

Japan America Society of Minnesota

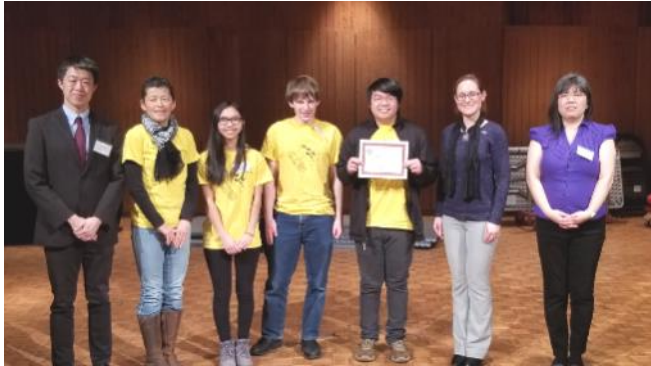


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The Tsūshin is a membership publication of the Japan America Society of Minnesota

March 2019 Vol. 28, No. 3

Recap: J-Quiz 2019



Level IV winners from Memorial High School

On Saturday, February 19, JASM hosted our 12th annual J-Quiz! 96 students from seven different high schools came together to put their knowledge about Japanese culture and language to the test at Normandale Community College.

To start the morning, each team of students participated in a preliminary exam, using their skills and knowledge in writing. Next, students and all other guests participated in the culture segment of J-Quiz. Sansei Yonsei Kai taught students how to perform traditional Japanese dances. They performed dances with both traditional and modern pop music. The students were also able to watch an aikido demonstration by the Twin Cities Aikido Center. The Aikido Center invited students to participate, including sword exercises.

During the break, students enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by Suishin Restaurant. They perused the JASM market featuring artwork, books, and other Japanese items. After break, students returned to the auditorium to prepare for the final rounds. Before the final rounds, the top three winners of Level I received their awards, and were given recognition for their achievements.

For Levels II-IV, the top three teams from each level were selected to participate in finals rounds. The students were incredibly knowledgeable. Level II even ended up in a tie, a first for J-Quiz. After the finals, the students were all recognized and awarded for their efforts.

The event closed with comments from Honorary Consul of Japan in Minneapolis, Dick Stahl, and the representative from the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago, Mr. Yuta Sano, who praised the students for their hard work and encouraged them to continue their studies, as they have a bright future ahead of them. JASM Executive Director Rio Saito finished the event, thanking all of the students, volunteers, J-Quiz Committee, the teachers and others whose contributions allow J-Quiz to happen.

Continued on page 3

Upcoming: Sake Tasting

Join us in March for our Sake Tasting event! JASM and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) are hosting this event where you will be able to socialize, network, learn about and try many varieties of *sake*, and most importantly, have fun!

During the event, the *sake* expert from Sake Story, Chris Griese, will give a presentation to help you better appreciate the sake you will be tasting. Chris received his Advanced Sake Professional Level II Certificate in Tokyo in 2010. After his talk, you will know how to serve and store *sake*, and be able to distinguish the many styles and types of *sake*. Total of five sake distributors will share a few sake samples to the event attendees.

JASM Sake Tasting

Thursday, March 14, 2019

5:30pm - 8:00pm

Minneapolis Institute of Art (Friends Community Room)
2400 3rd Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55404

Cost: \$25: JASM Members \$30: Non-members

Admission price includes the presentation, appetizers, and sake tasting of all available sakes. *By purchasing admission, you attest to being at least 21 years old with a valid ID.*

We look forward to seeing you there!

*Before this event, JETRO will be hosting *Sake Math, Sake Tasting & Seminar* for **food and beverage professionals only**. If you would like more information about this event go to: jetrosakeseminarminneapolis.eventbrite.com



Sake Tasting event 2014

Meet our Board Member: Shannon Meyer



Shannon Meyer, JASM Treasurer

My name is Shannon Meyer and I work at Deloitte Tax LLP advising companies and their employees on the tax implications of moving across borders. Although I grew up in rural Nebraska, I have always been captivated by learning and experiencing new cultures. It's this fascination that lead to my international tax career at Deloitte and multiple foreign assignments, including several short-term assignments to India and a four year assignment in Belgium from 2008 to 2011.

When my family relocated to Minnesota in 2012, I wanted to meet a variety of new people, introduce my children to different cultures and remain connected with the international community. Japan was of particular interest because it was high on my "bucket list" of must see countries I had not yet visited. I have long been intrigued by Japan's beautiful countryside, legends of samurais and sumo wrestlers, amazing food and the genuine kindness of Japanese people. Thus, I thought what better way to learn about Japan and prepare myself for a trip than joining JASM! It has turned out to be a very rewarding experience.

I have served as a board member and the Treasurer for JASM since 2013. My responsibilities as Treasurer include drafting the annual budget, reconciling monthly bank statements, preparing financial reports for the board and filing JASM's non-profit organization returns with the federal and state authorities. In addition to keeping JASM's finances in order, I enjoy volunteering at a variety of events such as the annual Mondale Gala (our largest fundraiser) and the Obon festival. Through these events I have been fortunate to build great relationships throughout the Japanese community in Minnesota.

I am still awaiting my first journey to Japan, but thanks to JASM I will be prepared to experience all of the culture and beauty Japan has to offer when that day comes.

By Shannon Meyer

Recap: J-Quiz 2019 Continued

JASM would also like to thank Normandale, the students, teachers, judges, sponsors, and volunteers. Their contributions allow J-Quiz to happen. It is always incredible to see the talents and hard work that these students display every year.



Level I winners from Shakopee High School



Level II winners from Eastview High School



Level III winners from Shakopee High School

Membership News

Thanks to the following new JASM members:

*Nikolai Golben
Gretchen Dempewolf*

Thanks to the following renewing JASM member:

Hisayo Sugaya

Recap: February's Know Me Kai Club



Attendees at our second Know Me Kai Club

topics. Business cards were exchanged and new friendships begun over delicious Japanese food and beverages.

As with our first *Know Me Kai Club*, JASM is excited to report our second *Know Me Kai Club* as a success. Thank you to Sakura Restaurant and to all of our attendees for joining us, even during this cold Minnesota weather. If you couldn't make it to this event, please join us for the next one!

On a clear winter night, JASM's second *Know Me Kai Club* was brimming with excitement and shared experience. We had a great turnout February 19, with many more attendees than we had anticipated.

Sakura Restaurant was filled with lots of people from many different walks of life. From JASM individual members to corporate members, locals to expats, young and old, and many new faces, the night was kept alight with stories shared about different experiences of business, Japan, Minnesota, and other



Please thank our members with your support!

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Corporate Spotlight: JETAAMN



JASM is proud to announce one of our Nonprofit Members, The JET Alumni Association of Minnesota (JETAAMN), as the Corporate Spotlight member for March!

JETAA of Minnesota was founded around 1995 to provide a resource for recent returnees of the JET Program to readjust back to daily life in the United States. It was hoped that through shared experiences in working and living in Japan, JETAAMN could provide a support network for those returnees who had come home. JETAAMN has always been interested in promoting the JET Program, promoting the ideals of internationalization in our respective communities, and trying to establish communal ties with other Japan-oriented organizations as well as those with greater international awareness themes.

JETAAMN has three main goals:

- To serve as a support network for returning and past participants in the JET Program by providing a social and informative resource foundation that may facilitate the participants' re-integration into Minnesota, and allow all past participants to share the skills and knowledge they acquired while on the program.
- To continue the JET Program's mission of promoting the exchange of Japanese culture, by functioning as an organization that enhances the opportunities available in the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota for Japanese cultural exchange.
- To function as a resource center for Japanese organizations and networking opportunities in Minnesota.

Through social events, sponsored community activities, and more, it is hoped that JETAAMN can provide its members with a solid organization committed to the ideals of internationalization: that human beings are larger than the governments they reside in.

JASM wants to thank JETAAMN for their continued support as a longtime Nonprofit Member with JASM. We are excited to continue working with them in the future!

New Intern: David Arcand



Hi, I am David Arcand. I am from Lino Lakes, Minnesota and currently go to St. Thomas University. I am the new Event Coordinating intern.

I am majoring in International Business and minoring in Japanese. I plan on studying abroad next school year in Tokyo, Japan. I will be studying at Sophia University with hopes of getting an internship or some sort of volunteer experience while I am abroad. I also plan on

going all over Japan during the winter break. I plan on seeing Hokkaido, Okinawa, and many other places. If I can leave Japan being able to have meaningful conversations with people I will have accomplished what I wanted to do during the study abroad.

I love trying to learn Japanese and hope one day to be working for a company in Japan. I hope to get to travel all over the world through my career. I don't have a specific business field that I am committed to, but I think that it will either be in marketing or operations management.

A Big Thank You For J-Quiz

JASM would like to thank the volunteers and sponsors for their contributions which allow J-Quiz to happen.

Thank you to our J-Quiz volunteers: *Aaron Aguilar, Hiroe Akimoto, Marc Blehert, Michiko Buchanan, Bernadette Clermont, Keiko Emmet, Skylar Fegel, Cody Hou, Marnie Jorenby, Akiko Kilau, Ritsuko Larson, Ron Leonhardt, Desmond Mack, Michaela Magee, Nana Onishi, Sheryl Patricelli, Neena Peck, Jazmin Potes Mangra, Ryan Renard, John Shade, Hisayo Sugaya, Vinicius Taguichi, Kenichi Tazawa, Davy Yang, Rachael Youngs*

Thank you to the J-Quiz Planning Committee: *Michiko Kato Dressen, Kyoko French, Motoko Hioki, Keiko Kawakami, Naomi Satoh, and Hiroko Shade*

Thank you to our Food Service Coordinator: *Mami Russell*

Thank you to the *Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese* for planning the event and helping their students prepare.

Thank you to our sponsors: 

Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, Dunn Brothers Coffee North Loop, The Japan Foundation - Los Angeles, Ron Leonhardt, Saji-Ya Restaurant, Taiyo International, Inc., and Temple University Japan Campus.

Japanese Product Design Lecture Wednesday, March 6th



This program will focus on the craftsmanship and commitment to manufacturing that flows through the underflow of Japanese design from traditional products to modern design. The motto is: "Enhancing your Quality of Life through Japanese Design". A Japanese philosophy may come from ancient Japan however it can still be applied to the current time and culture.

Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2019

RSVP: <https://www.jetro.go.jp/form5/pub/cgo/design2019-mn>

Time: 3:30 pm (Registration Opens)
4:00-5:30 pm (Seminar)
5:30-7:00 pm (Networking Reception and Japanese Designer Table Top Displays)

Venue: Minneapolis Institute of Art
Friends Community Room
2400 Third Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Organized by: JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization)
Supported by: Japan America Society of Minnesota

Keynote Speaker:

Keiko Matsuura, Design Coordinator for JETRO

Ms. Matsuura will discuss the functionality of Japanese products by explaining the formation and development of traditional Japanese craftsmanship. She will illustrate certain regions in Japan which are famous for crafting specific products, such as cutlery, pottery, lacquerware, etc.

Additional Speakers:

Japanese design related companies will make a presentation explaining the philosophy and functionality of the products they will be exhibiting at the reception.

****NOTE:** Event is free of charge, however registration is required.

Contact: Kelly Highland, Tsubasa Hashimoto, JETRO Chicago, jetrochicago4@jetro.go.jp, 312-832-6000



Japan-Minnesota Grassroots Forum



On February 2nd, JASM and JETAAMN hosted the first Japan-Minnesota Grassroots Forum. This event was sponsored by Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA and the US JET Alumni Association (USJETAA).

As many different local US-Japan organizations got together on Saturday morning, they were greeted by Kate Thersleff, President of JETAAMN and JASM board member; Bahia Simons-Lane, Executive Director of USJETAA; and Joy Champaloux, Program Officer of Sasakawa USA.

Following networking and introductions, Liz Brailsford, COO of the Worlds Affairs Council and this event's keynote speaker, spoke about the importance of US-Japan relations and how in the present day, grassroots diplomacy is more important than ever.

The local organizations then gave their introductions and discussed common challenges and solutions to implement in their task of promoting US-Japan relations. The organizations in attendance were: *Cambridge Sister City Commission*, *Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League*, *JASM*, *JETAAMN*, *Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese*, *Minnesota Nikkei Project*, *MN Nihonjinkai/Japanese Library*, *Mori no Ike*, *Red Wing Sister Cities Commission*, *Saint Paul - Nagasaki Sister City Committee*, *Sansei Yonsei Kai*, *Sasakawa USA*, *The Department of Asian Languages and Literatures at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities*, *USJETAA*, and *the World Affairs Councils of America*.

After their discussions, Kate Thersleff, JASM Executive Director Rio Saito, Bahia Simons-Lane, and President of St. Paul - Nagasaki Sister City Committee, JoAnn Blatchley, gave presentations on various topics, such as fundraising, leadership management, and volunteer recruitment. Around the last hour of the event, the organization split into two groups to further discuss ideas and challenges to successfully further grassroots diplomacy.

Although they could not attend, Consul-General Naoki Ito of the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago included a message to all of the organizations who participated in the event; wishing for the success of the forum and further emphasizing the importance of grassroots diplomacy.

JASM would like to thank Sasakawa USA and JETAA for their sponsorship of Minnesota's first Grassroots Forum. Special thanks to the Mall of America for gifting every group a gift bag and JK's Table for providing food. And of course, thank you to everyone who attended the event. We are looking forward to working together to continue our mission of strengthening ties between Japan and the US.

Tom Haeg's Book Review

Floating Clouds, by Fumiko Hayashi. Translated by Lane Dunlop, 2006; Columbia University Press. 303 p.



This compelling, classic novel set in the late stages of World War II and occupied Japan was written in 1951. Its brilliance immediately attracted the attention of the Japanese movie industry who released the film version, *Ukigumo*, in 1955. Both received popular acclaim from critics. Sadly, Ms. Hayashi died of a heart attack in 1951. She was only 48.

The story's narrative traces low-level Japanese civil servants who follow the Imperial Army into Southeast Asia and their subsequent, re-patriated existences amidst squalor in a vanquished Japan. Although it focuses on the boy-meets-girl relationship between Tomioka and Yukiko, it is much more complicated than that. We learn about the harsh colonial experience, rigid gender restrictions, a dearth of spirituality resulting from the Emperor's surrender, and social impotence. The character development is excellent, the imagery outstanding, and the plot intriguing. Hayashi's style of writing about common people echoes a John Steinbeck voice with a feminine tone. JASM members who lived in Japan during this woebegone period will certainly relate to themes of wandering, despair, and unrequited love.

Mr. Dunlop's English translation is quite interesting, too. His self-written preface is a quasi-biography of the author as he sees her. It seemingly explains how Hayashi's life parallels the story's heroine, Yukiko. Supposedly this was done to enhance believability by providing context. Whether this was necessary may be debated. Nonetheless, there were suspicions that Ms. Hayashi, hired as a journalist by the Home Ministry to report on the Imperial Army in East Asia, was an apologist and enabler for their atrocities. For some unexplained reason, she evaded scrutiny and was never held accountable during the War Trials. Instead, during the Occupation, she wrote *Floating Clouds* to describe through the eyes of a woman her government's wartime follies and to lay bare the wake of a defeated nation. The question remains: did she write *Floating Clouds* to convincingly distance herself from her wartime career?

Floating Clouds is available to members in the JASM Library.

By Tom Haeg

A Word from Yoko Breckenridge

Shinnenkai 2019 Recap

MN Nihonjinkai sets up a vendor booth each year for Shinnenkai. In spite of the snowstorm, there was still a great turnout! We always enjoy meeting new friends and greeting familiar faces at our table and want to thank everyone for their support.

We can't function without our wonderful volunteers and members who make it all possible. Thank you so much for your time, your talent, and your presence at these community events. I'm including a few photos below, and want to express our deep appreciation to everyone involved in Shinnenkai 2019.

Our next event will be the annual Library Garage Sale at the end of June. Save your donations or call us for pickup whenever this winter ENDS!

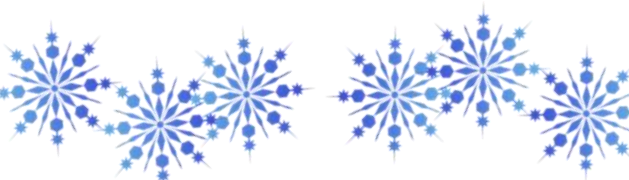


Photo by
Ackerman + Gruber

Yoko Breckenridge
612-839-0008



月例日本人会のお知らせ

毎月日本語図書館で日本人会の昼食会 (Monthly Nihonjin-kai) を行っています。電話などでお誘い合わせの上、お友達やお知り合いと一緒においで下さい。可能の方はどうぞ料理を1品ご持参願います。ミネソタ州在住の日本人達で良い事を考え、ご馳走と日本語で楽しい時間を持ちましょう。

日程：毎月第2月曜日正午より

場所：日本語図書館

(4231 Bloomington Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55407)

また、毎週土曜日午後2時から、日本語図書館のお手伝いしてくださる方の集まりがあります。是非ご参加ください。この図書館には、漫画や宗教誌約25000冊や約2500本のビデオDVDがあり、希望者にはセルフサービスで日本人会と同じく無料で貸出しています。お問い合わせは下記までどうぞ。

Yoko Breckenridge

Cell phone: (612) 839-0008

E-mail: yoko@yoko4home.com

(Nihonjin-kai monthly meeting is every 2nd Monday at noon. The meeting is held at 4231 Bloomington Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55407).

MCTJ Shinnenkai



To improve Japanese education in Minnesota, on Sunday, January 20, 2019, the Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese (MCTJ) celebrated its first Shinnenkai.

Twenty-two members were able to attend. The meeting started with a brief overview of the state of MCTJ and Japanese education in Minnesota and nationwide. We discussed how we need more qualified Japanese teachers in Minnesota to keep our programs growing. Rio Saito shared opportunities for college and high school students to take part in JASM, specifically, being a JASM intern and volunteering at the Minnesota J-Quiz competition every February.

Next Hanna Brandt updated us on Mori no Ike, the Japanese language village in northern Minnesota through Concordia Language Villages. Mori no Ike is looking to build a permanent village on the land they have purchased. They also need more Japanese speaking staff for their summer programs. Then we broke into small groups to discuss our specific needs and shared those with the big group. At the end of the program, participants agreed that they wanted to make the MCTJ Shinnenkai an annual event. We thank the Dakota County United Educators for providing the venue and for the lunch prepared by JK's Table.

By Laura Moy of Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese

Advertise in the Tsushin!

Advertisement Rates

Style	Size	Cost/issue
1/4 page	5 x 3.5 in	\$50.00
1/2 page	5 x 7.5 in	\$90.00
Full page	10 x 7.5 in	\$150.00
Classified	80 character line	\$10/ line (minimum 2 lines)

Ad production and design available in both Japanese and English for an additional charge. Deadline for completed ads and classifieds is the 20th of every month.

**Questions? Contact
the JASM Office
Tel: 612-627-9357
jasm@us-japan.org**

Japan America Society Calendar

March

**Japanese Product Design Lecture
Wednesday, March 6, 2019**

Sake Tasting, Thursday, March 14, 2019

Japanese Speaking Club

The Japanese Speaking Club is an informal meeting place for those wishing to practice Japanese. We encourage those just beginning the language as well as native speakers to gather at **Corner Coffee** in Uptown Minneapolis to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to speak Japanese. Come when you can, leave when you must.

Date/Time: Every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. (however, most people do not show up until 3:30).

Place: Corner Coffee
1414 W 28th St, Minneapolis, MN 55408
(Just east of Hennepin Avenue South)



*For questions, comments, or concerns, please contact JASM
at jasm@us-japan.org or 612-627-9357*

Doll Need a Home



We are looking for a home for the doll, "a Boy with an Axe", approximately 16 inches in height— \$80. It is in very good condition. If you are interested in purchasing the doll, please contact us: jasm@us-japan.org.

Become a JASM Member online

Support our mission and become a member!

1. Go to mn-japan.org
2. Click on 'Membership' at the top
3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.

You can also become a member using your smartphone.

Japan America Society of Minnesota

- ☐ Membership Application ☐ Change of Address
☐ Tax-deductible Donation

Name _____

Name (2nd adult of a household membership) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

I would like to make an additional tax-deductible donation of _____

Amount Enclosed: _____
(Please make checks payable to JASM)

Individual Membership

Patron.....	\$1,000+
Sustaining.....	\$500+
Contributing.....	\$100+
Individual	\$30
Student/Senior	\$20
Household	\$50
(2 adults plus children under 18)	

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Japan America Society of Minnesota



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通信

Tsūshin
March 2019

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a non-profit, non-political association engaged in bringing the peoples of Japan and the United States closer together in mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation. Through programs and interchange, it endeavors to promote an appreciation of cultural, educational, economic, public, and other affairs of interest to both peoples. Membership in the society is open to individuals, corporations, and other organizations interested in furthering its programs.

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a member of the National Association of Japan-America Societies.

(Please report any inaccuracies you find in this publication to jasm.interns@gmail.com)

J-Quiz 2019

