

BONENKAI IN JAPANESE DEPARTMENT

To send away 2009 and welcome the year 2010, the Department of Japanese held a Bonenkai, literally “forget the year gathering,” at the first floor of the Foreign Language Building noon December 30.

Bonenkai, a Japanese drinking party that takes place at the end of the year, is generally held among groups of co-workers or friends. The purpose of the party, as its name implies, is to forget the woes and troubles of the past year. The Japanese style Bonenkai in TKU features typical Japanese food sushi, miso and red bean soup, attracted students to stay in a long line in the hope of having a taste of genuine Japanese food as well as enjoying the Awa dance and Japanese dance performances. Dancers of the traditional Japanese Awa dance all dressed in Japanese style attire and did the dance in energetic way. Also, members of the Japanese Culture Club, dressed in kimono, done the traditional Japanese dance, attracting the attention of the event participants. Many of them took pictures of these lovely dancers.

One of the viewers Chen Pei-yu, a junior in the Department of Management Sciences & Decision Making, said that Awa dancers have done a great job in creating a joyful atmosphere of the event. “I really thought that I was part of a festival in Japan,” she noted. Following the Japanese dancing performances came the Mochi or glutinous rice pounding event. According to Dr. Chiyo Kuroshima, a Japanese lecturer in the department, eating glutinous rice is a tradition in her country which symbolizes reunion. And therefore, every household in Japan would pound Mochi or glutinous rice with wooden mallet.

During the Bonenkai, many participants tried on the pounding the famous food in New Year in Japan. In fact, there were some many people had tried with the pounding that made the wooden mallet broke. Some even joked about the pounding process, saying that it would help him to forget his anger about writing a thesis. Chuang Shun-chu, a senior in the Department of Mathematics said that wooden mallet is really heavy. But he said he really enjoyed the process. (~Yeh Yun-kai)

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