasantly surprised with ability of the actors, and I especially enjoyed the transition scenes in elevators, buses, and subways, which the actors conveyed effectively with little more than a few movements. The scenes involving choral action, whether it was the zombie coffee ritual or the

mechanical office symphony were also good.

What few lighting effects I saw were simple but effective and the sound effects, constructed on computer by Smith were more complex than I expected.

The play ends in much the same way it began, with the actors lying together centre stage, the sun going down on yet another day, with the sense that it will happen again the next day.

Curtain down.

24-Five reminded me of the student one-acts I saw back in University: a decent show made from simple but very effective pieces.

The next performance by The Hae Kom Players is scheduled for sometime this December. Overall, I was very happy with the show and considered my 3000 won well spent.

I'd happily give up the price of a beer for a night like this any time.

wtfie@ulsanpear.biz

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

Brew Pub

# McKenzie's

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e-mail: kenzie63@netian.com  
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 ● May's Dept.  
 ● Fire Station

Riverside of Taehwa  
foot bridge

## FILTHY SAYS

24-5  
@ Ulsan U.

- Great night out
- Cheap entertainment
- John B. falling off his bar stool
- No free popcorn or squid
- Happy expat community



Filthy gives :  
5 Shamrocks out of 5

# GOING UNDER THE KNIFE

BY KEITH ZUFELT  
THE ULSAN PEAR

Like so many waybooks who come to Korea, I didn't bother to purchase any health insurance before leaving my home country.

The reason for this was that I was under the impression that I was invincible and that my employer had medical insurance to cover me.

ECG's. Finally, I was led into the last room, where I assumed I would receive my physical exam.

Good, I thought to myself, the surgeon is actually going to take a look and see what is what.

A doubt started to creep into my mind as more nurses and orderlies with medical equipment filed into the room.

Here is where the story turns ugly. AFTER the surgery my interpreter informed me that I had to stay in the hospital for five days and that the total cost would be 1.5 million won.

At this point I also found out that my boss was not liable to pay 50% of the bill since I did not tell him that I wanted medical insurance. The doctor and the hospital administrator then decided to give me a discount and allowed me to shorten my stay to an outpatient basis. I went home that afternoon, three hours after my first contact with a Korean doctor, 500,000 won poorer and in charge of my own recovery.

My story has a semi-happy ending (I'm still alive), but few hard lessons were learned. My advice: check with your employer about what if any medical insurance you have. Finally get a quote from the doctor before the anesthetic goes in. Remember, like everything else in Korea, there is room for negotiation.

Don't be shy of the doctors. They are trained, professional and kind, just not so forthcoming with the whys and hows of treatment. Apparently Koreans don't question them, but this doesn't mean you can't. Ultimately you are responsible for your own health and well-being.  
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I told myself that this was because it was an instructional hospital, and they were just interns curious to see their first Caucasian patient.

My interpreter Mr. Park, then informed me that the surgeon was going to administer a local anesthetic. Perhaps this was so I wouldn't experience any discomfort as I was examined, I rationalized to myself, growing more desperate as the minutes passed.

All doubts of what was about to happen to me were erased as I watched a tray of surgical tools, retractors, absorbent pads, sutures (I swear I saw stainless steel BBQ tongs), and of course several scalpels being wheeled past me.

I was about to undergo surgery in South Korea, 10000 km from home, and alone.



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

## Enter If You Dare...

Unfortunately, I had waded into the murky financial waters of Korean healthcare and found that I was badly mistaken on both accounts.

My story starts in Mugeo-dong at a private practice run by Dr. Lee, a GP with pretty good English. Unfortunately, for me, Dr. Lee took one look at me and told me that he had a friend who was a surgeon.

"Surgeon?" I gasped, not quite to myself.

"Your case is severe," replied Dr. Lee. Within two minutes he had made me an immediate appointment with his surgeon friend at a local hospital.

What I believed was going to be a simple examination quickly turned in to a series of chest x-rays, urine analyses, meningitis, hepatitis, AIDS and TB tests, and



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# A DDT-FREE KOREA?

BY PATRICK SMITH  
CONTRIBUTOR

VASQUEZ

*Why not roll some canisters of  
CN-20 down there.  
Nerve gas the whole nest?*

HUDSON

*Look, man, let's just bug out  
and call it even, okay?*

- Scene from Aliens

You see the truck and you reckon, that guy should get his engine checked out – that exhaust is messed up.

But in time you learn that those bilious clouds that crowds of toddlers are skipping and playing in on the street are in fact bug killer. Poison.

When I asked a couple of Koreans what their fondest childhood memory was, it came as no surprise when they responded: "Following the So Dok Cha!"

The mosquito spray truck is one of the tools used to combat malaria, and is one of the factors responsible for South Korea (DMZ excluded) being malaria free.

Well, not quite free. According to the World Health Organization's malaria bulletin board, Korea was malaria free until quite recently. A new strain of the Anopheles Mosquito, an Uber Moskito resistant to the #1 pesticide of recent bug killing history, DDT, has been found here.

So does the K-Peninsula use DDT as part the bug spray programs? Well, if the Uber Moskito has grown resistant to it, then would it be too logical to surmise that DDT has and is being used?

As it is a persistent compound, DDT is perfect for spraying onto buildings, into walls etc. This is known as residual spraying and is common practice in Korea.

DDT has been banned in North America as it poses a potential risk to human health. The components of DDT are known to be harmful to the reproductive and endocrine systems.

I'm no scientist but it seems that indiscriminate, unforwarned spraying of clouds of toxic chemicals in densely populated areas is...well, questionable.

As is not advising children that chasing the Flied Piper could be detrimental to their fragile endocrine systems.

So, avoid the Bug Truck and if you are a teacher and your kids are dribbling zombies, then nil disparandum, it ain't your abysmal teaching skills, it may just be that gaseous cocktail kicking in.  
*ps.smith@zoom.co.uk*



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

When bugs attack!



## DID YOU KNOW?

SK Telecom offers a downloadable service that emits high frequency sound waves from your phone in order to repel mosquitoes.

Source: Korea Times,  
07/09/2003

# ALL HOPPED UP AND NOWHERE TO GO



Our test subjects assemble.

BY JOEL BURSLEM  
THE ULSAN PEAR

It's late. Energy levels are lagging. Maybe you feel a little under the weather. Or maybe you've just had a long night out and you need a quick pick-me-up before you head off to work.

There's always coffee to keep you awake, but that's been done before and besides, that watery hazelnut crap they serve at most joints around here just doesn't really cut it. So, out of sheer curiosity, our team set out to review Korean energy drinks to see what they really do.

Our intrepid group gathered at the Family Mart for our late night taste-test challenge. The fluorescent lighting lent a suitable clinical air to the proceeding. To establish a baseline for this experiment, we each measured our starting heart rates. Despite some effort, we were each able to find one.

Each drink was judged on overall look, consistency and most importantly taste. To avoid any undue marketing impressions, each was served in a plain-paper drinking cup. First up on deck:

## 1. Ssanghwa

- Dark, syrupy texture
- Bitter yet sweet flavor
- Hint of nutmeg ("like Thanksgiving...umm, Pumpkin Pie!")
- Can be served warm



6 out of 10

## 2. Saeng Saeng Ton

- Yellow, urine tint ("... looks like Mountain Dew!")
- Tangy and very sweet
- Slightly medicinal after-taste
- Possibly unrelated kidney pains reported by one test subject



2 out of 10

## 3. Royal Jelly

- Light brown color
- Honey scented
- Slight ginger flavor ("... like sweet dirt!")
- Aftertaste left some of us with a dry tongue



2 out of 10

Three drinks in and heart rates in 3 of 4 test subjects were markedly increased. Most of us reported a peculiar sensation developing. These drinks were probably never meant to be combined in this fashion, but nevertheless we continued onwards.

## 4. Wee Poong Dang Dang

- Draws roars of approval from the crowd for best name
- Cloudy, brown color
- Bitter, muddy flavor extracts cries of disgust



0 out of 10

## 5. Condition

- Golden, honey hue
- Light consistency
- Easy to drink
- Sweet, candy-like flavor ("...kinda like Tang")



7 out of 10

## 6. Thank You

- Honey brown color
- Citrusy-sweet flavor
- No aftertaste at all
- Mysterious little pills may add to the buzz



9 out of 10





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## AND THE WINNER IS...

Thank You came out the clear winner, though we still can not tell you what is in the pills that accompany it.

The loser was Wee Poong Dang Dang, which tasted very much like licking the underside of a soccer boot.

At this point we'd consumed six different energy drinks in a single sitting, ingesting a wild and undecipherable cocktail of herbal and chemical ingredients.

Leaving the sanctuary of the Family Mart, we ventured into the cool night air. Finding focus proved to be difficult, as was resisting the urge to skip down the street.

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## GETTING OUT OF ULSAN PALGONGSAN PROVINCIAL PARK

BY MATT WURDEMAN  
CONTRIBUTOR

Just 22 kilometers north of Daegu, a quick 2 hour train ride from Ulsan, lies Palgongsan Provincial Park. At 122 km<sup>2</sup>, it is Korea's largest provincial park, and is home to magnificent peaks, valleys, views and monuments.

With over 60 kilometers of hikeable trails, your hiking options are virtually endless. You can take a quick 2km stroll up to beautiful Pagyesa temple or brave the full-day 18km trek that spans the entire ridgeline.

The nice thing about this mountain range is that there are multiple bail out points. So if you find you've bitten off more than you can chew, just head downhill. All the trails end in a village where public transportation is readily available.

There are some awesome things to see here, so don't forget your camera. The three main attractions of Palgongsan are Pagyesa Temple, Donghwasan Temple and Gatbawi.

Donghwasan is home to Korea's largest Buddha statue of Unification. At 33m high and 15m wide, it's visible from many kilometers away just about anywhere along the ridgeline.

Donghwasan is a bit more crowded than Pagyesa but the impressive statue alone makes it well worth it.

Gatbawi is a giant statue of a seated medicinal Buddha carved into the side of a mountain.

Gatbawi is famous for granting each of its visitors one wish. It granted mine, so be thinking of one before you get there. This is the most crowded area of the park, especially on Sundays. And it's a bitch of a hike, 2km straight up a stone staircase. But granted wishes don't come cheap.

The trails range in difficulty, with the Pagyesa course being moderate and the Gatbawi/Dongbong course being strenuous. And if physical activity isn't your thing, there's no shame in taking the Skyline.

As for backpacking, there are plenty of helicopter landing areas perfect for setting up camp. There's no water once you get up along the peaks, so plan ahead.

For mountain bikers, there's a great trail that starts from Donghwasan village and goes up to the Palgongsan Skyline Observatory.

At 800 meters-plus elevation, it has both technical uphill and downhill singletrack. But if you're one of those lazy bastards who doesn't like to work for their downhill, you can take the skyline up for around 3,000won.

Another nice aspect of this trail is that it's far less crowded, as most people opt for the cable cars.

This is a good thing, as I've noticed that 200 pounds of man and metal hurtling towards a Korean at 30 km/h doesn't seem to be sufficient impetus to make them get out of the way.



Watching over the Park

PHOTO: MATT WURDEMAN



# FLIK

English Magazine for Expats Living in Ulsan  
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Get your copy of FLIK today or check out our website at <http://flik.hhi.co.kr>

Notice: FLIK is looking for correspondents.  
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If you are interested contact Jin Lee  
(leejin26@hhi.co.kr).

Palgongsan is renowned for its fall colors, prime time being mid-October through November. Whatever you decide to do there, you won't be disappointed.

### How to get there:

From Ulsan Train Station, go to Dong-Daegu station. There is also an Express bus you can catch that will take you from Ulsan to Daegu

Bus Terminal (which is right next to Dong-Daegu Station).

At the Station hop on bus #401 for Pagyesa, #104 for Gatbawi and #131 for Donghwasan, and take it to the end of the line.

You can ask at the tourist information booth where exactly to catch the bus.

[sokoredfury@yahoo.com](mailto:sokoredfury@yahoo.com)

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