

Hello.

I'm Melodie Cook and until about 2 years and 3 months ago, I used to live here in beautiful Nagasaki and had the good fortune to be on the Nagasaki JALT executive committee for several years, first as membership chair and then as program chair. Now I live in Niigata, but when I heard the sad news of Tim's passing, I felt that I had come here to both mourn and also celebrate his life with you.

To be honest, I can't say that I knew Tim very well. As many of you know, although he was a conspicuous figure about town and recognizable, especially because of his hat, Tim was also a very private person and kept many things, like his age, to himself.

However, what I do know, and what was clearly obvious to anyone who knew him, was that he had a great big heart. He was the embodiment of his passion: peace. He was one of the most gentle, caring, sweet, unassuming, and modest men I've ever had the pleasure to meet in my lifetime. He was a big, darling, perspiring teddy bear of a guy and I know that wherever he is now, he's blushing and sweating, listening to me sing his very well deserved praises.

I loved Tim. We all loved Tim. Who could not love Tim? Tim was the embodiment of love. He loved his work, his students, his friends, and Nagasaki with all his heart. And he loved JALT. He put his whole soul into Nagasaki JALT and as a result had over 200 people receiving his newsletter. During my time on the executive committee, some of us wanted stricter screening and harsher standards for presenters, but I don't think Tim ever really went along with that idea. For him, JALT was to be a place where the audience was always open and friendly and where you could, like at karaoke, make a few mistakes, but still garner applause.

I was just looking at Tim's page on face book and there was a section that said "pictures of you and Tim Allan." In almost every picture the two of us are in, we are sitting side by side or near each other smiling and either holding booze or booze is sitting on the table in front of us. Now, I don't know if the smiling was due to our proximity or the booze, but I'd like to think maybe it was 70% proximity and 30% booze.

Since the news of his passing was announced on facebook, numerous people have written to give their condolences, express their shock, and share their thoughts. Many wish him peace and say how much he'll be missed. Many students thank him for all he did for them. Many express the great privilege it was to have known him. However, his long-time friend and colleague Karen Masatsugu writes: "Damn it Allan, now I'm going to have to teach your class". And I think this quote honours Tim the most. Karen, who has been, and still is suffering greatly for the loss of the rock that is Tim Allan, finds a joke in the midst of her grieving. Well done, girlfriend!

Before I end, I'd like to do a little business on Tim's behalf. I heard that Nagasaki JALT is in need of executive members, obviously a president, too. Of course, no one could ever fill Tim's enormous shoes in exactly the same way, but I urge and encourage you to get involved. Please show your love for and belief in the same things Tim did. Please keep JALT going and do it not only for Tim, but also for yourselves. He believed in JALT because he believed in you. If you really want to honour Tim, please carry on his work.

And now, the top three things I will always remember about Tim:

Number 1: His hat. I was sharing the sad news of Tim's passing with Ian Munby in Hokkaido, who has been a guest speaker at JALT meetings and he said, and I agree, that no one could wear a hat with such dignity as Tim.

Number 2: Dinosaur hands.

Number 3: Bad puns. Tim was truly the king, but I waited patiently, because I knew that the law of averages was on my side, and that a gem would be likely to drop every say, 100 or so groaners.

One more thing, Tim submitted his doctoral thesis this past week. And so, I think it would please him, wherever he may be, if you would refer to him as Dr. Tim from now on.

Goodbye, beloved Dr. Tim. It won't be the same without you, and we won't be the same for having known you.