

THE Canadian

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN JAPAN

Happy
Birthday!

Part 2:
2001-2025

cccj 

Issue 4 2025 ¥900

thecanadian.cccj.or.jp

CCCJ 50th ANNIVERSARY & GALA

+

Ken Theriault Leaves
Costco Japan on a High

•

Wilf Wakely's Impact
on the CCCJ's Second
Quarter Century

•

Letter from
Ambassador Ian McKay





AIR CANADA SIGNATURE CLASS

Experience our industry-leading, end-to-end premium travel experience, available on flights from Japan to Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal, with convenient connections across Canada and the U.S.

Air Canada Signature Class passengers are treated to exclusive service and amenities on board, including superior dining and beverage service, an amenity kit, priority check-in, security, boarding, baggage handling, and more.

OUR SIGNATURE CLASS CABIN FEATURES:

- Executive Pods which convert to a fully flat bed: up to 203.2 cm (6' 7") long
- Lumbar support and massage functions
- 100% cotton duvet
- Adjustable pneumatic headrest and cushion for customizable comfort
- State-of-the-art entertainment system with an 18" touchscreen TV, a video touch handset, and noise-cancelling headphones

For more information visit aircanada.com



Contents

2025 | Issue 4



Celebrating the Chamber's second quarter century
p. 10



Against all odds:
the smart money was on Walmart but Ken had the last laugh
p. 20

Sarah Casanova & Philippe Godbout share their communication secrets
p. 22

5 Letter from the Chair
Marc Bolduc

8 Message from Ian McKay, Canada's Ambassador to Japan

8 From the editor
John R. Harris

CCCJ's 50th, part two

10 Our fabulous Golden Maple Leaf Gala
John R. Harris

16 Wilf Wakely: driving force in CCCJ's 2nd quarter-century
Greg Rozitis, Neil Van Wouw, Marc Bolduc

20 Ken Theriault, the guy from Saskatchewan who built Costco Japan
John R. Harris

22 Communication advice from our experts
John R. Harris

24 In summary
A briefing on our main features in Japanese





www.cccj.or.jp

**The Canadian Chamber of
Commerce in Japan
La Chambre de commerce du
Canada au Japon**

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan is a private sector, not-for-profit business organization founded in 1975 to promote the development of commerce between Canada and Japan.

CIC Tokyo
Toranomon Hills Business Tower 15F
1-17-1 Toranomon, Minato-ku,
Tokyo 105-6415
Tel: +81 (0)3 6807-3967

The Canadian is published four times per year.

Editor John R. Harris (Speechwriter Inc.)
Art Director Andrew Potheary (itsumo music)
Board Advisor Kayo Ito

Publisher The Canadian Chamber of
Commerce in Japan



@cccjapon



/cccjapon



bit.ly/cccjapon



/cccjapon

Representing some 46 business sectors, the CCCJ is a member-driven, member-focused organization and the longest-serving Canadian chamber of commerce in Asia. With over 400 members, the CCCJ represents a broad cross-section of businesspeople (including entrepreneurs) from Canada, Japan and other countries. The membership encompasses Canadian companies and individuals with ties to Japan as well as Japanese companies and individuals with ties to Canada.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS



Chair

MARC BOLDUC | chair@cccj.or.jp
GEA Japan, Senior Director



Vice-Chair

PETER ARMSTRONG | vicechair@cccj.or.jp
Partner, DLA Piper



Secretary

RIYO WHITNEY
Ontario Virtual School, Regional Director (Japan)



Treasurer

AI NAKAGAWA
Colliers International



Governor

PAUL BRAGANZA
CEO, Rain Interactive



Governor

SEIJI OMOTE
JK Holdings Co., Ltd.



Governor

TOMOKO EBINE
Senior Manager
Mitsui & Co., Ltd.



Governor

GREG ROZITIS
Invest Alberta



Governor

DONOVAN GORDON
CEO, ELITES 1st



Governor

ANNAMARIE SASAGAWA
Hitachi, Ltd.



Governor

CHRISTIAN HOWES
Counsellor Commercial (Ontario) at
the Embassy of Canada in Japan



Governor

NEIL VAN WOUW
CEO, Vanten K.K.



Governor

KAYO ITO
CEO, NTT Ltd.
Japan Corporation



Governor

JIM ZHANG
Senior Manager
The Executive Centre



Governor

SHAWN LAWLOR
Managing Director
Canada Wood

Letter from the Chair

by **Marc Bolduc**
CCCJ Chair

This year has marked a truly golden milestone in the CCCJ's history: our 50th Anniversary. Since its founding in 1975 the Chamber has served as the cornerstone of the Canada-Japan business relationship, growing from a small collective of businesspeople into a thriving and influential non-profit organization that embodies the depth of the economic and cultural ties between our two nations.

The CCCJ's journey over the past five decades is testament to sustained collaboration and a shared pursuit of prosperity. Our core mission has always been clear: to foster a dynamic and inclusive business environment, provide a unified voice for Canadian interests and advocate policies that benefit our diverse membership. Through periods of rapid technological change, global economic shifts and evolving regional pressures, the Chamber has consistently adapted to play a pivotal role in shaping the bilateral relationship.

This year we have had several notable achievements, starting with participation in various events related to the Osaka Expo, supported by our newly created Kansai Committee. We attended the Canada in Asia Conference in Singapore and hosted 17 fellow Indo-Pacific Canadian Chambers in Osaka. We also continued to present highly successful event series, such as the Net-Zero Forums spotlighting Canada's role in supporting Japan's energy security and transition. Plus, the outstanding series of events led by our Global Diversity Management Committee led by Governors Tomoko Ebine and Ai Nakagawa.

The Golden Maple Leaf Gala 2025

The pinnacle of our 50th-anniversary celebrations was our Gala, held on November 14th at the new Fairmont Tokyo. Attended by 220 guests, this year's edition of the annual Gala was a glittering commemoration of the Chamber's legacy. Its theme, "*Celebrating our legacy,*

embracing our future," perfectly captured the spirit of the evening.

Guests enjoyed an evening of fine dining and entertainment along with a congratulatory address by Ambassador Ian McKay and a toast led by yours truly. One highlight was the awarding of the CCCJ's Business Legacy Award to Ken Theriault, retiring head of Costco Japan, in honor of his outstanding support for the Canadian community in Japan.

This year we were gratified to receive many generous sponsorships, including two business-class tickets to Canada from Platinum Sponsor Air Canada. I would like to thank all our Platinum, Gold, Diamond, VIP Reception, Ruby, Cocktail Reception and Pearl Sponsors (listed on P.15) for their kind support. Thanks no less to our Gala Committee led by Governors Riyo Whitney and Donovan Gordon. Their hard work paid off with an outstanding celebration.

Looking ahead at the next 50 years

As we look ahead beyond our 50th anniversary, we can be proud of our achievements as we rededicate ourselves to the Chamber's foundational mandate, fostering connections in crucial areas: trade, investment, culture and education. Our recently elected and more diverse Board of Governors, with the support of our newly hired Office Manager, Meabh Reidy, is poised to lead the CCCJ into its next chapter, ensuring continued transparency, accountability and innovation in serving the Canada-Japan business community.

Speaking of whom, we are delighted to welcome our new Office Manager, Meabh Reidy, who hails from Limerick



Ireland and who has links to our most Irish of provinces, Newfoundland. I hope all members have a chance to meet her. And by the way, her first name rhymes with "wave."

Finally, our 50th anniversary is more than a chronological benchmark. It is a profound celebration of a half-century of friendship, shared enterprise and mutual prosperity between Canada and Japan, setting the stage for an even more collaborative future. 🍁

Our 50th anniversary is more than a chronological benchmark. It is a profound celebration of friendship, shared enterprise and mutual prosperity.

Canada & Japan: Looking Ahead to 2026

Message from **Ian McKay**
Canada's Ambassador to Japan

As we enter 2026, Canada and Japan stand at a pivotal moment in our partnership. The past year strengthened our friendship and expanded our cooperation, but the year ahead will be defined by how we respond together to a rapidly changing global environment. With geopolitical shifts and technological disruptions reshaping the international landscape our partnership offers stability, creativity and common purpose.

The Indo-Pacific is central to Canada's future, and Japan, as the world's fourth-largest economy, is a cornerstone of this engagement. Bilateral trade already exceeds \$36 billion annually, and Japan is Canada's fourth-largest foreign investor. These figures underscore the scale of our economic relationship, but the real story lies in how we continue to deepen and diversify it.

By working together, Canada and Japan are building a stronger, more resilient partnership that draws on our complementary strengths. Canada's energy, food and critical minerals will continue to support Japan's security and affordability goals, while Japan's investment and industrial expertise will enhance Canada's clean energy, advanced manufacturing and technology sectors. This collaboration is already shaping resilient supply chains in critical minerals, batteries and advanced technologies, combining Canada's research depth and clean energy resources with Japan's formidable industrial base. Looking ahead, energy cooperation will expand further as Canada advances collaboration on hydrogen, nuclear power and carbon-capture technologies, alongside its role as a stable supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Together, these efforts will be critical to achieving both countries' climate and energy transition objectives, ensuring that

our partnership not only meets today's challenges but also creates shared prosperity for the future.

In this dynamic environment, the CCCJ will play an increasingly important role as it moves forward in its second half century. For fifty years since it was founded in 1975, the Chamber has promoted commerce between Canada and Japan, advocated for Canadian business interests and provided a platform for networking, information exchange and policy dialogue. Its presence has ensured that Canadian companies have a trusted partner to navigate Japan's evolving market, while its ability to connect entrepreneurs, policymakers and industry leaders continues to strengthen the vibrant and resilient Canada-Japan commercial relationship. The CCCJ's close ties with other Canadian chambers across Asia have also served to broaden and reinforce Canada's presence in the Indo-Pacific.

As Ambassador, I see first-hand how the CCCJ amplifies Canada's presence and strengthens our ties to Japan. Through seminars, advocacy and networking events, the Chamber equips Canadian businesses with the tools to succeed and helps Japanese partners understand the opportunities that Canada offers. The CCCJ's role as a bridge of connectivity, complementing the work of governments helps to ensure that our commercial ties continue to grow.

On the occasion of the CCCJ's 50th Anniversary, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to its members and friends for their dedication and contribution to strengthening the deep bonds between our two countries. With your continued engagement, Canada and Japan are well positioned to build a future of shared prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. ✨

**By working together,
Canada and Japan
are building a
stronger, more
resilient
partnership**



A very long, fun day!

Message from the editor,
John R. Harris

Sometimes, making this magazine is fun. Like November 14 when I got to attend the Chamber's Gala, thanks to Paul Braganza who kindly gifted me the ticket he couldn't use. I had a great time... but it was a very long day.

Just before the Gala I was privileged to join the sayonara party for Ken Theriault, the retiring head of Costco Japan. Held in a huge ballroom packed with Costco folks from across Japan, as you will read in my profile of Ken on P.20, it was a very emotional event.

I've known Ken since about 2002 when I began making monthly treks from the Chiba countryside to Makuhari, Costco's first Kanto-area warehouse. After running into each other in the aisles and finding out we were both Canadian, Ken and I began a conversation that continues to this day. That's why writing a profile of Ken has made this issue such fun.

Let me put Ken's achievements in context.

When I first moved to Japan in the 1980s, everyone at home asked, "How can you live there? It must be so expensive." And it was. Partly that was due to 'endaka,' the high yen. Even more so though, life in Japan was costly because the economy was egregiously tilted in favor of producers and against consumers.

We paid seven times the world price for rice to protect farmers, large supermarkets were restricted to favor 'mom & pop shops,' and cheap imports were shut out wherever possible. Banks even turned their ATMs off from Friday evening till Monday morning to prevent people from withdrawing their own cash.

Some of the worst gouging came from wholesalers. An article I read in the late '80s, etched in my mind, described the typical wholesale chain for a can of Campbell's Soup. After 12 layers of wholesalers, the final transaction was six cans to a 'mom & pop shop' – *on consignment!* No wonder life here was so incredibly expensive!

When Ken was setting up Costco's first Japan warehouse near Fukuoka in 1999, he said that everyone strongly advised him to go through wholesalers. But he refused. Eventually the producers gave in and let him buy direct, and Ken suspects it was because they thought Costco was doomed to fail. With 'mom & pop' proprietors now stocking their shops at Costco, and visitors amazed at how affordable Japan is, Ken has had the last laugh.

For that, and for opening Costco's doors to dozens of Canadian products, Ken richly deserves the CCCJ's Business Legacy Award which was presented to him at the Gala.

My evening didn't end with the Gala, but with a midnight *ni-ji-kai* (after-party) with another farm boy from Saskatchewan, Jon Heese. Son of a Mennonite pastor, and one of 10 siblings growing up in a hamlet near Swift Current. Fast-forward, he ran a bar in Tsukuba until toughened drunk-driving laws scuttled his business. So he became a Japanese citizen and ran for city council. Now he's what we'd call an MLA in Ibaraki's prefectural legislature. His remarkable story is coming in our next issue. 🍁

Your Cargo Gateway to North America

Edmonton International Airport (YEG) connects Japan to North America with a circumpolar route.

- Future International Cargo Hub with 2,000 acres of sustainable cargo and logistics development
- North America's first and only scheduled cargo drone delivery route operating locally at an airport
- 24/7/365 uncongested operations
- IATA CEIV Pharma certified

Position your cargo for success
flyeia.com/cargo



MEMBERSHIP

The CCCJ
thanks all our

Members

SUSTAINING MEMBERS



CORPORATE MEMBERS

Alberta Japan Office
A&O Shearman
APEX K.K.
Bennett Jones LLP
Blackberry | QNX
BMO Japan Securities Ltd.
British Columbia Trade and Investment Office - Japan
Brookfield Asset Management
Calgary Economic Development
Canada Packers Japan Inc.
Canada Wood
Canadian National Railway
Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC)
CIBC World Markets (Japan) Inc.
Colliers International Japan
DLA Piper Tokyo Partnership
Edmonton International Airport (YEG)
Fasken
Forvis Mazars
Grand Hyatt Tokyo
Hyllife Pork Japan Ltd.
Interex Forest Products (Japan) Ltd.
Invest Alberta
JAL CAE Flight Training Co., Ltd.
Japan Gold KK
Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (JCCC)
JK Holdings Co., Ltd.
Linamar Japan Inc.
Manning Elliott LLP
McGill (Desautels Faculty of Management)

McMillan LLP
Meiho Facility Works Limited
Milestonetc
Mosaic Forest Management
Niagara Region Economic Development
Nishimura & Asahi
Northleaf Capital Partners
Ontario Trade & Investment Office, Tokyo
Prinoth K.K.
Quebec Delegation Tokyo
Rio Tinto
Robert Walters Japan K.K.
Royal Bank of Canada
Sankyo Corporation
Saskatchewan, Canada
Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance
Sprucegrove Investment Management
TD Securities (Japan) Co., Ltd.
TimberWest Forest Corp.
TMF Group
The Embassy of Canada to Japan
Torys LLP
UVIC (University of Victoria Alumni Association)
Vanten K.K.
Wayfarer
Western Forest Products
White & Case LLP

Saskatchewan

has what the world needs.



Top exporter
of canola seed,
wheat and
potash



Experienced
research and
development
agencies



Reliable top
quality food
ingredient
suppliers



Leader in critical
minerals and rare
earth elements
processing



Responsive
government
ready to work
with you

Contact the **Saskatchewan Japan Office** at japan@gov.sk.ca
to learn more about agri-food and critical mineral opportunities.

saskatchewan.ca

Saskatchewan
Canada 

Celebrating
the CCCJ's
50th
anniversary
**GOLDEN
MAPLE
LEAF
GALA**

by John R. Harris.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Since the 1980s our Maple Leaf Gala has been the Chamber's signature event and a focal point that brings together members of Canada's business community, their 'significant others' and friends. Always an elegant event, with many guests clad in tuxedos, ballgowns or kimonos, it is a night to celebrate with fine food and drink, a variety of entertainment, music and dancing.

A glittering venue

This year's Gala, on Friday November 14th, was held in a glamorous new venue: The Fairmont Tokyo, a brand new five-star hotel near Hamamatsucho Station on Tokyo's waterfront. Fairmont Hotels are very familiar to most Canadians, and many of us have stayed or dined in one or more of their famed hostleries that include the Chateaus Frontenac and Laurier, Toronto's Royal York, Banff Springs Hotel, Hotel Vancouver and Victoria's Empress – to name but a few. Fairmont is now owned by France's Accor Group.

Facilities in the new property are stunning, from the glittering ballroom to the 43rd floor lounge with its expansive view of the city. Festivities kicked off in this lofty venue with a pre-ball VIP reception for 40-plus sponsors and dignitaries. The reception was graciously hosted by Jeff Pentland, who runs Japan operations for Northleaf Capital Partners, a Vancouver-based financial services firm. Meanwhile, Robert Hoey of Funeral Support Services hosted a cocktail reception for other guests on the 4th floor.

Sumptuous fare

Guests were treated to a sumptuous five-course menu featuring Canadian specialties such as B.C. salmon carpaccio, Alberta sirloin, wild rice and baked Yukon for dessert. A selection of fine Italian wines was provided by the elegant Asa Nakano, CEO of Adria International. And Dave Enright of Evergreen Outdoor Center contributed a delightful sparkling white from Benjamin Bridge of Nova Scotia.

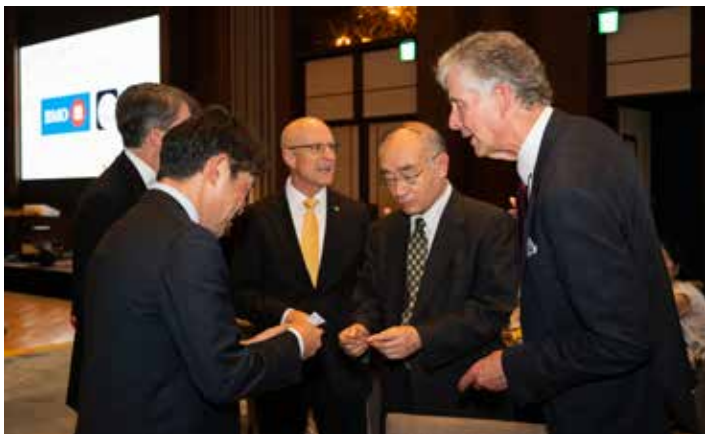


Photograph by Ai Nakagawa



This page: Kampai! Above: The Fairmont Hotel ballroom.
Opposite: CCCJ Governors past & present, sponsors, guests and their families gathered at the Gala.

Photograph by Maria Umemura



Top: Asa Nakano of Adria International and her father;
 2nd from top: And another 50th anniversary! Ambassador Sadaaki Numata and Mrs. Numata celebrated half a century of marital bliss;
 3rd from top: former Ambassador Ian Burney networking;
 bottom: Cathy Noyes and Patricia Bader-Johnston.

A full suite of ambassadors

When the ballroom doors opened at 6:30, among the 220 guests who streamed in were a full suite of ambassadors, present and former: current Canadian Ambassador to Japan Ian McKay, three former Japan envoys Mackenzie Clugston, Don Campbell and Ian Burney, as well as Quebec Delegué-General Mario Girard and Sadaaki Numata, former Japanese ambassador to Canada and Chair of the Chamber’s Honorary Board of Advisors.

Rocking entertainment

Entertainment commenced once our perennial emcee Alex Hatton took to the mic. First up, was Hisaka Sakai, accompanied by her pianist husband. She is a multi-talented jazz singer and storyteller who used to live in Toronto. Next up was Japanese magician Atsushi Ono, who has spent many years in Canada and was a finalist on Canada’s Got Talent. Ono-san was followed by DJ Silverfox, veteran of Tokyo’s music scene whose sound ranges from jazz and soul to disco.

Due praise and thanks

One special highlight was the presentation of the CCCJ’s first Business Legacy Award to Ken Theriault, the Saskatchewan-born head of Costco Japan (see profile on P.20).

Special thanks to the Gala team who made it all happen, especially CCCJ Governor Riyo Whitney, the ‘general’ who led the way. Key personnel included CCCJ Governor Donovan Gordon (who was in charge of the evening’s flow), and Meabh Reidy, CCCJ Office Manager, who supervised a crew of young volunteers from Temple University Japan. Likewise, sincere thanks to our many sponsors who are listed on P.15.

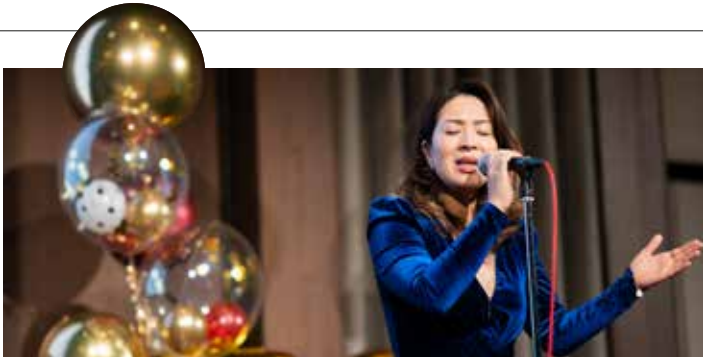
It was certainly a night to remember!





Above: Ambassador Ian McKay addressed the significance of the Chamber's 50th anniversary. Below center: Ken Theriault & his wife Miho with Marc Bolduc and his wife Natsuki. Left & right: A selection of the many CCCJ members and guests who helped make the Gala such a huge success!





Photos by Conan Wakely (pages 12-15)



Right side, above: CCCJ Chair Marc Bolduc and Governor Riyo Whitney, whose efforts made the evening a success; Below left: Emcee Alex Hatton.

Left column: singer Hisaka Sakai, magician Atsushi Ono and DJ Silverfox; Below: Kiyomi Weiss of sponsor Air Canada with grand prize winner; Next level down: Fairmont General Manager, Karan Singh with prize winner and our Meabh Reidy. Here, there and everywhere: a mosaic of members and friends!



A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Sponsors

Platinum



Gold



VIP Reception



Ruby



Cocktail Reception



FUNERAL SUPPORT SERVICES
フューネラル サポート サービス

Pearl



Wine donation



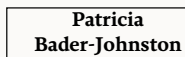
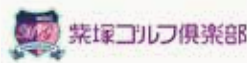
Media



Door Prizes



Silent Auction



WILF WAKELY

(1950-2021)

Driving Force in CCCJ's Second Quarter-Century

When the Chamber was founded in 1975, Wilf Wakely was already a noted figure in Canada-Japan relations. Expo pavilion host, Japanese TV comedian, diplomat, lawyer – Wilf wore many hats, not least his pivotal role as Chair in our second quarter-century. Sadly, Wilf died in 2021 after a difficult illness, leaving behind his wife, Takako, and children Conan and Tara.

Below, **Greg Rozitis**, Invest Alberta's man in Japan, offers a tribute and overview of Wilf's career, followed by tributes from Chamber Governor **Neil Van Wouw** and CCCJ Chair **Marc Bolduc**.

Greg Rozitis: Wilf's story is woven deeply into the fabric of Canada-Japan relations, defined by his decades of passionate service, pioneering leadership and remarkable hunger to connect. His passing was deeply felt in our Canadian community here, and among the countless business relationships he helped develop. As Chair and longtime driving force behind the CCCJ, Wilf was much more than a diplomat, lawyer or facilitator, he was a force for positive change whose legacy will endure on both sides of the Pacific.

Born in Vancouver, Wilf caught the 'Japan bug' at young age during a student exchange in 1965. Returning to Japan in 1970, he was a host at Canada's Expo '70 pavilion in Osaka – an experience that led him to put down roots in Kansai. Becoming fluent in the distinctive Kansai dialect (as well as standard Japanese) led to a career as a TV comedian – which made him a much-loved celebrity.

Going home to Vancouver, Wilf completed a law degree at the University of British Columbia before returning to Japan. Serving as First Secretary at the Canadian Embassy (1984-'87) Wilf played a key role in redeveloping the chancery, a landmark example of public-private partnership and an iconic symbol of Canada's presence in Japan.

In international business, few people have left a legacy as multifaceted and enduring as Wilf's. For decades, he was the heartbeat of the CCCJ, transforming it from a quiet social club into a dynamic force for economic, cultural and social change. His story is one of vision, relentless advocacy and a deep commitment to connecting Canada and Japan in ways that continue to benefit both nations today.

When Wilf took the helm as Chair in 2011, a seat he held through 2015, the CCCJ was at a crossroads. The 'Bubble Economy' had burst and the Chamber's business focus had faded. Seeing an opportunity and responsibility to restore the CCCJ's relevance, Wilf poured energy into its revitalization, transforming the Chamber into a vibrant, influential organization that attracted the attention of policymakers, business leaders and diplomats from both countries.

Under his leadership, the CCCJ grew to over 300 members across 33 business sectors, including Canadian companies operating in Japan, Japanese firms with Canadian ties and a diverse array of entrepreneurs and professionals. Wilf's open-door policy and talent for building relationships made the Chamber a hub for new ideas and collaboration.

One of his most enduring legacies lies in advocacy for stronger economic ties between Canada and Japan. He spearheaded the CCCJ's involvement in negotiations toward the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), ensuring that Canadian interests were front and center.

Organizing high-level symposiums and conferences, he brought together government officials, business leaders and experts to discuss strategies for eliminating trade barriers and fostering bilateral cooperation. The CCCJ launched the EPA Research Fund, supporting sector-by-sector analysis of tariff and non-tariff issues, and directly engaged with negotiators to advocate for Canadian business interests.



Illustration by Andrew Potheary

These efforts paid off: the CCCJ became a respected voice in trade policy, and Wilf's advocacy contributed to the eventual debut of the TPP in 2018.

Beyond trade, Wilf was passionate about building bridges between Canadians and Japanese. He championed youth exchange programs, cultural initiatives and professional development, mentoring a new generation of Canadian "Japanists" and fostering cross-cultural partnerships.

Wilf's generosity extended to sharing time and expertise with young talent, helping many to launch successful careers in Japan-related business

and law. Wilf also facilitated partnerships between the CCCJ and Japanese organizations, such as the Japan PFI/PPP Association, encouraging knowledge exchange and collaboration.

Wilf's commitment to justice was legendary. He was a tireless advocate for parents denied access to their children by Japan's courts, dedicating countless hours helping those in need, often pro bono. His work led to successful reunifications and humanitarian medical evacuations for Canadians facing hardship in Japan.

He also led the CCCJ's push for legal reforms on parental child abduction, pressing for meaningful changes to Japanese law and greater recognition of joint custodial arrangements. Wilf's advocacy extended to disaster relief, mobilizing Chamber resources to support victims of the Kobe and Tohoku earthquakes.

Wilf identified early-on that the public-private partnership (PPP) model, proven in Canada over decades, was something that Japan needed. His determination to introduce PPP was evident in landmark projects such as the redevelopment of the Canadian embassy in the 1980s. He was instrumental in pioneering this PPP model, making the embassy an iconic symbol of Canada in Japan and one of the most revered structures in the Canadian foreign service.

Recognizing the importance of communication, Wilf oversaw the launch of a new interactive CCCJ website, featuring interviews, videos and member resources. He organized speaker series, seminars and networking events, and maintained close ties with other chambers, further expanding the CCCJ's reach. Much of his work continues in our Chamber today.

Wilf's leadership was marked by intensity, enthusiasm and a willingness to challenge the status quo. He inspired others with engaging conversations and the ability to motivate action. His generosity extended to offering free legal advice and support to those in need, often putting aside personal business interests for the greater good.

Wilf's CCCJ legacy is one of vision, action and compassion. His many accomplishments and initiatives have shaped the Chamber's role in Canada-Japan relations and set a standard for leadership, advocacy and community building that will endure for years to come.

As the Canadian business community in Japan continues to grow and evolve, it does so on the foundation built by Wilf, one of

Wilf facilitated partnerships between the CCCJ and Japanese organizations, encouraging knowledge exchange and collaboration



Wilf Wakely was passionate about building bridges between Canadians and Japanese, as well as youth exchange programs and fostering a new generation



integrity, innovation and a deep commitment to bridging cultures and economies across the Pacific.

CCCJ Chair Marc Bolduc: Wilf was very passionate about making the CCCJ more open to all, regardless of age or gender. When I joined the Chamber in 2009 as a young businessman from Quebec, I perceived at first that it wasn't so open to younger people. But when I met Wilf and learned of his vision for the CCCJ I became a convert. His progressive mindset included opening CCCJ elections to allow any member to run for a position on the Board of Governors. He also created our Honorary Board of Advisors – a first among the foreign chambers in Japan. This has given us valuable access to Japan's corporate and public-sector elite. Beyond such milestone changes, Wilf made our Chamber feel more like a family. And for me, Wilf became a dear friend and a strong supporter of my own career. Simply put, he became my best friend and mentor! Thank you, Wilf!

Neil Van Wouw, CCCJ Governor: Wilf was the reason I got involved with the CCCJ. His passion for the Chamber was infectious. After he reached out as Chair to get me more engaged, within a year I was on committees, on the board and about as involved as I could be. I spent quite a lot of time with Wilf over the next few years and bit-by-bit learned about his amazing past, of all the hats he wore as he contributed to building bridges between Canada and Japan. His drive, and "think big" attitude continue to inspire many of us at the Chamber who knew him. And through the many initiatives he put in place, the fingerprints of which are still noticeable today, I think we can say that Wilf is still a "force" in the CCCJ. ♣

Fairmont
TOKYO

MAKE SPECIAL HAPPEN

A grand masterpiece where city's energy meets bay's serenity. Fairmont Tokyo invites guests to experience the best of both worlds — iconic views of Tokyo Tower to the west and the calming bay to the east. Discover elevated dining, tranquil retreats across our scenic rooms — including the hotel-within-a-hotel "Fairmont Gold" — as well as our spa and outdoor terraces.

FAIRMONT.COM

KEN THERIAULT,

the Canadian
behind Costco
Japan's success

by John R. Harris

Throughout the CCCJ's second quarter-century, the achievements of one Canadian businessperson in Japan stand out as exceptional. Ken Theriault from Saskatoon opened Japan's first Costco warehouse in 1999, and has run Costco Japan for all but three years since. Against all odds, Ken has built the Japan operation to 37 warehouses nationwide, making it one of Japan's leading retailers.

This month, after 30 years with Costco, Ken has stepped down as country manager and retired to Vancouver. Recognizing his visionary leadership, integrity and lasting contribution to the Canada-Japan business community, the CCCJ honored Ken at the recent Gala as first recipient of our Business Legacy Award.

To understand the story behind this, here is a brief account of the unlikely path that brought Ken to Japan and the success he achieved.

From 'sure to fail' to 'last man standing'

In April 1999, when Ken opened Japan's first Costco warehouse near Fukuoka, everyone predicted failure. Surely, Japanese consumers would *never* pay for memberships just to shop at an outlet selling huge wholesale packages. Of course they wouldn't drive 50 kilometers to get there, nor would they take to shopping on concrete floors with huge racks towering over the aisles. The 'smart money' was on Costco to fail and to win on the global retail giants then entering Japan, like Walmart, Carrefour, Metro and Tesco.

Cut to April 2025. Decades after every one of those giants had fled Japan, tails between their legs, Ken was getting ready for the grand opening of his 37th warehouse, this one in Minami Alps near Mt. Fuji. As usual, along with other key staff, Ken was on hand by three a.m. for the big opening at eight – only to find that customers were there before him.

"I was blown away," Ken said, "to see the parking lot filled with people who'd camped out all night to be first in the door. So I told



our staff to move it up, and we opened the doors at four. When we told the waiting crowd to get ready, they returned folding chairs and blankets to their cars and came back to the same places in line – no pushing or shoving. That's Japan for you!"

And *that* is how popular Costco has become in Japan.

No DNA test needed: it's Ken's baby for sure

You only have to follow Ken (at his brisk pace) on a warehouse tour to see who's the 'Big Daddy' at Costco Japan. Soon as they see him, every employee's face lights up. And you hear, "Ah, Ken-san, konnichi-wa." Since he has always traveled relentlessly to every warehouse and distribution center, there may be few among Costco Japan's 14,000 employees have not had at least eye contact with the boss.

"Us Canadian *shachos* are just kinda like that," said Sarah Casanova, former CEO of McDonald's Japan, and like Ken a product of small-town Canada. "We go into the kitchen and talk to the dishwashers... which isn't so common in Japan." Similarly, as reported in our March 2025 profile of Alain Bouchard, the Alimentation Couche-Tard founder was famed for visiting thousands of his convenience stores and chatting with staff.

Petit maison sur la prairie

Ken is very much the product of small-town Canada, specifically Montmartre Saskatchewan, a deeply Catholic francophone island amid a sea of anglophones – like those Gauls in the Asterix comics surrounded by Romans. But as his mother was Ukrainian-Canadian and Orthodox, Ken says he and his seven siblings enjoyed two Christmases a year.

When he was a teenager, the family moved to Saskatoon, where in high school Ken got a part-time job at a Dominion supermarket. Already exhibiting his trademark high energy, Ken put his back into the work and soon drew the attention of management.



Left, Ken opening the Costco warehouse in Minami-Alps near Kofu.

Right, Ken receiving the business legacy award from CCCJ Chair Marc Bolduc



Photo right: Conan Wakely

So even before finishing high school he was promoted to assistant manager. That led him to reconsider plans to become a lawyer. Ken recalls, “I thought, why saddle myself with huge student loans and spend all those years in school when I’m already on the management ladder at Dominion?” And that was it: for 50 years since, Ken has been in groceries.

After the late 1980s demise of Dominion Stores (slogan: “It’s mainly because of the meat”), Ken ended up interviewing with Price Club (then just merging with Costco).

East... then very far East

“Right away, they offered me a job as a warehouse manager,” Ken said, “and gave me the choice of several cities in Eastern Canada. I picked St. John’s Newfoundland, figuring if I’m going to go east, I might as well go as far east as I can. Little did I know then how far east I’d end up!”

That’s how in 1995 the family – Ken, Gwen and sons Ryan and Sheldon – moved from the prairie to “The Rock,” as Newfoundland is known. But they didn’t stay long.

Ken must have done a stellar job opening the new warehouse, because when he went to a Seattle meeting of all North American managers in July 1997, Costco founder Jim Sinegal pulled him aside and asked if he’d like to go to Japan with his son, Mike Sinegal. “Right away I said yes because I just love challenges,” Ken remembers.

Before long the family followed Ken to Japan. A bit later so did his St. John’s right-hand-man, Howard Tulk, a ‘Bayman’ from the Burin Peninsula who’s now in a senior role with Costco Korea.

A cheerful workaholic

From the start Ken threw himself into his Japan mission. “I’m a workaholic,” he admits. But then coming from a farming background as he did, you don’t get far if you’re not a workaholic.

Howard has watched him go for decades: “Ken always goes at it on max power, never stops. But it’s joyful energy. His motto is ‘Head! Heart! Soul! Treat people with respect and good things happen.’ Since everyone he meets, high or low, gets the same warm treatment, that’s helped him open hearts and doors in Japan. Costco Japan employees especially love him.”

That was on display at Ken’s retirement party, held hours before the CCCJ Gala on November 14th. Hundreds of Costco people from all over Japan packed a huge Tokyo ballroom for a parade of tributes and humorous anecdotes. It was an emotional event; tears were shed.

Success has come at a price though. Ken admits that workaholicism led to the end of his first marriage. “I was never home,” he says. Now as he heads back to Canada with his elegant second wife Miho, Ken plans to chart a new course: “Number one, I want to spend time with my grandkids. Much as I love Saskatchewan though it’s just too cold so we’re settling in Vancouver. Oh, and we’re going to the Winter Olympics in Milan.”

Ken & Miho flew off on December 1st, but we expect to see them back before too long. 🍁

Shhh... don’t reveal how Canadian Costco is!

If you shop at Costco Japan, you may have noticed lots of Canadian products on sale: tons of pork, multi-grain bread, maple syrup, mushrooms, cat food, Hardbite potato chips and more. “We’ve got over 60 Canadian items,” Ken said. “Yeah, although there’s been a bit of favoritism on my part, we won’t buy anything that’s not top quality at the right price. And Canada fits our model because the Loonie and the Yen are both low against the U.S. dollar.”

Expert advice on effective communication

by John R. Harris
with files from Meabh Reidy

For anyone who aspires to a leadership role in business or public service, there is surely no skill more critical than effective communication. Whether written or oral, to colleagues, customers or even a court of law, a true leader must be able to deliver a coherent and persuasive message. Equally or perhaps even more important is the flip side of communication: listening – especially to customers. And developing these skills requires dedicated effort. These were key takeaways from an October 22 Chamber event, “Effective Communication: A Key Driver of Career Growth.”

Presented by the Global Diversity Management Committee, it was a hybrid event with one of two speakers and several guests at the Tokyo offices of Colliers, while the other speaker and numerous guests participated online. The seminar was moderated by CCCJ Governors Tomoko Ebine and Ai Nakagawa.

Two expert communicators

The speakers were two of the most distinguished Canadian executives ever to serve in Japan: Montrealer Philippe Godbout, Managing Director at Dassault Systèmes Japan; and from Port Elgin, Ontario, on the shores of Lake Huron, Sarah Casanova, former CEO of McDonald’s Japan, and now a member of the CCCJ’s Honorary Board of Advisors. Both expert communicators, they offered practical insights into how effective communication influences leadership, collaboration and career advancement.

Philippe introduced the *Think, Lead, Act* approach, explaining that effective communication goes beyond output to align thought, leadership and action. He encouraged participants to listen deeply, noting that accurately hearing others is often the most challenging aspect of communication. Leaders, he said, succeed by caring about others’ goals while valuing their own skills. Philippe also highlighted that communication occurs on multiple levels, from team dynamics to organizational and national contexts, and that embracing different ways of thinking drives innovation.

Speeches that powered a V-shaped turnaround

Sarah Casanova sharpened her public speaking skills as she led the 200,000 employees of McDonald’s Japan through a “V-shaped” turnaround. See: <https://thecanadian.cccj.or.jp/saraha-amazing-journey/>. In 2014, she was faced with a turning around a company in a deep slump, with its people demoralized. After traveling the length of Japan to listen, Sarah began to speak, hesitantly at first. But as she addressed thousands of employees and franchisees

gathered in vast auditoriums she began to find her voice as she delivered powerfully motivational speeches. Her leadership roused the McDonald’s team to regain their mojo, with what she called “The Power of One.”

Since leaving McDonald’s, Sarah has put considerable thought into the art of communication. And that work was at the heart of her presentation, which you can see here: <https://tinyurl.com/4ytsdcuw>.

She stressed that communication should start from the heart, with preparation and practice essential to resonating with your audience. Assertiveness, she explained, does not mean aggression. Silence and body language can be powerful tools. Attendees were



CCCJ Governors Ai Nakagawa and Tomoko Ebine (from left) were moderators for Philippe Godbout (seated) and Sarah Casanova (via video).

encouraged to visualize interactions, manage emotions and focus on fairness, asking whether a message will be received or ignored. Her mantra, “Be bold, be brief, be gone,” reinforced the value of concise, confident communication.

Don’t get lost in translation

Cross-cultural communication was another key theme. Both speakers noted that when using an interpreter, audiences often focus on the translation rather than the speaker. Understanding high-context versus low-context communication styles and staying grounded in facts and goals during emotionally charged conversations are essential for success. They also emphasized tailoring communication to each audience, as there is no such thing as an average recipient.

This event highlighted the tremendous depth and breadth of experience among the Chamber’s membership. We look forward to more in the future. 🍀



CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN JAPAN
CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU CANADA AU JAPAN

“Since 2013, I have had the privilege of serving on the CCCJ’s Honorary Board of Advisors. The Chamber is an excellent organization that fosters bilateral cultural and business communication between Canada and Japan. This communication opens up tremendous opportunities. The CCCJ is also associated with many other chambers of commerce in Japan, providing our members with amazing global exposure.”

- Seiji Omote, CCCJ Honorary Board Advisor



GET CONNECTED
JOIN US TODAY!

CCCJ.OR.JP

In summary

Japanese summary of this month's main features

カナダと日本:2026年に向けて イアン・マッケイ駐日カナダ大使よりご挨拶

2026年を迎えるにあたり、カナダと日本のパートナーシップは重要な転機を迎えています。この1年で両国の友情と協力は着実に深化しましたが、地政学的変化や技術革新が進む国際環境の中で、両国が今後どのように連携し対応していくかが問われる年となります。

インド太平洋地域はカナダの将来にとって重要であり、世界第4位の経済大国である日本は、その取り組みを支える礎となっています。両国間の貿易額は年間360億ドルを超え、日本はカナダにとって第4位の外国投資国でもあります。しかし重要なのは、その規模以上に、関係をどのように深化・多様化させていくかです。

両国は相互補完的な強みを生かし、エネルギー、食料、重要鉱物、先端技術分野で、より強靱で信頼性の高いパートナーシップを築いてきました。今後は水素、原子力、カーボンキャプチャー、LNG・LPG分野での協力を拡大し、気候変動対策とエネルギー移行、持続的成長を支え合っていきます。

創立50周年を迎えたCCCJは、加日ビジネスの促進、政策対話、ネットワーキングを通じて経済関係を支えてきました。会員の皆様の継続的な尽力に感謝するとともに、インド太平洋地域における加日の協力が、今後も実りある成果へとつながっていくことを期待しています。

コストコジャパン成功の軌跡 — ケン・テリオ氏の功績

カナダと日本の経済交流が深化する中、この四半世紀において最も顕著な功績を残したカナダ人ビジネスリーダーの一人が、コストコジャパン前カントリーマネージャーのケン・テリオ氏である。1999年、福岡近郊に日本初のコストコ倉庫店を開業して以来、約30年にわたり事業拡大を主導し、日本全国に37店舗を展開するまでに同社を成長させた。2025年には在職30年をもって退任。CCCJはその功績を称え、初代「ビジネス・レガシー・アワード」を授与した。

日本進出当初、年会費制と大量販売を特徴とするコストコのビジネスモデルは、日本の市場には適さないと思われていた。実際に多くの外資系小売大手が撤退を余儀なくされる中、コストコは独自の価値を提供し続け、着実な成長を遂げた。2025年には37店舗目を開業。開店当日の早朝から現場に立ち会うテリオ氏の姿は、現場主義を貫く彼の経営哲学を象徴している。

テリオ氏は全国の倉庫店や物流拠点を頻繁に訪れ、従業員一人ひとりと向き合ってきた。その姿勢は組織文化として深く根づき、「この会社のDNAはケンそのもの」と評されるほどである。

サスカチュワン州の小さな町で育ったテリオ氏は、若くして小売業の現場で頭角を現し、プライスクラブを経てコストコへ入社した。1997年、創業者ジム・シネガル氏から日本進出を打診され、即座に挑戦を決意したという。情熱と誠実さをもって加日ビジネスの架け橋となったテリオ氏の歩みは、コストコジャパンの成功の物語であると同時に、加日経済関係の深化を象徴する物語でもある。

追悼：ウィルフ・ウェイクリー氏

ウィルフ・ウェイクリー氏（1950-2021）は、CCCJの「第2の四半世紀」を力強く牽引した中核的人物であり、その歩みは加日関係の深化そのものを体現している。1975年のCCCJ設立当時、彼はすでに万博カナダ館ホスト、テレビ出演のコメディアン、外交官、弁護士として日本社会に深く根を下ろしていた。2021年に病のため逝去したが、そのレガシーは今もCCCJと加日コミュニティに生き続けている。

バンクーバー生まれのウェイクリー氏は、1965年の学生交流をきっかけに日本と出会い、1970年の大阪万博を機に関西に拠点を置くことになる。関西弁を含む高度な日本語力と人間的な魅力により、多方面で信頼を築いた後、法学を修め、1984年から87年にかけて

在日カナダ大使館一等書記官を務めた。とりわけ官民連携による大使館再整備は、日本におけるカナダの確固たる存在感を象徴する成果として評価されている。

ウェイクリー氏は何十年ものあいだ CCCJの「鼓動」となり、かつては静かな社交クラブであった会議所を、経済・政策・文化を結ぶダイナミックな拠点へと変貌させた。2011年から15年に会頭を務めた際、停滞期にあったCCCJに再生の機会と使命を見出し、政策提言力と発信力を強化。会員数は300名を超え、33業種に広がる多様なネットワークを形成するに至っている。

特に、EPAやTPPに向けた政策提言においてCCCJを中心的な存在へと押し上げ、研究基金の設立や政府への働きかけを主導した功績は大きい。これによりCCCJは貿易政策における信頼ある発言者となり、その努力は2018年のTPP発効へと結実した。

また、ウェイクリー氏は人と人をつなぐことに情熱を注ぎ、若者交流、次世代育成、文化事業、人道支援にも尽力した。PPPモデルの普及、災害支援、家族再会支援など、その行動範囲は広く、「開かれたCCCJ」を実現





Conan Wakely

する改革も断行した。情熱、先見性、そして人への深い敬意——それがウェイクリー氏のリーダーシップであった。そのビジョンと精神は、今なお CCCJ と加日関係の礎として受け継がれている。

ゴールデン・メープルリーフ・ガラ

CCCJ 創立 50 周年を記念する「ゴールデン・メープルリーフ・ガラ」が、2025 年 11 月 14 日、新たに開業したフェアモント東京にて開催された。1980 年代以来、同ガラはカナダ系ビジネスコミュニティのメンバー、そのパートナー、友人たちを一堂に集める中核的な催しとなっている。優雅な装い、上質な料理とエンターテインメントを通じ、人々が交流を深める場として親しまれてきた。

今年は 220 名を超える来場者を迎え、43 階ラウンジでのプレ・レセプションには 40 社以上のスポンサーや来賓が集った。会場のフェアモントホテルは、多くのカナダ人にとって緑の深いブランドであり、洗練された空間と壮大な眺望が、節目にふさわしい華やぎを演出した。

晚餐では、B.C. 産サーモンやアルバータ産サロインをはじめとするカナダ産食材を用い

た 5 品のフルコースと厳選されたワインが供され、食を通じてカナダの魅力を確認する機会となった。会場には、イアン・マッケイ駐日カナダ大使をはじめ、歴代大使、州政府代表、日本およびカナダの財界を代表する要人が顔を揃えた。

エンターテインメントも充実し、ジャズシンガーの hisaka、マジシャンのアツシオノ、DJ シルバーフォックスによる多彩なパフォーマンスが、世代や立場を超えた一体感を生み出した。さらに、CCCJ 初の「ビジネス・レガシー賞」が、コストコ・ジャパンを 37 店舗規模へと成長させたケン・テリオ氏に授与された。

多くのスポンサー、運営チーム、若手ボランティアの献身によって支えられた本ガラは、CCCJ の 50 年にわたる歩みを振り返ると同時に、次の半世紀に向けた結束と展望を共有する場となった。まさに記憶に残る一夜であった。

CCCJ 創立 50 周年 — マーク・ボルドゥック 会頭よりメッセージ

CCCJ は 2025 年に創立 50 周年という大きな節目を迎えました。1975 年の設立以来、

イアン・マッケイ駐日カナダ大使

CCCJ は加日ビジネスにおける礎として発展し、両国の協働と繁栄を支えてきました。本年は、新設された関西委員会の支援のもと、大阪・関西万博関連事業への参加をはじめ、インド太平洋地域の商工会議所との連携、ネット・ゼロやダイバーシティ分野での取り組みなど、多くの成果を上げました。周年行事のハイライトとなったゴールデン・メープルリーフ・ガラは、CCCJ の歩みを称えると同時に、会員とともに次の 50 年を築いていくという明確な意思を示す場となりました。

効果的なコミュニケーションに関する専門家の助言

ビジネスや公共分野でリーダーを目指す者にとって、効果的なコミュニケーションと傾聴力は不可欠である。10 月 22 日の CCCJ イベントでは、カナダ人エグゼクティブ 2 名が、異文化理解および簡潔かつ誠実な発信が、リーダーシップとキャリア成長を支える重要な要素であることを実体験から語った。★



ADVERTISE IN

**THE
Canadian**



Published by The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan, this quarterly 28-page, four-colour magazine explores a range of business and cultural topics centred on the Canada-Japan relationship.

The print edition is distributed to the CCCJ's 400+ members from 46 business sectors. The publicly available online edition (thecanadian.cccj.or.jp/) attracts readers from across Canada and Japan.

Advertising in *The Canadian* is an effective way to demonstrate your organization's commitment to the Canada-Japan relationship before an influential audience.

Rates

Full-page ad: ¥450,000

Half-page ad: ¥300,000

Other digital and print "bundle" options are also available, see www.cccj.or.jp/publications/advertising

For more information, please contact
info@cccj.or.jp



**Proudly raised;
Responsibly made.**



CANADA PACKERS JAPAN INC.

Toranomon 2-chome Tower 10F
2-3-17 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo
TEL: 03-3595-6841
<https://www.canadapackers.jp/>

Decisions made *easier*.
Lives made *better*.

あなたの未来に、わかりやすさを。



カナダで生まれ、世界各地へ。
設立130年以上の歴史が証明する、信頼性。
あなたの「いま」と「これから」を、
マニユライフ生命が、サポートします。

Born in Canada, and present in many parts of the globe.
Trust that has been earned through over 130 years of history.
Manulife Life Insurance will be there for you to support
your "Now" and the "Future".

 **Manulife**
マニユライフ生命

Address: 30F Tokyo Opera City, 3-20-2 Nishi Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
web: www.manulife.co.jp